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Trinity College Dublin (TCD)
School of Education
Doctor in Education (D.Ed)

September 2010

Exploring contemporary higher education and academic work in Ireland: The impact of policy on practice

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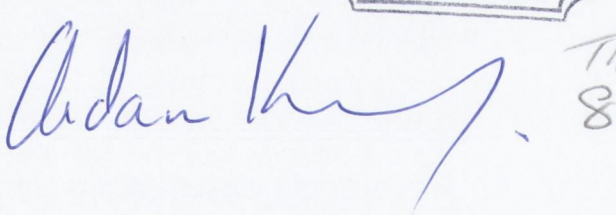
Declaration

I declare that the content of this thesis is my own work. Where reference or use of the work of others is made, full acknowledge is provided in the text and reference section. During the research process a critical research ethics approach was adhered to in line with best education research practice as outlined by organisations such as the Educational Studies Association of Ireland, the British Education and Research Association, the American Education and Research Association and the Australian Council for Educational Research.

In my professional opinion, I have fully complied with the scholarly conventions and general regulations for academic writing and postgraduate research, as set out in both the *University of Dublin, Trinity College Calendar Part 2, Graduate Studies and Higher Degrees* and, the School of Education, *Doctor in Education, Handbook.*

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Abstract

The drive for the so called 'knowledge economy' and the expected competitive advantage envisioned, has led to 'power elites' and vested interests applying pressure on nation states to develop and implement policies that push the balance of national education systems towards the economic imperative and away from the social good. This thesis will describe ideas, strategies and objectives relating to the pursuit of current higher education change policy agendas, as expressed in key European Union (EU) Education Commission and Council policy documents and communiqués and with national strategies, acts and agreements. It provides accounts of other modernisation advocates or 'policy shapers'[1], such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the World Bank (WB). This thesis concentrates on the modernisation policy agenda relevant to higher education in general, and to academic work: more specifically how this type of work is organised (the labour process[2]). Critical considerations are given to the tensions that arise between higher education policy formation and implementation and how this affects the academic worker in teaching, research and career. This gap between rhetoric and reality is linked to the dynamic conflict between structure as authoritative bureaucracy and the social action of the academic worker. The strategies that academic workers adopt with reference to the discourse and implementation of the change policy agenda are of crucial interest to this study, specifically the domains of power, the structural drive for compliance, and the resistance strategies of actors. The conceptual framework is informed by constructivism and the mode of inquiry is interpretative. The methodology is case study which is influenced by both fourth generation evaluation and critical ethnography. A mixed method design was used consisting of a policy review of public documents relating to higher education policy from the EU and Ireland from 1999 to 2008, a series of research interviews with higher education workers and critical stakeholders (n=27), and a lengthy online survey administered to both the institutes of technology (IoT) and university sectors in Ireland (n=499). The research approach adopted a multidisciplinary position to knowledge domains[3], utilising research from several disciplines within the broad episteme of social science. The findings show that, structurally, the change policy agenda over the last ten years has endeavoured to both restructure and reform higher education in programmes, quality, assessment, standards, language and the definition of knowledge. While policy has promoted systems harmonisation, it has also promoted increased competition between sectors and institutions. The implementation of large scale policy initiatives has presented challenges to academic workers and researchers. The findings suggest that while there seems to be institutional compliance with policy implementation this does not mean that there is academic compliance. Academic workers in the different sectors and institutions construct their own meanings of policy and operate their own implementation practices. There is also evidence of a growing challenge from academic workers and their representative organisations against the reorganisation of academic work and the market style reform of higher education in general. These challenges seek to reclaim higher education as a public and social good, rather than the economic imperative and the for-profit motive.

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[1] A 'policy shaper' in this context means an organisation that produces its own claims, either its own or commissioned research. The research warrants are used as a lobbying tool in pursuit of the organisation's ideological or commercial objectives. In essence this is a political process.

[2] The use of the term 'labour process' here relates to Braverman's (1974) *Labour and Monopoly Capital*.

[3] The specific established academic knowledge domains explored are sociology, philosophy, psychology and areas of non-specific or fuzzy boundaries such as industrial relations, evaluation and management.

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to Agnita, Oisin and Rachel for their support and patience. I would like to acknowledge the support of my supervisor Dr Andrew Loxley and Dr Peter Conroy (2005-2008), the reader Dr Tom Farrelly, the external examiner Dr Jim Gleeson, the internal examiner Dr David Limond, fellow D.Ed students of the class of 2005 and the other academic staff in the School of Education TCD. In addition, I would like to acknowledge colleagues in DIT, specifically Dr Anne Murphy, Dr Thomas Duff, Prof. Frank McMahon and Paul McSweeney. More generally, I need to acknowledge the assistance I received from staff in the institutes of technology, the universities, the Teachers Union of Ireland, the Irish Federation of University Teachers, the Irish University Association, Institutes of Technology Ireland, Higher Education Authority, Department of Education and Science and UNESCO-UNEVOC. Finally, sincere thanks to the interview participants and survey respondents for their time and insights.

Acronyms

Organisations, Agencies, Associations, Groups

DES	Department of Education and Science
DIT	Dublin Institute of Technology
EI	Education International
EU	European Union
EUA	European University Association
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HETAC	Higher Education and Training Awards Council
IFUT	Irish Federation of University Teachers
IHE	Institutes of Higher Education
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IoT	Institute of Technology
IoTI	Institutes of Technology Ireland
IUA	Irish University Association
NQAI	National Qualifications Authority of Ireland
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
TUI	Teachers Union of Ireland
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organisation

Terms, References, Names

ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EHEA	European Higher Education Area
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
ERA	European Research Area
GATS	General Agreement on Trade and Services
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resources Management
HSS	Humanities and Social Science
IR	Industrial Relations
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
LLL	Lifelong learning
MBP	Merit Based Pay
MNC	Multi National Corporations
NDP	National Development Plan
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
NPM	New Public Management
PMDS	Performance Management and Development Systems
PRP	Performance Related Pay
QA	Quality Assurance
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
SSTI	Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation

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Chapter 1: The research questions and the researcher

Introduction

> We have noted that the value-free claim of positivism papers over the realisation that science, like every human activity, is a political act.
> (Guba and Lincoln 1989, p125)

This chapter seeks to provide the reader with contextual information relating to this thesis, outlining the research questions and the research framework, and describing the structure. As such, the intent is to map out the terrain and signpost the direction of the research. This is followed by a contextualisation of the author in the form of a short autobiographical account which locates the author's experiences of work, education and research.

Research, questions and context

As an 'academic worker'[4] in the Irish tertiary education sector the author is seeking to develop a critical understanding of contemporary academic work, practices, procedures and policies. This was undertaken in order to enhance the author's professional capacity, capabilities and critical understanding of the 'lived experience' (Denzin and Lincoln 2003) of the academic workforce in Ireland, Europe and further afield. It is also an endeavour to make a critical contribution based on empirical evidence, which describes and explores the emerging 'change' narrative[5] that now prevails in education discourses at policy, management and practice levels, while detailing the emerging impact this change agenda has on academic workers in teaching, research and career. The focus of the three primary research questions will be the modernisation agenda in higher education and, to:

(i) Critically assess policy.

(ii) Explore its effects at sectoral and institutional level.

(iii) Evaluate academic workers experience of this agenda.

---

[4] The term worker is deliberately used to draw attention to the fact that academics are paid employees, who have contracts of employment, which set out general duties and responsibilities, expectations and obligations and the relationship between the employer and the employed. Also inherent in this concept are factors to do with individual values, attitudes, identity, culture, control and power relationship, this will be discussed in greater detail later on, for a summary see Kuper and Kuper (2007, pp919-920) also Aronowitz, 'Academic labour' (2000, pp68-102), Martin, 'Academic work' (1999). For a comprehensive overview of 'work' from a sociological perspective see Grint (2005).

[5] This change agenda narrative has been associated with the ideology of neoliberalism. For some general research on this related to higher education see Hyslop-Margison and Sears (2006), Levidow (2005), Spring (1998), and Ball (2008).

The research approach utilised was facilitated by engaging three interacting thinking processes:

- Critical 'self reflection' (Schon 1991) from the perspective of a professional in the field or what can be termed as, an 'insider' (Kemmis, McTaggart 2003, Loxley and Seery 2008), 'emic' inquirer (Guba and Lincoln 1998) or 'workers as critical researchers' (Kincheloe and McLaren 2006).
- A 'systematic literature review' (Creswell 1994, Hart 2005, Whisker 2006) of relevant policy, literature, documents and artefacts.
- The construction of thinking tools to inform the development of a conceptual framework and 'research strategy' (Blaikie 2006).

By applying this type of process it was expected that the research could navigate an academic research journey based on '*praxis*'[6] the application of theory and practice in action. From the out-set there was awareness that this would not be a straightforward, linear, tidy, off-the-shelf, text book style research process, but, rather, it would be 'messy'[7], active, sometimes unorthodox, explorative and hopefully a creative process. The intention was to challenge perceptions, interpretations and constructions of the reality of academic work in tertiary[8] education in Ireland in the twenty first century. As an 'insider' the research is enhanced by 'working knowledge' (Billett 2008, Garrick and Rhodes 2000) of the higher education sector over the last ten years and the experience, practice and knowledge gained as a 'critical adult learner' (Brookfield 2005, Fleming 2008). This contributes to the development of a research process that will describe, explore and develop understanding(s) of the emerging agendas in policies and structures that influence the organisation of academic work. In the higher education policy domain at *macro, meso* and *micro* levels, there seems to be a growing demand on publicly-funded higher education providers to standardise pedagogical practice, adopt uniform award structures and become more relevant to the needs of the economy and the 'world of work'. Ryan

[6] *Praxis* is a widely used term in philosophy (Honderich 1995, p713, Blake, Smeyers, Smith, Standish 2006, pp199-204), the usage here is based on the concept of 'action' and the utilisation of both theory and practice in an applied, real-world setting.

[7] Taken from Loxley (2007) he describes the process of carrying out research as messy, the clarity emerges from the analysis of gathered data and the interpretation of meaning that is developed, although this is subject to perception and world views.

[8] While the term 'tertiary' education can in its broadest sense be related to all post secondary education including further, education, adult education, Technical vocational education and higher education (see OECD 1998). In the context of this research and specifically relating to the case study the term 'tertiary' education is confined to the publically-funded seven universities, the 14 IoTs and the six higher education colleges.

(2004, p177) makes reference to this type of process, suggesting that university education is now perceived as 'a business in a borderless world'. This policy pressure challenges preconceived roles of academic work, it acts as the active ingredient in the restructuring or, more radically, the transformation of the higher education sector. This policy discourse puts direct pressure on publicly-funded institutions of higher education (IHE)[9] to modernise. There are also consequential pressures that arise from the modernisation agenda, such as the emergence of new forms of competition for students in the tertiary education sector. It can be argued that the modernisation agenda reduces boundaries and regulations thereby enabling new for-profit private providers[10] to compete with the publicly-funded IHE for the limited pool of students. One example of this is the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) which gives all education and training providers the opportunity to have their awards recognised and legitimised by the state. This is a new form of national education and training currency[11]. In addition, at European level, the European Qualifications Framework acts as a meta-framework utilised to translate the value of awards between countries in Europe. There seems to be more policy convergence at the international level with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) seeking further liberalisation of the services sector, which includes the public sector and education provision. The introduction of these national and European award mechanisms has brought into play a new technical language and approach to knowledge conceptualisation and acquisition. Learning outcomes, competency and skills (including in some cases entrepreneurship and innovation) are part of the new discourse that academic workers are expected to utilise in their programme documents and course content. Whether this has a direct impact on pedagogical practice, as a form of 'paradigm shift' (Young 2005)[12], or is just a new type of labelling procedure, which academics have to engage with, is still unclear in the case of Ireland.

---

[9] Both the University Act (1997) and the IoT Act 2006 use the general term Institutions of Higher Education to refer to universities and IoTs. This thesis will used this term instead of using the term of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) as detailed in the general UK and European higher education literature.

[10] Prof Ball from the University of London has carried out significant research in the area of private providers, their growth, motives and impact on higher education and the globalisation of education markets, in particular higher education and commercialisation.

[11] The use of the word 'currency' denotes the comparison between the regulatory framework for monitory currency, the symbolic value agreed by nation states in relation to legal tender, money (see Foucault (1992, pp 168-174) and the new commodification of knowledge and skills explicitly stated in award types which are regulated by national frameworks of qualifications.

[12] Young (2005) carried out research funded by the International Labour Organisation, relating to national frameworks of qualifications, their construction, implementation and possible impact. He argued that the establishing of an NFQ did not just consist of adopting systems and procedures but required a major shift in how knowledge was conceptualised, produced and governed.

The principal agent within the higher education (HE) sector, the one who is directly engaged in the teaching and research processes and deals with academic matters, is the lecturer, the academic worker. Describing and exploring how the academic worker responds to the new demands of policy is central to this piece of research. The initial concept used to explore the work of the academic worker was based on Tight's (2003, p154) classification of the roles[13] of academic workers: 'teaching, research, managing, writing and networking'. This was developed further, by adding components from the works of Martin (1999) 'academic work', Aronowitz (2000) 'academic labour', Shaw (2008) 'academic careers' and Schuster and Finkerelstein (2006) 'restructuring academic work'.

The research paid particular attention to the dynamic relationship between two concepts: 'human capital' and the 'labour process' in the field of higher education. It should be noted from the outset that the research did not deal with these concepts in their purest forms as detailed by both Becker (1993) and Marx (1963), or indeed in their distinct discipline areas of economics and sociology. Rather, the research focused on the usage of these concepts as codified in the texts of policy narratives and contemporary literature. The use of the term human capital has filtered up through both *macro* and *meso* levels of policy. For example; (*macro*) the European Commission has embedded the term human capital into successive education and training policy documents, such as the Lisbon strategy (1999) and the Bologna process (1999), and (*meso*) the Irish government's *National Development Plan 2007-2013*, Chapter 9, is entitled '*Human Capital*', this contains all the relevant national policy and strategic direction relating to education from primary to tertiary education and training. Selections of this type of policy documents are dealt with in detail in the chapters following.

While the term 'labour process' has been developed by various authors such as Braverman (1974), Wood (1982), Ritzer (2006), Grint (2005) and numerous others, it has not explicitly been translated into policy documents. Policy makers in modern capitalist societies may not see the relevance of concepts which originated from Marx or they may deliberately want to disassociate these

[13] Power (1994) makes an alternative classification of academic work in the 'functions of the organisation'. The 'first order function' is teaching and research and the emerging new 'second order function' is satisfying external performance indicators.

concepts from policy narratives. The use of language in policy documents is a political decision, language signifies the position of the writer. In the current, dominant neoliberal policy narrative there is no room for dissent or critical language[14], such as, Marxism. Rather, the current policy narrative encapsulates some of the meaning of the 'labour process' in terms such as, the organisation of work, employee and employer relations, productivity, effectiveness, efficiency, key performance indicators, employment regulations, industrial relations, contracts of employment, performance related pay, flexiblisation, employability and partnership. At institutional level these new working terms seem to be operationalised by an emerging power bloc which supports management control, namely human resource management (HRM). While the term labour process is not directly used, there is a considerable amount of policy and legislation in place that can be correlated with this term. For example, in an Irish context, national agreements such as *Sustaining Process and Towards 2016* have sought to reform the organisation of working hours, pay, pensions, performance measures, quality and the activities of organised labour. In order to explore this multi-faceted usage of the key terms human capital and the labour process, a multidisciplinary approach to knowledge domains is utilised. By combining relevant components from concepts and theories and by relating these to practice and experience, a conceptual framework was constructed. This framework was informed by higher education research, practice and policy, it was not discipline specific. This approach relates to a 'world view' which is underpinned by both ontological and epistemological assumptions informed by 'social constructivism' (Grix 2004, Blaikie 2006), 'naturalistic inquiry' (Denzin and Lincoln 2005), 'interpretativism' (Crotty 2005) and Robson's (2003) approach to 'real world research', this will be dealt with in detail in the chapters following.

The mode of inquiry utilised was located in what is traditionally termed, 'qualitative research' or what Loxley (unpublished) proposes as 'non-numeric' research. Loxley uses this term in order to get away from the qualitative - quantitative research divide, suggesting this divide is an artificial construct that draws attention away from the richness of the whole research process (see also

[14] Fleming (2008) arguing from Habermas's perspective, suggests that a critical discourse needs to be introduced into the Irish HE 'lifeworld' in order to challenge the dominance of neoliberal discourse which is based on technical rationality and the economic imperative.

Farrelly 2009, pp150-164). This leaves the research open to challenges from proponents of the scientific research paradigm of positivism. However, in order to assure the academic rigour of this research and counter arguments that may be used to challenge this research, a mixed research approach was utilised which combined both numeric and non-numeric strategies. The methodology comprises Yin's (1989) 'case study' approach which is informed by elements intrinsic to Guba and Lincoln's (1986) 'fourth generation evaluation' and Thomas's (1993) 'critical ethnography'. This approach has similarities to 'combined methodology' research or 'triangulation' (Creswell 1994). The research design employed during the sampling, fieldwork, data gathering and data analysis phases was 'mixed method'. In preparation for the field research an ethical code was developed to guide the research process. This was published as a working paper[15]. This ethical code was utilised in the four main stages of the research process for this thesis which were: (a) concept development, (b) data gathering, (c) data analysis, (d) reporting findings. The concept developing stage was informed by the relevant literature, (electronic and text documents) and social learning gained from work experience. The data gathering exercise consisted of developing a critical framework to: 1) review source policy documents, 2) construct a research interview schedule, 3) develop an online survey instrument and sampling procedure. The data analysis stage and reporting of findings was assisted by the application of both non-numeric and numeric software packages. The non-numeric data was interpreted by working with the professional qualitative software package NVivo 8[16] produced by QSR International [17], the numeric data were analysed by utilising the professional standard statistical software package SPSS 15[18].

Detailing the research questions

> Asking questions and getting answers is a much harder task than it may seem at first. The spoken or written word has always a residue of ambiguity, no matter how carefully we word the questions and how carefully we report or code the answers.
> (Fontana and Frey 2003, p61)

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[15] This paper was produced, submitted for peer review to the editor of DIT's online journal level *3* and accepted for publication in Vol. 6, 2008. See Kenny A (2008) *Towards a model of critical ethics to inform the research process in postgraduate research*, available at http://level3.dit.ie/html/issue6/kenny/kenny_1.html. .

[16] A range of NVivo 8 data reports relating to the interview data analysis such as coding, sources, attributes, nodes etc. are presented in Appendix B 22-25.

[17] QSR International is a leading developer of qualitative software analysis packages: see the following to their website http://www.qsrinternational.com/.

[18] The online survey data was analysed by utilising a full range of SPSS tests (descriptive and statistical).

The fundamental focus of any form of social research is the question(s) being asked. The very wording of the question(s) gives a clue to the researcher's approach, methodology and methods. Creswell (1994, pp70-75) makes a distinction between the types of questions utilised in different paradigms. Questions used in a quantitative approach will contain key words such as cause, effect, hypothesis, determine. While questions in a qualitative inquiry will apply words such as descriptions, discover, explain, explore. The types of key words that are embedded into questions provide insight into the coded language and research domain of the researcher. In the construction of the research questions for this thesis, the researcher tried to apply this style. The thesis title may be viewed as the master key. The title locates the research within the boundary of contemporary higher education and it confines the focus of inquiry to the nature of academic work. This includes factors that contribute to the shaping and directing of academic work, considers what academic work is and seeks to gain insights into the organisation of academic work. The questions take the form of three primary questions and three sub-questions, which, in turn are framed within the context of the state-aided higher education sector in Ireland and the policy agenda emanating from the European Union.

The specific focus of the inquiry was to explore academic work in teaching, research and career from the perspective of academic workers and other interested parties. The three primary aims were to:

- Assess critically the modernisation policy agenda relating to higher education and academic work.
- Explore how the modernisation agenda affects IHE and their organisation of academic labour.
- Describe and evaluate the academic worker's perception and experience of working in IHE in the context of the modernisation agenda.

To address the primary aims a series of sub-categories were used during the research process these were:

- Descriptions: describe the terrain of the new change policy agenda which emerged since the 1990s relating to the higher education sector and the academic workforce as evident in the narrative of policy

documents produced by the EU, Irish government, 'policy shapers' and individual institutions?

- Explanations: provide explanations derived from accounts of those engaged in academic work relating to their knowledge, reaction to and opinions of, this policy agenda and how it has impacted on their academic work, employment contracts and conditions of service?
- Evaluation: construct a thematic evaluative matrix depicting the 'claims, concerns and issues'[19] expressed by academic workers relating to the change policy agenda and their lived experience of teaching, research and career?

So far a contextual sketch of the research, the framework and the questions has been presented. However, in order to provide the reader with more detailed information about the rationale and motivation for carrying out this research and to accord with Yin's (1994) case study 'research protocol', an autobiographical portrait of the researcher is presented in the section following.

Identifying the role of the researcher

> The personality of the researcher helps determine his or her selection of topics, his or her intellectual approach and his or her ability in the field (Clarke 1976, p 104). But often we are left in the dark as to the personal and intellectual path that led researchers to drop one line of inquiry or to pursue another topic.
> (Punch 1998, p 162)

Punch (1998) argues for researchers to make themselves visible, by providing autobiographical details in order to provide a context that can inform the reader why the researcher chose a particular research subject area or research approach. Yin (1994) although in the same vein, takes a more structured approach and requests researchers to provide a research 'protocol' which provides such details as: a profile of the researcher, the researcher's investigation skills, experience and other autobiographical information. These are reasonable points. In line with the research style adopted in critical 'self reflection', details are provided in the section following which relate to the researcher's[20] human capital investment to date and experiences gained from

[19] Guba and Lincoln (1986, p40) these terms are used in fourth generation evaluation projects for explanations see Table 3.

[20] As the remaining part of this chapter is more autobiographical and relates to events and experiences that occurred prior to this research, the narrative will utilise the first person I to identify the author/researcher.

engagement as an academic worker in the labour process in a IHE. Some insights and observations are shared from the respective roles of a trade union activist, a member of a management team, a project manager and co-ordinator of a national centre. As such, the researcher was engaged in a research process while based in the workplace, involved in social actions and related experience of teaching, research and career. The intention was to present the reader which these 'lived experiences' in order to provide insights into social events that have contributed towards informing the researcher's construction of social reality and decisions in inquiry area and research approach.

Disclosure, towards a research protocol

In developing a research protocol it is important to provide some information on both the researcher's human capital and experiences in the labour process. The basic proposition relating to 'human capital' (Becker 1993, Schultz 1977) is that personal investment in education and training should have a positive return in increased employment opportunities and earnings. Both Coleman (1988) and Bourdieu (1986) introduced additional domains to the human capital thesis, incorporating wider society factors such as 'social capital' and 'cultural capital'. Considering these different forms of 'capital' two ethnographic questions can be posed: did investment in human capital improve my employment opportunities and earning? Were there any other factors that contributed to the career path that emerged including, socio-cultural considerations? Marx's primary assumption in relation to the 'labour process' is that there is an exploitive relationship between the 'means of production' and labour. Braverman (1974) took this concept a stage further, and provided an analysis of management control mechanisms, 'deskilling' and productivity. Was this my experience in the world of work? The answers to these questions are not straightforward: it is not just a matter of equating prior earnings with educational investment/cost and actual and expected future earnings, or drawing comparisons between working experiences when I started work and now. Rather, the social context needs to be taken into account by reflecting on past experiences and incorporating related theory.

I come from a 'working class'[21] family, brought up in the heart of Dublin's city centre. When I left school after my Intermediate Examination[22] at the age of 16 years, the unemployment rate had reached 18% in the area where I lived in north inner city Dublin. Less than 1% of the population in the inner city went on to higher education. During that time my expectations for the future were solely focused on getting a manual job. Work opportunities were very limited. However, I managed to get a position on an ANCO[23] training course in general engineering. When that finished, through a local connection and a recommendation from my training instructor in ANCO[24], I got into a FAS Community Employment Scheme[25] working as a general operative in construction, doing redevelopment work on a local community centre. I managed to get a place as a plastering apprentice, starting in a FAS training centre for 12 months' training. FAS paid an allowance to each apprentice during this training. On completion of the course examinations[26] the apprentice moved to the 'on-the-job'[27] part of the training, three years in the world of work[28]. Provision for formal learning was incorporated into the apprenticeship structure through what was then known as 'day release'. Apprentices attended a vocational technical college for one day a week: I went to Bolton Street School of Trades. This was formal structured Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), a mixture of applied skills learning and related theoretical knowledge, which included maths, science and technology. It was examination-

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[21] Working class is a contested concept (see Grusky 1994) the usage here denotes several factors: intergenerational financial capital and earning, work category classification, semi-skilled – unskilled, formal educational attainment and both Bourdieu's concepts of both 'social' and 'cultural capital' to the traditional concepts of 'class stratification' (Grusky 1994). This understanding of working class locates the concept in a historical frame and is context bound.

[22] The Intermediate Examination marked the end of compulsory education: pupils usually take this examination between the ages of 15-17. Pupils who want can go on to do the Leaving Certificate (a further two years) the results from this examination are the base line used for entrance to higher education.

[23] ANCO was a state-funded agency, with responsibility for training and apprentices: in 1988 it merged with Manpower the state-funded employment agency to form FAS the National Training Authority.

[24] This appointment resulted from the development of 'social capital' (Coleman 1988, Bourdieu 1986), in the formal field through achievement during training and in the informal social field through local community network.

[25] The Community Employment Scheme was a mechanism utilised to fund partially local community initiatives, in the areas of community development, employment, maintenance and construction projects. A local community management group oversaw the project and hired the workers/trainees. Employment was annual and remuneration was a percentage above the unemployment benefit rate. The main strategy was to make provision for unemployed people to remain active in a work setting, develop skills and progress to new employment opportunities.

[26] These examinations were mainly practical utilising a continuous assessment approach, the theoretical examinations at the end of the course consisted of both multiple choice and short answer questions. The whole focus of the training was to give the apprentice sufficient knowledge and skills in the trade area in order to start productive work. It was a form of state-funded capacity building. While the apprentice gained valuable skill the employer gained a productive worker for minimum financial investment.

[27] During the on-the-job training, employers were supposed to provide adequate supervision of apprentices, record their achievements on completion of numerous trade related skills task in an apprentice Log Book. From my experience and what I gathered from other apprentices at the time this was done ad-hoc. Employers were not really interested in providing training, their focus was on production of work. The training component relied on the attitude of the qualified trade persons. The middle age and older trade persons were the main custodians of apprentices, looking after the apprentices safety on site, their skills experience and making representation to the employer on behalf of the apprentice. It was a form of social bonding rooted in the traditions and culture of the trade area.

[28] This could be associated with the concept of Work Based Learning, learning by doing, observation and experience. However, it was unstructured, informal and depended on the work context and the culture inherent in the company.

based, with two one-hour examinations in the second year (Junior National Craft) and three, three-hour examinations in the final year (National Craft Certificate). Examinations were run on a national basis by the then Department of Education. In my experience this apprentice system utilised a good 'blended learning' approach, grounded in *praxis* the application of TVET theory and work practice. It was during this stage of my working life that I joined my first trade union (Operative Plasters' and Allied Trades Society of Ireland) and got a renewed interest in education mainly due to the encouragement of the teachers in Bolton Street. After I qualified, I worked for various contractors on short-term construction projects. The work was hard and the pay was low. Unhappy with the conditions and opportunities in Ireland I went to London to work. First, I did agency work[29], hired per day on a daily rate. The wages were good, but the conditions were unpredictable and exploitative. By developing work contacts through social networks[30] and gaining a reputation for high quality work I got the opportunity (created by an Irish foreman) to go 'self employed' and began to make a valuable financial return on my training investment. When I returned to Ireland I remained self-employed, but a new interest had begun to emerge. I began to do voluntary community work. This evolved into community arts and youth work. I did two extra mural[31] programmes in NUI Maynooth (Diploma in Community Arts, Certificate in Youth Studies). This was followed by a Diploma in Social Studies[32] through distance education. This investment in education, combined with the experiences I had gained through voluntary community work, led to a career shift. I started part-time, paid community work with youth groups, ex-offenders, community development groups, women's groups, ex-drug users and in Youthreach (VEC). During the mid-1990s the construction industry began to pick up after the slump period in the 1980s, there was a growing demand for apprentices. FAS, the institutes of technology and the social partners of the time restructured the apprenticeship systems into the

[29] In 'agency' employment at the time you had no formal conditions of service or employment rights. The agency would ring you and give you an address to go to for work. This could be done daily or you could get a few weeks in one location. In the hierarchy of the workplace agency workers were valued least and considered a disposable commodity by employers. The agency charged employers for the agency workers' labour, took a percentage and then paid the agency worker what they were due the following week.

[30] Social networks in London at the time evolved mainly to ex-pats (Irish workers) meeting in pubs after work. This type of drinking culture was predominant in the construction sector. There were other social networks in the areas of GAA and music and republicanism.

[31] Both the Diploma in Community Arts Development (18 months) and the Certificate in Youth Studies (10 months) were delivered off campus, utilising an adult education approach, assessment comprised both of continuous assessment and the submission of final written papers.

[32] This programme was organised by the International Federation for Adult Education (IFAE) in the Netherlands. It was a correspondence programme over a twelve-month period, assessment included multiple choice and short answer question and a final written submission.

New Standards Based Apprenticeship[33]. I had kept in touch with some of the teachers in Bolton Street during the intervening period. When the increase in apprentice enrolments eventually emerged in the institute of technology sector, a head of department contacted me and offered some part-time teaching hours[34] working with apprentices in Bolton Street[35]. While I was there I joined the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) and got involved with the politics of industrial relations in the local TUI branch. This new involvement in formal TVET provision sparked a desire to undertake further, advanced education and training in order to develop my professional practice. With the approval from the Director of the Built Environment[36] and encouragement from colleagues I began a Bachelor of Arts programme in Dublin City University, majoring in Psychology and with a minor in Sociology.

DIT was going through immense changes at the time following the merger of six colleges under the 1992 DIT Act. In conjunction with, and developing from, the national partnership agreement of 1994, the Programme for Competitiveness and Work (PCW)[37], agreement was reached in 1998 in relation to higher education. The TUI membership voted for this agreement, which promised new lecturing structures and promotion opportunities, a new entrance grade called assistant lecturer[38] and a wage increase. There was an expectation at the time that a number of part-time workers who fulfilled the PCW criteria would be converted to full-time positions as assistant lecturers. In 2000 I was appointed as an assistant lecturer in DIT. The assistant lecture grade was agreed under the PCW agreement, lecturing staff, however, saw it as a 'yellow pack'[39] grade. I became an active trade union member involved with industrial relations issues in DIT, elected in the following positions in the Dublin Colleges Branch of the

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[33] This new system sought to standardise the education and training process of apprenticeship programmes. An agreed, standard- based modular type course programme was developed for the 25 designated trade areas. The programme was delivered in seven phases, four on-the-job and three in both FAS for 20 weeks in phase 2 and the institutes of technology for phase 4 which is 10 weeks and phase 6 which lasts for 10 weeks. Apprentices were paid the industrial rate by FAS during their three phases of off-the-job education and training.

[34] The entry requirements for teaching apprentices at the time were, to hold a National Craft Certificate, have five years post apprenticeship working experience in industry and demonstrate further, learning.

[35] Bolton Street was originally one of the six colleges that came under the remit of City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee (CDVEC): the 1992 Dublin Institute of Technology Act merged all six colleges under one name DIT.

[36] DIT had developed a staff capacity building strategy providing financial support for staff willing to undertake advanced level qualifications. The intention was to develop the lecturing staff qualifications profile in the institute, more degree, Masters and PhD holders were needed in order to fulfil the criteria for university designation.

[37] The full content of the Programme for Competitiveness and Work can be accessed from the following , http://www.taoiseach.gov.ie/attached_files/Pdf%20files/Program%20for%20Competitiveness%20and%20Work.pdf

[38] See Circular Letter Circular Letter No. IT 03/05http://tui.biznet-servers.com/Contracts/CL%20No.%20IT%2003-05%20Prog%20from%20AL%20to%20L.doc

[39] The term 'yellow pack' come from Dunnes Stores' introduction of a serious of own brand products that were labelled in plan yellow wrapping and were considerable cheaper then branded products. The usage of the term yellow pack relating to assistance lecturers was derogatory, signifying cheap labour.

TUI: Local House Representative Bolton Street, Branch Equality Officer and two terms as Branch Chairperson. I was also elected to the Faculty Board of the Built Environment and the Academic Council of DIT. Through the work experience gained from academic and industrial relations fora and meetings, I felt a need to learn more about education in general, and industrial relations and management practices. Again, with the approval of the director of the faculty of the Built Environment and support from colleagues, I commenced an MSc in Education, Training and Management (Leadership Stream) in the School of Education in DCU. During the first year of this two-year Masters programme I was successful in an interview for a position as Qualifications Framework Development Officer[40] in Academic Affairs DIT. This appointment was for two years. Some months into the post, the DIT was requested by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) to undertake an institutional quality review. The European University Association (EUA)[41] was the agreed international review body. During the quality review carried out by the EUA, an internal DIT quality review team was established. I was appointed to this team as the Consultation Process Facilitator. My main function was to liaise with the different trade unions and academic staff and other grades of staff in DIT. This work became part of my thesis research for the MSc in Education.

In 2005 I decided to continue my education and training, applying for and gaining admission into the first Doctorate in Education[42] programme in Trinity College Dublin. At the time I felt this programme offered an ideal opportunity to develop advanced level skills and knowledge in research theory and practice, while also giving me the freedom to carry out in-depth research into my workplace (tertiary education) and the different roles of academic workers. In 2007 I was appointed as Project Manager for the Skills Research Initiative located in the in the Directorate of Research and Enterprise, DIT. The primary

[40] This position was advertised internally in DIT, the grade was lecturer, with a €5000.00 acting up allowance. The position was for two years, working 9 to 5 in an academic administrative unit, under the direct supervision of the Academic Registrar of DIT. The position was developing in response to the Academic Council's adopting of the National Framework of Qualification in late 2003. The initial reasonability was to place all the former DIT awards (legacy awards) on the NFQ. Other duties included liaison with the NQAI, the EQF and various quality assurance and academic matters. It is worth noting here that this was the first time someone from the trade area was appointed to an Officer position in DIT's head office.

[41] DIT was accepted as a member of the EUA in 2004. The NQAI in negotiations with the seven universities, had agreed that the EUA would carry out the institutional quality reviews of the universities. DIT with agreement from the NQAI requested the EUA to carry out the institutional quality review: this was agreed by all parties. An interesting point to note here, is the binary system remained in place, as the EUA Ireland Sectoral Report 2006 only made reference to the university sector the DIT quality review was not mentioned.

[42] The selection process included the following criteria, academic attainment minim of a Master's level degree (2.1) and submission of a research proposal, letter of intent and an interview with a panel of three academic staff members.

focus was to develop a strategy for research capacity building for lecturing staff teaching in the apprenticeship and skills related areas. During the first year of this new role as Project Manager the President of DIT requested that I prepare an application on behalf of the DIT to become the UNESCO-UNEVOC[43] National Centre for Ireland. This application was successful and in late 2007 DIT was appointed as the UNESCO-UNEVOC National Centre for Ireland. The coordinating of the activities of this centre were added to my remit. In 2008 I worked in the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre, UN Campus Bonn for the month of July, developing procedures and processes in preparation for the first international UNESCO-UNEVOC conference to be held in DIT. This successful event happened in August 2008.

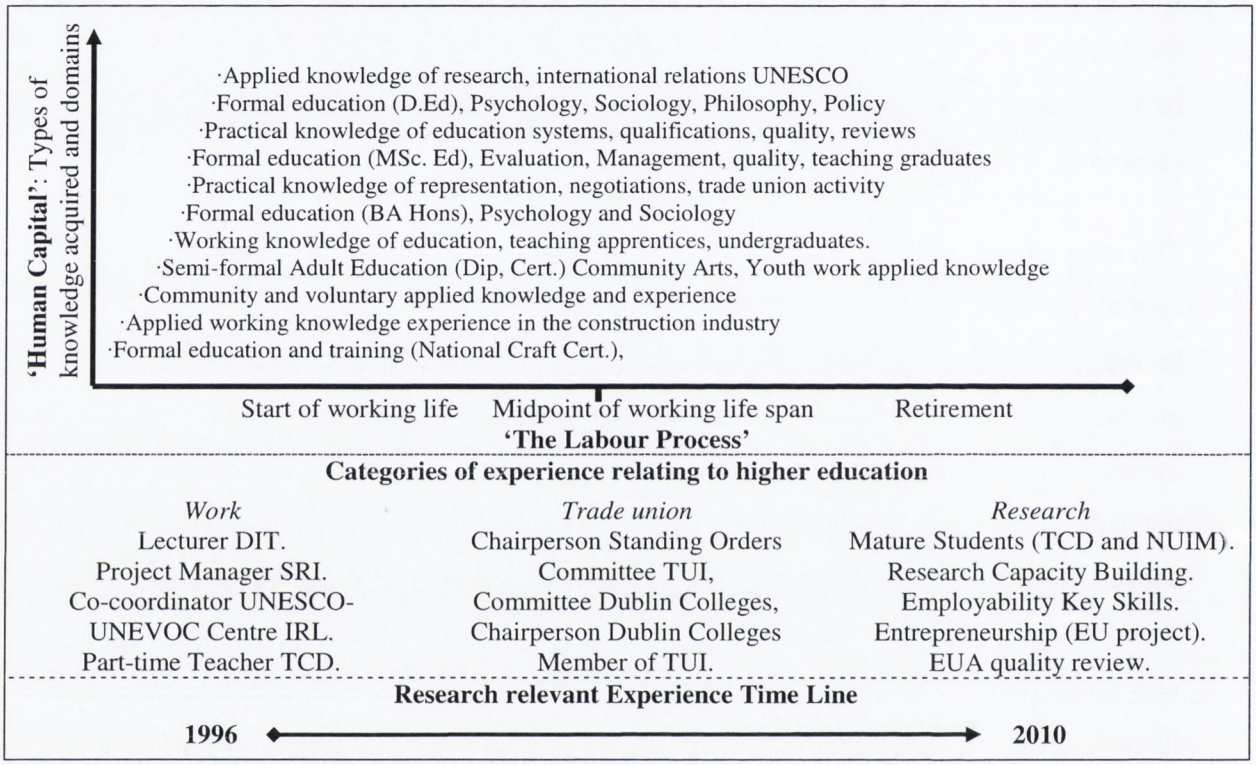
The return I gained from investment in formal education and training as human capital, has been a substantial gain in promotional opportunities, salary and job security, particularly in the education sector, where qualifications (their level and where they where obtained) have a significant value and currency during initial recruitment and selection[44]. However, the downside to this investment is the substantial loss in quality-time from my family and friends during the substantial time needed for study and the massive reduction in the amount of time I could contribute to social and voluntary activities, which, at some stages, was down to zero. In the labour process, I have engaged in a diverse range of formal, informal and voluntary work practices. Thus, I operated at different levels, from employee, manager, trade union representative and self employed having worked in the private, public and voluntary sectors. From this experience I would suggest that the labour process is not only about the power relationships between the employers and those employed, but is also a complex, multi-dimensional social field where psychological, social, political and cultural factors are at play. A snapshot chart is presented in Table 1, which illustrates the researcher's human capital accumulation with work and experience. The vertical axis represents human capital formal, informal and non-formal qualifications and knowledge domains. The horizontal axis represents the labour

[43] UESCO-UNEVOC is a specialised section of UNESCO, which has a lead role in the advancement of TVET. See the home page at, http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/snippet.php .

[44] While formal qualifications provide objective criteria for selection and gaining access to an interview, thereafter the interview panels judgements are based on subjective information, impressions and perception. A key player in an interview panel is the chairperson who can exercise considerable power in relation to who is on the panel and what questions are asked and influence the decisions of other members of the panel. In essence, an Irish context I have come across many examples of people being appointed to positions not on the basis of attainment, merit and what they know, but, rather, who they knew.

process in my working life from start of work (1984) to retirement (2032). Further, the diagram identifies three categories of work and experiences which are relevant to this thesis: my work in higher education as a lecturer, my voluntary activities in the TUI and my research experience. The knowledge and experience of working in higher education is located in a 14 year time span from 1996 to 2010.

Table 1, Charts the researcher's human capital, work and experience



This introductory chapter developed the context of the thesis and mapped out the structure and the intent of the research. The research questions were presented including some background information into the thinking behind the questions and the categories of inquiry, description, explanation and evaluation. It was noted that case study (Yin 1994) was the main methodology which was informed by evaluation and ethnography. The reader was presented with a 'research protocol', an autobiographical account of the experience, knowledge and competence of the researcher. The intention of this chapter was to disclose contextual information relating to the choice of research topic, the thinking process the researcher was emerged in, the evolving research approach and identify the researcher as a participant in the field of higher education.

Mapping out the thesis structure

Chapter 1: This chapter provided the reader with the context and emerging thought processes relating to concepts and the research process. The three main research aims were presented, combined with the sub-categories. The author engaged in critical ethnography and introduced the researcher,[45] providing some contextual background information. This chapter is more personalised than the other chapters. The researcher's opinion, beliefs and values are made visible. In places it could be considered a polemic.

Chapter 2: The second chapter focuses on the literature review. The process utilised is described and implemented. The process of engagement and re-engagement with relevant source materials begins in this chapter and continues throughout the research. The source materials include academic texts, journals, policy agencies' documents, open access repository electronic documents, 'grey literature' and other artefacts such as memos, leaflets, emails and letters that have relevance.

Chapter 3: This chapter outlines models of higher education in Europe and Ireland. Specific attention is drawn to 'mass higher education' and the related policy context. The concept of higher education as a workplace is introduced: this is combined with the presentation of a working definition of academic work. Finally, some key facts and figures are presented relating to the academic workforce and representative organisations.

Chapter 4: The fourth chapter locates the research strategy in the emerging abstract concepts, such as thinking tools that were applied during the research process. Consideration is given to the theoretical framework in the form of paradigms. Questions of epistemology and ontology are addressed. The methodological approach is presented: this is linked to the research strategy, research ethics, research design, methods and other practical considerations relating to research interviews and online surveys. Insights gained from experiencing the actual nature of this research are shared. These include some stories from the fieldwork which address questions such as: What happened?

[45] From this point onwards in this thesis the author will be identified as the 'researcher'. The rationale for this is to signify the movement of the author (as a practitioner) to that of an actor engaged in a systematic research process. The two exceptions to this case are the short autobiographical piece in chapter 1 and the chapter at the end of the thesis.

What worked? What needed to be repaired or discarded? Information is provided on the sampling criteria utilised for the research interviews and online survey and data gathering techniques.

Chapter 5: This chapter details the framework utilised to analyse the three thematic areas (teaching, research and career). This included information on data processing, clustering, data-sets, branches and three thematic areas (1) teaching, (2) research and (3) career. Key clusters and branch grouping of analysed data are identified in each thematic area. The analysed data are presented in both numeric and non-numeric formats: this is assisted by extensive use of both SPSS and NVivo software packages. This chapter also outlines the evaluative decisions made in relation to 'editing in and editing out' process that informed the construction of the thematic areas, evaluation matrices and the policy models presented in the final chapter (9).

Chapter 6: The sixth chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the interviews, survey and policy data relevant to thematic area 1 teaching (T1T). The analysed data are presented in both numeric and non-numeric formats: this is assisted by extensive use of both SPSS and NVivo software packages. Chapters 6, 7 and 8 deal with the analysis of the gathered data, this includes the interpretative process of both construction meaning(s) and understandings from the analysed data. This is where the theoretical and practical components of the research journey are fused together and refocused onto the analysis of data sets the research interviews, online survey and policy texts. This is done in order to extract 'real world' meanings. Some of the items analysed in this chapter include assessment, autonomy, ICT, learning outcomes, programmes, quality assurance and teaching practice.

Chapter 7: This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the interviews, survey and policy data relevant to thematic area 2 research (T2R). The analysed data are presented in both numeric and non-numeric formats: this is assisted by extensive use of both SPSS and NVivo software packages. This chapter analyses research topics such as capacity building, collaboration, funding, knowledge and quality.

Chapter 8: This chapter focuses on the presentation and analysis of the interviews, survey and policy data relevant to thematic area 3 career (T3C). The organisation and structure of the chapter is similar to the previous two chapters 6 and 7. The same software and analysis framework was used. The career related items that this chapter focuses on are academic freedom, management, new career, part-time performance, promotion, retirement and rotation.

Chapter 9: In this chapter the researcher's final considerations are outlined. This includes the presentation of three policy models and three evaluation matrixes. The chapter also serves as an opportunity to engage in critical self-reflection and questioning. What was learned from undertaking this research? What could be changed to improve the research strategy? What skills or knowledge does the researcher need to develop further?

Appendices: The appendices provide both supporting information which is directly related to the thesis and supplemental information indirectly linked to the research process. The appendices are divided into two sections labelled Appendix A, which is located at the end of the thesis and Appendix B, which is in the attached CD. The rationale for this was twofold, (1) to stay within the page number requirements for a TCD D.Ed thesis and (2) to provide the reader with a mechanism to view large documents and papers which are relevant to this thesis. Appendix A provides the reader with a hard copy of the research tools that were developed for this thesis while Appendix B provides proof of scholarship during the thesis period in the form of papers and conference presentations. In addition, it demonstrates the range of tests carried out on the data sets (large files containing SPSS descriptive and statistical tests and NVivo reports are included). This supplemental material is offered in order to establish the professional capacity and capabilities of the researcher and detail on-going dissemination of the research.

In addition, the author has undertaken to provide the reader with both supplemental material and sources of further information by utilising footnotes throughout the thesis.

Chapter 2: Establishing the review process

> Often individuals have a feeling, a hunch that this way or that way is the right way to proceed, without being able to articulate its evidential provenance. There is a playing around with bits and pieces of everyday evidence that in some way enables practitioners of one kind or another to discover – in the words often heard nowadays in relation to evidence-based practice – 'what works'.
> (Pring 2004, p2)

This chapter begins to contextualise the research area in general, by reviewing the literature on contemporary higher education policy specifically relating to Ireland the EU and other 'supranational agencies' (Ball 2008). First the review process is outlined, then seminal policy documents are explored and reference made to empirical work from the general higher education literature. Finally, some critical considerations are presented.

Explicating the literature review process

Literature reviews are an important component of contemporary academic writing and research. The practice of setting out the knowledge terrain of the research topic and then refining and evaluating, the content of this knowledge has become an integral part of thesis writing in the social sciences and other disciplinary domains. Rivenburgh (2009) in an article in *Inside Higher Ed*[46], stresses the importance of the Literature Review in academic writing stating:

> A literature review tells us what is known by sharing the results of prior studies related to your own. A literature review places your study within a larger body of work. It shows how your study seeks to fill a gap in, or extend, our knowledge in this area. A literature review offers a benchmark for assessing your own results. In the conclusion to your study you will revisit the literature review armed with your new findings.
> (Rivenburgh 2009)

[46] *Inside Higher Ed* is a free online higher education news resource, which was established in 2004. Recipients can subscribe to receive free daily news alerts, news items on higher education issues in relation to the USA, career opportunities and other forms of advertisements are also available on the website. To access *Inside Higher Ed* go to http://www.insidehighered.com/ .

The literature review stage allows the researcher to locate the primary idea or 'hunch' in a broader knowledge context. It provides sustenance for inquirers to conceptualise and formulate their own research topic within a framework of existing knowledge claims. The researcher makes sense of, and then assesses the relevance of these knowledge claims or what could be considered 'the bits and pieces' of evidence, Ryan and colleagues claim:

> The literature review is not a linear process. Rather, it is a backwards-and-forwards process between your reading and your writing. You read other people's work and you write your evaluation of it and discuss how it can help you develop your research question. It is written before, during and after the other parts of your thesis.
> (Ryan. et. el. 2006, p59)

This is an important proposition, particularly in the case of the literature review used in this research. The position adopted is that the literature review is a *process* applied throughout this thesis, rather than a stage or chapter as is common in some disciplines such as experimental psychology. Additionally, Creswell (2005, p79) develops a distinction between literature reviews for quantitative and qualitative studies, suggesting that in the case of quantitative research, the literature review is used at the start of the research to justify the study, set out the rationale and to confirm the results. As opposed to qualitative research, where the literature is used throughout to support or modify the interpretation of the data. In this thesis a more flexible approach was applied, based on a 'process approach' which enables flexibility and allows for a dynamic of continuous engagement between the literature and the research process in a kind of 'reflective practice' loop. In this thesis the literature review can be viewed as a process of gathering, interpreting and evaluating evidence from existing knowledge domains. The main criteria being that the evidence reviewed:

1) has relevance to the subject matter of this social inquiry and
2) that there is sufficient rigour inherent in the evidence for it to be considered credible.

Throughout the process, there is reflective interplay between the emergent data from the research and the evidence detailed in the literature. The literature review process, in essence, becomes part of the data-gathering and analysing process as the research progresses. Particularly in relation to existing policy documents and text artefacts which will be presented as both literature review material and data items for policy analysis. The initial literature review framework for this inquiry is presented in Table 2. This provides information on three primary items: 1) evidence, 2) process and 3) academic criteria. Descriptions are provided for each of the main items as well as detailed notes.

Table 2, Main characteristics of the literature review framework

Item	Description	Notes
Evidence	*External evidence:* Information from text, audio, visual media and interpersonal communications that can be substantiated and is traceable back to an identifiable source.	This relates to material in the outside or real-world, external to the researcher: Types of evidence includes: Primary sources: journals, text books, policy documents, letters, email, position papers, agreements, interview transcripts, minutes of meetings, survey data and conference papers. Secondary sources: websites, media sources, grey literature
	Internal evidence: Memory, cognition, experience, social knowledge and personal reflection.	This relates to the researcher's internal world and how meaning is interpreted and constructed from interaction with the external world such as, accounts of social engagements, observations, impressions and notes.
Process	*Set boundary by identifying key terms.* Establish evidence source locations. Scan evidence, assess relevance and categorise selected items. Critically evaluate selected evidence. Interpret the evidence and locate it in the research framework, constructing meaning and develop synergies as the process progresses.	This is an on-going process which commences at the start and continues right through the piece. As new items surface these will be evaluated, categorised and utilised to shape of the emergent work.
Academic criteria	*A true account of the evidence must be given.* Critique of the work of others must be substantiated and fair. An in-depth understanding of the evidence should be demonstrated. The use and application of evidence should be in accordance with doctoral level scholarship.	The research and scholarship of this piece must comply with contemporary academic conventions and specifically those set out in the TCD D.Ed Student Handbook. Where new items are proposed they must be labelled, explained and substantiated. The research and scholarship must take account of the best practice in contemporary academic ethics in social research.

Note: this table was constructed from a review of the works of Hart (2005), Creswell (2005), Thomas and Pring (2004) Ryan et al (2006) and Fisher (2006).

Making sense of policy a review framework

In general, policy can be considered to be a goal-directed plan to guide decisions and actions. In a political context there can be:

1) distributive policies, relating to state funding for health, education and welfare and
2) regulatory polices, used to control and mandate the actions of agencies and actors, such as car insurance and taxation.

A simple policy formation procedure could be depicted as a linear model comprising of agenda, formation, decisions, implementation and evaluation. This linear policy procedure, however, does not allow for social 'complexity' (Kincheloe and Berry 2004). In an Irish education policy context O'Buachalla (1988, p339) proposed a 'policy process model' which incorporated influencers of policy such as the 'churches' and 'union managers'. The state policy development process is influenced by the proximity of government ministers and the key stakeholders (churches, unions and employers). Draft policy strategies are sent to the Oireachtas for appraisal and amendment before the policy is put to a vote. Hall (1990, p8) explores the complexity of policy formation in the political discourse. He categorises three 'orders' of policy formation:

1) 'Incremental', this is gradual change.
2) 'Strategic', normal planning process.
3) 'Paradigm shift', radical change in direction.

Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) claim that policy formation and implementation is subject to 'context factors', such as influencers, text production and practice. Ball (1994) contributed a further two context factors, outcomes and political strategy. In a sociology of education context Ball (1994) moved the conceptualisation of policy from narrative to action, stating:

> Policy is text and action, words and deeds: it is what is enacted as well as what is intended. Polices are always incomplete insofar as they relate or map on the 'wild profusion' of local practice.
> (Ball 1994, p10)

This notion of policy as text[47] and action is developed further, by Middleton (2000), who considers the state's influence over policy development and implementation in the field of education, presenting three possible models:

1) 'State dirigisme', state control and influence over admissions, curriculum, standards, and modes of teaching.
2) 'State managerialism', marketisation, competition and students as customers.
3) 'Market as an instrument of state', language and discourse of control and 'steering from a distance'.

Ozga (2007) emphasises the political domain of policy with particular reference to education in Scotland and the new Educational Governance policy, suggesting that this is a neoliberal policy agenda characterised by, control, regulation, decentralisation and devolution[48]. Lucas (2006) makes a direct link between the neoliberal policy agenda and the process of globalisation, suggesting that, as the market approach becomes more influential at a global political level, this impact at local public sector level with the introduction of market-orientated policies. The primary rationale offered by policy makers for introducing a market ideology in the public sector is increased resource efficiency, enhanced effectiveness of organisation and the potential generation of wealth. This argument is supported by Deem (2004) who notes that market ideologies are now influencing how public sector organisations function. Nation states are reducing the funding they allocate to the public sector and encouraging the public sector to operate like the private sector and generate funds from the services they provide. In addition, King (2004) claims that new-right ideologies have replaced the welfare state with the regulatory state. In this approach, governments exercise power over the HE sector by enabling competition through funding strategies and by the introduction of sectoral evaluation systems. This dynamic encourages the public sector to adopt

[47] Ball (1994) describes policy as both 'text' and discourse', text refers to the agreed statements that were constructed through a process of 'ad hocary', while discourse denotes the power dimensions of policy formation.

[48] Peter (2004) claims that Blair progressed the neoliberal agenda in UK social policy. The four main characteristics are, 1) standards and accountability, 2) devolution of decisions, 3) flexibility of employment and 4) increased customer choice.

private sector management structures such as 'new public management' (NPM). The ideologies of the market as proclaimed by NPM begin to reshape the public sector, the organisation of public sector work becomes performative and the value of public sector work shift from public service to private practice focused on the individual. Becher and Trowler (2001, p11) note, NPM was adopted by the HE sector in the UK in the 1990s, three characteristic patterns emerged:

1) IHE developed 'cooperate strategies',
2) 'Strong central management' structures emerged and,
3) New 'institutional support units' where developed (quality assurance, teaching and learning, student support services).

Becher and Trowler (2001) claim that the adoption of NPM by IHE gradually led to a shift in the locus of power within institutions, power moved from the academic departments to the new administrators. Additionally, they note that as the 'marketisation' of the higher education sector advanced, there was another shift in power between IHE and students, as students became customers[49]. Bridges and Jonathon (2006, pp124-128) identified a link between the neoliberal policy agenda and the marketisation of education, they claim that there are five key 'ingredients' in this policy process:

1) the break up 'monopolies' to stimulate 'competition',
2) the introduction of customer 'choice',
3) the provision of 'information' to inform customer choice,
4) to 'free' providers from dependence on state funding and
5) to enable customers to secure 'options' of their choice.

In this neoliberal model the HE sector is viewed as a market place where competition was encouraged. Funding is redirected away from the IHE towards the student/customer. The state adopts a regulatory approach by setting standards, providing licenses and evaluating the performance of providers. While state policy is inherently political in nature Coffield et al

[49] Jomieson and Naidoo (2004) note that in the UK the introduction of the policy regarding students as consumers who are purchasing education products has contributed to the establishment of competition between universities and the general marketisation of higher education.

(2007, p737) offer a description of a 'Government model of public sector reform'. This model identifies four factors that contribute to the reform of public sector policy these are management, workforce, users and the market. Their proposition is that policy has an impact on practice, however practice does not impact on policy. It is worth noting that at European level, the EU Commission considers education and training funding policy as a catalyst to encourage change, stating that it 'provides political impetus and targeted funding in support of reform and modernisation' (EU Commission 2006, p11). In this approach funding is only allocated to institutions and agencies that comply with the Commission's reform and modernisation agenda. Dissenters unwilling to comply receive no funding. As such, funding is a powerful mechanism that can be used to control.

The policy review process is informed by Yanow's (2000) interpretive policy analysis and the process of subjective interpretativism and defamiliarisation, and Trowler's (1998) encoding and decoding of policy. In addition, Guba and Lincoln's (1986) categories of claims, concerns and issues, are utilised as a further analysis tool. The policy review tool is presented in Table 3. This tool is quite specific and can be utilised to guide the exploration of policy. This policy analysis tool calibrates with other tools developed for this thesis, particularly for the research interviews, online survey and code of ethics. This conceptual tool was applied by providing information on the reform process in a European Union context. Consideration was also focused on the strategies advocated by several supranational organisations. In the section following, the Irish reform context is explored and 'critical consideration'[50] given to 'claims, concerns and issues'. Throughout this review, signifiers relevant to human capital and the world of work were highlighted. As a professional practitioner in the field of tertiary education and training the researcher reflects on experience, providing commentary from an Irish context.

[50] Ball (1994) suggests there is a critical need to challenge policy and not allow oneself to be subjected to the doctrine of silence, where intelligent questions are not answered and the person posing the question is labelled as negative.

Table 3, Policy review conceptual framework

Making sense of policy Defamiliarisation, interpreting tertiary education modernisation.		
Establish Context:	EU Policy; Bologna process ; Lisbon agenda ; EQF ; Supranational organisations; WTO, OECD, UNESCO.	**Self reflection**: Lecturer, Manager, Researcher and Trade Union member.
Policy encoding process in Ireland	Irish Policy: 1992 RTC and DIT Acts, 1997 University Act, 1999 Qualifications Act, 2006 IoT Act, NDP 2007-2013, National Agreement Towards 2016,	
Categories		
Claims	Are favourable assertions made by stakeholders. This is a positive position where agreement can be reached and the negotiated process of inquiry can be finalised	
Concerns	Are unfavourable assertions made by stakeholders. This is a negative situation where negotiations are contested and there is strong disagreement expressed	
Issues	Are disagreements between stakeholders. In this position disagreement is acknowledged, and there is reasonable room for manoeuvring	
Signifiers: Academic work - human capital - world of work:		

Note: Influenced by Guba & Lincoln (1986), O'Buachalla (1988), Yanow (2000), Trowler (1998), and Mulcahy and O'Sullivan (1989).

Emerging policy

Over the last twenty years both developing and developed countries have prioritised policy development and investment strategies in tertiary[51] education and training[52], the principal objectives being to stimulate economic growth, maintain competitive advantage, facilitate high level skills employment while contributing to social cohesion and socio-cultural development. Influential 'supranational organisations' (Ball 2008) such as the World Bank (WB) the Organisation for Economic co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) have all produced reports proclaiming both the economic and social benefits that follow from national investment policy initiatives in education and training.

In the European context, the European Council, in March 2000, adopted the Lisbon strategy. A key component of this strategy was that further strategic investment in education and training by member states was necessary for Europe to become the most competitive economy and knowledge based society by 2010. The Irish government set forth its own

[51]The usage of tertiary education in this thesis specifically refers to 'Institutions of Higher Education' (IHE) which are listed in the 1971 Higher Education Act (amended in 2006) and the IoTs listed in the IoT Act 2006.

[52] This includes the Irish universities *Fourth level* strategy see http://www.iua.ie/iua-activities/Fourth-level-ireland/index.html .

investment in education and training policy in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2000-2007, the relevant chapter was entitled 'Employment and human resources programme' and the NDP 2007-2013, where the chapter heading was changed to 'Human capital'. In these documents there seems to be an assumption relating to investment in 'human capital' and the positive effect this has on economic growth, productivity, competitiveness and employability[53]. From these emerging policy agendas it would seem that tertiary education and training is being positioned as a primer[54] for economic development, perceived as a crucial 'intermediate zone'[55] between the world of learning and the world of work. Underpinning the political drive towards the 'knowledge economy' are an array of high level (EU and Irish) modernisation policy initiatives which seek to stimulate reform in higher education structures, systems, developing processes, procedures and standards that can enable cross national compatibility and comparisons.

The policy reform context

Policy initiatives have been developed in numerous areas such as access, quality, evaluation, assessment, funding, ranking, pedagogy, recognition and qualifications. Key characteristics of this emerging policy agenda are, new systems of accountability, managerialism, rationalisation, performance indicators, application of ICT, restructuring of systems, and learning and teaching practice. To gain an understanding of the policy reform context in Europe, three major European Union policy initiatives where explored, (1) Bologna (1999), (2) Lisbon (1999) and (3) European Qualifications Framework (2006).

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[53] For a more detailed account of 'employability' see Kenny, English and Kilmartin (2007) Key Skills Framework: Enhancing Employability in a Lifelong learning paradigm, free to download from DIT Arrow *http://arrow.dit.ie/dirreart/2/* .

[54] This is an adhesive agent that is applied to an object to make it ready for the application of other types of substances. In this case the meaning pertains to education been primed as the system that will support the labour force needs of the economy.

[55] In the context of this research, intermediate zone refers to the conceptual area of crossover between two or more social phenomena such as work and education in general. Or it can relate to specific crossover in social phenomena such as education and the crossover of boundaries between sectors such as the IoTs and the universities. Thus, an intermediate zone displays some common characteristics, function, objective or similarity between distinct social phenomena.

> A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competences to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space.
> (Bologna Declaration 1999, p1)

This declaration aims to achieve a European Higher Education Area (EHEA)[56] that can further, the intellectual, social, cultural, economic, scientific and technological base of Europe. The six principal measures which could facilitate the achievement of compatibility, comparability and integration of higher education systems in Europe, are summarised below:

- 'Easily readable and comparable degrees': including a diploma supplement, this will enhance employability and increase international competitiveness in higher education systems.
- 'Two main cycles'[57]: first cycle undergraduate (minimum of three years, programmes should have relevance to the European labour market) and second cycle graduate (Masters and doctorate levels).
- 'System of credits'[58]: development of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) to promote students mobility, credits can be acquired in the non-university sector.
- 'Promote mobility': reduce barriers that restrict the free movement of students, teachers, researchers and administrators.
- 'Promote European co-operation in quality assurance'[59]: develop comparable criteria and methodologies.
- 'Promote a European dimension in higher education': curriculum, integrated programmes and mobility.

The Bologna declaration is a significant policy framework for the integration of the European higher education sector. It has the potential to create a European higher education area, which could advance both the internal higher education market for students, academics and experts. To act as a major attracter for international human capital, challenging the

[56] During a discussion after a thesis presentation by the researcher in the School of Education 2009, Dr Murphy asserted that the Council of Europe first proposed the concept of a EHEA and the establishment of a European wide qualifications framework. The concept of a EHEA was turned into a policy reality by the EU Commission through the adoption of both the Bologna declaration and the subsequent EOF.

[57] The Bologna process has moved from a two cycle systems to a three cycle systems which includes, cycle 1 undergraduate, cycle 2 postgraduate, cycles 3 doctorate.

[58] An ECTS system is proposed for the VET sector under the European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET).

[59] For more details on quality assurance in higher education, see Kenny (2006) The quality movement discourse in the higher education sector: A general review, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=944768 and Kenny (2006) Quality, evaluation: Policy, theory and practice in the education sector http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=945321.

dominance of the United states and Australia particularly in the international student market[60]. The policy intent seems to lean towards convergence[61] of higher education systems in Europe, although the diversity of existing systems in tradition, culture, autonomy, capacity, capabilities, politics, reputations and standards may cause some obstacles and even resistance to its full implementation. Robertson (2009) makes a prudent note in relation to the narrative of the Bologna process, stating:

> The language used to describe the Bologna process, as a tool to connect education systems so as to ensure the diversity of national systems rather than harmonisation suggests how sensitive it is to charges of meddling in national affairs. Yet, in anyone's language, the realisation of a European higher education system is a dramatic change in the political and economic landscape of the region.
> (Robertson 2009, p71)

The primary objectives of the Bologna process should not be considered as national laws which require substantial prior consultation and political engagement before they can be changed. Rather, the Bologna process is much more flexible and mobile; it is an emerging policy framework, evolving over time. New amendments and interpretations are interwoven into this policy framework as both policy makers (national and EU) and elite groups (such as the EUA, OECD, UNESCO and others) seek to influence the intent and direction of the Bologna process. The Bologna process as a policy tool has gathered substantial momentum. Signatories to the declaration originally numbered 29 and now there are 45 including Russia. While the decision of nations states both to become signatories and implementers of the Bologna process is voluntary, due to the emerging critical mass of current signatories, non-signatory states might evaluate their position and sign up to Bologna from fear of exclusion.

It could be argued that for the Bologna process to work effectively in Europe, a variety of actors engaged in IHE such as academic workers, students, administrators, professional bodies and parents will have to

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[60] The OECD (2008, p 53) estimated in 2005 there were 2.73 million international students (students in higher education studying outside their country of citizenship) the destination of 75% of this cohort was OECD countries, Chinese students accounted for 40%.

[61] In a slightly different context Ball (1994) claims that there is evidence of convergence in the UK education policy context through, 1, control of the curriculum, 2, control by the market and 3, control by managers.

commit themselves to the objectives of a new form of hegemony. Academic workers will be the frontline staff involved with the implementation process. But by accepting the Bologna process, academic workers will need to reconsider their own pedagogical practices, both in programme development and teaching mechanisms. Programmes will need to conform to the Bologna structure in duration, quality assurance and ECTS. Programme developers will also have to make provisions for access and transfer of students from other EU countries. This includes the possibility of incorporating cultural sensitivity into programme content, as well as providing scope for language differences. Programmes will also have to conform to the quality assurance criteria evolving from the Bologna process: this could involve the restructuring or reform of quality processes and procedures already in place. The Bologna process also requires transparent and readable examination transcripts (mainly in the form of the Diploma Supplement). This could have two effects: Firstly the format of the Diploma Supplement may have an impact on how assessment and examination criteria are structured. Secondly, the provision of the additional details required to be incorporated in the Diploma Supplement may lead to a substantial increase in the academic administrative workload. The Bologna process can also be associated with elements of Ritzer's (2006) 'McDonaldisation' process, whereby, higher education is restructured to emphasise the following dimensions efficiency, calculability, predictability and control through nonhuman technology. It is worth noting that in many EU states academic autonomy is central to academic practice, programme development and teaching. However, there may be a risk that the Bologna process could become so formulistic in programme design criteria that academic autonomy may be restricted over time.

The Lisbon strategy

Another leading EU policy, which has a much closer focus on the education and training needs for the world of work and the new economy needs of Europe, is the Lisbon strategy, adopted in 2000. The main

premise of this policy is to make Europe the most competitive knowledge-based economy by 2010; the primary means to achieve this is a drive for increased investment in education and training. The measure for increased investment in education and training is set as a percentage of GDP, the average percentage for Europe in 2002 was 5.2% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Ireland's investment for the same year was 4.32%. The strategy sets five key benchmarks for national education and training systems in Europe to reach by 2010. These are presented below:

- Increase the number of mathematics, science and technology graduates (MST) to 748,000.
- Increase lifelong learning participation rates to 12.5%.
- Reduce early school leavers to 10%.
- Increase upper secondary level completions to 85%.
- Reduce low achievers in reading to 15.5%.

The Lisbon strategy also calls for reform in the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of education and training, specifically vocational education and training (VET). VET has traditionally been more associated with providing programmes that are closely aligned to the needs of the world of work. The European Commission Lisbon Update Report (2006) states:

> Enhancing the relevance of VET to the labour market and improving relations with employers and the social partners, is an important factor for most countries trying to tackle the issues of quality and attractiveness. Improvements in the structure of VET, access to apprenticeships and the reform of VET standards are crucial in this context.
> (European Commission 2006, p6)

It is worth noting, in comparison to the Bologna declaration which only focuses on high level knowledge and skills in the higher education sector, the Lisbon strategy provides a more equitable framework for the inclusion of marginalised sectors of society, early school leavers and those with literacy difficulties. Although, the focus of Lisbon may lean more towards the economic imperative, its scope could be considered broader in a social context in that it makes provisions in the form of 'benchmarks' for socially disadvantaged sectors of societies such as early school leavers. It can be argued that the Bologna declaration has been engineered to maintain the perception of the university as the monopoly producer of high status knowledge and culture excluding other providers of tertiary

education which could be loosely grouped under the headings of technical vocational education and training (TVET), adult education and, to some extent, Further, education. Dale (2009) critiques the scope of the Lisbon strategy stating:

> ...its immediate and broader implications are, of course, as has been widely recognised, extensive and very diverse, possibly to the point of mutual contradiction and, indeed, the problems generated by that diversity of goals and their possible implications for education have become the staple of studies of European Education Policy.
> (Dale 2009, p34)

The Lisbon strategy adopts a somewhat more pragmatic position in education and training sectoral boundaries. It seems to offer a seamless range of benchmarks from secondary, VET, adult education to higher education that are bound up in a lifelong learning. Principally, the Lisbon strategy is about encouraging EU member states to invest in human capital in order to gain an economic advantage in a globalised world. The strategy seeks to position Europe as a 'core' region in the developed world economies. This strategy is underpinned by what Dale (2009, p132) terms a 'master discourse of competitiveness'. The rationale behind the strategy is located in the economic imperative, based on the assumption that investment in national resources such as machinery, technology and infrastructure has measurable returns. Whereas, mass investment in human capital can stimulate unknown and unquantifiable returns in potential discoveries, innovations and entrepreneurial activities, these can contribute to economic growth.

The Lisbon strategy calls on members states to proportionally redistribute national wealth (as measured by GDP) towards specific priority areas in education and training. If this redistribution strategy occurs in accordance with the goals of the Lisbon strategy, the higher education sector could face serious challenges. Disciplines outside of the priority areas of mathematics, science and technology could face a reduced allocation of national funding, which would impact on the humanities, arts, social science and disciplines generally related to the 'caring' professions. A reduction in funding to these disciplines due to lack of prioritisation may

have an affect social cohesion in the long term. It can be argued that the Lisbon strategy adapted a utilitarian view of education prioritising investment in areas that have a function and utility in the economy and either excluding or 'de-prioritising' discipline areas that may not seem to have direct relevance to the economy. This is a somewhat myopic perception as creativity[62] the arts and humanities are more relevant than ever in the development of new thinking and ideas for sustainable development, entertainment[63] and leisure[64] and services to support the needs of ageing populations[65]. All of these areas can make a direct contribution towards the economic imperative while also supporting the 'social well being' (Putnam 1995) of societies.

European Qualifications Framework

A third major European Union policy initiative is the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for lifelong learning introduced in 2006. The European Commission (2006) states:

> The main purpose of the EQF is to act as a translation device and neutral reference point for comparing qualifications across different education and training systems and to strengthen co-operation and mutual trust between the relevant stakeholders. This will increase transparency, facilitate the transfer and use of qualifications across different education and training systems and levels.
> (EU Commission 2006, p2)

The Commission notes several reasons for the introduction of the EQF:

- It enables individuals to judge the value of their qualifications.
- It is a prerequisite for transfer and accumulation of qualifications.

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[62] See Florida and Tinagle's (2004) Europe in the Creative Age report which provides both analysis and case studies of the contribution creativity can make of economic output.

[63] In entertainment and the revenue that can be generated by creative people, U2 are now a worldwide phenomena with a portfolio worth hundreds of millions of euro, employing hundreds of people. U2 products generate more capital then most medium to middle size technology and science firms. For an interesting account of the U2's financial worth see the Independent online story Rock and Roll money trail, http://www.independent.ie/entertainment/music/u2-the-rock-n-roll-money-trail-1664663.html , accessed 3/6/09.

[64] The leisure industry includes areas like sports, tourism and hospitality. A Deloitte (2009, p4) report on the leisure industry claims that in 2007 there were over 900 million international tourists see , http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/cda/doc/content/UK_THL_THLExecReportSpring09.pdf. Further, Deloitte estimates that the tourism and leisure industry is worth €1 billion to the Irish economy, important sporting events like the Ryder Cup increased both the visibility and attractiveness of Ireland as a location for tourists, see http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/section_node/0,1042,sid%253D147367,00.html .

[65] Many countries in Europe will in the next twenty to thirty yeas have demographic profiles depicting aged populations. That is a large population cohort will be over 65 years of age. This is due both to increased life expectancy and reduced fertility rates. While this picture of ageing populations presents nation states with challenges in welfare provision. It also presents employment opportunities in services provision for those over 65 years of age in both leisure and health care. For more information on ageing populations see the Institute of Ageing, Oxford University http://www.ageing.ox.ac.uk/ .

- It improves employers' ability to judge the relevance of qualifications.
- It allows education and training providers to compare profiles and assists the development of compatible quality assurance systems.

The EQF is a meta-framework consisting of eight reference levels, ranging from compulsory education and training to doctorate studies. The EQF utilises a 'learning outcome' approach. Learning outcomes are based on combinations of knowledge, skills and competence. By adopting this approach the EQF endeavours to establish a 'common language' that has usability in the diverse education and training systems in Europe. The EQF acts as a translation device between different national awards systems, and claims to offer an assessable mechanism to judge the value of awards in Europe. Demand for this type of currency framework is emerging due to the increasing mobility of labour and the need for accessible mechanisms to inform the selection process for jobs.

The EQF is calibrated with the Bologna three cycle award system:

- Cycle 1 (undergraduate) is equivalent to EQF level 6.
- Cycle 2 (graduate) is placed at EQF level 7.
- Cycle 3 (postgraduate) is placed at EQF level 8.

In theory, the development of the EQF should assist the mobility of learners and workers in the EU, providing a cross-jurisdiction 'currency' mechanism to judge the general value of an award. However, this will depend on whether other member states have national qualifications frameworks in place that can communicate with the EQF. Although, the EU Commission has yet to prove whether employers and other stakeholders will recognise the meta-currency of the EQF, the EQF seeks to promote mutual trust between member states and relies on member states' co-operation to engage in the translation process. This raises some interesting questions: How will this process be monitored? Who will assure that quality is met and standards are compatible? Will utilising a common language of 'learning outcomes' have any effect on pedagogical practice in member states? The aforementioned European policy

initiatives are presented in their 'encoding process' phase (Trowler 1998, p49). This is the first stage of policy development. Throughout the 'transmission' and 'decoding process' these policies have expanded in both content and context over the last nine years. New streams and policy initiatives have emerged such as the drive for the European research area (2005) and lifelong learning (2006).

The European education and training reform agenda is both inward focused, endeavouring to create an integrated (European) knowledge economy/society, which is efficient, effective and quality assured, enabling mobility and meeting the needs of the new world of work. It is also outward looking, seeking to benchmark by matching the achievements of other global players such as the USA and Japan and endeavouring to create an attractive and sophisticated climate for international students and world class experts. It also aims to promote European educational and training provision on the global stage as a high value, quality service. This is a powerful, multifaceted education and training reform policy agenda emanating from the EU. Early adopters in Europe are at advanced stages in either reforming or restructuring their systems, while other key global education and training providers such as USA, Australia and China are monitoring developments and/or developing similar strategies in order to maintain their dominant position (see Robertson 2009, pp71-73 for more information on the international reaction to the European Higher Education Area). Finally, it is important to restate that the successful implementation of the European education policy agenda is premised on gaining the active support of the European academic workforce. The opinions of members of the Irish academic workforce in relation to European policy agendas will be explored in both the numeric and non-numeric research detailed in other chapters in this thesis.

Supranational organisations

The changes occurring in the European education policy environment are influenced by other factors relating to globalisation.[66] Brown and Lauder (2005, pp48-50) claim that globalisation has a significant impact on national educations systems through three 'rule changes', these are:

1) 'Eligibility', a shift from closed economies to open economies.
2) 'Engagement', a break from national roots by MNCs and a new tendency to invest on a global basis.
3) 'Wealth creation', a shift from fordist mass production to post- fordist flexible production as capital becomes reliant on knowledge (human capital) rather than on material resources.

Robins (2007, p345) supports this proposition claiming that MNC now perceive transnational markets on a global scale as a 'single entity' or market place. In this global single market MNC seek legal and regulatory assurances that enable them, to invest securely and promote their products, services and 'brands' in a 'borderless' world economy. Ball (2008, p26) claims that key drivers of 'economic globalisation' are the ICT revolution and deregulation of markets. The principal characteristics that enable this process are; reduction in trade tariffs, floating of currencies, foreign direct investment, standardised business procedures and deregulation of product and service markets. For this 'single market' approach to succeed it is necessary to gain support from nation states in establishing secure agreements relating to access to markets, security of investment and an adequate legal framework to protect investors. Supranational organisations act as key brokers in this process, they engage at both national and translational negotiations. However, it should be noted that supranational organisations are not facilitators or mediators of negotiations. Rather, they set agendas and advocate for particular policy positions. Indeed, some authors (Ball 2008, Castells 1994) suggest that nation states are losing their political autonomy in international policy making and that the supranational organisations are the emergent force in

[66] King (2004, p48) claims that globalisation is the 'exchanges that transcend borders and which occur instantaneously and electronically and is new', suggesting that globalisation can impact on three levels: economic, political and cultural.

international policy formation and implementation. In the rest of this section the diverse policy position of three supranational organisations is explored:

- The World Trade Organisation
- The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- The United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organisation

The World Trade Organisation

Since the 1990s the WTO has consistently argued for the liberalisation of education. Murphy (2008, p162) states, 'It is hugely significant, philosophically, politically and pedagogically, that education in general, and higher education in particular was defined as a 'service' in the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) as a WTO directive in 1995'. According to Verger and Robertson (2008) GATS makes provision for the market liberalisation of twelve service sectors in total. Educational services are included, separated into five areas: primary education, secondary education, higher education, adult education and other education services. GATS outlines four modes of commercialisation of the services sectors:

- 'Cross broader supply' (the provision of services between countries either though electronic means or the postal/delivery services).
- 'Consumption aboard' (the movement of consumers of one country to another in order to avail of services being offered).
- 'Commercial presence' (a service provider establishes a presence in another country in order to supply a service).
- 'Presence of natural person' (the temporary movement and location of a person in another country in order to deliver a service).

Note, researcher's summary between brackets

GATS also makes reference to domestic regulations in signatory states in relation to education providers, citing three principal areas were barriers need to be addressed, with transparent and equitable procedures put in place. These areas are qualifications, technical standards and licensing requirements. While member states are expected to enter into discussions on GATS they are not obliged to make a liberalisation commitment. In making a liberalisation commitment a state enters into a binding regulatory agreement, which has two primary regulations; national

treatment (not to be less favourable to foreign agencies) and market access (the elimination of barriers that are inherent in national systems).

Hyslop-Margison and Sears (2006, p11) in their critique of neoliberalism, free market practices and policies in higher education state, 'The WTO now routinely dictates to governments on the 'legality' of their domestic policies with regards to their potential interference with unfettered global market practices'. In the discourse of the so called 'free' market, the tertiary education and training sector is viewed as both producer of knowledge/skills and custodian of award systems which are bounded in the socio-political regulatory traditions of nation states and regions. States and education and training systems are also perceived as potential 'free'[67] market zones, which have been underexploited due to the lack of communication 'toolkits' that can mediate between systems, plus other items such as: regulatory barriers, diversity of systems, no compatibility, no transferability, no standardisation.

While tertiary education and training is a resource-hungry and investment-needy sector, it is also an economic growth area, employing hundreds of thousands of teachers, trainers, lecturers, researchers, administrators, support and technical staff (EU Commission 2006). Making provision for the education and training needs of hundreds of millions of people, this has the potential to generate vast sums of revenue. Lynch (2006), in referring to reports by UNESCO and investment bankers Merrill Lynch estimates the global value of the education sector to be more then two trillion dollars. Market penetration of education systems however is difficult because these systems are complex; differentiation is inherent, bound in the regulatory policy and socio-cultural traditions of nation states and sectoral developments. For optimal 'free' market mechanisms to operate at national, regional and international levels, a common understanding or currency framework needs to be developed by policy makers. Offers (2008) notes that publicly-funded higher education

[67] The usage of the word 'free' in relation to markets is somewhat misleading as markets are not free to find their own equilibrium or set their own competitive cycles. Rather, markets are regulated environments that promote the interests of power elites.

institutions are entering the commercial education market due to the need to raise additional funds. Those institutions engaged in this activity do so either through specialised faculty units, whose sole role is commercialisation, or by adopting an institutional approach, 'embedding commercialisation', throughout the whole institute. She notes that engaging in this type of education commercialisation has implications for pedagogical practice, quality and access. Education International takes a more oppositional approach, critiquing (WTO and GATS) commercialisation of education services as a neoliberal model which undermines the social good of education and reduces the democratic right to participate in education. Education International (2009) states:

> Education International (EI) has been concerned at the growing threat to education – in particular, higher education – of global, regional and bilateral agreements aimed at the creation of a profit-led education marketplace. EI believes this will not only create a range of challenges for employees and students, but it will undermine the quality of education and research and subvert their role and purpose in a way which has implications for civil society globally. This is not a parochial or sectoral issue.
> (Education International 2009)[68]

GATS seeks to provide a legal framework for service provision, free from barriers and regulations that restrict the flow of markets and commercial practice. GATS advocates suggest that this type of 'free' market model benefits all parties[69] by introducing competition into the services sector and opening up opportunities for providers to engage in service provision in different countries. However, there is an issue here in relation to for-profit educational companies[70] from advanced developed countries, colonising developing countries' higher education through the provision of electronic and distance education programmes. It can be argued that this type of transnational market penetration can adversely impact on the capacity building measures that some developing countries are pursuing. The reputation and costs of the external educational company may attract

[68]Education International website, http://www.ei-ie.org/en/article/show.php?id=36andtheme=gats 1/6/09.
[69] For a critique of the WTO's GATS initiative see Ahn (2004) for a qualitative accounts of how the poor in the USA were 'shafted' by the free trade agreements.
[70] Two examples of for-profit education companies that operate on a global basis are 1) Phoenix University caters for over 300,000 students and operates mainly the US, Mexico, Canada and Europe, (http://www.phoenix.edu/) 2) Kaplan which offers programmes in both second level and higher education caters for 1 million students annually, operates in 30 countries, has higher education campuses in the US, Singapore, Hong Kong, Dublin, Australia and China. (http://www.kaplan.com/Pages/default.aspx)

students thereby reducing the number of students entering the national higher education system in developing countries. Additionally, the cultural, social and political values of the external education company may not be appropriate to the social good and cultural norms of the developing country. After all, the main motive to engage in commercial activities is to accumulate profit, this profit motive may not resonate with aims such as development, equality of access, cultural diversity, social well-being and national capacity building initiatives. Ball (2008) takes a strong cautionary note in relation to market forms consuming education:

> The new policy paradigm and the market form in particular, constitute a new moral environment for both the consumer and producers, that is, a form of commercial civilisation. In this new moral environment schools, colleges and universities are being inducted into a culture of self interest.
> (Ball 2008, p45)

From this perspective it is the self interest of the provider of the service that takes prominence over the social, economic or cultural interest of the consumers. Education becomes just another commodity in the 'free' market environment, the intrinsic social value of education as a social good is replaced by a more selfish, economic imperative.

The OECD

The OECD, similarly, has provided policy makers with numerous reports calling for reform and modernisation of the tertiary sector. Investment in education and training is perceived as crucial to economic development in the new global economy. As reliance on natural resources, agriculture and manufacturing declines, services and technologies begin to play a dominant role in economic growth. The Secretary General of the OECD stated:

> Knowledge, skills and competences constitute a vital asset in supporting economic growth and reducing social inequality in OECD countries. This asset, which is often referred to as human capital, has been identified as one key factor in combating high and persistent unemployment and the problems of low pay and poverty. As we move into "knowledge-based" economies the importance of human capital becomes even more significant than ever.
> (Johnston 1998, p3)

The OECD (2008) argues that increased investment in education and training throughout the lifespan (lifelong learning), is a necessity to stimulate economic growth this is due to several factors, some of which are:

- Globalisation: internationalisation of national economies reduction in trade restrictions advances in technology and cheaper accessible transport.
- Multi-nationals operating on an international stage with mobility of capital.
- Change in demographics: ageing populations, lower birth rates, people living longer and population mobility.
- ICT: digital revolution significant increase in ICT take up, increase in broadband and internet connectivity and increase in web-based activities.
- World of work: working fewer hours, more temporary work, insecure employment, shorter careers and increased female participation.

The OECD (2006, p34) notes that investment in education and training can make a positive contribution towards economic development, 'if the average time spent in education by a population rises by one year, the economic output per head of population should grow by between 4% to 6% in the long run'. The return to the individual is also substantial; graduates are more likely to have above average earnings compared to those that only hold secondary school qualifications or lower (early school leavers). OECD (1998, p65) states, '...there is a strong identifiable relationship between human capital growth, and the growth not just in output but also in labour productivity'. Consequently, the higher the level of human capital, the greater the potential productivity gains made in the labour market which in turn contributes towards economic growth. Although Fleming (2008, p11) is critical of this economic approach utilised in education policy making, noting that a state may perceive education, '... as a way of supporting the economy...an education policy based solely on the needs of the market is deeply flawed'. In contrast the OECD advocates for the 'free' market model, and supports, the liberalisation of education services and the reduction in national barriers that prevent market activities. While the OECD proposes that state investment in education and training has the potential to contribute toward economic growth. It is not however, adopting the position that this

investment should be channelled into the public (funded) education sector solely, but, rather, the private sector should also have access to this investment. Free market policies should apply, funding should be allocated on a competitive basis, private (for-profit) providers should have opportunities to access this funding. Spring (1998) raises several interesting questions relating to the motives of the OECD:

> The varying uses of the market doctrine raise the larger question: Why are OECD policymakers advocating the use of market principles for business relationships but not for labour relationships? Why are government social controls imposed on labour? Why not advocate government polices that would create jobs by reducing the hours of employment? Why not create government controls over the introduction of technologies that might increase unemployment? Why doesn't the OECD propose methods to tax global capital so that the welfare state can be maintained? One possible answer to these questions is that the OECD only applies market theories when they will enrich global capitalists. OECD supports government polices of lifelong learning and accreditation schemes because they are tools for managing the labour market in the interests of the business community.
> (Spring 1998, p176)

Spring's questions raise the issue of political ideology both in national government policy and OECD reports that influence policy. While it is generally accepted that governments have distinct political and ideological positions, the OECD, on the other hand, as an international research organisation, projects a non-aligned stance. This could be due to the fact that the neutrality of the research could be brought into question. It could be argued that the OECD changes ideological position to mirror the ideology of the power elite in the country that commissions the research[71]. In the current knowledge-driven globalised environment there is increased competition between nation states to attract high level human capital, leading to both 'brain drain' and 'brain gain'[72] (OECD 2002). Human capital is perceived as a valuable resource, subject to the competitive practices of the market. This can have adverse effects on developing countries that lose the potential benefits that might arise from the human

[71] It could be argue that this is similar to the way financial rating agencies (which are private, for-profit companies) manipulate financial data in order to facilitate the interests of their large clients, in the financial markets. The Irish media have uncovered evidence of this type of behaviour is emerging due to the investigations into the reasons for the international financial crisis.

[72] The OECD Observer (2003) discussed this topic of brain gain and brain drain in the global economy, http://www.oecdobserver.org/news/fullstory.php/aid/673/The_brain_drain:_Old_myths,_new_realities.html

capital of some of their brightest citizens. This is one of the risks of investment in human capital that developing countries face. Humans are not like other forms of tangible capital (money, resources, land, buildings, equipment etc.). Human capital is intrinsically located in the person, who can decide how and where to apply knowledge skills and competence.

UNESCO

UNESCO is a specialist section of the United Nations (UN) responsible for promoting education and training initiatives in the member states of the UN. Its remit ranges across the whole spectrum of education; compulsory, post compulsory, TVET, HE and research. UNESCO's work is principally informed by the UN Declaration on Human Rights and the Millennium Development Goals. An area of considerable concern for UNESCO, is access to education as evident in the Education for All[73] campaign. With particular relevance to this chapter is equitable access to HE. UNESCO has serious concerns relating to the unequal and inequitable opportunities to access HE that persist in some developing countries. UNESCO (2004) position paper on HE states:

> It is clear that new opportunities and new challenges face higher education in its role as actor and reactor to a more globalised society. In response to these developments and trends, international and supranational frameworks are being reviewed or developed by different intergovernmental bodies. It has been acknowledged however, that UNESCO, as the specialised agency of the United Nations with the competence for education, has critically important role to play. UNESCO has the responsibility to help develop appropriate frameworks for higher education based on the principles of the United Nations and, in partnership with Member states, serve to build capacity and facilitate the implementation of these policy and regulatory frameworks at the national and international level.
> (UNESCO 2004, p 28)

Central to UNESCO's strategy for HE is 'capacity building' in appropriate policies and regulatory frameworks that can support the advancement of HE in developing countries. UNESCO (2004, p8) claims that the process of globalisation is having a major impact on the HE

[73] The Education for All campaign was adopted at the 1990 UNESCO international conference see,http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-RL_ID=50558andURL_DO=DO_TOPICandURL_SECTION=201.html

sector. Key elements in this context that have relevance to emerging HE policy initiatives of UN member states are:

- The growing importance of a knowledge society/economy.
- Deregulation of trade barriers in education services.
- The immense growth in ICT.
- A growing emphasis on the role of the market in education.

UNESCO report on *'HE Trends in Europe'* (2004) highlights several main areas of change; 'democratisation of access' (including the expansion of enrolments in HE, diversity of students profile and lifelong learning), quality of HE (mechanisms to assure quality, accreditations, standards and qualifications), internal functioning and the external environment (the funding, accountability and management of institutions and relevance of programmes to the world of work). UNESCO notes that the key emerging issues are employability, entrepreneurship, technology transfer and transnational education (TNE)[74]. The relevance of HE to the world of work is strongly questioned, particularly in the context of globalisation and the drive for the knowledge society and knowledge economy. UNESCO (2004) concludes:

> What is urgently needed is further reflection on the substantive aspects of academic globalization, on such issues as a global framework for academic qualifications and their recognition, for students, for staff members and for study programme mobility, as well as for the rules of market operations or for the provision of higher education as a public good. (UNESCO 2004, p27)

In the tertiary education sector UNESCO has a specialised subsection which deals exclusively with TVET called UNESCO-UNEVOC. UNESCO-UNEVOC promotes access, quality systems, information sharing and networking in the domain of TVET, ranging from VET to HE activities. The director of UNESCO-UNEVOC Dr Rupert MacLean (2008) claimed that over 80% of jobs worldwide require some form of TVET qualification, further, suggesting that TVET providers offer a variety of skill levels catering for the needs of the different labour markets in the developed world. He notes that the key challenges for the TVET area in developing countries are; access to quality TVET, promoting

[74] King (2004) notes that globalisation and the new emerging regulatory framework will create the opportunity for the establishment of a transnational university (TNU) similar to a transnational corporation (TNC).

decent work, TVET in the formal, non-formal and informal sectors, vocationalisation of secondary schools, VET in HE, global networking, teacher and training, value of education in work, sustainable development and realising the potential of ICT. UNESCO-UNEVOC carries out work at a European level. Bunning (2006) notes that leading on from the Bologna declaration's call for European wide degrees a Multi-National Master Degree programme in VET has been developed by Otto-von-Guericke University (Germany) and Anglia Polytechnic University (UK). Bunning also notes that the Lisbon strategy is facing some critical issues in relation to TVET such as:

- Missing mobility: barriers are still in place which inhibit mobility.
- Shortage of qualified teaching and training staff: by 2015 over 1 million teachers will have to be recruited.
- Reluctant participation in LLL: no clear funding strategy for LLL and there needs to be a visible promotion strategy in place for LLL.

EU policy, some considerations

In a European higher education policy context there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the European Commission, through incremental policy initiatives, is endeavouring to construct a 'single' European education market. The move towards this single European education market is supported by a complex modernisation policy framework, which encapsulates education and training from primary level to higher education. In higher education, the modernisation policy framework has succeeded in restructuring higher education programmes (three cycles), the introduction of a common award currency (EQF), the roll out of a compatible quality assurance regime and the unitisation of learning (ECTS). This modernisation project has reduced education barriers that existed between member states, increased systems compatibility and enhanced the potential for both student and teacher mobility in the EU. The European modernisation framework is achieving, in Europe, some of the market liberalisation items advocated by the WTO. As such, these European policy initiatives create an 'open' market where competition can

take root. The policy framework enables private,[75] for-profit providers to compete on an equal basis with publicly-funded providers by providing 'eligibility' measures that give recognition to awards made by both private and public providers.

This market space has captured the interest of some emerging new education MNC or what Becher and Trowler (2001) call 'mega-universities', for example, Phoenix University and Kaplan[76] who have already strategically positioning offices in Europe in readiness to exploit this education market. Some supranational organisations such as the OECD and the WTO perceive this type of competitive market environment as a rational, effective and efficient way to provide education. It is suggested that this type of competitive environment pressurises so-called inefficient public sector providers to become more market focused, offering programmes that are demand-led and eventually become more efficient. Finally, considering the EU tertiary education and training policy agenda (Bologna declaration, Lisbon strategy and EQF) and the liberalisation agenda proposed by GATS which receives support from the OECD, there are several questions that need to be considered such as: What does this reform and restructuring of higher education mean in an Irish context? Is this new policy agenda being considered by Irish policy makers? Is this policy being implemented? And how is this policy agenda impacting on academic workers in Ireland? These are some of the questions we now move to explore.

Irish government legislation and policy framework

This section deals with a range of both Irish government acts and policy initiatives which endeavoured to reform and restructure higher education. The contemporary reform of tertiary education in Ireland began in the

[75] Edwards (2004) notes that in the US 20% of HE student enrolments are to private colleges (such as Harvard, Stanford, Yale, Princeton etc.) and that there is a substantial increase in enrolment to private for-profit providers such as Phoenix.

[76] Dublin Business School (DBS) is owned by Kaplan. In DBS students are regarded as customers. As the CEO of DBS Gerry Muldowney stated 'In a globalised world, education has become a commodity where the students chooses where they learn. Most third-level institutions will have to look at the students more and more as a customer' (Holden J. (2006) Lecturing in an independent way, article in the Irish Times, 2006, p7).

1990s with the government passing several acts.[77] These acts created two separate higher education sectors the IoTs and the universities. They also restructured the awards system that both sectors utilised. The sample acts and policy initiatives that this section explores are presented in Table 4.

Table 4, Government of Ireland acts and polices

Government acts (legislation)
• The DIT Act 1992 (RTC Act 1992).
• The University Act 1997.
• The Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999.
• The IoT Act 2006.
Government policies (strategy)
• The White Paper on Lifelong learning (2000).
• The National Development Plans (2007-2013).
• The Social Partnership National Agreement Towards 2016.

Note: Acts are based in law and provide legal instruction, whereas policy can be informed by acts, it differs from acts, in that policy is more of a strategic narrative which demonstrates intent and direction.

DIT Act 1992

The DIT Act 1992 began the process of positioning DIT[78] in an intermediate zone between the university sector and the IoT sector. It made DIT a special case, moving it away from the IoT sector and locating DIT nearer to the university sector. DIT was and still is, by far the largest institute of technology in Ireland, having the most diverse range of programmes and an emerging research base. The DIT Act 1992 consists of 24 sections, providing details on such items as; the legal establishment of DIT as an autonomous[79] higher education institute, the structure, staffing and management of the institute, the functions, the financial and reporting requirements and regulations. In this chapter the main focus will be on Section 5 the Functions of the Institute. The act states:

> The principal function of the Institute shall, be to provide vocational and technical education and training[80] for the

[77] 'Acts' in an Irish context are artefacts of state proposed and adopted by the Oireachtas, Statutory Instruments and Legislation they set out the legal statute and framework.

[78] For more information on the evolution of the DIT from its foundation in 1887 to developments right up to 2004 see Duff et al (2004).

[79] The 1998 amendments to the DIT Act provided for full degree awarding power to the DIT, graduate and postgraduate. DIT gained the same autonomous degree awarding powers as the universities. The evaluation of degree awarding powers of the DIT came under the remit of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) as detailed in the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999. DIT now operates with the same status as the Irish universities. However, the Irish government has not, as yet, designated DIT as a university. In addition, in 2005 the DIT began to consider professorship applications and started to award DIT professorships.

[80] The principal function of DIT (under the DIT Act 1992) is located in TVET. It is worth noting that in 2007 DIT linked into the United Nations and became the UNESCO-UNEVOC National Centre for Ireland. The remit

> economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social and cultural development of the state. (DIT Act 1992)

This was a very specific function which emerged from DIT's historical involvement with vocational education and training. It positioned DIT close to the world of work. The act required DIT to provide courses of study for students, making awards at certificate and diploma level. Degree level awards were arranged in partnership with a university, Trinity College Dublin, during the 1990s. The DIT could also engage in research and consultancy and establish limited companies to exploit the potential outcomes from research and consultancy. The Institute, where it saw fit, could develop joint programmes with partners either inside or outside of the state. The institute had independence to manage its own affairs, administering its functions and financial management. There were some restrictions, for example, the Institute needs to gain approval from the Minister of Education before acquiring or selling property.

Universities Act 1997

The University Act 1997 provided a new legal framework for the university sector in Ireland. The Act covers areas such, as objects, structure, governance, staff, academic council, statutes, evaluation, financing and amendments to previous Irish government Acts. The main objects and functions of the act are set out in Chapter 1; section 12 sets out twelve objects, section 13 details eight functions and section 14 deals with academic freedom. The objects include: (a) advance knowledge through teaching, scholarly research and scientific investigation, (b) promote learning, (c) promote the cultural and social life of society, (d) foster independent critical thinking amongst its students, (e) to promote the official language of the state, (f) contribute to the realisation of national economic and social development, (g) educate, train and retrain higher level professional, technical and managerial personnel, (h) promote the highest standards in and quality of, teaching and research, (i) disseminate the outcomes of its research (j) facilitate lifelong learning and

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of this centre is to promote TVET. For more information see Kenny (2008) UNESCO-UNEVOC National Centre for Ireland: A case study, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1294649 .

(k) promote gender balance and equality of opportunities. Academic freedom is assured throughout the act academic staff can challenge perceived knowledge and make claims that may be controversial and unpopular. In addition, academic freedom is underpinned by tenure. The act caters for both national and international collaborations[81] with IHEs, students, companies and organisations. The act caters for the autonomy of financial, management and strategic activities of the university. The university has full degree awarding powers and can work in partnership with other IHEs or accredit programmes delivered elsewhere.

IoT Act 2006

The IoT Act 2006 established a legal framework which reformed the institutes of technology sector by amending the Regional Technical Colleges (RTC) Act 1992 and the DIT Act 1992. The act brought all the institutes of technology closer to the university sector by developing an environment and opportunities for semi-autonomous activities. Under Section 52 the IoTs and DIT came under the remit of the HEA instead of the DoES. The act extended the scope of the executive function of senior management and makes provision for more independent financial management. The function of the IoTs is still strongly aligned to Section 5 of the RTC Act 1992 (with some amendments) which states:

> The principal function of a college shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, be to provide vocational and technical education and training for the economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social and cultural development of the state with particular reference to the region served by the college and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, a college shall have the following functions.
> (RTC Act 1992)

Section 7 of the IoT Act 2006 introduced provision for the 'principle of academic freedom' to be afforded to the IoT sector and the DIT. The act makes provision for the establishment of companies to exploit the outcomes from research and consultancy. The act does not give degree

[81] Bjarnason (2004, pp154-160) provides several examples of collaboration between IHE which function at both international and global levels such as 'Univeritas 21' (U21) comprising 15 universities from Europe, America, Asia and Australia. 'NextEd' based in Hong Kong and Sydney 'NIIT' based in India and 'Fathom' which emerged from Columbia University and has 12 partners based in both the US and UK.

awarding powers to the IoTs, instead the individual IoTs must apply for delegated degree awarding provision from HETAC. The IoTs are still required under the act to seek ministerial approval for certain activities such as the disposal of property and other financial matters.

Qualifications (Education and training) Act 1999

The Qualifications (Education and training) Act 1999 impacts on all the aforementioned acts. It is a reform framework for the whole education sector. The act makes provision for the establishment[82] of the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI), the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) and the Further, Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC). The act empowers the NQAI to establish and maintain a National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ), based on standards, knowledge, skill or competence acquired by learners (students). The act directs the NQAI to establish both HETAC and FETAC, to maintain and improve standards in both further, and higher education and training. The act specifically states that these bodies should promote and facilitate 'access, transfer and progression'. The act states the NQAI should develop policies, procedures and criteria for the implementation of an NFQ. In doing this the NQAI should consult with the minister, the two awards councils, the universities and the DIT and liaise with both European and international bodies. The NQAI should develop a mechanism to review the implementation of the NFQ. In performance of its remit the NQAI should become informed of the education and training requirements of industry, business, agriculture, services, professions, trade and tourism. The NQAI should endeavour to have national awards recognised internationally and develop processes to give recognition to awards from outside the state. The act makes provision for education and training providers (public or private) to apply for their programmes to be recognised and receive accreditation from either

[82] While the 1999 Act established the NQAI, HETAC and FETAC, currently there is a major review of these bodies which could lead to an merger. Indeed the McCarthy Report (2009) recommended rationalisation of these bodies by merging them into one organisation.

HETAC or FETAC. The universities and DIT are recognised under the act as awarding bodies in their own right.

White Paper Adult Education (policy)

In 2000 the Irish government published its first White Paper on Lifelong learning entitled, *Learning for Life: A White Paper on Adult Education* (2000). The White Paper advocates a policy agenda for a systematic approach to lifelong learning, equality of access for learners to programmes and interculturalism serving diverse populations of learners. The White Paper (2000) sets out:

- to allocate priority resources to addressing adult literacy needs,
- to increase systematically opportunities for adult learners in the system, prioritising the needs of those with less than upper secondary education.
- to develop supporting services such as adult guidance and counselling and childcare,
- to enhance the responsiveness, relevance and flexibility of education and training provision to meet the needs of young people and adults alike, optimising participation of and benefit to, those at risk and
- to promote and develop a co-ordinated integrated role for adult education and training as a vital component in an over-arching framework for lifelong learning.

(White Paper 2000, p22)

The White Paper makes recommendations for both formal and informal learning, including the workplace, community, further, education and higher education. In higher education the paper makes proposals aimed at widening participation, access for mature students, support services for these students, funding strategy, distance education and mechanisms to monitor the implementation of this policy initiative. The White Paper views investment in lifelong learning as an important approach which can add to active citizenship, social cohesion, competitiveness and cultural developments and act as a vehicle for community building.

Towards 2016 (policy)

The Social Partnership Agreement *Towards 2016* developed a wide policy agenda which focused on both the economic and social dimensions of

Irish society. The then Taoiseach Bertie Adhern stated in the Foreword section (2006):

> Social Partnership has helped to maintain a strategic focus on key national priorities and has created and sustained the conditions for remarkable employment growth, fiscal stability, restructuring of the economy to respond to new challenges and opportunities, a dramatic improvement in living standards, through both lower taxation and lower inflation and a culture of dialogue, which has served the social partners, but more importantly, the people of this country, very well.
> (Adhern 2006, p2)

The partners of *Towards 2016* give detailed commitments (short-term and long-term) under two thematic areas: Marco-economic, infrastructure, environment and social policy, pay, the workplace and employment rights compliance. Education and training are dealt with in Part I Section 17. Commitments include:

- to reduce the number of disadvantaged children who have numeracy/literacy problems;
- to enhance early school provision, to strengthen the technical vocational curriculum;
- to improve access to education and training, enhance lifelong learning in particular support for disadvantaged adults;
- to increase ICT literacy and
- to develop a national skills strategy to upskill the workforce.

The public sector modernisation agenda is dealt with in Part II Section IX of the agreement. Under Section 31, the education sector reforms are detailed. Some of the common themes and commitments are summarised below.

Table 5, Summary of common themes and commitments in Towards 2016

Themes	Commitments
Performance Management, Quality assurance systems, Efficiency, Utilisation of ICT.	Implement strategic planning processes, Engage with new learning and teaching technologies, Introduce flexible modes of delivery, Review contracts of employment, Increase postgraduate supervision, Enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of services, Develop review and evaluation systems.

NDP 2007-2013 (policy)

The Irish government's, *National Development Plan 2007-2013* set out the strategic investment priorities for Ireland over the six year period of the plan. In Chapter 9, *Human Capital*, the government commits to invest over €25 billion into three areas: training and skills development (€5 billion), schools modernisation (€7 billion) and HE (€13 billion). The underlying drive behind this investment is the shift towards a high value, high productivity and knowledge-based economy/society. The strategic intent is in line with the EU's Lisbon strategy. Similar targets are identified as strategic objectives. Key expected outcomes from this plan are; to upskill the workforce, implement the national skills strategy, expand the workforce, develop third level infrastructure, modernisation of HE, increase the number of graduates, provide significant school capacity and provide more teachers. In relation to investment in human capital, the NDP (2007) states:

> Investment in education, training and upskilling, broadly termed as investment in human capital, has played a very important role in Ireland's successful economic performance. It has provided a well skilled and flexible labour force and thereby helped make Ireland a major attraction for domestic and foreign enterprises. Ireland was particularly successful in harnessing European Social Fund (ESF) receipts to very good effect. Human Capital funding in the Plan 2007-2013 will be domestically generated but the objective will still be to ensure access to a very good standard of education and training for all and, in particular, to provide the labour force with the skills and adaptability to meet the challenges of the future.
> (NDP 2007, p1990)

The NDP promotes lifelong learning, this learning can occur in formal education and training environments or in the workplace and informal settings. The NDP stresses the importance of upskilling the labour force and initiating strategies of 'activation' for those who are outside the labour force (unemployed women at home). The intent is to develop a highly skilled work force that can contribute to the realisation of the knowledge economy and maintain Ireland's competitive advantage amongst higher knowledge economies.

Towards a critical analysis of the policy discourse

While the emerging tertiary policy agenda is extremely complex, in the narratives there seems to be some convergence in certain areas such as, quality assurance, learning outcomes, the restructuring of programmes, the quantification of awards, and the need for accountability[83] and the introduction of performance measures. However, the critical question for this thesis was how is this policy agenda impacting on academic work? In general, the Irish policy narrative suggests that the 'world of work' has changed and will change more rapidly in the future. According to the policy narrative some of the main characteristics of the changing nature[84] of the 'world of work' are summarised below:

- the reduced expectation of a career for life,
- employment insecurity,
- multiple careers routes,
- reorganised contract of employment,
- mobility in regions and between nation states and
- the demand for worker flexibility and adaptability.

Note, these key points where extracted from national agreements 1998-2005

The policy narrative argues that in order to cope in this new world of work, workers continuously need to update their skills and enhance their employability potential. While credentials are still important in order to gain employment, the relevance of credentials needs to be monitored and gaps need to be addressed through further training and upskilling. Credentialism seems to have been replaced by lifelong learning (formal, non-formal and informal) and the process of human capital accumulation. The concept of human capital referred to in the works of both Schultz (1977) and Becker (1993) is now widely used in tertiary education policy documents. The principal claim is located in the assumption that actors are free to make rational decisions on the type and scope of investment they want to make in relation to their human capital, based on their current knowledge and resources (social and financial). A clear distinction is made between the tangible resources evident in production, goods and

[83] Gleeson and O Donnabháin (2009) identify two forms of accountability 'contractual' and 'responsive'. They suggest that contractual accountability, which utilises performance measures, is the dominant form of accountability in use in the Irish public sector.

[84] Other changes that are occurring in the 'world of work' are contained in a paper by Kenny et al (2006) Key Skills and the Lifelong learning Paradigm, *Level 3*.

finance, and the intangible resource of human capital which is located solely in the person. Human capital as an intangible resource is accumulated over time by the actor through investment in schooling, access to information, training and health options. It is claimed that the return on this investment is manifest in increased, employment opportunities, rate of earnings commanded by the actor and productivity gains. The accumulated outcome of mass (population) investment in human capital directly contributes towards national economic growth and development. The OECD (1998, p8) defines human capital as, 'the knowledge, skills, competences and other attributes embodied in individuals that are relevant to economic activity'.

There is significant convergence in the reviewed policy documents (both Irish and non-Irish) towards a position that increased investment in education and training initiatives will encourage actors to engage in human capital accumulation (upskilling), resulting in long term economic growth as the knowledge economy/society evolves. The intention is to develop a critical mass of knowledge workers in nation states to drive entrepreneurial activities, innovative developments and smarter productivity. There seems to be an underlying assumption that human capital accumulation can meet head-on the challenges that globalisation presents for developed countries. Mainly, competition for manufacturing and low-skilled work from developing countries due to lower labour costs, lower production costs, less labour market regulation and attractive tax incentives for multinational corporations. The emphasis is on moving from manufacturing to the new services economy. This type of process can be represented as a move from a fordist labour force, based on the notion of mass production, automation and standardisation to a post-fordist position of flexiblisation, creativity and higher level enterprises (Harvey 1989, Hace and Jaquei 1997, Scott 1995, Moore 2004).

In contrast to the human capital perspective embedded in the Irish policy narrative, it is worthwhile to consider some other forms of analysis relating to capital. Bluestone (1977, pp335-340) critiques human capital

as an economic functionalist approach, which is grounded in pure mathematics, as such, it is an abstract theory divorced from the reality of social life. Furthermore, the human capital perspective perceives the labour market as an 'ideal type' where social exclusion, discrimination, racism and gender inequality does not exist. Two alternative theoretical perspectives which expand the concept of human capital are presented by Coleman (1988) and Bourdieu (1986).

Coleman's (1988) 'social capital' proposition was an endeavour to develop a conceptual framework which could cope with both *micro* and *macro* social constructs, where the agency of the individual actor and the social structures of modern society could be explored and uncovered. He sought to merge components from both sociological theory as the *macro* perspective with economics theory as the *micro* perspective. He adopted the concept of the socialisation, and how this process shaped actors' social action and both implicit and explicit social norms that seem to govern action and orientation. This was in contrast to the neoclassical economics approach which promoted goal-driven, self-motivated individual action, where agency was independent of structure. In a contemporary political sense these two approaches to the analysis of the sociology of structure and the economics of agency could be compared to the welfare state perspective of the collective good and the neoliberal doctrine of individual choice. Both of these worldviews impact differently on the ideology and direction of both rational action and rational decision making. Coleman was interested in utilising 'rational choice theory'[85] in his theoretical approach. Social capital was associated with potential resource(s) inherent in the individual, which are recognised by others and which have a form of social value. Social capital therefore has a certain type of worth, a tradable resource, the currency of this worth-resource is determined by 'significant others'.[86] The function of social capital is bound in the social

[85] Although 'rational choice' theory has an extreme element located in absolute individual right to action Coleman does not intend this usage. He confines rational choice to the actors basing decisions and actions on the prevailing and most up-to-date information and the contention that the outcome should be purposeful and beneficial to the individual and others.

[86] Mead's (1934) concept, here it is used to highlight the influence that close associates have on an actor, social capital its worth and value are determined by these associates. This can be developed further, by utilising

structure and enables types of social action which have an agreed or shared understanding of the social meaning and value. Coleman notes some similarity between social capital and exchange theory and the concept of reciprocity. However, he clarifies that social capital is more then the exchange of tangible goods and services and while there is an expectation of return generally this is not always the case. Social capital is bound by the strength of the social norms and sanctions experienced by the community, network or family. For example, in a close network such as a collegial academic setting, lecturers will change timetables or cover classes for colleagues when the need arises. Parties to this arrangement do not require explicit agreements on how and when the social act will be returned, but, rather, take solace from the social understanding that when they are in need colleagues will oblige and cater for their needs. This demonstrates what Coleman terms obligation, expectation and trustworthiness. The acts are not based on altruistic behaviour. There is an expectation of return and an obligation placed on the group member(s) which is based on the principal of social reciprocity.

Bourdieu (1986) proposes that 'capital' in social inquiry cannot be confined to the limited functionalist scope of economic capital along with its sub-strand of analysis 'human capital'[87]. Further, Marx's *macro* analysis of capital, which focused on the duality of capital and labour in modern capitalist societies needed to be extended. Indeed, Weber had attempted this in his theory and research methodology of '*verstehen*'[88] and the concept of 'social action' which puts the individual (as the unit of analysis) at the centre of social phenomena and suggests the social cannot occur (exist) without the action of the individual, this can be captured as a micro perspective. Bourdieu, while utilising both macro and *micro* analysis also sought to bridge the gap and apply mid-range or *meso* analysis that included the complexity and dynamics of agency, action and structure. Bourdieu's proposition relating to *capital* was to identify three

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Giddens's (2004, pp47-55) analysis of self-identity in modernity and how the live biography of the self is both shaped by social action with others and self reflexivity.

[87] Schultz (1960) advocated the concept of human capital be used in education policy. He noted that education should not be viewed as a consumption product but, rather, as a productive investment.

[88] For a critical commentary on Weber's verstehen see Kieran Allen (2005, pp68-81).

inter-related conceptual frameworks. First he accepted that there was a need for the economic myopic vision of human capital as an analytical instrument, but social capital and cultural capital needed to be applied to give a more in-depth insight to the complexities of social phenomena. Social capital provided a conceptual framework to explore both the tangible and intangible outcomes from investing in, being part of or identifying with specific social networks. These could be close-knit in family and kinship, or action specific in issue group and professional associations or formal in the state and the reproduction of class and status groups. Further, social capital, to a certain extent relied on participation, perception, proximity, spatiality and a sense of shared obligation to gain a return, even if it is symbolic. For example, being a member of a trade union implies the perception that there is safety in numbers, a sense of solidarity with workers and a mechanism for protection of terms and conditions of employment. This is a form of social capital investment which is symbolic and has tangible returns. However, if the social capital investment is not looked after, for example, by the passivity of the member, the dominant leadership may take a direction that deflates the social capital an example is the TUI Executive decided to accept *Towards 2016* in 2005 this was against the majority mandate of its membership which was to reject the agreement.

In Bourdieu's perspective social capital does not operate in isolation from other forms of capital such as cultural capital, which was categorised into three segments:

1) 'Embodied'; this relates to cultural formation and investment in the self such as social etiquette, language codes[89] and ascent, mannerisms. This can be directly related to class (high/low). In an educational sense middle class teachers can see their reflection in middle class students which provides positive reinforcement, while working class students' behaviour and language would be alien and looked down on a negative reinforcement of class position.

[89] See Bernstein (1996) for more on language codes, class reproduction and alienation in the education system.

2) 'Objectified'; this suggests a relationship with and understanding of social and cultural artefacts such as music, arts, cars, horses and the social context therein. For example, horse owners who go to Goff's would not have any relationship with horse owners in Ballyfermot other than a horse has four legs.

3) 'Institutionalised'; the state education system and the formal awards and accreditation procedure. This can be linked to Webers' concept of credentialism, in an Irish context, the 1999 Qualification (Education and Training) Act and the National Framework of Qualifications. Bourdieu's forms of capital provide a complex conceptual framework for social inquiry: inherent in these concepts are the ability to explore both vertical and horizontal zones of social life and the flexibility to focus on a *micro, meso* or *macro* unit of analysis. It could be argued that if policy makers utilised either social capital or cultural capital to inform the policy formation process rather than relying on the predominant human capital perspective, the policy landscape would look very different.

Policy hot topics and human capital

Reviewing the Irish policy narrative, there seems to be some hot topics that can be clustered into three categories these are; capacity, measurement and quality. These are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6, Policy hot topics and human capital

Topic	Human capital
Capacity	• how to increase human capital in an effective, efficient and relevant manner.
Measurement	• how to recognise human capital accumulation.
Quality	• how to guarantee the standard or currency of human capital.

Hot topic - Capacity: In relation to capacity, while policy (*NDP 2013, Towards 2016*) cites formal education and training system(s) as the key vehicle for the production of human capital, it also recognises the contributions that formal tertiary education and training have made in relation to human capital capacity building over the last two decades. There is, however, unease in the policy narrative relating to the operation of the tertiary system, as questions arise about the quality of operations,

the appropriate and efficient use of resources, effective management and structures of tertiary education and training. There seems to be a tension between the policy claim that education and training have contributed to economic advancement and the counter claim that the education system is inefficient, unproductive and in need of modernisation. The policy narrative seeks to expand the provision and need for education and training throughout the working lifecycle, increasing the output of high quality graduates, while simultaneously seeking 'rationalisation' of tertiary education systems (systems that have a proven track record in the production of human capital). The modernisation agenda inherent in the policy narrative displays a 'mistrust' of the traditional practices (and values) inherent to contemporary higher education. The education and training systems that have evolved in Irish society over the last century are perceived to be inefficient, underperforming and unaccountable. The intention of policy seems to lean towards the 'economic discourse' (Salter and Tapper 2000) applying the 'logic of the market' (GATS), to deregulation of national barriers while increasing regulatory mechanisms and performance compliance processes at provider level. *Towards 2016* (the ten year National Partnership Agreement) sets out specific measures for performance and compliance for actors in the IoT sector. A Performance Verification Group (PVG) was established to monitor commitments entered into by the social partners[90], the PVG accessed individual institutions action plans and made judgments on whether significant progress has been made on agreed items in order to approve agreed wage increases.[91] In the context of the reform process and in relation to employability, a term that has significant correlation with human capital, the EUA (2007) makes the following claim about higher education:

> ...employability is a high priority in the reform of curricula in all cycles. This concern transcends national boundaries and implementation priorities. However, the results also reveal that

[90] The social partners include all the trade union, employers' associations and other representative groups party to negotiation with government relating to the partnership agreement. In this case the TUI represented the academic workers in the IoT sector and IBEC represented employers (senior managers in the IoT sector).
[91] It can be argued that if the public sector trade unions agree to the Corke Park proposal 2010, then the PVG could be utilised to monitor performance efficiencies and whether further, wage reductions should be imposed.

> there is still much to be done to translate this priority into institutional practice.
> (EUA 2007, p7)

Hot topic - Measurement: In regard to measurement, formal human capital accumulation is encapsulated in the awards systems that are based in the traditions, cultures, norms and socio-political processes of nation states. While awards were recognised at sectoral, regional, inter-regional and national level, the portability of awards at international level is perceived to be problematic. The competition for international talent (undergraduate, postgraduate and post-doctoral) and the increased mobility of both unskilled and skilled labour has led to the development of award translation systems and, in some cases, the complete reform of awards systems by the introduction of NQFs. NQFs provide for a human capital accumulation currency mechanism. Human capital can be quantified into units of knowledge, skills and competency, mediated by 'learning outcomes' and placed on the hierarchical currency table of national frameworks. The development of common currency frameworks facilitates the readability of awards, the trans-regional and transnational mobility of talent and labour. By establishing a common currency language, frameworks can facilitate the process of private providers' penetration of the education and training market. Private providers can gain award legitimacy through the recognition of their programmes on national frameworks: this substantially increases the marketability of their programmes and creates a dynamic of competition in education and training systems between public and private interests. This competition dynamic can act as a leverage mechanism to effect change in the publicly funded education and training provision.

In 2003 the NQAI operationalised the NFQ in Ireland: this was a ten level framework ranging from primary education to higher education. The IoTs and the DIT generally welcomed this initiative and became early adaptors, placing their legacy (former) awards on the framework and incorporating the new 'learning outcomes' approach and narratives of 'knowledge, skills and competencies' into programme documents. The university sector was somewhat slower to implement the narrative of the framework into its

programmes and more cautious about placing their awards on the framework[92]. The NFQ introduced a new awards currency mechanism into the Irish education and training system(s) underpinned by a new technocratic common language and quality assurance. Young (2005) in his international review of NQFs for the ILO states:

> Introducing an NQF based on levels, standards and outcomes is not a superficial reform that leaves most existing education and training provision able to go on as before. If taken seriously it involves a complete change, not only in the way qualifications have traditionally been organized (and in many countries still are), but also in the deeply embedded practices that underpin them. It implies a shift from placing specialist educational institutions at the centre of the system of education and training to a system in which the learner and his/her opportunities to gain a qualification is at the centre. Whether the concept of the individual learner can bear such a responsibility when real learners differ so much in their capabilities is something that needs serious debate.
> (Young 2005 p8)

Hot topic - quality assurance: Lastly, in relation to quality assurance is the question of, how the standard or currency of human capital is guaranteed. The mechanisms utilised to achieve this are quality assurance procedures and cyclical review processes. While quality assurance procedures are not new to tertiary education and training in general, emerging in the UK tertiary system in the 1980s (Salter and Tapper 2000) and other European countries, such as Sweden in the early 1980s (Henkel and Bauer 1997). In an Irish context quality assurance procedures have gradually developed at programme and institute levels over the last two decades. Institutions either developed their own models of quality assurance procedures or adopted systems from other professional bodies or sectoral organisations.

This diversity of quality assurance was not very compatible with the needs of an NFQ. A more standardised systematic approach was needed. The NQAI and the two awards councils, HETAC and FETAC, developed a common quality assurance approach in relation to the NFQ, which worked in parallel with the new, technocratic narrative associated with awards.

[92] In 2008 the IUA lunched a document which explained the framework and in 2010 the university sector proposed its own interpretation of the framework and the placing of awards this project was called the Framework Implementation Network (FIN).

The universities and the DIT, as awarding bodies, had quality assurance systems in place already. The NQAI requested the EUA to review these systems in 2005-06. The EUA quality review teams reviewed each university and the DIT separately. Individual reports were compiled and then a sectoral report was produced. The EUA made positive recommendations on the standard and appropriateness of the quality assurance systems that were in operation in the universities and DIT. The IoTs on the other hand had to fulfil the quality assurance criteria and review process set out by HETAC. Several IoTs have now gained delegated awarding authority from HETAC. The quality assurance procedures in place in the Irish context are compatible with European Union policy initiatives such as the EQF and Bologna process.

The future direction of quality assurance in an Irish context is not clear at present. Whether it will evolve into an inspection model, accountability mechanism or an improvement process is unknown. However, it is worth considering Yorke's 1999 article 'Assuring quality and standards in globalised higher education' which outlines the intrinsic correlation between the national drive for economic competitiveness and the responsibility of institutions to provide quality 'knowledge capital' to counteract the challenges posed by globalisation. Yorke firmly reiterates that the quality direction (outcome) at both national and institute levels should be one of enhancement rather, than accountability: 'The demands of the future require a more forward-looking approach in which enhancement is to the fore and in which accountability follows' (1999, p100). The statutory reform of Irish HE has introduced numerous new measures in relation to the governance, structure, functions and objects of universities, DIT and the IoTs. Here the researcher's focused on the functions, categorising items into claims, concerns and issues. The 1997 University Act, 1992 DIT Act and the 2006 IoT Act offer a variety of options for higher education in regard to independent financial management, corporate activities following on from the commercialisation of research and consultancy and stating the intent to respect the traditional principle of academic freedom to all academic staff.

In these Acts the universities have the most autonomy and broadest function. This is critical to the advancement of a liberal higher education system. The DIT is in a position between the universities and the IoTs in that it has a mixed function between vocationalism and traditional liberalism, somewhat similar to Tapper and Salter's (2000) description of the Colleges of Advanced Technology (CATS) in the UK. The other IoTs are located firmly in vocationalism, similar to the pre-1992 UK polytechnics, the act directs the IoTs towards a more utilitarian route. The acts cater for international co-operation and engagement with students, education and other organisations. The acts also demonstrate a concern relating to the use of resources, directing the respective institutions covered under the acts to make efficient and effective use of resources, detailing measures for accountability and the responsibility entrusted to senior management for good governance of resources. The acts give more executive functions to the senior managers of institutes: in the IoT act concerns relating to staff matters are addressed by providing executive functions to the senior manager in relation to staff dismissals. There are several issues in the acts: one relates to the non-inclusion of 'tenure' in the IoT Act, tenure enables academic freedom. Without tenure academic freedom cannot operate without fear of reprisal (dismissal). The acts preserve the binary divide. Obviously there is a perceived issue with the development of a unified higher education system where autonomy to make awards is bestowed on all the institutes. The 1997 University Act allows for the purchasing and disposal of property and lands, while the DIT and the IoT Acts cater for the purchasing and disposal of property and lands with approval from the minister.

Policy claims, concerns and issues

From reviewing the policy cited in this section a policy matrix was constructed. This matrix utilises and combines both Guba and Lincoln's (1986) 'claims, concerns and issues' and Ball's (1994) 'context factors'. The matrix is presented in Table 7, items are grouped under context subheadings, knowledge economy (claims), globalisation (concerns) and

potential return on investment (issues). These seem to be main drivers and challenges in the policy context. This is presented as a work in progress rather, then a definitive account. It is a starting point, a mapping out of items from which route maps for further, in-depth inquiry can be developed.

Table 7, Policy matrix: Claims, concerns and issues

Categorization of the main 'claims, concerns and issues'		
Claims	**Concerns**	**Issues**
Context: the development of the knowledge economy/society.	*Context: meeting the challenges of globalisation*	*Context: realising the full potential from investment.*
Investment in education and training has a positive return for the individual and contributes towards economic development. Education and training enhances employability, flexibility and adaptability. Lifelong learning is necessary for both competitive advantage and social cohesion. Qualifications frameworks aid recognition, translation and understanding of the value of awards and mobility. Quality assurance systems provide mechanisms to improve standards. Academic freedom and autonomy are respected. Massification of education of higher education.	There is a need to reform and modernise tertiary education. Tertiary education and training needs to become more effective and efficient. Regulatory barriers need to be reduced to enhance participation and competition. Tertiary education needs to become more relevant to external factors and the world of work. Performance and accountability needs to be monitored. Award recognition and translation mechanisms are needed. Quality needs to be embedded in all aspects of work. Tertiary education and training needs to upskill the workforce.	Tenure can reduce performance and control mechanisms. Performance systems are needed to develop and monitor staff work. There is a need for options to deal with underperforming staff. Staff employment contracts need to be reopened and renegotiated. Institutions need to identify and access alternative funding mechanisms. Drive to liberalise education systems. Should education be for profit or the social good? Competition as a mechanism to increase effectiveness and efficiencies.

The challenging of dominant positions is at the heart of this thesis, positions that have been manoeuvred into the common discourse as taken-for-granted concepts or, even worse, accepted as preconceived ideas through an advanced multi-faceted hegemonic process. The current dominant national narrative in relation to education and training in the higher education sector is the realisation of the knowledge based economy. This strategic position is underpinned by the promotion of the centrality of the economic imperative in political and media discourses (Fleming 2008). The economic imperative has become the new doctrine of the expert 'knowers' and 'doers' and gains voice and visibility in the

'media of convenience'[93] and the socially constructed mechanism for 'enforced consensus'[94], through peer pressured regulation such as the social partnership approach. The doctrine of the economic imperative has gained widespread political support in the EU and nationally. A broad-front political ideology loosely categorised, as neoliberalism is the primary conduit for the advancement of the economic imperative. In particular the neoliberal doctrine promotes several agendas such as:

- market values,
- the right of the citizen to choose,
- the individualisation of society,
- centralised control and the decentralisation of responsibility and
- the demonstrable drive for efficiency and increased productivity.

The ideological values of the neoliberal political programme have fast-set into the political discourse of nation states in Europe and become embedded in the narrative of policy strands pertinent to the higher education sector. The visibility and the extent and depth of change sought by the new order change policy agenda is now evident in the wide variety of official polices. The resulting official policy streams have sought to redirect the gradual modernisation process pursued by the academy in the higher education sector. This process seems now to be firmly linked with the values and goals of neoliberalism and the utilitarianism inherent in the prioritisation of the economic imperative. If this is the case, then it could be viewed as an ethnocentric economic position (a mistrust of alternative economic positions) relating to knowledge as utility as the claim, the warrant, the slogan of the economic power elite. Gibbons et al (2005) have explored what they term this 'new production of knowledge', they

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[93] Media of convenience here relates media that are very accessible to the population at large, commonplace in work and home environments, such as radios, TV sets and newspapers. In these media there are programmes and columns that present digestible pieces of information. These are very often opinion pieces, polemics, chat shows, light news programmes.

[94] The national social partnership approach brought representatives from the different trade unions, employers associations and other organisations together in order to develop a consensus on national strategies related to the organisation of work and the modernisation agenda. Enforced consensus is where some representatives either trade union or employers have to accept decisions that are counter to their members' interests. Enforced consensus operates both in and outside sectoral groupings involved in the partnership process. The government acts as the mediator seeking consensus by applying pressure on key players. If consensus is not reached the government can blame the social partners for the failed results. This was the case in the collapse of the 2009 partnership talks. While the trade unions made a modernisation offer that was unpalatable to some members, the government wanted the modernisation agenda items. But the government's objective was to gain direct public sector pay cuts, the trade union membership would not agree to this. The government collapsed the talks citing the trade unions as not offering enough and went ahead on a solo drive to introduce pay cuts in the budget. This was one of the first times that the trade union side witnessed a full collapse of the partnership talks. The unions were somewhat dismayed.

make a distinction between knowledge production at two levels, 'Mode 1', traditional knowledge discipline domains and 'Mode 2', interdisciplinary, inter-institutional and flexible production, which occurs in a competitive environment underpinned by rivalry, differentiation, innovation and entrepreneurialism. It is arguable, that in the new world order dominated by the economic imperative, knowledge could be deemed by the dominant economic orthodoxy to be a tradable commodity in the 'free' market, a tangible outcome of the production process, manufactured in the utilitarian education systems. These systems are managed and facilitated by the academic labour force. Weiler (2006, p61) has detailed a critical challenge to the dominant 'knowledge orthodoxies' in Europe and Northern America, setting out three principal deficiencies:

1) failure to understand what knowledge actually means, (epistemological assumptions),
2) failure to account for the political context of knowledge production and
3) failure to address the structural change implications for higher education in this transformation of knowledge culture.

The next chapter explores higher education and academic work relating some of the conceptual and theoretical areas of interest to actual practice in Irish higher education.

Final comment

This chapter provided a systematic review of the contemporary modernisation agenda relating to higher education. Several different perspectives where explored such as the EU, supranational organisations and Irish government policy. Reference was also made to a common ideological discourse of neoliberalism. It was argued that this discourse is embedded in different higher education policy documents in the EU and Ireland. It was suggested that the modernisation policy agenda is promoting a so called 'free' market approach which is based on competition, choice, decentralisation, efficiency and accountability.

It can be argued that the higher education policy agenda is informed by the functionalist human capital theory which assumes that individual investment in education will lead to a financial return to the investor (student, customer) in increased remuneration. This investment in human capital should enhance productivity and innovation. The strategy is to create a critical mass of knowledge workers in order to build a knowledge economy that can maintain competitive advantage.

This modernisation policy agenda seeks to increase higher education provision, restructure the qualifications systems, develop common quality assurance criteria and stimulate increased competitive approaches in the higher education sector. In addition, the modernisation policy agenda (as pursued by policy makers influenced by neoliberal ideology) has a focus on re-organising academic work, introducing a performance-based work culture[95], disaggregating teaching from research, in essence, creating new career specialisations. These factors are explored in greater detail in the next chapter.

[95] Peters (2004) notes, that the neoliberal education polices, advanced by both Thatcher's conservative government and progressed by Blair and the Labour government have led to the advancement of an 'enterprise culture' where education in general, becomes an 'enterprise education'.

Chapter 3: Work and the academic worker

> The current importance of work in an employment relationship and market context should not obscure those forms of work which are differently structured and located.
> (Brown 2007, p920)

This chapter introduces a profile of tertiary education in both Europe and Ireland, outlining some of the models and systems in use. The focus moves to a review of key factors that influence the shape of academic work in tertiary education, providing some examples from Europe and elsewhere. This is followed by a proposed working definition of academic work which is utilised for this research. Finally, the case of academic work in Ireland is detailed, a statistical profile presented, significant trends explored and some representative organisations relevant to academic workers and IHE are detailed.

The context of tertiary education in Europe and other places

In order to develop a context for tertiary education in Europe it is appropriate briefly to explore the rise of higher education in its general objectives, consider some types of higher education systems and models of state and higher education. Clark's (1983) comparative research on higher education proposes three types of ideal higher education systems based on where the locus of control was positioned:

1) The state systems, which are centrally controlled an example of this type of system is the USSR.
2) The market systems, characterised by competition, choice and market exchange, the USA is an example of this approach.
3) The professional systems, are controlled by academic oligarchy, where the elite professionals administer the systems, Italy is identified as an example.

Clark's triangulated systems continuum offers a conceptual framework for large scale transnational comparisons between higher education systems in general, In contrast, Altbach's (1979) comparative research focused on national models of higher education and how these models were influenced over time by the emerging universities. He claims that during the middle-ages both the 'French professoriate-oriented model'

(University of Paris) and the 'Italian students-orientated model' (University of Bologna) were dominant models. The British model (based on Oxford and Cambridge) gradually dominated the 'Third World' universities, for example, universities in India. This was mainly due to British colonisation. However, during the nineteen century the German model became a dominant force. This model emphasised the role of research and the important contribution the university could make towards the advancement of the state in both economic and social terms. Washburn (2006) notes that while the US market approach is influencing international trends in higher education policy, there is, however, a distinct divide in the market model of higher education in research and teaching, with numerous research-based universities focusing on graduate studies and colleges of higher education which focus on teaching. A snapshot of generic types of university models is presented in Table 8, these models are 'ideal types' (Weber). However, in practice, both policy makers and IHE may utilise a mixture of these models in order to move toward their objectives.

Table 8, Generic types of university models

University models				
Knowledge	**Professional**	**Personality**	**Pastoral**	**Market**
German	*French*	*UK*	*Newman*	*USA*
Humboldt Focus: Research, graduate studies.	Grande Ecoles Focus: Teaching, professional workers and state functionaries.	Liberal Focus: Teaching, civilising gentlemen, intellectual and cultural inquiry	Theological Focus: Teaching, virtue, spirituality, social and civic values, norms and mores.	Mass HE Focus: Human capital, generating mass knowledge and skills in order to maintain economic advantage.

Note, adapted from Altbach (1979), Scott (1995), Salter and Tapper (2000), Lucas 2006, Lowe (2009), Washburn 2006.

The models in Table 8 provide a sample of a range of generic models. There are of course others such as the multiversity (Scott 1995), entrepreneurial university (Clarke 1998) and networked university (Wit 2010). These models act as conceptual tools to explore the abstract nature of higher education, providing signposts which direct the general

objectives and functions of different types of higher education system and approaches. However, in order to move to a more practical policy level we need to identify a theory that examines higher education systems and state involvement. Scott (1995, p37) claims that the 'evolution' of higher education systems can be captured in five distinct categories:

1) 'University dominated system' (traditional universities are the only postsecondary providers of higher education).
2) 'Dual system' (the traditional universities and some other institutions operate in the postsecondary higher education system).
3) 'Binary system' (there are two systems in operation, the traditional universities and the alternative higher education systems).
4) 'Unified system' (comprehensive higher education systems combing traditional universities and other institutions).
5) 'Stratified system' (common system with mission differentiation due to either political decisions or market forces).

Scott (1995, p38), in utilising this framework, has proposed that since 1977 the Swedish system can be classified as unified while the system in Holland from 1992 can be considered as dual. The UK moved from a binary system (1965) towards a unified system (1992). California is presented as an example of a stratified system (1960). By applying this analysis to an Irish context it can be argued that since the emergence of the Free State in 1922 the Republic of Ireland has moved from a university dominated system to a dual system in the 1970s with the government's *Investment in Education* strategy and the vocational sector expanding into regional technical colleges and a binary system (1992) with the formal establishment of the institutes of technology. Furthermore, Scott (1995, pp83-85) provides a framework to analyse how the state operated with the university sector, providing five categories:

1) 'Universities as state institutions' (workers in the universities are state employees and the IHE properties are owned by the state, such as European countries like Netherlands, Sweden and China).
2) 'Chartered and constitutional universities' (universities protected by the constitution or receive chartered protection from the state, for example, the US state universities, Australian universities, old British universities).
3) 'Arm's length universities' (universities which receive public funding administered by intermediate bodies rather, than directly from the state. Examples are the new universities in the US, UK and Sweden)

4) 'Universities in the internal market' (the higher education sector is liberalised and a market approach is utilised. 'Buffer bodies' distribute funding in according to competitive practice, such as some US and continental European systems).
5) 'Private universities' (the state has no direct financial commitment. The state, however, does act in a regulatory fashion in degree awards and quality).

In an Irish higher education context the University sector was operating in a 'universities as state institutions' model, until the formation of the HEA in 1974 whereby the model gradually shifted towards an 'arm's length' model. The HEA acted as the state's intermediate agency or what Clancy (1998, p106) termed 'buffer organisation'. In a similar scenario, the IoT sector was originally funded directly by the state through the Department of Education and Science. However, in 2006 the HEA took over this function. This can be termed an 'arm's length' model. While the state has shifted the funding allocation for HE to an intermediate agency the HEA, the HEA does not manage the IHE or academic employees. Academic employees', in both the universities and the IoTs, employment contracts are defined by government legislation as evident in the 1997 University Act and the 1992 DIT and RTC Acts and the 2006 IoT Act. As such, the relationship between the state and tertiary sector in Ireland has shifted from direct 'state control' to indirect control or 'state supervision'. The IHE in the tertiary sector have a certain amount of discretion in how they utilise the public funding they receive. The state leaves the administration of this funding to the intermediate agency (the HEA) and requires the HEA to regulate financial matters and provide for financial accountability. However, in an Irish context it would be too- simplistic to consider that the HEA functions and acts as an independent agency free from state interference. The HEA is funded by the state and is answerable to the state: the recent[96] financial crisis demonstrated the power that the Department of Finance has over the HEA. In 2009 the Department of Finance instructed the HEA to implement with immediate effect a cost

[96] There are numerous commentators proposing when the economic crisis started in Ireland. Dates range from 2006 to 2009, although a resent report into the banking crisis locates suggests the recession started in 2007 Regling and Watson (2010) A Preliminary Report on The Sources of Ireland's Banking Crisis, http://www.bankinginquiry.gov.ie/Preliminary%20Report%20into%20Ireland%27s%20Banking%20Crisis%2031%20May%202010.pdf

saving measure called the Employment Moratorium, the HEA duly instructed IHE that no new employment contracts could be issued without first gaining approval from the Department of Finance. This type of approach would suggest that a 'universities as state' institution model is in operation or what Becher and Trowler (2001, p6) call the 'Regulatory state model' which is characterised by 'reduced funding' and increased 'accountability' measures, a state drive for HE 'expansion' and wider 'access'. This is combined with a 'bid and delivery' competitive funding system. Furthermore, in order to maintain operations in this financially stringent model IHE must try to reduce staff costs by reducing remuneration and increasing the use of causal labour. Finally, as Deem (2004) notes in the market model the state expects IHE to generate their own funding from sources other than the state, IHE are expected to operate similar to private business. This type of change affects the IHE in academic values, organisational culture and the need to restructure and reform[97] practices. State policy intervention into higher education can be located in the mass higher education stage of development. This is explored in the next section.

The mass higher education movement

Scott (1995, p8) claims that 'mass higher education' as a policy approach began in the USA in the 1960s. This agenda severed to cater for the growing demand for access to higher education and the needs of the 'post-industrialisation', this progressed to the 'post-fordist' (1970s) economic environment. Tapper and Palfreyman (2005) proposed that mass higher education began in the USA with the gradual expansion of HIM in the 1940s and then the post WWII US government's higher education access policy for soldiers, the 'GI Bill'. Mass higher education policies were gradually introduced in Europe and the UK from the 1980s onward. In the UK the mass higher education approach was advanced in 1992 with the designation of the polytechnics as universities, although Salter and Tapper

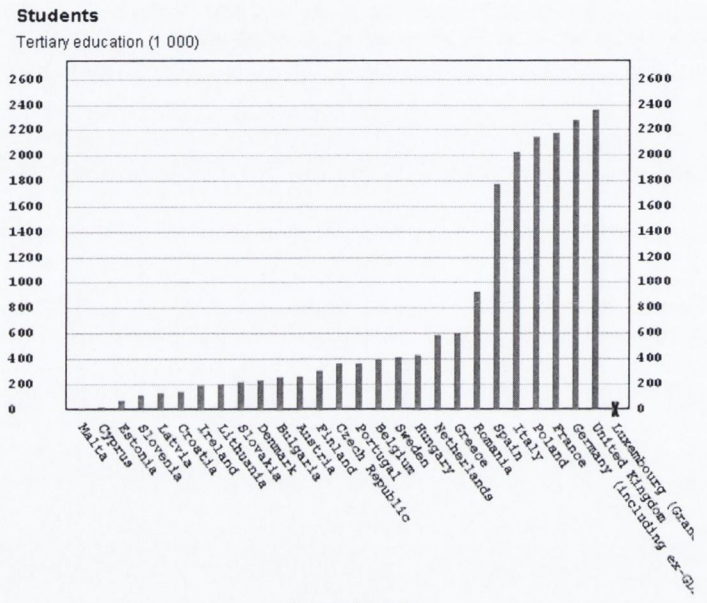
[97] An example of a senior management reform agenda which met substantial staff resistance is detailed by McConnell (2006) articles in the Sunday Independent, entitled, UCD exodus warning for 'appalling' reform' article in the Sunday Independent, 6/8/06, p7.

(2000) claim that the UK policy makers in the 1950s started the development of the binary system by establishing colleges of advanced technology (CATs). The policy ideology was informed by market considerations, providing a structure that could provide technically skilled workers for industry. The universities were not achieving this type of outcome as they were still in the 'traditional liberal' ideology. The state facilitated the polytechnics emerging as the new providers of advanced education and training for labour force skills. As such, the polytechnics functioned in an 'economic ideology' responsive to state policy and 'control' (Bauer, Henkel 1997, p214) and worked closely with industry. Altbach (1999) proposes that 'mass higher education' is now a global phenomena, claiming that the number of enrolments of postsecondary students has reached 20 million in China, 15 million in the United States and 8.5 million in India. He notes, that world-wide, over 55 million students are in postsecondary education and that the Commonwealth of Learning estimates that the figure will rise to 150 million postsecondary student enrolments by 2020. Higher education enrolment in China has risen phenomenally from 1,083,600 in 1998 to 5,460,500 in 2006 (Lai, 2010, p93). These figures suggest that the increasing demand for tertiary level education is placing pressure on publicly-funded tertiary education institutions to expand enrolment: the most immediate way to do this was increase class sizes. According to UNESCO there has been an annual increase in tertiary level enrolments of 4.6%. The Global Education Digest report states:

> The number of students pursuing tertiary education has skyrocketed over the past 37 years, growing five-fold from 28.6 million in 1970 to 152.5 million in 2007. This translates into an average annual increase of 4.6%, with the average number of tertiary students doubling every 15 years. But a closer look at the data reveals that the expansion has been particularly intense since 2000, with 51.7 million new tertiary students enrolled around the world in just seven years.
> (UNESCO 2009, p10)

The same trend is occurring in Europe, according to the EU Commission (2008). It was estimated that in the EU's 27 member states in 2006 there were over 4000 IHE, employing 1.5 million academic/teaching staff.

These institutions provided programmes of advanced level (ISCED 5 and 6) education and training to over 19 million students. The table below outlines the distribution of students per country. Eurostat (2009) claims the total tertiary education student population has witnessed an increase of over 3 million students from 2000 to 2006. Continued upward growth is expected.



Source Eurostat

Staying with European student indicators three areas are worth mentioning in the human capital policy agenda, these are:

1) awards;
2) employability and
3) expenditure.

(1) Awards: According to Eurostat's *Key Education Indicators* (2009, p4) in the EU 27 in 2007 over 3.95 million students obtained a tertiary level award (ISCED 5-6), Further, over 58% of those who received awards were female. The feminisation of the tertiary student population in Europe is continuing; 56% of new enrolment in 2006 were female (Eurostat/Eurostudent 2009, p11). However, the largest percentage of student enrolment, both male and female, is confined to the 18-27 years of age cohort which stands at 70% of the total student population (Eurostat 2009, p116).

(2) Employability: 10% of languages, arts and humanities graduates were unemployed in 2007. This is twice as much as in other disciplines. Also 20% of graduates in new employment in 2007 were working in jobs where a lower level of qualification was required. This is considered to be a 'Vertical qualifications mismatch' (Eurostat-Eurostudent 2009, p131).
(3) Expenditure: Eurostat (2009, p4) claims the EU 27 spent a total of €585,906 million on education, the differential between the three main categories was primary education received €136,225 million, secondary education received €259,798 million and tertiary education received €131,041 million. In addition, education in the EU 27 received 13% of total expenditure in the form of income from private sources while in the USA private sources account for over 25% of income, 78% of all expenditure from education institutions in the EU 27 goes to staffing costs.

As the demand[98] for access to higher education increased, the capacity of the existing IHE to cater for the increased student numbers came into question. According to Martin (1999) the strategy both the UK and Australia utilised was to increase the number of providers. In 1962 there were 28 universities in the UK, in 1999 there were over a hundred universities catering for 1.6 million students. Similarly, Martin notes that in Australia in 1962 there were 10 universities catering for 57,000 students and in 1999 there were 36 with a student population of 640,000. However, this trend in the 'massification' (Scott 1995) of higher education led to significant changes in the way higher education was perceived and how provision was organised. Altbach (1999, p3) claims that higher education in the twenty first century is subject to considerable change factors such as, funding, new providers, distance education, differentiation, managerialism, academic career and student diversity.

While publicly-funded higher education is responding to this demand for mass higher education it is subject to two complex dynamics: the pressure from government to become more cost efficient and accountable, and the

[98] It can be argued that the demand for access to HE increased due to several factors such as, demographics, new entrance criteria, new students (female, adult) and labour market demand for graduates.

competitive pressure from the increasing number of private, for-profit-providers offering places to students (see Deem 2004, Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). Private for-profit-providers are developing streamlined cost-effective education teaching technologies. These are aggressively marketed to potential students globally as distance education programmes. For this form of learning at a distance to function, the course curriculum or programme content needs to be reconstructed into chunks of learning, or units which can be easily delivered electronically, without the need for expensive face-to-face lecturing. In this type of marketised system the role of the academic is pushed to the background and the emerging key employment roles are the 'education technologist', 'ICT technicians' (Noble 1998, Weller 2002), advertisement agents, student support services and strategic managers. These new roles can be collectively termed the 'administrative estate' (Altbach 1999). Aronowitz (2000) makes a similar type of argument in relation to the tertiary education structure in the USA: he compares universities to corporations or 'knowledge factories'. These 'knowledge factories' are concerned about product, reputation and market share, the intrinsic motivation is monetary value (revenue generation and/or profit). In this corporate market dynamic the notion of 'higher learning' as a liberal process of education for the social and cultural good is replaced by the utilitarian functionality of training and education for the world of work. Slaughter and Rhoades (1999) utilise an ideological and political concept, 'academic capitalism', to describe the emerging marketisation and 'new economy' of higher education. In this new dynamic, higher education is commodified, the so-called 'market' is the driving force and competition between IHE leads to innovation and entrepreneurialism. 'Academic capitalism' becomes the new 'mode of production'. The organisation of academic work is reconstructed to facilitate this mode of production, and the relationship between the higher education institute and the primary unit, the student, turns to a supplier-customer dynamic. Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) state:

> The theory of academic capitalism moves beyond thinking of the student as consumer to considering the institution as marketer. When students choose colleges, institutions advertise education

> as a service and a life style. Colleges and universities compete vigorously to market their institutions high-ability students able to assume high debt loads. Student consumers choose colleges and universities that they calculate are likely to bring a return on educational investment and increasingly choose majors linked to the new economy, such as business, communications, media arts. Once students have enrolled, their status shifts from consumers to captive markets and colleges and universities offer those goods bearing the institutions' trademarked symbols, images and names at university profit centres such as unions and malls.
> (Slaughter and Rhoades 2004, p2)

A key factor in publicly-funded tertiary education is the degree of autonomy higher education institutions have and the roles of academics in the 'basic trinity, teaching, research and service' (Schuster and Finklestein 2006, p77). Maton (2005), who applied Bourdieu's 'field' approach to explore policy relating to academic autonomy in the UK, suggests that there is a decline in 'rational autonomy', As such, policy discourse has shifted from HE developing knowledge for the sake of knowledge to the 'utilitarian perspective' that HE is 'instrumental' to economic needs. Wasser (1999) notes that some governments responded to the expansion of higher education during the 1980s-90s by reconsidering the policy framework that higher education operated within. Policy makers endeavoured to relocate the positioning of autonomy as a decision-making process located in the individual higher education institute, to a boarder decision-making process which included the concerns, needs and opinions of the external environment and 'stakeholders' (Salter and Tapper 2000). Further, external monitoring of the activities and planning processes of IHE were introduced particularly in the demand for accountability[99]. Provision for accountability and performance evaluation were gradually introduced by such measures as external quality assessment (EQA), total quality management (TQM) and new public management (NPM)[100]. In an EU context the predominant measures that impact directly on academic work are quality assurance, learning outcomes and the EQF.

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[99] Hager and Hyland (2006, p276) note that during the 1990s there was 'growing international public dissatisfaction with the professions and with the performance of particular professionals, fuelled by an increased willingness on the part of the media to expose professional incompetence and malpractice, by the increasing sophistication of consumers and by general demands for greater accountability'.

[100] Gleeson and O Donnabháin (2009) link the introduction of NPM into the Irish public sector with both the strategic management initiative (1994) and the Public Service Management Act (1997). The motive was to restructure the management of the public sector in order to make it more effective, efficient and transparent.

Enders's (1997) analysis of data from an *International Study on the Academic Profession*[101] notes that academics appreciated their work autonomy. However, there was concern about their work duties, roles, work load and external influences:

> The combination of the two major functions of research and teaching in an academics' job role is an issue of perennial concern. From a traditional point of view it is the fact that academics are not only teachers but researchers that forms the distinctive character of the profession and their combined job role is generally regarded as one of the indispensable conditions of the profession. Moreover, the loose coupling of various work tasks in the multifunctional job role allows a high degree of individual choice as regards their arrangement. A low degree of job prescription and a high degree of autonomy in the use of time are seen as major intrinsic rewards of professional life in academe. A high overall working load and a common feeling of overload and strain seem to be the price that academics pay in exchange for this.
> (Enders 1997, p7)

While Enders (1997, p16) identifies 'research and teaching' as central job roles for academics, he also notes that research activities are perceived to have a higher status. Further, he identifies the trend whereby academics in senior positions tend to focus their time on research activities and teaching duties tend to be passed on to junior or part-time academic staff. Ender (1997, p21) notes that job dissatisfaction is highest among these part-time and contract academic staff. The main issues are restrictive roles, lack of job security and lack of promotional opportunities. In contrast, Bauer and Henkel's (1997) comparative study, based on interviews with academics in England and Sweden (n=190), explored quality assurance. Their results show that academic staff in general were unhappy with the increased administrative duties associated with quality assurance. This increased workload was affecting their teaching and research. It was, further, aggravated by the growth in student numbers. Staff questioned how their institutes' education mission could be maintained under these circumstances. In a different context, results from Capellera's (2005)

[101] This international research on the academic professional was originally sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/ .

survey of Spanish academics' (n=388) attitudes to work recorded 41.7% dissatisfaction with their work in support services for teaching, recognition for teaching, research and financial compensation for their work. While 28% expressed satisfaction with teaching and research and showed positive signs of comment to their organisations, the remaining 30% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Rather, they recorded high 'self efficacy' ratings and low organisationally commitment. Strike and Taylor's (2009, p191) multi-case study of academic careers in the UK suggested that part-time workers accepted that they were expected to work in temporary roles and it was the responsibility of the part-time academic to fit 'into a career and gain permanency'. This trend towards employing academic staff in untenured and new types of employment roles is also noted by Altbach (1999) who states:

> As noted, the academic profession has lost some of its power and autonomy in the university. Academic work, for a growing number in the profession, is changing. Indeed, the academic profession itself is changing to meet the new realities. New types of academics are taking their places in the universities and colleges—clinical professors, research professors, part-time and adjunct academic staff and others are all part of the mass system. The professorial ideal of the autonomy to teach without much control from external authority is less often achieved. In many countries, workloads have increased and class size has grown. (Altbach 1999, p13)

Further, Altbach (1999) claims that the issue is not only the emergence of a more casual academic work force, increased classes sizes and additional teaching workloads, but, rather, this process is having an impact on the tenure system, the traditional principle of academic freedom[102] and the development of the academic professional in general. Altbach (1999) is concerned about the long term threat that this casualisation process will have on the future development of the traditional academic duties of research and scholarship. As casualisation increases the status and reputation of the academic professional declines, tenure positions decrease, salaries decrease and the profession becomes a less attractive

[102] Doumani (2006) suggests that academic freedom in the US higher education sector is facing a more serious challenge now compared to the McCarthy period during the 1950s. Stating (2006,p11) 'in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, government agencies and private advocacy and special interest groups have subjected institutions of higher learning to a increasingly sophisticated infrastructure of surveillance, intervention and control'

career option to young, talented people. The underlying logic to this argument is that causal workers perceive their work as short-term and insecure and they have less loyalty to the work or employers. This type of short-termism is not conducive to long-term capacity building, knowledge generation and the development of the academic disciplines. Further, casual staff are less likely to be motivated to take an active stand to protect core values of traditional academics such as academic freedom.

Becher and Trowler (2001, p16) label the new part-time academics 'gypsy scholars' meaning academic workers who have to work part-time in several IHE to make a living. In the emergence of a post-fordist employment system for academic workers the characteristics are: fewer permanent or tenured jobs, greater diversity of work related tasks, variety of employment contract types and a demand from management for work flexibility. They claim that this change in the academic labour process is leading to the intensification of work, the degradation of working conditions, increased bureaucracy and a power shift from academics to manager-administrators. They cite the post-1992 universities or 'NewU's' as the dominant example of this type of labour process restructuring. Wasser's (1999, p29) review of academic autonomy and the emerging policy context in Europe and America notes that national policies are becoming more restrictive in academic autonomy, suggesting that there is a push to encourage academics to engage with the external environment and adopt market strategies (industry, business and commercial interests) in order to stimulate innovation, entrepreneurialism and economic activities. As such, he contemplates whether academic autonomy will 'escape from the tyrannies of the market'. Advocates of the 'market' approach, such as the OECD, which claims in the thematic *Review of Tertiary Education* (2008) that there is a need for policy makers to restructure tertiary education propose making it more relevant to the labour market, introduce quality systems similar to industry, introduce performance measures relating to work and pay, have more external evaluation of tertiary education institutions and that IHE should have more autonomy to manage their human resources. The OECD claims that

policy makers should reconsider what is meant by academic freedom stating:

> Academic freedom has been, according to some groups, under threat as a result of a number of trends in tertiary education such as the growing share of private funding, the increased focus on accountability and performance and new approaches to institutional management. At the same time, institutions are under pressure to use public funds to the benefit of society as a whole. This calls, in most countries, for a re-conceptualisation of what comprises academic work. In this context, academic freedom needs to be framed in institutions' obligation to society, e.g. with academics pursuing their objectives while accounting for institutional goals, being provided with support and conditions to meet these goals.
> (OECD 2009, p11, Overview)

In this basic structure-agency construct or 'corporate model' (Washburn 2006) the OECD encourages policy makers at both national and institute level to mediate the agency of the academic worker (academic freedom) by introducing performativity measures that are goal-directed. Thus, the academic worker is confined to the instrumental policy of the state and managerialism of the institute: agency is not based on freedom but, rather, measurable, goal-directed action. This type of directional approach locates the power of autonomy and academic freedom within the state which directs the institutes of higher education. These institutions, in turn, manage and direct their human resources (academic workers) to set about achieving the strategic goals of the institute as determined by the state. In essence this could be considered one of the paradoxes of the neoliberal modernisation agenda. Instead of reducing state control and providing more autonomy to institutions, the state exercises instructional control through the levers of both fiscal measures and policy regulation. In this scenario autonomy does not correlate with academic freedom but, rather, with managerial freedom. The institute is given the power to exercise control over the human resources (academic staff). As such, academic freedom as a traditional academic value and corner-stone of scholarly inquiry, knowledge and creativity becomes subsumed by the doctrines of quantification, commodification and marketisation. Academic freedom becomes confined by performance measurement and competitive fiscal

practices of the market. In summary, academic work seems to be subject to substantial structural pressure to modernise and expand while, at the same time, the organisation and nature of academic work is undergoing considerable restructuring. Schuster and Finkelstein (2006, p75) claim that over the last decade the main pressures on American faculty to change were: a general focus on cost reduction and expansion of faculty duties, in essence 'imperatives for faculty to do more'. In addition Bousquet (2008) claims that in the USA there has been a substantial increase in the employment of graduates[103] who are still studying (such as PhD students) to teach undergraduates. This type of employment is part-time, with limited career path opportunities and no employment security. Bousquet (2008) provides details of how this new type of academic worker is getting organised to campaign for better employment conditions through the use both of industrial relations mechanisms and legal challenges. In an endeavour to represent visually the structure-mediator-agency dynamic of policy implementation in the tertiary education sector a matrix was constructed (see Table 9). This matrix seeks to map out and correlate some key items that emerged from the policy review which represent government initiatives. In the matrix they are termed structure. These policy initiatives are directed at the IHE that have to interpret the policy and implement the policy As such, the institutions are termed mediators. Finally, the mediators need to develop strategies to engage academic staff and negotiate their agreement to implement policy. However, academics have a degree of autonomy and academic freedom termed in the matrix agency. The matrix seeks to map out key policy agendas initiated at structural level and then show how they are interpreted and mediated by IHE and, how they become a reality at academic level. The matrix endeavours to categorise the effect this structure-agency dynamic is having on academic labour. Academic labour characteristics are presented first and then the characteristics of the directional shift and restructuring of academic labour is presented.

[103] Peter (2004) notes that in the UK under the Blair government a new training salary was introduced for post-graduate teacher trainees, for the first time. This new entry level employment contract included a performance based pay component.

Table 9, Generic matrix: Structure-mediation-agency tertiary education

The dynamic of structural pressure mediated and enforced by IHE focused on actor agency and the directional shift this is having on the organisation and characteristics of academic work.		
Structure (policy)	**Mediator (IHE)**	**Agency (academic)**
• Modernisation. • Market approach. • Fiscal policy. • Knowledge economy.	• Autonomy to manage. • Regulatory harmonisation. • Competitive funding. • Mass human capital production.	• Subject to HR policy. • Quality assured and outcomes based. • Performance pay. • Knowledge, skills, competency.
Directional shift and characteristics ← – – –

and experience the researcher constructed the following working definition of academic work:

> Academic work as an activity can be physical, cognitive and social, focusing on inquiry, scholarship and teaching, in order to further, human knowledge and understanding which can contribute towards social and economic well-being. This type of work is located in the social, political and cultural traditions of society, IHE, academic disciplines and the identity of the academic worker. While the organisation of academic work is subject to localised structures, practices and monitory exchange value, it is, however, emancipated by academic autonomy and academic freedom.

This working definition of academic work seeks to denote that academic work can be related either to social action or to solitary thinking and contemplation. As such, academic work is not confined to observable action or, indeed, observable outcomes. The principal activity of academic work is directed towards gaining knowledge, insights and understandings, appreciations of ideas, things and human society. The academic worker then shares this learning, expertise and skills with peers, students and others. This process can have either a direct or indirect influence on developing individual or collective social or economic 'well being' (Putman 1998). The definition allows for variations. As academic work is a social construct it is subject to the social context, which includes the political environment and power, cultural awareness including behaviour, language and aesthetics, traditions and their links to history, heritage and customs. The variations are further complicated by different levels, such as the larger social domain which includes the state, the region, the social institutions and the relevant laws and policies. Another layer is the distinctive characteristics and practices pertinent to the place of employment the institute of higher education and whether the institute has a profit motivation or is interested in the public good. Further, the knowledge domain specific to academic discipline (science, engineering, arts, humanities etc.) can affect the practices and perceptions of work.

Central to this is the psychology, identity and agency of actual academic workers, their interpretation and perception of the aforementioned layers. In this definition the organisation of academic work is subject to localised considerations such as the contract of employment, employment legislation, and the organisational structures and polices of the institute of higher education and local custom and practice. Finally, academic work is remunerated on the basis of national or, sometimes, localised exchange value agreements which set the salary levels for the type of academic work that is being undertaken. However, while academic work is salary-based this does not mean that academic workers cannot direct some of their academic work voluntarily with other individuals and groups in society.

The emergence of academic workplaces in Ireland

Coolahan (2004, p56-66)[104] locates the emergence of the university sector in Ireland to 1592 with the establishment of the University of Dublin (Trinity College) by Queen Elizabeth I. This was a Protestant university which had as a main function the promotion of the English language and culture. The second university in Ireland began as St Patrick's College Maynooth founded in 1795 as a Catholic seminary. The university sector was expanded by the British government in 1849 with the establishment of Queens University Belfast and Queen's College Cork and Queens College Galway. Coolahan notes a major development in 1908 with the British government passing the Irish Universities Act which established the National University of Ireland (NUI) which had three colleges: University College Cork (UCC), University College Dublin (UCD) and University College Galway (UCG). From Coolahan's account the 1970s proved to be the main period of political focus on establishing an Irish university sector. During that decade several different government parties endeavoured to put in place their policy frameworks for the university sector. In 1997 there were five universities TCD, UCD, UCC, UCG and Maynooth. Two IHE (Limerick and Dublin) were awarded university

[104] Coolahan (2004) drafted the *Country Background Report* for the OECD examiners who undertook the Review of Higher Education in Ireland in 2004-5.

status in 1989, these two new universities were called the University of Limerick (UL) and Dublin City University (DCU). In the Universities Act 1997 the state formally restructured the university sector, listing seven universities (TCD, UCD, UCC, UCG, UL, NUIM, DCU). The Act also lists six 6 Colleges. Coolahan (2004, p77) notes that the Minister for Education in 1963 set out the government's intent to establish a second higher education sector the Regional Technical Colleges. Clancy (1997, p87) terms this initiative 'a deliberate policy of diversification' suggesting that prior to 1970 the higher education system was dominated by the universities. Two key policy reports that influenced the government's decision to diversify the higher education sector and establish a binary system were:

1) the OECD (1963) Report (which identified the need for advanced technical education) and
2) the government's (1965) *Investment in Education Report.* [105]

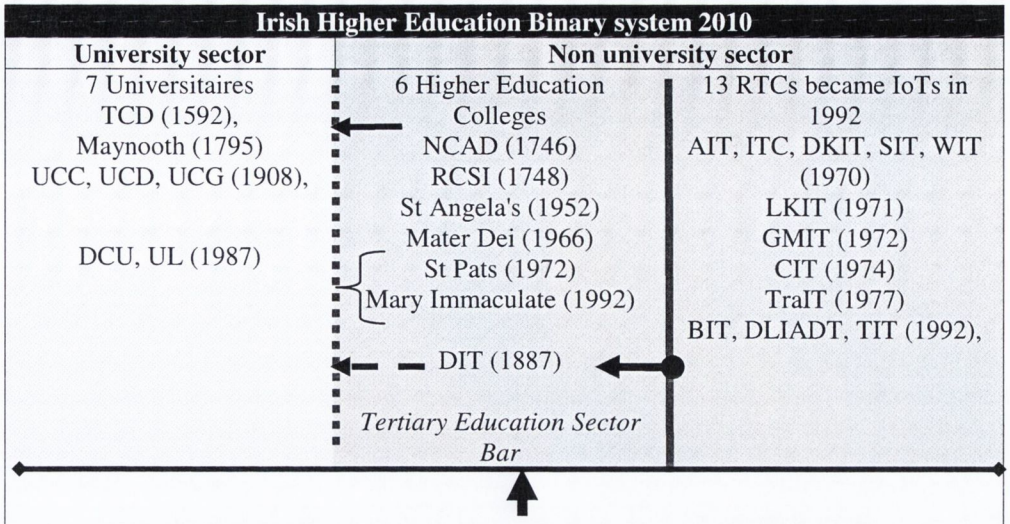
The first five regional technical colleges became operational in the 1970 (Athlone, Carlow, Dundalk, Sligo, Waterford) other RTCs were established during the 1970s (Cork, Letterkenny, Galway and Tralee). They remained under the management and control of their different Vocational Education Committees and respective CEOs. Their remit was to provide technical vocational education and training, specifically for senior trades certificates, technicians, adult education and some professional qualifications. The City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee (CDVEC) established the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) in 1977[106]. As such, this was the first institute of technology in the country. The DIT gradually forged a close partnership with TCD and arrangements for awards of joint degrees were agreed. The government formalised the RTCs as institutes of technology in 1992, the DIT was designated as a separate type of institute in the 1992 DIT Act. The present binary education system in operation in Ireland is depicted in Table 10.

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[105] Clancy (1997, p87) claims that this report had more influence in government policy formation then the Commission on Higher Education report (1967).

[106] Duff, Hegarty, Hussey (2000, p3) suggest that the DIT's origins go back to the Irish Artisans Exhibition of 1885. A committee was formed by the Workman's Club which represented different trades such as bricklayers, stone masons, plasterers, wood cutters and jewellers, the object was to establish a training facility for apprentices.

Table 10, University and non-university sectors in Ireland



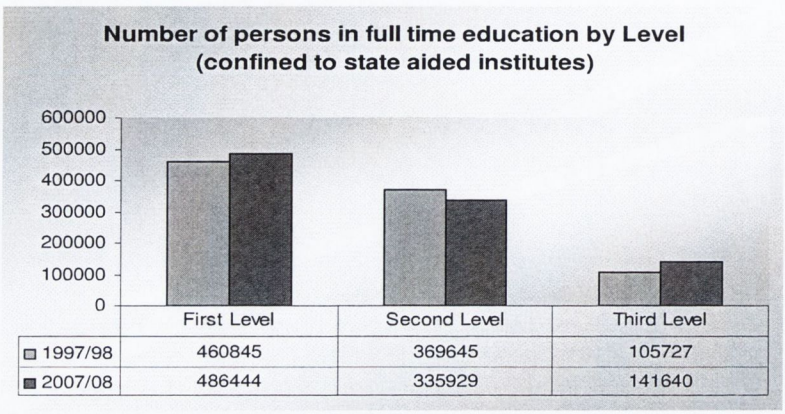
Pressure from other providers to gain access to tertiary sector awards.
Other post-secondary providers such as the PLCs and FAS want to be located in the tertiary sector. There is still ambiguity about level 6 of the NFQ (FETAC or HETAC), is this tertiary or further, education? However, the NFQ allows any provider to submit courses for placing at any level: the decision to designate a course rests with the appropriate awards council.

The ambiguity relating to which sector the 6 higher education colleges and the DIT belong to is denoted by dashed lines. The sector that best fits the characteristics of DIT is displayed by the black arrows and the dashed arrow shows the sector where DIT wants to be located. In Ireland the tertiary education sector has a strong reliance on the secondary education sector to supply new students: nearly 90% of new undergraduate students come directly from secondary education through the CAO system. Although Farrelly (2010) claims that the IoT sector enrols more non-standard students in comparison to the university sector, it is worth exploring the student population. The total number of full-time students in state-aided education institutes (level 1 primary, level 2 secondary, level 3 higher education) in 2007/08 was 964,013. This figure suggests that nearly a quarter of the entire population[107] are in full-time education. During the decade 1997/98 to 2007/08 enrolments increased in both first level up 25,599 and third level up 35,813 (see Table 11). However, the figure that was causing concern to the tertiary sector was that second level enrolments recorded a decrease of 33,720. Further, students taking the

[107] For the first time this century the population of the Republic of Ireland went above 4 million in 2006 .During the height of the so called 'Celtic Tiger' period (1999-2006) the population of Ireland increased by over .45 million.

Leaving Certificate (the entrance examination for tertiary level) examination declined during the same decade from 65,922 students in 1998 to 55,543 students in 2008.

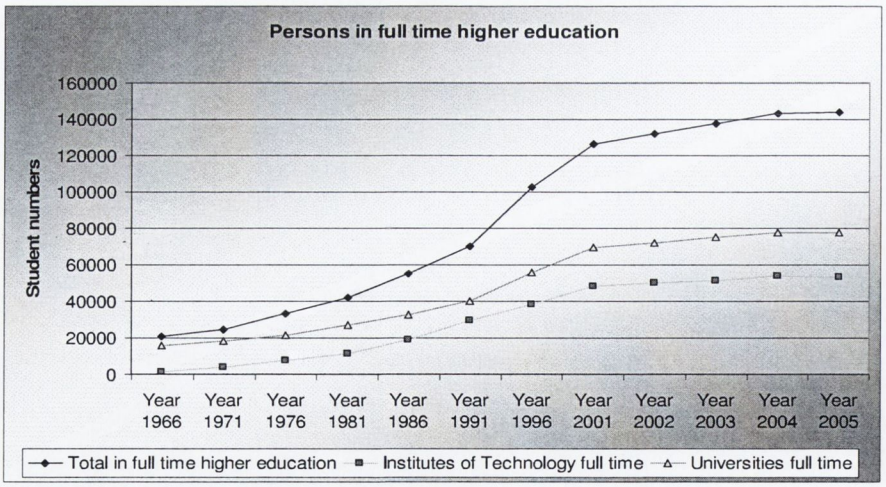
Table 11, Number of full-time students per sector



Data adapted from DoES Statistic 2009

The tertiary education sectors have undergone significant expansion since the introduction of the *Investment in Education* (1965) policy initiative by the government. In 1996 full-time student enrolments were nearing 20,000, whereas in 2005 full-time enrolment where over 140,000, Table 12 charts the trend.

Table 12, Full-time students 1966-2005

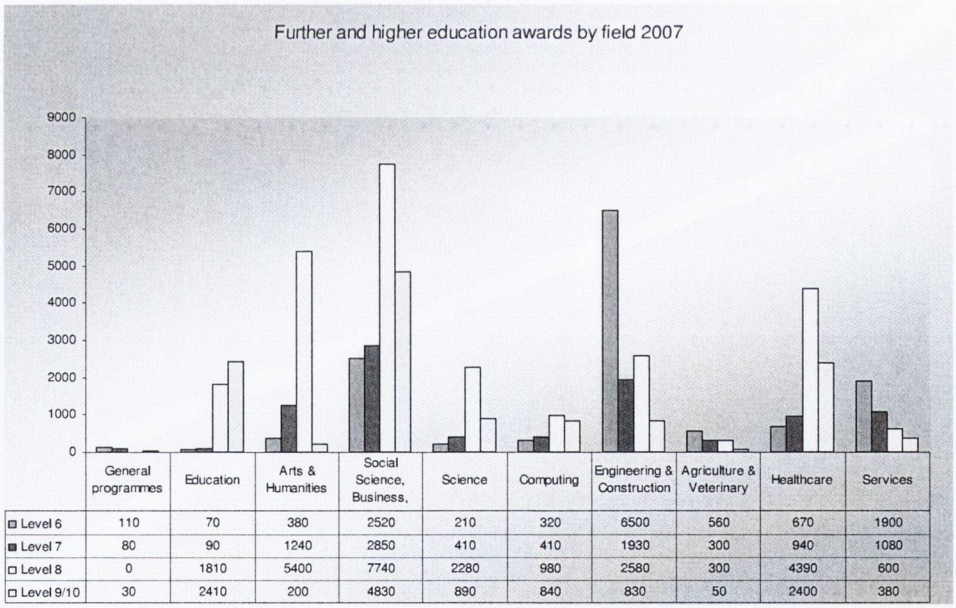


Data adapted from CSO (2008), DoES (2006), HEA (2007)

As noted previously, in an Irish context there is still some ambiguity relating to the starting point of tertiary education. With the introduction of the NFQ in 2003 the discussion now focuses on whether tertiary education

starts at level 6 or level 7. Skilbeck's (2003) report confined the tertiary sector to the universities, the higher education colleges and the IoTs. However, the 1999 Qualifications (Education and Training) Act and the subsequent launch of the NFQ (2003) has created opportunities for other providers (publicly-funded providers, private providers, and for-profit-providers) to apply to either FETAC or HETAC to have their courses recognised as national awards and placed on the NFQ. It is interesting to note that for the first time, in 2008, the two awards councils (FETAC, HETAC) and the HEA produced a joint report which charted the further, and higher education awards made in 2007. The further and higher education awards per field of education and training are presented in Table 13. The highest number of level 6 awards where located in the field of engineering and construction (n=6,500), while the highest number of both level 7 (n=2,850), level 8 (n=7,740) and level 9/10 (n=4,830) awards where in the field of social science and business.

Table 13, Awards by NFQ level and discipline/field 2006



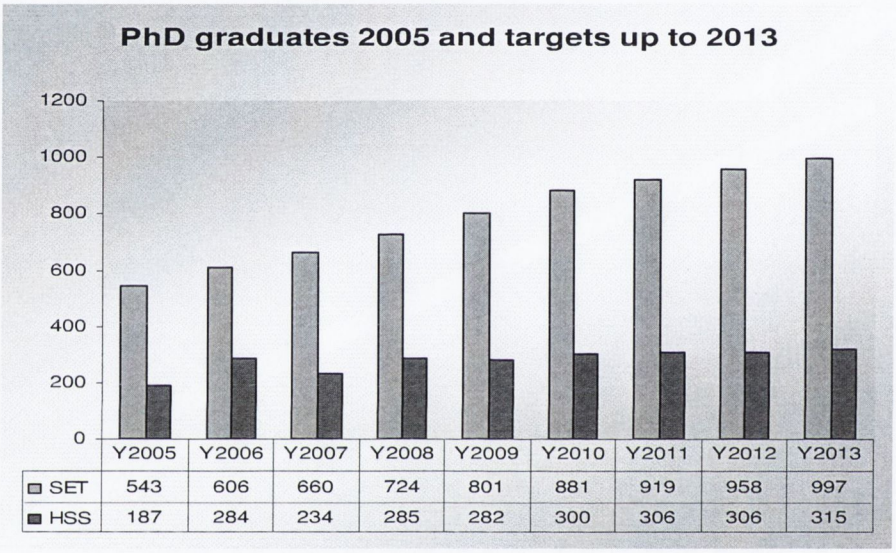
	General programmes	Education	Arts & Humanities	Social Science, Business,	Science	Computing	Engineering & Construction	Agriculture & Veterinary	Healthcare	Services
Level 6	110	70	380	2520	210	320	6500	560	670	1900
Level 7	80	90	1240	2850	410	410	1930	300	940	1080
Level 8	0	1810	5400	7740	2280	980	2580	300	4390	600
Level 9/10	30	2410	200	4830	890	840	830	50	2400	380

Data adapted from SLMRU/FAS (2009, p6) National Skills Bulletin

It is also interesting to note that the government's *Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation 2006-2013* (SSTI) is seeking to increase the number of PhD graduates particularly in the broad category of science, engineering and technology (SET). See Table 23 for projected figures.

However, from examining the awards made in 2006 at levels 9/10 (see Table 13) it is very clear that graduates choose to do programmes relating to the broad category of humanity and social science (HSS). Further, if the SSTI targets for SET PhDs are to be reached some concern must be focused on the level 8 graduates of 2006. These graduates are the future PhD students. However, the majority of 2006 graduates come from the category of HSS (n=13,140),[108] whereas in the SET category there is less then 50% of this at (n=5,840)[109].

Table 14, PhD targets for SET-HSS 2005-2013



	Y2005	Y2006	Y2007	Y2008	Y2009	Y2010	Y2011	Y2012	Y2013
SET	543	606	660	724	801	881	919	958	997
HSS	187	284	234	285	282	300	306	306	315

Data adapted from SSTI 2006, p29.

In terms of the structure and purpose of the tertiary education sector in Ireland there remains considerable divergence between the positions taken by prominent actors and sectoral representative associations[110]. An example of the different views is captured in two major reports which examined tertiary education in Ireland. The Skilbeck report (2003) recommended that Ireland move from a binary system towards an 'integrated tertiary education system' stating:

[108] This figure for HSS was obtained by combining two categories humanities and arts (n=5,400) and social science and business (n=7,740).

[109] This figure for SET was obtained by combining three categories, science (n=2,280), engineering and construction (n=2,580) and computers (n=980).

[110] Some of the main sectoral representative associations are: the Irish University Association (http://www.iua.ie/index.html), Institutes of technology Ireland (http://www.ioti.ie/), Dublin Institute of Technology (http://www.dit.ie/), Higher Education Colleges Association (http://www.heca.ie/aboutUs.php), Teachers Union of Ireland (http://www.tui.ie/), Irish Federation of University Teachers (http://www.ifut.ie/), Irish Business Employers Confederation (http://www.ibec.ie/IBEC/IBEC.nsf/vPages/home?OpenDocument).

> In place of the rigidities and dysfunctions of binary or bifurcated system of highly regulated institutions, what is proposed in its place is a series of moves, over time and through a wide array of specific arrangements, toward a more integrated tertiary system: a system, moreover, which recognises the value of a variety of players, public and private, formal and informal.
> (Skilbeck 2003, p6)

Whereas, the OECD (2004) examiners' report, *The Review of Higher Education in Ireland,* argued that Ireland should retain a differentiated tertiary education system, stating:

> That the differentiation of mission between the university and the institute of technology sectors is preserved and that for the foreseeable future there be no further, institutional transfers into the university sector.
> (OECD 2004, p22)

However, subsequent to these reports several factors emerged that began the process of integrating the tertiary sector. Legislation in 2006 (such as the IoT Act) brought both the university and non-university sectors under the strategic and fiscal administration of the one authority the Higher Education Authority (HEA). Also in 2006, the HETAC granted delegated degree-awarding authority to the institutes of technology, but it should be noted that the DIT is an awarding body in its own right as such, it did not need HETAC delegated authority. Further, in 2006 the government allocated over €500 million (2006-2010) for the Strategic Innovation Fund[111] (SIF) the primary aim being to enhance collaboration and co-operation between IHE (both university and non-university sectors). While, in practice, there is evidence of localised co-operation between academics, departments and schools from different higher education institutions and sectors, at structural level boundaries are still maintained. However, change is imminent mainly due to three emergent factors:

1) The demands that the current economic crisis is placing on tertiary education.
2) The embedding of the NFQ requires structural changes in recognition, access, transfer and progression.
3) Growing competition from private sector higher education providers.

[111] The Strategic Innovation Fund was open to competitive bidding by higher education institutes, the initiative sought to increase collaboration and co-operation in four thematic areas, restructuring, teaching and learning, fourth level and lifelong learning. Full details can be accessed from the HEA website at http://www.hea.ie/en/sif .

The reform of the Irish tertiary education sector is moving at a substantial pace, the McCarthy (2009) report on the public sector recommended numerous changes for tertiary education including the merger of two Dublin based IoTs with the DIT, the closure[112] of two other IoTs and the establishment of more formal functional collaboration between regional higher education institutions. How, precisely, the new fiscal change agenda will impact on shaping the development of tertiary education in Ireland in the future is a matter that currently challenges policy makers and stakeholders in the sector.

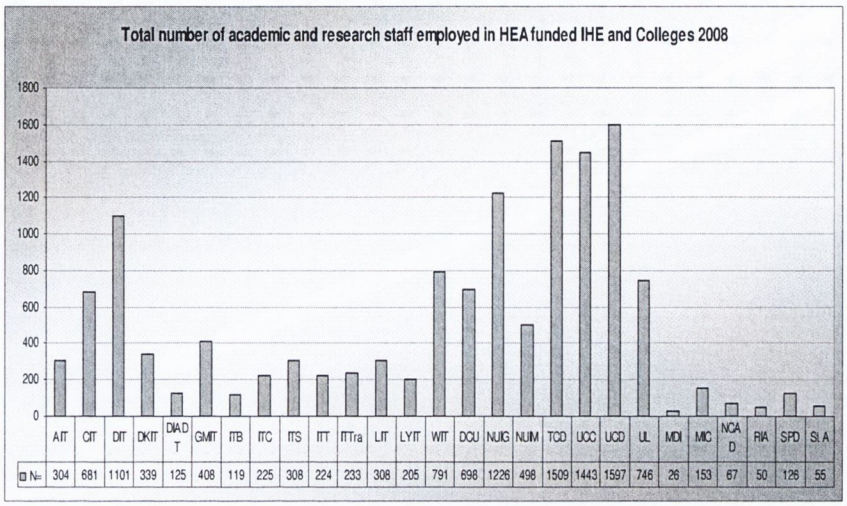
Profile of the academic workforce

According to the government's Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes (McCarthy 2009, p63), the third level education programme was allocated €1,813m in 2009 and this programme was implement by 20,873 staff (administration, technical, academics, researchers managers and other categories). Just focusing on the academic/research labour force, the DoES's (2009) *Education and Statistics Report* stated the total number of teachers/academics employed in the publicly-funded education sectors (primary, secondary and third level) in 2007-08 as 72,697. In the third level sector (universities, colleges and IoTs) the number of academic/research staff employed was 14,112. In comparison, according to the annual staff returns submitted to the HEA (2008), the total number of academic/research staff employed in the universities, colleges and IoTs was 13,665. When this figure is disaggregated into sectors it can be observed that the university sector employs the largest number 7,817, this is followed by the IoT sector, 5,371 and the colleges of higher education, 477. Utilising the HEA's 2008 staff returns, Table15 was constructed. This shows the total number of academic/researcher staff employed in each IHE. From the data it can be observed that the three largest employers are UCD (n=1,597), TCD (n=1,509) and UCC (n=1,443). In comparison the three IHE that employ

[112] Walshe (2009) claims that the rationalisation of the higher education sector (IoTs and universities) will lead to the closure of programmes and departments resulting in the lost of hundreds of jobs.

the smallest number of staff are MDI (n=26), RIA (n=50) and St.A (n=55).

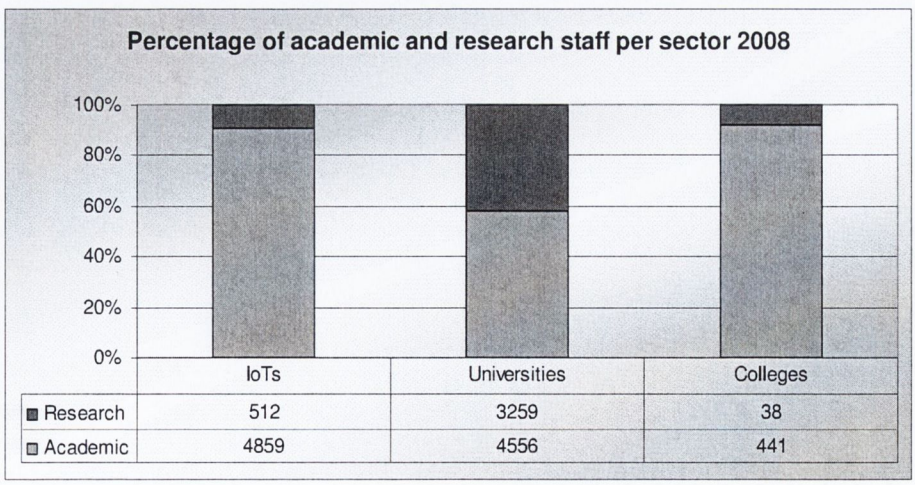
Table 15, Number of academic/research staff employed pre IHE 2008



Data adapted from HEA (2009)

In terms of the classification of workers as either academic staff or research staff the percentage different between the three sectors is presented in Table 16. From these data it is clear the university sector has a far greater percentage of staff focusing on research, over 41%, whereas the main focus of staff employed in both the IoT and colleges sectors seems to be teaching (over 90% of academic staff in this category).

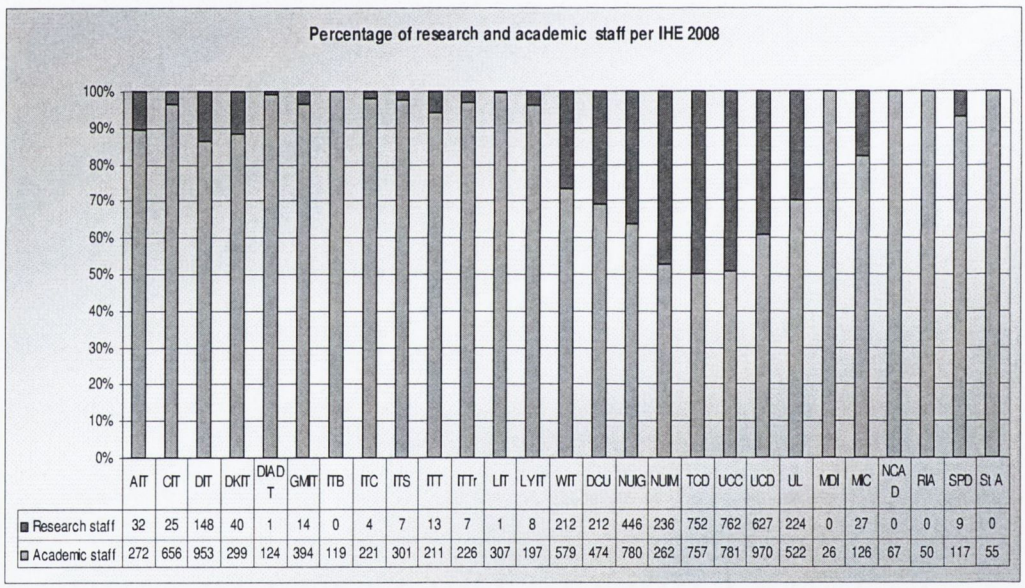
Table 16, Sectors, academic and research staff 2008



Data adapted from HEA (2009)

When the data are further disaggregated by individual institution and the percentage of research staff compared to academic staff, it becomes clear that the pattern of employment in the university sector has a strong focus on employing research staff (Table 17). In the university sector the IHE with the highest percentage of research staff is TCD (50%) and the lowest is UL (30%). In comparison, within the IoT sector WIT is the only IoT that is nearing a comparable research and academic staff profile similar to the universities with 28% of staff recorded as researchers and 72% as academics whereas none of the other IoTs, recorded more then 12% of their staff as researchers. These data suggest that the main focus of the IoTs is teaching and that research is in the early stages of capacity building.

Table 17, Academic - research staff per IHE 2008



	AIT	CIT	DIT	DKIT	DIADT	GMIT	ITB	ITC	ITS	ITT	ITTr	LIT	LYIT	WIT	DCU	NUIG	NUIM	TCD	UCC	UCD	UL	MDI	MIC	NCAD	RIA	SPD	St A
Research staff	32	25	148	40	1	14	0	4	7	13	7	1	8	212	212	446	236	752	762	627	224	0	27	0	0	9	0
Academic staff	272	656	953	299	124	394	119	221	301	211	226	307	197	579	474	780	262	757	781	970	522	26	126	67	50	117	55

Data adapted from HEA (2009)

From these data it is reasonable to note that the IoT sector seems to be focusing academic staff towards teaching duties in line with the objectives set out in the 1992 Acts. The university sector also seems to be following a traditional pattern of developing a strong research base in conjunction with teaching.

The academic contract of employment

While academic staff employed in the state-funded higher education sectors in Ireland are subject to labour law similar to workers in general, there are some areas where academic workers receive additional protection and unique privileges. For instance, the 1997 University Act and the 2006 IoT Act bestow the traditional principle of academic freedom on all academic workers in the universities and the IoTs. As such, academics have the right within the law to voice or put forward opinions, knowledge claims or research that are counter to the communally-held understandings, beliefs and values of society. In the university sector academics have more self-directed autonomy. They can develop their own programme content and chose their own research areas. In general, there is no contractual teaching hours workload specified in their employment contracts. There are some variations in employment contracts in the university sectors, as the universities have a certain amount of institutional autonomy, whereas, in the IoT sector academic staff have some autonomy in relation to making a contributing to programme content, they have no autonomy in relation to the numbers of hours they must teach. Staff in the IoT sector are employed under an agreed national employment contract, which specifies that lecturers teach 560 hours annually or 16 hours a week and assistant lecturers[113] teach 630 hours or 18 hours a week[114]. This high teaching workload has its origins in the college teacher[115] grade where the practice was 700 annual teaching hours or 20 hours a week. The high teaching workload in the IoT sector greatly reduces the opportunity for academic staff to become research active in a serious fashion compatible to academic staff in the university sector where the teaching workload can amount to 6 hours per week. In order to increase the number of research active staff in the IoT sector, institutes either relocate core grant funding

[113] Assistant lecturer was the new entry level grade in the IoT sector introduce in 1998 under the PCW national partnership agreement. Progression from AL to L has become a serious industrial relation issue: the TUI has brought numerous cases to the LRC.

[114] In the proposed Public Service Agreement (2010-2014) part 2 sectoral arrangements, all teachers, primary, secondary and lecturers in both the IoTs and universities are required to work a further one hour a week. Management will have the discretion to assign duties for this additional working hour. The proposed agreement contains no commitment to pay for this additional work.

[115] The college teacher grade became a serious industrial relation issues during 1989-1990. The TUI was taking a strong negotiation position claim that college teachers should be allowed to move onto the new lecturer grade in the RTCs. The outcome was that if college teachers had 5 years experience and taught more then 40% of their timetabled hours at 3rd level then they where eligible for interview for a lecturer position.

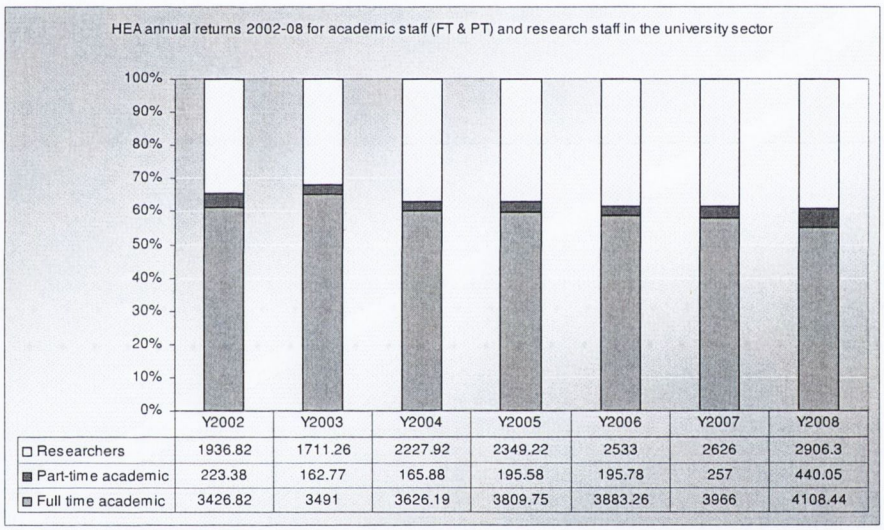
or raise finance from external funding sources to buy out teaching hours of academics who want to undertake research.

In general, there are two ways to gain employment in an IHE, one is as a newly appointed permanent member of staff and the other is as a part-time member of staff. Newly appointed permanent staff usually have to serve a 12 month probationary period before their employment contracts can be considered permanent. Once this occurs the new staff are put on the salary scale. In the university sector, after five to six years the staff member can apply to 'cross the bar' onto the lecturer grade. In the IoT sector there is an eight point scale after which staff can apply for progression[116] to the lecturer grade. Part-time teaching was considered as a flexible mechanism for an IHE to maintain teaching programmes during academic staff sickness, leave or sabbaticals, gradually departments and schools, whose budgets were capped or cut, began to rely on part-time teaching as a cost saving practice rather, then employing new, permanent staff. Some departments and schools utilised part-time employment as a selection procedure to assess whether the part-time member of staff had the aptitude, capacity and capabilities to become a permanent member of staff. Although under the Part-time Workers Act 2003, a part-time worker who has been employed for four years is entitled to a contract of indefinite duration (CID), it is worth exploring academic staff annual returns to ascertain whether there is an increase in the employment of part-time staff. To do this two sectors were explored the University and the IoT, from 2002 to 2008. The university sector is presented in Table 18. These data were obtained from HEA figures. Three categories are utilised, academic full-time staff, academic part-time staff and research staff. However, it should be noted that research staff are predominately appointed part-time or for a specific period, depending on external funding. From the data a trend is observable as full-time staff members increased from 2002 (n=3,426.82) to 2008 (n=4,108.44), so, too, did the

[116] While there is an agreed national criterion to be utilised for AL progression which most IoT apply, the directors of DIT and the HR department have continuously challenged the national criteria. DIT wants to utilise its own criteria, claiming that its needs to apply a higher higher standard than the other IoTs. The local TUI branch have contested DIT's position as a grave breach of a national agreement.

numbers of part-time and research staff. However, the proportional difference in percentage terms between full-time staff and both research and part-time staff increased substantially. In 2002 part-time staff accounted for 3.99% (n=223.38) and research staff 34% (n=1,938.83), whereas, in 2008 part-time staff accounted for 5.9% (n=440.05) a relative increase of 1.91%, and research staff stood at 38.98% (n=2,906.3) again, a relative increase of 4.98%. In relative terms this means that the full-time academic staff category experienced a 6.89% decrease over the same period. In a general sense these data support the claim that universities are employing more part-time teachers and more researchers and proportionally fewer full-time academic staff.

Table 18, Full-time and part-time staff in the university sector 2002-08



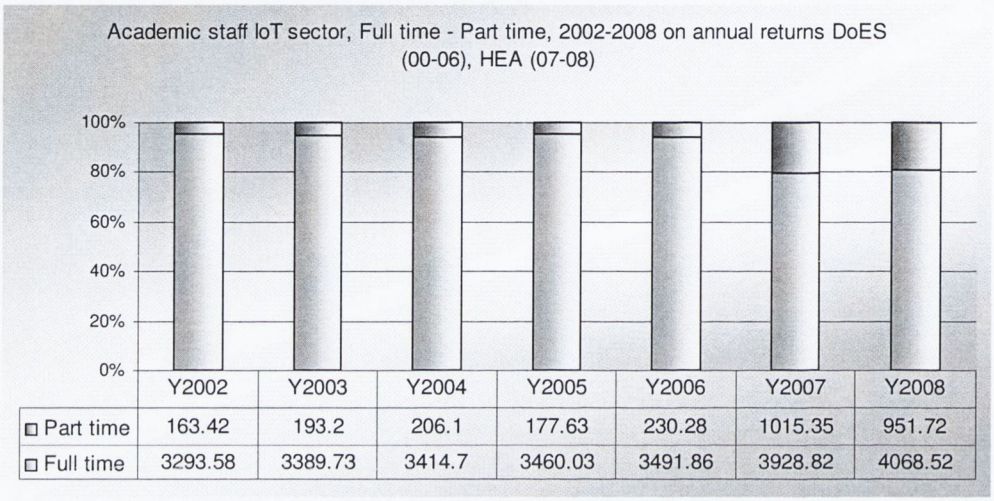
	Y2002	Y2003	Y2004	Y2005	Y2006	Y2007	Y2008
Researchers	1936.82	1711.26	2227.92	2349.22	2533	2626	2906.3
Part-time academic	223.38	162.77	165.88	195.58	195.78	257	440.05
Full time academic	3426.82	3491	3626.19	3809.75	3883.26	3966	4108.44

Data adapted from HEA Annual University Staff returns 2002-2008

Exploring the IoT sector for the same trend proved somewhat more difficult for two reasons, (a) access to accurate data on the number of research staff employed in IoTs before 2007 proved difficult to obtain and (b) responsibility for gathering staff returns moved from the DoES to the HEA in 2007. Each of these organisations utilised a different data gathering methods. Table 28 is made up of two sets of data, DoES 2002-2006 and HEA 2007-2008. The DoES data show an increase in the percentage of part-time staff employed. In 2002 part-time accounted for 4.7% (n=163.43) whereas, in 2006 part-time staff than amounted to 6.1% (n=230.28). This demonstrates a relative increase of 1.4%. However, the

HEA data suggest that in 2007 part-time staff represented 20% (n=1,015.35) of the academic staff employed in the IoT sector. This disparity between the two sets of data reduces the possibility of identifying a longitudinal trend (see Table 19). However, the HEA data are surprising, suggesting that nearly one in every five academics in the IoT sector are part-time.

Table 19, Full-time and part-time staff in the IoT sector 2002-2008



	Y2002	Y2003	Y2004	Y2005	Y2006	Y2007	Y2008
Part time	163.42	193.2	206.1	177.63	230.28	1015.35	951.72
Full time	3293.58	3389.73	3414.7	3460.03	3491.86	3928.82	4068.52

Data adapted from DoES 2002-2006, HEA 2007-2008

In general, both the university and the IoT sectors have experienced increases in academic/research staff numbers from 2002-2008. This expansion could be attributed to the expansion of student numbers and the positive economic climate. However, in 2009 the Department of Finance instructed the DoES and the HEA[117] that an Employment Control Framework was to be introduced immediately and no new staff appointments where to be introduced without prior permission from the Department of Finance. Furthermore, in 2009 the Department of Finance set a target for staff reduction of 5%. Also, during the same period several pay cuts where imposed on the public sector, such as indirect pay cuts through an income levy of 1-2%, substantial increase in superannuation and direct pay cuts imposed in the November 2009 Budget ranging from 3% to 15% of salary. The imposition of these cutbacks led to the collapse

[117] This was not the first time the department of Finance instructed the HEA to engaging in cut-backs. As noted by Clancy (1989, pp110-111) the 1988 budget '...heralded the most drastic cuts for HE...'

of the National Partnership Process[118], and a one day national strike organised by the four teaching unions[119] (ASTI, INTO, TUI and IFUT) and continued industrial action in the form of 'work to rule' tactics.

Changing nature of academic work

In the tertiary sector, particularly over the last decade, academic workplaces and academic work practices have been subject to numerous initiatives seeking either to restructure the organisation of the sectors/ institutions or reform programmes and practices in institutions. Gappa, Austin and Trice's (2007, p7) research on American faculty suggest that there are four main changes affecting higher education institutions and academic work, these are; 'fiscal constraints', 'calls for accountability', 'increased students enrolments' and 'the rise of the information age'. These changes can be associated with the Irish higher education experience. The factors that most directly affect the academic workers in their workplaces are ICT, quality and managerialism. In the 1990s ICT equipment was rarely seen (e.g. PC or laptop) in an academic worker's work space (office, lab or classroom), now ICT equipment abounds. Academic workers utilise ICT as a primary communications channel (email or internet) replacing post and telephone. Academic workers now carry out all their own secretarial and administrative function with the aid of ICT. ICT has become the new mode of knowledge management, knowledge gathering, knowledge dissemination and, increasingly, ICT software is colonising the teaching or pedagogical space. However, the utility of ICT is not confined to the academic workplace. Academic workers can access their work from home, at conferences, or on holidays through the internet. The virtual work environment enabled by ICT has now invaded the private space of academic workers. While academic workers now utilise ICT as a taken-for-granted piece of work equipment

[118] Collins (2009) article on the front page of the Irish Time (4/2/09) stated, 'Cowen proceeds with public sector pension levy despite talk's failure'. While the partnership talks stalled the government moved to impose severe public sector spending cuts which started with the introduction of a pension levy and short afterwards actual pay cuts.

[119] Interestingly Gleeson (2000, p20) observed that 'Teacher Unions are one of the most powerful blocks in the ICTU'. However, this did not prove to be the case, as both the IMPACT and SIPTU trade unions regularly out vote the teacher unions in ICTU.

or tool and as a social networking facilities for private usage, they are also providing their employers with information, such as the different times staff log onto their IHE domain, when they open their email browsers, what sites they visit, what software programmes they use most and what journal articles they access, a form of general electronic surveillance. Noble (1998) terms this as the colonisation of academic work space by ICT as the 'automation of higher education'. He makes a cautionary observation in relation to ICT and education stating:

> With the commoditisation of instruction, teachers as labour are drawn into a production process designed for the efficient creation of instructional commodities and hence become subject to all the pressures that have befallen production workers in other industries undergoing rapid technological transformation from above. In this context faculty have much more in common with the historic plight of other skilled workers than they care to acknowledge. Like these others, their activity is being restructured, via the technology, in order to reduce their autonomy, independence and control over their work and to place workplace knowledge and control as much as possible into the hands of the administration. As in other industries, the technology is being deployed by management primarily to discipline, de-skill and displace labour.
> (Noble 1998, p4)

Another area of academic work where there has been a shift in the 'locus-of-control' from the academic worker to non-academic administrators is quality assurance. Until the early 1990s academic workers in tertiary education institutions in Ireland operated in agreed regulatory frameworks in maintaining the standards and reputations of programmes and awards. Academic workers utilised their knowledge and expertise to develop, provide and monitor programmes. While different IHE utilised different approaches, in general, the systems were based on academic professionalism, judgement, value and practice. Academics in the university sector adopted a peer review process while state agencies adopted a light touch approach toward programme and award monitoring and evaluation. In the IoT sector academic staff operated a consultative process with industry and business in programme development and the DoES made the final judgement on whether a programme would run or not. However, in general, decisions relating to programmes (content, teaching, assessment, facilities, admissions and awards) where left to the

academics. During the late 1990s a more systematic and structured quality assurance regime emerged, which was built on technical language, procedure, standardisation and measurement. These quality assurance systems where incrementally introduced into the academic workplace. Academic decisions become subject to quality criteria. As the quality assurance regime advanced new specialised administrative positions were created such as quality assurance officers. As the regulatory framework of quality assurance became embedded in both national and European higher education policy[120], the role of the quality assurance officers became more central to the official functioning of IHE. The quality assurance regime colonised[121] the academic space and the academic decision making process, the quality assurance regulatory framework was now enforced by administrative quality assurance units. Academic work was subjugated to the doctrine of quality assurance and the new quality assurance procedural and bureaucratic hierarchy. While this quality assurance regime has impacted on academic workers by directly increasing their administrative workload, it is causing a more fundamental shift in the nature of academic work. Academics have to conceptualise their work within the quality narrative, have to redefine their disciplines within the construct of quality, and the power of academic judgement is now regulated by the evaluative decisions of the non-expert administrators and stakeholders (such as student evaluations). In addition, due to the current managerial restructuring of higher education which included the introduction of human resource management (HRM)[122] in the late 1990s[123] into IHE, it is now questionable whether academic workers can truly exercise individual autonomy in pursuit of their academic duty. It would seem that the agency of academic workers is gradually being restricted and controlled by the 'performativity' (Lyotard 1984) dogma of HRM. During successive

[120] For further, information see Kenny (2005) The quality discourse in higher education, *Level 3*.

[121] Fleming (2008, pp7-8) provides other examples of the colonisation of HE in the design of buildings and the spaces provided and the use of technology As such, e-learning in pedagogical practice.

[122] Wilson (1991) noted the introduction of HRM in the UK HE sector in the 1990s, linked this to the emerging managerialist trend that was expanding in the public sector.

[123] An example of this is the Labour Relations Commission report (1999) on the poor industrial relations that existed in DIT, particularly in the new management and the academic staff. The LRC recommended that a head of HR should be appointed, this happened in 2001 (grade head of school level). The HR function and unit has mushroomed with the appointment of a director of HR in 2005, the HR unit is now the biggest administrative unit in the DIT and can make decision at the highest organisational structure level. In DIT HR is not a support structure but, rather, it has become a strategic management unit, senior faculty managers turn to HR for permission to make certain decisions. Further, the poor industrial relations climate has continued to disimprove.

national agreements (e.g. *Sustaining Progress and Towards 2016*) the state pushed for the introduction of HRM into the higher education sector. HRM was promoted as a sophisticated management mechanism that could enable local managers to realise the full potential of their institutions' human resources (workers). The promise was based on the claims that HRM would lead to increased productivity, increased efficiencies and flexible work practices. HRM would also contribute to the establishment of a friendly workplace which was based on trust. This could reduce the adversarial industrial relations climate that existed in numerous IHE. However, HRM is more then a management tool, it is an ideological approach utilised to get the most out of the available resources. Fundamentally, HRM is about taking control over the organisation of work by propagating individualisation, promoting performance measures and competition between staff and maintaining workers' compliance through technocratic polices and procedures. The researcher considers the principle of HRM and the new economic imperative are accurately demonstrated in Ritzer's (2006) McDonaldisation thesis, namely:

1) 'Efficiency', reducing production input costs, reducing and regulating employees salaries, increasing productivity, increasing profit margins, increasing returns to senior managers and shareholders;
2) 'Calculability', every component part of the labour process, whether it is human or material or time can be itemised, labelled, commodified and has a unit cost value, this unit cost value is traceable, responsibility is foisted onto employees not to exceed unit cost value, any infringements receive sanctions;
3) 'Predictability', transferability of product, process, service across either national or international borders, the sameness of quality and service, uniformity of production process, produces and corporate cultures and
4) 'Control', new management techniques such as, human resource management, total quality management, and quality circles. In addition, the regulation of labour and trade unions, legal framework to control employment disputes and new mechanisms for the recruitment, retention and the dismissal of staff.

Most IHE now have HR departments, some IHE have even appointed HR personnel to senior management positions which are at the same level as a head of school or director. HR policy controls selection criteria,

recruitment[124] procedure, induction programmes, staff training and development, remuneration, promotion, performance measures, disciplinary procedures and industrial relations functions in many IHE. The academic managers at department and school level are now subject to the controlling influence of the HR units, matters relating to staffing (part-time teachers, researchers etc.) must go to HR for approval. Further, HR units in most institutions work in conjunction with the central finance department/unit in an endeavour to manage efficiently the labour costs of the institutions. Where labour cost-saving measures are identified such as part-time work contracts rather than full-time work contracts, employing tutors rather than teachers, restructuring programmes to cater for more students and less staff etc., it is the HR unit that develops policies and procedures to implement these cost saving strategies. HR units are also now responsible for the implementation of performance management development systems (PMDS), introduced in the national agreement *Towards 2016*. Over the last ten years, and to a larger extent in the IoT, sector the HR function has become embedded, senior academic managers (heads of school and even directors) now refer staff who have employment related questions to HR[125] for answers. It can be argued that while HR at first was a management tool and buffer zone between management and staff, it is now gaining a central function in the strategic and applied management of the organisation of IHE. As the HRM system becomes embedded in the organisation of work in general, and specifically in higher education it is worth considering, where is the resistance? Thomas (1993, p7) suggests that 'Resistance entails wildness. An appeal to our wild side invokes a call to reject inhibitions imposed by assumed meanings and to cultivate in their place the fiercely passionate and undomesticated side of our scholarly nature that challenges preconceived ideas.' While individual academics may be isolated and find it difficult to challenge and resist the march of HRM there are two

[124] Although it is worth noting the senior managers (university presidents and IoT directors) can act on their own initiative in recruiting high profiles academic/research staff. For example, see the president of UCD aggressive recruitment procedures (articles in the Sunday Business Post, 3/9/2006, p19) and President of NUIG who was accused of poaching staff.

[125] Jennings (2009) the General Secretary of IFUT, claims that HR departments in the university sector are using senior counsel to represent the IHE at Labour Court hearings (source Holden 2009, p16).

academic workers' representative groups, IFUT and the TUI, that offer academic workers organised mechanisms to challenge the dominant doctrine of HRM.

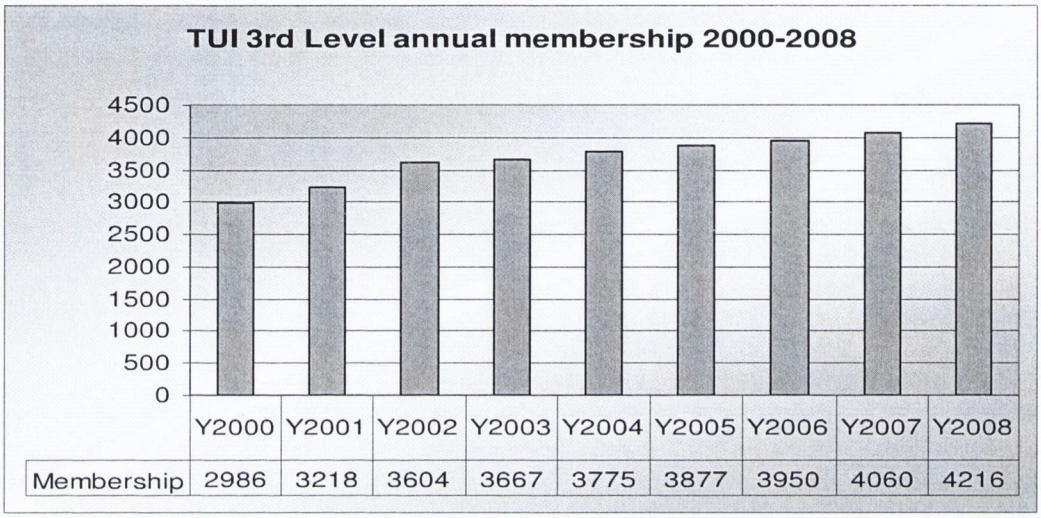
Trade unions, associations and representative organisations

In an Irish higher education context there are several representative organisations (trade unions) which have a licence to represent academic workers. The three main trade unions are the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT), the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) and the Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union (SIPTU). The TUI represents the interests of over 14,500 members who come from both the second level and third level sectors. In the third level sector the TUI accepts membership applications from part-time or full-time academic staff working in IoTs. In 2008 the TUI allowed research staff in the IoTs to apply to join. There where 4,216 members of the TUI in the third level sector in 2008. This represented 29% of total membership of the TUI. IFUT is a specialised trade union which represents academic and research staff in the university sector. In 2008 its membership was 1,853. While SIPTU is one of the largest trade union in the country claiming to representing over 200,000 members, in higher education SIPTU[126] is only licensed to represent academic workers in DCU, although it does accept members from non-academic grades in the universities and the IoT sector. As the number of research staff expanded in the higher education sector so too did the demand for representation. In some cases research representative organisations were formed such as in the Trinity Research Staff Association (2005) and the Association for Research and Contract staff UCC (2006) and in 2009 the Irish Research Staff Association was established as an umbrella group for all university research staff associations. The TUI and IFUT represent the largest number of academic staff in IHE: both of these trade unions have experienced growth in membership since 2000. Table 20 shows the TUI's[127] annual membership

[126] Several requests where made to SIPTU Education branch DCU (2006-2008) for academic and research annual membership numbers However, no information was returned to the researcher.
[127] The TUI annual membership figures for the third level sector where kindly supplied by the TUI membership section in March 2010.

numbers for the third level sector (IoTs). In 2000 this was 2,986, this rose to 4,216 in 2008, this represents an increase of 33.9% (n=1,430). Further, the TUI mandate is in the IoT sector and in 2008 the IoT sector employed 5,371 staff (academic n= 4,859, research n=512) of whom 78.49% where members of the TUI (n=4,216). The TUI is the single biggest representative trade union within the higher education sector in Ireland.

Table 20, TUI annual membership 3rd level 2000-2008



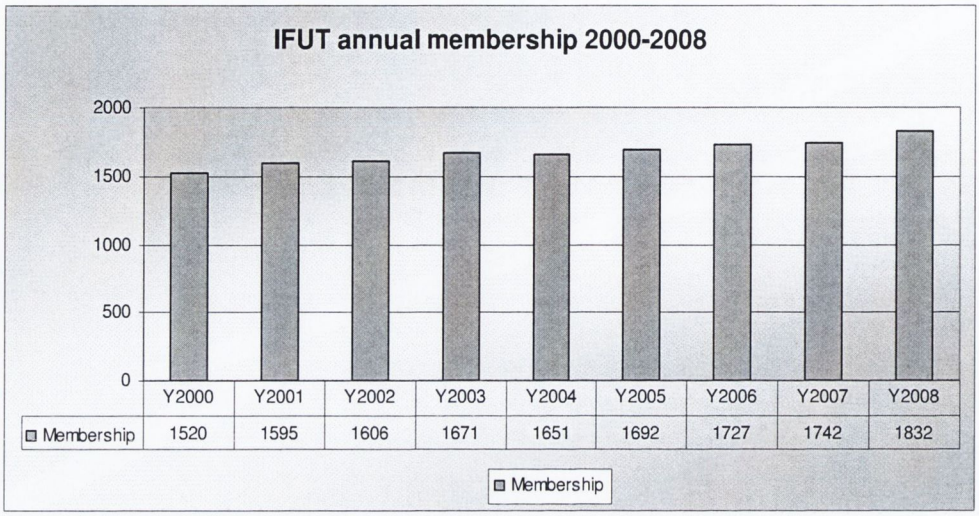
Source: TUI Membership Section.

Table 21 details IFUT[128] annual membership numbers from 2000-2008. IFUT, which represents the universities and colleges, As such, IFUT has experienced a moderate membership growth over the same period (2000-2008) of 17% (n=312). However, in order to establish the representative mandate of IFUT in the university staff population two items have to be considered: (A) academic and research staff in DCU (academic n=474, research n=212) are represented by SIPTU, therefore, this number has to be factored out. (B) IFUT's membership base mainly consists of academic staff, therefore, the population of research staff should be factored out (n=3,297). If we calculate for academic staff only in the universities and college and discount DCU (n=4,524) then IFUT has a mandate to represent 40.49% of academic staff in the university and colleges sector. However, if we include the academic and research staff employed,

[128] IFUT annual membership numbers were courtesy of the General Sectary's Office, September 2009.

discounting DCU (n=7,680), then IFUT represents only 23.85% of the academic and research staff in the university and colleges sector.

Table 21, IFUT annual membership 2000-2008



Source: IFUT General Secretary.

The employers (universities, colleges and IoTs) have, in general, two levels of representation: one focuses on policy and strategy and the other on industrial relations. In policy and strategy the university sector utilise the Irish University Association (IUA). The IUA was launched in 2005, it was previously known as the Conference of the Heads of Irish Universities (CHIU). The IoT sector is represented by the Institutes of Technology Ireland (IoTI) formerly known as the Council of Directors of the Institutes of Technology. The DIT is not a member of either association. While the sectors have different policy and strategy associations they share the same organisation when it comes to industrial relations, the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC). The IHE[129] utilised IBEC as an advisory and representative organisation in relation to staff industrial relations matters. In most cases the IHE use IBEC's services where local industrial relations issues cannot be resolved and are referred to other employment related statutory agencies such as the Equality Authority, the Labour Court or the Labour Relations Commission.

[129] An IFUT press release of 6th February, claimed that the seven universities paid nearly €900,000.00 in service fees to IBEC from 2004 to 2008.

Final comment

This chapter presented the modernisation agenda as evident in key European and Irish national policy initiatives. In particular, attention was given to difference conceptual models and structures of higher education in Europe and Ireland. The case of 'mass higher education' was identified as a contemporary trend in the USA and Europe. The Irish model and structure of higher education were outlined and relevant milestone policy initiatives were detailed. Higher education as a workplace was explored, followed by the development of a working definition of 'academic work'. This definition was used to inform the research strategy utilised for this thesis. The key components of academic work were identified as teaching and research, distinctions were made between academic work in the university and non-university sectors. Modern trends in the management and control of the organisation academic work, such as HRM, were critically detailed. It was argued that the modernisation agenda is promoting a managerialist, performance-based culture and that this is gradually eroding the traditional collegial culture which was central to the operations of universities. Finally, two higher education academic workers' representative organisations (TUI and IFUT) were presented and a brief profile of the membership of these groups was given.

In the next chapter consideration is given to developing thinking tools to inform the research's conceptual framework, research methodology and methods, research design, sampling, data gathering and the analysis framework. Provisional profiles of the sample group and the response rate will be outlined.

Chapter 4: Concepts, methodology and methods

> Theory building relies on a few general constructs that subsume a mountain of particulars.
> (Miles and Huberman 1994, p18)

This chapter locates and details some of the thinking processes that led to the construction of a conceptual framework for the research. Some philosophical considerations are outlined and questions relating to the research paradigm and worldview are addressed. This chapter provides a detailed account of the three methodologies and how they where combined. The rationale for utilising mixed methods is described, the research design is mapped out and the type of sampling procedures used for both the research interviews and online survey are presented. In addition, the protocols developed to deal with research ethics are outlined.

Towards the constructing of a conceptual framework

A conceptual framework provides the layout, blueprint or master template for a piece of inquiry. It provides details on theory, concepts, methodology, methods and practice that bound the inquiry. Developing a conceptual framework is not always a straightforward task. Many considerations have to be explored, the nature and purpose of the inquiry, the social context of the inquiry, the availability and sources of data, the researcher's values and beliefs, available resources, capacity, capabilities and the intended readership. These are just some of the many items researchers deliberate and reflect upon before they make decisions about the type of conceptual framework to develop for the inquiry. Crucial to this decision-making process is the perception the researcher holds in relation to knowledge. On this subject Creswell (1998) states:

> Knowledge is within the meanings people make of it: knowledge is gained through people talking about their meanings: knowledge is laced with personal biases and values: knowledge is written in a personal, up-close way: and knowledge evolves, emerges and is extricable tied to the context in which it is studied.
> (Creswell 1998, p 19)

Creswell firmly links the concept of knowledge to the social field of human agency and social and cultural interaction, while, at the same time, making allowances for variables such as bias, values and context specificity.[130] For this thesis the researcher adopts a similar type of pragmatic view on knowledge, locating the essence of knowledge in the psychological, social and creative endeavours of humans as they evolve in a social setting. This approach has resonance with *macro* concepts relating to social formation and stratification such as Bourdieu's concepts of 'social capital' and 'cultural capital' and Gramsci's analysis of 'hegemony' as a social control process. If knowledge is a socially constructed phenomenon then it is open to both passive and coercive forms of social control influencers.[131] This occurs at different levels of social engagement, the family unit, peer group, social networks, the community, both formal and informal education, the workplace and national and international agencies. Influencers that either implicitly or explicitly persuade, induce, direct or shape the construction of meaning and knowledge are quite prevalent in modern societies, which have advanced information communications infrastructures. In this social constructivist paradigm, higher education is a contested zone when it comes to knowledge, knowledge production, knowledge claims and the transmission of knowledge.

Philosophical considerations

In order to develop a 'research strategy' (Blaikie 2007) to facilitate this research, the researcher felt it was necessary to locate a conceptual framework that allowed for the development of understanding and the interpretation of meaning specific to the social context of academic workers and their real life experiences. From the researcher's exploration of social research paradigms and their knowledge claims and warrants, the researcher began to focus on the constructivist paradigm; this decision

[130] Context specificity includes factors such as ethnicity, culture, geographical location, social stratification and gender. It is a general term used to encapsulate the social context a person finds him/herself in now. It is informed by lived experiences and knowledge acquired.

[131] The usage of the word influencers here is linked to the social transmission of norms, mores, values, beliefs and culture. In modern society influencers are evident for example in the broadcasting media and ICT facilities. Large corporations, industry and nation states spend vast amounts of money on advertisement campaigns in overt attempts to shape peoples opinions, attitudes, beliefs and understandings of the world.

was mainly influenced by the works of Blaikie (2007), Creswell (1998), Guba and Lincoln (1989) and Denzin and Lincoln (1998). Constructivism places human knowledge, meaning and understanding in a social context, through engagement with the real-world, life experiences, actions and observations: reality is interpreted and meaning socially constructed. Creswell (1998, p 9) states the importance of philosophical issues in social research, suggesting that they are 'inextricably linked to procedures'. He further notes his limitations and field of expertise, 'I am not a philosopher of education but, rather, a research methodologist' and therefore Creswell positions philosophical issues in the background of his inquiry process. The ontological position which the researcher considers most appropriate to personal beliefs and most useful to inform this piece of social research is the 'idealist' train of thought. The principal premise is that external reality is subjective, based on the impressions, ideas and experiences of the individual. Meanings are constructs of reality, which are intrinsic to the human mind. According to Guba and Lincoln (1989, p 85) the constructivist paradigm incorporates three overarching beliefs; ontology, epistemology and methodology, these are summarised below:

> *Ontology* [what is real?] In the constructivist paradigm this is relativist, the explicit assumption is that 'truth', knowledge, reality are social constructions, which are relevant to the conceptual understanding and sophistication at the time. Truth is subjective and open to change: it is "ungoverned by natural laws".
> *Epistemology* [how do we know?] According to the constructivist paradigm adopts a subjectivist approach to social inquiry, the process of the investigation leads to the construction of understanding(s), the inquirer is not objective and detached, but, rather, a collaborative agent involved with others in the social phenomenon.
> *Methodology* [how do we find out?] In the constructivist paradigm is based in hermeneutics, which asserts that interpretation and explaining involves a continuous process of gathering, analysing, critiquing, gaining understanding and interpreting. This is a cyclical process, the development of meanings and understandings are not definitive, but, rather, this is a social process of re-engagement with the newly constructed beliefs in order to develop a deeper and richer understanding and evaluate the substance of the new beliefs.

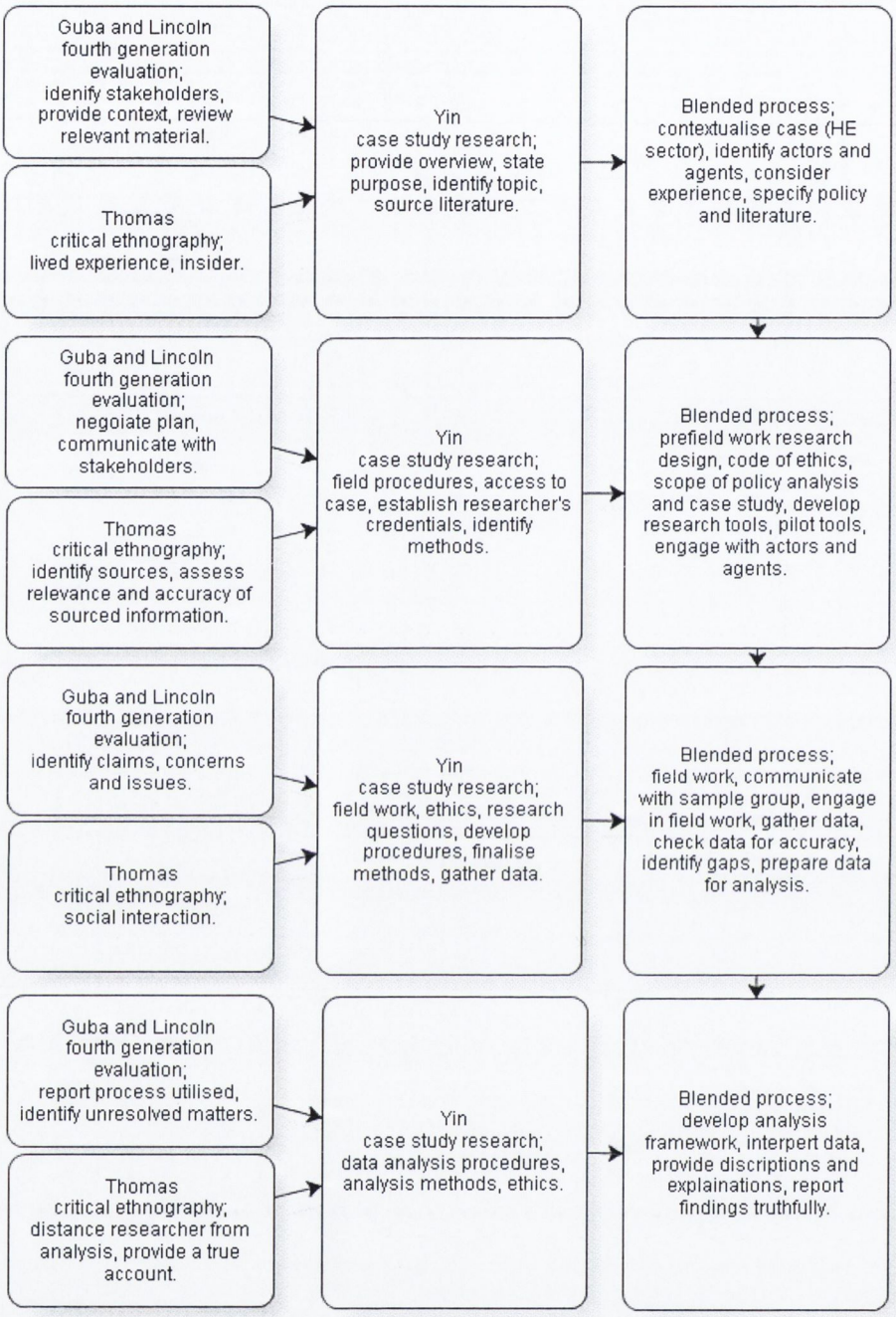
The research approach utilised in this thesis is located in what Guba and Lincoln (1989, p84) term constructivism, with the fundamental ontological assumption being that 'realties' are socially constructed based on 'information', 'sophistication' and social 'consensus'. The epistemological

assumption is 'monistic subjectivist', as such the researcher and those researched mutually contribute to the construction of meaning based on the outcome of the research process. The methodology is located in hermeneutics which consists of a continuous dialectic of iteration which informs the process of analysis, critique and construction of meaning. In this paradigm decisions on what methods to utilise are based on purpose and appropriateness. The paradigm does not make specific requirements on the particular types of methods that should be used.

Blended thinking tool

Moving towards a conceptual framework necessitates the provision of details relating to the researcher's emerging thought processes. To do this it is necessary to start introducing theory and practice considerations in order to begin contextualising the research. This is an action-orientated process located in the notion of *praxis*. It will contribute towards making the orientation of the inquiry more explicit and developing it into a real-world context (Table 22). A blended thinking tool was constructed from Yin's (1984) 'case study' in addition, components were incorporated both from Guba and Lincoln's (1989) 'fourth generation evaluation' and Thomas's (1993) 'critical ethnography'. The intent was to create a practical framework for direct application in the field, in particular the gathering of data, the collating and processing of data, the interpreting of data and how this practically fits into the overall research approach. Key items from the previously mentioned authors' theories are positioned in the columns on the left hand side. These are blended in the first column in accordance with the research procedure (contextualising, pre-fieldwork, field work, data and follow-up). The conceptual framework in Table 22 identifies the researchers' positionality. The purpose is to provide the reader with an insight into the thinking process of the researcher from the early stage of the research process.

Table 22, Conceptual framework a blended approach



As the research process matured over the duration of the research the conceptual framework was refined to deal with the problems that arose when abstract thinking was applied to real-world situations. This section provided details relating to the researcher's position in the research worldview. The constructionist paradigm was the paradigm of choice. As such, this worldview had a direct impact on the methodologies and methods that are utilised and how they are used. Finally, a model of the

research process was presented and the three sources of data where outlined. In the next section the methodologies and methods will be presented. This is followed by some information about the field work and descriptions of the gathered data.

Research methodology, from theory to practice

> In the modern world the category of intellectuals, understood in this sense, has undergone an unprecedented expansion. The democratic-bureaucratic system has given rise to a great mass of functions which are not justified by social necessities of production, though they are justified by the political necessities of the dominant fundamental group.
> (Gramsci 2005, p13)

This chapter charts the movement in the research thinking process from the abstract to 'real-world' considerations; from theory to practice. This includes consolidating the thinking process relating to the research, thinking before doing, thinking about doing, thinking while doing and reflection on what will be done. This thinking process moved from broad abstract conceptualisation to theoretical consideration to practice and then cognitive reflection. In essence, a research strategy is constructed and a research plan is drafted. The research strategy developed for this thesis is detailed in the approach, paradigm and framework. In this process questions of credibility are also addressed, as well as the research ethics model that was developed. The rationale for utilising components of three methodologies is presented, this includes outlining their practical application and identifying issues or problems that arose during the research. Finally, a detailed account of the research design, the research methods and descriptions of all the research tools that were developed is outlined.

Mapping out the research framework

From reviewing literature, processing information and thinking about theoretical considerations and basic assumptions on, methodology and methods, a research framework map was constructed, as presented in Table 32. This provides details relating to the hierarchical structure of the

research, identifies the theoretical domain, and provides links to the practical research methods. Table 23, serves as a master plan or blueprint for the research approach to be utilised in this thesis. It signposts major themes (methodologies and methods), it denotes the direction the research took take. It could be considered a master plan that informed all other aspects of the research such as the research questions, research design, data gathering and data analysis. It details both the theoretical and practical intention of the research and mirrors the researcher's own worldview.

Table 23, Mapping out the research approach

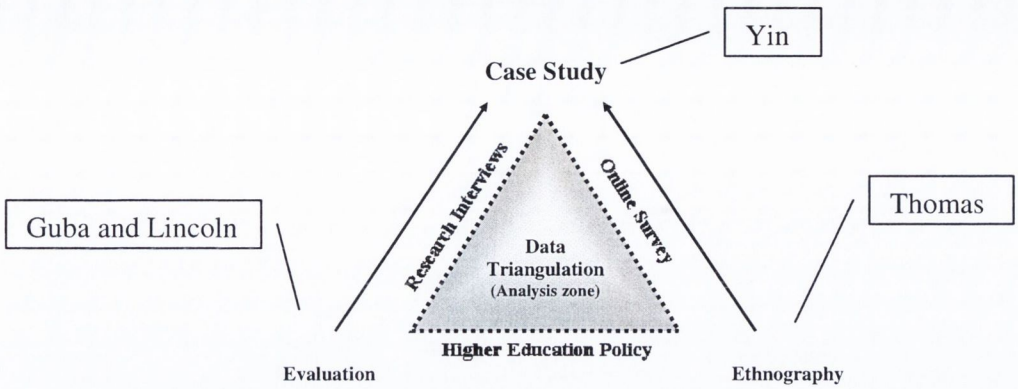
Mapping out the research approach	
Locating concepts, theory and practice informing the research strategy and design	
Constructionist paradigm: Basic assumptions or world view which will guide the development of the research approach. The belief that dominant positions need to be critiqued and where necessary challenged.	*Ontology :* Realties are socially constructed, can be specific to the individual or have a shared perspective, for example social class, cultural groups or professional bodies. *Epistemology* The researcher and researched social dynamic enables meaning construction through interpretation of what is known and understood.
Methodology: Locating the discipline, procedures and processes that will inform the methods.	*Modes:* Case study informed by fourth generation evaluation, and critical ethnography, in addition, supported by critical ethics.
Methods: The ways and tools the inquiry will utilise practically.	Policy analysis (EU and national), Research interviews (face to face by purposive sample), Questionnaire (online survey by representative sample).
Focus: The areas, items and actors that the research focused on.	Academic worker (human capital and labour process) Areas: teaching, research, career, other duties, voluntary activities. Lived experience (attitudes, experience and opinions)

Note, adapted from Guba, Lincoln (1989), Denzin, Lincoln (1994), Trowler (1998), Ball (2008) and Blaikie (2007).

Three is better then one?

The methodology was mainly located in the domain of non-numeric (qualitative) research although some numeric data were gathered either to substantiate or contradict the non-numeric data. This was achieved by gathering and analysis of data from three different data sources (interview data, survey and text narratives). The principal methodological approach was based on (1) Yin's case study methodology this was informed by both (2) Guba and Lincoln's fourth generation evaluation and (3) Thomas's

critical ethnography. These are discussed in detail in this chapter. All of these methodologies are congruent with the constructionist paradigm.



The primary function of this type of combined methodological approach was to increase the rigour and credibility of the research, while, at the same time, providing a framework for depth and richness in descriptions, explanations and exploration. This approach can be considered to be a form of methodological triangulation. As stated previously, the methodology informs the methods:

1) A series of in-depth, face-to-face research interviews with actors in the field.
2) Literature and policy analysis from a critical perspective.
3) An online survey of academic workers in the Irish higher education sector.

The rationale for this was to increase the creditability of the data by comparing and contrasting data from different sources during the analysis. While the main focus of the research was on academic workers and their 'lived experience', this was, however, originally confined to five key thematic areas that are relevant to academic work, these were 'teaching, research, career, other duties and voluntary work'. A contextual account of the research field (higher education) will be provided from both an '*emic*', insider perspective drawing on localised knowledge and an '*etic*', outsider account ascertained from agents and text narratives.

The case study methodology

Creswell identities the 'case study' as one of five qualitative research design traditions the other four being, the biographical, phenomenology,

grounded theory and ethnography. According to Creswell (1998, p61) a 'case study' consists of exploring a 'bounded system' over a period of time while gathering multiple sources of data in great detail. The focus of a case study inquiry may be confined to an 'individual, an activity, an event or a program'. Further, the case study method requires the researcher to develop the context of the case. This includes locating the case in its setting, detailing the origins of the case and providing descriptions of the case. Robson (2000, p51) cautions the prospective researcher on the usage of the case study, suggesting that, while there is a long tradition of case study inquiry in numerous disciplines, there is, however, a need to consider the question of research rigour? In order for case study to be judged rigorous, a detailed and systematic approach must be utilised during the research design stage. Robson defines a rigorous case study thus:

> A case study is a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon in its real life context using multiple sources of evidence.
> (Robson 2000, p5)

In this statement Robson locates case study as a research approach rather, than a method it is an approach based on evidence gathered from multiple sources relating to a specific real-world occurrence. The rigorous case study is thus agued to be a legitimate research approach that can be utilised by both the so called 'hard' science and 'soft' science research paradigms (Robson 2000, pp56-61). The case study approach is mostly utilised for research on human action and the social world. Denscombe claims:

> The case study approach works best when the researcher wants to investigate an issue in depth and provide an explanation that can cope with the complexity and subtlety of real life situations.
> (Denscombe 2008, p28)

Denscombe (2008, p38) also notes that the case study approach can be utilised as an 'inductive' inquiry approach seeking to discover something by providing descriptions explorations, comparisons, or as a 'deductive' approach endeavouring to test theory through explanations, illustration

and experiments. However, Denscombe (2008) notes that the unique characteristic and key point to consider when developing a case study is that the case must have specific attributes that are relevant and identifiable to the subject of the investigation. As such, the case needs to have defined boundaries which are clearly marked out from the start of the research process. To this we can add there are several types of case study research: some types consist of a single case study while other types utilise multiple case studies. Stake (2005, p445-447) categorises case studies into three types. The 'intrinsic' case study, is utilised where the researcher wants to gain understanding and the case is the central component of the research. The 'instrumental' case study is used to examine an issue or theory, the case is one part of the research. The 'collective' case study is where more then one case study is used, sometimes called multiple cases. While Stake locates his case study types with the rationale and purposes for the research, Yin (1989, p46-59) relates his case study types to research design and units of analysis, proposing four types of case study design presented as a matrix, Diagram 1 is a reconstruction of Yin's (1989) case study types matrix.

Diagram 1, Basic types of case study designs

	Single case designs	Multiple case designs
Holistic (single unit of analysis)	Type 1	Type 3
Embedded (multiple units of analysis)	Type 2	Type 4

Note, adapted from Yin (1989, p46)

The two types of single case study design are: Type 1, Single case study holistic, utilised where there is one main case which has one level (unit) of data which is identifiable and accessible to the researcher. Type 2, Single case study embedded, utilised where there is one main case which has several levels or subunits of data which are identifiable and accessible to the researcher. Yin notes the rationale for choosing a single case study design is informed by several considerations: (a) the single case can be

used as a 'critical case' to test theory, (b) the single case represents a rare occurrence or 'unique case' and (c) the single case provides 'revelatory' opportunity for the researcher to study a new or emerging phenomena. The two other case study designs are: multiple case study holistic (Type 3) utilised where there is several cases which share common characteristics and where there is one level (unit) of data which is identifiable and accessible to the researcher. Multiple case study embedded (Type 4) where there is numerous cases that may or may not share common characteristics and where there is more then one level (sub unit) of data. While multiple cases provide a rich source of data Yin (1989, p53) cautions that is not a good enough reason to utilise multiple cases, rather, 'replication' and 'prediction' (similar to experimental designs) should be the underlying logic for utilising multiple case studies. As such, Yin's 'multiple case study design' provides a bridge between hard science and soft science, a qualitative approach can be utilised in a quantitative fashion. Indeed, Yin presents the case study as a research approach that can easily utilise combined research methods such as surveys and interviews. Furthermore, Yin's criteria for judging the quality of case study research which are construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliabilities, are clearly located in the narrative of the positivist approach and quantitative research technique. Conversely, Stake (2005) utilises more post positivist criteria such as triangulation stating:

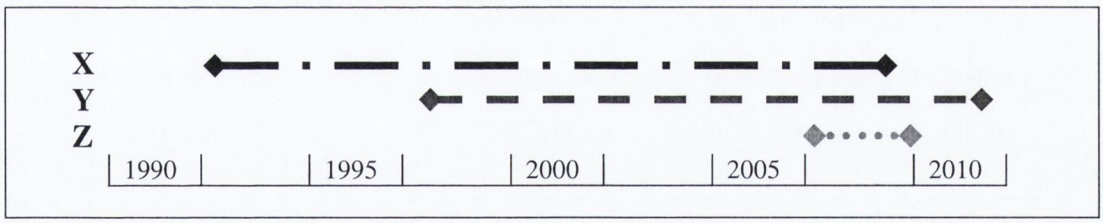
> To make empirical data more objective and less subjective, the researchers use explicative, falsification and triangulating methods. Good case study research follows disciplined practices of analysis and triangulation to tease out what deserves to be called experiential knowledge from what is opinion and preference.
> (Stake 2005, p455)

This thesis endeavoured to apply the concept of triangulation at several levels, triangulation of methodologies (case study, evaluation and ethnography) and triangulation of methods (text interviews and survey). Furthermore, a form of triangulation was considered when the units of analysis were first identified. This was done at the *macro* level-international agents and European policy at the *meso level*-national agents

and national policy and *micro* level-academic workers and IHE. In addition, the case study utilised in this research is a 'single embedded case study design' (Yin 1989) the focus on inquiry is of academic work and the case is bounded by both time and place. The focus of the case is on academic workers and their opinions, attitudes and experiences related to three main thematic areas teaching, research and career. As such, there were three 'units of analysis' consisting of HE policy text documents, agents and actors audio interviews and a survey of academic workers'. The location of the case study is the Republic of Ireland, the case is confined to the publicly-funded higher education sector in Ireland specifically the seven universities the 14 IoTs and the four colleges. All these IHE have a distinct linkage in that they come under the remit of the HEA. There were three time lines utilised for this case study:

1) Time line 'X' refers to the policy period which is of interest to the research.
2) Time line 'Y' denotes the researcher's personal involvement in the HE sector as an academic worker.
3) Time line 'Z' details the research gathering period when the interviews and survey was carried out.

Diagram 2, Time lines relevant to case study



The fourth generation evaluation component of the methodology

For Guba and Lincoln (2001, p1) evaluation is "one of three basic forms of disciplined inquiry, the others being research and policy analysis". Guba and Lincoln (1985) claim that evaluation evolved through four generations Table 24 provides a summary of these stages.

Table 24, The four generations of evaluation

Type	Characteristics
First generation evaluation.	Consisted of 'measurements', utilising empirical tools such as questionnaires, IQ batteries and personality inventories which seek to utilise standardised norm tables to make comparative measures. An example of this approach is Binet and his IQ test which played a major part in the development of modern psychometric tests. The author correlates this concept of evaluation with characteristics found in quality assessment, namely measurements and empirical data.
Second generation evaluation.	Was based on 'description', reporting on the strengths and/or weakness of a project/programme of evaluand (the subject of the evaluation) according to specific criteria. An example of this approach is Tyler's work on curriculum development. The author compares this theory of evaluation to characteristics in quality assurance, namely describing standards and procedures and then estimating the effect.
Third generation evaluation.	Consisted of making 'judgements'. This entailed utilising methods from both of the previous generations, but went further, and makes a ruling or cast a verdict on the project/programme or 'evaluand'. The author draws a parallel between this evaluation idea and characteristics in contemporary quality assurance, namely seeking to make improvements by making judgements on process and programmes.
Fourth generation evaluation.	Which is the approach adopted in this thesis is constructivist, is based on negotiation and the construction of understanding and meaning by those involved in the project/programme or evaluand. The author connects this evaluation paradigm to the enhancement model of quality, in that they are both collaborative and participatory in nature, do not rely solely on measurements and are not risk averse.

Note, adapted from Guba and Lincoln (2001)

Table 25 gives a quick summary of the key features of the four generations of evaluation, time period and authors. The researcher correlates quality items (in similar characteristics) against each generation of evaluation, it is worth noting that each of these four evaluation generations are still in operation. The choice of evaluation method depends on the individual elevators preferred theoretical framework and the evaluand's specifications as to which one of the generations is employed to accomplish a specific task.

Table 25, Summary of Guba and Lincolns' evolution of evaluation

Evaluation evolution and quality items				
Period	*Generation*	*Features*	*Proponents*	*Quality*
1900	First	Measurement/technical	Binet/Terman	Assessment
1940	Second	Description/weakness/strengths	Tyler	Assurance
1960	Third	Judgements/decisions	Cronbach/Stake	Assurance
1980	Fourth	Constructs/negotiation	Guba/Lincoln	Enhancement

Adopted from Guba, Lincoln (1985), quality and theorist.

Greene (2003, p 594, cited in Denzin and Lincoln 2003), claims that there are four contemporary evaluation 'genres':

- Post-positivism, which focuses on accountability and efficiency.
- Utilitarian, which focuses on managerial effectiveness.
- Interpretativism and constructivism, which focus on understanding and contextualisation.
- Critical social science, which focuses on emancipation and empowerment.

Greene (2003, p596) links Guba and Lincoln's Fourth generation evaluation to the critical social science genre, which he claims is openly ideological in nature and explicitly advances a particular value-loaded agenda. However, Guba and Lincoln (1985, pp31-39) considered three main flaws in the first three generations of evaluation. These are summarised in Table 26.

Table 26, Flaws in first three generations of evaluation

Guba and Lincoln Flaws in first three generations of evaluation
(1) 'A tendency towards managerialism'
This argument rests with the 'locus of control' the manager as the commissioner of the evaluand can decide to remain outside (detached) from the evaluation process. If there is failure identified in the evaluation the manager accepts no responsibility and can delegate blame to others.
(2) 'Failure to accommodate value-pluralism'
Here the debate centres on values of the evaluators', values pertinent to the particular paradigm, values of the stakeholders and commissioners of the evaluation. The contention is that the scientific paradigms claim to be 'value free', objective and impartial. Guba and Lincoln allege that 'every act of enquiry whether evaluation research or policy analysis becomes a political act in this sense'. Therefore, all inquiry is not value free.
(3) 'Over-commitment to the scientific paradigm'
The assumption is that an over-reliance on the scientific paradigms methodologies results in 'context stripping', measurements without milieu which, therefore, reduce the potential for interpreting meaning.

Note, adapted from Guba and Lincoln (1989)

Guba and Lincoln (1985, p39) argue that the 'responsive constructivist evaluation' *priori* in boundaries and specifications is qualitatively different from the *priori* of the first three generations of evaluation, in that

rather than the *priori* being established by the commissioner of the 'evaluand' and the evaluator, the responsive constructivist evaluation establishes a *priori* 'though an interactive, negotiated process that involves stakeholders and that consumes a considerable portion of time and resources available' (1985, p39). They state that this mode of evaluation focuses on stakeholders and their concerns, claims and issues. Guba and Lincoln develop their concept of stakeholder by providing classification criteria: stakeholders within an 'evaluand' can be located in three broad grouping in the purpose and outcome of the evaluation process see Table 27.

Table 27, Guba and Lincoln, stakeholders and categories

4th Generation Evaluation, stakeholders and categories	
Stakeholders	
'Agents'	• These are the commissioners of evaluation, the principal decision makers, the funders and the evaluator's client.
'Beneficiaries'	• These are the direct focus of the evaluation, the target population, and, indirectly, all other recipients that may gain from or contribute to the evaluand.
'Victims'	• All those who, either directly or indirectly, experience an adverse or negative impact from the outcome of the evaluand.
Categories	
'Claims'	• Positive aspect within the evaluand.
'Concerns'	• Negative aspect within the evaluand.
'Issues'	• Items of reasonable disagreement within the evaluand.

Adapted from Guba and Lincoln (1985, pp40-45).

The critical ethnography component of the methodology

The critical ethnographic component of this thesis research was based on engaging in critical reflective practice from an insider perspective, by operating in several different roles (see Table 28).

Table 28, The researchers' roles

Categorisation of researcher as a social actor in the social research process in : Actor roles, research positionality and sensitivity.		
Roles	**Positionality**	**Sensitivity**
Academic Worker	Insider	Experience gained from *praxis* of working in the higher education sector, pedagogy and programme construction, teaching, assessment and evaluation, cultural capital.
Researcher	Interpreter	Practical application of research in the social environment: know how, know what, know and why.
Student	Participant	The acquisition and dissemination of knowledge claims and human capital as adult learner in lifelong learning.
Trade union Activist	Protagonist	Active social engagement in industrial relations, management critique, policy critique, agenda setting and social capital.
Self	Reflexivity	Self-consciousness, class consciousness, critical awareness of both the external social environment and internal psychology of agency.

The theoretical underpinning of the critical research approach utilised is located in the work of Thomas (1993) *Doing Critical Ethnography.* He cautions those carrying out critical ethnographic research not to fall into several traps and gives advice on how to overcome these traps. Table 29 lists the 'traps and tricks' providing summarised comments underneath each identified 'trap' or 'trick'. With regards to these 'traps and tricks' it should be noted that an extensive account of how the researcher gained access to participants, the procedures for gathering and analysing data and the provision of a robust framework both to ensure respect and gain consent of participants is detailed in the research ethics section of this thesis. The critical research ethics model applied to this research addresses most of Thomas's (1993) concerns, or what he terms as 'traps' although the thesis research distanced itself from Thomas's (1993) 'tricks' as this has an implicit suggestion that the research is somehow trying to deceive the participants. Instead, the thesis research utilised appropriate scholarly conventions and procedures to guide the research process and the participants.

Table 29, Critical ethnography, 'traps and tricks'

Critical ethnography 'traps and tricks'	
'Traps'	**'Tricks' (*conventions and procedures*)**
'Seeing only what serves our purposes'	'Avoid imposing meanings on data'
'Using conceptual clichés'	'Avoid buzz words'
'Placing passion before science'	'Avoid axe grinding'
'Making claims beyond demonstrable evidence'	'Avoid overgeneralisations'
'Replacing reason with stridency'	'Avoid sledgehammers'
'Writing to the already committed'	'Remember the audience'
'Forgetting the ethnographic project'	'Appreciate difference'
'Taking ourselves as given'	'Discover reflexively who we are'

Note: This Table was developed from Thomas (1993, pp62-68).

Finally, from reviewing the literature there seem to be three general phases[132] that inform a research design utilised in critical ethnography:

1) reviewing what is known,
2) observations,
3) analysis (these are presented in Table 30).

Table 30, The three phases of the critical ethnography method

Critical ethnography in the field	
Phase	**Description**
1, Reviewing what is known.	The gathering of data, reviewing accessible material such as documents, artefacts, symbols and social space. The researcher explores both historical and contextual evidence.
2, Observation and social engagement.	Through observation the researcher explores the culture, norms, values and behaviours which exist in the social setting. The researcher enters the social space to observe, makes preliminary notes and seeks clarification and explanations from the social group. Through social engagement the researcher begins data gathering by means of interviews with participants in the field. These interviews can be with individual or groups. The 'voice' of the participant surfaces in the recorded data at this stage.
3, Analysis framework and reporting.	The researcher identifies the social groups that influence the social setting. Preliminary assumptions based on analysis of data gathered are checkout with a variety of participants in order to check for accuracy. The researcher provides a description of the social phenomena, analysis is then subject to interpretation of data to gain understanding, questioning issues that emerge from the data and challenging items of concern.

Notes: Table constructed from components of Thomas (1993), Creswell (1998) Sliverman (2008) and Cohen et al (2004).

[132] Interestingly Dewey (1997, p69) discussing education and experience claims that the 'formation of purpose' needs, 1) observation, 2) knowledge of what happened and 3) judgement.

We now move on to linking ethics as codified in the previously reviewed material (academic literature, government and international guidelines, followed by professional associations and documents, texts and artefacts extracted from electronic sources such as the websites of higher institutions of education and other digital repositories) into a critical ethics model[133] to inform the research process. The critical ethics model (Kenny 2009) presented in Table 31 was applied in order both to construct a research ethics code and present the researcher's positionality and potential bias (the published paper is presented in the Appendix B, b1).

Table 31, Critical ethics model to inform the research process

Towards a critical ethics model to inform the research process utilised in educational research in the Irish Higher education sector.	
Research process	**Ethical framework**
Review what's known, the ontological assumptions. Review how it is known, the epistemological assumptions.	• Locate what is known within the specific knowledge domain(s), identifying the dominant (official) knowledge paradigms. • Critically evaluate the warrants and claims, for issues, claims and concerns relating to: ideology, power, authority, dominance, inequality, gender, race, class and culture, • Review data from multiple sources, academic literature, professional associations, the official and alternative policy narratives, artefacts from for-profit and not-for-profit organisations, trade unions, memos, letters, brochures, publicity material and media items. • To avoid plagiarism and to give respect to the voice of others, record and acknowledge all data sources, giving full traceability back to the source in accordance with academic convention. • Make visible one's own positionality and voice in the review of knowledge process and space.
Planning and methodological considerations	• Critically reflect on the intent of the research, the value of the research, the purpose of the research and the scope of the research. • Identify the appropriate conceptual framework, methodology, methods and provide an explicit rationale for decisions made. • Detail the characteristics of the sample set, paying particular attention to issues and concerns such as power, gender, race, culture and vulnerability, • Produce an detailed and appropriate set of information material to invite and inform potential participate about

[133] The use of the word 'model' is linked to Grix (2004, p20-21). A model is a way of representing something: it can be used as 'a descriptive or explanatory device' a model is a useful mechanism to visualise abstractions, concepts and interrelationships. Miles and Huberman's (1994, p117-118) use of models in qualitative research is to construct conceptual frameworks and illustrate findings.

	the intended research process, giving assurance on the following items: confidentiality, anonymity, respect, right to withdraw, right to review data, safe storage of data, usage of data and life span of data. • Utilise a negotiation process to engage potential participants' informed consent, demonstrate sensitivity to the participants' requirements, if consensus (agreement) cannot be reached after due process then agree to differ and disengage.
Gathering data by specific methods.	• Demonstrate appropriate professional conduct and respect for the participant(s) during the data gathering process. • Utilise professional judgement to facilitate and monitor the data gathering process, where risks to others are perceived or detected make appropriate intervention to reduce the level of risk, in some case the data gathering exercise may need to be halted. • Utilise a location, space, material, equipment that the participant considers appropriate. • Record the data exchange in the agreed manner, utilising appropriate professional techniques and equipment. • Allow participants to review their data for accuracy and clarification before it brought forward to the data analysis stage of the research process • Do not engage in fabrication, making up a sample framework, developing fictional participants or recording data from imagined participants. • Respect the right of free speech, freedom of expression.
Analysing data using specific methods	• Treat all gathered data with the same reverence and respect: do not add extra value or emphasise to particular data sources. • Develop an appropriate coding system which protects the identity of participants. • Utilise a data analysis procedure (software or other technique) that is fit-for-purpose and provide traceability links back to source data, • Do not engage in the falsification of data, making up or introducing data to fit a particular conclusion. • Do not allow any third party external agent to access data without the prior consent of participant(s). • Do not construct data in order to make exaggerated or false claims.
Reporting findings, dissemination, locations, events, presentations and types of communication channels.	• Give a truthful and accurate account of the research process utilised, the data gathering procedure, the data interpretation process and the findings. • Disseminate findings to the academic communities via conferences, journals, repositories. • Provide the participants with access to a copy of the final report. • From critical reflection on the research process, capture the learning and share this with the academic community. • Do not distort the finding or allow other to distort them, if they are challenged the research process utilised must be robust enough to fend off such attacks. • Monitor the usage and reporting of the findings by other, where they are misused by an agent, utilising the same channels send a correction. • The principle of academic freedom must be respected and defended through the research process.

The fundamental decision the researcher made from the start was to use an open and transparent research process: there was no need or desire for secrecy, either from my fellow D.Ed students[134] in TCD, colleagues in DIT[135] doing doctoral studies in other institutions or colleagues working in the higher education sector in general. Utilising an open process meant the emerging work was open to challenge from others. This is quite useful as it assists the researcher to reflect critically on the developing research process and refine thinking about areas of concern. In line with this approach it was decided to endeavour to gain full informed consent from all participants invited to participate in the research process. To facilitate this several research tools were developed these are listed below (copies of these are presented in the appendices a, b, c and d).

1) Letter of invitation Purpose; provide a short note to introduce the research topic: invite participants to take part in the research and give assurance on ethical practice.
2) Request – consent form Purpose; provide a detailed document, setting out the following information, full contact details of researcher and supervisor, the title of the research project, the ethical guidelines for the research process and request participants to sign their consent.
3) Interview process and question items Purpose; to explain how the interview process would work, what could be expected and provide the question framework.
4) Brief CV Purpose; to provide the participant with some general information about the researcher.

Methods

> The logic of experiential relations is manifested even in discourse itself by their fact that opinions can only be specified and their derivation made clear, in languages of specific form and can only be tested by methods of a specific kind (on a high level of generalisation): by observation and interviewing.
> (Habermas 1974, p20)

In this section the research methods are outlined, with the main focus on providing sufficient details of how the theoretical considerations were

[134] Several TCD D.Ed students formed an ad hoc meeting group where we discussed research theory and practice, presented our research ideas and projects and acted as a support network. Information was freely shared among the students in the group.

[135] Several colleagues in DIT were also doing D.Ed research in Sheffield University (UK). On several occasions I worked individually with colleagues on research methods and techniques and shared my research project. The important point here is that as a researcher I made a decision not to be over precious and secretive about my work but, rather, open it up for critique at an early stage. I do not hold to this concept of research secrecy at student research level: it should be an open domain for knowledge sharing and development. Unfortunately it seems that research is becoming colonised by the for-profit commercial narrative which encourages secrecy and knowledge protectionism.

applied when carrying out the research. The section is structured in the following fashion: first, the methods are discussed, this is then followed by a detailed account of the main data-gathering procedures utilised for the research interviews and the online survey. The specific sampling criteria utilised for both the research interviews and the online survey are presented, problems and issues that emerged during the fieldwork are highlighted and profiles of the participants and response rate from the survey are detailed.

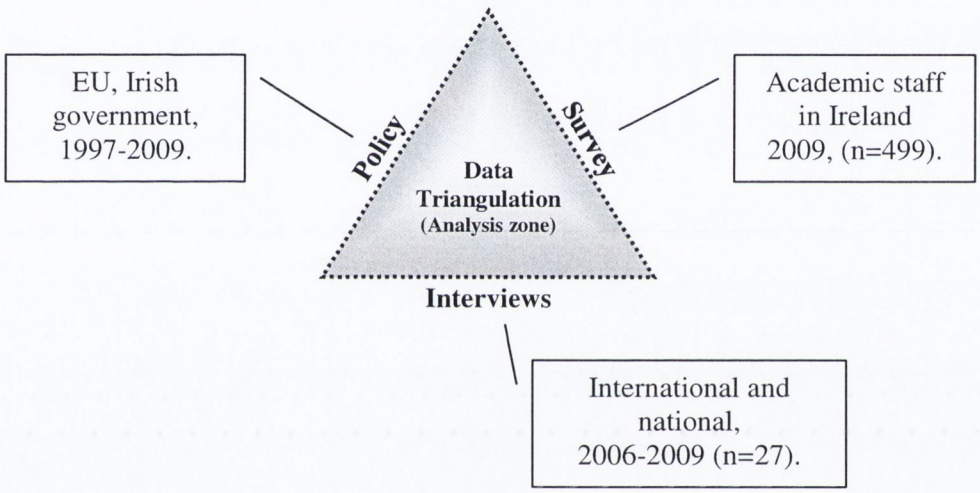
It can be argued that methods are the working tools developed to investigate social phenomena. In most cases the research phenomena will have been the subject of considerable conceptualisation, abstraction and theorising processes before a question of method occurs. The methods stage of a research is usually where theory moves to practice utilising tools to gather data during the fieldwork. Denzin and Lincoln (2005, pp641-649) identify several major categories of qualitative research: 'narrative, art based, interviews, observation, visual, auto-ethnography'. While Creswell (1994, p11-13) details four types of qualitative methods located in their respective methodologies 'ethnography, grounded theory, case study and phenomenology'. Similarly Silverman (2008, p110-112) positions methods subject to methodological considerations no matter whether either a qualitative or quantitative research approach is utilised. He proposes four main categories of method, 'observation, text analysis, interviews and audio-visual'. The choice of any specific method directs and shapes the type of data that are gathered. The choice of method is not only related to methodology, but the researcher's position and political context, as Denzin and Lincoln state:

> Research involves a complex politics of representation. The socially situated researcher creates, through interaction and material practices, those realities and representations that are the subject matter of the inquiry.
> (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, p641)

As stated previously the predominant mode of inquiry was qualitative, the approach utilised for the methods is informed from both the constructionist paradigm and components of critical theory. More

specifically, three different methods were utilised to elicit data. This approach could be considered a 'multiple method' (Silverman 2008, pp121-122). The main rationale for this is to engage in a process of 'triangulation' (Denscombe 2007, pp133-138). Data are gathered through the use of different methods, from different sources and samples, in order to provide different layers of information or units of analysis that can be utilised to compare and contrast. This should both provide rich descriptions and add trustworthiness to the interpretative nature of the analysis process. The methods and data triangle is presented in Diagram 3.

Diagram 3, Research methods and data triangle



The use of triangulation is intended to enhance the credibility and rigour of the research findings. The methods used in this research are listed in Table 33 the methods are detailed in conjunction with data types and their location in the research process. A general list of the research methods is presented below:

1) Policy analyses (Irish and European), data extracted from artefacts, documentations, policy narrative, and relevant general literature (primary and secondary sources).
2) Interviews (face-to-face), data obtained from engaging in social engagement through a dialogical process with other actors and agents in the field (a primary data source).

3) Survey (online), data obtained from recording social comments gathered through electronic means from specific actors and agents in the field (a primary data source).

4) Observations (personal), data constructed from the researcher's reflection, experience and observations, gained from working in the field (primary and secondary sources).

Table 32, The research design: stages, methods, data and aims

Summary of research design			
Stage	**Method**	**Data type**	**Aim**
Preparation	Literature review.	Academic texts, journals, seminars, conferences and dialogue.	To inform the scholarship of the research throughout the research process.
Gathering	Critical policy analysis.	Artefacts in text format from EU, Irish, HE sector, agents, and actors, policy documents.	To provide contextual background information and inform the construction of semi-structured questions for the interview stage and the survey.
	Interviews, semi-structured questions.	Recorded verbal data (audio taping) by agreement with actors and agents in the field.	To inform the research process in general, and contribute towards the construction of items for the online survey.
	Online survey.	Participant profile and text data	Gain data from a representative sample of academic workers in the Irish HE, to inform the research in general.
	Observation (informal).	Cognitive, impressions and accounts gained from social engagement.	To inform the research process in general, and the construction of meaning.
Processing	Data cleaning.	All data converted into text, checked for errors such as typing errors.	Prepare data as evidence for triangulation and interpretation in order to construct meaning and develop understandings.
	Data coding.	All text data coded	
	Data categorising.	Data text collated and categorised	
Interpreting	Reviewing the evidence.	Text data as evidence triangulated.	Construct a true account of the research evidence, interpret findings, identify emergent trends and seek clarification or additional informant where necessary.
Reporting	Thesis.	Text 80,000-100,000 words presented in TCD format.	Fulfil academic criteria.

The practical resource requirements needed to carry out this research (in equipment, applications, software, general tools and space) are detailed in Table 33.

Table 33, The equipment, requirements and items needed for this research

Research tools to be utilised in this study	
Texts	This includes all relevant written, symbolic sources of information that has a degree of scholarship or evidence credibility such as text book, academic journals, policy documents, professional publications, conference papers and grey literature.
ICT	A PC was used for data input, processing and visual presentations, Software and digital repositories that will be used: MS Word, MS PowerPoint, SPSS 14, NVivo 8, Endnote, Email, free Online Surveys, TCD Library catalogue, DCU Library Catalogue, DIT Library catalogue, EU Commission, OECD, UNESCO, WTO, WB, Inside Higher Ed. And Global Higher education.
Audio	Verbal communication, telephones, Audio recorder (Marantz) and microphone.
Visual	Visual observation, working and learning spaces, buildings and social settings.
Space	Rooms for interviews, locations varied depending on where the participants are located.

The research interview method

The interview method has a long tradition in social science inquiry in the fields of sociology (ethnography, phenomenology and feminist research), psychology (psychoanalysis, social psychology and abnormal psychology) and, more recently in education research. The interview method gradually evolved over time from a very structured approach, located in positivistism, where researchers maintained control of the subject, the environment and distanced themselves from the 'social engagement'.[136] To more naturalistic approaches, where the researcher is immersed in the social context, as such, becoming both a participant and researcher in the social phenomena. Central to the research interview approach applied in this thesis were the assumptions presented below (note these assumptions are located in the researcher's epistemological and ontological position stated previously in the methodology section).

- Research interviews are situated in a social context and are influenced by occurrences that take place in the social setting.

[136] In the context of this thesis the term social engagement refers to a planned meeting which has been previously agreed by the parties involved. This meeting is not accidentally or opportunistic, it has a set purpose and the boundaries are set beforehand. The meeting is, therefore, action orientated and consists of the social interaction between the parties involved.

- The researcher carrying out research interviews is not a neutral passive 'bystander' (Aronson, Wilson, Akert 1994, p439)[137] but, rather, an active agent influencing the process.
- The interviewee can affect the content and the direction the interview takes.
- The research interview consists of a negotiated social dialogical event facilitated by the actors (researcher and interviewee) participating in the process.
- The research interview may be affected by either a perceived or actual power differential between the researcher and the interviewee (such as, gender, ethic, class, status or authority).
- The creditably of the research interview is located in the appropriateness of the research strategy adopted during the research process.
- The researcher has both a professional and discipline-based responsibility to ensure that the interviewee is aware of the ethical guidelines in use.
- The researcher has a professional responsibility to record, analyse and report the finding from the interview in an accurate, truthful, fair and transparent way.
- Parties to the research interview enter into a form of 'psychological contract'[138] (Briner 2005) based on the information supplied, they have both obligations and expectations of the event and the outcome.

These assumptions position the research interview method utilised in this research in the constructivist paradigm where meaning is developed from interpreting social action in the real-world. It is close to what Fontana and Frey (2005, p709) define as 'post-modern interviewing', where the role of the researcher is viewed as being an active actor in the research process. The research interview becomes a site for social engagement between the researcher and the interviewee. Through this process of social engagement knowledge, experience, opinions and attitudes are shared. The social engagement process is not a neutral event but, instead, subject to different psychological and social factors in the actors' (researcher and interviewee) perceptions of each other. In developing a research strategy for research interviews it was important to consider the previously stated factors. Where possible, processes and procedures should be established to reduce or control the risk of bias, the code of ethics assisted this process.

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[137] Aronson, Wilson and Akert (1994 pp439-453) give comprehensive coverage of the research detailing the 'bystander effect', this describes people's thinking (process) on whether or not to intervene in an emergency situation. It is used here to suggest that researchers have no choice but to intervene as they are part of the social engagement enacted during the research interview.

[138] The concept of the, 'psychological contract' developed from industrial psychology and studies which focused both on employers and employees (unwritten) psychological expectations and obligations relating to work. Its used here to highlight the notion that both parties enter into an agreement to participate in the interview. This agreement creates an obligation on the parties and is subject to expectations of both parties' constructions of how the interview will be run and reported.

In moving towards a research interview approach and considering the items discussed above it should become clear that adopting a research interview approach is not solely a matter of method and methodological considerations, but, rather, epistemological issues are to the fore. As such, the epistemological position adopted in this research is that knowledge can be constructed from utilising methodologies and methods located in the continuum ranging from positivitism to postmodernism. The chosen method must have relevance to the context and purpose of the inquiry. The legitimisation of knowledge production should not be judged solely in regard to macro paradigms and the academic discipline distinctions within these paradigms, but, rather, based on the situated context of the inquiry and the creativeness of the research strategy utilised to gain insights about the phenomena, issues or focus of the inquiry. In this regard, research interviews are an appropriate method to explore actors' knowledge, know-how and opinions based on their experience and 'lifeworld'[139] (Habermas). The research interview method is a valuable tool in the social science researcher's tool-kit that can be used to gain rich, in-depth social data. The analysis of this data can contribute towards the development of meaning, understanding and new knowledge claims.

The design of the research interview

The research design utilised for the research interviews consisted of four stages:

1) Development of processes and tools.
2) Piloting, revision and planning.
3) Field work, gathering the data.
4) Developing an analysis framework and analysing the data.

Stage 1, Research interview, development of process and tools

Face-to-face research interviews were chosen as a way to elicit data from a sample group of experts. Kvale (2008, p70) terms this approach 'interviews with elites'. In order to gain access to this type of elite sample

[139] Further, information on the concept of 'lifeworld' In an Irish HE context can be found in Fleming (2008, pp6-8).

group it was necessary to develop a suite of research interview tools. The research interview method requires the researcher to develop a systematic approach to facilitate the research interview process. The first phase of this development necessitates the consideration of what tools are needed. The tools include items such as, invitation letter, procedures and guidelines, interview schedule, ethical statement and information about the researcher. These tools were utilised both to communicate with others (the sample group, my supervisor). They needed to provide sufficient information to establish the creditability both of the researcher and the proposed research process. The tools provided potential interviewees with enough background information in order to make informed decisions on whether to participate in the interview research. The following provides the researcher's thinking in relation to the development of the four research interview tools which were, (1) letter of invitation, (2) consent form, (3) question schedule and (4) short CV.

Tool (1) The research interview invitation letter

The invitation letter to participate in a research interview was constructed to be short and concise, containing relevant information on the research title, who was carrying out the research and supervisor's details (see appendix A, a1). Further, it detailed the time requirements and introduced the ethical guidelines in use. It gave two commitments to the participants: 1) the right to review the transcript of the interview and 2) the right to withdraw from the interview process at any stage. The invitation was distributed by email to the sample group, this was followed-up by a telephone call 7-14 days afterwards. If a participant was interested, then the other tools listed below would be sent (by email) to them. The rationale behind the construction of the invitation was to provide a limited amount of information in order not to burden the potential participants with too-much material to read, whilst also alerting the potential participants to the fact that this was a serious piece of research, what the time commitment was, and the ethical obligation to which the researcher was committed.

Tool (2) The research interview consent form

The research consent form was developed both to provide additional information about the researcher and detail the ethical commitments the researcher was offering to the participants (see appendix A, a2). The intention was to assure potential participants that the research interview process was credible, well thought-out and underpinned by a robust series of ethical commitments. The consent form was sent to a potential participant who responded positively to the invitation email or follow-up telephone call. The ethical commitments went further, than the traditional items such as confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent. Guarantees were given in relation to reviewing transcripts, appropriate security and storage of electronic data including the timeframe, who would have access to the data, and where the data would be used. The gathered data would not be utilised for any commercial or profit-making endeavour. Above all, the ethical guidelines sought to assure the potential participants that scholarly convent would be respected by the researcher. The ethical guidelines had to consider the scholarly conventions of both the School of Education specifically and TCD in general. As such, they had to be robust and professional, of a high standard and in line with the scholarly reputation of the university. The consent form was essentially a contract, stating the terms and conditions for the research interview and acting as a formal instrument of obligation. Once the consent form was signed by a participant the researcher entered into a formal obligation to the participant that all of the commitments made would be fulfilled. Embedded in this contract was the participant's right to withdraw at any stage of the research process.

Tool (3) research interview schedule

The research interview schedule was constructed to provide the participants with additional information on the procedure and organisation of the interview (see appendix A, a3). The rationale for this was to reduce any ambiguity and provide clear information in order to manage expectations of how the interview would progress. The commitment to allowing the participant to review the transcript of the interview was restated in order to reinforce further the commitment made in the consent

form. A thematic semi-structure research interview style was adopted. Five key thematic areas were presented in one column with prompt category items detailed in the adjacent column. Participants were advised that they could choose to respond to one thematic area or as many thematic areas as they were interested in discussing. Additional, space was provided at the bottom of the schedule for participants to identify themes or categories of particular importance or interest that were not stated in the schedule. In order to allow participants to prepare for the research interview the interview schedule was emailed to them at least seven days before the interview.

Tool (4) Identifying the researcher

In order to assist the potential participant to assess the capacity, capability and credibility of the researcher, and to be as transparent as possible, each potential participant who responded positively to the interview invitation received a copy of the short curriculum vitae (see appendix A, a4). The rationale for this was to give the potential participant sufficient information about the researcher in order to make an informed decision. By doing this the potential participants had the power to base their decisions to participate or not in the research interview by evaluating the researcher's knowledge, know-how and competence. The other rationale for disclosing this type of personal information was to endeavour to develop openness where the participant could make a decision on whether to trust the researcher's scholarly intention. Further, giving participants access to personal background information could have a positive affect in developing rapport at the start of an interview.

Stage 2, Research interviews, piloting, revision and planning

The rationale for piloting was to test the process and procedures developed in a simulated context and ask questions as to whether the tools were adequate and fit-for-purpose. Did they do what they were meant to do? Was there any other information that needed to be added? What did the pilot participants think of my interviewing technique? What were the technical issues that could arise when using the equipment in the field? The intention of the piloting stage was to allow peers to evaluate critically

the research interview process developed, both on technical issues and personal performance. This piloting phase took place in 2007, the interview locations were the workplaces and offices of the pilot group participants. The pilot interviews provided invaluable feedback with regard to technical issues such as noise levels and microphone positioning and non-technical issues such as the interviewer failing to keep more focussed on the process. Planning for the research interviews consisted of developing a timeframe for the interviews, identifying a sample group and dealing with the logistics of scheduling interviews. The provisional working timeframe for organising and carrying out the interviews was confined to 2006-2008. The intention was to have 2009 for full analysis of the interviews and writing of the thesis. However, in reality this timeframe was flexible enough to accommodate participants request in times, locations and dates.

Stage 3, Research interviews, sample and fieldwork procedure

The 'population' was confined to specialised actors who operated in the higher education sector. These included policy makers, representative organisations, senior managers and academic staff. In developing a 'sample frame' (Denscombe 2008, p19) for the interviews it was not the intention to gain a 'representative sample' of the population but, rather, engage with a wide range of different people with specialised knowledge working in the sector. This could be considered a type of 'non-probability sampling' (Denscombe 2008, p29) technique, where the sample group is small and the research is interested in focusing more on 'discovery' rather, than testing hypothesis or generalisations. The purpose of the interviews was to gain in-depth knowledge on the thematic areas. To achieve this, the sample group members needed to be highly knowledgeable and expert in their field. However, in order to refine the sampling criteria a 'purposive sampling' (Silverman 2008, p103) technique was utilised, factoring for seniority, gender and length of experience. In both the statutory and representative categories of the sample group senior staff where invited to participate. In the case of practitioners participants would be chosen on the basis of employment grade (senior management, management, lecturer

and researcher) and discipline area. Further, there were three general categories within the population that where of particular interest to this thesis research these are detailed in the sampling frame in Table 34.

Table 34, Sampling frame categories for research interviews

Sampling frame categories		
Statutory (national agencies)	**Representative (organisations)**	**Practitioners (academics)**
Department of Education and Science. National Qualifications Authority of Ireland. Higher Education Authority. Higher Education Training Awards Council.	Irish Universities Association. Irish Federation of University Teachers. Teachers Union of Ireland. Irish Congress of Trade Unions.	Senior managers. Managers. Lecturers. Researchers.

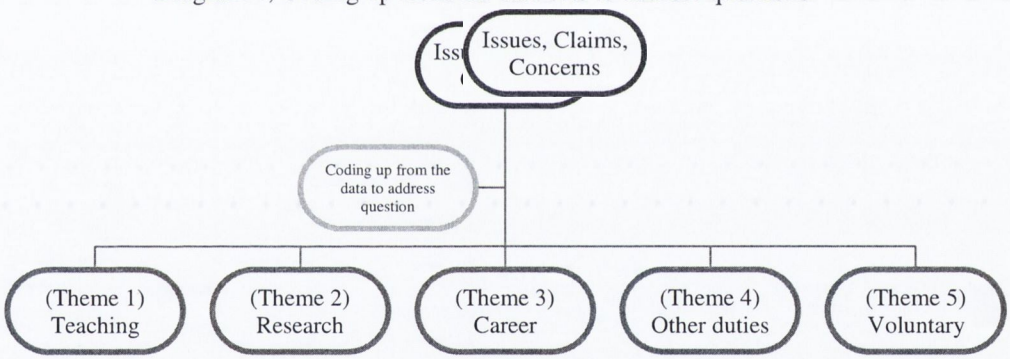
Once the research interview tools had been tested, reviewed and revised and sufficient expertise had being gained in relation to the professional usage of the audio recording equipment, then the research process was ready to move into the next stage inviting participants to take part in the research interviews. The first phase of communication was through email (invitation to participate tool) this was followed by a telephone conversation and if the participants were interested additional information was sent by email (consent form, interview schedule and brief CV). Working within the time constrains of the researcher's own work and other research projects, invitations to participate where sent out in batches of five, were participants agreed to participate the interviews were scheduled and carried out. Then the next batch of five invites would be distributed and the same procedure was followed again.

Stage 4, Research interviews, developing an analysis framework

The research interview research design utilised sought to explore and gain participants' knowledge and understandings relating to the five thematic areas as detailed in the interview schedule. However, it was not the intention of the researcher to explore the interview transcripts in micro discourse analyse fashion but, rather, to operate at a macro level of analyse by identifying categories within the thematic areas. To achieve this type of analysis two methods were considered appropriate, 'content analysis' (Kvale 2008, p105) and 'thematic analysis' (Gillham 2007,

p130). Both of these methods enabled the researcher to probe the data sets and extract meaningful chunks of information based on the interpretative process. This could be considered a process of reduction, although reductionism was not the specific analysis direction the researcher wanted to take. However, the analysis approach had to be realistic. With over twenty hours of audio recordings transcribed into a volume of text, some process had to be utilised in order to derive a manageable amount of analysed data from the data set. One approach utilised by Richards (2008) comprises 'coding up from the data' this enables the researcher to interpret categories of relevant meaning based on the actual data set and as such, it is not considered to be a reductionist approach. The main rationale for the research interviews was to gather data from participants on the 'issues, concerns and claims' in relation to the five thematic areas. This is depicted graphically in Diagram 4.

Diagram 4, Coding up from the data sets to address questions



In order to increase the efficiency of the data analysis process the researcher undertook specialised training in the utilisation of an advanced qualitative analysis software programme call NVivo 8[140]. Utilising NVivo 8 for data management and analysis the following steps were taken during the data process and analysis stages:

1) Format each participants transcript, code thematic areas as T1T, T2R, T3C, T4O and T5V, utilising the style format function in MS Word make thematic areas codes heading 1, researcher's question normal text blue and participants responses normal text black.

[140] NVivo 8 is the updated version of the traditional industry standard qualitative software package called Nudist. NVivo 8 is a qualitative data management programme that gives the researcher an advanced array of software tools to organise and analyse qualitative data. The software package enables researchers to establish their own analysis frameworks and then probe the data for meaning.

2) Clean transcripts of identify signifiers, names and statements of a personal identity nature.
3) Import formatted transcripts into NVivo 8 as separate cases.
4) Utilising the auto code function in NVivo 8, code all cases as tree nodes (this groups all the participants' responses to each thematic areas together).
5) Analyse thematic areas and code on areas of similarity, these can be coded several times.
6) Record any similarities between thematic areas as relationship nodes.
7) Explore data for any major items relating to 'issues, claims and concerns' in each separate thematic areas and develop these as separate categories by 'coding on' (Richards 2008) as free nodes.
8) Develop and test models depicting emergent categories, relationships and issues, claims and concerns.
9) Generate a report on the analysis process.

The online survey method

The rationale for the development of an online survey was to elicit numerical data from the 'population' (Creswell 1994, p119) in order to supplement the interview data. Denscombe (2008, p155) notes that questionnaires rely on information supplied directly (in writing) by the participant. This is distinct from interviews and observations where the researcher records the data. Loxley states:

> The questionnaire is unavoidably structured. It is by definition the systematic and standardized gathering of data about social phenomena. Where it differs from the structured interview, is that participants respond in a written as opposed to an oral form. In most cases the questionnaire is used to produce numerical data about a given population. The questionnaire should not be seen as being synonymous with the survey, which is a covering term for a range of highly structured methods.
> (Loxley in press)

Questionnaires facilitate the gathering of 'facts' and 'opinions' (Denscombe 2008, p171) and eliminate the effect of researcher interaction with the participants. The face-to-face interviews provided an opportunity to ascertain in-depth information from participants. These 'negotiated conversations' provided a means for both the researcher and/or the participants to influence each other's responses due to social interaction and proximity. Power differentials between the participants and researcher could influence the direction of the interview. In contrast, the online questionnaires greatly reduce the social interaction process and any

inherent bias that may be associated with face-to-face interviews, although it should be remembered that bias cannot be removed altogether. However, measures can be introduced to try and control bias. The participants have time and space free from the direct influence of the researcher to consider their responses and make personal judgements in respect to the questions or statements posed in the questionnaire. The questionnaire data were gathered in order to supplement the exploratory data that had already been gathered during the interview stage of the research, providing both 'descriptive and explanatory' data (Robson 2000, p127). This is part of the mixed method or 'multi method' approach (Silverman 2008, p121) which consists of developing strategies for gathering different types of data (non-numeric and numeric). The questionnaire method enables the gathering of 'data in a standardised form' from a 'sample of individuals from a known population' (Robson 2000, p124). By adopting an electronic questionnaire format rather than the traditional paper questionnaire, it was envisaged that both production and administration costs would be greatly reduced. Furthermore, the administration of an electronic questionnaire as opposed to a postal questionnaire was considered to be more efficient and manageable for a single researcher. These assumptions were based on previous experience from developing and administrating two large online surveys in DIT. The first was for the quality review[141] of DIT 2005-06 and the other was related to an opinion survey of DIT staff concerning University Designation[142] 2007. The online questionnaire method has become gradually more accepted by potential participants as an appropriate mechanism to gather data (see for example Denscombe 2008 pp9-10 and 160-161, Lankshear and Leander 2005 pp 326-332). While there seems to be widespread usage and acceptance of online surveys there are also some

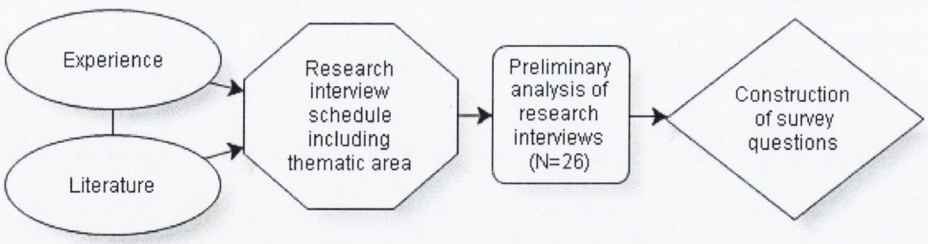
[141] Under the 1999 Qualifications (Education and Training) Act the DIT and the Universities are required to carry out an institutional quality review every 5 to 7 years. In 2005-2006 the EUA was appointed as the external body to carry out these quality reviews of both the universities and the DIT. As part of the Review process an internal self evaluation report had to be generated and submitted to the EUA quality review team before it visited the IHE. The online survey mention above was part of this internal evaluation process.

[142] The DIT is quite distinct from the other IoTs in legislation, the functions and objectives of the DIT are set out in the DIT Act (1992) whereas the IoTs come under the remit of the RTC Act 1992 (both Acts have been revised under the 2006 IoT Act, However, the DIT still holds its unique distinction). In 1998 the DIT's application for university designation was deferred subject to meeting certain criteria before a new application could be made. In 2007 the President and directorate considered the DIT should reapply for university designation under the aspect of a Section 9 application. To guide the opinion of staff an internal consultation process was initiated. A central tool used in this process was an online survey.

concerns expressed about this type of data gathering method. The main concern for some people is anonymity: is the survey truly anonymous? Can their response be traced back to their computer or email address? Who has access to the data and where are the data stored? Will participants' personal information be shared or sold on to other third parties? These quite reasonable concerns are addressed in the following discussion which deals with the construction of the online survey.

Online survey design

The questionnaire was designed in order to shed some light on the primary research questions detailed in the introduction chapter of this thesis. The construction of the questionnaire was informed by an interactive process of reflecting on experience and reviewing the literature. This could be outlined as combining experience gained from participating in the EUA quality review of DIT (2005-06) and a critical review of relevant literature including policy documents. This informed the development of the research interview schedule, which consisted of thematic areas and semi-structured questions. From preliminary analysis of the research interviews key items were identified and questions were constructed to explore these items.



The questions were constructed to address items relating to the five thematic areas utilised during the research interviews which were: teaching, research, career, other duties and voluntary activities. In addition, there was some degree of modification to one of these thematic areas other duties: this was restructured into two new themes

governance[143] and third mission[144] activities. The questionnaire design incorporated six distinct sections: profile (demographic factors): teaching (teaching practice, professional development): research activities: career (remuneration, academic freedom): governance (attitudes to decision making process) and third mission activities (engaging with communities and enterprise, sports and cultural activities). The final draft of the questionnaire was quite lengthy totalling 129 items: this exposed the questionnaire to Rugg and Petre (2007, pp142-143) critique of lengthy questionnaires. There are three points to note in addressing this critique, firstly the questionnaire was informed by an extensive literature review and the research interviews. This made the questionnaire items relevant to the contemporary higher education environment. Secondly, the complexity of modern higher education in practice, policy, pedagogy and conditions of services needed to be reflected adequately in the questionnaire. Thirdly, the sample population is somewhat unique, it consists of 'knowledge workers' (Horibe 1999, p11), experts in their discipline areas. The academics and researchers in the sample population were accustomed to reading and analysing long documents. As such, the length of the questionnaire was not the problem in this case, rather, the questionnaire had to be relevant and have academic credibility. The questionnaire sought to gain participants' responses to statements rather than questions. There is an important difference to be noted here as to whether questions provide a channel to gain an answer to a problem, issue or query. Mindful that responses to questions can provide more detailed information than responses to closed statement, an additional optional text box was included under each statement. This provided participants with a facility to insert elaborations on their thinking about and response to the statement. In addition, a 'don't know' option was included to allow participants to make a response to items where they did not want either to agree or disagree with the statement.

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[143] According to the United Nations, ESCAP (2009) governance refers to the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Particular factors that impact on good governance are, transparency, rule of law, consensus and accountability.

[144] Third mission referrers to activities other than the two main missions of higher education (teaching and research). Laredo's (2007) paper relates third mission activities to knowledge production in both the social and economic domains. In the online survey third mission activities was utilised to explore issues to do with voluntary activities in the social domain.

Online survey information for participants

While constructing the online questionnaire strong consideration was given to issues such as anonymity, ethics and privacy (Denscombe 2008, Rugg and Petre 2007, McNamee and Bridges 2002). Firstly, it was decided to provide participants with a detailed statement of who was carrying out the research, what the purpose of the research was and detailed contact information of both the supervisor and the research student. This information was presented in both the invitation to participate email and in the introduction section of the online survey (see appendix A, a5). Information was also clearly stated from the start of the survey note that 'it would take a minimum of 20 minutes to complete'. The online survey also included an ethical statement which sought to give assurance to participants that their identities would be protected and that appropriate professional standards were in place. To guarantee further the privacy and confidentiality of participants who responded to the online survey several others measured were taken. The software package that was utilised was Free Online Survey (http://www.freeonlinesurveys.com/) upgraded to the secure pay-for-use version. This version is encrypted with password protection: no third parties have access to the survey and the data. In addition, the software provided an option where the user (survey administrator) could choose to track respondents (their email address). This function was turned off for the duration of this survey. All responses received were completely anonymous. The survey was live from 24th April to 15th May 2009. When the survey finished the data were downloaded to an Excel document run from an encryption protected computer. The online survey was then deleted and the account closed.

Sampling frame used for the online survey

As Robson (2000 p135) states, 'sampling is an important aspect of life in general, and enquiry in particular. We make judgements about people, places and things based on fragments of evidence'. Researchers make generalisable claims based on the sample method that they apply to gathering data. By strategically identifying a sample group from a

population a researcher can suggest that the analysis resulting from the research is representative of the opinions, attitudes or understandings of the whole population. There are two broad sampling approaches, one is 'non-probability' where the population is difficult to define and the researcher is not trying to make a generalisable claim. The other is 'probability sampling' (Denscombe 2008, pp13-15, Robson 2000 pp 137-139) where generalisable claims are made, this was utilised during the development of the sample for this research. The rationale for this choice was that the population was sufficiently well defined (academic and research staff in IHE). Further, access to the population was achievable through public access IHE websites. This gave reasonable confidence that a good, representative cross-section of the population could be realised. The population presented in Table 15, was constructed via data from the statistics section of the HEA[145]. The population sample consists of 9,730 academic staff members (full-time and part-time), 3,820 research staff (full-time and part-time), total population size was based on figures supplied by the HEA is 13,450. This population can be disaggregated (in percentage terms) into the three main categories the IoTs, the universities and the colleges and designated institutions.

Table 35, Population disaggregated into sectors and percentages

Sector	No. of Academic and research staff	Percentage of population sample
Seven universities	7,717	57.37%
Fourteen institutes of technology	5,371	39.93%
Six colleges/ designated institutions	362	2.69%
Total	13,450	99.99%

The sampling design is based on 'single stage' sampling (Creswell 1994, p119). As previously mentioned, access to the population contact details is publicly available through the IHEs' websites. This direct access allows the researcher to make decisions on the selection of sample group. The sampling process consisted of the development of a 'sample frame' and 'stratified sampling' (Denscombe 2008, p14, Robson 2000 p138, Creswell 1994 p120). Stratified sampling enables a researcher to set specific

[145] HEA data was received by email on the 6/5/2009.

boundaries or categories within the sample frame and then apply a random sampling style technique to choose the sample group in each boundary or category. The characteristics of the stratified sample used in this research were confined to two major categories, academics and researchers. The sample was also designed to include: a proportionate gender distribution, a range of work roles such as academic, researcher, manager, senior manager, the type of employment contract, for example, permanent, part-time or temporary and a proportionate sample of different discipline areas (such as, arts, humanities, science, engineering, social sciences and so forth). The final sampling frame consisted of the public access email addresses of academic and research staff employed in HEA designated IHE. The sampling technique involved accessing the individual websites of the seven universities, fourteen institute of technology and the seven other colleges and institutions funded by the HEA; these are all listed on the public access website of the HEA.[146] Working through each individual IHE website, a trawl was carried out of academic and research staff[147] email addresses, these email addresses where then selected randomly from different faculties, schools and departments.

Table 36, Sample frame, distribution targets and controlling factors

Sampling framework targets	
Category	**Distribution target**
Senior Management (provost, president, director, head of school).	5% of total sample group.
Management (head of department, assistant head).	10% of total sample group.
Academic staff (senior lecturer, lecturer, associate lecturer, assistant lecturer, teaching assistant).	60% of total sample group.
Research staff (researchers, post- docs).	25% of total sample group.
Controlling for other factors such as	
Gender balance.	50% male, 50% female of complete sample population.
Permanent whole-time staff.	60% of total sample group.
Part-time and other forms of temporary contracts of employment.	40% of total sample group.
Discipline areas.	Proportionate distribution across main

[146] HEA website, http://www.hea.ie/en/AboutHEA#Designated_Institutions.

[147] From exploring the IHE websites and the faculties and schools there seems to be a diversity of terminology utilised to depict the duties or employment grade of staff. This is particularly evident in the university sector. There are standard grades such as senior lecturer and lecturer and then a variety of other terms are used in different universities and faculties such as, teaching associate, teaching assistant, associate professor, tutor. In the IoT sector there seems to be more uniformity in the standard grades, senior lecturer, lecturer and assistant lecturer. The grades in the IoT sector seem to be directly attributed to National Agreement (see PCW 1998): alternatively the universities seem to have more autonomy to establish their own individual grade structures.

	discipline areas based on faculty and school characteristics.
Number of academic and research staff working in individual IHE	5% of total as per HEA annual returns 2008
Academic title	Factor for titles detailed such as professors, doctors, and emeritus.
Percentage of sectoral distribution	IoT sector 40%, university sector 57%, colleges 3%.

In this sampling frame email addresses were extracted (copied and pasted into a Word document) in a random fashion in accordance with stratified sampling criteria. The rationale for adopting this type of sampling was to endeavour to get a broad, representative sample of the population. It is worth noting at this stage that this was not a straightforward or easy task. Some of the websites, in particular all the universities provided public access to their respective staff email addresses, but in a limited number of cases access to an email addresses required a two step process of clicking on the staff member's name (this was a link) this then opened a webpage which contained details of the staff members and some additional profile information. In the case of DCU, there was a three step procedure before getting access to the individual email address. The procedure to gain access to email addresses in the institutes of technology was more varied. Some IoTs operated a similar system to the universities, while in others it proved much more difficult to obtain staff email lists. For example in the cases of Athlone (AIT), Waterford (WIT) and Cork (CIT) access was only given to the email addresses of managers, senior managers and secretaries, information on the academic staff email directory was not accessible (dates access was attempted between 25/4/09-11/5/09). In the case of Sligo IT (SIT) access to staff email list was only available through a username and password protected system called 'Secured by Thawte' as such, there was no public access to staff email address list. In some other cases, for example Limerick IT (LIT) staff names and telephone numbers were provided, email addresses had to be constructed by the user by writing the first name then dot, then second name and then inserting @lit.ie. In many cases in both the universities to some extent and in the IoTs in particular part-time staff and researchers did not seem to have email addresses listed on their websites.

Final comment

In this chapter the conceptual framework or blueprint for the thesis research was discussed, this consisted of applying a constructivist approach. The methodology was identified as case study which was informed by fourth generation evaluation and critical ethnography. This was operationalised by utilising a mixed method strategy of (interview data, survey and policy analysis). This was underpinned by a critical ethics model which was constructed specifically for this thesis research. A detailed account of the research design, research tools and the research procedures was presented. The population was described, combined with the sampling technique utilised for both the interviews and survey.

The next chapter provides a profile of the sample group and the response rate which included some descriptive statistical profile data and details the data analysis framework, including questions of trustworthiness, dependability and authenticity.

Chapter 5: Data presentation and analysis

Establishing the data analysis process

> In what I have said I have taken for granted the soundness of the principle that education in order to accomplish its ends both for the individual learner and for society must be based upon experience – which is always the actual life-experience of some individual.
> (Dewey 1997, p 89)

This chapter provides information on the profile response rate from the research interviews and online survey, and details the analysis framework used for both level 1 and level 2 analysis of the interview, survey and policy data-sets. It outlines the procedures applied in order to process the raw data, develop data-sets, and then merge the data-sets into the three thematic area (1) teaching, (2) research and (3) career. This chapter also contains important information relating to research credibility, trustworthiness and rigour.

Research interviews participants' profile

In total thirty five invitations were sent out. As stated in the sampling framework both purposive sampling and opportunity sampling were used. In the purposive sample 30 invitations were distributed (in six rounds of five) from this 27 participants gave initial agreement to participate in an interview. However, due to a multitude of different factors only 19 participants from this sample group were actually interviewed. The reasons why the ten interviews did not occur can be categorised into two groups:

> Group 1: Four respondents claimed to have no time to participate in the interviews or stated they would get back to the researcher (Categories: statutory n=2, academic n=2).
>
> Group 2: Six respondents found difficulty agreeing a suitable date, last minute cancellation, and in two cases the researcher had to cancel due to illness (Category, academic n=6).

The total number of interviews carried out during this research was twenty seven. One participant did not give final consent to use their interview. Table 37 details some principal characteristics of the sample group who participated in the research interviews.

Table 37, Principal characteristics of the research interview sample group

Attributions	Statuary	Representative	Academic	Other[148]
Gender	M 1, F 1	M 5, F 0	M 7, F 8	M 4, F0
Sector				
University			7	2
Institute of Technology			8	
Organisation	2	5		2
Nationality				
Irish	2	4	12	
English		1	2	
Australian				1
American				1
Zambian				1
French				1
Main duty				
Senior Management	1	3	3	1
Management	1	2	5	1
Teaching			4	1
Research			3	1
Category totals	2	5	15	4
Total sample size				26

The interviews with participants took place from the January to November 2008. After each interview the recorded material was transcribed and forwarded to the participants for their consideration. Participants had this opportunity either to accept the transcription as a valid record from their perspective or they could amend any inaccuracies or add additional clarification or information. As stated in the research interview tools previously, only the participants' approved transcript would be considered as data for analysis during this research.

Online survey response rate

In order to analysis the response rate to the online survey the sample size needed to be established. However, as mentioned previously, online

148 The other category relates to interviews that were carried out with participants who were outside the original sample frame. These participants did not work in the Irish HE sector. However, they had extensive experience of working in HE and territory education in both their respective countries (universities and institutes of technology) and at an international level through the United Nations specialised education branches, UNESCO and UNEVOC. This provided the research with insights from an international perspective.

surveys present a problem in distribution to the sample group: it is quite easy for recipients of the invitation to participant email to forward this email on to others not in the sample group. The mechanism to control for this is via the tracking email address function. However, due to ethical considerations and to guarantee anonymity, this function was not used during this survey. Therefore, in order to allow for the possibility that some recipients would forward the invitation email, a probability factor of one in every five recipients was used. In conjunction a margin of error of 5% was incorporated. This in effect, increases the potential sample group size, while decreasing the response rate percentage.

Table 38, Calculation of the sample group size

Calculation of distribution of emails to sample group	
Description	**N**
Total distributed through direct email by researcher	758
Total distributed by organisations to representations	80
Sub total	838
Distribution probability factor (1 in 5)	168
Margin of error (5% of sub total)	42
Total (readjusted distribution total)	1,048

A readjusted sample group distribution of n=1,048 was therefore utilised to calculate the response rate for the online survey. The entire online survey software package registered a total of n=494 responses. Of these registered responses two factors had to be addressed in other to obtain the number of valid registered responses. There were n=19 blank responses registered. This was mentioned previously, the survey timed out and the software automatically registered it as a response. These need to be deducted from registered response total. The issue in relation to AIT and other grades of staff outside of the sampling framework responding to the survey (n=9) registered responses from, administration (n=3), postgraduate students (n=3), staff officer (n=1), support staff (n=1), and persons in human resources (n=1). It was considered that these responses only represented 1.8% of the total number of respondents. Therefore they could not have a significant adverse effect on the results. It was decided to leave them in the data set. Further, these respondents gave their time to complete the questionnaire, responding to statements based on their

experience of working in higher education. Taking the deduction of blank returns into account (19) the valid responses received can then be calculated at n=475. Therefore, the estimated percentage response rate for a sample group of n=1,048 equals 45.32%, taking other factors into consideration like the length of the survey. There was no incentive offered such as a prize or money. Considering the technical issues and the number of auto replies received stating that the recipient was out of the office, this was an above average response rate. A data set of n=475 is large enough to make statistical inferences representing 3.53% of the total population sample (n=13,450). The responses per institutional category are presented in Table 39.

Table 39, Number and percentage of responses from the three HE categories

Q 3, Please select the name of the higher education institute where you presently work		
IHE category	**N**	**Percentage**
Universities	214	45.82
Institutes of Technology	214	45.82
Colleges and designated institutions	39	8.53
Totals	467	99.99
Note: non-responses to this question = 8		

It should be noted that the colleges and designated institutions have closer connections to the universities than the IoTs. Some staff work across both of these categories and, in some cases, programmes are either delivered jointly or the university acts as the awarding body for programmes which are run in the colleges. The IoT sector is distinct and has only come into the remit of the HEA under the 2006 IoT Act. For comparative analysis it is reasonable to group the categories of universities and colleges and designated institutions together and compare survey results with those from the IoT sector.

The aggregated results from five of the survey profile questions gender, employment category, employment contact, discipline area and qualifications are below. When exploring the data in these tables, it should be kept in mind that the responses to different questions varied, this will

be reported under each table as the non-response at the end of each table. Table 40 provides the gender distribution of respondents.

Table 40, Gender as indicated by respondents

Q 1, Gender		
Gender	**N**	**%**
Male	219	47.2
Female	245	52.8
Total	464	100
Non-response 9		

The female response rate was greater then the male response rate by 5.6%, the target for gender balance set out in the sample framework was 50%. Nine respondents decided not to respond to this question. A more in-depth exploration of gender was carried out during the analysis phase, looking at gender and management, gender and contract type.

Table 41, Respondents present employment role

Q 4, In general, how would you categorise your present employment role?		
Role	**N**	**%**
Academic	344	72.9
Researcher	52	11
Manager	24	5.1
Senior manager	16	3.4
Other	36	7.6
Total	472	100
Non-response 9		

A significant majority (72.9%) of the respondents reported being academics. This was followed by (11%) reporting that they were researchers, while 3.4% claimed to be senior managers and 5.1% reported they were managers. A reasonable percentage of respondents (7.6%) chose the 'Other' option, providing details on their roles, from analysis of their response they can be grouped into three areas, academic, research and other, these are detailed in Table 42. It should be noted that someone who has an academic contract can be on a secondment to an administrative post, a research post or an external teaching post. This is the reason why it was decided not to clean (delete) other grades out of the dataset. This could be considered as using a 'guess-a-meter' technique.

Table 42, Details from question (4), respondents who chose the 'Other' option

Q 4, Respondents who chose 'Other' option					
Academic	**N**	**Research**	**N**	**Other**	**N**
Academic and professional staff	3	Tutor researcher	1	Administration (strategic, professional, projects and development)	9
Academic and research	1	Researcher and academic	1	Development executive	2
Academic and senior manager	2	PhD researcher	2	Educational guidance coordinator	3
Clinical and academic	1	Masters researcher	1	Learning technologist	1
Head of department	1			Project co-ordinator	1
Module leader/Clinical Nurse manager	1			Staff officer	2
Senior lecturer	1			Support	1
Teaching assistant	1			Technical, technical officer, senior technical	1
Totals	11		5		20

When the raw data were processed or 'cleaned' (Robson 2000, p316) in SPSS the 'Other' categories listed in Table 43 were reassigned either to academic (n=11) or research (n=5). The remaining others (n=20) were left as they were. In the research category there was a student doing a masters degree. This respondent was been left in the survey data set, as it is unknown to the researcher whether this respondent is an actual student (in the traditional sense) or a member of staff who is undertaking a masters degree, as can be the case in the IoT sector.

Table 43, Respondents type of employment contract

Q 5, What type of employment contract do you have?		
Type	**N**	**%**
Permanent whole-time	306	65.5
Part-time contract	25	5.4
Part-time hourly	8	1.7
Temporary	19	4.1
Fixed term	60	12.8
Contract of indefinite duration (CID)	36	7.7
Other	13	2.8
Total	467	100
Non-response 8		

The majority of respondents reported that the held a permanent whole-time contract of employment (65.5%), this was followed by 12.8% claiming they had a fixed-term contract, 7.7% held a CID and 11.2%

either were on hourly, temporary or part-time contracts. The respondents (n=13) who chose the Other option reported they did not have contracts (n=3), CID hourly and fixed term (n=3), permanent job share and permanent part-time (n=2), three year contact (n=2), MSc and PhD (n=2) or contracted for a specific purpose (n=1). During the analysis stage any of those that could fit into a category were reassigned.

Table 44, Respondents discipline area

Q 7, From the following list where best could your discipline be located?		
Discipline	**N**	**%**
Arts	23	4.9
Humanities	47	10
ICT	28	6
Social science	42	9
Science	85	18.1
Engineering	49	10.4
Business	53	11.3
Tourism	8	1.7
Built environment	14	3
Education	49	10.4
Medical	26	5.5
Other	45	9.6
Total	469	100
Non-response 6		

The largest number of respondents reported that they came from a science discipline (18.1%) followed by business (11.3%), both engineering and education at 10.4% respectively, humanities (10%), social science (9%), ICT (6%), medical (5.5%), arts (4.9%) and built environment (3%). Forty five respondents chose to use the 'Other' option and provided descriptions of their discipline areas. These can be broadly inserted under six main categories (see Table 45), these were reassigned during the data cleaning stage.

Table 45, Discipline areas, 'Other' options reassigned.

Q 7, Discipline areas, Reassigning 'Other' opinions into disciple areas		
Discipline	**Description**	**N**
Medical	Nursing on its own or combined with one of the following midwifery, health science, health studies or health science.	21
Science	Mathematics, applied mathematics or non-medical health	3
Social science	Social science combined with either one of the following, humanities, education, psychology, medical, IT, law, and organisational psychology	6
Art	Arts and education, design, professional cookery	6
Engineering	Engineering and science, aircraft engineering	3
Other	Registrars office, HR, library, research and enterprise,	6
Total		45

Table 45 detailed the reassignment on a 'best-fit-basis' of the discipline areas that respondents reported in the Other options text box. While nursing and midwifery had a reasonable number of responses 17 of the 21, it was felt that they could still be accommodated in the medical category and that there was not a significant number to justify the development of a new category.

Table 46, Respondents level of formal qualifications

Q 10, From the list below please indicate your highest formal Qualification		
Qualification	**N**	**%**
Ordinary degree	11	2.3
Honours degree	27	5.7
Masters degree	195	41.4
Higher diploma	9	1.9
Doctorate	210	44.6
Other	19	4
Total	471	100
Non-response 4		

The two qualifications that the majority of respondents report to hold are PhD/doctorate (44.8%) and masters degree (41.4%): this is followed by honours degree (5.7%), ordinary degree (2.3%) and higher diploma (1.9%). Of the n=19 respondents who chose the 'Other' option, six reported that they were doing a PhD and two reported they held a senior trade qualification. The rest reported to hold one of the following qualifications, B Litt., professional qualification, Leaving Certificate, administration qualification, PhD/doctorate, qualification as a solicitor or chartered management accountant, certificate or registered nurse. Where appropriate the degree qualifications (B. Litt and PhD) were reassigned into the appropriate category. This profile question is quite important as an indicator of human capital. Further, in-depth analysis of this question will be carried out in the analysis stage of the data.

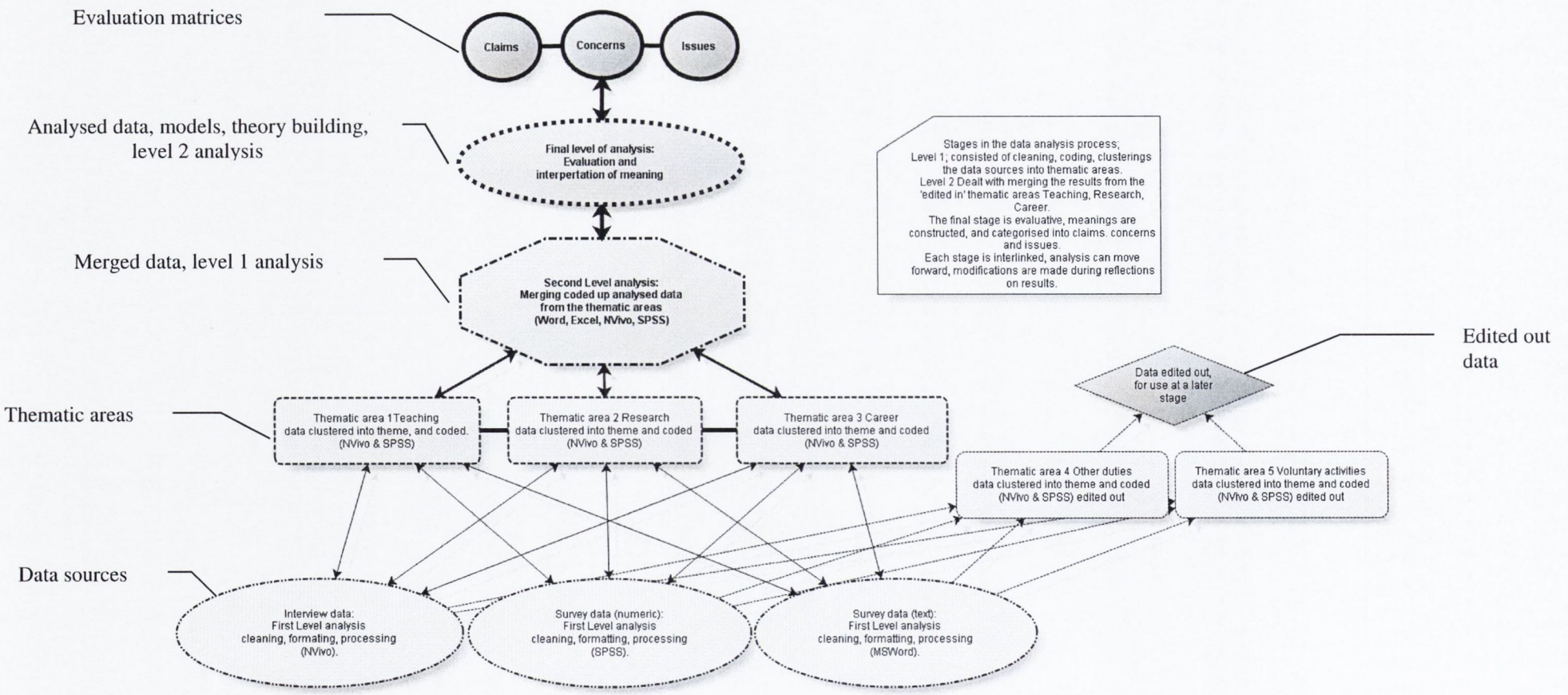
Analysis framework

It should be noted that the analysis of the gathered data was based on experience, the experiences of the interview and survey participants as evident in their recorded statements and responses and the experience of the researcher as both a worker in the higher education sector and a

postgraduate research student. The engagement with the gathered data was not undertaken in a formalistic procedural fashion but, rather, as a process of continuous engagement and reflection over a long period of time. The main endeavour was to interpret meaning from the gathered data. This process involved grouping data into thematic clusters (teaching, research and career), identifying relevant categories, 'coding up' (Richards 2008) from these categories, merging analysed data and detailing the main 'claims, concerns and issues'. The analysis stage also consisted of re-engaging with some of the relevant policy documents to contextualise the analysis of the data. This is part of the commitment made previously to incorporate the literature review process throughout the entirety of the research process. A pictorial representation of the analysis stage is presented in Diagram 5.

Diagram 5 provides a schematic which details the different data types (interview data, survey, text) and how these data sets are treated in the first level of analysis. This includes the editing process whereby data from the key thematic areas teaching, research and career was extracted for analysis while data from two other thematic area other duties and voluntary activities was edited out. Finally, the second level of analysis is detailed showing how this is related to the construction of evaluation matrixes for each thematic area using Guba and Lincoln's categories of 'claims, concerns and issues'.

Diagram 5, Schematic detailing analysis levels



Level 1 and level 2 analysis

In this thesis research 'level 1 analysis' of the data analysis process could be considered as the transitions phase of the gathered data, where the raw data from the different data types (interview data, numbers and text) is prepared for initial analysis. This consisted of cleaning the data, formatting data, clustering data and coding data. The precise treatment of the different data sources is presented in Table 47. For the first level of data analysis the data sources were treated separately, first the interview data then the survey and the text.

Table 47, Preliminary treatment of data during first level analysis

Level 1, data analysis			
Treatment	**Interview data**	**Survey data (numeric)**	**Survey data (text)**
Cleaning	Transfer audio to text, check transcriptions for accuracy, errors and removing identities.	Checking online responses are completed and checking text box comments.	Open each individual respondent's text comments.
Formatting	Format transcripts ready for uploading to NVivo8.	Export online survey results to Excel format ready for SPSS 15.	Copy individual texts comments and paste into MS Word.
Processing	Import data to NVivo8, set attributes, auto code to thematic areas using cluster.	Import to SPSS 15, check attributes, check missing data, enter question labels, run descriptions and frequencies.	First reading of text comments, consider on appropriate coding system.
Clustering	Distribute text from interviews to main thematic areas.	Identify question items relevant to the main thematic areas	Distribute comments to major thematic areas.
Coding	Code in thematic areas as clusters, create branches from clusters.	Recode HE sectors, age, discipline, employment for analysis.	Code in thematic areas.

Level 2 analysis of the data consisted of a more detailed examination of the data. In essence this level could be associated with moving from descriptive analysis to a more in-depth exploration of the data. During this level of analysis, categories are identified, 'models'[149] are considered, and the analysed data is merged and readied for separation into 'claims,

[149] Grix (2004) and Huberman (1994) note that the descriptions and explanations of analysed data can be assisted by the construction of visual models.

concerns and issues', Table 48 provides descriptions of this process. During both levels of analysis reference was made to relevant policy documents as part of the contextualisation of the findings.

Table 48, Final stage treatment of data analysis

Level 2, data analysis			
Treatment	**Interview data**	**Survey data (numeric)**	**Survey data (text)**
Categories	Code up from clusters to three free groups	Run cross tabs of sectoral responses group results into categories.	Code up from main clusters.
Models	Develop schematic models from results.	Develop schematic models from results.	Develop schematic models.
Merge	Start to combine the different analysed data.		
Evaluation	Categorise: claims, concerns and issues.		
Reporting	Report findings: three main thematic areas.		

The process of editing 'in and out'

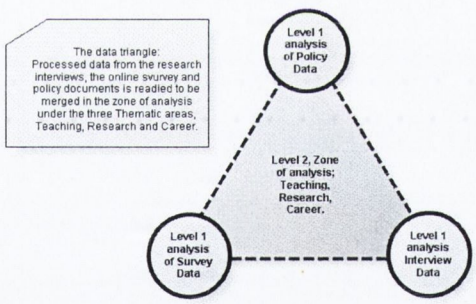
It should be noted that both level 1 and level 2 data analysis consists of two mutually synchronised processes of; editing out (excluding data that is not directly relevant to the research), and editing in (including gathered data that is directly relevant to the research). This is a critical stage in data analysis. Deciding on what data are included or excluded will affect the outcomes of the research and the reporting of the findings. The rationale for this editing process is twofold. Firstly the data categorised under the thematic areas teaching, research and career is sufficient to address the primary research questions. Any items of interest contained in the two thematic areas other duties and voluntary activities can be easily distributed in the main three thematic areas. Secondly, in order to meet the space and time requirements for this thesis a decision had to be made on what data could be edited out during this stage of the research. Data edited out will be utilised during follow up research after the thesis.

Organisation of the data analysis chapters

The organisation of the three main analysis chapters (6, 7 and 8) will mainly deal with level 2 analysis of the analysed datasets. Where appropriate some reference will be made to level 1 analysis, level 2

analysis comprised merging the different data sets (Interview data, survey and text) into the main thematic areas: 1) Teaching (TIT), 2) Research (T2R) and 3) Career (T3C). Each thematic area will be presented in separate sections: each of these sections will start with a brief description of the data sets and then move to analysing the coded data. This involves exploring comparison and differences within thematic areas in the three data sets. This process enabled the combination of words and numbers in order to gain assess to meaningful clusters of information. Following the analysis of each thematic area an evaluation matrix was constructed utilising Guba and Lincoln's categories of 'claims, concerns and issues'. The analysis was informed by notes and memos drafted during the first level of analysis and the coding system that emerged. This type of analysis includes the triangulation of different data-sets. The process is depicted in Diagram 6, which shows the three analysed data sets ready for merging into the zone of analysis or level 2 analysis.

Diagram 6, Data triangle and levels of analysis



Question of credibility

The main 'defence mechanism' constructed in order to meet critiques and challenges from peers who have a more quantitative research approach, was the 'credibility' of the research approach utilised and the 'robust criteria' applied throughout the research process. In the constructivist paradigm Riege (2003) provides a framework to assess the reliability and validity of the inquiry approach. He reviewed the work of Yin, Guba and Lincoln, Denzin and Lincoln, Miles and Huberman and Robson. From his research, he poses test questions to address the main items that the theorists identified as important criteria for consideration when seeking to establish the 'rigour'

and 'truth' of a qualitative inquiry (2003, p81). A summary of Riege's questions are presented below, during the developing, operationalisation and analysis of this research approach the researcher utilised these questions as evaluation tools to inform judgements and decisions that were made.

Credibility (similar to internal validity)

- How rich and meaningful are the descriptions?
- Are the findings internally coherent?
- Are concepts systematically related?

Transferability (similar to external validity)

- Are the descriptions provided sufficient for application in another similar study?
- Are they congruent with, connected to, or confirmatory of prior theory?

Dependability (similar to reliability)

- Are the research questions clear and the design features in congruence with them?
- Have things been done with reasonable care?

Confirmability (similar to objectivity)

- Are the methods and procedures described explicitly?
- Is a complete picture provided including 'backstage information'?
- Is there sufficient information provided for reanalysis by others?

Note: adapted from Riege (2003)

In order to address questions relating to the credibility, rigour and 'trustworthiness' (Guba and Lincoln 1989) the reader is provided with substantial accounts of the process and procedures utilised throughout this thesis research. However, there is also a need to detail the quality and adequacy criteria associated with research undertaken from a constructionist paradigm. In this paradigm according to Guba and Lincoln (1989, pp233-251), there are three main criteria utilised to judge the quality and adequacy of a case study or qualitative piece of research, these are 'trustworthiness' (methods), 'hermeneutic' (process) and 'authenticity' (fairness). They argue that these criteria should be embedded in the

research process and underpinned by a robust code of research ethics. Trustworthiness is intended to provide quality criteria which 'parallel' positivist's criteria relating to the rigour of methods which are internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity. In place of these the constructivist approach utilises 'credibility, transferability, dependability'. The hermeneutic process consists of continuous dialogue and engagement in the field of inquiry, where analysed data can be fed back to stakeholders to comment on accuracy and provide further insights. This reduces the likelihood of researcher bias and researcher prejudice of the data. Guba and Lincoln (1989p, p245) note that while both the trustworthiness and hermeneutic criteria relate to methods and process, there is also a need to develop criteria which reflected constructivist philosophy, these they labelled 'authenticity'. The authenticity criteria is based on 'fairness' which is intended to relate to how the researchers deal with the values and structures as well as and trust of the participants. Additionally, there are three further categories of authenticity:

1) Ontological authenticity, the participant's own construction of the world and the extent this may change during the research process.
2) Educative authenticity, the measurement of a participant's understanding of others, how others construct their world view particularly those who are involved in the research process.
3) Catalytic authenticity, the extent of any action is facilitated by the research process.

Final comment

This chapter presented the reader with the data analysis framework utilised for this research. This included presenting information on the two levels of analysis used in this research, the clustering of the data and the development of data-sets and the combination of data-sets into thematic areas. Question relating to trustworthiness, transferability, dependability and authenticity were outlined. The chapter also introduced how the next three data presentation and analysis chapters are organised.

Chapter 6: Thematic area 1 Teaching, data analysis

> Teaching is not really a valued part of the university enterprise.
> Associate Prof. NYU, interview quote (Washburn 2006, p201)

In this chapter, interview, survey and policy data relevant to thematic area 1 teaching is presented and analysed in accordance with the analysis framework introduced in Chapter 5. First the specific thematic area is briefly explained, which includes providing some description of the 'first run' of coding and the clustering of data within the thematic area. The specific hierarchical analysis framework is described: this includes identifying the primary cluster, the secondary clusters and subordinate clusters for the thematic area. The analysed data are presented in accordance with the hierarchical framework. It should be noted that this analysis chapter is not constructed in an essay or story format. Rather, it is constructed by systematically aligning logical chunks of analysed data in proximity to other related chunks of analysed data. Where possible, after each cluster, a schematic diagram will be presented. These schematics will act as tools which summarise the key items in each cluster and point to broader association with items in other clusters. Some of these schematics could be considered early stage prototypes of theoretical models that are constructed from the analysed data.

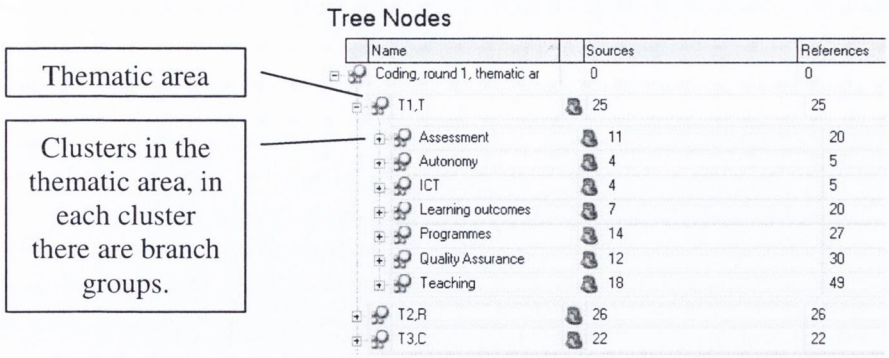
Interview data description

Level 1 analysis consisted of clustering all interview data relevant to teaching into a cluster called thematic area 1 teaching (T1T). 'Coding up' (Richards 2008) from T1T led to the construction of seven branch groups: assessment, autonomy, ICT, learning outcomes, programmes, quality assurance, teaching (see Diagram 7). Similarly survey questions and text comments relevant to teaching were clustered into a similar T1T category. A copy[150] of the clusters with the three thematic areas (T1T, T2R and T3C) is pasted below, T1T is expanded to display the seven 'coded on'

[150] In order to copy and paste the cluster diagram, the print preview of the clusters was executed in NVivo. Then the snapshot tool was used to select the screen area for copying.

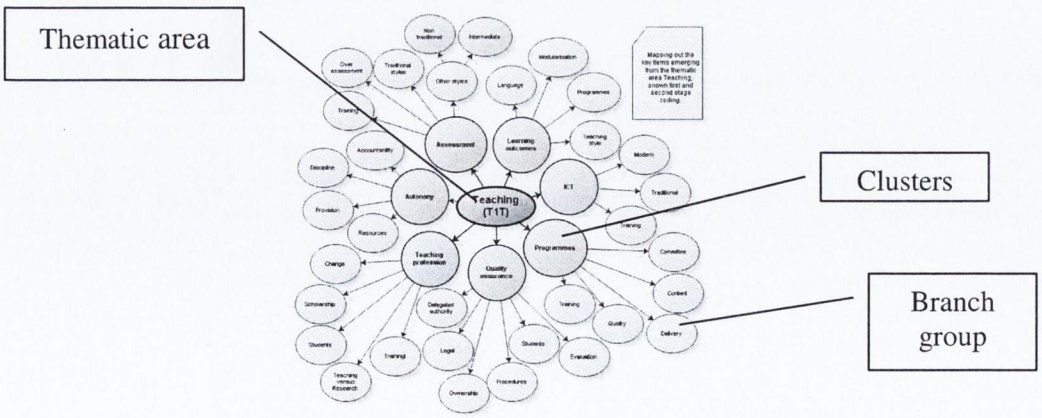
branch groups (each one of these seven branch groups will be expanded when that group is being discussed).

Diagram 7, NVivo screen snapshot of T1T cluster



T1T contained twenty five sources, this means extracts from twenty five different interview transcripts were imported into this thematic area. Level 2 analyses consisted of: interview data 'coding up' (Richards 2008) from each branch group, identifying key items and forming new branch groups. Finally, utilising the memos function in NVivo, each branch group was evaluated constructing the 'claims, concerns and issues'. All these memos were then constructed into a free group T1T which was used to form an evaluation matrix. The schematic model (Diagram 8) provides an overview map of the key coding branches from the cluster T1T, the 'coding on' (Richards 2008) of the seven branch groups and the subsequent 'coding on' (Richards 2008) of 33 branch groups.

Diagram 8, Model of T1T cluster and associated branches



Survey data description

In relation to thematic area 1 teaching the questionnaire provided respondents with 38 items to consider. While the 38 items were all inter-related under the overall thematic area of teaching, there were, however, several groupings of closely related items. The rationale for constructing these groupings was to get a boarder understanding of respondents' opinions relating to the key theme of each grouping, these are presented in Table 49.

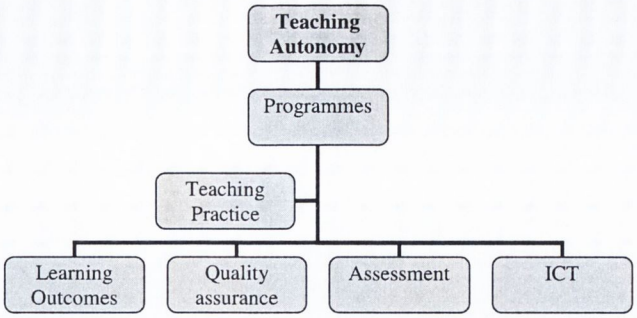
Table 49, Questionnaire thematic area Teaching and groupings

Groupings	Description (number of items and focus)
(1) Experiences	Six items in this group, these sought to gain views on teaching experience and factors such as support service, facilities, time, class size and e-learning.
(2) Positions	Three items in this group, exploring perspectives of the institution in teaching value, recognition and mission.
(3) Programmes	Six items in this group, the intention was to gain an insight into programme development, the resources, funding, collaboration, content, staffing and autonomy.
(4) Quality assurance	Four items in this group, these sought to gain views on quality assurance and its relationship with teaching, programmes, standards and learners.
(5) Policy	Five items in this group, these sought to ascertain awareness of different policy agendas both European and national such as, Bologna, Lisbon, NDP, NQAI and NFQ.
(6) Assessment	Four items in this group, these explored opinions on different assessment approaches such as, time controlled examinations, problem based, work based and continuous assessment.
(7) Structuring	Five items in this group, these sough to gain opinions on both modularisation (efficiency, improved choice and cross-disciplinary) and semesterisation (workload and students achievement).
(8)Professionalism	Five items in this group, these sought to explore teaching practice in professional development, scholarship, supports, exchanges and networking.

Hierarchical analysis framework for T1T

During further analysis within this thematic area and from comparative analysis with the data set a hierarchical framework was constructed (see Diagram 9). In this section the analysis will be presented in the sequential order of this hierarchy. The primary cluster identified was teaching autonomy. The secondary cluster was programmes which has an associate cluster termed teaching practice. This is followed by the subordinate clusters, learning outcomes, quality assurance, assessment and ICT.

Diagram 9, Thematic area teaching analysis hierarchy



Teaching autonomy (primary cluster)

From examining the policy data it emerges that the 1997 University Act gives universities the authority to organise their own affairs, both financially and strategically. This includes establishing corporations and operating campuses in other countries and gives a guarantee to safeguard the traditional principle of academic freedom. In a similar approach the 2006 IoT Act makes provision for professional autonomy (academic freedom) and increases the institutional autonomy of IoTs. However, the OECD (2004, p45) identify a 'tension' that can arise between institutional, professional and teaching autonomy and the need for 'public accountability'. The EUA (2005, p12) claimed that in the Irish university sector '*The system would appear to strike the right tone and combination of public interest, accountability and university autonomy'*. While there is an on-going debate about autonomy (institutional, professional, research, teaching) versus public accountability (see Salter and Tapper 1995, 2000 and Doumani 2006), in the Irish case, the state has already made provision to evaluate institutional autonomy under the 1999 Qualifications Act. This Act requires the IHE to carry out quality reviews every 5-7 years and to make the findings of these reviews publicly available. In the first round of these reviews (2005) the reviewers (the EUA) evaluated professional autonomy of academics in their teaching and research and institutional autonomy in the governance and operations of the IHE. Interestingly from the survey data 88.4% (n=269) of respondents agreed that, *governing bodies in IHE should introduce good governance policies and procedures to enhance decision-making transparency*. One interview participant who

was instrumental in implementing the quality requirements set out in the 1999 Qualifications Act stated:

> It's a balance between taking the autonomy and demonstrating accountability for it. So I think the idea of having reviews as long as the ownership, the aim is to maintain ownership with the institutions is a good thing and I think it's well accepted.
> Senior Manager, NQAI (Interview data 2006, branch group accountability)[151]

In relation to the statement '*Academics have autonomy to develop new programmes*', 58% (n=218) of respondents agreed, with 29.8% (n=112) disagreeing, and 12.2% (n=46) registering a don't know. This result would suggest that a large number of respondents consider they have had appropriate autonomy to engage in the development of new programmes. One contributor stated:

> Yes we have a great degree of autonomy but it is not untrammelled. New programmes are very closely (and appropriately) scrutinised to ensure academic quality and financial viability.
> (Text data 2009, branch group autonomy)

When autonomy was explored at sectoral level there was considerable difference between the university sector where 62% (n=100) agreed and colleges where 66.6% (n=22) agreed that they had appropriate autonomy. Compared to the IoT sector where 53% (n=88) agreed and 40.36% (n=67) disagreed (see Table 50).

Table 50, Autonomy and HE sectors

Academics have autonomy to develop new programmes * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Total
Academics have autonomy to develop new programmes	Agree	100	88	22	210
	Disagree	32	67	7	106
	Don't know	29	11	4	44
Total		161	166	33	360

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges 1

There were 34 short comments inserted into the survey text box relating to this statement, the majority of the text data comments were very negative.

[151] Where a participant's role is identifiable it will be presented in front of the brackets, for example, lecturer (data type, date, code). This is the general case for the interview data. In cases where the role identity is not known such as the text data in the survey the reference will be enclosed In the brackets, for example (data type, date, code).

Respondents claimed they may have autonomy on paper but in practice this was not the case as either local or senior management could easily stop autonomous initiatives. One comment stated:

> Yes, but within such strict resource constraints that it amounts to no real autonomy.
> (Text Data 2009, branch group discipline)

Table 51, Autonomy and discipline

Academics have autonomy to develop new programmes * Locate your of discipline area from the following list crosstabulations

	Locate your of discipline area from the following list												Total
	Arts	Humanities	ICT	Social Science	Science	Engineering	Business	Tourism	Built Environment	Education	Medical	Other	
Agree	15	24	9	24	36	25	25	4	7	24	21	2	216
Disagree	3	9	10	9	21	16	15	3	4	11	5	6	112
Don't know	3	7	3	3	14	3	4	0	0	4	5	0	46
Total	21	40	22	36	71	44	44	7	11	39	31	8	374

It is evident from the survey data that respondents from certain disciplines perceived that they had less programme autonomy when compared to other disciplines (see Table 51). Respondents from the ICT sector registered a majority opposed to the statement 45.45% (n=10) while several other disciplines recorded high levels of disagreement engineering 36.36% (n=16), business 34% (n=15), science 29.5% (n=21) and education 28.2% (n=11). This type of results was also evident in the interview data where one contributor stated:

> I guess the first thing is, were academics always autonomous with regard to programmes they developed? In may be liberal arts or liberal studies or literature and languages and so on, may be there was certain autonomy there. I'm not sure in the sciences and medicine, things like engineering, the kind of public professional practices. I'm not quite sure that the academic had autonomy. I think professional bodies, the power of the professional bodies and the workplace and the practice in the world outside academia to a great extent influenced the provision of programmes and the design and content of those programmes. Lecturer, acting officer, IoT sector (Interview data 2007, branch group discipline)

This expresses the idea that autonomy is not just located in the IHE but affected by external agencies, professional bodies and other interested

parties so that it can be challenged further, when the concept of the student as purchaser of IHE programmes is added to the equation. When programmes can be developed autonomously, what happens if students do not choose to apply for and enter these programmes? As argued by one participant:

> For instance, if you look at what is happening with media studies. If you put on a media arts programme you will fill it several times over, no matter where it is in the country. If you put in something like physics which seems to make the world go round the number of applicants who have that as their first preference is extraordinarily low so in a way its not the autonomy of higher education that's deciding that. It's the outside world thinking this is now interesting, relevant, useful, whatever, trendy, sexy so regardless of how much autonomy the academics want to have or think they have they can't really decide that this is what people are going to like.
> Lecturer, IoT sector (Interview data 2006, branch group provision)

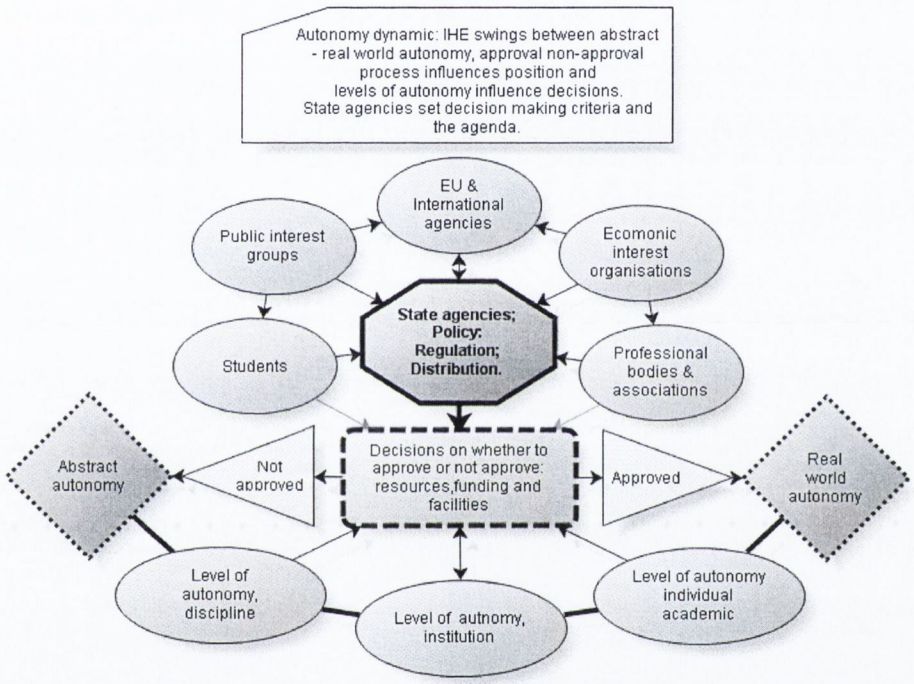
By introducing external factors such as the influence of state agencies, funding bodies, professional organisations, students, the abstract concept of autonomy becomes grounded in the practicalities of the real-world. One of the major real-world practicalities for an IHE and the programmes that can be offered is adequate resourcing. It can be argued that autonomy is just an abstract concept if there are not enough resources (staff, funding and facilities) to realise or act on autonomous decisions. As one participant noted, autonomy needs to be supported through investment.

> Oh there's autonomy galore. Resourcing there isn't. New course development seems to me to be the equivalent of innovation in industry. New course development is innovation for the institute. Our systems are very poor in relation to that. Very poor resourcing, I believe that in order to have innovation you have to resource it. It doesn't just happen.
> Head of school, IoT sector (Interview data 2006, branch group resources)

The Irish government provides legalisation (1997 Universities Act and the 2006 IoT Act) which gives autonomy to the HE sector. The state also enacted legalisation under the 1999 Qualifications Act which requires the HE sector to be accountable. The state administers funding and accountability mechanisms through state agencies such as the HEA and NQAI. However, the policy direction the state develops is influenced by

key interest groups (industry, students and EU etc.). Diagram 10 provides a model of the dynamics of autonomy, showing the influencers who seek to direct state policy, the state agencies that provide the policy framework, regulatory environment and decision-making criteria for funding and resourcing the HE sector. While the HE sector has autonomy at different levels, that of the individual academic, discipline area or at institutional level, depending on the resources available, this autonomy will be either abstract or real-world.

Diagram 10, Autonomy dynamic



Teaching programmes (secondary cluster)

In IHE the programme development process has become quite complex. IHE do not only have to deal with internal academic considerations but must now engage with external agencies,[152] and their requirements, when programmes are being developed or reviewed. From the survey data there was significant support for co-operation between IHE and external bodies 88.2% (n=330) of respondents agreed with the statement '*Programme development can be enhanced through collaboration with external*

[152] Under the government (2010) Labour Market Activation initiative competitive funds are available for IHE that either modify existing programmes or develop new programmes which target unemployed people and/or cater for labour force upskilling.

bodies'. A head of school from the IoT sector provided some insights into his experience interaction with industry experts stating:

> What we try and do, we will have course advisory boards from time to time so that's where we bring industry advisors into advise on the course and we would do that normally in a cycle. So you would complete I can't say quite how often, but you would look at the programmes as a whole and have your industry partners there saying well we think there's much more merit in, you know, having more of this and less of that or we think industry is changing and this is what you should be anticipating. The sort of graduates that we produce are very much coming with an applied background and you expect them to be going into industry positions whatever so you would use them at the industry, the course advisory boards industry would have an input.
> Head of school IoT sector (Interview data 2006, branch group committee)

Most IHE utilise a committee structure in order to facilitate the process of programme development, validation and reviews. These committees can be hierarchical and based on new public management principles (in the IoT sector) or more associated with the liberal traditional of collegiality (in most of the university sector).

While, in general, most IHE utilise a form of committee structure do staff consider they have access to these committees? From the survey data 67.6% (n=221) of respondents considered *they normally had appropriate opportunities to participate in their institution's committee structure.* However, from cross tabulating gender, role and contract type it becomes clear that people some in categories do not consider they have access. For example, 66.4% (n=109) of females consider they have access compared with 71.5% (n=108) of males, 55% (n=15) of researchers disagree with the statement in comparison to only 21% (n=55) of academics. In addition, 45.5% (n=40) of not-full-time staff agreed with the statement compared to 77.4% (n=179) of full-time staff. It would seem that full-time academic staff consider they have access, while research and part-time staff consider they do not have appropriate access. Although the precise constitution of committees varies in different IHE, generally the IoT sector seems to have adopted a more uniform approach in comparison to

the university sector where, in some cases, traditional practices take precedent. Programme committees consist of varied academic staff and can have students and other grades of staff representation. During reviews and programme validations, external academics, experts or industry/professional body representatives may be invited to participate. IHE that utilise this engagement with external experts and monitoring of the external environment suggest that it can contribute towards assisting the development of programme content by introducing new items or needs as one participant demonstrated:

> For example in engineering you'll find now there was a much greater emphasis in all the programmes on the softer skills. The emphasis is on team work, on being conscious of the environment, of the responsibilities of the professional engineer or being conscious also of the fact that when they go outside in a relatively short number of years, engineers invariably end up as manager. So we try to incorporate it in those kinds of ways. Now the teamwork is obviously lab programmes and group projects and design things. The working as an individual is their own final year project and stuff of that nature and then being aware of business community and the wider context. We try to do that through programmes like the Engineering Society and so forth and we get people in to talk about communications, various parts of finance and so forth.
> Associate prof. university sector (Interview data 2008, branch group content)

This notion of external bodies[153] contributing towards programme content received considerable support. Thus 73.7% (n=274) of respondents agreed with the statement, '*Academic programme content needs to be relevant to the external environment (the world of work)*'. While there was general support for this statement there were also sectoral differences. A substantial gap emerged between supporters 86.58% (n=142) in the IoT sector as compared to 60.62% (n=97) in the university sector. Utilising the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, the difference is statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.000, Z=-5.093.

[153] Examples of some external bodies that can make a contribution to the development of programme content are Engineers Ireland, ABA, CIF, IBEC and so forth, although it should be noted that some external bodies serve a regulatory function while others are advisory.

Statistical test 1, Academic programmes and HE sectors

Academic programme content needs to be relevant to the external environment (the world of work), variables HE sectors	
Mann-Whitney U	9824.500
Wilcoxon W	23354.500
Z	-5.093
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

Also in the text data, as noted, contributors cautioned that while programmes needed to be relevant to the external environment, the content should not be driven by the external environment. Others noted the difference between the IoTs and the universities and the difference between vocational and liberal education. One respondent stated:

> If I answer yes, this is usually taken to mean that the needs of the "knowledge economy" can dictate what we teach students inside the university. That is bullshit. The "external environment" needs to understand that universities are not vocational training institutes and citizens need a broad education in which they learn critical skills in order to best contribute to society.
> (Text Data 2009, branch group programmes)

In the current HE legislation there is support for this in the form of the 'binary' system (Scott 1995, OECD 2004). Both the RTC Act (1992) and the DIT Act (1992) firmly position the IoT sector as vocationally oriented, while the 1997 University Act allows the universities to pursue both liberal and vocational routes, although it is interesting to note that in both sectors programme committees are developing alternative modes of programme teaching, approaches which have a vocational orientation such as work-placements, internships, WBL, distance learning and online learning. One example from the interview data relating to this is presented below:

> What I think we need to emerge towards is one that focuses on students understanding and using knowledge as opposed to predominately about the tradition of teaching students and that, you know, more student centred, more group work, project work, etc., etc. and you will find example of that and you will find everyone supporting that but when you actually look at the real content of programmes there's a lot of very formal class teaching, transmission of knowledge and not overtly a lot of activities around seminars, tutorials, presentations which would be more about that demonstrating understanding and use.
> President, IoT sector (Interview data 2007, branch group delivery)

In programme documents the introduction of new modes of teaching, assessment and the language of learning outcomes is facilitated by quality reviews. Salter and Tapper (2000) note that in the UK programmes gradually became subject to quality assurance during the 1980s. In the Irish HE sector programmes became subject to quality systems in the 1990s. Initially these quality systems focused on quality checks and reviews of programmes. However, this has gradually expanded to include activities at department, school and faculty level (this is discussed in the next section). In relation to programme reviews the survey data shows support for the statement, '*Quality reviews assist programme development*' 61.7% (n=230) agreed. However, there was some sectoral difference, 67% (n=110) of the IoT respondents agreed in comparison to 57.5% (n=91) of the university sector. There was also a significant statistical difference between sectors as demonstrated by using the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test. The difference is statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.004, Z=-1.597.

Statistical test 2, Quality reviews and HE sectors

Quality reviews assist programme development. Variable: HE sectors	
Mann-Whitney U	11807.500
Wilcoxon W	25337.500
Z	-1.597
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.110

In addition, there was also difference by discipline with the science/medical grouping more supportive of the statement, at 73% (n=74) than the other two discipline groupings (see Table 52).

Table 52, Discipline and programme quality reviews

Quality reviews assist programme development * Discipline groupings Social, Science/Medical, Technology crosstabulation

		Discipline groupings Social, Science/ Medical, Technology			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00
Quality reviews assist programme development	Agree	111	74	41	226
	Disagree	43	15	23	81
	Don't know	23	10	10	43
	Other	11	2	0	13
Total		188	101	74	363

Key, 1=Social Grouping, 2=Science/Medical grouping, 3=Technology grouping

There was, however, some concern expressed about the about the nature and purpose of quality reviews. Some respondents (n=15) suggested that the review agenda can be political, management-led and seek to introduce change and cost-efficiency measures. One detailed response from the text data seemed to capture most of the concerns expressed:

> They should, but in practice are hugely expensive in time as well as money. They are heavily bureaucratic, designed by a management culture that consistently substitutes quantitative for qualitative analysis and seem determined to impose RAE-style models although the balance between Teaching and Research in Irish universities is not as research-centred as in the UK.
> (Text Data 2009, branch group quality assurance)

To some extent, programme committees have more influence during annual programme reviews in comparison to management-led school, faculty and institutional reviews. Programme committees have the flexibility to introduce, or experiment with, alternative modes of teaching and assessment. However, in general, programme committees do not have the autonomy to manage the financial matters relating to programme provision. One participant gave an account of programme reviews in school, stating:

> So there's that constant evaluation going on of our programmes, there's that delivery, that is always followed by an evaluation and that may result in a fairly major change if you see a pattern emerging over the three or four years or minor changes to test them out on a year to year basis. The school itself, the university has quality review which all schools are subjected to every three years and I'm a member of that quality review group and my predecessor is also a member of that. That's a fairly intensive quality review of all of the programmes and all of the issues that arise for the delivery of these programmes and we underwent ours last year and you must be able to show that any of the changes that are recommended are put in place in varying periods of time.
> Head of school, university sector (Interview data 2008, branch group quality)

The resourcing of programmes in staffing and funding mechanism seemed to be a contentious area. There was strong opposition to the statement, '*Academic programmes in my institution are appropriately resourced*'. Some 63% (n=236) of respondents registered their disagreement, while 27.1% (n=102) agreed. There was no sectoral difference. However, there

was a marginal difference for disciplines with 67% (n=52) disagreement in the technology grouping compared to 54% (n=56) in the science/medical grouping. This result suggests that respondents were dissatisfied with the levels of resources that programmes were receiving in their institutions. At present, core funding is allocated by the HEA which utilises a unit cost analysis formulae based on student numbers. There are tentative discussions (DES, HEA, 2009) about introducing funding systems based on outcomes and completion numbers. In general, respondents were not in favour of this model of funding with 54.1% (n=205) disagreeing with the statement '*Academic programmes in Higher Education Institutions should receive state funding in accordance to the number of students who graduate*'. When the results are analysed on a sectoral basis it seems that those in the IoT sector are more opposed 68.42% (n=103) to the introduction of this type of funding system when compared to the university sector where only 46% (n=75) disagree (see Table 53). The other concern with this model of funding was academic standards and the question of what effect this would have on the maintenance of academics standards. One contributor noted the possible impact claiming:

> Everyone optimizes to the metric presented to them: universities will graduate students that don't deserve a degree, leading to a downward spiral of standards.
> (Text data 2009, branch group programmes)

Table 53, Funding mechanism and HE sectors

Academic programmes in Higher Education Institutions should receive state funding in accordance to the number of students who graduate * HE sectors crosstabulation

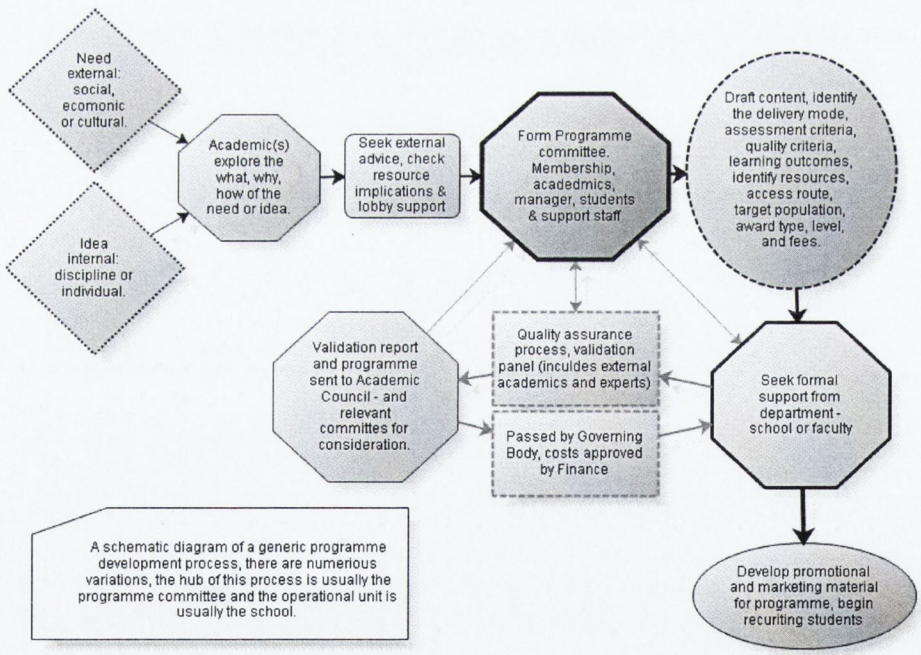
		HE sectors			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00
Academic programmes in Higher Education Institutions should receive state funding in accordance to the number of students who graduate	Agree	54	45	9	108
	Disagree	75	103	19	197
	Don't know	34	17	6	57
Total		163	165	34	362

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

From analyses of the data the following schematic (see Diagram 11) was constructed. The schematic signposts the key stages of programme development, the model is intended to give a generic account. It is

recognised that there are differences between the university sector and the IoT sector and, indeed, in each sector. The purpose of the model is to capture the important stages that different participants talked about during the interviews. The schematic shows that the start of a programme may result from an academic having an idea, or as a response to external needs. The concept is then explored, colleagues are consulted, and other factors are considered. If there is support for the initiative, an ad hoc programme committee can be established to work on the programme material and content. The committee then seeks support from the formal structures in the department or school. If this support is obtained the programme document can be submitted to the appropriate quality committee which will make a recommendation to the Academic Council. If the Academic Council approves the programme, then the costing and resource implications are considered. The school is then advised on the fees and given the green light to proceed with enrolling for the programme.

Diagram 11, Schematic detailing the programme development process.



Teaching practice (associate cluster)

It can be argued that for most academic staff working in Irish IHE teaching is their primary activity. Indeed, it seems to be taken-for-granted

that teaching is one of the main functions of an IHE. While teaching is a primary function of academic staff working in higher education, in the policy data the term teaching is not explicitly mentioned in either the 1992 DIT/RTC Acts or the 1997 University Act. However, in general, teaching as an academic function, is detailed in the employment contracts of academic staff. In the IoT sector academic staff are required to do 16-18 hours teaching a week, while in the university sector the hours vary dependent on the criteria of each university from 3-12 hours per week. Not withstanding the actual number of teaching hours worked, the question of the quality of teaching has being raised. For example the EUA (2005) stated:

> The situation regarding teaching and learning differs considerably from one Irish university to another and indeed within universities also. Some situations were considered by the EUA teams to be rather, traditional, with large auditorium-style lectures and many contact hours for students. Others appeared more modern and flexible, with an increased focus on learning rather than teaching, more project work and greater links with the world of work and other external stakeholders. However, there is a general positive shift from larger classrooms to smaller groups and from long courses to shorter modules.
> (EUA 2005 p22)

The Irish government (NDP 2006, p205) has identified the need to improve the quality of teaching in general and, specifically, to introduce new innovative teaching approaches and structures. The NDP proposed a reform stimulus package, run on a competitive basis called the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF). SIF had an estimated budget of €510 million. While SIF reforms are targeted at structures and management, students and access, progression and retention and collaboration, there is also a targeted objective for teaching. In conjunction with the NDP and its stated objectives for teaching, the national partnership agreement *Towards 2016* (2006 Section E) commits academic staff in the IoT sector to co-operate with 'programme restructuring', 'flexible modes of delivery' and the 'utilisation of new teaching technologies'. In the national policy reform agenda teaching is targeted as a practice that needs to be 'rationalised', 'made cost efficient' 'utilising new technologies', 'improving quality' and employing 'performance' measures. These reforms correlate with the

characteristics of Ritzer's (2006) McDonaldisation proposition. One participant who works for the IUA stated:

> There's a lot of focus on teaching activity and the quality of teaching activity. Engagement of staff because teaching processes in many cases have been completely reorganised in measurement and structured programmes. Many academics are having to change their routine and the way they've done things in certain ways for ten years. They've had to rethink and generally spend more time on teaching without necessarily having more resources or backup and then there are all sorts of other duties that are out there.
> (Officer, IUA, Interview data 2007, branch group change)

The interview participant from the IUA directly identified changes in teaching practice with the restructuring of programmes. An example of this type of structural change that affects teaching was the national introduction of modularisation[154]. In the higher education sector one of the general claims that proponents of modularisation made during its introduction was that it had a direct benefit to the institution increased effectiveness in programme management and improved teaching efficiency. However, 43.4% (n=159) of respondents disagreed that the statement *'the modularisation system in my institution increased the efficiency of teaching'*. It can be argued that the teaching reform agenda is placing more demands on academic staff time in increased administrative duties, quality assurance, student support, new technologies and research. All these demands are reducing the time academics have to engage in their teaching and scholarship. The change agenda is not only about seeking change of practices but, rather, there is a strategy to gain access to the classroom by managers in order to observe practice and evaluate teaching performance. One participant noted:

> What happens in the classroom? That, that is precluded if you like from in many ways from our action, our supervision by virtue of the role I suppose of the unions. Now and that's a broad general position and I think it is a kind of, it is an anomaly that, you know, the core area of what we are about is somehow cornered off from us and having said that there are plenty of ways that we impact, seriously impact on how jobs are, how the teaching job is done. I regard the teachers in the college as

[154] Wilson (1991 p 250) argues that the introduction of modularisation into the UK HE systems in the 1980s could lead to the 'deskilling' of the role of lecturers in terms of programme development.

> professionals and as such, self regulating, However, again having said that no matter what profession you're talking about whether its medicine or whatever or teaching there is a degree of regulation and there is a need to supervise the supervisors if you like.
> (Head of school, IoT sector, Interview data 2007, branch group change)

One interview participant cited student dissatisfaction with teaching and lecturers as a contributing factor to the change agenda. Noting that, in some cases students were perceived by lecturers as passive receivers of information rather than active participant in the learning process, the interviewee stated:

> I think the pressure has come from students who were sick and tired of, you know, the poor presentation of lectures, the boring nature of lectures and the lack of response on the part of their lecturers to student needs.
> (Prof. and senior officer UN agency, Interview data 2008, branch group students)

While the changing nature of the student population may be placing demands on academics to cater for differences such as gender, disability, ethnicity and student ability there is, however, a more direct driver pressurising academics seeking their time and knowledge and that is the emergent research agenda. In an Irish IHE there seems to be a perception that the new research agenda is taking precedence over teaching and that research receives more recognition by IHE. As a participant noted:

> Teaching is not given the recognition it is due and it seems to me that the trend nationally and internationally is also away from teaching as a hugely important and the most important thing that higher education institutes do and that's driven by commercialisation. It's driven by managerialism, it's driven by skimping the funds nationally from central sources so that you have to get more internationally and there's more in research. There's more monies if you concentrate on that so I know that every higher education institute is striving to be seen on the dip stick of research and it is definitely at the expense of teaching and also there is lecturers knowing that the recognition is now in research. I am pushed by it too. A Strand 1 goes in, an application for an innovation partnership. You know we hold these people up as the best but we don't hold up course development or really good teaching, innovative practice in the same way because it doesn't generate additional monies *per se*. It has all sort of hidden benefits but they're not seen and that's a real issue.

(Head of school, IoT sector, Interview data 2008, branch group teaching vs. research)

Although from the survey data it emerged that the respondents were not overly supportive of the statement, '*As an activity teaching is highly valued by my institution*', only 52.6% (n=200) agreed. When the data are disaggregated 48% (n=145) of academic staff agreed with the statement, while staff from the 20-35 year group are more supportive of the statement, 65% (n=65) agreeing, whereas only 47% (n=86) of the 31-45 age group and 48% (n=46) of the 46-65+ age grouping agreed. From the result it would seem that younger staff believe teaching is valued whereas both older staff and academic staff do not consider teaching is valued by their institutions. In teaching gaining recognition 54.8% (n=206) agreed with the statement '*Teaching excellence is recognised in the institution where I work*'. There was a sectoral difference with 63.58% (n=103) from the university sector agreeing compared to 46% (n=76) in the IoT sector. Utilising the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, the difference is statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.02, Z=-2.333. This is a surprising result considering that the IoT sector is mainly a teaching focused sector.

Table 54, Teaching excellence by HE sector

Teaching excellence is recognised in the institution were I work * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Total
Teaching excellence is recognised in the institution were I work	Agree	103	76	20	199
	Disagree	39	76	13	128
	Don't know	20	12	1	33
Total		162	164	34	360

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

Statistical test 3, Recognition of teaching and HE sectors

Teaching excellence is recognised in the institution where I work. Variable: HE sectors	
Mann-Whitney U	11520.000
Wilcoxon W	24723.000
Z	-2.333
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.020

The other narrative that is emerging in relation to teaching is professional

training for teaching. Several participants questioned whether academic staff in Irish IHE held teaching qualification and if they did not, why not? A couple of participants suggested that academics were employed because of their expertise and knowledge not because they were good teachers. The majority of IoTs and some universities have introduced training programmes for academics in teaching methods. One participant stated:

> Well we were chatting about teaching and well the first thing that I'd say about is that there's an issue around teacher training[155], teacher education for people in third level. It varies from institution to institution. Some have put a more formal structure in place and in Britain it's become almost a requirement now that people have a teaching qualification to become tenured and certainly to move jobs. In Ireland we're quite a bit away from that. I think its something that needs to be done apart from the quality of teaching there's also the parity of esteem issue.
> (Associate prof. university sector, Interview data 2009, branch group training)

Additionally, there was a positive response to the statement *'The institution where I work provides opportunities to advance my professional teaching practice'*, 76.9% (n=286) agreed. However, in the text data, questions were raised relating both to quality and relevance of short courses that where provided by institutions. One respondent made a more critical comment:

> Superficially, but the Teaching Development Unit imposes orthodoxies about Teaching and Learning, instead of helping teachers develop and broaden their skills.
> (Text data 2009, branch group professionalism)

Also, it seems that respondents were not content with the resources that IHE direct towards improving teaching practice. Only 53.2% (n=196) of respondents agreed with the statement *'My institution needs to provide more supports to enhance teaching and learning practice'*. According to the text data, respondents wanted both resources and decision-making power to direct resources towards fulfilling their own training needs rather than centralised learning and teaching centres making decisions on what training was needed. From an analysis of the data it would seem that there

[155] A comprehensive account of the needs of both primary and post primary teacher education is contained in the report by SCoTENS (2004).

are three main interrelated factors seeking to influence academics teaching practice, these are,

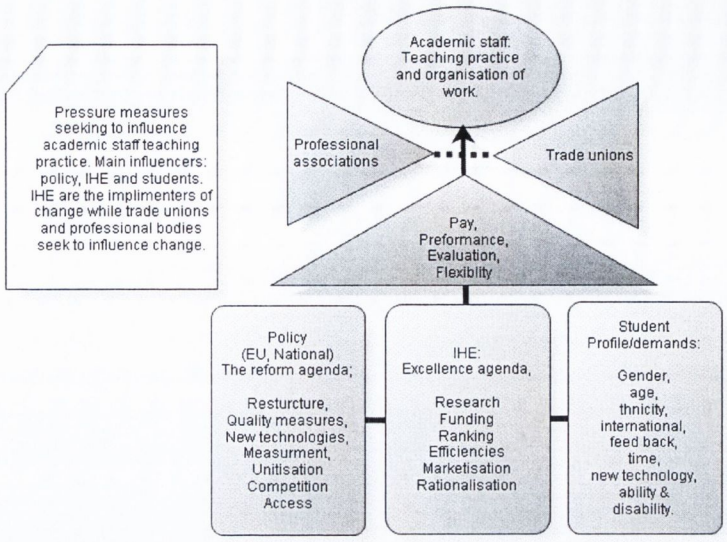
1) policy initiatives at both European and national levels,
2) IHE and their strategic direction and
3) students' needs and demands.

While the policy agenda is developed at European and national levels it is managed in the HE sectors and the individual IHE which begin the process of policy implementation. This has the most direct effect on teaching practice at institutional level. The primary reform initiatives at present seem to be targeting the reorganisation of work, rationalisation of labour and traditional practices, efficiency measures achieved through technologies, quality assurance, performance management and differentiation in remuneration.

The modernisation agenda is affected by other stakeholders such as professional bodies (IBEC, IUA, IoTI etc.) that already have influence at national policy level, but now are also seeking to gain influence at sectoral and local IHE level. For example, trade unions operate at both national level, where full-time officers seek to influence policy, and at local level where voluntary activists seek either to influence or challenge policy implementation in the IHE. Diagram 12 illustrates the three change drivers and the bodies that endeavour to influence the change agenda directed at academic staff and their teaching practice. For academics the reform measures have led to increased demands on their time which, in turn, has reduced the amount of time they can direct towards teaching.

In addition, some IHE continue the drive to increase research capacity, capabilities and output. There is a growing perception that teaching is not given the same recognition and resources as research. This is leading to some tension and frustration, particularly for new academics and academics seeking promotional opportunities as research activities seem to attract more worth than teaching activities.

Diagram 12, Pressures on academic staff to change teaching practice



Teaching learning outcomes (subordinate cluster 1)

The European Commission has been a strong advocate of the introduction of learning outcomes by the higher education sector. In Europe learning outcomes are perceived as a key approach to the establishment of a common language, an understanding of learning as quantifiable units that can facilitate the construction of a compatible and comparable measurement system or credit system across Europe (Bologna 1999)[156]. In an Irish higher education context the NQAI and HETAC have being active supporters of learning outcomes. They have both encouraged the universities and IoTs to incorporate the language of learning outcomes[157] into programme documentation. While the NQAI published this policy and procedures document in 2003, it would seem, from the survey data, that there is still a considerable amount of ambiguity. This was evident from the 46.2% (n=171) don't know response registered to the statement, *'The NQAI policies and procedures enhance academic programme development in my institute'*. While 33% (n=122) of respondents agreed and 18.1% (n=67) disagreed. From this result it is clear that a large percentage of respondents are unaware of the effect the NQAI policies and

[156] See the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve communiqué, (2009, p3) which states 'We reassert the importance of the teaching mission of higher education institutions and the necessity for ongoing curricular reform geared toward the development of learning outcomes'.

[157] For further details about the NQAI's learning outcomes see the NQAI publication *Policies and criteria for the establishment of the national framework of qualifications (2003).*

procedures are having on their institutes' programmes. The text data contributors either stated that the NQAI was not relevant to the work they were engaged in or associated the NQAI with quality assurance matters. The following comment provides a good example of this sentiment:

> As with QA, the NFQ and its associated practices are good in themselves but are inclined to support a static or reductive model of learning.
> (Text data 2009, branch group policy)

In the survey data there is a divergence of opinion between the university and IoT sectors on the NQAI's policies and procedures document. The margin of difference was evident when a comparative analysis between the sectors was made. Table 55 demonstrates this difference with 40.83% (n=67) of the IoT sample agreeing with the statement and only 22.43% (n=35) of the university and 35% (n=12) of the college respondents agreeing. Also, the percentage of don't know responses in each sector was quite high with the university sector registering 55.76% (n=87), colleges 52.9% (n=18) and IoTs 37.8% (n=62). A statistically significant different can between the university and IoT sector can be demonstrated by using the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.000, Z=-3.588.

Table 55, NQAI policy and procedures and HE sectors

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland's policies and procedures enhance academic programme development in my institute * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	
The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland's policies and procedures enhance academic programme development in my institute	Agree	35	67	12	114
	Disagree	31	32	2	65
	Don't know	87	62	18	167
	Other	3	3	2	8
Total		156	164	34	354

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

Statistical test 4, NQAI policies and HE sectors

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland's policies and procedures enhance academic programme development in my institute. Variables: HE sectors.	
Mann-Whitney U	10041.000
Wilcoxon W	23571.000
Z	-3.588
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

While there were sectoral differences in relation to NQAI policy and procedures, there was general support for the statement '*The National Framework of Qualifications award levels make awards more transparent and recognisable'* with 59.4% (n=221) of respondents agreeing and 12.1% (n=45) disagreeing. However, the result that is of more concern is the 28% (n=104) who registered a don't know. From cross-tabulating both roles and sectors with the NFQ statement, the large don't know response can be explored. It emerges that 57.14% (n=20) of researchers registered a don't know in comparison to 26.7% (n=78) academics, further, the university sector recorded a higher don't know 40.8% (n=65) in comparison to the IoT sector 16.45% (n=27), see Table 56.

Table 56, NFQ awards and sectors

The National Framework of Qualifications award levels make awards more transparent and easily recognisable * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	
The National Framework of Qualifications award levels make awards more transparent and easily recognisable	Agree	72	117	20	209
	Disagree	20	19	4	43
	Don't know	65	27	10	102
	Other	2	0	0	2
Total		159	163	34	356

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

While the NFQ has been in place since 2003, the results from the survey data suggest that a high percentage of staff do not know about the function and purpose of the NFQ. This raises some questions. For example, why are staff not aware of the framework and its function? Has the NQAI implemented an effective promotional campaign? There was some reservations expressed in the text data in relation to the implementation of the NFQ one contributor stated:

> It is my experience that not all degrees awarded from different institutions are of the same quality. I have grave concerns with some of the awards that are given.
> (Text Data 2009, branch group policy)

The speed of programme adaptation to learning outcomes was not only dependent on encouragement from the NQAI and HETAC but, rather, in some discipline areas such as, engineering, it was the professional

associations, in this case Engineers Ireland (EI), which were the main driving force for reform. However, while many IHE incorporate learning outcomes into their programmes, it is worth asking whether this was undertaken as a 'paper exercise' or a real reforming process? The following extracts present participants' considerations on different issues such as modularisation, programmes and teaching:

> You know there are compelling reasons for doing so. The emerging student profile is one, modularisation is another because obviously in a system of modularisation where ideally you have a batch of modules which will be available as the electives to students from all sorts of departments and all sorts of areas in an institute. It needs to be crystal clear what the learning outcomes are and students need to have access to the information which describes and then they can make an informed choice and also exchanges, the Bologna exchange students coming in they need to be able to say what they're signing up for.
> (Director IoT, Interview data 2008, branch group modularisation)

In this first comment the participant is associating learning outcomes with both providing information to aid student choice and the boarder European HE policy agenda. Whereas, the next participant perceives learning outcomes in a very different light:

> It's too big a revolution you know and unfortunately what happens in higher education, probably everywhere, maybe its life now it moves fast. Learning outcomes is nearly a thing of the past and we've moved on to the next problem. But that doesn't mean its bedded down because its not. It's not at all and I think the danger is that we'll say or you can flippantly say all programmes are written in learning outcomes. All modules are written in learning outcomes.
> (Officer HETAC, Interview data 2008, branch group programme)

This participant notes both the potential change that learning outcomes encompass and the risk of only using the language of learning outcomes. The next participant provides an example of someone discussing the practical application of learning outcomes in programmes:

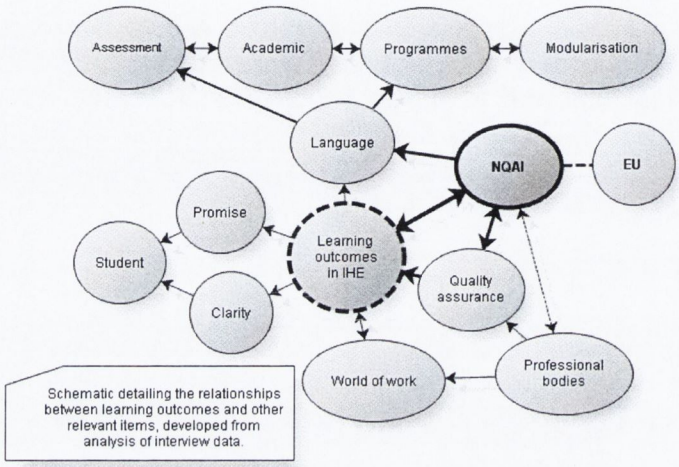
> But what we do now is we have the learning outcomes which they are supposed to achieve in that third year on, you know the competencies and the skills and knowledge and that is put on Moodle so the students know what learning outcomes they're supposed to achieve and they then have, in Moodle they have to track what they're doing at work and slot that into a particular

> relevant learning outcome for the year. It could be about, they need to attend site meetings in the construction sector or they need to engage in some kind of problem solving or they need to pick up certain pieces of knowledge if they're doing quantity surveying for instance, they learn about certain calculations and see how that's actually being done.
> (Director IoT sector, Interview data 2008, branch group teaching style)

From the data it would seem that learning outcomes have been gradually introduced into the narrative of programme document. As such, learning outcomes have moved from being perceived as some abstract policy concept that needs to be considered and, if necessary, responded to. But rather, learning outcomes are being positioned in HE as primary criteria utilised for restructuring of programmes (i.e. modularisation) and as part of the programme review process. The implementation of learning outcomes seems to be meeting limited resistance. Learning outcomes, as promoted by the national agencies (NQAI and HETAC), are finding willing advocates in the ranks of IHE mangers. While some academic staff may not be comfortable with the growing dominance of learning outcomes, they are, however, still adopting learning outcomes in revised programme documents. This process is captured in the schematic presented in Diagram 13, which maps out learning outcomes in relationships between the state (through agents such as the NQAI and IHE), academics and students showing the discourse of learning outcomes and how this techno-language has penetrated academic programmes and structures. The national agencies claim that learning outcomes provide more information and clarity to students. As such, the promise is more information to inform students/customer choice. The schematic endeavours to map out the influence of the state agency the NQAI (as structure) that promotes the utilisation of learning outcomes learning it illustrates the directional flow of influence in IHE, students and interest groups. It shows how learning outcomes, as a new discourse, are embedded in the academic language and programme content of HE. Support for the implementation of the learning outcome discourse comes from both the EU and professional bodies (such as EI). The promoters of learning outcomes promise students that this approach will provide clarity

in programme object, purposes, goals and content. Learning outcomes become the new student/customer labelling system, stating what the programme offers, and provide employers with the precise content of a programme which can inform selection decisions.

Diagram 13, Schematic detailing learning outcomes and relationships



Teaching quality (subordinate cluster 2)

From the policy data it would seem that the introduction of formal quality assurance procedures into the Irish higher education sector is a relatively new phenomenon. The first mention of quality assurance for the HE sector in a legal context was in the 1997 Universities Act (Section 35) which instructs the governing authorities of each university named in the Act to carry out formal evaluations of the institution's departments and faculties every ten years. The evaluators should not be employees of the IHE and they should be competent to make both national and international comparisons of the quality of teaching, research and other services provided by the institution. The Act specifies that student assessment of teaching, research and services must be part of the evaluation. The Act recommends that IHE should, within their means, implement the findings and recommendations contained in the evaluator's report.

In the IoT sector neither the 1992 RTC Act nor the 1992 DIT Act contains any reference to quality assurance or evaluation of programmes, departments, schools or faculties. However, the governing bodies of the

IoTs where required to produce annual reports detailing the institutions activities, finances and other matters relevant to the Acts. Some institutes began to establish quality assurance procedures. For example, the Academic Council of the DIT adopted quality assurance procedure in 1998. However, the 1999 Qualifications Act established a legal context for all recognised education and training providers in the state to have quality assurance systems in place. One participant notes the review and reporting pressure that the IoT sector was under during that time (2006-2008) stating:

> [IoTs]... were looking for delegated authority which meant that they had the capacity to oversee the granting of their rewards with a certain amount of independence from HETAC so for the last seven years I think that the institutes, they're probably fed up of doing reporting and being externally reviewed because they've had quality assurance review, they've had delegated authority reviews, they've had programmatic reviews. But notwithstanding that I think they're at the end of the cycle and the reviews of the effectiveness of all of their quality assurance has now to be put into place and that will sort of be the end of cycle one and we'll be going into cycle two.
> (Officer HETAC, Interview data 2008, branch group delegated authority)

In the 1999 Act and under the administration of the NQAI the responsibility for quality reviews moved from agency level to being the individual responsibility of each IHE. Not only were IHE required to carry out quality reviews but they had to take ownership of the process and follow through on implementing the quality reviewers' recommendations. As a participant noted:

> We haven't sought to take away any ownership of them. If you were to switch that for a second. Let's take HETAC and even NCEA, if you'd asked the question where does quality assurance rest ten years ago in the rest of the then RTCs, whatever it changed about ten years ago, the then IoTs they'd have said quality assurance rest with NCEA. That's not a solution. The ownership has to be at institutional level because that means taking responsibility at institutional level too. I think Ireland has taken a lead in stressing the ownership at institutional level that there is a danger in some European systems of ownership being at agency level. But I think that is changing in Europe too but I'm not sure how much because in European stuff institutions have so little freedom.
> (Senior Officer, NQAI, Interview data 2008, branch group ownership)

While quality assurance systems are in place in all IHE, respondents were not convinced that these systems improved teaching. Only 34.1% (n=128) agreed with the statement '*Current quality assurance arrangements in the institution where I work enhance my teaching practice*', while 40% (n=150) disagreed and 21.3% (n=80) replied don't know. There was some difference between sectors 44% (n=74) of the IoT respondents disagreed with the statement compared to 35% (n=57) in the university sector. Utilising the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, the difference is statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.004, Z=-2.879.

Statistical test 5, QA procedures enhance teaching and HE sectors

Current Quality Assurance arrangements in the institution were I work enhance my teaching practice. Variable: HE sectors	
Mann-Whitney U	10832.500
Wilcoxon W	24527.500
Z	-2.879
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.004

Disaggregating the results into discipline groupings displayed further differences with 50% (n=38) of the technology grouping disagreeing, compared to 39% (n=74) from the social grouping and 33% (n=34) from the science/medical grouping. These results stand in contrast to the EUA (2006) reviewers' sectoral report which praised the universities in Ireland for developing excellent quality assurances systems. Why do academics not concur with the EUA claim? The text data provides some additional insights: there were three main categories of responses:

1) Time: it is very time consuming, increased workload at all levels (department, school and faculty) with no clear outcomes.
2) Bureaucratic: centralised administrations develop bureaucratic systems and procedures: quality becomes a paper chase exercise.
3) Funding: no additional funding available to carry out quality reviews and no funding to implement the recommendations of quality reviews.

One respondent presented an interesting contribution questioning whether there is a need for a new quality systems and the role of administration stating:

> Old system of external assessment should be adequate for quality control. A central office delivers inappropriate 'one size fits all' advice to junior TA's. Staff mentoring within disciplines is preferable.
> (Text data 2009, branch group quality assurance)

From the interview data it would seem that procedural quality assurance systems have being developed and made evident in institutional quality assurance manuals. However, the question for the next round of institutional quality reviews is, was the first round a paper exercise or did IHE really engage with the quality assurance procedures and take action on the quality reviewers' recommendations? However, Ireland and the HE sectors in Europe and the developed world are not the only ones interested in quality assurance. One participant from an international agency with experience of lecturing in developing countries notes how the HE sector in developing countries is operating quality procedures, stating:

> Quality assurance systems are, they're being set-up. There's a tendency of universities using university, you know, lecturers and professors from other universities to look at their work. And in countries a number of countries are setting up authorities to look at the quality of what is being offered to students: and on the boards of the authorities you could have, you know, senior staff from various institutions sitting on these and wanting to check what is being done, whether it's up to scratch or is not. Even sometimes the grading of papers by lecturers from outside: external examiners will come and look at what has been marked to see if the grading is good enough and so on.
> (Officer, UN agency, Interview data 2008, branch group procedures)

An interesting question concerns the position of students within these kinds of structures. For example, how does the IHE provide a space and give a voice to students in institutional strategy, teaching and research? This question is framed by one participant who questions whether the quality assurance procedures in the sector adequately cater for students' needs, stating:

> I think the biggest challenge under the quality assurance is for all institutions is the bottom one which is all of them how do you review the effectiveness of your own quality assurance and I think that's where the institutions are at now. Seven years on, over the last seven years they've all grappled with having proper

> procedures written in student appeals. How do you deal with students? What are their rights and entitlements?
> (Officer HETAC, Interview data 2008, branch group students)

Some IHE have developed quality assurance procedures and structures which provide opportunities for students to nominate candidates to various committees within institutions to represent the students' voice at meetings. There is still one contentious issue which has an industrial relations history, which is student evaluation of teaching staff. One participant captures the essence of this issue, stating:

> One obvious thing would be systematic evaluation of student views of teaching but that brings us to the whole issue of the evaluation of staff performance which is a very, very touchy area. In theory built into the new quality assurance systems but in practice the same issues apply when evaluations are conducted, who conducts them, who gets to see them, how objective are they, what uses can be made of them. So I would see all those as issues.
> (Associate prof, university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group teaching evaluation)

Despite being contentious, respondents were supportive of the statement, '*Developing a quality culture enhances the learning experience of students*', 71.5% (n=266) agreeing, although the strongest percentage of support came from the IoT sector with 77.57% (n=128) agreeing, compared to the university sector with 64.74% (n=101) agreeing (see Table 57).

Table 57, Quality culture and HE sectors.

Developing a quality culture enhances the learning experience of students * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

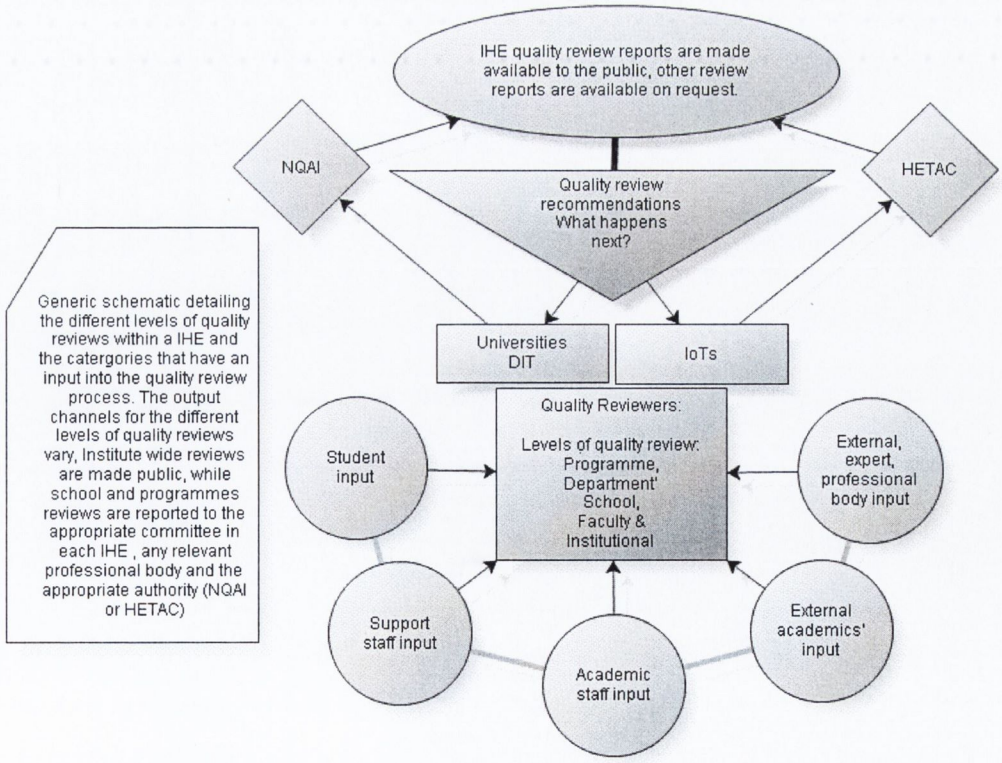
		HE Sectors			
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Total
Developing a quality culture enhances the learning experience of students	Agree	101	128	24	253
	Disagree	22	13	2	37
	Don't know	26	20	7	53
	Other	7	4	1	12
Total		156	165	34	355

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

From an analysis of the data the following schematic (Diagram 14) was constructed, detailing the quality review procedure. It outlines institutional quality reviews and the dynamic involving the state agencies, HE sector and other stakeholders such as, students, academic staff, support staff,

external academics and external bodies. While, normally, quality reviews require this wide range of stakeholders to participate in the review process there can be power dynamics in which one stakeholder's voice gains prominence. This is dependent on the make-up of the review team. It should be noted that the makeup of a review team is dependent on what level of review is being undertaken, programme, department school, faculty or institution. The diagram provides a generic example of an institutional quality review, showing the reporting channels. For the universities and DIT these are through the NQAI and for the IoTs it is HETAC. All final quality review reports must be made public. However, the real question is what happens next? Do the IHE act on the recommendations from the reviewers' report? Do the IHE have the capacity and resources to act? The answers to these questions will become evidence during the next round of institutional quality reviews which will happen between 2011 and 13.

Diagram 14, Institutional quality review process and sectoral reporting channels



Teaching assessment (subordinate cluster 3)

Different types of assessment (of formal, informal and non-formal learning) and methods of assessment (summative examination, continuous assessment, group-based assessment etc.) have received considerable interest in recent times from both higher education policy makers and academic lecturing staff. The OECD's (2007) *Higher Education Policy Analysis 2005-2006* has taken a particular stance in the promotion and the utilisation of 'formative modes' of assessment based on outcomes (also see OECD 2005, Document 2, p11). Similarly, the 1999 Act clearly links assessment with standards and directs that assessment should be 'fair' and 'consistent' and promotes the formation of a uniform national assessment system. Subsequently the NAQI advocated for alternative types of assessment of formal, informal and non-formal learning, which are directly linked to learning outcomes and the NFQ level descriptors. However, the NQAI and the two awarding councils HETAC and FETAC advocate that providers consider alternative assessment approaches in the programmes/courses they offer. Several interviewees mentioned that national agencies such as the NQAI and HETAC seem to be promoting the introduction of newer assessment styles while labelling assessment styles in current use as old and traditional. Several examples from the perspectives of interviewees are presented below; these range from traditional to new types of assessment approaches. It is also worth observing within these extracts that there is a form of policy implementation through 'steering at a distance' (Middleton 2000):

> It would have been said to me quite frequently by HETAC when I came here, 'Oh your assessment methods in [undisclosed IoT] are very traditional, very old fashioned, all the rest and I remember in my innocence in the early days writing to them and saying 'Well would you ever come along and do a workshop for us', and then I got a note back saying we don't do that.
> (Head of school, IoT sector, Interview data 2007, branch group assessment)

This is an example of a structure versus agency dynamic: the individual manager perceives that the state agency is seeking to influence local school decisions relating to assessment. The following statement

demonstrates how managers at institution level seek to influence the move away from traditional assessment methods.

> As I say our Registrar is permanently reminding us that we should be more innovative, that we should be examining less in the traditional examination format but still it is left to the individuals of the department to come up with the assessment format that's more suitable for their subject because obviously one assessment format might not be suitable across the board.
> (Acting head of department, IoT sector, Interview data 2007, branch group traditional)

In the example below, the interviewee is providing some insights into their rationale for utilising continuous assessment,

> Just going on the assessment, one of the things that we've been conscious of is trying to make a greater use of continuous assessments rather, than the more structured examination type process and there's a gradual movement towards that. The marking of it is obviously contentious. Now there was already continuous assessment in all our programmes but we are moving and so some of our programmes like the design is one hundred percent continuous assessment whereas most of the others would have the component that might account for twenty, thirty percent but that's tending to shift and depending, we're looking at the kind of programmes where we can better involve the students, better involve continuous assessment than the intention is to do that.
> (Associate prof., university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group intermediate style)

The interview extract below illustrates a senior managers considerations relating to new forms of assessment such as presentations, projects and peer mentoring:

> So even at undergraduate level a lot of emphasis is placed on presentations and on project work. So as a result of that different approaches have to happen so they may not be called problem-based learning but you could have a project which was based around all of the input from the various themes that emerge from lecturers during the course of the year. The other innovation I suppose would be peer mentoring so and there are two people conducting PhDs in that field as well here in the school but the notion of peer mentoring is that students get an opportunity to mentor each other and to feedback on things like presentations or on group work. So they informally grade each other and there is a very, very strong opportunity to facilitate and to give feedback to their fellow students and that's all part of developing them as trainers and teachers into the future. So I think that's quite innovative.
> (Head of school, university sector, Interview data 2009, branch group non-traditional style)

The assessment narrative in the interview data seems to have a certain type of positioning. Time controlled and end of term examinations are perceived or labelled as 'traditional' assessment styles, whereas styles such as continuous assessment, group work assessment, presentations assessment and problem-based learning are associated with 'modern' assessment practice. This can be explored further, by analysing the survey data. The survey data displayed support for the following proposition *'there was a need for alternative assessment approaches to be introduced into IHE'* with 87.7% (n= 324) agreeing (there was no significant difference when sectoral, discipline and age cross-tabulations were carried out). There was broad general disagreement with the statement that *'time controlled examinations were the most accurate way to measure student performance'*, 69.3% (n=257) disagreed (Tables 58-59).

Table 58, Time controlled examination and HE sectors

Time controlled examinations are the most accurate way to assess student performance in terms of their knowledge, skills and competence* HE Sectors crosstabulation

		HE Sectors			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00
Time controlled examinations are the most accurate way to assess student performance in terms of their knowledge, skills and competence	Agree	29	29	2	60
	Disagree	108	109	28	245
	Don't know	10	9	2	21
	Other	9	18	2	29
Total		156	165	34	355

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

Table 59, Continuous assessment and HE sectors

Continuous assessment is an excellent approach for measuring student performance in terms of their knowledge, skills and competence * HE Sectors crosstabulation

		HE Sectors			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00
Continuous assessment is an excellent approach for measuring student performance in terms of their knowledge, skills and competence	Agree	134	132	25	291
	Disagree	11	12	1	24
	Don't know	5	9	4	18
	Other	9	13	4	26
Total		159	166	34	359

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

However, in general, there seems to be support for the statements above. There were also some concerns raised in the text data in relation to standards and the need to use a variety of assessment methods:

1) Critiques suggested that continuous assessment lowers standards

and is unworkable in large groups. Further, plagiarism is difficult to monitor and the process is very time consuming. Usage should be confined to subject or discipline area.

2) Combined methods were supported and it was noted that continuous assessment worked well in conjunction with other assessment approaches.

One commentator noted:

> Examinations should be based on real industry practices. Nobody works on their own: they need to understand people and how to work in teams. (Text data 2009, branch group assessment)

From the merged data there seems to be general agreement across sectors and disciplines that there is a need to move away from traditional assessment styles towards experiments with new forms of assessment which are considered to be more modern. For example, 81.1% (n=304) of respondents considered continuous assessment to be an 'excellent' approach to measure students' performance. There is some evidence from the interview data to suggest that this move to new assessment approach is emerging from different areas, influenced by students and resources. It seems from some of the interview data that students are complaining about increased failure rates due to over assessment and modularisation. An example of this is provided below:

> ...there have been complaints [from students representatives] about assessment linked to modularisation and over assessment because we sometimes have fourteen papers now and we've got seven papers in first year and seven in first term and so there are complaints from the students about over assessment.
> (Head of school, IoT sector, Interview data 2007, branch group over assessment)

While some interviewees consider that the alternative assessment approaches may be beneficial to students and that it is important to incorporate a variety of assessment methods. There are others who question whether staff are appropriately trained in these new assessment methods and wonder what the additional resource implication might be. The following statement gives some idea of the variety of assessment methods in use:

> So at any given time you could have a group work assessment. You could have an individual assessment. You could have a combination of both of those. You could have a written assessment and allied to that a diary assessment. You could have a presentation, you know, so it's quite an innovative approach. On-line assessments, so it's quite varied.
> (Head of school, university sector, Interview data 2009, branch group, assessment)

The following comment brings up the issue of training in assessment methods and how assessment methods can lead to increased workloads:

> I would guess that in most institutions you still, you know, would be a minority of people for example who have any kind of formal experience of being trained in the assessment area. I'm only guessing there but that would be my guess and of course the assessment loads have increased with Semesterisation so getting people to practice a good practice in assessments such as good formative assessment and good feedback is very difficult given the workloads that people have and particularly with Semesterisation. But certainly again training there in those areas would seem to me to be very important.
> (Senior lecturer, university sector, interview data 2008, branch group training)

The respondents were clearly in favour of introducing new assessment approaches such as placements and internships: 71% (n=265) registered their support for '*Work Based Learning (WBL) to be incorporated into the assessment process*'. Although caution was urged in the text data in relation to WBL on the following grounds:

1) In WBL assessment, it is difficult to assure constancy and validity.
2) WBL is discipline specific, for some disciplines and subjects this approach is not feasible.
3) WBL is subject to market conditions, in times of economic downturns who gives the students work or placements?

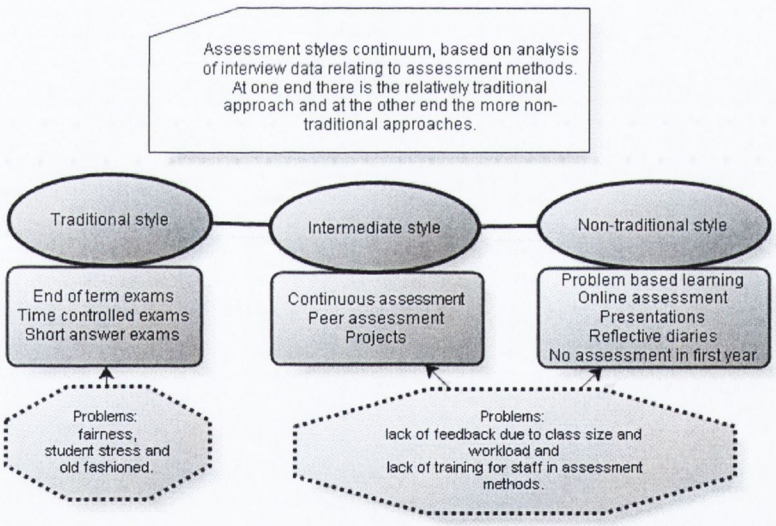
One respondent was critical of the way WBL is interpreted and utilised as an assessment method by IHE stating:

> I disagree with interpretation of work based learning as solely placement and internships - WBL is more focused on enabling workers to achieve academic recognition for the learning they achieve through working and advancing the knowledge in their workplace.
> (Text Data 2009, branch group assessment)

From level 2 analysis of the branch group assessment and the 'coding on' (Richards 2008) of the data sets the model illustrated in Diagram 15 was

constructed in NVivo. It depicts an assessment continuum moving from traditional assessment styles to intermediate assessment styles to non-traditional assessment styles. The methods associated with each style are detailed, as well as the problems that can arise with each assessment style. The model is multi-directional: as such, choice of assessment style is based on the discipline's needs, the academic staff and the programme content. The structure/agency divide was evident. In some cases there was also convergence with both academics and state agencies promoting the use of new styles of assessment. However, it should be borne in mind that assessment method or style is grounded in different disciplines and the attempt to promote a one-size-fits-all assessment approach is rather simplistic. The choice of which assessment method to use should be left to the academic staff who are involved in teaching and developing the programmes.

Diagram 15, Assessment styles model



ICT (subordinate cluster 4)

The use of some form of ICT-supported equipment has now become commonplace within the academic workplace in classrooms, laboratories, seminar rooms and offices. In IHE it seems to be taking for granted that every academic staff member has access to a computer either in the workplace or at home. In addition, nearly all academic members of staff in IHE have been issued with their own institutional email addresses,

provided with security codes to access their institutions, ICT domains and log in codes for their personal ICT domains. Computers and related equipment (project or display screen, video conferencing cameras etc) now seem to be part of the furniture in lecturer halls, classrooms, seminar rooms, meeting room, library open areas, workshops and laboratories[158]. This successful colonisation of IHE learning spaces, meeting spaces, work spaces, studying spaces and thinking spaces by ICT equipment and programmes has occurred over a relatively short space of time over the last fifteen years. The promotion of the usage of ICT seems to be of significant interest to the government and Social Partners[159]. This is evident in commitments made in the *National Partnership Agreement Towards 2016* (2006, p129, p133). This agreement commits academic staff in both the IoT and university sectors to accept and utilise new technologies in their workplaces. In general, IHE have been early adopters and promoters of the utilisation of ICT. In IHE the emergent ICT infrastructure now supports student admissions, examinations, and other student services, staff salaries, timetabling, research and teaching. ICT equipment and programmes have emerged as new teaching support tools, although some would argue that ICT is not a support tool but a new form of pedagogy. However, from the data two opposing perspectives surfaced between those who worked with ICT but perceived it only as a support tool-kit and those who consider ICT to be the key instrument in the emergence of a new form of pedagogical practice. The following contribution, from participants, highlights these opposing sides. The extracts are from two branch groups which where categories as 'traditionalist' someone who uses ICT as a 'support tool' and 'modernist' someone who utilises ICT as a pedagogical tool:

> I guess I'm still a traditionalist in the sense that when people come to a university like ours they want to benefit from the experience of that person…I like the opportunity to interact with

158 See for example Cosgrave et al. (2009) Usage and uptake of virtual learning environments and technology assisted learning tools: findings from a multi-institutional, multi-year comparative study. A study of 11 institutes and Universities demonstrating the high level of VLE use. http://ilta.net/index.php?option=com_contentandview=categoryandlayout=blogandid=61andItemid=191.

159 Gleeson (2000, p28) indicated that while the social partnership approach provided sectoral interests with a forum to gain influence and recognition, as the process progressed there would be a 'temptation for cosy consensus' to develop.

> and make a joke too and share a laugh with the students...there's a social aspect to learning that I think that we often times miss.
> (Head of school, university sector USA, Interview data 2008, branch group traditional)

While the first interviewee states he/she is a traditionalist who emphasises the social aspect of the learning experience, in contrast, the following respondent wants to move towards a more 'modern' approach:

> But I do think there is a need to move away from the instruction modes and what you can see as well is the use of ICT great but unfortunately what happens is that whenever people in distance talk about we need to have more on-line delivery, it's the same. Its, just, passive transmission of information, it's just, you throw a whole load of slides onto the web and that's what am I learning. They might as well, they can either be in the classroom and listen to you and copy down the slides or they can get it via the internet. That's not a modern approach to teaching and learning at all. That's just more of the same.
> (Director IoT sector, Interview data 2008, branch group modernist)

There was general support for the statement *'The application of E-learning enhances my learning and teaching practice'*, 56.4% (n=215) agreed while 19.7% (n=75) disagreed. However, there was a substantial percentage of respondents who recorded don't know, 21.5% (n=82). In the current age of technology, with all the IHE claiming that they have state-of-the-art ICT infrastructure, a high don't know rate was a peculiar result. By exploring work role cross-tabulated with e-learning it can be observed that the highest percentage of don't knows come from the researcher category at 40.5% (n=15), managers 20% (n=5), academics 19.5% (n=58) and senior managers 14% (n=2). See Table 60 below.

Table 60, Elearning and role

The application of E-learning approaches enhances my learning and teaching practice * Categorise your present employment role from the following list Crosstabulation

Count

		Categorise your present employment role from the following list					
		Academic	Researcher	Manager	Senior manager	Other	Total
The application of E-learning approaches enhances my learning and teaching practice	Agree	171	15	15	9	5	215
	Disagree	69	2	2	2	0	75
	Don't know	58	15	5	2	2	82
	Other	0	5	3	1	0	9
Total		298	37	25	14	7	381

In addition, by crosstabulation of the statement on e-learning with age (Table 61) it is observable that there is a slight upwards trajectory between the age group, and the percentages who disagree with the statement. In the youngest group 20-35 years of age, there is 14% (n=14) disagreement, in the mid range group, 36-50 years old 19.5% (n=35) disagree and, finally, in the oldest group, 51-65 plus years of age, 27% (n=26) disagree. This result could be interpreted as showing that younger staff members are more familiar with ICT as they have grown up during the ICT revolution and take ICT for-granted, whereas older members of staff are coming to terms with ICT and still learning about its potential.

Table 61, Elearning and age

The application of E-learning approaches enhances my learning and teaching practice * Age Groupings Crosstabulation

Count

		Age Groupings			
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Total
The application of E-learning approaches enhances my learning and teaching practice	Agree	58	106	48	212
	Disagree	14	35	26	75
	Don't know	23	38	20	81
	Other	4	3	2	9
Total		99	182	96	377

Key, 1 = 20-35, 2 = 36-50, 3 = 51-65+

While there was no other major deviation in response to the e-learning statement for categories such as sector, gender or discipline. There were some very interesting comments posted in the text box. This text data was grouped into three general responses:

1) E-Learning facilities are available in the institute, but the staff had no experience or training in how to use the ICT facilities.
2) E-learning is only suitable for certain types of well motivated students and particular types of courses.
3) Staff have tried e-learning but they were not content with the outcome or quality.

One contributor stated:

> It is a convenience in delivery of student work and written comments from teachers, but not an adequate substitute for personal interface.
> (Text Data 2009, branch group elearning)

While there is considerable discussion within the interview data narrative relating to the benefits and the drawbacks of ICT utilisation, there is also

some questioning of how academic staff actually develop their ICT skills. Do academic staff teach themselves or do they attend training sessions? Is training provided by their IHE? As one participant pointed out:

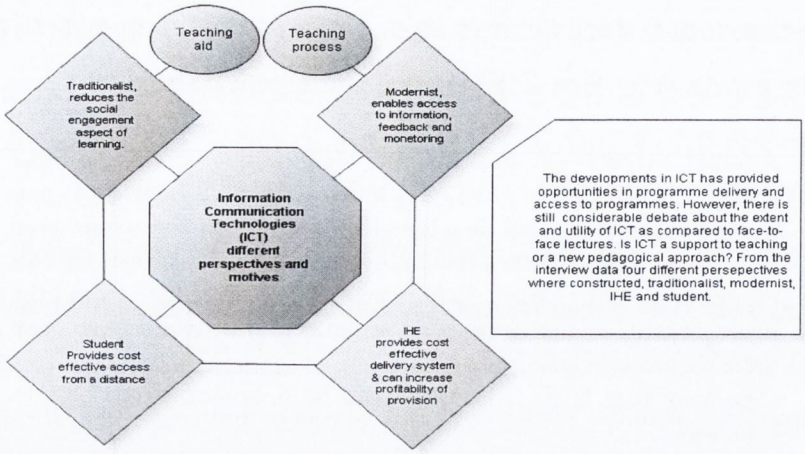
> Another aspect of information technology would be that academics effectively have, you know, inducted themselves and trained themselves and developed themselves in the whole area of using information technology and you know upskill themselves with very little input or assistance from the managements in the various universities and it would have been done themselves you know.
> (Senior officer, IFUT, Interview data 2006, branch group training).

From analysis of the interview data and consideration of the survey text data a conceptual model was constructed (Diagram 16). This model seeks to summarise key themes within the narrative and provide a location for then in a general design. The model endeavours to capture four different perspectives pertaining to ICT:

1) The student perspective is positive towards ICT perceiving it as a mechanism to manage study and as a mechanism to access programmes and information from a distance.
2) The IHE perspective, perceives ICT as a management tool and cost efficiency measure for the marketing and provision of programmes online.
3) The traditionalist perspective, is adopted by academic staff who perceive teaching as a social process in which ICT is a supporting tool.
4) The modernist perspective, is adopted by academic staff who perceives ICT as the beginning of a new pedagogical movement which can either reduce or replace the need for face to face lecturing.

It should be noted that the usage of the term traditionalist does not mean old fashioned or out-dated, rather, it implies an accepted and proven approach, whereas 'modernist' suggest a new approach that is still being tested and evaluated.

Diagram 16, Model detailing four different perspectives relating to ICT



Summary of T1T

This section endeavoured to provide the reader with a detailed account of the data and analysis relevant to T1T. A data analysis hierarchy was outlined. Within this hierarchy the 'teaching autonomy' cluster took precedence over other clusters such as 'programmes' and 'teaching practice'. In addition, four subordinate categories where identified. These were 'learning outcomes', 'quality assurance', 'assessment' and 'ICT'. From analysis of the data three forms of autonomy were identified, sectoral, institutional and individual. In addition, autonomy was described as either abstract or real-world, depending on the dynamic interaction between actors (EU, state, stakeholders, IHE and academic). It was noted that, while IHE had autonomy for programme development, external factors and dynamics had major influence such as funding, resources, policy and professional bodies. These external factors seemed to have a direct influence on academic workers' teaching practices influencing pedagogy and making for increased workloads. There was general agreement that new forms of monitoring quality, teaching and assessment styles, ICT and technocratic language (learning outcomes) were being promoted by state agencies and external bodies. In general, IHE management seemed to be implementing these new initiatives. However, there were some signs of academic staff resisting the utilisation of these initiatives within their own teaching practice giving compliance on paper but not in practice. Although the multitude of macro policy initiative (EU

and Irish) relating to qualifications frameworks, modularisation, ECTS, ICT and learning outcomes have an impact on the discourses of teaching, programme development and programme provision, it is evident that a new technocratic language has become part of the way teaching is discussed and described. There was a clear view that teaching was perceived to be undervalued in comparison to research. Finally, the under-funding of IHE was cited as an area of grave concern which needed to be addressed.

Chapter 7: Thematic area 2 Research, data analysis

> Corporate money, it was said, would subordinate the public aims of research to private aims...universities would impose secrecy and censor research findings to please company sponsors, while exploiting graduate students and corrupting appointments and promotions procedures for commercial gain.
> (Bok 2003, p58)

This chapter details the interview, survey and policy data relevant to thematic area two, research (T2R). The chapter's structure is similar to the previous chapter. First, the specific thematic area is briefly explained, which includes providing some description of the 'first run' of coding and the clustering of data within the thematic area. The hierarchical analysis framework is described; this includes the different clusters and branch groupings. The analysed data is presented as a sequence of logical chunks of analysed data set in proximity to each other. In order to provide a visual summary of material a schematic diagram will be presented at the end of each analysed cluster.

Interview data description

T2R was 'coded up' (Richards 2008) from the interview data during the first stage of coding, all comments relating to research were clustered in this thematic area, this cluster of data was then formed into a cluster called T2R. The cluster T2R contained 26 sources and 26 references. During the 'coding on' (Richards 2008) stage five branch groups where formed, these were capacity, collaboration, funding, knowledge and quality (see Diagram 17).

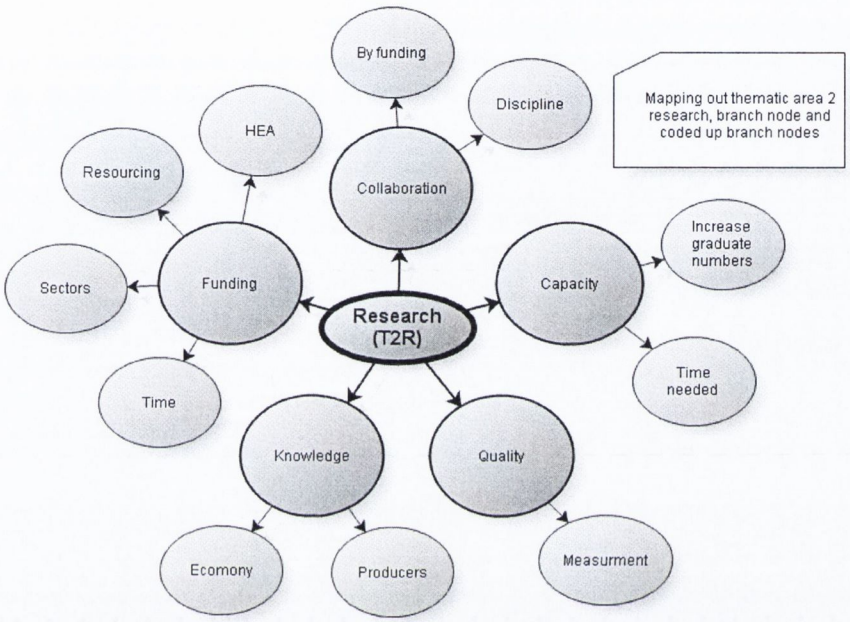
Diagram 17, NVivo screen snapshot of T2R cluster

Tree Nodes

Name	Sources	References
Coding, round 1, thematic are	0	0
T1,T	25	25
T2,R	26	26
Capacity	3	5
collaboration	4	6
Funding	14	33
Knowledge	9	14
Quality	5	5
T3,C	22	22

During the following round of 'coding on' (Richards 2008) from each branch group, 11 further, branch groups were constructed. A schematic mapping out the coding of the cluster T2R and the subsequent branch groups is presented in Diagram 18.

Diagram 18, Schematic of T2R cluster and associated branches



Survey data description

T2R provided respondents with 27 items (questions 48-75). Research in higher education is receiving considerable interest from government, policy makers, senior management in IHE and various other agencies from both the economic and social sectors. This part of the survey sought to gain an understanding of key items relevant to this expanding field within the domain of academic work. The survey items are clustered under six groupings which explore respondents opinions from their own knowledge of research experience, external factors, their institutions' research strategies, research evaluation and research as a part of academic work. The group headings and descriptions are set out in Table 62.

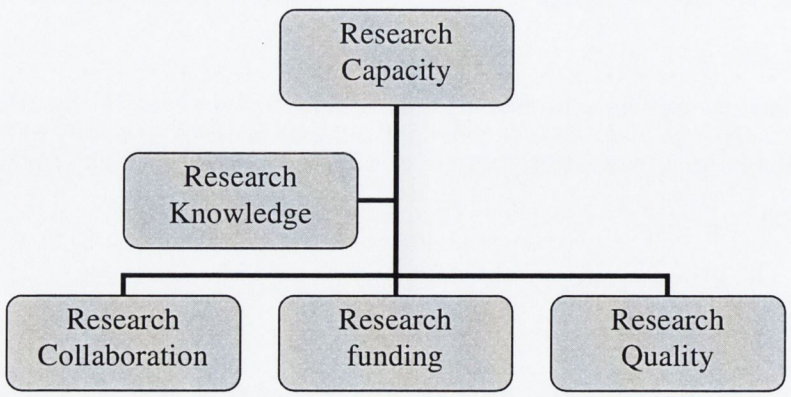
Table 62, Six groupings, thematic area research, questionnaire

Grouping	Description
(1) Experience	Four items in this grouping, these items sought to explore respondents' views based on their experiences relating to issues such as; the support services offered, facilities available, financial support and research management strategy.
(2) External	Four items in this grouping which sought to explore opinions in relation to roles, procedures and policies of external organisations such as accessing the role of the research councils in Ireland, industry involvement, EU initiatives such as funding, and the establishment of a European research area.
(3) Positions	Five items in this grouping, which sought to gain insights into how respondents view their intuitions' mission statements and ethics protocols, opportunities for researchers, the definition of research that their institutions promote as either elite or applied research approaches.
(4) Rationale	Four items in this grouping, which sought to gain opinions on the rationale for research such as, the relevance of research, commercialisation, needs of society and dissemination.
(5) Measurement	Three items in this grouping which sought to gain opinions on whether research should be evaluated, if there should be quality reviews and asked whether ranking systems are needed.
(6) Researchers	Seven items in this grouping, which sought to explore opinions in relation to issues that directly affect researchers such as autonomy, capacity building, new researcher support, careers and opportunities, co-operation with others, international experts and placements.

Hierarchical analysis framework T2R

During the merging of both the interview data and the survey data a hierarchical analysis framework was constructed. This is presented in Diagram 19. From the analysis of the data research capacity building was identified as the primary cluster, research knowledge was a secondary cluster while all other clusters (research funding, research quality, research and collaboration) were subordinates.

Diagram 19, Thematic area research analysis hierarchy



Research capacity (primary cluster)

The EU's Lisbon strategy (1999) set out a policy agenda for the EU 27 to increase the human capital of the EU population. In essence, this agenda is a knowledge capacity building initiative, endeavouring to raise human capital levels so workers and researchers have the capacity to utilise knowledge in order to move towards the development of a knowledge economy and maintain a competitive advantage over the USA, Japan and other emerging economic sectors. In HE the benchmark set for 2010 was to increase the percentage of MST graduates in Europe by 15% before 2010. According to the EC Commission's 2008 report this benchmark has being surpassed standing at over 29% in 2008. The knowledge-based economy that the EU Commission is aiming for needs an increased supply of graduates in order to meet industry demand for technology, engineering and science PhD researchers. According to the Commission (2008 p76) the number of tertiary level MST students has increased from 4 million in 2000 to over 4.51 million in 2006. This represents an annual growth rate of 2.5%. However, in an Irish context the data for MST students shows a decline of -1.6% per year. In 2000 there were 45,300 MST students and in 2006 there were only 41,000 MST students. This is a poor result considering the state's promotion of MST degrees and financial supports in place and that there are no student fees. The Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment (2006) in the Foreword to the Strategy for Science Technology and Innovation (SSTI) 2006-2013 stated:

> Our strategy encompasses the steps we need to take to develop a world class research system, building on the model of competitive excellence adopted by the PRTLI and SFI initiatives. It addresses key human capital investments across the education system and industry. It provides mechanisms to translate knowledge into jobs and growth and, in this context: it takes forward the recommendations of the Enterprise Strategy Group and the Small Business Forum. The strategy establishes agendas for public sector research in agriculture, health, environment and natural resources. It also addresses the vital international and all island dimensions of research and innovation.
> (Minister Martin, SSTI 2006)

The SSTI seeks to build research capacity and high level research activity in the science, technology and innovation domains which particular focus

on agriculture, marine, energy, health, environment and natural resources. One of the outputs from this policy initiative is to increase the number of PhD graduates in engineering and science from 543 in 2006 to 997 in 2013. The projected PhD graduate numbers was presented in Table 22, which showed the target numbers of SET graduates were twice as high as humanities and social science graduates. In order to meet these targets for PhD/doctoral graduates there has to be an increase in both undergraduate and postgraduate numbers. There has to be sufficiently academic and research staff in place to cater for the increase in student numbers. In addition, working with PhD/Doctoral students is much more specialised and time-consuming work. It is worth considering if there is capacity in the HE sector to cater for this demand and are there resources to fund this increase? Referring back to Table 20 which provides the statistical information in relation to the actual number of awards made by IHE and the discipline areas the awards are made in, based on data from FETAC, HETAC and HEA 2007, the most popular awards were in the humanities and not science and technology.

There was significant support 73.5% (n=249) agreeing with the statement '*There is a need for my institution to provide research capacity building initiatives for staff*'. Indeed, capacity building is part of academic work; this is evident in the development of new programmes which enhance capacity in different discipline areas. One example is provided by a participant who was instrumental in the development of the first Doctor of Education (D.Ed) programme to be run in Ireland who stated:

> At the centre of it was always a notion that it was about capacity building in Ireland for, what's the word, mature or senior professionals in and around education ...where its increasingly important given the thing that was shifting towards very much being towards the notion of evidence based practice, evidence based policy and yet the people who are making the policy did not have any shall we say expertise or skill or understanding about the whole messy convoluted complex process of evidence and what constitutes evidence, how the evidence is generated and so on and so forth.
> (Lecturer, university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group capacity)

As argued in the section on teaching, academics identify needs and develop programmes to meet demand in their discipline areas. By developing new programmes, such as a D.Ed for example, capacity in that discipline areas is increased. Those who graduate from such programmes can make a contribution both to their workplaces and act as supervisors for other students. However, there needs to be a balance between how many students the IHE enrols and the likelihood that there is a demand for these highly skilled PhD/doctorate students in the external world of work. As one participant stated:

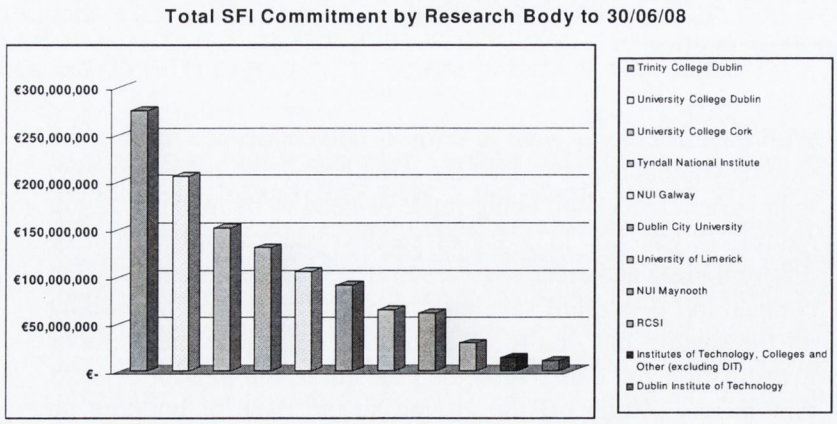
> Even if we had enough the question is absorption capacity which isn't that thing you know as well. It's a problem elsewhere, it's not just an Irish problem and it's more prominent in some areas than in others. But nevertheless the point is you know you hear the story of PhDs in philosophy driving taxis in the states.
> (Director, IoT sector, Interview data 2009, branch group increasing graduate numbers)

From the academic perspective, it can be argued that graduate unemployment may be caused either by over supply or lack of demand, IHE engaged in capacity building initiatives need to monitor the outcomes of their actions, providing both students and graduates with realistic information relating to the potential career path of the PhD/doctorate research. One mechanism to manage capacity building output is to limit the number of providers engaged in the field; the most effective way of doing this is through funding mechanisms. One participant noted that by making funding more competitive, only the 'top quality' applications will gain funding, stating:

> Well the difficulty is, well in fairness universities are making the case. If you cut off or reduce the money now and reduce money, more strict choices are being made or need to be made or if you reduce, if you put in a lot of money you can allow lots of different ideas and areas to flourish. If you've got less money the competition gets more severe. You could argue you're pushing up the quality but you're clearly going to reduce the areas of investigation and that's what the problem is and in a lot of areas they're just getting off the ground so the issue of building up capacity in Ireland is really, it is a critical thing. It takes a long time. It's not short-term. You don't get. It doesn't matter what field it's in, it takes time to develop serious track record, a serious capacity.

(Director IoT sector, (Interview data 2009, branch group capacity)

However, operating this type of restrictive funding mechanism can lead to the emergence of a limited number of IHE becoming so called 'centres of excellence' which successfully gain the largest proportion of the available funding, while the other IHE receive limited funding and become disengaged from capacity building initiatives. This is a type of approach can be identified as an 'elitist' (Scott 1995) approach, rather, then a true capacity building strategy which seeks to engage the whole HE sector equally. Advocates of competitive funding policies claim that funding is awarded in accordance with merit. However, not all IHE have the same expertise, capabilities, and capacity to draft winning proposals. In the current binary system of IoTs and universities different IHE are at various stages of development. Some need support in order to develop capacity as not all IHE are at the same starting position. An example of 'high capacity' IHE obtaining funding in comparison to IHE who are developing capacity can be found on the SFI website in the Funding Statistics section. Specifically the data detailing the grant/awards made June 2008, the data shows that the majority of SFI grants and awards go to the university sector: the whole IoT sector (including DIT) do not even gain the same funding as the university that received the least funding NUIM.



Source, SFI funding statistics Grants and Awards June 2008 link http://www.sfi.ie/content/content.asp?section_id=179andlanguage_id=1

The universities have obviously developed capabilities and capacity to

write winning proposals, while the IoT sector and DIT are only in a capacity building stage. In essence, it is unfair to consider that the universities and the IoTs are starting from the same position, the IoTs have a substantial way to go before they can hope to reach the same level as the universities. Capacity building initiatives rely on funding, facilities and staff commitment to achieve their goals. However, the responses from the survey data would suggest that academic staff are not content with the present situation. With 48% (n=164) of respondents claiming that new researchers were not provided with the support they need. When this result is disaggregated the sectoral differences are marginal with 53% (n=76) in the university sector disagreeing and 47% (n=71) in the IoT sector disagreed, also of interest is that 50% (n=122) of full-time staff disagreed compared to 44% (n=42) of not-full-time staff. In research support services in general, 49% of respondents disagreed with the statement '*There are excellent support services available to those engaged in research in the institution where I work*'. When this result was disaggregated by sector there was a difference of 47.2% (n=68) of university respondents agreed whereas 56.2% (n=86) of the IoT sector disagreed. By using the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, the difference is statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.001, Z=-4.162.

Statistical test 6, Support services for researchers and HE sectors

There are excellent support services available to those engaged in research in the institution were I work. Variable: HE sector.	
Mann-Whitney U	8218.000
Wilcoxon W	18658.000
Z	-4.162
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

From this result, it would seem that the IoT sector is more dissatisfied with research supports services than the universities. For capacity building initiatives to develop there is a need for appropriate facilities. However, 52% (n=179) of respondents disagreed with the statement, '*The research facilities available in my institution are first class*'. There was a sectoral difference 59.4% (n=91) of the IoT sector disagreed compared to 45%

(n=65) in the university sector. The difference is statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.000, Z=-4.416.

Statistical test 7, Research facilities and HE sectors

The research facilities available in my institution are first class. Variable: HE sectors.	
Mann-Whitney U	8046.500
Wilcoxon W	18486.500
Z	-4.416
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

There was also a difference in discipline with 44% (n=41) of the science/medical grouping disagreed. Also, 55% (n=95) of the social grouping and 54% (n=38) of the technology grouping disagreed. In addition, while support services and facilities are important to capacity building initiatives for research, there is also a need to provide opportunities for staff to engaged in research, thus 53.6% (n=184) of respondents agreed with the statement '*My institution provides appropriate opportunities for those who want to engage in research*'. However, there was some sectoral differences with 58.6% (n=85) of the university sector agreeing where as only 46% (n=71) of the IoT sector agreed. The statistical difference between the sector can be calculate by using the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, the difference is statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.030, Z=-2.169.

Statistical test 8, Opportunities to engage in research and HE sectors

My institution provides appropriate opportunities for those who want to engage in research. Variable: HE sectors.	
Mann-Whitney U	9575.000
Wilcoxon W	20160.000
Z	-2.169
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.030

From these results it can be argued that in general, people in the university sector is more content with the research support, facilities and opportunities compared to the IoT sector.

Table 63, Research support service and HE sectors

There are excellent support services available to those engaged in research in the institution were I work * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	
There are excellent support services available to those engaged in research in the institution were I work	Agree	68	38	16	122
	Disagree	63	86	14	163
	Don't know	11	28	2	41
	Other	2	1	0	3
Total		144	153	32	329

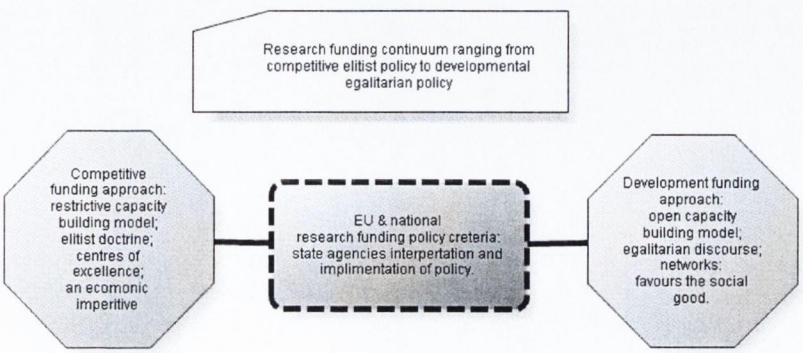
Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

The schematic in Diagram 20 was developed from the data and as such, it summarises some of the key points relating to research capacity building and related topics such as funding. It depicts a research funding policy continuum. The political environment and power brokers influence which end of the continuum the policy criteria will favour either the competitive funding approach or the development funding approach. In this continuum capacity building initiatives can be either:

1) open, with a focus on board participation, the creation of sharing networks, serving the social good or
2) restrictive, limiting access to the few, establishing centres of excellence, gaining economic return and competitive advantage.

This model demonstrates a type of linear perception relating to research funding policy. However, it should be noted that the policy environment is much more complex. A multitude of state agencies interpret policy criteria in diverse ways, this can lead to contradictory policy initiatives running simultaneously or even competing against each other.

Diagram 20, Research funding policy continuum



Research knowledge (secondary cluster)

While the EU Commission's Lisbon strategy (1999) seeks to move the EU 27 towards the realisation of the knowledge economy the Irish government, prominent supporter of the Lisbon strategy (and other Lisbon related agendas), has moved these policy narrative away from the knowledge economy to the new 'Smart economy'. In the Smart economy (2009, p13) document they state: *'Ireland's stock of highly-skilled workers and higher education institutions by incentivising greater investment, in high-value research and development areas in science and technology'*. The intent of the smart economy policy doctrine is the commodification of knowledge, realised through the commercialisation of research activities in the form of innovation. The government has identified science and technology as the target discipline areas, committing both direct funding and incentive investment initiatives to stimulate science and technology research activities in the higher education sector. The government (2009, p15) wants to increase Ireland's share of the 'international education market', support lifelong learning, restructure and enhance the performance the HE systems, support IHE mergers, utilise flexible learning to upskill the workforce, develop a commercialisation culture in HE and explore partnerships with industry. As such, the government is continuing its reform agenda for the HE sector, seeking mergers of IHE within the HE sectors, promoting IHE and industry partnerships, and embed a commercial culture in research and teaching practice. The document also wants to increase the number of international students participating in the HE sector, expand lifelong learning initiatives and, by developing flexible modes of delivery, bring learning into the workplace.

In the narrative of the interview data there is the realisation that the IHE are not divorced from the economic interests of society. Indeed IHE are perceived as making an active contribution towards meeting the economic needs of society. However, there seems to be a slight sectoral difference in the purpose and responsibility of IHE in relation to the economic imperative. The participants from the IoT sector seem to portray an

instrumental perceptive, the IoTs are perceived to have a dominant economic function in meeting the needs of industry and supplying the labour market. The university sector seems to adopt a more liberal approach, accepting that the universities have a major role to play in the economy, developing new knowledge, providing high quality researchers and graduates for the labour force. But the university participants also emphasised the developmental, human and societal roles they play in advancing humanity. Examples of each of these positions are presented below:

> So there's an important role there. It is an important national objective, the mantra of a high knowledge-based economy, demands a knowledge base and that means a research base and we have a role to play there. In relation to teaching I think actually it's quite, it is crucially, important.
> (President IoT sector, Interview data 2008, branch group Economy)

While the pervious interviewee commented on the positions and the purpose of research within the government policy narrative, the second interviewee (below) adopts a more critical position in relation to policy and the rationale for research:

> We're not elitist in that regard. We live in the economy and it's in our interest that it should be so but where we're worried is where that steps too far and its starts choking off other areas of the pursuit of knowledge and that's this difficulty. And I'd have to say that it's probably to some degree an unintended by-product of people having too-narrow a focus as seeing education merely as some sort of an adjunct to the market. It has to be much more than that. Education should be about the development of human potential in its broadest sense of that term.
> (Associate prof. university sector, Interview data 2009, branch group economy)

In an Irish policy context both the SSTI 2005-2010 and the NDP 2007-2013 direct research activities towards the needs of industry. To gauge opinion on this the following statement was posed, '*In general, research activities need to be relevant to enterprise and industry*', 48.2% (n=165) of respondents registered their disagreement while 42.4% (n=145) agreed. It would seem that this result demonstrates that there is a clear tension or uneasiness about research being solely directed towards the needs of

industry. However, when the results were disaggregated into sectors it become clear that it was primarily those in the IoT sector who favoured the statement 58.27% (n=88) agreed while the other sectors opposed the statement universities 61.11% (n=88) and colleges 71.87% (n=23).

Table 64, Research relevant to industry and HE sectors

In general research activities need to be relevant to enterprise and industry * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Total
In general research activities need to be relevant to enterprise and industry	Agree	43	88	5	136
	Disagree	88	51	23	162
	Don't know	8	8	3	19
	Other	5	4	1	10
Total		144	151	32	327

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

In the text data opposition to the statement was evident. Contributors claimed that the statement is too limiting and directional. Others noted that this type of strategy would lead to a deterministic approach. Some stressed the need for blue skies or strategic research where discoveries can be made, while some raised questions about the needs of society, and humanity. One respondent stated:

> No some research should be so relevant, but suggesting that everything has to be would be very detrimental to Universities as centres of learning and broader innovation.
> (Text data 2009, branch group rational)

It is generally accepted that both the IoT sector and the university sector make a direct contribution towards the formation of different types and levels of knowledge within society. Although the notion of knowledge production occurring outside the HE sectors receives a less favourable response, it is subjected to questions of legitimacy, validity, reliability and so forth. This type of discourse can be located in the discussion about 'mode 1 and mode 2' (Gibbons et al 2004) knowledge production. One participant whilst discussing knowledge production stated:

> The knowledge producers outside the universities hugely influenced what was thought within higher education in the universities in broadening the curriculum. If you even look at

> how little there was say in the Newman construct and then how the world outside at academia began to say look this isn't enough anymore, lets expand.
> (Lecturer, IoT sector, Interview data 2009, branch group producers)

However, knowledge producers outside of the HE sector do make a contribution towards the HE sector in many ways. Informally, their work can be tested and assimilated in the knowledge domains of the HE sector. While, formally, external knowledge producers can be invited by IHE to participate in research teams, programme validation and reviews, quality reviews and so forth. The HE sector acts as a dynamic knowledge dissemination system, providing opportunities for actors and agencies to present their work at seminars, conference, workshops, colloquial meetings, performances in journals and so forth. This type of creative dissemination dynamic emerges from the spirit of inquiry, the academic pursuit of gaining understanding, sharing experience and knowledge generation. One participant made a relevant claim, stating:

> I mean academics must be free to pursue knowledge wherever it brings them and that's the whole thing about the thrust and development of human endeavours visa-a-vis education and development of greater accumulation of the store of human knowledge.
> (Associate prof. university sector, Interview data 2009, branch group producers)

Autonomy to decide what to research is central to the traditional principle of academic freedom. Academic staff in both the universities and the IoTs have had 'the traditional principle of academic freedom' recognised under legislation (1997 Universities Act, 2006 IoT Act). In order to gauge opinion on this the following statement was posed, '*I have the autonomy to pursue my own research interests*'. There was a majority response in favour of this statement with 70% (n=240) agreeing. While this is a strong result, it is still somewhat worrying to consider that 21.6% (n=74) of respondents did not consider they had the autonomy to carry out their own research. By disaggregating the results it become evident that both the universities and the colleges recognise their autonomy with only limited number disagreeing with the statement 13.1% (n=19) and 12.5% (n=4)

respectively where as 32.35% (n=49) of the IoT sector disagreed. If the don't knows and others are excluded and we apply ratio measurement to agree and disagree response then it can be proposed that, in the university and colleges only one in every six consider that he/she does not have autonomy, while in the IoT sector the ratio is one in every two.

Table 65, Research autonomy and HE sector

I have the autonomy to pursue my own research interests * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	
I have the autonomy to pursue my own research interests	Agree	118	85	25	228
	Disagree	19	49	4	72
	Don't know	7	16	1	24
	Other	1	1	2	4
Total		145	151	32	328

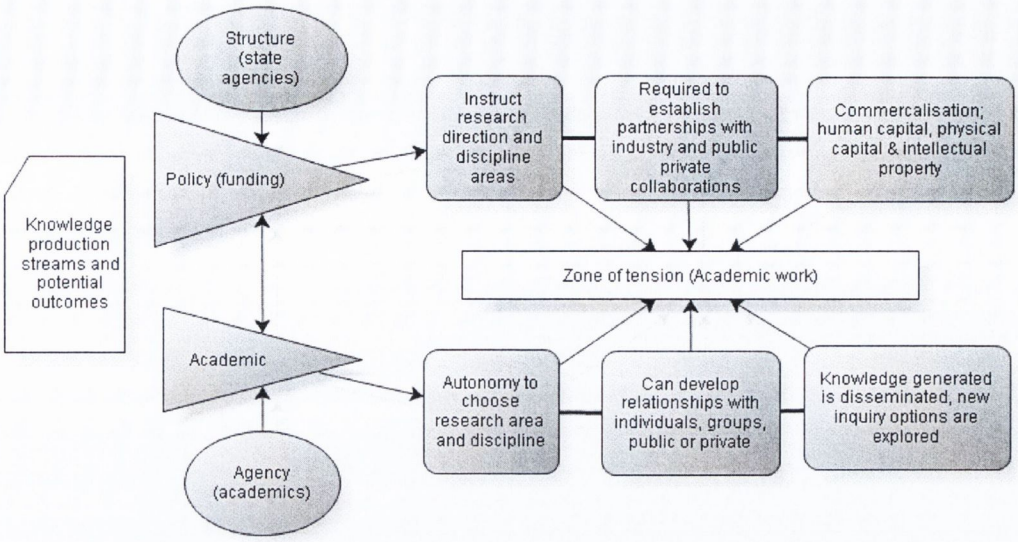
Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

In the text data several commentators noted that while autonomy is present in theory and has a legal framework (1997 Act, 2006 Act). However, in practice other issues took precedent such as, lack of funding to carry out research and no time, due to excessive teaching timetables and workloads, particularly in the IoT sector. One respondent stated:

> There is no overt blockage in academic freedom but many obstacles in administration, time etc.
> (Text data 2009, branch group research)

Diagram 21 was constructed from the data. It depicts two knowledge production streams, the first is driven by policy and funding. Research whether it is carried out by IHE or private companies is directed. The rationale is to produce research that has market functionality and can be commercialised. The second stream flows from academic choice, the academic (individual or group) carrying out the inquiry. The resultant knowledge is disseminated to both the academic community and society.

Diagram 21, Knowledge production streams



Research collaboration (subordinate cluster 1)

Developing collaborations between researchers has become an important part of both the EU and Irish government policy. In a European context the EU is actively promoting the establishment of an ERA with the main goals of developing world class research facilities across the EU, encouraging knowledge sharing and collaboration between researchers, establishing of networks, and the promotion of a European research agenda. Collaboration is considered crucial in the ERA policy initiative. The EU Commission and ERA 2009 report stated:

> However, what matters most for Europe is not to be "mechanically" better placed in the top when it comes to the ranking of individual universities. The key is to put in place stronger mechanisms for encouraging and allowing a stronger performance and for a better organisation of universities to allow for differentiation and collaboration. (EU-ERA, 2009 p141)

Similarly, in an Irish policy context the promotion of collaboration has been encouraged specifically in the HE sectors between Universities and IoTs, externally to the HE sector between IHE and industry and in the European HE sectors, between IHE (public and private) and industries. The HEA-Forfas (2007) report on the research and infrastructure in Ireland noted:

> Irish researchers have a long tradition of international (particularly EU) collaboration. We understand that it was precisely these links that sustained the research system during earlier decades of under-investment. Such international collaboration will continue to be, so the existence of international links should also be a factor in awarding new infrastructures.
> (HEA-Forfas, 2007, p19)

The Bologna process (1999) sought to establish an EHEA which led to a similar (EU) initiative seeking to establish an ERA. While, in general, academics are aware of the Bologna process, the following statement sought to ascertain their awareness of the ERA, and collaboration at both institutional and discipline levels. Surprisingly 56.6% (n=192) of respondents recorded don't know while 38.9% (n=132) agreed which the statement '*The European Research Area will have a positive effect on stimulating research collaboration, innovation and commercialisation'*. When this result was disaggregated differences emerged between both sectors and disciplines, 52% (n=74) of the university sector recorded don't know compared to 61.8% (n=94) in the IoT sector. Further, the don't know results for disciplines show some difference, the social grouping 58% (n=100), science/medical 52% (n=48) and technology 54% (n=37). In the text data there were several concerns raised for example some rejected the notion of commercialisation, while others noted that the bigger European countries such as the UK, Germany and France will dominate the research agenda. There was general support for collaboration, however, some noted that collaboration should not be forced but, rather, used were it was appropriate. One participant stated:

> If it is genuinely appropriate: cross-disciplinarily for the sake of it helps no-one. (Text data 2009, branch group position)

While collaboration has become part of the HE research policy narrative there are some concerns relating to collaboration being linked to funding, particularly when used as part of the criteria for evaluating funding proposals. One participant noted there were different traditions in difference discipline areas, stating:

> So it's all about collaboration either with colleagues in your own department and then with colleagues in other departments and

> then with other institutions. Now that seems to me to be a kind of a science model really because I presume if you're interested I don't know enough about physics and cracking or bursting the atom or whatever that there's enough, you know you've got a group of people. That's quite hard in the humanities to find people who have a lot of common. I mean in our department we vary as I say across a whole lot and mostly many of these people that take media, you'd have everyone from people who are specialised camera men or person's right through to we'll say specialist in journalism and then you'd have people like who are, you know philosophers. So that business of grouping people is quite difficult.
> (Associate prof. university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group collaboration)

Some participants gave examples of collaborations that have emerged between the university and IoT sectors. SIF was cited as a stimulus funding package which fostered this type of collaboration. Others considered that while collaboration was important it could not fix the fragmentation problem that exists in the HE sectors. One stating:

> Oh yes it's got to. We have no choice and really coming from a different country and having some experience in England as well I'm amazed at how fragmented this sector still is and how it's been allowed to just drift along in its fragmented state. This is not sustainable. We have far too many providers. I mean look at Dublin. We have four institutes of technology, three universities and then you've got some of the private, NCA, the NCI, the College of Surgeons and Griffith. I don't know how many there are but there's only 1.2 million people in Dublin. It's just ridiculous so collaboration has to be the way to go.
> (Director, IoT sector, Interview data 2009, branch group funding)

In order to develop collaborations, stimulate networking and share both knowledge and expertise, many IHE in Europe encourage and facilitate staff to undertake placements in other institutions. The following statement sought opinions on the suggestion that '*Researchers should be supported to do placements in other HEI (nationally, European, internationally)*'. There was a majority response in favour, 90.2% (n=303) agreed, 2.4% (n=8) disagreeing and 6.6% (n=22) saying don't know. The text data agreed with the statement but there were some reservations noted as the following extracts demonstrate, typical comments included:

1) Only if there is evidence to prove that it will enhance quality of research.

2) Perhaps, so long as they weren't simply taking subsidised foreign holidays.
3) This again should only be supported to aid in technology transfer and/or fulfil other strategic goals of a research programme.
4) If value can be demonstrated.

Developing a broad base of research expertise is vital both to capacity building and the development of collaborations. However, one interview participant noted how dependent smaller IHE are on individual academics that have expertise and have developed track records in research and research funding. If these members of staff leave the institute, the institute will not have the resources or the capacity to continue to develop the research area. An interviewee stated:

> You know you have to go for the collaborations otherwise you're not going to be able to build up you know the critical mass, the continuity as well. In our sector now the bane of our track record in research is bringing where you have talent. It depends on one or two people and if one of them leaves the whole thing just falls apart.
> (Director, IoT sector, Interview data 2009, branch group discipline)

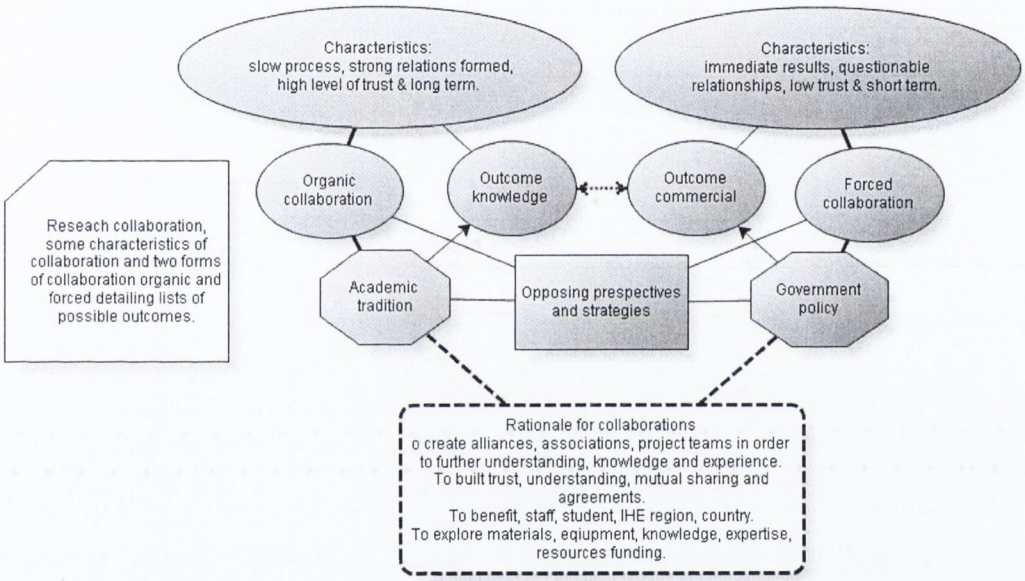
It would seem that collaboration is considered to be a positive development in research policy, particularly collaboration in sharing knowledge and expertise between different disciplines, 60% (n=285) agreed with the statement '*There should be more co-operation between researchers from different disciplines*'. There was however, some concern expressed about funding criteria linked to collaboration which may disadvantage disciplines that have a tradition of researchers working on their own. A collaboration model is presented in Diagram 22. Some of the characteristics of collaborations are detailed, such as, collaborations to gain knowledge and understanding, to share and build trust, collaborations between staff, students and institutions, collaborations focused on sharing equipment, materials resources and so forth. Two different approaches to collaboration are presented below:

1) Organic collaboration which is based on traditional academic practices of working with students and colleagues both In IHE and internationally. This type of collaboration process takes time to develop. However, strong relationships are formed and high levels of trust can emerge, the benefits are long term.

2) Forced collaboration, which is driven by policy and funding a type of 'carrot and stick' approach funds are made available but those who obtain funding must follow the rules, meet targets and produce the required outcomes.

These types of collaborations may have a monetary motivation rather, than a social good belief; the relationships between partners can be weak, with low levels of trust. This type of collaboration may produce the correct bureaucratic outcomes, but as soon as the funding stops the collaboration finishes, a form of short term-ism.

Diagram 22, Organic or forced collaboration



Research funding (subordinate cluster 2)

The Irish government established the HEA in 1971 under the remit of the Higher Education Authority Act 1971. Section 3 of this act requires the HEA to co-ordinate state investment, promote the value of education and research and promote the democratisation of HE. As such, the HEA administers and manages the public funds that the government allocates to higher education (seven universities and six colleges). The HEA's remit expanded to include the IoT sector under the 2006 IoT Act. The HEA (2009)[160] now states: '*The HEA manages and disburses recurrent funds to the universities, institutes of technology and other designated colleges'.*

[160] HEA (2009) website http://www.hea.ie/en/group/124

According to the HEA (2008) Annual accounts report the authority administered the distribution of over €1.6 billion in 2007. Of this €1.427 billion went to the IHE in the form of recurrent grants. Over a third of this budget went to the IoT sector (€0.534 billion) and €0.173 billion went to research grants. Some participants noted that members in the IoT sector were not to happy when the IoTs came under the remit of the HEA. They were concerned that a university style funding model would not be appropriate for the IoT sector: the IoTs utilised smaller class sizes and teaching was more applied in nature (workshops, labs etc.). For the IoT sector the implication of the HEA funding model and a continued reduction in funding was to direct staff away from research back towards teaching. One participant noted:

> I think since the move to the HEA there seems to be increasingly scarce funding, some people are saying that actually the colleges (IoTs) are rather regretting the move to the HEA because the department (DoES) wasn't that bad after all because they're being very, very seriously pinched in funding and because of that the push then is back into well okay you had a little bit of time for research but we're now pushing you back into teaching because we need, you know to extract the full sixteen hours out of you as a lecturer.
> (Senior officer TUI, Interview data 2008, branch group funding)

From the data there seems to be a difference of opinion over how funding for research is distributed to both the university sector and the IoT sector. While participants from the university sector don't seem to make reference to the IoT sector, the participants from the IoT sector continuously compare the IoT sector with the university sector. In general, the IoT participants perceive research in the university sector to be treated more favourably by the HEA, receiving more funding, resources and facilities, while the IoT sector plays second fiddle. One participant stated:

> So there were a lot of other problems that I had to focused on, we had a little bit of research going but it was limited enough and as part of the strategic plan in 2005 and 2006 subsequently we engaged in a process to try and define what our research niches might be because my philosophy was that in the IoT sector you have to be extremely selective as you don't have a floor funding for research. You're never going to get enough funding through competitive schemes to fund research in every single discipline

> area. So unfortunately you might have twenty discipline areas and may be only three will be able to embark on a research part. (Director IoT sector, Interview data 2008, branch group sectors)

From the survey data there is a clear concern relating to research funding at IHE level, 54.7% (n=187) of respondents disagreed with the statement, *'Research activities receive an appropriate level of financial resources in my institution'*. The colleges seemed to register a higher percentage of disagreement 62.5% (n=20) in comparison to the IoTs' 54% (n=84) and the universities 54% (n=54). In general, the majority of contributions in the text data claimed that more funding was needed for research. However, there was a minority of comments that suggested research activities received more funding than they deserved, consequently this led to reduced funding available to teaching. One respondent noted:

> Again we do receive financial support but we are often left with very tight budgets which we supplement with our personal funds. (Text data 2009, branch group funding)

In the criteria and procedures utilised in both EU and national competitive research funding schemes there was some divergence of opinion between sectors. The EU has become a major funder of higher education research projects: policy initiatives have expanded the scope of higher education research funding. However, only 27.9% (n=95) of respondents agreed with the statement *'The application criteria and selection process for EU research funding is fair and transparent'* while 56.6% (n=193) registered a don't know. This result could be taken to mean that a large percentage of respondents have no direct experience of EU research funding, and of those that have experience there is a two to one ratio supporting the fairness of the selection process. However, this result is not unexpected as developing proposals for EU research funds is a very specialised area of work. When the results are disaggregated into roles it can be observed that 43.33% (n=13) of the researchers agreed while 69% (n=164) of academics don't know. There were also sectoral differences with 43% (n=62) saying don't know in the university sector compared to 68% (n=104) in the IoT sector. Utilising the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, the difference is

statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.000, Z=-4.461.

Statistical test 9, EU research funding criteria and HE sectors

The application criteria and selection process for EU research funding is fair and transparent. Variable: HE sector.	
Mann-Whitney U	8008.500
Wilcoxon W	18304.500
Z	-4.461
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

Further, the discipline grouping with the highest percentage of don't know was technology at 64% (n=45) in contrast the lowest percentage which was the social grouping at 51% (n=89).

Table 66, EU research funding and HE role

The application criteria and selection process for EU research funding is fair and transparent * Catergorise your present employment role from the following list Crosstabulation

Count

		Catergorise your present employment role from the following list					
		Academic	Researcher	Manager	Senior manager	Other	Total
The application criteria and selection process for EU research funding is fair and transparent	Agree	70	13	3	7	2	95
	Disagree	38	6	5	3	0	52
	Don't know	164	11	13	3	2	193
	Other	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total		273	30	21	13	4	341

In general, the text data supported claims that the EU research funding application process was fair. There was, also some concerns expressed suggesting that the application process was very bureaucratic and complicated. One respondent stated:

> There is a myth around EU funding. It is an enormous opportunity and operates to an extremely transparent and fair selection based on scientific excellence, competent applicants and potential impact. Criticism is usually poorly informed.
> (Text data 2009, branch group external)

In an Irish context there are two central funding councils, one which makes provision for the humanities and social science (IRCHSS) and the other that focuses on engineering, science and technology (IRCEST). The following statement provided respondents with the opportunity to comment on, '*The Irish Research Councils operate a transparent and fair application and selection process for research project funding*'. The

majority of respondents registered a don't know 49.9% (n=171) with 26.8% (n=92) agreeing and 23% (n=79) disagreeing. This could suggest that the majority of respondents had no dealings with these research councils. However, when the results are disaggregated into sectors it is evident that people in the universities agree 41.6% (n=60) while both the IoT sector (65.78%, n=100) and Colleges (50%, n=16) were more likely to record a don't know.

Table 67, Irish research councils and HE sectors

The Irish research Councils operate a transparent and fair application and selection process for research project funding * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	
The Irish research Councils operate a transparent and fair application and selection process for research project funding	Agree	60	22	7	89
	Disagree	38	30	9	77
	Don't know	46	100	16	162
Total		144	152	32	328

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

There were several concerns expressed in the text data; some participants questioned the limited amount of feedback they received from the research councils whether their proposal received funding or not. Others complained the language utilised by the two councils, was over technical and elitist. Some questioned the decision-making process with cases and friends giving awards to friends and judges not knowing enough about the discipline areas to make informed decisions. One respondent stated:

> IRCSET discriminates against excellence in biosciences/molecular biology by not providing sufficient consumable support. The selection is therefore skewed. Excellent students in biosciences are not supported in favour of physical sciences.
> (Text data 2009, branch group external)

While the EU and Irish government policy initiatives on research signpost the need for research to contribute towards the so called 'knowledge society' and, therefore, industry and enterprise, there seems to be limited research funding support provided by industry and enterprise to the higher education sector. As such, 73.6% (n=251) of respondents agreed with the

statement, '*Industry and enterprise should make more funding available to IHE to carry out research and development*'. There were, however, concerns raised in the text data. Most expressed reservations, such as, ethical issues suggesting that research should be unbiased and that there should be no interference from industry into research and findings should be distributed unedited by the influence of industry. One respondent complained:

> What are the aims of third level education? If it is forming skilled workers, I would agree. If it is forming competent community leaders and managers, confident and responsible citizens, I would not agree, because governments would have a good excuse to reduce even further, public funding.
> (Text data 2009, branch group external)

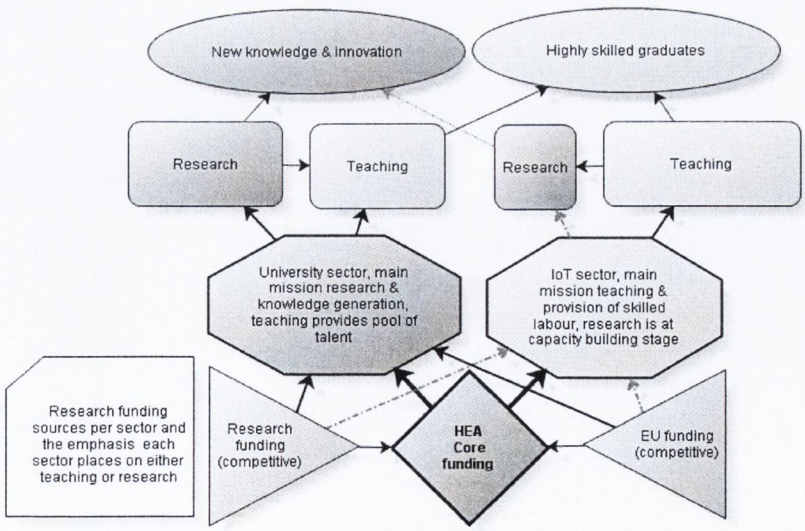
The item that participants from both sectors share is 'time', time to carry out research, time to do research funding proposals and time to do research administration. The increase in teaching workloads has resulted in academics having less time for scholarship and research. There was marginal support for the statement '*I have enough time to give individual students appropriate support*' 48% (n=184) agreeing compared to 46% (n=174) disagreeing. When the result was disaggregated disagreement was located in the following categories, academics 50% (n=149), full-time 49.5% (n=131) and social grouping 48.5% (n=92). In particular, new staff seem to have extreme time pressure developing class material, administration and then conducting research activities. Some participants noted that they used research funding to buy out their teaching time so that they could focus on their research. Some participants noted the difference in teaching time commitments between the university sector (6-8 hours teaching), and the IoT sector (16-20 hours' teaching) questioning how academics in the IoT sector are supposed to engage in research activities under these teaching loads. However, one participant from a university stated:

> ...the main concern is time and the amount of time that's made available for teacher because within the university there are three key areas I suppose where the focus lies and teaching is just one of those. Research is another one of those and administration is the third. So people are meant to keep, I suppose, an even

> balance between the three of those and that can be extremely difficult. So increasingly the problem is those people who are may be a new lecturers and who are ambitious to make it to senior lecturer and promotion etc. find it extremely difficult because they also need space and time to conduct research. So in our setting here there's a lot of administration goes with the position. There has to be a constant eye kept on research both application for research funding and research output and to try marrying that with the actual teaching group is the biggest problem that we encounter.
> (Head of school, university sector, Interview data 2009, branch group time)

The perceived differences between the IoT sector and the university sector are in core funding and teaching and research this is mapped out in Diagram 23. There seems to be a perception that the university sector is better at attracting funding from the funding agencies in Ireland and European and the HEA. The funding that each sector receives is distributing differently, the universities fund more research while the IoTs fund teaching. The net outcome is that the universities have greater capacity and capabilities when it comes to the production of new knowledge through research, this research activity informs both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching. Whereas the IoT sector's focus is on teaching rather than research, the overall focus is directed towards producing graduates for the labour force.

Diagram 23, Sectorial funding and precieved research and teaching differences



Research quality (subordinate cluster 3)

According to SFI in a recent research performance study of twenty countries which explored the impact of research and citations, Ireland was ranked in eight place, Denmark was ranked first, the USA fourth and the UK sixth. The SFI announcement quotes Martin Shanna of Forfas, who states:

> The findings show that Ireland has pockets of competitive research in many fields of science. From an enterprise perspective, citation data is also important as it is a good proxy for the quality of research and it can help to influence decisions on the location of the capital investment of companies and venture capitalists. (SFI, 2009)[161]

In Ireland there are no research quality reviews as in the UK, which has the research baseline framework replacing the RAE. Therefore citations Shanna suggests, become a 'good proxy' for ascertaining research quality, providing valuable comparative data on research outputs. In the survey there was considerable support for measuring output, 46.6% of respondents agreed with the statement *'Research outputs of all Higher Education Institutions need to be empirically measured'*. While in total 33.3% (n=113) disagree, interestingly when the data are disaggregated into sectors both the universities, 44% (n=63), and IoTs 47% (n=72) support the statement, while the colleges oppose the statement 51.61% (n=16) saying disagree. Further, the text data (n=34) contributors expressed caution: a large section stated that there was a need to be careful about adopting a failed system such as the RAE in the UK. Others were concerned about the type of metric used. Would this be transparent and open to both humanities and sciences equally? Others objected completely to the notion of measurement. One respondent questioned:

> How can you empirically measure research in philosophy? Does that mean that research in philosophy is un-useful and unnecessary?
> (Text data 2009, branch group measurement)

The EUA's 2005 quality review of the universities noted several positive aspects of research quality in Irish universities, such as the practice of

[161] The full statement can be found on the SFI website at the below (accessed January 2009)
http://www.sfi.ie/content/content.asp?section_id=226andlanguage_id=1andpublication_id=1955

research-based teaching, the autonomy of researchers and IHE and the networking capacity of researchers and IHE in research areas. However, the report also noted some aspects that needed improvement such as collaborations within and amongst IHE, interdisciplinary research teams, reliance on individual researchers ('star' performers) and the lack of coherent quality reviews. The EUA stated:

> Many research projects and centres undergo a variety of quality review procedures linked to their external funding contracts. However, there is a need to ensure greater coherence, in both methodological and logistical terms, between these external reviews and the university's own review processes.
> (EUA, 2005 p25)

While the 1999 Qualifications Act required the NQAI to request the universities and DIT and HETAC to request the IoTs to carry out quality reviews of the IHE functions, programmes and services the Act does not however, directly require IHE to review their research activities. The EUA was requested by the universities and the DIT to include research as an item in the review process. However, a senior officer from the NQAI made it clear during an interview that research reviews were not on the NQAI agenda, stating:

> To be honest the research assessment exercise would be a responsibility here of our two departments and the HEA and the SFI. So the Qualification Authority is not involved in debates about research funding and research excellence in that regard. What we would be involved, I mean obviously we're involved in the framework includes awards which are research ones including the one hopefully that you're going to get and so we would be concerned in that sense and with the quality assurance of that programme. Our quality assurance relationship with research is relatively distant and we wouldn't be a major player in the research discussions and I wouldn't pretend that we are.
> (Senior officer NQAI, Interview data 2008, branch group quality)

Respondents to the survey were supportive of quality reviews relating to research and 69% agreed with the statement, *'There should be quality reviews of research activities in all Higher Education Institutes'*. Some critical comments emerged from the text data specifically relating to the

time-consuming nature of quality review and the seemly over-bureaucratic nature of review. As one respondent noted:

> There will be no reward and so far no acknowledgement by the institution for days of work on contradictory badly explained forms.
> (Text data 2009, branch group quality)

While the NQAI may not be taking responsibility for requesting IHE to undertake research quality reviews, it is, however, likely, under the current doctrine of quality assurance, that some agency will take this work on board. There are numerous supporters advocating research quality reviews and that ranking systems to be put in place. While some perceive quality as an enhancement tool utilised to stimulate reflection, revision and improvements, others adopt a more behaviourist approach suggesting that research reviews and ranking system can change behaviour. As such, they are managerial tools rather than academic aids. One participant who is a strong supporter of ranking systems declared:

> Ranking is only what you do with the information at the end of the day. I mean it's an importantly critical driver for lots of reason. It can drive internal behaviour. Policy makers can drive behaviour. It's a driver of behaviour. You don't want to be the restaurant that listed with the sign on your door saying 'food poisoning' so that drives your behaviour. So in the same way these things drive behaviour. So in that sense it's done but I'm interested in using that in the first instance to strategically drive and look at what we're doing and improve quality.
> (Director IoT sector, Interview data 2009, branch group measurement)

It would seem over the last ten years Irish policy makers have developed a growing interest in measuring institutional performance. This type of practice emerged in the UK during the 1990s in the RAE now REF, others types of measurement system took the form of league tables. To gauge opinion on this change agenda item the following statement was posed, '*The development of ranking systems would enhance the quality of research in Institutes of Higher Education*'. 56% (n=190) disagreed. There was strong sectoral opposition to this statement; in the university sector 63% (n=91) disagree, IoT sector 50.3% (n=76) disagree and the colleges 66.6% (n=20) disagree. From these results it is clear that respondents do not want a ranking system introduced into the higher

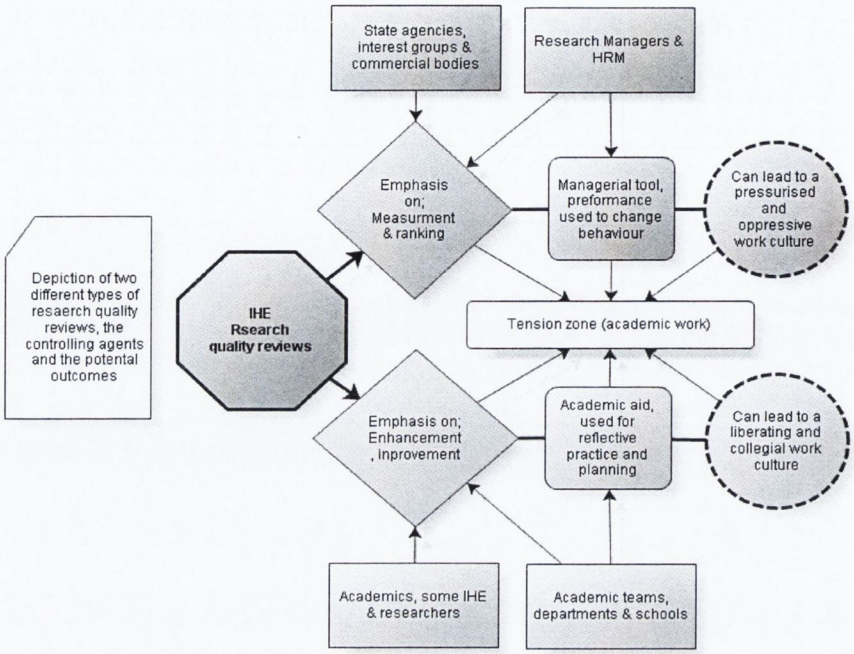
education sector. In addition, the text data heavily criticised the notion of introducing ranking systems. Concerns were expressed about the nature of the measurements. Who would construct the matrix? What would be the purpose? Who would do the measurement? One respondent stated:

> The UK model, which has promoted centres of research excellence has proved highly problematic in that it has resulted in an extremely problematic method of recruitment, one that has significantly undermined staffing and resources to the teaching element of courses.
> (Text data 2009, branch group measurement)

There was no evidence of widespread support for the introduction of ranking systems. However, participants welcomed 'quality' as an important initiative which can assist in the academic mission of an IHE. There was no support for a league table measuring the performance of different IHE. It was considered that a ranking system could have adverse effects in reducing collaboration and co-operation between IHE, promoting centres of excellence perception and becoming a managerial instrument. Participants noted that quality of research was monitored in an academic fashion through the peer review process; where academics values are upheld and academics are in control rather, than administrators and bureaucrats. There seem to be two different types of research quality review approaches emerging in the Irish context. These are depicted in Diagram 24:

1) One type emphasised measurement and ranking, IHE research quality is given a unit value which is comparable by IHE. This type of approach gives management a new performance tool that can be utilised to control staff behaviour, reward performance and sanction underperformance. The work culture can become more pressurised, staff members compete against each other for rewards, to some staff this competitive work atmosphere can become oppressive.
2) The other type emphasises quality enhancement, improving things as the need arises, quality is perceived as a continuous process. The ownership of and responsibility to direct this process rests with the professionalism of the academic staff. This type of approach is conducive to collegiality, the work culture can liberate staff by giving them control and allowing a non-adversarial atmosphere to mature.

Diagram 24, Types of research quality reviews



Summary of T2R

This section provided the reader with a detailed account of the analysed data from the T2R. The primary cluster in the data analysis hierarchy was research capacity, the associate cluster was research knowledge and the subordinate clusters were collaboration, funding and quality. For the data it was evident that there was a misalignment between the governments policy drive to increase research capacity and the HE sectors claimed that there was not enough funding or resources available to meet the targets that the government had set. It was clear that research in the university sector was at a much more advanced level than research capacity in the IoT sector, more resources would be required to build up the IoT sector's capacity. The rationale to build capacity was questioned, was it to generate new knowledge or was it to gain a return on investment through the commercialisation of research outcomes. It would seem that the government's policy was to promote commercially feasible research activities in the science, engineering and ICT areas. The primary vehicle utilised to achieve this was competitive funding and a second strategy was forced collaborations between IHE researchers. Some academics perceived the government's approach as short-termism and unsustainable.

There were also concerns expressed about the quality measurement criteria utilised both for appraising funding applications and evaluation research outcomes. In general, there was support for more qualitative measures that support capacity building rather, then stringent numeric criteria based on objective outcomes. In the next section the typical academic career will be explored.

Chapter 8: Thematic area 3 Career, data analysis

> In sum, academics live in somewhat 'messy' environments where toleration of ambiguity is a necessary condition of work. (Bess 2006, p514)

Chapter 8 provides analysis of the interview, survey and policy data relevant to thematic area 3 Career (T3C). The chapter structure is similar to the previous two chapters. The thematic area is explained, including some description of the 'first run' of coding and the clustering of data. The hierarchical analysis framework is outlined; this includes the different clusters and branch groupings. The analysed data is presented in accordance with the hierarchical framework, listed in logical chunks of analysed data. In order to provide a visual summary of material a schematic diagram will be presented at the end of each analysed cluster.

Interview data description

Level 1 analysis consisted of clustering all interview data relevant to career into a cluster called T3C, 'coding up' (Richards 2008) from T3C led to the construction of seven branch groups (academic freedom, management, new career, part-time, performance, promotion, retirement). A copy of the clusters in the three thematic areas (T1T, T2R and T3C) is provided below, T3C is expanded to display the seven coded on branch groups. T3C contained 22 sources or extracts from 22 different interview transcripts which were imported into this thematic area (see Diagram 25).

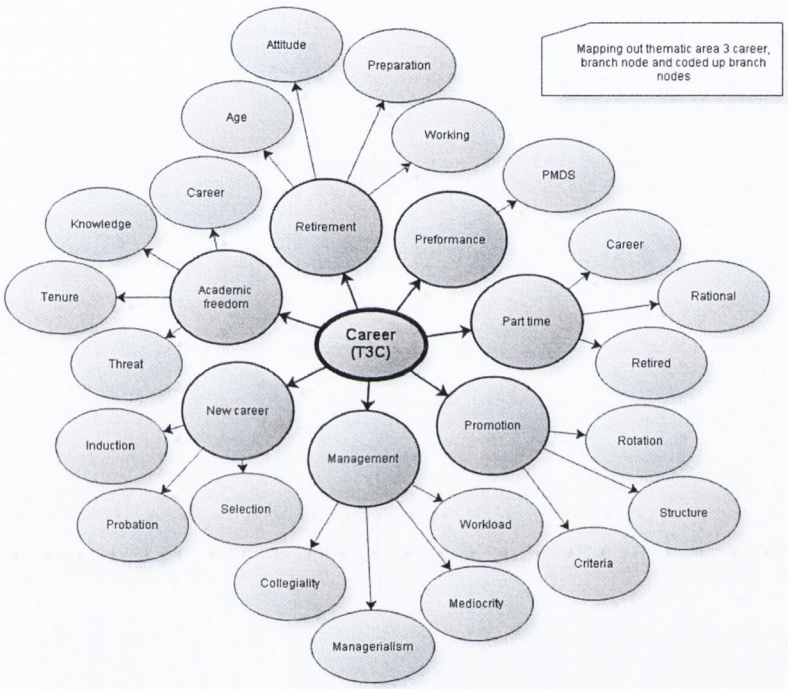
Diagram 25, NVivo screen snapshot of T3C cluster

Tree Nodes

Name	Sources	References
Coding, round 1, thematic are	0	0
T1,T	25	25
T2,R	26	26
T3,C	22	22
Academic freedom	3	4
Management	7	10
new career	9	11
part time	9	14
Preformance	3	7
promotion	9	13
retirement	9	14
rotation	3	3

The second round of coding consisted of 'coding up' (Richards 2008) from each of the seven branch groups, in all twenty three new branch groups were formed. The schematic model (Diagram 26) provides an overview map of the key coding branches from the cluster T3C, the 'coding on' (Richards, 2008) of the seven branch groups and the subsequent 'coding on' (Richards, 2008) of the 23 branch groups.

Diagram 26, Schematic of T3C cluster and associate branches



Survey data description (T3C)

T3C explored academic workers' responses to changing employment contracts, remuneration, responsibilities and duties. Many factors have contributed to the changing nature of the academic career. For example, new legislation both national and European, agreements reached by the social partners, new controlling structures like HRM and the rise of the casualisation of employment. This thematic area sought to explore respondents' opinions in relation to key items pertinent to the new academic career. There are 29 statements in this thematic area. These are divided into seven groupings: appointments, career, retirement, contract, gender, remuneration and structures (see summary in Table 68).

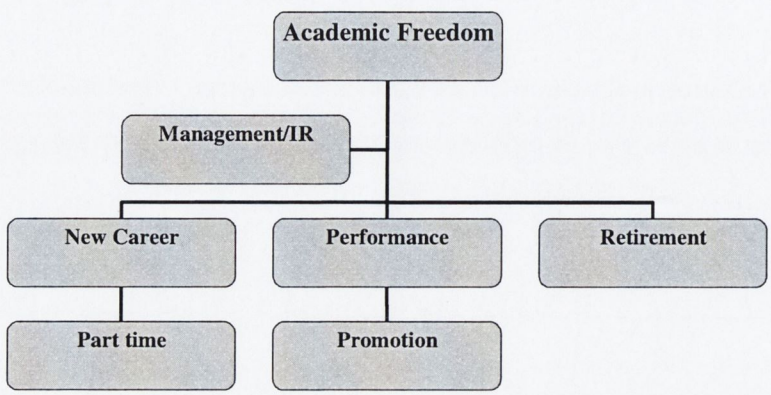
Table 68, Seven groupings in the thematic area career

Grouping	Description
1) Appointment	Five items, this grouping sought to gain opinions on the appointments procedures and support services for new staff with particular reference to recruitment, selection, induction, mentoring and supports.
2) Mid-career	Six items, this grouping explored opinions relating to job security, promotional opportunities, rotation of management posts, opportunities for participants working in difference roles, workload and procedures relating to underperformance.
3) Retirement	Four items, this grouping sought to gain respondents' opinions on such items as early retirement, semi-retirement, retirement information courses and succession planning.
4) Contract	Five items, this grouping inquired into respondents' opinions relating to the academic employment contract in particular; academic freedom, flexible work practices, part-time work, legislation and national agreements.
5) Gender	Four items, this grouping sought to explore issues relating to gender such as: female participation, positive discrimination, child friendly workplaces and crèche facilities.
6) Remuneration	Four items, this grouping sought to gain opinions on items relating to types of salary and payments such as wages, salary scales, performance-based pay and external income.
7) Development	Four items, this grouping explored initiatives relating to staff professional development items such as provision of CPD opportunities, sabbatical leave, networking and committee work.

Hierarchical analysis framework T3C

As with the previous thematic areas when the survey and interview data were merged and the first level of analysis carried out, several clusters where identified. These were constructed into a hierarchical analysis framework (see diagram 27). The primary cluster was academic freedom, the secondary clusters where management/industrial relations (IR), the subordinate clusters where performance which has a sub-cluster promotion, new career which had a sub-cluster part-time and finally retirement.

Diagram 27, Thematic area career hierarchical framework



Career academic freedom (primary cluster)

In an Irish HE context the traditional principle of academic freedom gained official legal status in recent times. For the university sector it was incorporated in Section 14 of the 1997 University Act. The IoT Act 2006 amended Section 5 of both the 1992 DIT Act and the 1992 RTC Act and incorporated a section on academic freedom. In these Acts academic staff have the freedom to *'to question and test received wisdom, to put forward new ideas and to state controversial or unpopular opinions and shall not be disadvantaged, or subject to less favourable treatment by the university'* (University Act, Section 14, 1997).

While both the 1997 University Act and the 2006 IoT Act makes formal statutory provision for academic freedom, there is a distinction between the two sectors. The 1997 University Act recognises the 'independent ethos' of the universities. However, the 2006 IoT Act does not make a similar statement. The IHE in the university sector have near full autonomy to fulfil their functions and objects, as set out in the 1997 University Act. The 2006 Act gives the IoT sector compatible autonomy to the universities. While both the 1997 University Act and the 2006 IoT Act accord academic freedom to both the IHE and the academic staff members, the IHE must both 'promote and preserve' academic freedom while the academic staff member must act in the 'law'. Also, while both acts accord academic freedom to academic staff, only the 1997 University Act makes provision for tenure, the 2006 Act does not. It can be argued that this lack of commitment to tenure contradicts the intent behind the traditional principle of academic freedom. Tenure is needed in order to guarantee the open and free functioning of academic freedom. However, one participant who was involved with the negotiations relating to the formation of the 2006 IoT Act provides some insights into why this is the case, stating:

> In relation to teaching the OECD certainly had views about the standards of teaching in Ireland from what it saw in its study visit here it viewed teaching in the institutes of technology of a higher standard than universities and it was a surprising comment for people in the department (DoES) to receive but

> they did back it up by commenting on the existence of tenure in the universities and they saw tenure as an issue. Whereas I think academics might have seen tenure a long time back as a protection of academic freedom. It is no longer seen as that and if you look at the legislation that the IoT Act of 2006, academic freedom is protected in that legislation but there is no tenure and I think if people are going to really look at the issue of improving the standards of teaching I think there are issues there about so many people who have almost removed themselves from teaching to become pure researchers and really there's not enough of a link between this fourth level Ireland and really the core business of teaching students because that's why the institutions primarily exist. This move towards I suppose just the creation of knowledge rather, than if you start from the perspective of the learner coming in the door is the number one person in all of this.
> (Senior officer IoTI, Interview data 2008, branch group academic freedom)

This would suggest that while academic freedom is accorded to the academic staff in the IoT sector there is, however, no guarantee of tenure. If academic staff and particularly new staff, are outspoken, presenting controversial opinions that the IoT (indirectly the state) disapproves of, then the academic staff member's employment contract could be reconsidered or terminated. Although, generally, academic workers in modern societies usually have reasonable chances of achieving tenured position during the early stages of their academic career this is not always the case. Combined with tenure is an entitlement to academic freedom: this is the freedom to express views and arguments that are contrary to commonly held values, beliefs and knowledge domains. The importance of academic freedom was highlighted in the survey data when 86.9% (n=280) of respondents agreed with the statement, '*The traditional principal of academic freedom is an important part of the academic employment contract'*. Within the text data some concerns were raised. Some respondents were not aware that their contract contained such a clause, others wondered about the precise definition of academic freedom. Others stated it was important in theory but not sure about actual practice. However, one contributor made a strong comment in defence of academic freedom stating:

> Important? It is fundamental and foundational. The bedrock of the contract and under systematic threat by a host of forces

> determined to turn a university into a factory churning out standardised product. Milk is for churning and suitable for homogenisation. But research is not a dairy product.
> (Text data 2009, branch group contract)

The 2006 IoT Act did, however, bring the rights and responsibilities of academic staff from the two sectors (universities and IoTs) closer together. According to the international interview participant (USA, France and Australia) academic freedom seems to have been in existence much longer in other countries in comparison to its relatively recent introduction in Ireland. One participant from Australia who is in his mid-career reflects back to when he started lecturing and his understanding of academic freedom, stating:

> I mean when I was, you know, started off as a university lecturer it was very much you decided what you wanted to do. You might share it with your colleagues and things but it was regarded as part of academic freedom that once you had the title of your course you'd basically decide what you wanted to do and that's no longer now the case. There's much more involvement of other vested interest groups.
> (Prof. and senior officer UN agency, Interview data 2008, branch group career)

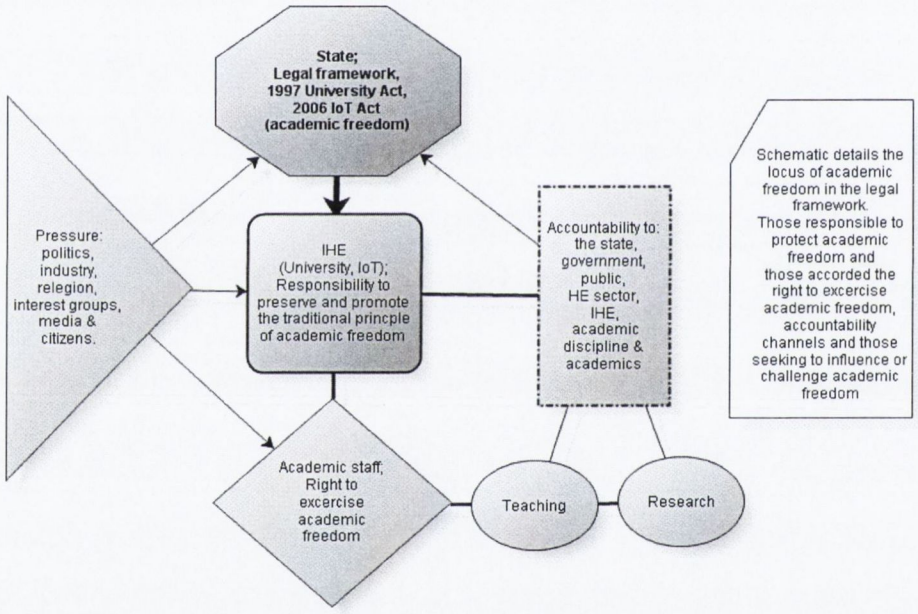
Participants relate academic freedom to both research and teaching. It was perceived as the freedom to make personal decisions on what type of research to undertake, how to teach, what content to teach and what type of programmes needed to be developed. However, there was some concern noted in relation to external forces impinging on academic choice, by seeking to have their demands and perspectives incorporated into programme content and/or research activities. As one participant stated:

> Then again due to funding, to constraints and things like that, they were only being allowed to pursue research into certain areas based on market conditions or what are seen as the profit/loss implications for the funding agencies. That's going to be and it is already evidenced in higher education particularly the universities. The combination of the threat to academic freedom and the push by narrow market considerations or profit/loss considerations, funding considerations and the choices of research, that's a major difficulty.
> (Associate prof. university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group threat)

The IHE have the legal responsibility both to preserve and promote the

traditional principle of academic freedom, and, specifically, the universities are required where there is an issue with interpreting the 1997 University Act, to revert to the ethos of traditional principles rather, than supporting interpretations that are contrary. In this legal framework there is a sectoral difference, while academic staff in the IoT sector have academic freedom they do not necessarily have tenure. Whereas academics in the university sector have academic freedom and tenure, the academics in the IoT sector now have academic freedom but not tenure. Diagram 28 endeavours to portray the locus of academic freedom its protectors, users and those seeking to influence or challenge academic freedom.

Diagram 28, Schematic depicting academic freedom



Career management/IR (secondary cluster)

Current management practices and structures in operation in IHE have being strongly influenced by the government-led modernisation agenda emerging from successive national partnership agreements. For example nearly all IHE have HRM strategies and HRM managers now, these replaced the personnel officers and department. The partnership process gradually introduced the narrative of HRD into partnership agreements during the 1990s. The main priority of this approach was to establish co-operation and trust between employers, unions and staff. There was a

strong emphasis on the provision of training and development programmes for staff, unions and managers. However, post-2000 the narrative changed. The partnership approach was embedded in work practices, the human resources of staff did not need to be 'developed' but, rather, 'managed'. A commitment to HRM was first given in the *Programme for Prosperity and Fairness*. However, HRM came to prominence in *Sustaining Progress* (2003) HRM was to become the dominant management strategy for the public sector. In the 2006 partnership agreement, *Towards 2016*, commitments were given to review HRM policy, practice and procedures. As such, HRM became embedded in educational discourse and it became a taken-for-granted component in the policy narrative and higher education systems. HRM colonised the management structures and approaches in IHE.

The logic of HRM is to gradually become the interface between staff and the individual IHE management, controlling appointments, promotions, staff negotiations, performance measures, staff development and training. HRM seems to have a stronger position in the IoT sector where directors of HR have been appointed. The HR function within the university sector is still perceived as somewhat similar to that of the traditional personal department, however, the logic of HRM in an organisation is not to remain subordinate but, rather, acquire substantial management influence at senior levels. In general, the HRM unit/department seek to take control of industrial relations (IR) issues, operating the grievance and disciplinary procedures and carrying out direct negotiations with trade unions. The intent behind the partnership agreements was to restructure the organisation of work in the public sector. As one IoT manager stated:

> I think in management the system that we have in a public sector type environment limits greatly the amount of the flexibility you have to address those issues and yes you could address something if it's clearly a disciplinary issue but you've got to really invest your time into it. The system doesn't make it easy to do that. It's highly unionised, it's got the backing of a public sector type environment. You need the approval of the Minister for Education to remove somebody from office...So in a broad management I suppose the system encourages mediocrity. You

> don't have to be exceedingly high above the, you know, you don't have to be noticed, you just have to be doing it well.
> (Head of department, IoT sector, Interview data 2008, branch group management)

There is a worrying point here that needs to be noted, staff do not appoint themselves to positions in IHE. Managers operate the selection process and make decisions on appointments. When staff are appointed they serve a probationary period, after that period managers[162] evaluate their performance and decide whether the staff are made permanent. If managers have control over all these decisions how can they label staff that they appointed as mediocre? Within the interview narrative there is a counter argument to the above statement which challenges the new style management structure and the business type agenda that is being pursued. As one senior manager commented:

> There is a kind of star circle operating in all the colleges now between the director or President, the Financial Controller and the head of Development. Sometimes the Registrar, sometimes not the Registrar, the Registrar as an academic voice is sometimes left out in the cold on that one as well and that they basically, that's in and kind of anything that interferes would be onward march of rampant and crude managerialism...I think [named university] is a case in point, do you know. Hugely disregarding and discounting the views of the academics there and for, you know and trying to drive an agenda which will get them on the top one hundred list or whatever and it's interesting that Trinity has resisted much more successfully than [named university], the academics in [named university] have resisted the same thing and [named university] is on that list of one hundred.
> (Head of school IoT sector, Interview data 2007, branch group management)

In the modernisation policy agenda there seems to be the perception that one style of HRM is suitable for all the public sector. This displays a lack of understanding relating to the nature of academic work and collegiality. Academics are highly skilled self-motivated professionals who have their own form of quality and performance monitoring in the form of the 'peer review process'. Utilising a strong managerial control approach is counterproductive so, too, is the 'paint by numbers' HRM policy and

[162] In some of the older universities this is not a management type decision but, rather, a form of peer review is utilised.

procedures approach. It would seem that most IHE within Ireland have moved from having a personal department/office to adopting a HRM approach. To ascertain opinions relating to the introduction of HRM the following statement was posed, '*The introduction of HRM in the institution where I work has had a positive effect on working relationship between staff and managers*'. A significant percentage of respondents registered opposition against this statement 43.7% (n=137) disagree, 37.4% (n=115) said don't know and only 14.2% agreed. This result suggests that respondents do not consider HRM as a mechanism that can improve management–employee relationships. When the results are cross tabulated with employment role it becomes evident that most opposition to HRM is from the academic staff with nearly one of every two respondents disagreeing with the statement. The only area of support was from senior managers where 41% (n=5) of respondents supported the statement (see Table 69).

Table 69, HRM and employment role

The introduction of Human Resource Management (HRM) in the institution were I work has had a positive effect on the working relationship between staff and managers. * Categorise your present employment role from the following list Crosstabulation

Count

		Categorise your present employment role from the following list					
		Academic	Researcher	Manager	Senior manager	Other	Total
The introduction of Human Resource Management (HRM) in the institution were I work has had a positive effect on the working relationship between staff and managers.	Agree	33	1	4	5	0	43
	Disagree	118	5	9	3	2	137
	Don't know	88	18	4	4	1	115
	Other	5	1	1	0	0	7
Total		244	25	18	12	3	302

The text data are equally critical of the introduction of HRM. A variety of the short comments are presented below:

> The complete opposite - Now HRM perceived as management - Dreadful relationship between HR and staff - Only a buffer - don't know what it was like before but we call them "the dark side"- Need a button for strongly disagree on this one!
> (Text data 2009, branch group management)

One of the main strategies of HRM is to provide sufficient policies and procedures in workplaces in order to create a perception of a safe and caring working relationship between management and staff. A principal objective of HRM control is the individualisation of workers. The aim is

to reduce collectivism by providing individual rights. As such, HRM is a management tool which seeks to reduce the influence of trade unions and where, possible, operate in a union-free working environment. However, HRM (within the policy context) is not portrayed in this manner to staff, it is pushed as a new approach utilised to protect workers and enhance their contribution and capacity in the workplace. To gauge how successful HRM has operated in the HE sector over the last decade the following statement was posed, '*The institution's HRM policies and procedures are so good that I do not consider it necessary to be a member of a trade union or professional representative body*'. There was a very strong response registered against this statement 79.4% (n=244) disagreed, 11.3% (n=35) don't know and only 3.7% (n=12) agreed. The text data was equally decisive, no support was registered for HRM. Most of the comments said that relationships between staff and management have got even worse since HRM was introduced. One respondent stated:

> In this current climate it is essential to belong to a union. The very term 'human resource management' is politically loaded and aligned to management.
> (Text data 2009, branch group structures)

Why is it that there is so much tension between management (including HRM) and staff? Several statements were constructed in order to explore this type of question. These included items such as trust, leadership, values and strategic decision. The results show that while there is some similarity between sectors there is a large divergence of opinion in most cases. For example 55.1% (n=169) of all respondents disagreed with the statement, '*In the institution where I work staff has a high level of trust in senior management's capacity to manage and lead the institution*'. Sectoral differences emerged with 44% (n=56) of the university sector disagreed compared to 70% (n=94) of the IoT sector. The discipline groups that recorded the highest percentage of disagreement was the technology grouping at 72% (n=46). Furthermore, when role was taken into account (see Table 70) the disagreement with the statement was evident in every role (academic, researcher, manager and senior manager).

Table 70, Trust in senior management by role

In the institution were I work staff have a high level of trust in senior managements capacity to manage and lead the institution * Categorise your present employment role from the following list Crosstabulation

Count

		Categorise your present employment role from the following list					
		Academic	Researcher	Manager	Senior manager	Other	Total
In the institution were I work staff have a high level of trust in senior managements capacity to manage and lead the institution	Agree	52	7	3	3	0	65
	Disagree	144	9	9	6	1	169
	Don't know	46	9	5	2	2	64
	Other	4	0	1	0	0	5
Total		246	25	18	11	3	303

The pattern of sectoral difference continued. With 44.6% (n=143) of the general respondents disagreed with the statement '*Senior academic managers provide strategic direction for teaching and research in my institution*'. However, when the results are disaggregated it is the IoT sector which registers the highest percentage of disagreement at 58.95% (n=79), while both the universities and colleges agree by 44.53% (n=57) and 48.27% (n=11) respectively (see Table 71). Similarly while 44% (n=136) of respondent's disagreed with '*Senior academic managers provide academic leadership to the different disciplines in the institution where I work*', the IoT sector registered the largest percentage of disagreement at 55.97% (n=75) but both the university and college sectors supported the statement at 40.62% (n=52) and 44.82% (n=13), respectively. In the same trend, 40.1% of respondents agreed that '*Senior academic managers promote academic values both in and outside of the institution where I work*'. While the university and College sector supported this statement the IoT sector disagreed by 45.52% (n=79). It would seem from these results that the IoT sector is particularly dissatisfied with senior management while the university and college sectors are more supportive of senior management.

Table 71, Senior management strategic direction and HE sectors

Senior academic managers provide strategic direction for teaching and research in my institution * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Total
Senior academic managers provide strategic direction for teaching and research in my institution	Agree	57	38	14	109
	Disagree	48	79	11	138
	Don't know	21	14	3	38
	Other	2	3	1	6
Total		128	134	29	291

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

Table 72, Academic leadership and HE sectors

Senior academic managers provide academic leadership to the different disciplines in the institution were I work * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Total
Senior academic managers provide academic leadership to the different disciplines in the institution were I work	Agree	52	41	13	106
	Disagree	44	75	11	130
	Don't know	30	14	5	49
	Other	2	4	0	6
Total		128	134	29	291

Table 73, Academic values and HE sectors

Senior academic managers promote academic values both within and outside of the institution were I work * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Total
Senior academic managers promote academic values both within and outside of the institution were I work	Agree	59	45	18	122
	Disagree	37	61	7	105
	Don't know	33	27	4	64
	Other	0	1	0	1
Total		129	134	29	292

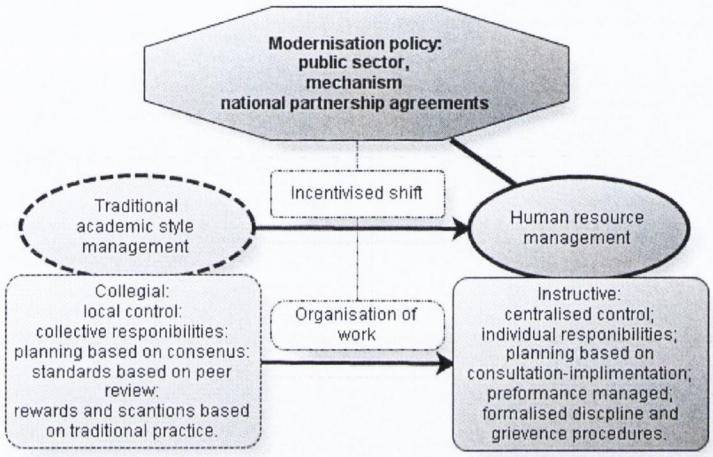
As new management styles emerge and more demands are placed on managers to produce evidence of performance, of efficiencies and of accountability, the traditional collegial approach comes under pressure from managerialism. This type of process is identifiable in an observation made by one of the participants:

> I've also, in some places I've noticed that some people are now increasingly devoting themselves to management. They've decided in their careers I'm going to take the management pathway. So you have got people who get promotion because they're willing to take on these managerial roles and they're not...Yet from the point of view of the managers of course they have to act efficiently, they have to also make decisions fairly rapidly so it's retention in many institutions.
> (Prof. and senior officer UN agency, Interview data 2008, branch group management)

From the data there seems to be a tension between the new management systems and approaches such as HRM compared to the traditional academic approaches. Those in management positions cite as a reason for this new management increased workloads and pressurised work practices due to the greater demand to produce evidence of value for money and performance indicators. The new management systems seem to be

creating a distance[163] between managers and their new found roles and academics teaching and research roles. A schematic detailing some of the changes that occurred with the shift from traditional management styles to HRM is shown in Diagram 29 The main driver for these changes was the government modernisation agenda, the mechanism utilised to gain the changes were successive national partnership agreement, the change was incentivised by national pay awards.[164]

Diagram 29, Shift from traditional academic management to HRM



New career (subordinate cluster 1)

Provision for the appointment of staff by IHE is accorded in the 1997 University Act, Section 25, and the 2006 IoT Act, Section 13 which relates to the RTCs and Section 39 relating to DIT. While both the 1997 University Act and 2006 IoT Act accord the universities and the IoTs the legal right to appoint new members of staff, the universities have authority to appoint staff without ministerial approval, whereas the IoTs must gain ministerial approval from both the departments of finance and education. Also, the universities have more autonomy in relation to developing their selection procedures, policy and criteria, where as the IoTs must abide by the procedures set out by the ministers. In 2009, the Minister for Finance

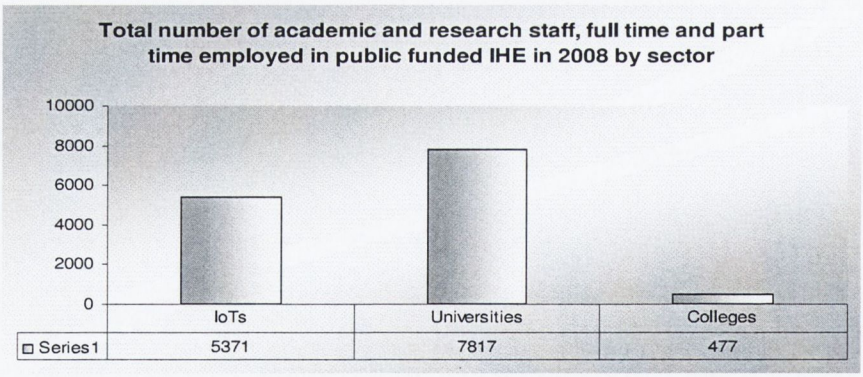
[163] Jamieson and Naidoo (2004) note that under the 'consumerist model' in the UK, 'new management' in HE perceive academic staff as a labour force that needs to produce a 'plaint-free' teaching at the 'lowest cost' but gaining the best results. New management give the consumer (student) power to evaluate teaching performance and make judgement on the teaching quality of academic staff.

[164] In the commitments detailed in the Corke Park proposal 2010, the government have succeeded in getting the largest trade unions (SIPTU and IMPACT) to agree to public sector transformation under the threat of more pay cuts. Three of the teachers unions (IFUT, TUI and ASTI) have all rejected this proposal.

enforced an appointment moratorium in the public sector. This affected both the university sector and the IoT sector. All public sector organisations were directed that no new appointments were to be made without the prior approval of the Minister for Finance.

The HEA, acting under instruction from the Minister for Finance, notified all IHE about the employment embargo.[165] The HEA directed all IHE to send formal requests relating to staff recruitment to the HEA for consideration. However, casual, part-time employment was allowed where need arose, although if a part-time worker was nearing eligibility for a CID then a formal request had to be made before re-employing the part-time worker. Currently CID employment contracts are similar to permanent employment contacts. The rationale for the employment embargo is to make financial savings by not replacing staff who retire, leave or are let go. According to HEA statistics (2009) based on annual returns received from IHE regarding the number of academic and research employed, there were 5,371 in the IoT sector, 7,817 in the university sector and 477 in the colleges.

Diagram 30, Number of academic/research staff employed in HE by sector (2008)



The first experience and insight that potential new staff members gain of a higher education institution are the interviews they participate in as part of the selection process. The interview can be quite causal and informal (part-time positions) or structured and formal (whole time positions), the

[165] See Irish Times Editorial (2009, p15, 9/7/09) entitled, *Third-level recruitment*, where reference is made to the implications this type of policy directive has on the autonomy of the sector as detailed in the 1997 University Act.

approach depends on the nature of the position. The following statement sought to gain respondents opinions on, *'The institution where I work has transparent recruitment, selection and appointment procedures'*. While there was a high degree of support registered for this statement, 55.9% (n=185) agreeing, there was also a substantial percentage of respondents opposing the statement 28.1% (n=91) saying disagree. However, when this result is disaggregated it can be observed the not-full-time category disagree by 62% (n=45) compared to the full-time category where only 47% (n=45) disagree. There is further, divergence when role is incorporated 55% (n=144) of the academic category agree while only 40% (n=11) of the research category agreed. Surprising there was only marginal gender difference 60% (n=87) of males agreed, compared to 57% (n=95) of females. Gender equality is an important consideration for any recruitment and selection process. To gauge opinion on gender issue the following statement was posed, *'In my institution there is a need for a positive gender discrimination policy (for females) at new appointment level'*. There was a strong response registered against this statement, 56.6% (n=186) disagree and 21.8% (n=75) agreed. However, when the results were disaggregated, using gender as the other variable, it became evident that females were opposed to this statement 46% (n=75) disagree while 73.64% (n=109) of males disagreed (see Table 74).

Table 74, Gender discrimination policy and gender

In my institution there is a need for a positive gender discrimination policy (for females) at new appointment level * Gender Crosstabulation

Count

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
In my institution there is a need for a positive gender discrimination policy (for females) at new appointment level	Agree	18	53	71
	Disagree	109	75	184
	Don't know	20	35	55
	Other	1	0	1
Total		148	163	311

While there was some support for the statement within the text data however, the majority of contributions advised caution in relation to this matter. Some said that there were already gender equality policies in place, others considered positive discrimination to be a form of

discrimination itself, appointments should be made on merit alone. One reflective respondent stated:

> I'm not sure about positive discrimination but definitely, to provide more support to women academics as there are statistically fewer numbers at higher levels and this should be addressed.
> (Text data 2009, branch group gender)

In relation to the issue of induction, 66% (n=216) of respondents agreed that their institutions provided induction programmes for new staff. However, there were some difference when the result was disagregated, 75% (n=106) of the university sector agreed in comparison to 61% (n=87) in the IoT sector. Utilising the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, the difference is statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.010, Z=-2.578.

Statistical test 10, Induction programme for new staff and HE sectors

The institution were I work provides induction programmes for new staff. Variable: HE sectors.	
Mann-Whitney U	8380.500
Wilcoxon W	18110.500
Z	-2.578
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.010

Further, more full-time staff agreed 73% (n=169) of the time but not-fulltime staff only agreed 51% (n=45). While there were some concerns expressed in the text data relating to the quality of courses and their content, others complained about the lack of notification and others dismissed the courses as just 'procedural stuff'. From the interview data, while most participants noted that there were induction courses one participant identified a common issue in such courses, becoming training programmes:

> Induction varies I guess, depends again on the context. Induction which is introduction which is, this is the organisation you've just joined and this is where you get your pay and this is where the clinic is. That kind of induction I think is grand, its, you know, like you would to any new employee. Induction, the tricky thing with this is when you select somebody you are selecting them on the basis of being competent. You can't really turn around to them and say you must be trained, you're incompetent.
> (Lecturer, IoT sector, Interview data 2009, branch group induction)

However, some participants perceived induction to be more than learning where to get information and finding out how the organisation worked. They considered there should be formal induction programmes about the learning and teaching practices, new teaching technologies and how teaching and learning is development in the department, school or institute. For example, in the DIT it is now compulsory for all new academic members of staff to undertake a one year Postgraduate Certificate in teaching and learning run in the Learning Teaching Technology Centre (LTTC). Although one head of school from the university sector did not consider this formal approach as necessary, stating:

> Well yes but it's very informal in the sense that it's, you know, as head of school I would talk a lot to new people obviously coming in but I'd find out that they'd learned a lot by going into the office of the person next door and saying 'what do I do about this?' or 'I've been given this course to teach, who taught it before me, I'd better give them a ring.' It's very informal but it's probably the best form of induction that's available, in other words the formalised stuff that HR and that put on is useful but it's much more about structural things like your pension and so on whereas induction into the department tends to be informal. (Head school, university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group induction)

However, when new staff are appointed are there supports in place to assist them with other commitments, such as children? While there has been a general movement in recent times to seek improvements in the quality of working life, by introducing family friendly policies and initiatives, it was not clear whether IHE were developing similar policies and practices. The following statement sought to explore this, '*IHE should develop new child/family friendly initiatives*', to this 70.9% (n=237) agreed, 11.3% (n=39) disagreed. Disaggregating this result to factor for gender it can be observed at 82% (n=135) of females agreed, whereas 66% (n=100) of males agreed. Also, there was some opposition expressed in the text data. Some claimed this type of initiative would discriminate against single people and couples without children, while others were supportive of the initiative. One contributor seemed to suggest that high level academics should not be confined by family commitments, stating:

> Any examination of the family responsibilities of high profile academics will indicate the limitations of combining family responsibilities and high calibre teaching research and service.
> (Text data 2009, branch group gender)

In the quality of working life movement there has been strong support for the development of crèche facilities being available in the workplace. Thus 76.4% (n=248) of respondents agreed that *'IHE should provide crèche facilities'*. The university sector was more supportive of this statement at 91% (n=126) whereas in the IoT sector 67% (n=94) agreed. Further, there was a gender difference with 88% (n=143) of females agreeing compared to 66% (n=103) of males. Also there were some questions raised in the text data, mainly who would pay for the development of such facilitates. Would these facilities be run on a profit-making basis? However, others pointed out that there were already sufficient facilities in place in their institute. Facilities were also associated with institutional strategic planning this included staffing (appointments and careers). It can be argued that IHE are reconsidering how they treat new members of staff, their training and development needs. IHE have all developed 'strategic plans'[166] mapping out the IHE mission and vision, where the institute is and where it wants to go. To achieve their missions IHE are looking to the skills of their staff and constructing institutional skills profiles, exploring what skills they need to progress. One participant from the IUA noted:

> I think there's a certain amount of attention being paid to the whole issue of career planning. The whole structure of an academic career is changing very rapidly, the way funded, whether people are being helped with their plans and career both from their own perspective but from the institutions perspective. You know helping them with development in reaching their potential and getting the most out of them for, you know, for the good of the individual concerned and also the prospective employer. There's a long way to go.
> (Officer IUA, Interview data 2007, branch group probation)

In general, as new staff engage and progress in their work, some will come up against different issues or problems where advice or support

[166] Institutional Strategic Planning was part of the national partnership agreements *Sustaining Progress* (2003) and *Towards 2016* (2006).

from other members of staff will be sought. The following statement sought to gain opinions on '*My institution provides appropriate support services to assist new staff*'. While the response seemed clear with 44.2% (n=147) agreed and 37% (n=122) disagreed, when the results are disaggregated into sectors there is evidence of a divergence of opinion. The university sector agree with the statement by 52.5% (n=73), while the IoT sector disagreed by 46.7% (n=65) and the colleges registered a tie with 37.9% (n=11) both for and against the statement. In comparison 49.5% (n=112) of full-time staff agreed whereas only 38% (n=35) of not-fulltime staff agreed.

Table 75, New staff support services and HE sectors

My institution provides appropriate support services to assist new staff * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	
My institution provides appropriate support services to assist new staff	Agree	73	57	11	141
	Disagree	43	65	11	119
	Don't know	23	17	7	47
Total		139	139	29	307

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

It would seem that new staff learn from fellow workers, and, in some cases, organisations have tried to develop formal mentoring processes in order to induct new staff quickly into the organisation and the work process. In order to gauge experience of this type of procedure the following statement was posed, '*In my institution there is a formal mentoring system in place whereby senior staff assist and advise new staff*'. There was significant opposition recorded against this statement, with 64.9% (n=212) saying disagree, and 17.4% (n=61) agree. When disaggregated 55% (n=76) of the university sector disagree compared to 79% (n=109) in the IoT sector. Further, 71% (n=62) of not-full-time disagree compared to 64% (n=148) of full-time staff. From this result it would seem that mentoring is not a common practice in the respondents' institutions. However, from the text data it emerged that informal and ad hoc mentoring occurs between experienced staff and new members of

staff. One contribution provides a good summary of the type of responses received:

> Individual staff do support new staff directly on an ad hoc basis (over coffee etc.). A career development / mentoring process appears to be completely lacking at present.
> (Text data 2009, branch group appointment)

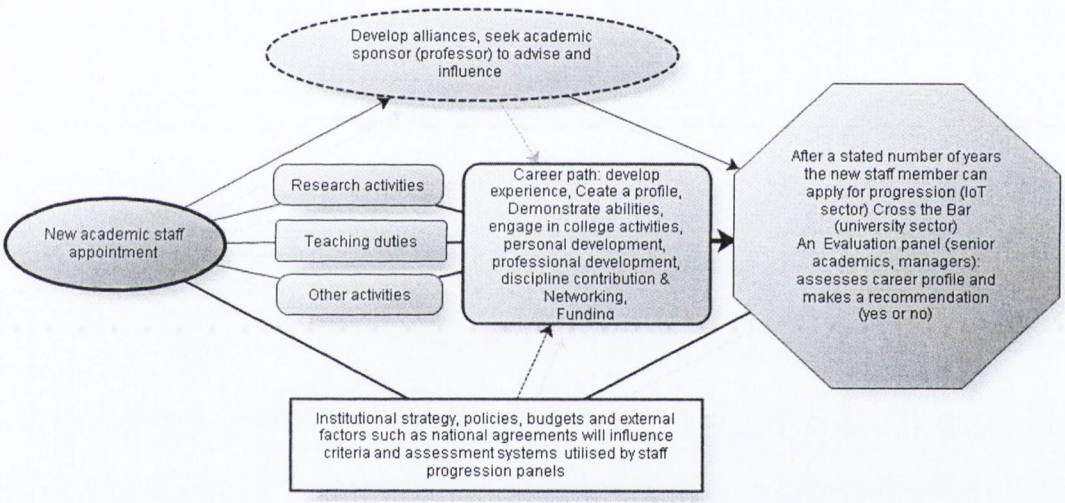
While IHE are beginning to focus more attention towards new staff and their potential career paths, the IHE are also evaluating the performance of staff and making decisions on whether the new staff should be awarded tenure. It can be argued that as IHE receive less funding, the number of tenured positions decreases, and, in turn, this can lead to increased competition amongst new staff for the limited number of positions. As it becomes more difficult to gain a tenured position, staff engage in different strategies to try gain tenure. As one participant notes:

> It makes them increasingly in a position where they have to get sponsors to protect them, to sponsor them, to perhaps progress on their coat tails for a young academic to align themselves with the professor who is successful in getting research grants and to almost become a glorified research assistant even though themselves have a PhD and they have, you know, considerable expertise. So I think those sort of things are happening. I think when it comes to the selection process there's even a greater emphasis on research and writing than there has been in the past and of course as I said to get tenure is more difficult. To get promotion is more difficult and I think the criteria although one is meant to be a good teacher the criteria are very much to do with how many publications that this person had.
> (Prof. UN agency, Interview data 2008, branch group new career)

The appointment of new staff has become much more difficult under the present government's employment framework restrictions which specifically target the public sector. Where new staff are appointed, they find it increasingly more difficult to gain tenured positions. Under the current funding climate, IHE are more reluctant to appoint permanent staff and tend to employ part-time and causal, contract staff in order to stay in their budgetary constrains. From the data a schematic was constructed (Diagram 31). This diagram details a hypothetical new academic staff member's three primary duties, teaching, research and college related duties, this includes administration. Over time the new staff members

endeavours to develop, establish a profile, demonstrate worth, and taking by additional duties, shown flexibility, research and funding achievement. The new staff member, seeks to develop alliances with other staff and, in some cases, seeks to gain the approval and in turn sponsorship of a senior academic. When there is sufficient time served the new staff member can, in accordance with institutional procedures make an application to move onto the new career track/level such as lecturer. The IHE establishes an evaluation panel to assess the staff member's performance in a number of areas that the institute is interested in such as research, funding, students and teaching. The evaluation makes a decision on whether the candidate is successful or not.

Diagram 31, Generic model shown possible appointment routes



Career part-time (subordinate cluster 1.1)

The employment of part-time staff by IHE for the purpose of supporting either teaching or research has been common practice for several decades. Part-time staff were employed by IHE for numerous reasons such as, temporary replacement of full-time members of staff who were either sick, on leave, on sabbatical or to supplement a programme with expertise and knowledge from the external world-of-work or culture. For postgraduates and PhD researchers' part-time work allowed them to gain teaching experience, which could assist in future career decisions. This was a common narrative in the interview data as a participant noted:

> Contract type, in our case I've deliberately followed a policy as much as I could over the years of bringing in people on part-time or temporary contracts for a number of years and then hopefully if they work out to see them appointed permanently. I'm not a great believer in even the most searching of interview processes and all that. I think that anyone who can't, anyone who can't fool you at an interview certainly doesn't deserve to be a teacher put it that way.
> (Prof. university sector, Interview data 2009, branch group career)

As such, this was a common practice, employing someone on a part-time as, basically, a novice, assessing progress and suitability over a number of years and then inviting him/her for interview for a full-time position. While this type of employment approach sounds reasonable, allowing the institute to assess performance and the part-time staff to gain experience, there were several points of concern raised within the data. The part-time staff members needed to demonstrate compliance: they were in a vulnerable position and could not refuse to carry out extra duties or challenge managers decisions. There were also abuses in the unreasonably long duration of part-time contracts.[167] In some cases part-time staff were used as a cost saving strategy rather, than employing a full-time staff member. In the cases of some IHE there seemed to be a move towards the casualisation[168] of academic work. One participant provides a detailed account from his experience as both an academic for over thirty five years and a trade union activist, stating:

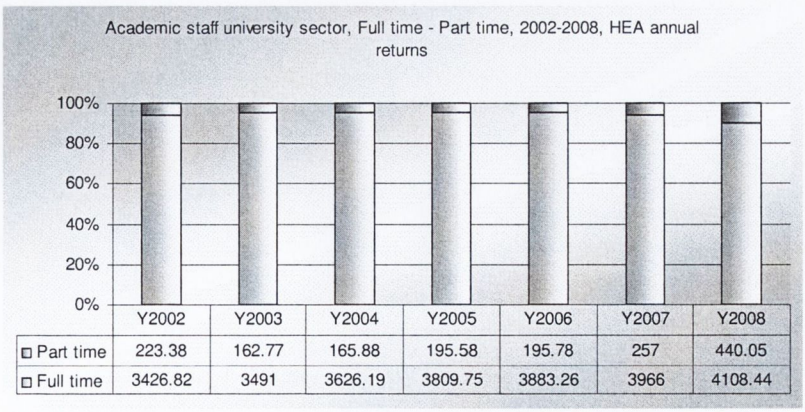
> Now you see in relation to the casualisation I mean let's get our picture right we have with the assistance of, you know, legislation, legislative provisions, I mean we have resisted the worse forms of casualisation here and we haven't reached anything like the US situation where only thirty per cent of the lecturing staff are permanent or have tenure and the rest, it isn't just that the thirty per cent are tenured and the rest are sort of permanent, that's not right, the rest are casual and the rest who are casual around short-term contracts. Right, now we haven't reached anything like that yet because we have resisted and we have succeed to a considerable extent to giving more tenure to a lot of part-time but nevertheless the institutions are at all times trying to find because of the cost pressures placed on them, coming down from the department. Because of the cost pressures

[167] From the researcher's trade union experience there are numerous cases where part-time contracts were issued annually, to some staff ranging from 5 to 13 years.
[168] Chris Rowland, Education Branch Organiser SIPTU, claims that the casualisation of labour is occurring across the whole third level sector (Holden, Aiming for global markets, article in The Irish Times (2006, p6).

> placed on them they are always trying to find cheaper ways of providing the service...So they do talk throughout the pay agreements about flexibility and so on and you know that's a factor but they are actually then trying and I'd be interested in talking in the institute in [named IoT] but they are actually trying to get round the employment legislation. That's what they're really trying to do with these five hundred casually employed people who have their own courses. They're not standing in for anyone or anything like that.
> (Lecturer IoT sector, Interview data 2006, branch group rationale)

To explore whether IHE are employing more part-time academic staff it is worth examining the annual staff returns that IHE submit to either the DoES[169] or the HEA. The data presented range from 2002 to 2008 and cover the two sectors (university and IoT) separately. However, these data should be just utilised as a proxy snapshot, as the numbers come from different sources. Additionally part-time numbers are calculated as per full-time staff equivalent (this does not give the actual number of part-time staff). Finally, for sectoral comparative analysis purposes academic staff numbers are used. The universities have significantly more research staff in comparison to the IoT sector, in some cases the numbers of researchers in different universities out-number the total number of academic staff in some IoTs. The other reason for using academic staff is that they are a more stable variable in comparison to research staff, who have a much higher likelihood of being part-time as this are a new, emerging sector in the academic workforce in IHE.

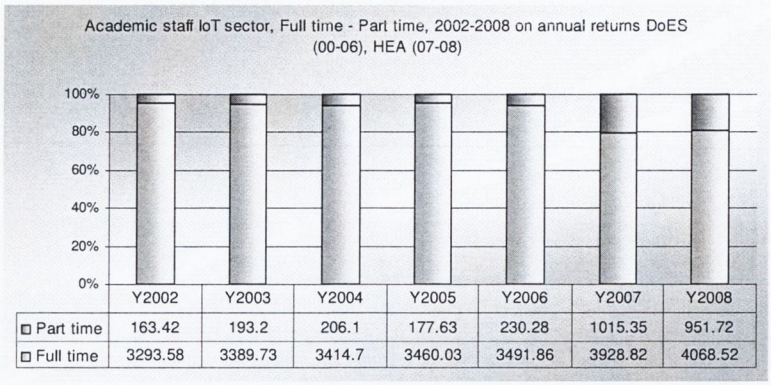
Diagram 32, University sector, full-time - part-time academic staff 2002-08



	Y2002	Y2003	Y2004	Y2005	Y2006	Y2007	Y2008
Part time	223.38	162.77	165.88	195.58	195.78	257	440.05
Full time	3426.82	3491	3626.19	3809.75	3883.26	3966	4108.44

[169] The IoT sector submitted annual staff returns to the DoES until 2007, thereafter submissions were sent to the HEA.

Diagram 33, IoT sector, full-time - part-time, academic staff, 2002-08



	Y2002	Y2003	Y2004	Y2005	Y2006	Y2007	Y2008
Part time	163.42	193.2	206.1	177.63	230.28	1015.35	951.72
Full time	3293.58	3389.73	3414.7	3460.03	3491.86	3928.82	4068.52

This data suggests that both sectors have recorded an increase in full-time staff from 2002-2008. The university sector, increased by 681.62 full-time staff, whereas the IoT sector, increased by 774.94 full-time staff. There was also a comparative increase in the number of part-time staff employed. Using percentages it can be seen that part-time academic staff accounted for 6% of academic staff in the university sector in 2002 and that this increased to 9% in 2008. Whereas the IoT sector seems to display a more dramatic increase, in 2002 4% of academic staff were part-time while in 2008 over 19% of academic staff were part-time. The increase seems to be most significant between 2006 and 2007 where there is a jump of 15%. This fact highlights the different recording procedures utilised by the DoES and the HEA. In terms of casualisation, there seems to be a mild trend in the university sector, an increase of 3% in 2002 to 2008. However, the IoT sector displays a more significant trend toward casualisation with a 15% increase from 2002-2008. In the IoT sector in 2008 nearly one in every five academic staff held some kind of part-time contract whereas in 2002 one in every 25 held part-time contracts. However, while these data identify a trend toward casualisation in both sectors, caution has to be taken as sector data are being utilised. These data give an average result and do not identify whether some IHE are moving faster towards casualisation than others. Institutions have gradually moved to rely more on utilising part-time employment contracts for new staff in order to remain cost efficient. The following statement sought to explore this, '*More casual (part-time) contracts are needed to enhance the institution's ability to respond to change*'. While there was

strong opposition to this statement 45.3% (n=153) disagreeing, there was also a substantial amount of support also at with 34.9% (n=116) agreeing and 12.6% saying don't know. This result suggests that respondents are not in favour of institutions utilising part-time staff as cost-saving mechanisms. However, when the result is disaggregated some interesting differences emerged in gender 54% (n=81) of males disagreed compared to 42% (n=70) of females. There was difference in employment contract 47% (n=107) of full-time staff disagree compared to 51% (n=45) of not-fulltime staff, additionally, managers were more in favour of the statement so that 58.82% (n=10) of managers and 41.66% (n=5) of senior managers agreed.

Table 76, Part-time contract and employment role

More causal (part time) contracts are needed to enhance the institution's ability to respond to change * Categorise your present employment role from the following list Crosstabulation

Count

		Categorise your present employment role from the following list					
		Academic	Researcher	Manager	Senior manager	Other	Total
More causal (part time) contracts are needed to enhance the institution's ability to respond to change	Agree	90	10	10	5	1	116
	Disagree	130	13	4	6	0	153
	Don't know	33	4	3	1	2	43
	Other	6	0	0	0	0	6
Total		259	27	17	12	3	318

The text data provided further insights into respondents' views on part-time work. Serious concerns were expressed in relation to part-time contract holders being abused, exploited, disempowered and a form of short-termism. One comment stated:

> This leads to a two-tiered system whereby part-time staff get all the unpopular hours like evening and weekends which permanent members of staff tend to shy away from. The part-time staff where I work often feel their efforts are not recognised and that they have no job security.
> (Text data 2009, branch group contract)

In contemporary industrial relations discourse job security has become an issue for critical debate between employers' representative groups and trade unions. This debate is particularly intense when comparisons are made between private sector and public sector employment contracts. The following statement sought opinions on this, '*Staff in the institution where I work has a high degree of job security*'. There was a substantial level of support for this statement with 48.3% (n=163) agreeing. However, there

was a significant percentage of respondents registering disagreement 30.1% (n=123). This result would suggest that respondents have a rather, low sense of job security (less than 50%) feeling secure. This is contrary to the media-promoted perception that all public sector employees have high job security. When the results are cross tabulated with employment type it becomes clear that 65.51% (n=57) of not-fulltime staff do not consider they have job security in contrast to 60.43% (n=139) of full-time staff who consider they have job security. Utilising the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, the difference is statistically significant between the full-time and not full-time staff P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.000, Z=-4.885.

Table 77, Job security and full-time or part-time employment

Staff in the institution where I work have a high degree of job security * Employment contract FT/NotFT Crosstabulation

Count

		Employment contract FT/NotFT		
		1.00	2.00	Total
Staff in the institution where I work have a high degree of job security	Agree	139	21	160
	Disagree	66	57	123
	Don't know	20	8	28
	Other	5	1	6
Total		230	87	317

Key = 1 Full-time, 2 Not full-time

Statistical test 11, Job security full-time and not full-time staff

Staff in the institution where I work have a high degree of job security	
Mann-Whitney U	6799.000
Wilcoxon W	33364.000
Z	-4.885
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

In the text data contributors made a distinction between job security in contract type; part-timers had no security while full-time staff had job security. Some noted that their trade unions were presently taking legal cases in relation to CID. There was considerable concern and anxiety expressed in relation to jobs security, as one respondent stated:

> Feeling less secure in current climate when student places have been cut. (Text data 2009, branch group part-time)

It should, however, be noted that the national partnership agreement *Towards 2016* (2006) has a specific commitment in relation to the

university sector which allows for increased recruitment of part-time and atypical workers, stating:

> These needs may be met in some cases by voluntary arrangements and flexible working or, where this does not adequately meet the need, by the recruitment of staff on the basis of part-time working or atypical work patterns.
> (Towards 2016, 2006, p132)

National partnership agreements set an agenda for the reform and restructuring of the organisation of work both in the private and public sectors, specifically seeking that workers be more flexible in their work practices. In order to gauge opinion on this agenda the following statement was posed, '*National Agreements restrict the development of new employment practices in IHE*'. In response 47.2% (n=149) of respondents recorded a don't know, while those who agreed and who disagreed tied at 25.3% (n=85, n=80) respectively. When the results are disaggregated into employment roles, however, it seems that academics are the most undecided group with 47.26% (n=121) saying don't know, while managers are the most supportive of this statement with 66.66% (n=12) agreeing.

Table 78, National agreements and employment role

National Agreements restrict the development of new employment practices in Higher Education Institutes * Categorise your present employment role from the following list Crosstabulation

Count

		Categorise your present employment role from the following list					
		Academic	Researcher	Manager	Senior manager	Other	Total
National Agreements restrict the development of new employment practices in Higher Education Institutes	Agree	64	5	12	3	1	85
	Disagree	70	3	3	4	0	80
	Don't know	121	18	3	5	2	149
	Other	1	1	0	0	0	2
Total		256	27	18	12	3	316

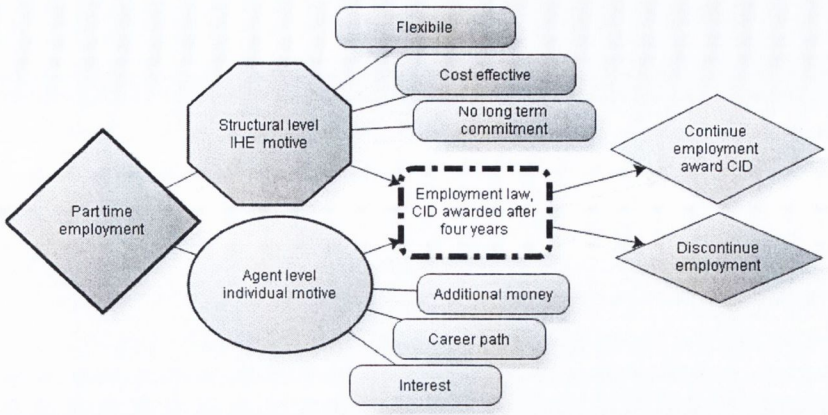
Although the text data sought to look at some other types of concerns, contributors considered that conditions of employment would be much worse without national agreements. Some questioned whether national agreements were a mechanism for unions to safeguard their members' positions. One respondent posed the question, 'Are they not history now? The present debates about the Corke Park Proposals would suggest national agreements have not gone away yet. Another important point to consider about part-time work is that not all part-time workers in IHE

consider this work a career. A considerable number hold down jobs in other sectors, they may be self-employed or in some cases, they can be retired. Indeed in the data narrative several cases were mentioned where retired academics were employed as part-time workers. One quote from a lecturer in the university sector captures this phenomenon, stating:

> I think people always retain their links here. I don't think you ever leave this place. It's not a sort of thank you and goodbye. People still are connected but it's usually around part-time lecturing or part-time research or part-time supervision so they still carry on. There's nothing formal around, I think it just happens. A lot of the stuff here just happens through you know custom and practice and tradition and not through the codification of what it is that we do (laugh).
> (Lecturer university sector, Interview data 2009, branch group retirement)

An institute may re-employ a retired academic staff member to work part-time, teaching or researching and claiming to do this because of expediency, cost-effectiveness or the expertise of the retiree. However, this is a rather false economy in the long-term. This type of strategy does not allow new people to enter the profession. It also undermines the advancement of the discipline as new staff can contribute new ideas. Part-time employment is a widely used employment option, IHE utilise part-time employment because it offers flexibility, is cost-effective and provides for no long term employment commitment. The schematic in Diagram 34 depicts this, showing the possible motives for both the IHE and the individual. However, under employment law a decision must be made in year four whether to discontinue employment or award the part-time staff member a CID contract.

Diagram 34, Part-time employment rational (IHE, individual)



Career performance (subordinate cluster 2)

Increasing worker productivity has been a key theme throughout social partnership negotiations. While the national agreements sought concessions from workers in flexible work practices and rationalisation of work practices, the use of modern technologies to increase effectiveness and efficiencies, there was still a lack of agreement around management controlled performance measures. However, in *Partnership 2000* the management of staff performance became a solid commitment, *'The key to achieving these goals is the implementation of an effective performance management process'* (2000, p58). This created an opportunity for managers to introduce performance measures, although the exact mechanism for these performance measures was still under consideration. Key shift in the performance agenda can be identified in Section 10.13, where the concept of performance development was strengthened by the social partners agreeing a system to manage 'underperformance'.

Managing underperformance was significantly strengthen in *Sustaining Progress* (2003, p102) Section 22.7 where the Parties agree to, '*widen the range of disciplinary sanctions and to have a fuller range of sanctions available in serious cases of underperformance*' (2003, p102). Disciplinary sanctions were now firmly locked into performance systems. *Sustaining Progress* (2003) was the 'performance manifesto' of the social partnership process, it gave birth to the national Performance Verification Group which had the power to refuse agreed pay increases if they

considered there was sufficient evidence that performance indicators where not achieved at individual IHE or school level. Also the National Centre for Partnership and Performance (2003, p69) was firmly embedded in the document. The performance doctrine now had structures, policy, procedures and sanctions. The IoT sector was to be the testing ground for the introduction of PMDS. The commitment agreed in Section 24.3 stated, '*Institutes will introduce a structured system of performance management and development in line with the HEA sector to ensure alignment of performance and effort with organisational goals and strategies*' (2003, p112). During the interview stage of this research the notion of under-performing staff came up as an issue. The following statement sought to gain respondents opinion on this, '*IHE need to introduce a measure to deal with underperforming staff, this includes where necessary the authority to suspend or terminate an employee's contract'*. While 64.8% (n=203) of respondents agreed, only 15.6% (n=50) disagreed. When the results are disaggregated and employment role is examined it is evident that there is support for this statement across all categories. This result indicates that the respondents are agreeable to the notion of terminating the employment contract of a staff member who is considered to be under performing.

Table 79, Underperforming and employment role

Higher Education Institutes need to introduce a measure to deal with underperforming staff, this includes where necessary the authority to suspend or terminate an employee's contract * Categorise your present employment role from the following list Crosstabulation

		Categorise your present employment role from the following list					Total
		Academic	Researcher	Manager	Senior manager	Other	Academic
Higher Education Institutes need to introduce a measure to deal with underperforming staff, this includes where necessary the authority to suspend or terminate an employee's contract	Agree	158	17	15	10	3	203
	Disagree	44	3	2	1	0	50
	Don't know	33	4	0	1	0	38
	Other	10	0	0	0	0	10
Total		245	24	17	12	3	301

While there was some support within the text data for the introduction of performance measures there were also some calls for caution. The minority of supporters suggested the 'sooner the better' this type of system was introduced to deal with under-performing staff. However, the majority position was that while this could be considered, there was an absolute necessity for stringent safeguards to be put in place first to

protect staff from unjust claims. One respondent captured the general position, stating:

> This is a tricky one, it's not something I'd agree to lightly, but then again, I can easily think of people who simply abuse the trust vested in them and whose continued presence drag down the work of others. So it might be that I'd agree, subject to very stringent safeguards.
> (Text data 2009, branch group performance)

In can be argued that the implementation of mechanisms to deal with under-performing staff has been gradually introduced through national agreements and that PMDS is the fore-runner of performance-based work. The development of PMDS systems went out for tender in 2003 and a system was gradually implemented from 2004 onwards. In relation to PMDS a senior TUI officers stated:

> PMDS is a similar nature type of thing. Again because it's imposed and because there's a perceived threat coming from these things, there's a resistance to it and I mean it's a curious that while much during the time when PMDS was being imposed on the TUI, on its lecturers they were one or two pockets of places where people were discussing on a reasonably progressive way with their own management and say well wouldn't it be a good idea if we as lecturers were able to, now have a discussion with our heads of department in a positive, now let's see how that went and let's try something other and let's agree objectives and let's see how they went. And wouldn't that be a good idea to do it. That's PMDS and that was a staff request coming to management which you know goes to what my saying is had it been handled better and handled in a proper partnership manner then it could have been introduced in a much more positive way to the benefit of all. Whereas the adversarial way that it's being done, you want us to do it, okay, if you insist we do it right but it'll be minimalist and grudging.
> (Senior TUI officer, Interview data branch group performance)

While in the interview data there is support for the introduction and implementation of PMDS, there were several concerns expressed about the time commitment needed to hold PMDS staff meetings. Managers' workloads have increased dramatically. If they have a large number of PMDS meetings to organise this while others questioned the process and the outcomes was this just a tick-the-box exercise or would there be tangible resources attached to goals. As one supporter stated:

> But I think a certain number of staff are definitely doing. It's the tick box exercise. We have to go through, you know, starting off your PMDS interviews and Aidan it's great now, we have to go through this because we have to fill in this form and send it back now. They're looking for it back. That's great now. You're fine with that. Tick, tick, tick and send it back. Well then I'm not surprised you don't achieve a great deal if you start with that approach and I think there will be a certain amount of that approach in the sector despite the fact that there's been numerous days training given in how to implement and what we should be trying to achieve.
> (Acting head of department, IoT sector, Interview data 2007, branch group performance)

However, not all academics were in agreement with the introduction of PMDS, some suggested that it had the potential to reduce the traditional nature of collegiality which existed between academic managers and academic staff in the sector. Others claimed that it was the first stage in the introduction of a performance related pay (PRP) system. Concern was also raised about the idea of bringing business practices into education, questioning whether examination results will be used as part of a performance evaluation of a lecturer. One lecturer stated:

> They try to put it into small print and to disregard that and so on but the act of professional commitment is the strongest, is the most important factor and it tends to, this whole PMDS with performance-related pay further down the road as recommended in the Fitzpatrick report and you know generally favoured by institutions such as the OECD and you know that tends to undermine the whole collegiality principle and to impose a sort of business model and that came through. That came through those agreements. Now I suppose the semesterisation thing, you know, I suppose that's the biggest that has actually, well I would say two of the biggest things that affect teaching is the semesterisation thing and also the pressure on institutes to economic pressure on institutes to attract and retain students, right, you know, has seriously affect the examining function. I would say that it has affected the examining function. Now that thing didn't come except in so far as when you're operating in an atmosphere of PMDS, when you're operating in a atmosphere of PMDS and when you have a significant number of casually employed lecturers.
> (Lecturer IoT sector, Interview data 2006, branch group performance)

In order to gauge opinion on PBP the following statement was posed: '*A performance-based pay system is needed for all IHE*'. There was a considerable response registered against this statement with 43.8%

(n=150) disagreeing and 30.6% (n=102) agreeing. By crosstabulation of the statement with employment role it is evident that the management categories were more in favour of PBP, 66.6% (n=12) of managers and 41.6% (n=5) of senior mangers agree while academic staff registered the highest opposition at 50.3% (n=130) saying disagree. In addition, utilising the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, the difference is statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.194, Z=-1.298.

Table 80, PBP and employment role

A performance based pay system is needed for all Higher Education Institutes * Categorise your present employment role from the following list Crosstabulation

Count

		Categorise your present employment role from the following list					
		Academic	Researcher	Manager	Senior manager	Other	Total
A performance based pay system is needed for all Higher Education Institutes	Agree	74	10	12	5	1	102
	Disagree	130	11	4	4	1	150
	Don't know	40	5	2	3	1	51
	Other	14	0	0	0	0	14
Total		258	26	18	12	3	317

Statistical test 12, Performance based pay and HE sectors.

A performance based pay system is needed for all IHE	
Mann-Whitney U	8858.000
Wilcoxon W	18728.000
Z	-1.298
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.194

From the numerous contributions made in the text data three general categories of comments where constructed, these were:

1) Those that where supportive of the statement, but questioning what type of what metric would be used.
2) Those that where strongly against the statement, this type of mechanism is open to abuse and could be utilized to bully staff.
3) Those that said it was already in place (progression for AL's and merit bar)

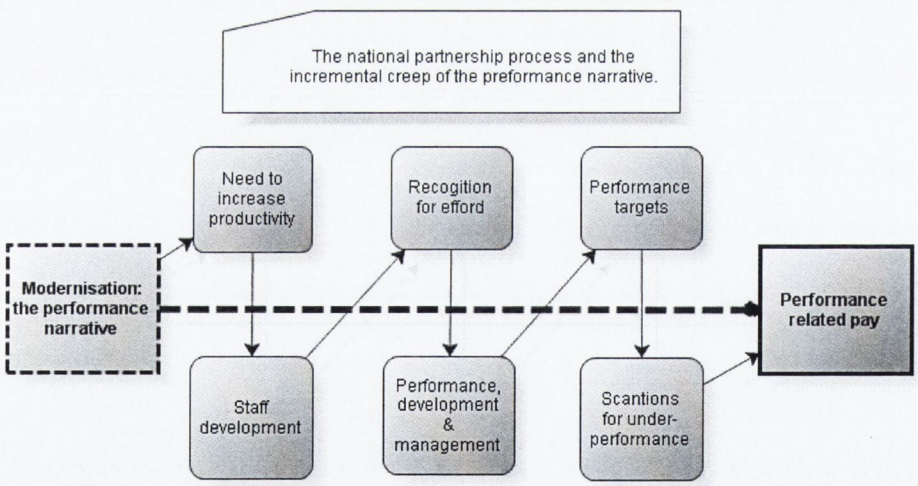
One respondent stated:

> How do you measure objectively performance in public institutions? It may be subject to too-much subjectivity and managers' personal views. So, even if I could agree on the principle, I would strongly disagree at a practical level.
> (Text data 2009, branch group performance)

This 'performance' narrative is firmly embedded in the Irish government's modernisation agenda: this is evident from the agreed text in national

partnership agreements. The performance narrative evolved from a drive for increased productivity and the needs of the economy (*PCW 1998*), then moved to focus on developing staff skills through training initiatives (*Partnership 2000*), advancing to the development of measurement systems that could give recognition to staff for their performance (*Sustaining Progress 2003*). This was extended further in the partnership agreement *Towards 2016* (2005) which incorporates disciplinary sanctions and performance targets into the performance measurement and development system. The natural evolution of this performance discourse which is essentially a business narrative, is the introduction of a performance-related pay system. Diagram 35 illustrates the key milestones in the evolution of the performance discourse embedded by the government modernisation in the agenda for both civil and public sector employees. It can be argued that setting performance targets is the present stage of this evolution process. However, if the Corke Park proposal is accepted then PRP will become a reality.

Diagram 35, The evolving performance narrative



Career promotion (sub-cluster 2.1)

From the data, career promotion opportunities are discussed in the criteria used for promotion and the rotation of posts and employment structures which relate to promotion. Particular attention was directed towards the criteria utilised to judge progression from assistant lecturer (AL) to lecturer (L) in the IoT sector, while in the university sector the term used

was crossing the 'merit bar'. Consideration was also given to the procedures that apply to the rotation of academic posts, such as heads of departments and heads of school. While national partnership agreements have specific items and commitments relating to promotion (unit should be merit based with an open pool etc.) these are mainly targeted at the Civil Service. However, the PCW agreement of 1998 contained a restructuring commitment in the establishment of a new grade of academic staff in the IoT sector, this grade was called AL. The AL grade had an eight point scale after which staff could apply for progression onto the lecturer grade. However, the interpretation of the original PCW agreement seems to differ from IoT to IoT with some institutes operating very liberal progression criteria, while others have rather restrictive criteria. One example of restrictive IoT progression criteria is presented below:

> We do have a Progression Panel which I chair and sometimes we're disappointed as an institute that somebody doesn't seem to have done the things that we think they should have done. For instance if I just give you an example where somebody who has been here five or six years and they have never written anything, they've never published anything, they've never written anything or they've never, they haven't undertaken or completed any higher qualification other than the bachelors degree or whatever they came in on and that's a disappointment because our regulations to progression say they must have at least a masters degree.
> (Director, IoT sector, Interview data 2008, branch group criteria)

One of the main concerns academic staff in the IoT sector have with the progression criteria is that research activities and, particularly, research output is given so much more weight over teaching and scholarship. Several interview participants have noted that academics hired to carry out lecturing and teaching are been refused progression because the progression panels in their institutes do not consider the research activities of the staff members to be sufficient. However, research weighting is not just confined to progression in the IoT sector. Research output has become a prominent assessment measure utilised by interview panels during the selection and promotion process. Indeed there was a strong narrative in the interview data that expressed concern about the lack of recognition

given to teaching in comparison to research. The follow examples highlight this:

> What I mean by that is that the theory is that teaching performance now carries as much kudos in promotional opportunities and so on as research but not too many people believe that in practice and one of the reasons is that there really is very little standardised, measurable, if you want to put it that way of teaching performance.
> (Prof. university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group criteria)

While the first comment raises concerns about the equal weighting of teaching and research activities for promotions, as the second comments states that research activities take prominence:

> It would cover as I said the administration, the teaching, the research and so forth. What will tend to happen though is that I mentioned about the fellowship and quite clearly in the event that if someone is going for promotion then their research activity is scrutinised.
> (Associate prof. university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group promotion)

It would seem as institutions endeavour to build research capacity by encouraging staff to become research active, but they are also utilising the appointment process to attract experinced researchers, and giving greater weight to research during the selection process. The following statement sought to gauge opinion on this, '*In my institution during the selection process for new appointments or promotions, research achievements gain a higher score over teaching achievements*'. A substatnial precentage of respondents 39.4% (n=129) agreed and only 16.9% (n=63) disagreed while 37.5% (n=126) said don't know. This result supports the assumption that research actives receive higher marks during interviews and promotions when compared to marks that are attributed to teaching and other activities. Interestingly, when the result is disaggregated and employment role is considered it is observable that nearly all categories support the statement academics 41.7% (n=109), researchers 40.7% (n=11), senior managers 49.9% (n=6). The only category that disagree is managers at 29.4% (n=5). However, at this stage it is worth noting that senior managers set the marking criteria for interview panels.

Table 81, Research weighting and employment role

In my institution during the selection process for new appointments or promotions, research achievements gain a higher score over teaching achievements * Categorise your present employment role from the following list Crosstabulation

Count

		Categorise your present employment role from the following list					
		Academic	Researcher	Manager	Senior manager	Other	Total
In my institution during the selection process for new appointments or promotions, research achievements gain a higher score over teaching achievements	Agree	109	11	3	6	0	129
	Disagree	49	4	5	5	0	63
	Don't know	101	12	9	1	3	126
	Other	2	0	0	0	0	2
Total		261	27	17	12	3	320

The text data is equally supportive of the statement, although some further insights are gained. While some contributors noted that extra weighting was given to research, they also pointed out that this descision could be based on the discipline area. One respondent made an interesting point. Even if teaching and research are treated equally, those with more research activities will maintain an advantage:

> Equal merit is given to both. However this advantages those who have been research active, as points are awarded in the 'teaching' category based on level of qualification and years experience rather than use of innovative teaching practises etc.
> (Text data 2009, branch group promotion)

The main progression point for academic staff in the university sector is the merit bar. The assessment process to ascertain whether an academic staff member can cross the merit bar usually occurs at points 8 to 10 of the staff salary scale. Crossing the merit bar is not an automatic process. A review panel is formed to evaluate the staff member's teaching, research and other activities that may have relevance. One participant from the university sector provided some details on this process and noted that some issues relating to the promotion procedures which apply to other senior academic grades, stating:

> The research and the scholarship if I can move onto them it's very hard in (named university) to get promotion. When you join here as a member of staff on the lecture scale there's a merit bar about the twelfth or thirteenth increment and I think it's a sixteen increment scale and if you have not shown that you have engaged actively in three things, you have to be involved in teaching. You have to be involved in research and you have to be involved in the wider, your own departmental community and the wider college community through administration and whatever then your chance of getting over the bar is slim. Your

> chances of getting promotion to senior lecturer are slimmer still and your chance of getting promoted to associate professor if you don't is non-existent.
> (Associate prof., university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group promotion)

While decisions on whether a member of staff progresses to lecturer grade or crosses the merit bar are generally made by senior academics or managers, there is another type of promotion in the university sector called rotation, where academic staff vote for the person they consider to be the most suitable candidate. In general, senior management type posts are rotated such as heads of school. The term served in these elected posts usually lasts for up to five years, a candidate may serve for two terms if successfully re-elected. In the IoT sector rotation does not seem to be in operation, although the expanded use of 'acting posts' could be considered a form of short term placements in management roles (duration varies between six months and several years). There was however, support for the notion of rotation expressed by some in the IoT sectors. As one participant stated:

> On the career side it is a feature of (named IoT) that we make appointment, up to now we've made appointments through what we call structured posts, head of department, head of school and faculty director. We've made these as lifetime appointments. I think that's a mistake. I think we should really get ourselves out of that onto some system of rotation. It's not simple because there are pension's rights and questions of whether or not people would be attracted to come into (named IoT) for a five year appointment or would they decide, you know that's too risky. I'd better stay where I am. But I would like to see more rotation if we could achieve that. I'd also like to see greater flexibility to reward people with higher salaries without them becoming managers, without them going into a head of school position or something like that. (Director, IoT sector, Interview data 2008, branch group rotation)

In HE there are numerous types of promotional opportunities, some are based on remuneration, and others are related to management function while some are more about academic status and prestige. However, in order to ascertain whether there was a clear career path the following statement was posed '*The career structure in my institution provides for promotional opportunities*'. A majority 44.1% (n=167) recorded their disagreement with this statement, while 37.5% (n=127) agreed. When the

result is crosstabulated with employment role it is evident that all categories except one were opposed to the statement, senior managers support the statement at 58.33% (n=7).

Table 82, Career structure and employment role

The career structure in my institution provides for promotional opportunities * Categorise your present employment role from the following list Crosstabulation

Count

		Categorise your present employment role from the following list					
		Academic	Researcher	Manager	Senior manager	Other	Total
The career structure in my institution provides for promotional opportunities	Agree	109	8	2	7	1	127
	Disagree	130	17	15	3	2	167
	Don't know	19	2	0	2	0	23
	Other	2	0	1	0	0	3
Total		260	27	18	12	3	320

In the text data, concern was expressed about the limited number of promotional posts that become available. As one detailed contribution stated:

> 15 senior lecturer positions become available every 2 years. The bar should be clearly defined and anyone reaching the bar should be promoted. The current system in (named university) results in unnecessary competition between colleagues (rather, than collaboration) and leaves staff dissatisfied, waiting 2 years for the next opportunity. Career development process in engineering is completely inadequate.
> (Text data 2009, branch group mid-career)

In relation to promotion and, particularly senior academic grades, there is evidence that females are underrepresented at senior management level in institutions. The following statement endeavoured to gain an insight into what respondents thought about this, '*IHE need to introduce a proactive gender policy to increase female participation at senior management level*'. There was a marginal result to this statement with 39.4% (n=126) agreeing, 43% (n=137) saying disagree. When the results was disaggregated and cross-tabulated with gender it became evident males were opposed to this statement by 63.33% (n=95) whereas, females agreed with the statement by 58.64% (n=95). In addition, utilising the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, the difference is statistically significant between males and females $P<.05$, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.000, Z=-5.123.

Table 83, Gender policy for management positions and gender

Higher education Institutes need to introduce a proactive gender policy to increase female participation at senior management level (recruitment and selection) * Gender Crosstabulation

Count

		Gender		
		Male	Female	Total
Higher education Institutes need to introduce a proactive gender policy to increase female participation at senior management level (recruitment and selection)	Agree	30	95	125
	Disagree	95	38	133
	Don't know	24	26	50
	Other	1	3	4
Total		150	162	312

Statistical test 13, Proactive gender discrimination, male and female

Higher education Institutes need to introduce a proactive gender policy to increase female participation at senior management level (recruitment and selection)	
Mann-Whitney U	8380.500
Wilcoxon W	21583.500
Z	-5.123
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

There was strong opposition to this statement expressed in the text data, as contributors claimed that all appointments should be merit-based. Some claimed that there were some gender issues that needed to be addressed although this was not the way to go about that. One respondent stated:

> Positive discrimination is ethically no better than negative discrimination. Gender should be left out of the equation entirely. One way of doing this is to mandate 50% male and 50% female voting rights on all candidate interview panels.
> (Text Data 2009, branch group gender)

There is another form of promotion in operation in the university sector in Ireland. Senior positions are offered on a rotation basis, while in the IoT sector these types of positions are made by permanent appointment. The following statement ascertains opinions on this, '*In my institution senior academic management positions should be offered on a rotation bases'*. There was very strong support for this statement 63% (n=196) agreed and 18.2% (n=56) disagree. This result would suggest that there is significant support for the idea of rotation of senior positions. Sectoral analysis demonstrates support for rotation across all sectors in universities 61.2% (n=79), IoT 68.1% (n=90), colleges 62% (n=18).

Table 84, Rotation and HE sector

In my institution senior academic management positions should be offered on a rotation basis * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Total
In my institution senior academic management positions should be offered on a rotation basis	Agree	79	90	18	187
	Disagree	22	26	4	52
	Don't know	24	14	7	45
	Other	4	2	0	6
Total		129	132	29	290

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

While rotation may be confined to the university sector at present, the sectors do share a procedure whereby staff can be elected or nominated to serve on different committees in the IHE. The following statement sought to gauge opinion to this, '*In my institution I have opportunities to move to new roles (elected or on an acting basis)*'. The response difference was marginal 42.6% (n=138) agreeing and 43.8% (n=147) disagreeing. However, when the result was disaggregated it became clear that there were sectoral differences. Utilising the Man-Whitney (non-parametric) test, difference is statistically significant between the university and IoT sectors P<.05, Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.016, Z=-2.404.

Table 85, New roles and HE sector

In my institution I have opportunities to move to new roles (elected or on an acting basis) * HE Sectors Crosstabulation

Count

		HE Sectors			
		1.00	2.00	3.00	Total
In my institution I have opportunities to move to new roles (elected or on an acting basis)	Agree	75	49	11	135
	Disagree	44	81	15	140
	Don't know	15	10	3	28
	Other	2	0	0	2
Total		136	140	29	305

Key, 1=Universities, 2=IoTs, 3=Colleges

Statistical test 14, Opportunities to move to new role and HE sectors

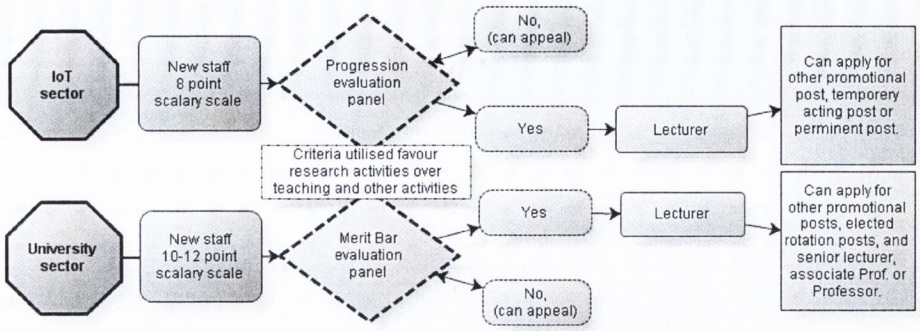
In my institution I have opportunities to move to new roles (elected or on an acting basis). Variable: HE sector	
Mann-Whitney U	8080.500
Wilcoxon W	17396.500
Z	-2.404
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.016

While the university sector respondents supported the statement with 55.14% (n=75) agreeing, the opposite result was evident in both the IoT

sector where 57.85% (n=81) disagree and in the colleges where 51.72% (n=15) disagree. In addition, 49% (n=112) of full-time staff agreed whereas 52% (n=46) of not-fulltime staff disagreed. There was no gender difference with 45% of males and females agreeing. This result suggests that respondents from the university sector seem to have opportunities to participate in different organisational roles while the practice is more restrictive in both the IoT and college sectors. Both progression and promotion can be very emotive issues, particularly in cases where staff have concerns about the fairness of the criteria utilised by managers to make their decisions. From the data there is considerable tension emerging in relation to the high weighting that research receives in comparison to the relatively modest weighting attributed to teaching. Concerns were expressed about this process of valuing research activities more than teaching, which may lead to staff dissatisfaction and undermine the teaching function and mission of IHE. The promotional route for new staff appointed to both the IoT and university sectors is mapped out in Diagram 36. While there are similarities between the two sectors, there are some differences between the number of years new appointees have to serve before they reach the top of the scale and are eligible to apply for progression/promotion to the lecturer grade. However, there seems, to be similarities in criteria utilised to assess the applications case in that research is given a higher score than teaching and other activities. If an applicant is refused he/she have the option to go through an appeal process or contact their relevant trade union and seek advice. Once applicants are approved they move over to the lecturer pay scale. Other potential promotional routes are in the IoT sector acting posts[170] which are temporary posts and permanent posts (all appointments by interview). In the university sector there are rotation posts appointed by staff elections and other posts such as senior lecturer, associate professor and professors.

[170] It could be argued that some IoTs are utilising acting post as both an efficiency measure (cost saving) and as a rotation system. This type of practice has become, very prominent in the DIT where nearly all new appointment are advertised on a acting basis or for 5 years duration.

Diagram 36, Promotion routes for new staff IoT and University sectors



Career retirement (subordinate cluster 3)

The age at which an employee is required to retire varies depending on whether employment was in the private or public sector. The general perception held is that in Ireland the retirement age is 65 years. Although this is not always the case, as some other provisions are made such as that the Garda and fire-fighters the retirement age is 55 years. Judges can work until 72 years old. However, within the public sector in general, (leaving out special agreement Garda, Army etc.) the mandatory retirement age for those who started employment before 2004 is 65 years. Although the minimum retirement age for those who started post 2004 is 65 years old, employees who started work in the public sector after 2004 can be required to continue working after the age of 65. This change in retirement from a mandatory age of 65 to a minimum age of 65 will have a direct effect on newly appointed academic staff in the HE sector. One participant noted that not all countries have the same retirement age policy, stating:

> Well I find in some countries they've now got legislation against ageism and discrimination on the basis of age and therefore in a number of countries now you can't force someone to retire because they happened to turn sixty-five or sixty, whatever the retirement age is. If they're still doing their job well they're allowed to stay on. You can get rid of them on a performance criteria basis
> (Prof. senior officer, UN agency, Interview data 2008, branch group age)

However, while staff in Ireland presently retire from their IHE at 65, this does not mean that all those that retire have no further contact or work relations with their former IHE. Indeed some academics who retire are

invited back into IHE to work on a part-time basis to teach or supervise research or carry out other duties. As one participant noted:

> No, no, not that I know of. There's a no. They do, I suppose in a sense that we're coming up to a number of retirements fairly soon and I think that they will stay as D.Ed. supervisors, PhD supervisors, come back and do part-time teaching.
> (Lecturer, university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group retirement)

While there is a mandatory age for retirement some members of staff seek to retire early from their positions. In order to gauge the level of opinion in relation to this the following statement was posed, '*Mature career academics should have the option to retire early*'. There was over-whelming support recorded for this statement with 84.8% (n=270) agreeing. There was no divergence of opinion when the results were disaggregated by sector or by age. However, the text data did present some additional insights. Some contributors expressed concerns relating to how this would actually work? How would it be funded? Others suggested that there should be an option to retire later. One contributor gave a detailed account that is worth considering:

> But the current system where 40 years service is necessary to receive a full pension is not satisfactory. Unlike secondary and primary school teachers who generally begin full-time employment by 25 years of age, 3rd level academics usually do not get permanent contracts until they are 30-40 due to the requirement for further doctoral and postdoctoral education. This means it is impossible for them to accumulate 40 years for a full pension.
> (Text data 2009, branch group retirement)

Following from the above the next statement was posed, '*Mature career academics should have the option to semi-retire (work part of their hours)*'. There was a very strong response recorded in favour of this statement 87.4% (n=280) agreeing. The text data was supportive. One contributor stated:

> I agree with this statement. Not only should academics on full-time permanent contracts be allowed to change the their contract to part-time (semi-retire) but academics who reach the age of 65 and wish to remain employed on a part-time basis should be provided the facility to do so. For example, they could still get

> credit for their research which should not be wound up by 65 years of age if they wish to continue.
> (Text data 2009, branch group retirement)

While some IHE keep contact with staff who have retired by inviting them to work part-time, other IHE take a slightly different perspective. Some noted that staff nearing retirement may not be as productive as they previously were and may not be willing to take on new tasks. As one contributor stated:

> There are people in two or three years off retirement who would say to me now 'don't be asking me to do anything, I'm getting ready for retirement' (laugh) so I think there's a very keen awareness of staff who are close to retirement and a small number would be reluctant to take on anything new on the basis that they're near to retirement which upset me a bit because they have great experience, huge experience...Those people are invaluable but they're looked upon as oh a burden.
> (Acting head of department, IoT sector, Interview data 2007, branch group attitude)

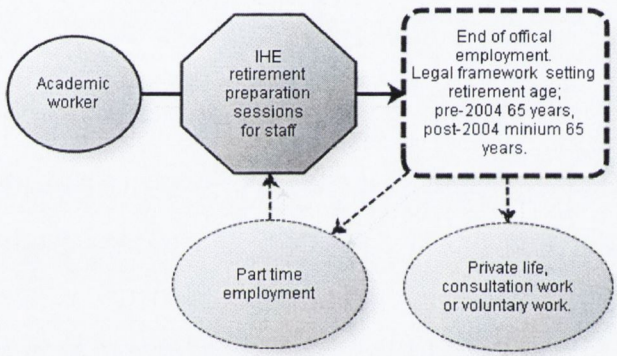
While there may be different perspectives expressed on the performance of staff nearing retirement and the usefulness of maintaining contact with those who retired, there was, however, unanimous agreement that IHE should provide retirement information and preparation sessions for staff nearing retirement. Nearly all participants reported that this was the case in their specific IHE. One contribution captures this:

> They have a structure whereby they run a whole series of seminars in the year during which, what happens is they will make note of everyone who is approaching their sixty-fifty birthday irrespective of what position they are in the college...They will have people in from Revenue. They'll have people in from Social Welfare to talk about rights and so forth. So they do it pretty well. They also then have an active retirement club afterwards do you know, to bring pensioners back in so they seem to do that pretty well so they do provide information.
> (Associate prof. university sector, Interview data 2008, branch group preparation)

It would seem from an analysis of the data that, while mandatory retirement age may vary depending on the country and the legislation in place on the year the persons started employment, the fact that an academic retires from an IHE does not necessary mean he/she looses

contact or employment with the IHE as, in a number of cases, retirees where offered part-time hours. Also participants considered that appropriate information relating to retirement was provided by their IHE, and, in some cases participants noted that there was an active retirement association in their IHE. The retirement procedure is presented in Diagram 37. Academic workers nearing retirement age can avail of IHE retirement preparation sessions. Retirement ages are detailed in legal frameworks but the general age is 65 years. Once someone retires he/she may undertake private pursuits, voluntary work or consultancy work, although in some cases they may have the option of working on a part-time basis in their original IHE.

Diagram 37, Retirement procedure



Summary of T3C

This section sought to provide the reader with an adequate account of data presentation and analysis relevant to T3C. A data analysis hierarchy was outlined, this consisted of a primary cluster termed academic freedom, a secondary cluster called management/IR, and five subordinate clusters termed new career, part-time, performance, promotion and retirement. It was evident from the data that both the university and IoT sectors perceive academic freedom to be an important component of academic employment contracts. However, there where concerns expressed relating to the lack of tenured positions and how this adversely affects academic freedom. There was concern too about the new management style (HRM) which was beginning to emerge. Questions were raised about how this would impact on academic collegiality. In addition, HRM seemed to be

very supportive of new government and national partnership policies, in relation to flexible work practice and performance. Some suggested this type of strategies will lead to casualisation of academic work and the introducing of performance related pay. Concerns was also expressed that research activities were given too-much weight in the judging criteria for new entrants and promotional posts. Finally, there was considerable support for both the notion of early retirement and for IHE to employ retirees on part-time. From the analysis of the data it is evident that there is substantial crossover between the three thematic areas teaching, research and career in the organisation of academic work. While academic work is organised and structured differently in the two main sectors (university and IoT) and the variations within sectors, it is reasonable to argue that academic work consists of a combination of the thematic areas and the identified clusters. At a structural, macro political level, there is a considerable modernisation ideology which is developing policies directed at changing the organisation of academic work. The policy agenda is based on the premise that by reducing public sector funding new efficiencies measures will emerge. IHE have struggled with the both regular annual budget cutbacks and increased student enrolments. In order to manage this pressure IHE began a rationalisation process by reducing both pay and non-pay budgets, organisational restructuring, introducing new labour control management such as HRM and negotiating new contracts of employment. Tangentially some IHE have developed business strategies both to attract funding and to exploit human capital and research activities. This rationalisation strategy needs to consider some questions. Will academic staff remain committed to their work? Will students gain a quality education? Is this rationalisation model sustainable in the long term?

Chapter 9: Conclusion

> The contradictions of higher education become most visible when economic, demographic and ideological forces create a hiatus between aspirations of continuous progress and upward mobility and experience of a world of increased class divisions and ecological constrains.
> (Brown and Clignet 2000, p45)

This thesis critically explored the tensions that arise between higher education policy and its effects on academic work (teaching, research and careers). The three primary aims were to:

- Assess critically the modernisation policy agenda relating to higher education and academic work.
- Explore how the modernisation agenda affects IHE and their organisation of academic labour.
- Describe and evaluate the academic worker's perception and experience of working in IHE in the context of the modernisation agenda.

From the analysis there seemed to be a gap, between 'policy rhetoric and reality' (Tea 2008, p67), this was linked to the dynamic conflict between 'structure' (policy) and 'agency' (academic workers) (Ball 1994, Canaan and Shumar 2007). The strategies that academic workers adopt with reference to the implementation of the modernisation policy agenda were of considerable interest, particularly relating to the organisation of work, control, power, the structural drive for compliance and the resistance strategies of actors. The data comprised of a review of higher education policies from the EU and Ireland from 1999 to 2008, combined with both a series of research interviews with academic workers, managers and critical stakeholders (n=27) and a detailed online survey (n=499). In this concluding chapter the thesis moves to a reflective mode. Considering the research process utilised and the analysed data, the researcher endeavours to ascertain what was learnt about policy, academic work and the research approach.

This concluding chapter is in four sections. The first section focuses on the HE modernisation policy agenda and the changing conditions of academic work relating to the findings. The second section addresses the questions relating to policy development and their effects on IHE, by critically exploring the modernisation policy agenda and analysis of the data. A proposed multi-level policy model (Grix 2004) is presented. This three level policy model was constructed to deal with the structure – agency dynamic referred to throughout this research. The third section provides three evaluation matrices which explore academic workers' understandings and experiences of policy. These evaluation matrices were constructed by analysing the data in the three thematic areas; teaching, research and career. These evaluation matrices categorise the 'claims, concerns and issues' (Guba and Lincoln 1989, p40) of policy makers, institutions and academic workers. Finally, the fourth section provides some reflections and outlines the experience and learning gained from carrying out this research.

HE modernisation policy and academic work

Over the last forty years there has been a significant level of growth in Irish HE. According to White (2001, p247) Ireland has moved to a 'universal'[171] HE system enrolling more the 40% of 18 year olds. This dramatic expansion[172] in participation in HE can be observed by comparing the number of full time students in the HE sector from 1966, (n=20,000) to 2005, (n=140,450) (CSO 2008). This expansion was facilitated at structural level, by policy initiatives that expanded HE provision. For example, in 1960 there were five universities and four colleges of education, whereas, in 1992 there were seven universities, six colleges of higher education and thirteen institutes of technology. The DoES (2008) claimed that in 2006-07 the Irish publicly-funded HE sector employed 14,112 academic/research staff and 6,761 additional staff including managers, administration, technicians, staff in support services

[171] Classification based on Trow's (1973) work, which explored the transition from elite to mass higher education. An elite system enrols under 15% of 18 year olds, a mass system enrols 15%-40%, whereas, a universal systems enrols over 40%.

[172] Heffron (2001, p55) claims 'there has been a twenty-fold increase in the number of university students in the Republic of Ireland from 1900 to 2000'.

etc. In addition McCarthy (2009, p54) stated that public expenditure on education cost €8,641.8 million in 2009, of which €1,813.1 million was distributed to the HE sector. Skilbeck (2001, p24-25) notes that HE expansion has brought the 'forces of modernisation' into education. These include: external monitoring and regulation of productivity, performance, accountability, access, quality, efficiency and technology. It can be argued that the Irish state has pursued a human capital policy agenda, seeking a return on investment made (knowledge production), in order to establish Ireland as a 'knowledge economy'. Interestingly, the survey findings show that 72% (n=268) of respondents did not know if the human capital strategy proposed in the NDP (2008) would contribute towards the creation of a knowledge economy, although 52% (n=192) supported the claim that the EU's Lisbon agenda sought to make education and training more relevant to the world of work.

As the scale of state investment in HE increased questions about 'value-for-money' and 'accountability' emerged (Gleeson, O Donnabháin 2009, pp28-29) and state agencies started to apply pressure on the HE sector to become more accountable and demonstrate relevance. Bloland (1999, p107) notes a similar trend in the US, where different states require universities to 'justify the costs of what they do, how they do it and what results they obtain'. More specifically, Johnsrud (2007, p490) claims, in her presidential address to the Association of the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), that 'faculty work' has lost the 'respect and trust' of the public, particularly as a result of poor quality of teaching, the perceived irrelevance of research and the terms and conditions of academic employment. As the public may be less trustful of education professionals so according to the survey's findings, 55% (n=169) of respondents do not trust their institutions' senior managers.

As stated previously (see chapters 2-3) Irish government policy is incrementally advocating modernisation of teaching, research and the academic career structure. Barrett (2001, p83) argues that lecturing and research in the universities has been 'under attack' by policy makers since

the 1990s. The accumulation of this attack was embedded in sections of the 1997 Universities Act which made provision for external interference in academic matters. For example, this could be done by the appointment of external persons to IHE governing bodies (section 2), and quality assurance review teams (section 35). Skilbeck (2001, p102) notes that there seems to be a 'crisis of trust' between the state and university sector. The state wants the university sector to be more transparent, accountable and relevant to the needs of the economy and society. Within a European context Neave (1988) noted the emergence of the 'evaluative state', where governments seek to direct by imposing quality criteria and market practices. Power (1999, p98) claims that, from the mid 1980s, 'a new theology of quality, efficiency and enterprise' emerged in the UK. This opened the way for external agencies to audit and verify IHE activities such as teaching, research and provision of other services. From the survey findings it emerges that 67% (n=248) of respondents agreed that quality assurance monitoring helped to maintain academic standards, 88% (n=330) of respondents claimed that programme development was enhanced by collaboration with external bodies and 67% (n=234) agreed there was a need for monitoring of the quality of research activities.

Mitchell (2001, p38) agrees that government policies are intruding into university life, in the form of quality assurance, financial monitoring and restrictions on budgetary management. The main rationale for this is that universities are considered 'powerhouses of knowledge-based economy', 'powerhouses' that produce graduates who have the skills, capabilities and capacity to 'exploit economic potential' in the interests of industry and government. Kelly (2001, p19) contends that the function of the contemporary university has shifted, from the provision of a broad liberal education, to narrow 'vocationalism'. As such, policy makers and industry leaders in pursuit of the knowledge economy have sought to make programmes, teaching and research more career-oriented and relevant to economic needs. From the survey findings it emerged that, 73% (n=274) of respondents agreed that the content of programmes should be relevant to the world of work. However, only 48% (n= 165) of

respondents disagreed with the claim that research should be relevant to enterprise and industry and in addition, 76% (n=259) preferred that research make a contribution to the needs of society. Sorlin and Vessuri (2007) note that there are tensions among policy makers, academics and other interested groups relating to whether HE should be contributing towards the construction of a 'knowledge society' or a 'knowledge economy'. By contrast, the knowledge society focuses on the social, the public good and fairness, whereas, the idea of a knowledge economy puts the focus on the economic imperative, private good and competition. Scott (2006, p23) claims that the knowledge society is posing 'complex issues' for HE in the USA, particularly in the understanding of each university's 'research mission' and 'public service'. Public service, making research available to society was a common commitment of graduate schools in the US until WWII, thereafter, research began to focus on military technologies and commercial endeavours. Scott (2006) claims that during the 1980s both government policy and investment from industry directed the public service mission toward the commercialisation of knowledge. Universities as the powerhouses of knowledge production were gradually moving away from basic or blue-skies research toward applied research. Research as knowledge production, became commodified.[173] Universities opened knowledge transfer offices to copyright knowledge through intellectual property[174] rights and exploit the commercialisation of research by working in partnership with industry or establishing campus companies. From the thesis survey findings it emerges that 39% (n=135) of respondents agreed that their institutions provide supports for the commercialisation of research.

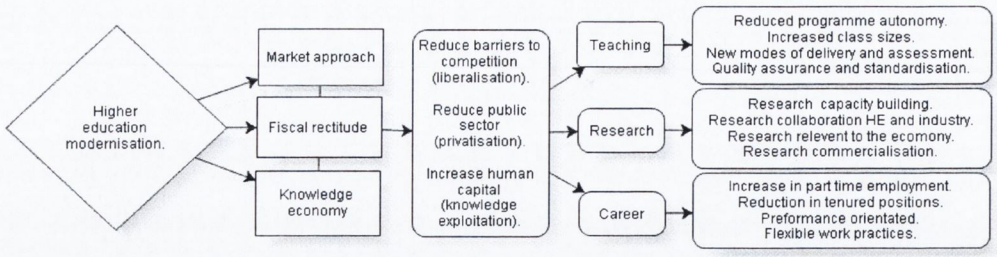
Zeleza (2007, p84) argues that the 'restructuring of the production of knowledge' (commodification), combined with capitalist globalisation imposed a market-driven ideology and a neoliberal approach to education, and to society in general. This neoliberal modernisation agenda, as

[173] Canaan and Shumar (2007, p4) note that higher education is subject to two primary external forces, marketisation and commodification. They define commodification as 'the process of turning social goods and processes into commodities'.

[174] O'Neill (2008,p77) claims the policy and procedures relating to intellectual property rights in Ireland needs an urgent overhaul as it presently does not provide adequate protection for inventors and scientists.

pursued by transnational organisations such as the WTO, OECD, WB, IMF, advocates the liberalisation of markets, services and the privatisation of the public sector. Nairn and Higgins (2007) claim that the New Zealand government, during the 1990s, commenced structural reformation of the education system, utilising a neoliberal approach. Education was realigned to the norms of the market. This neoliberal modernisation policy approach contains two central strategies, (1) establishing customer (student) choice and (2) increased competition. Maassen and Cloete (2004) identify a shift in Australian HE policy during the 1990s so that the government sought to reduce public expenditure on education by stimulating private investment. It can be argued that this shift began the process of moving HE from a public good to a private good. Bansel and Davies (2007, p248) argue that the emergence of neoliberal polices in Australia, during the 1990s, reduced the 'administrative state' which had a focus on 'human well-being', into 'state that gives power to global corporations and installs apparatuses and knowledge through which people are reconfigured as productive economic entrepreneurs of their own lives'. Hill (2005) claims that the neoliberal policy modernisation agenda in the UK education system is premised on several factors, such as deregulation and centralisation, NPM, fiscal regimes, commercialisation, charging of fees, outsourcing services, privatisation, wage restriction and the control of labour. In addition, other key themes in the neoliberal doctrine are the promotion of market values, citizens' right to choice, individualisation of society and increased demand for efficiency and productivity. The OECD's (2005) review of HE in Ireland advocated reform by adopting a market-oriented approach. The report's recommendations correlate with the main strands of neoliberalism. Hogan (2005) critiqued the OECD's recommendations, claiming that they focused on economic goals and down-played the importance of the social contribution that HE made to society. In addition, McDonagh (2005) has suggested, while noting the need for reform of the university sector, that reform must have an academic focus rather than follow a business model approach. He expresses fear that the current strategy could lead to economic wealth but cultural deprivation. A summary of the main strands of the neoliberal

modernisation agenda relating to HE, are illustrated in the following diagram.



The modernisation policy agenda has impacted on the terms and conditions of academic work in general and specifically teaching, research and careers. Deem et al (2007, p36) note that the conditions of employment of academic workers, in the publicly funded HE sector, have changed over the last decade, with the introduction of 'neo-technocratic managerialism'. This has led to the promotion of performative measures, which have an emphasis on efficiency, monitoring, and pay restrictions. From the survey findings it emerges that 47% (n=150) of respondents did not agree with the introduction of performance-based pay and 70% (n=224) rejected the notion that individual IHE should have the power to set salary levels.

Within the 'markets in education' (Marginson 1997, Lauder and Hughes 1999) ideology, a new logic of the organisation of work has emerged. The premise informing this is that a need exists to reform work practices, procedures and structures in order to extract more value-for-money (Jamieson and Naidoo 2008) from the knowledge production process. This new logic advocates the division of academic labour into separate, specialised categorises of work such as, 'teaching, research and administration' (Canaan and Schumer 2008, p6). Further, within these three categories, new employment contracts are emerging, mainly, non-tenured, casual, part-time and fixed-term employment. Canaan and Schumer (2008, p7) note, from a US perspective, that post-graduates are the new source of 'cheap labour' utilised as functional workers in HE laboratories and classrooms. Although, Bleiklie et al's (2001) research, which focused on Norwegian universities, suggests that, 'graduate

education' is the route to an academic career, graduates are increasingly employed by the universities where they studied so that the universities operate a form of self reproduction.

In an Irish context, the current findings suggest, the IHE are employing a larger percentage of casual, part-time academic workers in comparison to whole time tenured positions. The rationale for this can be located in short-term, cost savings measures, as it is cheaper to employ a causal, part-time worker compared to the long-term commitment of employing a tenured person. It can be argued, however, that this efficiency doctrine has the effect of making budget savings by reducing the status and job security of academic labour through casualisation of labour. Interestingly, the survey findings show that 48% (n=153) of respondents disagreed with the recruitment of more causal staff. Further, only 50% (n=162) of respondents considered they had good job security. Hill (2005) claims that the neoliberalisation of public sector education is affecting teachers' and academics' conditions of employment by imposing casualisation, lower salaries and increasing surveillance of workers, and demanding performance measures and seeking to reduce the relevance of trade union representation. In general, in Irish IHE HRM departments deal with these issues. However, the survey findings show that, 45% (n=137) of respondents claim HRM did not improve industrial relations and 81% (n=244) claimed that HRM policies and procedures would not dissuade them from remaining in trade union. Deem et al (2007) claim that managerialist practices are leading to increased tensions and divisions within the university, between full time, tenured staff and part-time, casual staff and the value and status of teaching, compared to research, favours the latter as the mission of the university is dominated by the market approach, in contrast to liberal academic values.

These divisions and tensions escalate as the market discourse assumes a dominant position in the HE sector. Limond (2008, p409) strikes a cautionary note, claiming that 'market-speak' and its change agenda may undermine the very essence of the university, the quest for truth without

fear or favour, so that as such 'the ability to speak truth unto power'[175] is lost. The NPM approach endeavours to restrict the professional autonomy of academics by creating employment insecurity through casualisation and reduction in tenured positions and by introducing new control mechanisms such as quality assurance, performance indicators and performance related pay. In addition, the autonomy of the academic worker is restricted further by new teaching and learning discourses such as the insistences on learning outcomes and the unitisation and standardisation of programmes and awards through national qualifications frameworks. External monitoring of academic work is evident in public and political discourses. For example, Foley (2010) reports that Irish politicians and policy makers are asking what academics actually do and how many hours they work? They demand to know what amount of their time is distributed to teaching, research and administrative duties. Courts' (2006, p174) analysed data in the UK[176] and suggests that academic work has 'intensified'. The rise of student numbers has led to an increased workload in seminar/lecture preparation, marking of students' work, feed-back to students and administrative work. The average number of hours worked per week has risen from 40.5 in 1962 to 54.8 in 1994. The percentage of time designated to different academic functions has also changed. In 1992 the time distribution was 34% to teaching, 28% to research and 11% to administration, whereas, in 1994, the time distribution was 35% to teaching, 20% to research and 33% to administration.

McNay claims that the substantial rise in administrative duties can be located in the increased bureaucratisation of academic work and the new 'audit explosion'. Interestingly, it emerges from the survey findings that 58% (n=186) of respondents considered their present workloads were manageable and 48% (n=184) considered they had enough time to give students individual support and feedback. But, nonetheless, there is

[175] McNay (2006, p164) reports that a 2004, UK based, survey of academic staff (n=300) found that 79% agreed that, 'there is fear of sanctions against those who speak truth to power'. Further, the research suggests that in IHE where corporate style management approaches are applied, cultures of 'bully and blame' can emerge.

[176] Court compared data from the following survey sources, the Robbins report (1962) and two Association of University Teachers (AUT) surveys (1994) and (2004).

evidence of the intensification of academic work, through the introduction of new forms of management, the implementation of new auditing and quality regimes, the expansion of performance measurement systems and increased forms of work-related surveillance. However, it can be argued that when it comes to the organisation of work in modern society, academic workers still have privileged conditions, such as, academic freedom and professional autonomy. From the survey findings it emerged that 87% (n=280) of respondents considered that academic freedom was a central part of their employment contract. While these privileges allow academics to seek truth and pose questions these privileges also come with a moral responsible to society, a responsibility to make a contribution. Where academics fail to engage in the political discourse of policy formation, then new rationalities and forms of logic will be constructed by others and imposed onto academia. As Limond (2008, p412) cautions, we must not 'lose site of the moral issues' through indifference to or obsessive concern with micro issues. The thesis survey explored some generic moral issues. For example, 78% (n=235) of respondents agreed that academics should support human rights. In addition, 66% (n=200) of respondents agreed that academics should give time and support to charities and 75% (n=227) agreed that academics should engage with community initiatives. However, 60% (n=182) of respondents disagreed with the provision of free advice and consultancy work for enterprise and industry. It would seem that respondents are more pre-disposed to supporting not-for-profit social initiatives and less likely to provide free assistant to profit-based enterprises. Within the neoliberal markets model of education this should not be the case, as both not-for-profit social initiatives and for-profit enterprise should be exploited equally, as everything has a commercial value which needs to be exchanged in return for service provision. In the market approach, altruism is considered a curiosity which is only tolerated as long as it does not affect commercial interests. The basic principle of the market approach is 'survival of the fittest'. The fittest gain the rewards, while the weak are marginalised and exploited. In this doctrine there is no room for philanthropy, compassion, equality or respect for human dignity. Spring

(1998) argues that the human capital or investment model does not provide help to the poor, sick or aged based on moral reasoning. But, rather, it is based on instrumental rationality and the calculation of economic benefits. Hyslop-Margison and Sears (2007) assert that the current education policy agenda is dominated by the ideology of neoliberalism. This approach advocates a market-led social policy agenda of 'user-pays'. Those who have the capacity to pay can access services, while those without resources are marginalised.

The next section seeks to conceptualise the education policy formation process by constructing three policy models which cater for the dynamic of structure and agency.

Policy models, structure and agency

Building on the work in the other chapters the focus of this section moves to policy as a dynamic social action process (Ball 2008) at the interface between structure and agency. The researcher constructs and presents three conceptual policy models. These proposed policy models seek to establish a framework from which policy can be explored at different structural levels[177] such as *macro* (EU), *meso* (Irish government) and *micro* (IHE). The models also endeavour to highlight the political domain of policy (Ozga 2007) and policy discourse (Hall 1990) while building on O'Buachalla's (1988, p339) 'policy process model'. The proposed policy models seek to capture not only policy formation and implementation, but to extend the policy process model to include both 'interpretation and response'. This allows for the consideration of the structure and agency dynamic and the social context (Ball 1994). The proposed policy models outline how pressure, in the form of fluctuating 'social waves',[178] is applied over time to key power structures where official policy formulation begins. These models outline the dynamic relationships involved in the policy process at different structural levels and indicate the

[177] Vidovick (1999) doctoral thesis explored quality assurance policy in Australian HE and utilised the following three levels of policy analysis 1) marco – ministers, 2) intermediate – agencies, 3) micro – university.
[178] The term 'wave' is used as a metaphor, to suggest a gradual build up of pressure that peaks, floods an area. A social wave is, therefore, a build-up of collective opinion that is directed at a social factor. This pressure can be released and then starts to build up again. This concept of social waves is also linked to Hall's (1990) 'policy discourse' as the formations of social waves are influenced by the both public and private media.

interconnectivity between these levels. This incorporates Ball's (1994) notion of policy as a negotiated text and discourse. The models are constructed to deal with the 'ideology' (Lucas 2006, Deem 2004) of policy formation and the influential factors and forces that shape policy.

As the policy process in higher education moves through these structures it eventually confronts the agency of implementers such as administrators and managers whom Bess (2006, p510) speaks of as the 'underground of *de facto* policy makers'. In turn, the policy implementers seek to influence and direct the higher education environment and the work of academic workers. Academics can choose compliance or non-compliance in one form or another. Compliance can mean active implementation (strong support for the policy), passive implementation (accepting policy as an instruction), or bureaucratic implementation (filtering the paperwork through the systems). Similarly, non-compliance can be active non-compliance (direct action and opposition to the policy), passive non-compliance (no visible action or opposition to the policy) or bureaucratic non-compliance (using systems to block and delay policy implementation).

These models are presented as conceptual tools that can contribute to the development of theory and frameworks that can be utilised to analyse policy initiatives at both structural and agency level. While the models are presented as new work which is untested, the researcher will endeavour to signpost components of the models in the evaluation matrix section, in order to juxtapose developing theory with practice, although caution should be applied when utilising these models as they are first-round prototypes based on this thesis research. As such, the rigour and trustworthiness of the models in their general application to other research projects needs to be evaluated.

EU higher education policy model

In the EU higher education policy model (Diagram 38, p314), the EU's central structures, such as the EU Commission, are subject to waves of

pressure seeking to influence the development of specific policy initiatives. These pressure waves can emanate from global or international sources, social groupings or movements, elite power groups, lobbyists or EU member state governments and ministries. As the pressure mounts, a policy discourse (Ball 1994) begins to form. Bridges and Jonathon (2006) note that the dominant policy discourse is the neoliberal agenda which has a focus on the marketisation of the public sector.

It can be argued that the EU, as a structure, is not just a passive conductor for pressure waves but, rather, it is an active developer of policy initiatives. As such, the EU (in its political power structures) can act as a federal state initiating control, management and discourse of policy implementation (Middleton 2000). Once a policy initiative such as the Bologna process is agreed by the EU Commission, then implementation strategies are developed. These strategies can be linked to funding opportunities or legal frameworks or based on states' voluntary participation (as is the case with the Bologna process).

However, when a new policy text (Ball 1994) is rolled out, it is subject to interpretation by others (actors, agencies and member states). During this interpretation stage the EU can present clarifications on items within the policy initiative. However, policies can also be challenged during this interpretation process: challenges can be restricted to the legal environment, or based in social protest movements. Even if policies are challenged[179], this does not mean that the implementation phase stops. Ministries in member states consider how they will respond to the policy implementation. Will they be early adopters actively promoting the EU policy or will they be merely compliant participants enacting the policy or, even be noncompliant and not engage with the implementation? The decision to comply or not to comply with EU policy initiatives is influenced by the range of implementation strategies, including the rewards and/or sanctions that are attached to the particular EU policy

[179] For example the Irish electorate voted against the EU Lisbon agreement (2007). However, the EU continued with the Lisbon agreement implementation, while, at the same time putting pressure on the Irish government to hold a second referendum on Lisbon and advocating a 'yes' vote in the second referendum (2008).

initiative and the demands the policy initiative places on a member state in resources and capacity. In addition, policy texts have a history and will already have been the subject of political debate (Ball 1994), so that the supporters and advocates of policy texts will be ready to implement the policy initiative. In turn, opponents of the policy will have their resistance strategies in place.

Irish government higher education policy model

The Irish government's higher education policy model (Diagram 39, p315) is one in which the higher education policy initiatives that emerge from the EU are usually complied with. However, how member states receive and understand the intent of the EU policy wave is subject to numerous other influencing factors such as the reaction of national agencies including in the case of Ireland the DoES and HEA, public opinion such as that of students and parents, lobbying carried out by powerful groups like employers' organisations, IHE organisations and bodies including 'trade unions and the churches' (O'Buachalla 1988, p336). Lucas (2006) suggests that nation states are adopting a market approach to higher education mainly due to the external influence of globalisation and the prominence of neoliberalism. One strategy that the present Irish government utilises to test public opinion relating to new policy initiatives is to establish an expert consultant group[180] which can make recommendations on the policy. The recommendations of these groups can then be used as a protective buffer-zone for the government. The government gauges reaction and either implements the policy directly or instructs senior civil servants to revise the recommendations and indirectly implement the policy. This is similar to Ball's (1994) concept of exercising control through the context of political strategies. In the policy environment of the Irish political system, even after the implementation of policy there is still some space for renegotiation.[181] However, the HE

[180] The Irish government utilises both external agencies, such as the OECD, for example, to review higher education (2005) or establishes internal consultative groups such as the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs to make recommendations on education and training in general. In 2010 the Irish government through the HEA used the Hunt committee to review higher education in Ireland, at the time of writing, however this report has not yet been published.

[181] Representative groups and associations such as IBEC, ICTU, IFUT, and TUI can lobby government departments or state agencies in order to have specific parts of policy texts modified.

sectors, in the form of their representative associations or individual IHE, can decide to comply or not comply with policies, although non-compliance may result in sanctions being applied. Also, non-compliance may not be in the form of direct opposition and resistance. Rather, it can be carried out in a covert or passive fashion. IHE that adopt a non-compliance strategy may risk being treated differently by government departments and state agencies, particularly in matters of future state funding.

IHE policy model

The IHE policy model is shown in diagram 40 (p316). The IHE experience policy wave pressure from government, state agencies and stakeholders such as students, parents and representative organisations. While senior managers such as the provost, president or director of a university or IoT can directly recommend the implementation of policy initiatives, usually, in the university sector, a more collegial approach is adopted. Senior university managers seek advice and support from structures in the IHE. This is a type of filtration process, where policy initiatives are considered and assessed from the different perspectives of the organisational structures such as the academic council, the governing body and so forth. Generally, this is not the case in the IoT sector where a more managerialist approach is utilised and policy is implemented with limited consultation of academic staff. In most cases, the implementation of policy receives authority from the senior management and then moves to the operational structures: faculties, schools and departments.

The final stage of policy implementation is the academic worker. The academic worker has the choice either to comply or not comply with the implementation of a policy initiative. However, there are consequences for non-compliance. The IHE brings its structures, policy and procedures to bear on the dissenter. Industrial relations mechanisms can be initiated and in some cases, disciplinary procedures can be invoked. The academic worker has the choice either to continue with individual agency or seek

collective support from colleagues in the school, department or a trade union.

A final note on the proposed policy models

These three proposed policy models were constructed from insights gained during both the data gathering process and the data analysis phase of this research. The models are presented as generic, working tools that can be utilised both to gain understanding and for analysis of the policy process with particular reference to policy formation, implementation, interpretation and response at different levels. The models should allow multiple-factors to be incorporated into the analysis framework, such as the perspectives of different stakeholders and actors these can be considered at the different levels of policy *macro* (EU), *meso* (national) and *micro* (institutional and actor level). These models should not be taken as rigid frameworks. They are presented as flexible, dynamic models where additional components and factors can be added. These three generic policy models seek to outline how policy relevant to higher education is implemented at EU level and then passed on to national and then IHE levels. A clear example of how this type of policy model at structural level can affect the agency of the academic worker is the Bologna declaration and its higher education reform[182] agenda. The Bologna declaration dealt with matters such as quality assurance, unitisation of learning (ECTS) and uniformity of programmes (a division of all HE into three cycles). These have a direct impact on how academic workers engage in their everyday work and may influence how they conceptualise it, though this is hard to be certain about. It would seem, from the analysed data, that the senior management in the IoTs are more responsive and quicker to implement government and state agencies' higher education policy initiatives. The senior management in the IoT sector seem to adopt an authoritarian approach, instructing academic workers to accept and implement policy. By comparison, the university sector takes more time to discuss and consider policy agendas. In general,

[182] Robertson (2009) does not consider the Bologna Declaration to be a reform agenda. Instead, he suggests the current implementation of this policy initiative is having a dramatic adverse effect on higher education in Europe in both political and economic ways.

senior academic managers in the university sector operate a more collegiate and committee-based organisational structure. Policy implementation requires widespread agreement. As such, the university sector operates a more consensus approach to policy implementation. Academic workers are less peripheral to this decision making dynamic. However, in recent times, senior management in one university[183] endeavoured to reform this consensus approach and replace it with a business style authoritive management approach[184] similar to the IoTs, although there is some evidence in the data that some academic staff are resisting this top down approach.

The following three policy models can be linked to the next section which outlines the evaluation matrices and the 'claims, issues and concerns' evident in policy narratives (structure) and the analysed interview and survey data which represents academic workers opinions (agency). In order directly to link the policy models with items in the evaluation matrices, the coding system summarised below was developed,

EU (*macro)* level = L1.	Government (*meso)* level = L2.
IHE (*micro)* level = L3.	Academic agency = A.

Codes appear after each item in the evaluation matrices. For example, '(L1)' means the item can be associated with the EU (*macro*) level policy model. Where an item has more then one association with a policy level, all the relevant levels are listed. For example, '(L2, L3, A)' translates into government policy model, IHE policy model and academic agency.

[183] The university referred to here is UCD, where academic staff and trade unions in UCD have expressed concern and in some cases opposition to the President Hugh Bradys' new managerial style and business approach to university reform (Mitchell 2006, McConnell 2006, Bray 2009).
[184] It can be argued that this approach is similar in character to both Becher and Trowler (2001) and Deem (2004) accounts of NPM in the public sector and HE.

Diagram 38, Schematic of EU policy model

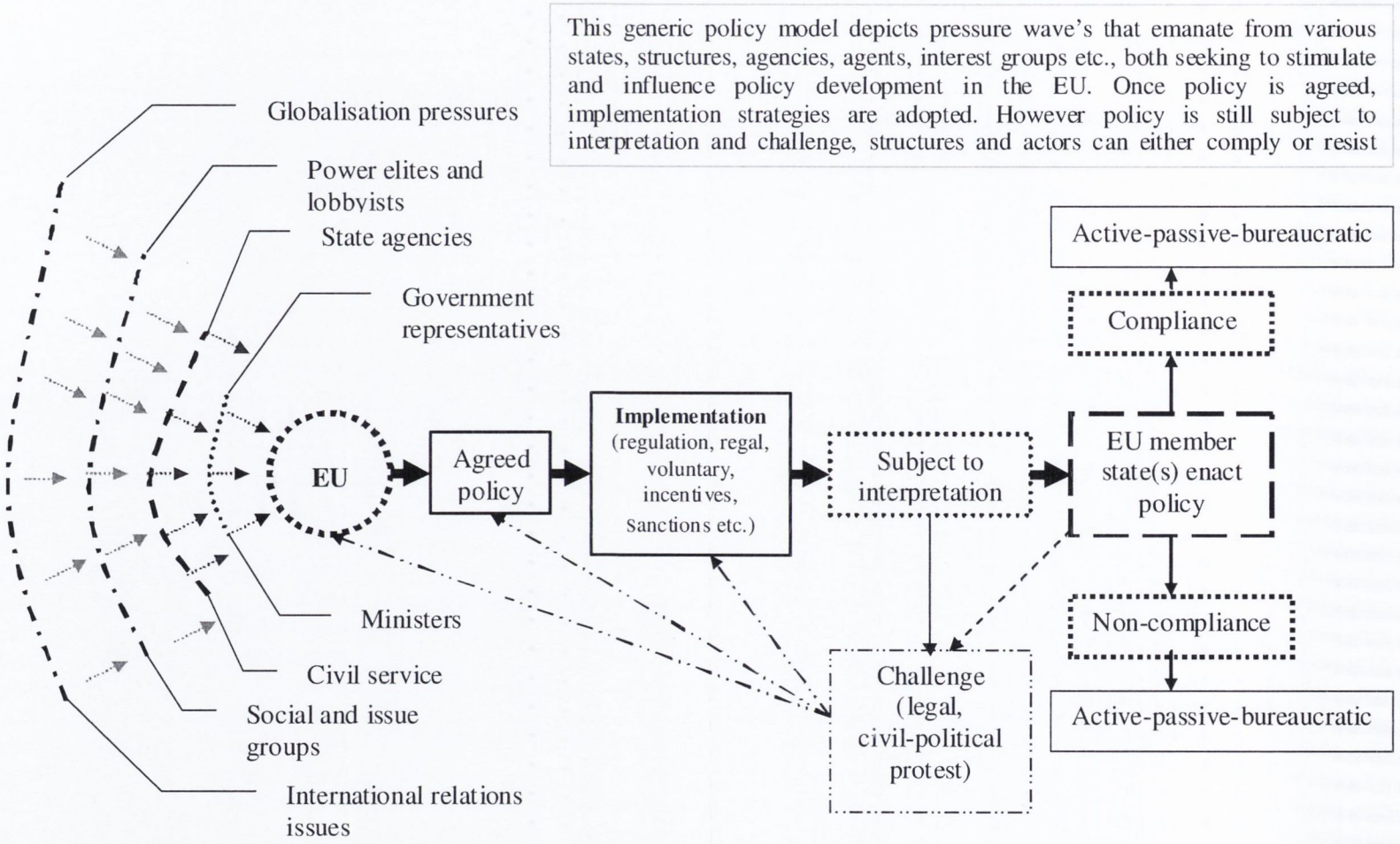


Diagram 39, Schematic of Irish government policy model

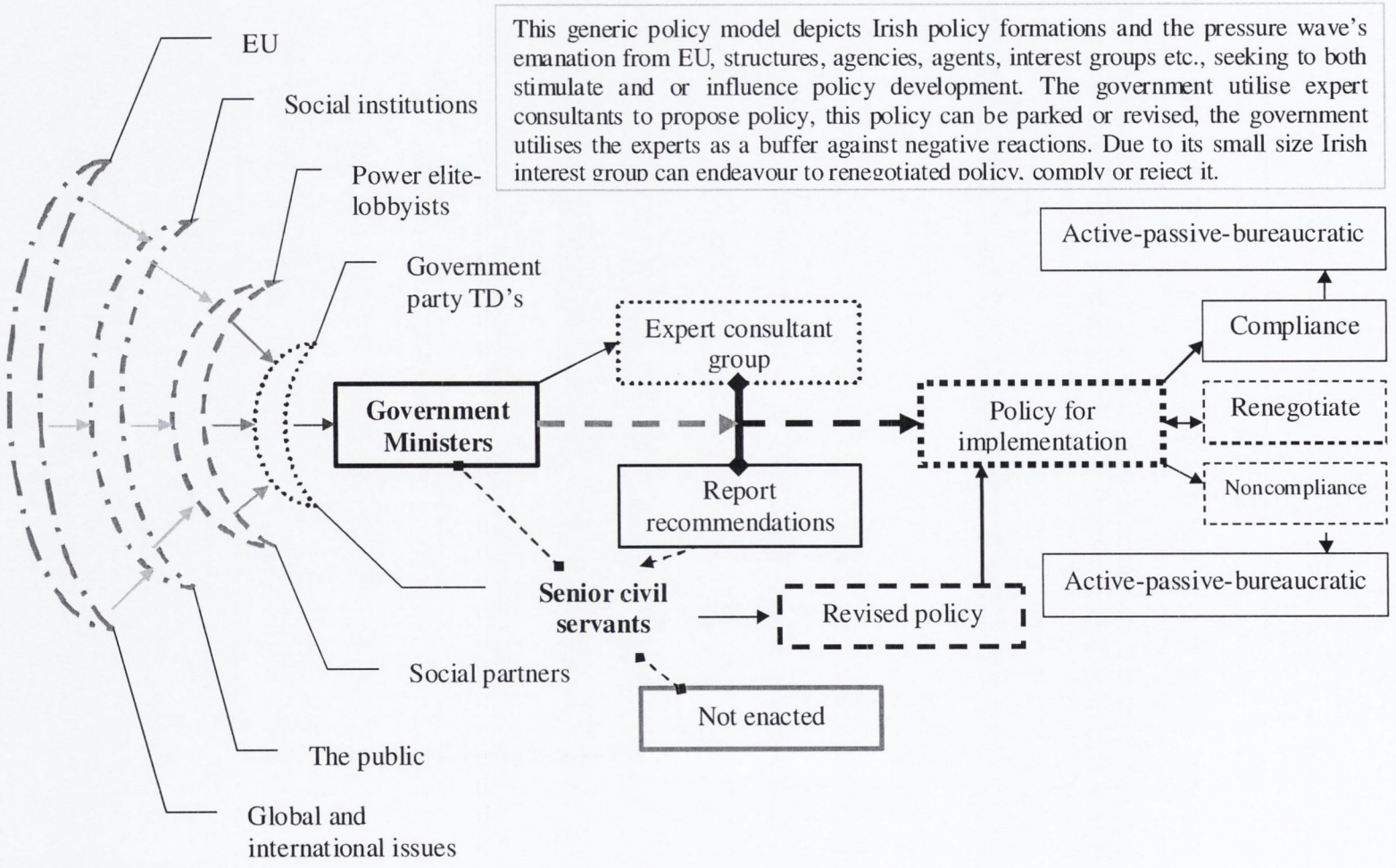
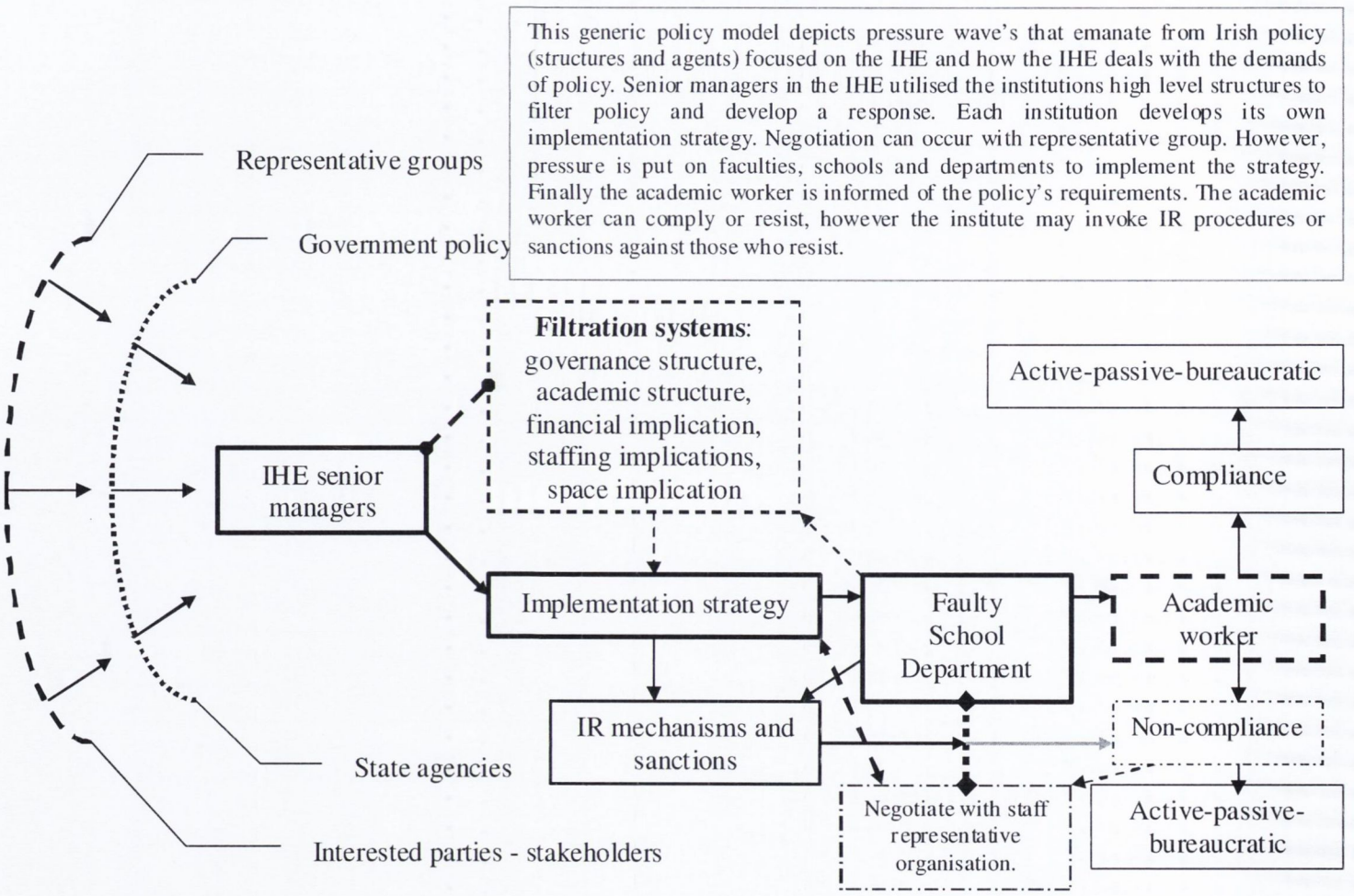


Diagram 40, Schematic of IHE policy model



Evaluation matrices

As stated in the introduction to this thesis, a primary research aim was to describe and evaluate academic workers' perceptions and experiences of working in IHE in the context of the modernisation policy agenda. To address this question the researcher undertook to construct a thematic evaluative matrix which illustrated the 'claims, concerns and issues' expressed by academic workers relating to the changing policy agenda and their lived experience of teaching, research and academic careers. The three evaluation matrices were constructed from the merged analysed data (policy, interviews and survey) and serve to address the aim above. A formative evaluation process was utilised based on Guba and Lincoln (1989) evaluation categories of 'claims, concerns and issues' (for definition see Table 27, p135) as expressed by stakeholders and agents. Each evaluation matrix is confined to one of the thematic areas: (1) teaching, (2) research and (3) career and the key points that emerged from the clusters in each of these thematic areas.

Evaluation matrix teaching

The evaluation matrix for teaching (Table 86, p321) contains a summary of the main items that emerged from the analysis of the data, namely: (1) assessment, (2) autonomy, (3) ICT, (4) learning outcomes, (5) programmes, (6) quality assurance and (7) teaching practice. Each cluster is then categorised into the main 'claims, concerns and issues'. From analysing this matrix there seems to be a pattern emerging in the positioning of structure-agency within the categories. Structural (governmental and EU) statements, narratives and comments which emerged from policy initiatives seem to be located mainly in the 'claims' category. These are relatively positive statements. Whereas, typically IHE, faculty and school related statements are clustering in the 'concerns' category, while departments' and academic workers' statements are filtering into the 'issues' category. This can be demonstrated by exploring some of the clusters. For example, at structural policy level (government, departments and agencies) there was support for the introduction of new

assessment approaches, quality assurance, the wide-spread usage of ICT, the adoption of learning outcomes and providing IHE with autonomy. These types of statements are categorised as 'claims'. By comparison, at IHE level statements seem to focus around the category of 'concerns'. For example, new assessment requires restructuring, autonomy needs resources, ICT infrastructure requires investment, learning outcomes and quality assurance require additional resources and some IR problems need to be considered. However, the critical voices located in the 'issues' category seem to come mainly from what could be termed grass-roots-level, the departments and academic workers (agency level). For example, new assessment approaches can 'dumb-down' standards, autonomy and measurability/accountability are not compatible, the utilisation of ICT as a learning technology strategy can be identified with a markets approach, learning outcomes can lead to vocationalism, quality assurance system present questions of 'ownership'.

The emergence of this type of categorisation is not surprising as most policy initiatives are promoted at a structural level (see both EU and government policy models) and, as such, structures have a more positive disposition towards 'claims'. Whereas, both the institutions and the academic workers have actually to implement the policies. This includes trying to manage local implementation and its impact on work practices. It is during this implementation stage (see IHE policy model) that most of the 'concerns' and 'issues' seem to arise. Focusing on the clusters in the evaluation matrix it can be observed that, in relation to assessment, there is support for the 'claim' that new assessment approaches can assist students. However, the 'concerns' are that new approaches required additional resources to implement and can lead to a substantial increase in academic workloads. In addition, the main 'issue' is whether standards can be maintained. Will there be sufficient academic monitoring of these new assessment approaches to ascertain the rigour and trustworthiness of the assessment approach?[185] In the learning outcome cluster there is a 'claim' that learning outcomes have been successfully incorporated into

[185] Loxley (2010) suggests that this depends on information systems that currently do not exist.

higher education at sectoral, institute, department and programme levels, so that learning outcomes have become normalised. However, there are 'concerns' about the restrictive nature of learning outcomes in defining knowledge in specific domains such as skills, competence and know-how. Further, there is an emerging argument which sees learning outcomes as an 'issue' suggesting that learning outcomes lead to reductionism and the demise of liberal education and represent a move towards the vocationalisation[186] of higher education. This argument was echoed in the programme cluster where 'concerns' centred on the extent of external interference with programme content due to new policy regimes and regulatory procedures. One of the major new regulatory regimes is quality assurance (Salter and Tapper 2000). In the quality assurance cluster a typical 'claim' suggests this type of regulation is leading to increased standards and student satisfaction and that it is an effective mechanism to measure performance. However, there were 'concerns' expressed relating to the implementation of quality assurance, such as the bureaucratic nature of these systems, the lack of additional resources to operate quality assurance systems, the increasing control that quality assurance systems gave to administration and the technocratic language of quality assurance systems. In the teaching cluster, there was a 'claim' that teaching has undergone substantial change over the last decade, particularly so in relation to the implementation of both EU and national policies. However, there were 'concerns' relating to the growing practice in IHE of the employment of part-time teachers, instead of making permanent appointments, specifically where part-time teachers are being given the same responsibilities in developing teaching and programmes as permanent academics (see Ritzer 2006 on casualisation). Furthermore, 'concerns' were identified relating to the increased utilisation of teaching and learning centres/units being established in institutions with a remit to train staff to teach utilising specific pedagogical paradigms. It was suggested that this type of training practice can undermine individual teaching styles and create a pedagogical uniformity which reduces

[186] Jamieson and Naidoo (2004) suggest that successive UK governments' (from 1979 to 1997 and beyond) education polices focused education towards industry's needs by restructuring the curriculum. This has led to education in general (including higher education) leaning in a 'vocational direction'.

academic creativity and autonomy (see also Noble 1998, on the commodification of instruction). A main 'issue' that emerged was the debate about the status and value of teaching in comparison to research activities. Particular reference was made to the points systems used during appointment and promotional interviews. Research activities seemed to receive more merit and higher points than teaching experience. It was frequently suggested that this needed to be addressed and a balanced approach needed to be developed. Furthermore, an important question was raised regarding teaching in HE. Why is it that HE lecturers do not need teaching qualifications to teach similar to teachers at primary and second level? This was an 'issue' that came up strongly in the interviews and, specifically, in the context of teaching practice and the professionalisation of teaching. The modernisation policy agenda at both EU level (Bologna and the EQF) and national level (*National Qualifications Act 1999 and Towards 2016*) has endeavoured to restructure HE's teaching programme structures, modes of provision, technocratic language and quality assurance, assessment approaches and autonomy of institutions and actors. While this modernisation policy agenda created numerous challenges at structural, *meso* level (state agencies) the real, day-to-day impact of policy implementation was experienced by the academic workers (agency). From the analysed data it would seem that academic workers have adapted their work practices in order to cater for the new demands of the modernisation policy agenda. However, this does not mean that academic workers are in agreement with this modernisation policy agenda. Rather, academic workers are carrying out their teaching duties in accordance with localised disciplinary and faculty practice. The modernisation policy agenda is something that academic workers perceive as instrumental guidance, rather than considering it as a major policy paradigm shift (Hall 1990). In general, academic workers seem to develop localised solutions to overcome the problems posed by the institutional *micro* level implementation of the modernisation policy agenda. Where there is limited or no localised freedom to solve problems industrial relations disputes seem to arise.

Table 86, Evaluation matrix teaching

Clusters	Claims	Concerns	Issues
Assessment	The introduction of new assessment approaches was considered to be a positive development: this has the potential to enhance student learning and feedback, while reducing academic workload. (L1,L2)	New assessment approaches combined with restructuring (modularisation) and increased class sizes are leading to increased workloads, there is no remaining time left for other duties such as research. (L3,A)	Due to increased workloads, larger class size and pressure to gain results there is a real possibility of declining standards (dumbing down results). (L3, A)
Autonomy	Autonomy to act is an important part of an academic's contract, academics in an Irish context considered they have autonomy to investigate, develop programmes and contribute to discipline knowledge domains (L3, A)	While autonomy is evident in theory it cannot be put into practice without resources. (L3, A) Further, having autonomy without security of employment (tenure) can lead to compliance and reduce the likelihood of critical inquiry. (L3, A)	With any form of autonomy there is also a need for accountability, However, who monitors this and how is accountability measured or assessed? Confining accountability to measurement restricts autonomy. (L3, A)
ICT	ICT provides both academics and students with a sophisticated mechanism both to access information and manage knowledge and learning. (L1,L2) ICT offers new opportunities for programme provision at a distance, cost-effective teaching, reasonable cost to the students and the possibility of profit or revenue generation for the institute. (L1, L2)	While ICT can assist both academics' teaching and students learning utilising ICT as the primary mode of teaching at a distance greatly reduces the social aspect of learning a crucial component of the socialisation process and social formation. (L3, A)	ICT is promoted as the new pedagogical tool however, some of the assertions made are more to do with the marketing of hardware and software. ICT as a mode of teaching enables some providers to market their programmes in developing countries for profit.
Learning outcomes	The learning outcome approach is now embedded in the Irish higher education sector, in programme documents, in the language used to discuss teaching, learning and programme development. (L1, L2)	Learning outcomes represent a challenge to liberal education, learning outcomes restrict the teaching and learning process measurable units, learning outcomes are part of the restructuring of the education systems making it more relevant to the world of work. (L3, A)	Learning outcomes were introduced in 2003 by the NQAI and HETAC many IoTs carried out a paper exercise incorporating learning outcomes into programme documents. However, learning outcomes are more than a text narrative rather, they require changes in pedagogical practice (teaching, learning and assessment) they require a vocational approach. (L3)
Programmes	Programme development occurs in a consultative and collegial fashion, the academic process is rigorous and quality assured. (L3, A) Inputs from others (external experts, industry and students) contribute towards the programme development process. (L1, L2, L3) Quality assurance is now evident in all higher education programmes. (L2, L3)	The requirements placed on programme developers from awards councils and professional bodies can restrict the content and exploratory nature of programmes. (L3, A) Lack of resources and budget cutbacks reduces the overall quality of programmes and restricts development. (L3)	While the debate on whether programmes contain too much teaching and too much assessment is on going, However, as financial considerations begin to take prominence the likelihood is that programmes will contain fewer teaching contact hours, more self directed learning hours and more cost-effective assessment practices (L3, A)
Quality Assurance	The quality assurance procedures contribute towards enhancing the standards of programmes in teaching and outcomes. (L1, L2) The QA system enable IoTs to apply for delegated authority, this increases their autonomy and recognition. (L2, L3) QA increases the opportunities for student participation at all level of the IHE. (L2)	QA in the technical (rigid) sense reduces the willingness of academics to fully engage, Rather, it is perceived as a bureaucratic exercise fill in the documents and then teach as normal. (L3, A) There are also industrial relations issues relating to teacher/lecturer evaluation carried out by students. (L3, A)	The ownership of the QA procedures is an area for consideration: the NQAI wants the IHE to have ownership of their own QA Rather, than a national agency. This raises questions about funding and resources to run IHE QA systems. (L3, A)
Teaching	Academics have embraced change in student profiles, new technology and teaching practice. (L2) Institutions invest in teaching training initiatives to assist staff to development new thinking and practices relating to teaching. (L2, L3) Classroom sizes are decreasing this enables the introduction of new teaching approaches. (L2)	Teaching is losing status and value to research: institutions perceive research as a revenue generator and are redirecting resources away from teaching towards research, part-time teachers are being over utilised as a cost saving measure, this will have a long term effect on teaching. (L3, A) There is too much emphasis put on 'teaching training' by newly established teaching and learning units this can create uniformity in teaching style and reduce autonomy and creativity (L3, A)	There needs to be a balanced approach to teaching versus research both should be equally valued, teaching should inform research and visa versa. (L3, A) There is a need for teacher training in third level just like primary and second level. (L3) There is a need to evaluate teaching practice. (L2, L3)

Evaluation matrix research

The evaluation matrix research (Table 87, p 325) contains a summary of the main items that emerged from the analysis of the data relating to research, namely: (1) capacity, (2) collaboration, (3) funding, (4) knowledge and (5) quality. Each of these clusters is then categorised into the main 'claims, concerns and issues'. It was noted in the analysis chapter that current research policy in Ireland is focused on capacity building by increasing the number of PhD graduates to 1,312 by the year 2013 (*SSTI 2005*) while, at the same time, trying to increase the quantity of research and innovation activities in Ireland. The state's policy adopts a 'human capital' strategy (similar to Becker's 1993 original economic analysis, rather than Coleman (1988) or Bourdieu's (1986) more socially orientated theories). The main 'claim' of Irish government policy is that increased investment in higher level education will lead to the development of the 'knowledge economy' (OECD 1998) and future economic prosperity. There were emerging 'concerns' relating to this. Firstly the pool of graduates is not big enough to accommodate the projected increase in PhD numbers (*SSTI,* 2005) and, second, there needs to be a strategy to increase the capacity of academic staff in PhD supervision[187] and specialised skills. Further, there are some serious 'issues' in graduate employment around whether or not the labour market will have the capacity to absorb this large number of PhD graduates (see OECD 2007). And are PhD graduates receiving sufficient career preparation in the form of employment training during their studies (see EUA 2005). Also, the government's policy is to stimulate collaborations between sectors and IHE in order to increase capacity, stop duplication and rationalise the resources for the sector. However, 'concerns' have emerged in relation to the seeming over-supply of IHE and increased competition as a result of the limited resources that are available. Issues also arose in relation to the relevance of collaboration to some disciplinary areas where the traditional practice is of the lone researcher. If funding is focused on collaboration, then some disciplines will lose out.

[187] See also EUA (2008) on the supervision of doctoral students.

In research funding there seems to be a 'claim' that additional funding can be obtained from increasing the number of international students, engaging in commercial practices with industry and the commercialisation of research carried out in IHE. However, the 'concerns' were that there is not enough funding available to allow academic staff to engage in long term research projects (see Deem's (2004) analysis of state policy on reducing funding to public HE). Continuity of funding is problematic and many institutions are redirecting some of their core funding for teaching to research activities. There seems to be an 'issue' emerging in the space of sectoral differences with the IoT sector suggesting that it does not receive as favourable treatment from funding agencies as the university sector (see Skilbeck 2002 and Scot 1995 relating to tension that arise in binary HE systems) .

In both university and IoT sector there is a 'claim' that research is a knowledge generator and, according to policy, this knowledge can be utilised for economic interests (see also *SSTI* 2005 and OECD 2008). However, the 'concern' is that the definition of knowledge and the knowledge domains may be too restrictive and based on short-termism. The 'issue' is that knowledge generation is not confined to the HE sectors, but, rather, industry and enterprise also produce knowledge. Knowledge thus becomes a commercial interest and the protection of commercial knowledge is located in intellectual property[188] (IP) rights. This is increasingly common in Ireland.

The cluster on quality research received considerable attention in both the interview and survey data sets. While a 'claim' emerged supporting the introduction of a quality and/or ranking system in order to increase the quality of research this was countered with the argument that if this type of approach was introduced too early it would be counterproductive for capacity building initiatives. 'Concerns' arose around the unsuitability of a UK style system such as the RAE. Ranking systems emerged as an

[188] Peter (2004) links both knowledge management and the commercialisation of knowledge to the introduction of intellectual property which provides a legal framework for copyright protection, patent regulation and international protection for commercial knowledge and ideas.

'issue'. Academic opinion was firmly opposed to the introduction of a ranking system in Irish HE. The value and nature of ranking systems as measurement tools was questioned. Who benefits from ranking systems? How do ranking systems contribute to education and pedagogy? Are ranking systems just another marketing mechanism to advertise reputation and academic standing in accordance with specific, but arbitrary, measurements?

The modernisation policy agenda promotes research as a key driver of 'knowledge production' (see Gibbons et al 2005), innovation and economic potential. Research seems to be confined to satisfying the economic imperative and commercialisation of results and outcomes, see Aronowitz (2000) on 'knowledge factories'. Some IHE, and particularly those in the IoT sector, have responded and complied with this utilitarian approach to research (as set out in *SSTI 2005*). However, the university sector seems to be much more cautious in accepting this concept of research. The university sector, in general, has maintained its understanding of research as both a social good and contributor to innovative ideas which can have an economic benefit (see Lynch 2006, Fleming 2008). However research funding agencies both public and private are increasingly constructing funding criteria that challenge the university sector's concept of research and knowledge. Academic workers are at the forefront of this. The structural imperative of the funding agencies and their application and assessment criteria are the frontline in a struggle over the implementation of policy initiatives in which the needs of academic workers to explore may clash with, or challenge, the funding agencies' application criteria. Further, as research activities are separated from teaching and research, funding is allocated in a short-term way linked to outcomes, research capacity declines as professional researchers do not enter academic careers but, rather, move to employment opportunities in the private sector that offer greater rewards.

Table 87, Evaluation matrix research

Clusters	Claims	Concerns	Issues
Capacity	Large-scale investment in human capital (graduates, PhD graduates and post docs) can increase knowledge production activities, innovation and contribute towards the development of the knowledge economy. (L1, L2)	More investment is needed in research and development, there is a need to increase the pool of graduate talent in order to increase PhD numbers in an effort to create a critical mass of high level knowledge experts. (L2, L3) Academic staff need time to engage in capacity building initiatives to support the growing numbers of PhD students. (L3, A)	Graduate unemployment needs to be monitored, in a demand-led system the economy needs to have the capacity to absorb PhD graduates. (L2, L3, A) The employability of PhD graduates is crucial: career planning for researchers must be facilitated and promoted by the IHE. (L2, L3, A)
Collaboration	Collaboration between disciplines and/or sectors in the form of both skills and equipment sharing can lead to the emergence of new ideas, practices, knowledge, innovation and discoveries. (L1, L2) Early stage collaborations can lead to partnerships forming and joint bids for further funding. (L1, L2, L3)	There is an over-supply of HE provision in some regions, this leads to duplication of activities, in order to improve efficiencies, more effective use of resources and enhance productivity there is a need for strategic collaboration between IHE at regional and national levels. (L2)	Inquiry in some disciplines is more individualist then collaborative, linking funding criteria to collaborative projects may disadvantage individual lead research. (L3, A) Competition for funding leads to secrecy and the reduction in collaborations. (L3, A)
Funding	International students provide a substantial revenue source for IHE. (L2, L3) Partnerships with enterprise/industry provide IHE with additional resources and revenue. (L1, L2, L3) Revenue can be generated through the commercialisation of ideas and innovations by campus companies. (L2, L3)	Allocating time for academics/researchers to carry out research is problematic, in some cases teaching hours are bought out. (L3) The shortage in funds to engage in research activities can be solved by: reallocating funds from the HEA core grant, establishing teams to target competitive research funds. (L2, L3) Continuity of research funding causes employment problems for contract staff. (L3)	In research funding the universities seemed to be treated differently or more favourably in comparison to the IoT sector. (L3, A) Researchers find it difficult to follow a career path as most of their employment contracts are part-time. (L3, A) There is no clear progression or promotional career ladder. (L3, A)
Knowledge	The state invests substantial funds in the HE sector: the state has expectations of the potential returns on this investment. (L1, L2) The HE sector can make a direct contribution towards the realisation of the knowledge society. (L1, L2)	The HE sector can be considered both as knowledge consumer and knowledge producer. (L2, L3) There is considerable debate in the HE sector and disciplines as to what constitutes knowledge, and what types of knowledge are been promoted (L3)	The HE sector is not the only producer of knowledge, enterprise/industry produce knowledge, knowledge has become a commodity (IP) traded in the free market. (L1, L2)
Quality	Academic peer review is an excellent quality control mechanism. (L3, A) Ranking systems provide information that can be utilised in order to change the behaviour of individuals and organisations. (L2, L3)	The introduction of a Research Assessment Exercise would be the responsibility of the HEA and not the NQAI. (L3) Research activity in Ireland is at an early stage of development an REA would not be of and great benefit at this stage. (L3, A)	Ranking systems are contested by academics and institutions in their fairness, relevance and their rationale and purpose. (L3, A) Poorly constructed ranking systems can adversely diminish the value and worth of some discipline areas. (L3, A) Ranking systems can damage the reputation of IHE that do not conform to the ranking systems criteria. (L3, A)

Evaluation matrix career

The evaluation matrix for career is shown in Table 88 (p329) and contains a summary of the main items that emerged from the analysis of the data relating to career such as: (1) academic freedom, (2) management, (3) part-time, (4) performance, (5) promotion, (6) retirement and (7) rotation. Each cluster is then categorised into the main 'claims, concerns and issues'. In an Irish context permanent, whole-time or tenured academic staff have a unique entitlement enshrined in legislation. That is, they have 'academic freedom', the right to voice opinions and do research counter to commonly held knowledge, values or beliefs. The 'claim' is that academic freedom allows for critical inquiry and new discoveries. There was 'concern' however, that academic freedom cannot be fully realised without tenure. Non-tenured and part-time staff are substantially less likely to offer critical opinions due to the possibility that their employment contracts may be terminated, (see Enders 1997 and Altbach 1999, research relating to part-time teaching).

A number of 'issues' emerged relating to how commercial interests and the interests of funders can affect and restrict the practice of academic freedom due to the threat of funding being withdrawn. Some policy makers perceive tenure to be the main problem in developing a mechanism to control underperformance and the termination of employment contracts. The 'claim' in the management cluster is about motivating academic staff to work more 'efficiently', 'effectively' and 'productively' (see Ritzer (2006) on McDonaldisation). There was the 'concern' that centralised administrative management is exploring ways to deal with under-performance. Additionally, managerialism emerged as a central 'issue' with the suggestion that the academic voice and academic decision-making are been replaced by administrative centralised management (Altbach 1999). Those who occupy administrative management positions do not necessarily have the same values as academics. Rather, their focus is often on technocratic work organisation and instrumental decision making. HE becomes a utilitarian system where

rationality is focused on human capital production and the commercialisation of knowledge, rather than adopting the principles of education as a social good for society and education for the sake of education (Fleming 2008).

In addition, it was 'claimed' that new appointments to the HE sector received appropriate induction from their employers in relation to how systems work in the IHE and what is expected from the employee. In the IoT sector there was 'concern' that new appointees who do not have sufficient work related experience (five years) may have a lack of understanding of the values of work. Other 'issues' were raised about the probationary period for new appointees and the criteria utilised for progression and promotion, with particular reference to the over valuation of research, compared to teaching. While it was 'claimed' that part-time employment provides potential new appointments with experience of working in the HE sector there was 'concern' about the practice of employing part-time teachers. Specific problems were lack of integration and their being unable to contribute to the long term development of the specific discipline and may not be in a position to undertake the full range of academic duties. However, more serious 'issue' emerge in the suggestion that part-time employment was utilised by institutions in an exploitative[189] fashion for short term cost efficiency measures (Becher and Trowler 2001).

In staff performance, the 'claim' suggested that the introduction of PMDS (*Towards 2016*) in the HE sectors enables both managers and academics to consider localised goals and objectives and develop personal work plans for coming years. However, the main 'concern' was that these PMDS meetings between managers and staff were very time-consuming for local management and that there were no additional resources to enable the achievement of the aims and gaols agreed during the meetings. Other 'issues' emerged in relation to the outcomes of these meetings.

[189] Both IFUT and SIPTU claim that UCD is utilising the current funding crisis as an opportunity to cut staff costs by not converting eligible part-time research workers to permanent posts as is required under the part-time employment legislation (Bray 2009).

What happens if the goals are not met? What types of sanctions or rewards are available? Is this leading to the introduction of a performance related pay system (Ball 1994). In relation to promotions, can PMDS be utilised to inform the assessment process? Again there were serious 'concerns' about the criteria utilised for promotion especially the valuing of research more than teaching. In the IoT sector a particular 'issue' arose in relation to the unfair procedures and criteria utilised to assess progression from grade[190].

When it came to staff nearing the end of their careers, there were 'claims' that the IHE provided sufficient pre-retirement courses and support services, although 'concerns' were expressed about these staff becoming de-motivated and unwilling to accept change during the last years of their employment. An issue emerged relating to the statutory retirement age suggesting that enforcing a specific age to retire such as 65 could be considered as ageism. Finally, concerning rotation, there were 'claims' that this type of promotional procedure allowed new ideas to be tried out and offered an opportunity for interested staff. However, there was a 'concern' that new rotation appointees may not be willing to make hard decisions because, after their terms, they have to go back to faculty work. In the IoT sector rotation was an issue for management staff who did not want rotation to be introduced. They wanted to maintain their management position for the life-time of their employment. It can be argued from the analyses of the career cluster that the modernisation policy agenda has endeavoured to restructure the organisation of academic work to be more cost efficient, flexible and productive. The main result has been the casualisation of academic work and the demise of tenure. The critical agency of the academic worker and his/her autonomy can as a result be greatly restricted.

[190] The DIT HRC has refused to progress more ALs to Ls than any other IoT in the country. The TUI has brought nearly 60 DIT cases either to the Rights Commissioner or the Labour Court.

Table 88, Evaluation matrix career

Cluster	Claims	Concerns	Issues
Academic freedom	Academic freedom allows academics to explore diverse knowledge domains, areas of interest, and to present evidence, theory or concepts that challenge preconceive common understandings. (L1, L2, L3, A)	The linkage between academic freedom and tenure can have a negative effect on productivity. (L2) Tenure is crucial to the democratic exercise of academic freedom, without tenure there is no academic freedom. (L2, L3 A)	Commercial interests and the profit imperative are a threat to academic freedom. (L3, A) Tenure is the real problem the employment of academic freedom, there is a need to be able to terminate underperforming staff. (L2)
Management	Management is about motivating and encouraging others to make a contribution, this can be achieved in a consultative or collegial fashion. (L2, L3) Academic staff are the experts in their fields they should take ownership of decisions related to their areas or programmes (L3, A)	There is a growing trend towards centralisation this leads to a reduction in the academic role of heads of school and increases the decision-making powers of other senior grades such as finance. (L2, L3, A) Staff are unionised but it is difficult to operate disciplinary actions against underperforming staff and nearly impossible to sack staff. (L2, L3) There is a growing disconnection between academics and their work and the new role of management (L3, A)	Managerialism is the new trend, decisions are made centrally by a few senior managers, the views of academics are discounted, there is a move towards the business imperative where decisions are based solely on efficiencies and productivity. In this approach measurement is the key with ranking systems and performance measures cited as best practice. (L2, L3, A)
Career	Induction programmes assist new staff to gain an understanding of how the institute operates, their roles in the institute and establish the guidelines for what they are expected to do. (L3)	Employing candidates with limited industry or work experience can lead to difficulties in promoting the values of work to students, limited network of industry contacts (L3)	The selection procedures and probation/progression evaluation criteria seem to give too much weight to research achievements reducing the status of teaching accomplishments. (L3, A)
Part-time	Provides an opportunity to gain employment and experience and can act as a potential career path. (L2, L3) For the institute this type of contract is both cost-effective and flexible (L2, L3)	Part-time appointees may not integrate with the other staff in a department/school. (L3, A) They may not be able to play a full part in the academic activities of the institute. (L3) They may not consider that it is important to make a contribution to a discipline's knowledge. (L3)	An institution can exploit part-timers as a cost saving practice. (L3, A) Excessive use of part-time work can lead to the casualisation of work, this, in turn, can reduce the status of full-time contract employment as the percentage of part-timers increases. (L3, A)
Performance	PMDS provides an opportunity for both managers and academic staff to discuss issues and set goals for the coming year in a formal and structured conversation fashion. (L2, L3)	PMDS is very time consuming for managers who have to meet all staff individually. (L2, L3) Staff consider PMDS meetings are rushed and that no real decisions are made or resources identified for achieving goals (L3, A)	The outcomes from PMDS meetings are questionable as there are no sanctions or reward options available. (L2, L3) Due to the excessive workload, PMDS meetings can develop into a tick the box exercise (L3)
Promotion	Promotion over the 'merit bar' or 'progression' provides an opportunity for junior staff to move to a better salary scale, and offers more status and prestige (L2, L3)	The assessment criteria utilised do not give the same weighting to teaching as to research. (L3, A) The number of promotional places available will depend on financial considerations rather, than the number and quality of staff applying. (L2, L3)	In the IoT sector there have been serious industrial relations issues in relation to the interpretation and operation of progression procedures from grades (L3, A)
Retirement	Institutions provide pre-retirement programmes for staff, detailing welfare and revenue items. (L3) Some retirees retain contact with the institute through part-time work. (L3)	Staff who are nearing retirement age can become de-motivated and unwilling to take on new challenges and responsibilities. (L3) Retirees who take on part-time hourly paid work reduce the opportunities for new staff to gain experience. (L3, A)	Setting a statutory age for retirement may be considered as a form of discrimination 'ageism', in some countries there is no age limit, retirement is based on output and performance (L2, L3)
Rotation	Rotation provides promotional opportunities for staff, allows new ideas to emerge from the new appointments and can be seen as a mechanism to reward excellence (L3, A)	New appointments may not want to make hard decisions because they while eventually have to return to their previous positions working with their colleagues (L3)	There is resistance to the introduction of rotation in the IoT sector particularly from staff who are already in prominent management positions. (L3)

The three evaluation matrices utilised a fourth generation evaluation (Guba and Lincoln 1989) process to construct meaning from the analysed data sets (interviews, survey and policy documents) by identifying clusters, categories and the main 'claims, concerns and issues' in these clusters. The clusters signpost the key areas of convergence within the data sets. The matrices provide the reader with a detailed account of the effects of the modernisation agenda from the perspectives of academic workers, academic managers and policy makers. The interpretation process utilised to construct the matrices was formative evaluation. The researcher also utilised *praxis,* the application of theory and experience of working in the HE sector. Finally, as mentioned in the policy model section, the researcher endeavoured to signpost components of the three proposed policy models in juxtaposition to the clusters and categories (claims, concerns and issues) in the evaluation matrices. This was achieved by using a labelling system to denote where any item within each matrix cluster and category could be located. Additionally, in order to identify whether academic workers had a substantial interest in an item, the symbol 'A' was utilised.

Final comment

In assessing the research approach utilised for this thesis it should be noted that research is a human activity limited by the knowledge, ideologies, value systems and culture of the researcher. However, the question is, did the research approach utilised in this thesis achieve what it set out to achieve? While it is difficult to give a short answer to this question, the question can be broadly addressed in the affirmative. The methodological triangulation of case study (Yin 1984) informed by evaluation (Guba and Lincoln 1989) and critical ethnography (Thomas 1993) worked well together. This was mainly due to the fact that the methodologies were compatible and located loosely in the interpretive paradigm. The mixed methods (Creswell 1998) approach of research interviews (Gillham 2007), policy analysis (Yanow 2000) and a survey (Sliverman 2008) allowed for a rich array of data to be gathered and provided depth to the analysis process. The most crucial component was the conducting of the research interviews. These interviews could not be confined to data gathering. Rather, they offered insights and raised critical questions that informed the overall research approach. The success of the research interviews

was assisted by the development of a robust and transparent code of research ethics which gave participants a degree of confidence and professional assurance. The online survey gave a representative voice to the data: it gave another level of meaning during the analysis. The 'text box' option under each question proved very successful in capturing new ideas and opinions. Overall, I considered it functioned well and eventually achieved what it was constructed to do. However, I would caution others who are considering utilising this approach that it is challenging, sometimes messy and very time-consuming, particularly during the interview fieldwork and the analysis stages.

From undertaking this research it has become clear that academic work has undergone substantial changes over the last decade. The stimulus for these changes seems to have emanated from both European and national policy initiatives relating to restructuring (Dale 2009) of higher education systems, programmes and work practices. The incentive utilised to facilitate the implementation of these change agendas was mainly monetary in the shape of funding opportunities or salaries issues. Other authors such as Deem (2004) have noted the UK government's policies including, reducing state funding to public sector HE are forcing IHE to find alternative funding sources. In a somewhat similar fashion Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) claim that the current HE policy strategy in the USA is based on the ideology of 'academic capitalism'. Furthermore, Dale (2009) terms the European higher education policy a master discourse of competitiveness. In this policy discourse a 'market system' has emerged in HE (Clark 1983). Washburn (2006) claims that this market model in the USA is creating a clear distinction between IHE which focus on teaching (colleges) or research (universities). Interestingly, Scott (1995) observed similar changes in the UK during the 1980s. However, he focuses on how policy makers undermined the power of the traditional university sector by creating the new universities (NewUs). The NewUs were keen to establish their position and implement the market-driven policy model advocated by the UK government. This weakened the university sector's position when it came to resisting the market model of HE. For the university sector however, non-compliance was not an option, to maintain its position, alternative strategies needed to be developed such as the RAE (see chapter2). In the Irish HE context there are similar sectoral differences in the implementation

of new policy initiatives. Like the NewUs in the UK the IoT sector is more apt to enact new policy initiatives while the university sector is more reflective and strategic in the manner in which it processes policy initiatives and the length of time taken to make decisions.

While the HE market model is not in full operation in the binary system (Scott 1995) in Ireland in 2010, there is, however, evidence of a growing market model culture characterised by reduced public spending on HE, the introduction of competitive funding policy initiatives and the deregulation of barriers between public and private or for-profits providers. Further, in the organisation and management of IHE there has been a shift in power towards what Altbach (1999) terms the administrative estate. From personal experience in the IoT sector the researcher concurs with the notion of increased administrative centralisation and the demise of the academic decision-making powers of senior academic managers such as heads of school. While this trend is occurring in the university sector it is not as pronounced as the structural shift witnessed in the IoT sector, particularly with the rapid growth of HR and finance units and their increased decision-making powers in relation to the management and functioning of IoTs. The implementation of government policy has increased sharply in the IoT sector mainly due the rise of administrative power (Noble 1998) and its instrumentality. This administrative power-surge has had a direct impact on academic work and pedagogical practices. Academic staff are perceived by the new administration as functional units who can be directed, manipulated and controlled, these units deliver the product (teaching) to the consumers (students). The advancement of knowledge and the social good of education are not within the thinking frames of the new administrative power holders. The new administrative power is authoritarian and instructive. Academics are expected to comply with the new instructive teaching and training environment. Dissent is treated with disdain (Ball 1994) and by the invoking of disciplinary procedures.

However, all is not lost. Just as the new administrative management power is reaching its peak there is a groundswell of academics who resent the utilitarianism of the new administrative order and who are organising forms of resistance to challenge this administrative power. As a humanist and

educationalist, I am fully supportive of the view that higher education must place the development and protection of people and their social and humanitarian needs before profit and the economic imperative. As an academic worker, I am actively engaged in resisting the doctrine of the economic imperative and the Taylorist fetish for measuring and ranking human work. Rather, I advocate a social agenda that seeks to eradicate human suffering in poverty, inequality, discrimination and exploitation by actively engaging in teaching and research that can contribute toward the collective social good rather as opposed to the narrow interests of power elites. It is my belief that academic workers should be mindful of the political, social and cultural contexts in which their teaching and research activities are located. In critical cases, where decisions have to be made, academic workers should consider utilising the datum line of the social good to inform their decisions.

Finally, from engaging in this research process, which critically sought to explore policy, to assess its effects on practice and to evaluate academic workers' experiences, I have come to the realisation that academic workers keep the higher education system in Ireland afloat. This is despite the neoliberal policy agenda pursued by government departments, state agencies and the managerialist tendencies of senior managers in IHE, business organisations and trade unions. Academic workers daily solve the *micro* problems that policy initiatives pose. However, they do not get recognition for their innovative and creative work. Instead, the official 'mandarins' continue to confront academic workers, and the public sector in general, with dubious stories of poor quality work, inefficiencies and ineptitude. I would suggest that state officials and their political masters reflect and focus on the inefficiencies and corruption in their own ranks before they throw abuse at the public sector and academic workers. However, corrupt and dominant regimes do not engage in reflection. Rather they initiate ever more draconian procedures and policies. It is up to academic workers to criticise political discourse and challenge policy initiatives that threaten the social good of higher education, freedom of inquiry, freedom of speech and democracy.

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Appendix A

A1, Letter of invitation (research interview)

Copy of Tool 1, Letter of invitation (Date of issue 2006)

Invitation to participate in a research interview as part of the data gathering process for a Doctorate in Education dissertation for TCD.

Dear

I am carrying out an initial series of research interviews with higher education organisations and representative bodies for my D.Ed dissertation in the school of Education Trinity College Dublin (TCD) supervisor Dr Peter Conroy. The working title of this research is, *' The Dynamics of Human Capital and the Labour Process: Contemporary Higher Education and the nature of academic work: Descriptions, explanations and evaluation, a critical approach'*.

I would like to invite you to participate in a recorded semi-structured exploratory interview session, duration about 30-45 minutes, at a location and date of your choice. Details on ethical guide lines and the interview process are attached: I would just like to emphasis two important points here:

(1) Participants will receive a copy of the transcript from the interview to correct and authenticate,
(2) A Participant who consents to take part in the research may withdraw from this research project at any stage.

If you are willing to participate or need additional information please do not hesitate to contact me for Further, information.

Regards

Aidan Kenny
Project Manager,
DIT Skills Research Initiative.
Bolton Street Campus.
81 Capel Street.
Dublin 1.
Ireland.
Tel. 00353 1 4023757
Mob. (Deleted)
Email aidan.kenny@dit.ie

A2, Request and consent form (research interview)

Copy of Tool 2, Request and consent form (date of issue 2006)

Research Interview Request and Consent Form		
General Information	Research student	Aidan Kenny, Project Manager, Skills Research Initiative. DIT, Bolton St. Campus, 81 Capel St., Dublin 1. Tel. 402 3757, Mob. 086 1048449, Email, aidan.kenny@dit.ie
	Supervisor	Dr. Peter Conroy, Lecturer School of Education, Arts Building, Trinity College Dublin. D.1. Tel. 896 3583 Email conroypc@tcd.ie
	Programme	Doctor in Education (D.Ed)
	College	Trinity College Dublin.
	Purpose	Gathering of data for D.Ed dissertation
	Dissertation title	The Dynamics of Human Capital and the Labour Process: Contemporary Higher Education and the nature of academic work: Descriptions, explanations and evaluation, a critical approach

Please read the following statement and indicate your agreement by signing below:

I agree to participate in a recorded interviewed session with the above named research student under the following terms and conditions:

- Consent: the participant may withdraw consent to be interviewed or the usage of recorded material at any stage of the research process.
- Confidentiality: the original recordings will be made available upon request to my supervisor named above and the members of the examination panel.
- Anonymity: the authenticity of research is higher were the identity of the participant is detailed, However, it is acceptable for participants to request for their identity to hidden, the researcher may use their own academic judgement to hide a participants identity even if the participant agreed to be named.
- Review: the participant has the right to review the transcription from the interview and insert clarifications or corrections were necessary.
- Purpose: the recorded material will be utilised by the research student for scholarship and research relating to the pursuit of his D.Ed in TCD.
- Analysis: the recorded material will be transcribed, coded, categorised and interpreted in accordance with scholarly convents.
- Publication: extracts or the full content of the analysed material may appear in the dissertation, conference presentations, papers submitted to academic journals.
- Availability: extracts or the full content of the analysed material will be accessible from, the TCD library dissertations section, conference papers, academic papers and certain electronic repositories.
- Security: all recorded material will be stored in a secure place in a locked cabinet, the storage of electronic data will be password protected.
- Storage: recordings will be stored for three years post qualification, there upon they will either be deleted or permission for an extension will be sought from the participant.
- Not-for-profit: this is a non-commercial piece of academic research: the researcher will disseminate the findings on a cost neutral basis.

Participants signature **Date / /2006**

First name	**Address**	**Tel.**
Surname		**Email**

Thank you for consenting to participate in this piece of academic research.

Copy of Tool 3, Question schedule and process (date of issue 2006)

Semi-structured interview schedule.

Aidan Kenny, D.Ed Programme TCD, Email aidan.kenny@dit.ie, Tel 4023757

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this piece of academic research by signing the consent form. The format for this piece of research will consist of a recorded 'semi-structured exploratory interview', this should take about 30-45 minutes to complete.

Some general information:

This research is confined to the general domain of higher education, with a specific focus on the dynamic relationship between academic practice and policy and strategy. The preliminary intention is to gather data from several different perspectives, students, academics, managers, policy makers, representative organisations and other agents. Participants can state their own particular perspective.

The research process:

Before the interview: Participants are asked to engage in critical reflection from their own experience of any of the items listed below in the interview schedule prompt list. Participants can chose to focus on several items and new items can be added if they are considered to be relevant.

During the interview: Participants will be prompted to provide, descriptions, explanations and sources of relevant information. Participants will also be asked to evaluate areas of major interest to them and consider categorising them into the following three criteria:

'Issues' - areas that you think need to be and can be resolved.
'Concerns' - problem areas that need resolving but are extremely difficult.
'Claims' - areas of agreement and examples of good practice.

After the interview: A transcript of the interview will be sent to each participant to check for accuracy and add clarifications: the returned transcript will then become the data source for analysis.

Main items	Subcategories
Teaching	Teaching practice (students, lectures, workshops, facilities, etc.) Programme development (design, review, relevance, parties) Assessment practice (formative, summative, continuous, etc.) Systems (Quality assurance, modularisation, semesterisation etc.) Scholarship and professional practice
Research	Research activities Autonomy to pursue research Research funding Research reviews Scholarship and professional practice
Career	Entry (selection process, induction, contract type, grade) Career (tenure, remuneration, promotion, opportunities, training) Exit (information, pension, planning, succession)
Other duties	Management (systems, units, programmes, projects etc.) Administration (records, reports, communication, storage etc.) Co-ordination (students, team, programmes, project etc.)
Voluntary activities	Relating to work (teaching, research, etc) External focus (sports, community, charity etc)
Your items	**Your subcategories**

Thank you for giving up your time and contributing to this piece of academic research.

Please note: during the interview you can request for the recorder to be paused at any point, this may be to allow reflection or to seek clarification.

A4, Brief CV (research interview)

Copy of Tool 4, CV (updated 2008)

Short CV : Aidan Kenny, 3rd year D.Ed student, school of Education, Trinity College Dublin.

Qualifications

08 **Doctor of Education,** third year, TCD.
05 **MSc. Education Training Management**, DCU duration 2 years (Final award 1.1).
03 **BA (Hons.),** DCU, duration 4 years (Final award 1.1),
02 **Dip. Humanities**, DCU, duration 3 years (Award 2.1.),
98 **Dip. Social Studies**, International Federation for Adult Education, award 1.1.
96 **Extra Mural Certificate in Youth Studies**, NUI Maynooth,.
94 **Extra Mural Dip. Community Arts and Development,** NUI Maynooth,.
88 **Senior Trade examination** department of Education and Science,
Advanced Craft examination, City and Guilds,

Membership of professional organisations

Graduate member of British Psychology Society (BPS)
Member, European Elevation Society (EES)
Member, The Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI)
Member, The Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE).
Member, Association for Learning Technology (ALT)

Work experience:

06-07 Project Manager, Skills Research Initiative, directorate of Research and Enterprise DIT.
03-06 Qualifications Framework Development Officer, Office of the Academic Registrar, DIT.
00-03 Lecturer, faculty of the Built Environment, school of Construction, Plasterwork Section.
99-00 Community Development Officer, Clondalkin Partnership Company.
97-99 Part-time teacher, faculty of the Built Environment, Plasterwork Section
95-99 Part-time resource teacher in Youthreach VEC, Rush Co. Dublin.
90-95 Partner in All Surface Plastering Ltd.

Other posts/nominations held

05-07 Internal Review Panel member for the validation of the following programmes: MSc/PgD Sales Management, MA Public Affairs, MSc Computer Science.
05-07 Member of the Academic Council Sub Committee on quality assurance DIT.
05-06 Facilitator to the EUA Steering Committee DIT
03-05 Nominated academic staff representative on the faculty Board of the Built Environment, DIT.
03-05 Academic staff representative on the Academic Council DIT the faculty of the Built Environment.
01-04 National Chief Expert, for the department of Education and Science National Skills Competition, Plasterwork.
03-04 Elected, International Deputy Chief Expert of the Worldskills Competition in Plasterwork by international experts in St. Gallen's Switzerland.
00-02 ITAC appointed, Subject Matter Expert in plasterwork, participating in: syllabus revision, drafting national exam papers for FAS in both Phase 4 and 6.
02-04 Elected Chair, Dublin Colleges branch TUI (second term),
01-02 Elected, Equality Officer, Dublin Colleges branch TUI.
98-00 Elected, TUI Representative for Linenhall school of Construction, DIT.

Publications

Journal (papers submitted)	Paper
DIT level 3 (Peer reviewed and published).	Kenny A., (2008) *Towards a critical ethics model to inform post graduate research.*
European Journal of Education Research (Peer reviewed, comment: revise and resubmit)	Kenny A. (2007) *Institutional quality reviews: A case study of the EUA quality review of DIT.*
Research into Comparative International Education (Peer Reviewed and Published).	Kenny A. (2007) *Evaluation: Emergence, mode of inquiry, theory and practice.*
DIT level 3 (Published).	Kenny A. (2006) *Descriptions of the EUA quality review of the DIT.*
DIT level 3 (Published)	Kenny A. (2005) *The quality Movement: discourse in the Higher Education sector. A general review.*
Education-Line (open access digital repository)	Kenny A. (2005) *Emergence of quality assurance in Irish Higher Education: review of European and national policy and description of the Dublin Institute of Technology practice*

Book review (published) The Journal of Adult and Community Education in Ireland (2007).

Review of Colleran N (2006) F*rom the Inside Out: Emerging perspectives in adult and Further, education in Ireland*, Tipperary (NR) Vocational Education Committee, Ireland,
The Journal of Adult and Community Education in Ireland (2007)

Article reviewer

Conference Papers	Paper
Collopium, The Scientist, Engineer, Architect as philosophically inform graduate professionals DIT	Kenny A (2008) *A reflective Pause: Artefacts of state and the praxis of vocationalised knowledge (paper presentation).*
European Evaluation Society International Conference 2006, London.	Kenny A., McNamara G., (2006) *Evaluation, Policy, Theory and Practice in the Education Sector.* (Paper presentation)
International Technology Education and Development Conference 2007, Valencia, Spain.	Kenny A., English R., Kilmartin D. (2007) *Key Skills Framework: Enhancing Employability In a Lifelong learning Paradigm.* (Paper presentation)
Critical Management Studies 5th International Conference 2007, Manchester.	Kenny A. (2007) The modernisation agenda: Performativity and labour in Higher Education. (Paper presentation),
Irish Education Studies Association 2007, Cavan, Ireland,	Kenny A. (2007) quality, *Evaluation: policy, theory and practice in the higher education sector* (paper presentation)
Irish Evaluation Network, Policy Institute TCD.	Kenny A. (2006) *Descriptions of the EUA quality review of the DIT* (paper presentation).

A5, Email invitation (online survey)

Copy of Tool 5, Online survey invitation email (date of issue 2008)

Invitation to participate in a D.Ed dissertation research questionnaire.

Please find below a link to an online survey, the questionnaire was constructed by a 4th year Doctor of Education (D.Ed) student in the school of Education, Trinity College Dublin (TCD).

Double click below to access the questionnaire:
http://FreeOnlineSurveys.com/rendersurvey.asp?sid=yzym6ge3k2ew3qs577180

The questionnaire explores 'academic work', the target group is academic staff and researchers working in Institutes of Higher Education as listed on the Higher Education Authority website (http://www.hea.ie/en/AboutHEA#Designated_Institutions). The topics covered in the questionnaire are: Teaching, research, career, Governance and 'Third mission' activities. The questionnaire consists of multiple-choice statements and should take about 20 minutes to complete.

Details on ethics and the instructions on how to complete the questionnaire are available at the start of the online questionnaire. If you have any questions, comments or would like to request a hard copy of the questionnaire to complete please reply in confidence to the email address below.

Please circulate this invitation to other colleagues in your institution who you consider may be interested in participating.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Kind regards

Aidan Kenny
4th year D.Ed Student.
Trinity College Dublin
School of Education,
2nd Floor, Arts Block,
Dublin 1.
Tel. 01 402 3757.

A6, Information and instructions (online survey)

Copy of Tool 6, Online survey information for participants (date of issue 2008)

Research questionnaire for D.Ed dissertation, school of Education, TCD.

Dear Participant

Thank you for launching this online survey, the survey was constructed by Aidan Kenny a 4th year Doctor of Education student in the school of Education Trinity College Dublin (TCD). The purpose is to gather numerical data on academic work for inclusion in the student's dissertation research which is entitled, '*The Dynamics of Human Capital and the Labour Process in Higher Education*'. The dissertation research is supervised by Dr. Peter Conroy, school of Education (TCD)

Ethical statement: Participants are guaranteed anonymity. No participant's identity will be disclosed, responses to the survey will be considered confidential between the researcher and respondent. The researcher will be the only person to have access to the full data set: analysed data will be displayed in aggregated format. Data will be stored on a secure PC that has encryption protection. The data will be used for the researcher's dissertation and other relevant study activities. This is a not-for-profit piece of scholarly research. The final dissertation and follow-on academic papers will be disseminated freely through open access repositories and journals.

Instructions: While this is a detailed and relatively lengthy survey (over 120 items) it has been constructed to make answering as easy as possible, just click on the appropriate button. **It should take a minimum of 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire**. The questionnaire consists firstly of a brief profile section (Q1-10), this is then followed by range of multiple-choice statements which are grouped into five sections: Teaching (Q11-47), research (Q48-75), career (Q76-105), Governance (Q106-123) and Third mission (Q124-129). Based on your own expertise, experience and knowledge respond to each statement by clicking on the appropriate circle (Agree, Disagree or Don't know). If you have additional comments or explanations please write them into the text box provided below each statement (each text box can accommodate three lines of text). When you reach the end of the questionnaire just click Submit. The deadline for receipt of completed questionnaires is May the 15th.

Thank you for taken the time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix B (see attached CD)

B1, Published paper: Towards a model of critical ethics.

B2, Published paper: The dynamics of human capital and the world of work.

B3, Conference presentation: Where next? Mature Graduates

B4, Report: Where to next, mature graduates.

B5, Conference presentation: Tertiary Education Europe and Ireland.

B6, Issue paper: Towards a model of tertiary education.

B7, Report: Higher education and academic work.

B8, Published paper: Human capital and the world of work.

B9, Conference presentation: Human capital and the labour process.

B10, Conference presentation: DIT and VET in Ireland.

B11, Published paper: Research Capacity Building in VET.

B12, Conference presentation: Voice, text and artefacts.

B13, Conference paper: UNEVOC National Centre Ireland.

B14, Round table paper: Reflective pause.

B15, Report: UNESCO-UNEVOC Conference Ireland.

B16, Published paper: Evaluation: Emergence and mode of inquiry.

B17, Published paper: Employability and key skills.

B18, Published paper: Emergence of QA in HE.

B19, Published paper: The QA movement.