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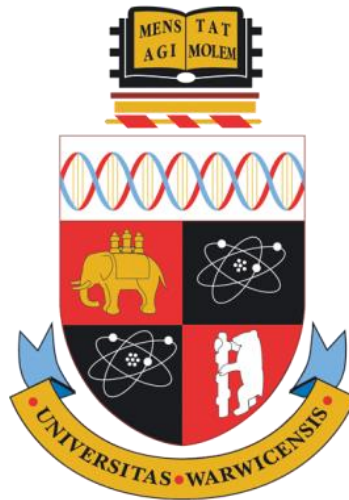
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# **Hybrid academic managers and the reconciliation of conflicting institutional logics**

by

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for the degree of

**Doctor of Philosophy**

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# Table of Contents

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List of Tables .....	7
List of Figures.....	8
Acknowledgements .....	9
Declaration and Funding.....	10
Abstract.....	11
Abbreviations .....	12
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	13
1.1. Setting the Scene .....	13
1.2. The Managerial Logic, the Consumer Logic and the Commercial Logic.....	15
1.3. Theoretical Contribution at the Micro-level of Analysis.....	16
1.4. Structure and Content .....	19
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	21
2.1. Introduction and Signposting .....	21
2.2. An Introduction to Institutional Theory .....	21
2.3. The Emergence of Institutional Logics .....	23
2.4. The Concept of Institutional Complexity at the Organisational-level .....	24
2.5. Managing Multiple Institutional Logics at the Individual-level .....	26
2.5.1. Replacing .....	27
2.5.2. Co-existing .....	28
2.5.3. Blending .....	30
2.6. The Concept of Institutional Complexity at the Individual-level .....	31
2.7. The Theoretical Framework of Institutional Work.....	34
2.8. The Theoretical Framework of Identity Work .....	37
2.9. Concluding Remarks .....	42
Chapter 3: Policy Developments.....	44
3.1. The Political Economy of British Higher Education .....	44
3.2. The UK Higher Education Sector: From the 1970s onwards .....	45
3.2.1. The Jarratt Report.....	46
3.2.2. The Research Assessment Exercise .....	48
3.2.3. The End of the Binary Divide .....	49
3.2.4. Publication of the First University Ranking.....	50

3.2.5. Russell Group Formation .....	53
3.2.6. Introduction of Student Fees .....	54
3.2.7. The National Student Survey .....	55
3.2.8. The Research Excellence Framework .....	56
3.2.9. The Stern Review .....	59
3.2.11. The Knowledge Excellence Framework .....	63
3.3. Concluding Remarks .....	64
Chapter 4: Research Methods .....	67
4.1. Case Selection .....	67
4.1.1. Personal motives for case selection .....	70
4.2. Philosophical Underpinnings: Interpretivism .....	70
4.3. Research Design .....	71
4.4. Data Collection .....	72
4.4.1. Participant sampling strategy .....	72
4.4.2. Data collection method .....	73
4.5. Data Analysis .....	76
4.5.1. Empirical (first-order) codes .....	77
4.5.2. Second-order codes .....	77
4.5.3. Aggregated, theoretical codes .....	78
4.5.4. Individual-level responses .....	78
4.5.6. Orientation towards the role .....	80
4.6. Establishing Trustworthiness of Data .....	82
4.7. Concluding Remarks .....	84
Chapter 5: Findings .....	85
5.1. Section 1: Individual-level Responses .....	85
5.1.1. The Managerial logic .....	86
5.1.2. The Consumer logic .....	104
5.1.3. The Commercial logic .....	121
5.2. Section 2: Individual Hybridisation .....	131
5.2.1. The Incidental Hybrid Academic Manager .....	132
5.2.2. The Willing Hybrid Academic Manager .....	135
5.2.3. The Transitioning Hybrid Academic Manager .....	138
5. 3. Concluding Remarks .....	141
Chapter 6: Discussion .....	142
6.1. Theoretical Contributions .....	144
6.1.1. Individual-level responses of hybrid academic managers .....	144
6.1.2. Individual hybridisation .....	152

<b>6.1.3. Pattern of responses across multiple institutional logics .....</b>	<b>156</b>
<b>6.2. Practical Contributions .....</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>6.3. Future Research .....</b>	<b>172</b>
<b>Chapter 7: Conclusion .....</b>	<b>176</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>193</b>

## **List of Tables**

\*\*\*\*\*

Table 1: Development from public policy to multiple institutional logics

Table 2: Managerial roles of interview participants

Table 3: Interview questions

Table 4: Explanation of individual-level strategies

Table 5: Strategies to reconcile the tensions between the professional and the managerial logic

Table 6: Strategies to reconcile the tensions between the professional and the consumer logic

Table 7: Strategies to reconcile the tensions between the professional and the commercial logic

Table 8: Explanation of individual hybrid types

Table 9: Orientation of incidental hybrid academic manager towards the role

Table 10: Orientation of willing hybrid academic manager towards the role

Table 11: Orientation of transitioning hybrid academic manager towards the role

## List of Figures

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Figure 1: Chronological timeline of the competitive arena

Figure 2: The progression from empirical data to more aggregated, theoretical codes in reference to individual-level responses

Figure 3: The progression from empirical data to more aggregated theoretical codes in reference to individual hybridisation

Figure 4: Reconciliation of the managerial logic across three hybrid academic manager types

Figure 5: Reconciliation of the consumer logic across three hybrid academic manager types

Figure 6: Reconciliation of the commercial logic across three hybrid academic manager types

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I certify that the thesis I have submitted for the Ph.D. degree at the University of Warwick is my work other than where indicated. The copyright of this thesis remains with the author. Quotation from the thesis is permitted, if full acknowledgement is made. This thesis may not be reproduced without my consent.

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## Abstract

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This study explores how hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools experience and reconcile the tensions of multiple institutional logics. Recent government policies initiating private sector styles of working have altered the conventional professional orientations of Higher Education institutions. As a response, universities in general, and Business and Management Schools in particular, have started to incorporate managerial thinking and market mechanisms into their core vision. To understand these shifting institutional demands at the micro-level of analysis, this thesis draws on 40 interviews with hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools. The findings of this study make three important theoretical contributions: First, this research demonstrates that hybrid academic managers employ a repertoire of six individual-level responses to engage in the reconciliation of multiple, conflicting institutional logics. Secondly, this study indicates a reconceptualisation of the individual hybridisation dichotomy, by differentiating between incidental, willing and transitioning hybrid academic managers. Thirdly, I provide an insightful analysis of how different patterns of individual-level responses vary across multiple institutional logics and across individual hybrid types. This offers important theoretical contributions, because it reveals more variation at the micro-level of analysis and advances our current understanding of institutional complexity in the field of Business and Management Education.

**Keywords:** institutional complexity; institutional work; individual-level responses; hybrid academic managers; British Higher Education; Business and Management Schools

## Abbreviations

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ABS list – Association of Business Schools list

ASQ journal – Administrative Science Quarterly journal

ESRC – Economic and Social Resource Council

HEFCE – Higher Education Funding Council for England

HR – Human Resources

KEF – Knowledge Exchange Framework

KPI – Key Performance Indicators

MA – Master of Arts

MBA – Master of Business Administration

NHS – National Health Service

NPM – New Public Management

NSS – National Student Survey

PRP – Performance Related Pay

QR funding – Quality related research funding

RAE – Research Assessment Exercise

REF – Research Excellence Framework

STEM subjects – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics subjects

TEF – Teaching Excellence Framework

UGC – University Grants Committee

WBS – Warwick Business School

# Chapter 1: Introduction

\*\*\*\*\*

This chapter provides an introduction to the research question of how hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools experience and reconcile the tensions between multiple institutional logics. First, this chapter will outline the political context of Higher Education in the UK today and discuss the emergence of different institutional logics, namely the managerial logic, the consumer logic as well as the commercial logic. Secondly, it introduces the most important theoretical frameworks of institutional complexity and institutional work to lay a common ground for further reasoning. Thereafter, this chapter will discuss how this study advances existing research in three ways by focusing on the way in which multiple non-conventional institutional logics are enacted discursively on the individual-level. Lastly, I will briefly outline the structure of this thesis and summarise the content of each chapter.

## \*\*\* 1.1. Setting the Scene \*\*\*

Over the last decades, the British public sector has experienced significant political and economic changes. Public service organisations have increasingly been affected by policy discourses and organisational practices that are associated with the ‘New Public Management’ (NPM) approach (Alexander et al., 2017; Deem et al., 2007). NPM has become a dominant paradigm of public administration and involves a bundle of radical changes including the ‘commercialisation, corporatisation and privatisation’ of the public sector (Parker, 2012: 248; Ferlie, 2017). This signals a fundamental cultural shift towards greater competition within and between public organisations, output focused accountability and a value-for-money philosophy (Parker, 2012; Alexander et al., 2017).

British universities have not remained immune to the pressures of this changing institutional landscape (Deem et al., 2007). Originally, universities have represented values of collegial governance, institutional autonomy and academic freedom as their guiding principles (Winter, 2009; Deem, 2004). Indeed, universities were first and foremost a place of learning, striving to generate knowledge for the sake of pursuing ‘intellectual truth as an end in itself, and, as such fulfilling a central and ethical role for society at large’ (Winter, 2009: 122).

However, the Higher Education sector has become subject to a series of direct and indirect modernisation endeavours by the government (Deem, 2004; Deem et al., 2007). These include a considerable emphasis on cultural changes to overtly manage academics and their professional work in the process of increasing marketisation, using explicit performance assessments as well as reducing the units of funding per student (Deem, 2004). This has had

profound consequences on how the system is funded, the need for public accountability of academics, quality audits and who has access to Higher Education (ibid; Willmott, 1995).

To address these developments, universities have started to reposition themselves in the academic environment. Thus, they have begun to transition from traditional, liberal institutions of ‘thinking and learning’ towards embracing increasing commercialisation and financial goals as guiding principles in their vision (Thomas et al., 2013: 56; Willmott, 1995). This has led to a cultural shift in Higher Education as the sector is ‘being transformed by the power and the ethics of the marketplace’ (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007: 8).

Particularly, Business and Management Schools are at the focal point of these challenges because they are amongst the largest and most important departments for institutional funding and external reputation (Mingers and Willmott, 2013). Nevertheless, they have increasingly been criticised for serving their research ‘as a commodity product, which is disjoint from the liberal pursuit of knowledge, a principle on which universities were founded’ (Thomas et al., 2013: 48; Willmott, 1995). It is argued that they are currently valued much more for their cash-generation abilities and financial power than for their academic vigour and scholarship (Thomas et al., 2013). This creates uneasy tensions and ambiguous positions for Business and Management Schools as they attempt to respond to the institutional demands in their environment (ibid).

To comprehend these institutional changes, this thesis draws on the concept of institutional logics as a meta-theoretical framework. Institutional logics are the basis of taken-for-granted social rules that guide the behaviour of field-level actors, and ‘refer to the belief system and related practices that predominate in an organisational field’ (Scott, 2001: 139; Friedland and Alford, 1991; Reay and Hinings, 2009; Battilana and Dorado, 2010). Drawing on the institutional logics perspective offers a valuable, analytical approach, to examine the connection and contradiction between macro-level institutions, organisational practices and individual actors (Battilana and Lee, 2014; Bishop and Waring, 2016). Recently, despite Business and Management Schools being one of the acknowledged success stories of Higher Education, there has been increasing criticism about their role and academic stature, as conflicting institutional logics have entered the field, transforming the work of Business School academics in accordance with NPM policies (Pfeffer and Fong, 2002; Thomas et al., 2013). The key institutional tension here unfolds between the conventional logic of academic professionalism, on the one hand, and the logic of managerialism, commercialisation and consumerism promoted by NPM, on the other hand.

### **\*\*\* 1.2. The Managerial Logic, the Consumer Logic and the Commercial Logic \*\*\***

The managerial logic describes managerial techniques that impose increased efficiency, greater managerial accountability and greater return on public investment (Nordstrand-Berg and Pinheiro, 2016). It provides the ‘underlying rationale for an integrated set of ideas, practices and mechanisms that can deliver the most efficient and effective forms of planning and organising work’ (Deem et al., 2007: 6). This signals various changes in the environment of Higher Education, most importantly increased performance management, which monitors, compares, measures and controls academic activities (Naidoo et al., 2011). With the introduction of assessment exercises such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF), academic performance is measured and benchmarked. It is intended to increase the research quality and productivity in the sector and plays an essential role in determining the institution’s access to research funding, its reputation and position in league tables (Ratcliffe, 2014).

The consumer logic invokes the conceptualisation of students as customers in the Higher Education sector (ibid). According to Naidoo and Jamieson, opening up the sector to market forces has led to consumerist principles to be applied ‘to one of the most important and intimate functions of Higher Education: the development and delivery of academic programmes’ (2005: 267). The emphasis here is on using academic programmes for the purpose of generating revenue. Hence, the Higher Education sector has adopted the instrumental system of production and consumption, shifting the burden of costs from the taxpayers onto students as consumers of academic knowledge (Khurana, 2007; D’Este and Perkmann, 2011).

The government’s rationale for introducing the consumer logic into the Higher Education sector has entailed the introduction of student fees and the intent to enhance ‘quality’ as the sector moved from an elite to a mass system (ibid; Deem, 2004). This is accompanied by various consumerist levers to enhance student choice and control over the educational process, including mechanisms for greater choice and flexibility, information on academic courses through performance exercises such as the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), the National Student Survey (NSS) or the institutionalisation of complaint mechanisms (Naidoo et al., 2011).

The commercial logic represents a growing emphasis of the government to utilise research outputs as an additional way to generate revenue. Rather than engaging in ‘blue-sky’ research, academics are increasingly seen to bridge the fields of academic scholarship and industry. Mechanisms to achieve this include, for example, engaging in spin out inventions, doing consultancy work, actively securing large research grants, or managing contracts with external business partners. According to Thomas et al., Business School research is increasingly

commercialised which is contrary to traditional visions of universities as ‘thinking institutions and generators of knowledge’ (2013: 52; Willmott, 1995). It appears that many universities have become ‘knowledge businesses’ that are not focused on generating public value for society but are rather concerned with providing services to specific stakeholders (D’Este and Perkmann, 2011; McKelvey and Holmén, 2009).

Thus, it becomes evident that the introduction of the managerial logic, the consumer logic and the commercial logic has had profound consequences on the governance and management of universities and Business Schools in particular. As a result, the sector experiences complex tensions between the traditional institutional logic of academic professionalism and the constant reconfiguration of institutional boundaries that is generated by the emergence of these non-conventional institutional logics.

### **\*\*\* 1.3. Theoretical Contribution at the Micro-level of Analysis \*\*\***

The emergence of these conflicting institutional logics within Higher Education indicates that the context is increasingly characterised by institutional complexity, ‘that is the presence of multiple logics with conflicting, or at least diverging, prescriptions for behaviour’ (Martin et al., 2017: 104; Greenwood et al., 2011; Kraatz and Block, 2008). The majority of contexts, including the field of Higher Education, experience competing institutional logics that often impose conflicting demands on organisational members (Pache and Santos, 2013). Surprisingly, however, most studies in institutional theory are much more attentive to the macro-level of analysis and largely ignore how these changes are interpreted at the level of the individual (Bévort and Suddaby, 2016; Pache and Santos, 2013; Bishop and Waring, 2016).

The absence of micro-foundations in existing research causes a state of theoretical inconsistency in the literature (Bévort and Suddaby, 2016). To tackle these shortcomings, an emerging stream of research has started to challenge the ‘macro-gaze’ in institutional theory by encouraging fellow scholars to ‘inhabit’ institutions with individuals (ibid: 18; Hallett and Ventresca, 2006; Hallett, 2010). Yet, the literature on institutional complexity, until very recently, has inclined to assume that organisations are composed of individuals who either comply or resist a given, dominant logic (Pache and Santos, 2013).

This simplified dichotomy, however, does not reflect the compound variations on the individual-level of analysis. This thesis aims to unravel ‘the more complex reality’ by responding to recent calls in the literature that we currently lack a systematic analysis of individual-level responses to multiple and competing institutional logics (Pache and Santos, 2013: 5). As individual-level responses are not straightforward to implement in pluralistic contexts, for example, in professional organisations such as universities, it ‘requires, on the

part of individuals, a combination of identity work and institutional work' (Pache and Santos, 2013: 31; Creed et al., 2010; Jarzabkowski et al., 2009).

The framework of institutional work situates institutionalism closer to what is happening on the ground, thus, reintroducing the somewhat neglected concept of agency (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Similarly, identity work, as a form of institutional work, describes the relationship between actors and the environment they operate in to explicate how they adapt to changes in the institutional orders around them (ibid; McGivern et al., 2015; Pache and Santos, 2013). Building on this, the thesis draws on the theoretical framework of institutional work, and partly on identity work, to explore the research question of *how do hybrid academic managers utilise different individual-level strategies to reconcile the tensions of multiple, conflicting institutional logics?*

This thesis makes three important contributions to our current understanding of institutional complexity by explicating how multiple non-conventional institutional logics are enacted discursively on the ground. First, my thesis aims to advance Pache and Santos' (2013) model which explores how organisational members react to two institutional logics. It is argued that the individuals' response is moderated by the degree of adherence to each logic as well as the degree of hybridisation of the organisational context. In combining these aspects, Pache and Santos developed a theoretical model, which suggests that individuals engage in five strategies to respond to two institutional logics in various scenarios. They contribute to the emerging literature on institutional change and attempt to predict which strategy organisational members are most likely to utilise to respond to two institutional logics.

My research complements Pache and Santos' (2013) conceptualisation of individual-level responses by empirically exploring how hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools engage in institutional work to reconcile the contradictions of multiple institutional logics. Hence, I advance their model in three ways. First, Pache and Santos provide a theoretical model to explain individual-level responses. Nevertheless, we currently lack an empirically-based understanding of how individuals engage in the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics. To my knowledge, this study is the first attempt to advance their model in a single, empirically-based context. Secondly, my study offers a more nuanced understanding of individual-level responses by extending their simplified framework towards exploring three institutional logics (the managerial logic, the consumer logic and the commercial logic). Thirdly, my research empirically explores a specific aspect of their proposed model by explicitly focusing on hybrid academic managers who fully identify with the conventional professional logic.



Thus, rather than attempting to provide an all-encompassing explanation for different institutional influences under different situations for different individuals, my research provides a nuanced account of how individual-level responses operate in the professional context of academia. In doing so, my research offers a more fine-grained understanding of the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics and contributes to the growing literature on institutional complexity at the micro-level of analysis (Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013).

By modifying and extending Pache and Santos' model (2013) empirically, I identify six individual-level responses that hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools utilise to reconcile competing institutional logics: *'fight'*, *'dispirited'*, *'deny'*, *'compartmentalise'*, *'accept and educate'* and *'combine'*. In doing so, my research provides empirical evidence of individual-level responses and demonstrates how hybrid academic managers respond to institutional complexity in their everyday work.

Particularly hybrid academic managers, who are professionals engaged in managing the work of their occupational peers, are situated at the heart of institutional contradictions (Fitzgerald and Ferlie, 2000; McGivern et al., 2015). Historically, professionals have attempted to resist novel ways of organising professional work that challenges their dominance and autonomy (Mintzberg, 1989; McGivern et al., 2015). In the current context, however, their role is framed by traditional academic, managerial and market logics that have been diffused across the Higher Education sector (Deem et al., 2007; Winter, 2009).

The existing literature on individual hybridisation suggests that some professionals reluctantly and others willingly enact hybrid roles (Kitchener, 2000; McGivern et al., 2015). These types of hybrids are framed as 'incidental' and 'willing' hybrids. Incidental hybrids are often only temporarily in hybrid roles, maintain their personal and professional identities and aim to protect traditional professionalism (McGivern et al., 2015). In contrast, willing hybrids enthusiastically seek hybrid roles in an attempt to reconceptualise outdated professionalism (ibid). This conceptualisation provides a foundation to understand how individuals claim hybrid roles and how they maintain or hybridise professionalism in managerial organisational contexts (ibid).

My study enhances the existing research on the hybridisation of professionalism, by moving beyond the incidental/willing role claiming dichotomy that has been suggested by earlier studies (McGivern et al., 2015; Winter, 2009). I do lend empirical support to the existing conceptualisation of individual hybridisation, but I advance this notion further. As my data indicates, the orientation towards the role suggests a progressive hybridisation whereby hybrid academic managers might transition from their original incidental position towards becoming a willing hybrid, often at their own surprise. Thus, becoming a hybrid professional manager

not necessarily begins with the conscious decision of an individual to willingly engage in a hybrid role, but rather involves an underlying, dynamic process of transformation. This *transitioning hybrid* type reveals more variation at the micro-level than initially assumed in previous studies. Thus, it is vital not only to acknowledge heterogeneity amongst institutional logics, but also amongst hybrid academic managers types to provide a detailed and more nuanced understanding of the reconciliation strategy at the micro-level of analysis.

Surprisingly, however, we know relatively little about how hybrid academic managers enact hybrid roles and how they engage in institutional work and identity work to reconcile potential institutional contradictions. The literature lacks a detailed and empirically-based account of the lived experiences of hybrid academic managers. By addressing this gap, my study makes a third valuable contribution and provides an insightful analysis of how the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics varies across different hybrid types. My data indicates that institutional actors are active participants in interpreting institutional pluralism (Currie and Spyridonidis, 2015). Thus, rather than responding to different logics in a homogeneous way, hybrid academic managers exploit their level of agency differently according to the level of institutionalisation of each logic. It demonstrates an interesting correlation between the individual-level response of hybrid academic managers and the level of enforcement of a given institutional logic. This suggests a significant development because it reveals more complexity at the micro-level and advances our current understanding of institutional complexity in the field of business and management education.

#### \*\*\* 1.4. Structure and Content \*\*\*

The **two** chapter provides a literature review of existing research and theoretical debates from the literature of institutional logics and institutional complexity more specifically. It analyses how the theoretical focus has moved from exploring macro-level changes towards concentrating on the micro-foundations of institutional theory. The literature on individual hybridisation, institutional work and identity work will also be discussed. This chapter identifies the research gap in the existing literature and explicates how my research question will advance our current understanding of institutional complexity in business and management education.

The next chapter, chapter **three**, contextualises the competitive arena of Higher Education today. It provides a comprehensive overview of the most relevant policy changes, beginning with Thatcher's election in 1979 until the most recent proposal to introduce a Knowledge Excellence Framework (KEF) in presumably 2020. In doing so, this chapter serves as a necessary foundation to illustrate how different institutional logics have emerged and evolved in the field over time.

Chapter **four** explores the selected research methodology. The chapter outlines the research methods by discussing the sampling strategy, the data collection process and the data analysis procedure. I demonstrate the progression from empirical data to more aggregated theoretical codes. Additionally, this chapter provides a discussion of the philosophical underpinnings of this research and demonstrates theoretical and personal motives for selecting Business and Management Schools as a research context of this study.

The **fifth** chapter presents the empirical findings of this research. This first section is structured around the three main institutional logics, namely the managerial logic, the consumer logic as well as the commercial logic to demonstrate the individual-level strategies in response to each institutional logic. The second part of this chapter provides empirical evidence on three individual hybrid types, namely the incidental hybrid, the willing hybrid and the transitioning hybrid academic manager.

Chapter **six** provides a thorough discussion of the theoretical contribution of my study. It explicates how the findings of this study illuminate and advance theoretical insights of previous research. In more detail, it demonstrates how my thesis contributes to our current understanding of individual-level responses to competing institutional logics. The chapter also advances existing research on individual hybridisation. It argues that some individuals who originally only reluctantly engaged in the hybrid role, experience a progressive hybridisation by transitioning from being an incidental hybrid towards becoming a willing hybrid manager. Further, I demonstrate how the reconciliation varies across different institutional logics and across different hybrid types. The chapter also outlines the practical implications of my study for hybrid academic managers and policymakers alike. Lastly it discusses possible direction for future research to invite further questioning in the field.

Chapter **seven** concludes this thesis by summarising the most important aspects of this thesis. It outlines the purpose of this study again and highlights how the findings and contributions of this research advance our current body of knowledge of institutional complexity in the field of business and management education. Finally, the limitation of this study will be discussed.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

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### **\*\*\* 2.1. Introduction and Signposting \*\*\***

This chapter aims to provide a review of the literature on institutional logics and discuss related theories in the literature stream of institutional complexity, institutional work, identity work and individual hybridisation. This chapter illuminates the definitions and developments of institutional theory and then proceeds to discuss the emergence of institutional logics as a meta-theoretical framework. Thereafter the review explores the theoretical concept of institutional complexity examining the incompatibility of multiple, conflicting institutional logics. I will outline the theoretical inconsistency in the literature by analysing how scholarly attention has predominantly focused on the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics at the macro-level of analysis. Yet, we know relatively little about the micro-foundations of institutional theory (Hallett and Ventresca, 2006). To address this inconsistency, institutional scholars have recently focused on the theoretical frameworks of institutional work and identity work, which situates the individual at the centre of current debates. This chapter discusses the differences and connections of both framings and outlines the most relevant research accordingly.

Further, I will draw on recent studies on individual hybrids that explore how actors experience institutional contradiction in their everyday practices. Although there is a growing body of knowledge on individual hybridity in professional organisations, such as the National Health Service (NHS), it becomes evident that we currently have a very limited understanding of individual-level responses in other contexts. This leaves a significant research gap to explore how hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools experience and engage in the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics.

### **\*\*\* 2.2. An Introduction to Institutional Theory \*\*\***

The study of institutions has a long history in organisational theory (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). In the 1970s, an original approach to institutional theory emerged with the seminal work of Meyer and Rowan (1977). The authors focus on three concepts of institutional theory namely, institutional rules, legitimacy and isomorphism. They argue that the structural similarities of organisations are based on their efforts to conform to cultural myths and symbols in the institutional environment, which advances the legitimacy necessary for their survival (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Thornton et al., 2012). The need to conform to the requirements of external environments for legitimacy may cause the organisation to develop goals that are not part of their core technical missions (ibid; Sauder and Espeland, 2009). To

deal with these challenges, organisations have to decouple parts of their activities from their technical core (Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Thornton et al., 2012). Meyer and Rowan's perspective of institutional theory stands in 'stark contrast with earlier versions, which focused on the need to bring about consensus between the informal and formal forces of organisational structure and culture' (Thornton et al., 2012: 23).

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) further developed the argument of Meyer and Rowan (1977). They extend the focus of isomorphism from the societal-level to the organisational-level. The authors argue that once organisations are structured into an actual field, powerful forces emerge that lead them to become more similar to one another. The concepts that best captures the process of homogenisation is isomorphism (ibid). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identify three sources through which institutional isomorphic change occurs, which will now briefly be discussed successively.

The first one is labelled 'coercive', which results 'from the formal and informal pressures exerted on organisations by other organisations upon which they are dependent and by cultural expectations in the society' (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983: 150). As argued by Meyer and Rowan, organisational structures increasingly come to reflect rules institutionalised and legitimised by the state and, as a result, are increasingly homogenous within given domains (1977; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Secondly, they propose the mimetic process. This perspective argues that growing uncertainty encourages imitation as organisations tend to model themselves on those who are perceived to be more successful (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Townley, 1997). The last mechanism denotes to normative pressures, which primarily stems from professionalisation (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). In more detail, the authors argue that this can be accounted to two aspects. One aspect rests on formal education by universities, and the second aspect refers to the growth of professional networks (ibid). This analysis places cognition at the forefront of their orienting strategy and provides a valuable contribution to institutional theory (Thornton et al., 2012).

Scott (2008; 2001) provides another valuable perspective for approaching the study of institutions. Scott defined that 'institutions are comprised of regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements, that together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life' (2008: 48). Scott's framework points out that institutions rest on three different 'pillars'. In more detail, the regulative pillar stresses rule-setting, monitoring and sanctioning of activities. The second pillar emphasises the normative rules that introduce a prescriptive, evaluative and obligatory dimension into social life. These normative systems stress 'appropriateness' as a central concept by imposing constraints on social behaviour, but also empowering and enabling social action (ibid). Lastly, the third pillar emphasises the importance of symbolic systems, that is the use of common frames, schemas

and other symbolic representations that guide behaviour (Scott, 2008). Hence, a key interest of Scott's framework is to understand how institutions relate to individuals through manifested rules, as well as the legitimacy and cultural-cognitive elements that affect what is taken to be relevant (Abdelnour et al., 2017).

### **\*\*\* 2.3. The Emergence of Institutional Logics \*\*\***

Friedland and Alford's (1991) seminal essay, together with later work by Thornton and Ocasio (1999) created a new approach to institutional theory by positioning the concept of institutional logics at the centre of analysis. Friedland and Alford (1991) stress that the core institutions of Western society – the capitalist market, the bureaucratic state, families, democracy, and Christian religion – each has a central logic that constrains both the means and ends of individual behaviour and are constitutive of individuals, organisations and society (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008).

These institutions are potentially contradictory and, hence, make multiple institutional logics available to individuals and organisations (ibid). The authors argue that 'some of the most important struggles between groups, organisations and classes are over the appropriate relationships between institutions and by which institutional logics different activities should be regulated and to which category of persons they apply' (Friedland and Alford, 1991: 256). Individuals and organisations transform the institutional relationships of society by exploiting these contradictions (ibid).

Thornton and Ocasio (1999) provide a similarly valuable conceptualisation of institutional logics. They stress that institutional logics are 'the socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organise time and space and provide meaning to their social reality' (Thornton and Ocasio, 1999: 804). According to these definitions, institutional logics are both material and symbolic – they are formal and informal rules constituting 'a set of assumptions and values about how to interpret organisational reality, what constitutes appropriate behaviour, and how to succeed' (ibid: 804; Jackall, 1988).

The two definitions of institutional logics both presume a core meta-theory – to understand individual and organisational behaviour (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). This is not possible without locating it in a social context, and this context both regulates behaviour and provides an opportunity for agency and change (ibid). The institutional logics perspective shares an interest with Meyer and Rowan (1977) and DiMaggio and Powell (1983) to explore how cultural rules and cognitive structures shape organisational structures, but it does differ in two ways (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008).

First, the institutional logic perspective shifts the centre of attention away from isomorphism towards the effect of different institutional logics on individuals and organisations in a number of contexts including markets, industries and different organisational forms (ibid). Secondly, it assumes that institutional logics shape mindful and rational behaviour and individual and organisational actors have some hand in forming and changing these institutional logics (ibid).

#### **\*\*\* 2.4. The Concept of Institutional Complexity at the Organisational-level \*\*\***

Since the conceptual development of institutional logics, there has been a growing interest in this research domain (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008; Greenwood et al., 2011). Scholars have mostly focused their attention on how multiple logics can be managed at the organisational-level of analysis (Oliver, 1991; Pache and Santos, 2010). When the philosophies and values of logics complement each other or cohere, organisations may work with institutional pluralism to ‘gain endorsement from important referent audiences’ (Greenwood et al., 2011: 318; Dunn and Jones, 2010). However, when multiple logics are fundamentally conflicting, the apparent unity between contradictions cannot be sustained over time (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2005).

Supporting, Pache and Santos (2010) stress that increasing contradictory demands make compliance impossible to achieve because satisfying some demands requires resisting others. Such conflicting institutional demands are much more likely to emerge in fragmented fields, such as the Higher Education sector, as ‘universities rely on and are responsive to a number of uncoordinated constitutes’ (ibid: 457).

Pache and Santos (2010) make a valuable contribution by proposing that the incompatibility of institutional demands may differ either by the goals they aim to pursue or by the means they prescribe. Although Pache and Santos present these categories as being discrete, they also acknowledge the possibility of overlapping. The first point of discussion refers to a situation where the organisation agrees on its goals yet disagrees on which means should be put in place to pursue those goals. The second perspective focuses on the conflicts over goals, meaning that there is a disagreement about the goals an organisation should achieve. Arguably, this conflict is more challenging to resolve because it threatens the core mission of what the organisation is about (ibid).

Their paper provides foundational work to understand the increasing impact of conflicting institutional pressures on organisational processes. However, as Pache and Santos stress, ‘while institutional scholars acknowledge that organisations are often exposed to multiple and sometimes conflicting institutional demands, existing research makes no systematic predictions about the way organisations respond to such conflict’ (2010: 455). The authors have aimed to address this gap by discussing the extent to which conflicting demands permeate organisations (ibid).

Greenwood and colleagues (2011) advance this line of thought further to understand how organisations respond to multiple logics, which may or may not be mutually compatible. In their seminal work, Greenwood et al., (2011) introduce the term ‘institutional complexity’ by arguing that ‘organisations face institutional complexity whenever they confront incompatible prescriptions from multiple institutional logics’ (2011: 317). The authors use University science departments as an example. It is stated that these departments ‘function in a context where the logics of science and commerce are both in play and yet prescribe different behaviours – such as open publication and the pursuit of knowledge versus the propriety retention and commercial exploitation of research results’ (Greenwood et al., 2011: 318). As Greenwood et al., (2011) stress, characteristics of the organisation, such as its field position, structure, ownership, governance and identity, can make it particularly sensitive to particular logics and less so to others. These characteristics will now be discussed in turn.

According to Greenwood et al., (2011) there had not, at the time, been any studies that directly examine the structural field position of an organisation in relation to institutional complexity. Hence, the authors rely on the concept of ‘periphery’ (Leblebici et al., 1991). They argue that organisations positioned at the periphery of a field are less likely to experience the same intensity of institutional complexity as their counterparts that are more centrally located. Periphery organisations are less connected to other organisations from whom appropriate behaviour might be learned, and they are more disadvantaged by existing arrangements (Greenwood et al., 2011). Hence, the periphery field position tends to provide them with more flexibility and discretion in responding to institutional complexity (ibid; Phillips and Zuckerman, 2001; Racko et al., 2017).

In contrast, organisations that are located in a network position that bridges fields exposes actors to ‘inter-institutional incompatibilities, increasing their awareness of alternatives’ (Greenwood et al., 2011: 341). Correspondingly, institutional pressures do not just enter an organisation, but they are rather interpreted and given meaning to by actors (ibid). What follows is the assumption that the more complex an organisation is, the more likely it is to experience institutional complexity (ibid).

Furthermore, the ownership and governance of an organisation can be seen as an important factor to determine its sensitivity to institutional complexity. This is based on the argument that, within an organisation, some individuals or groups might be more influential than others (ibid). For example, in a study by Lounsbury (2001) publicly funded universities strategically align their response to the preference of governments and public agencies from whom they receive funding. Thus, an ‘organisations response to institutional complexity will be affected by its dependence upon important institutional actors’ (Greenwood et al., 2011: 345).



Greenwood and his colleagues (2011) categorise potential responses as either focusing on the organisational strategies or the organisational structures. Studies seeking to explore the ‘strategy’ that organisations adopt to respond to institutional complexity focus on ‘whether and to what extent organisations embrace prescriptions urged upon them by field-level referent audiences and seek to explain how those preferences are determined’ (Greenwood et al., 2011: 348). One of the most prominent studies following that line of thought is Pache and Santos’ (2010) article, which has been discussed above. However, most studies, imply that organisations embrace single and sustainable responses (Greenwood et al., 2011). To put it differently, almost all studies, explain what logics are the ‘winners and why. But organisations also have to manage the losers. Yet, we have little appreciation of how they do so’ (ibid: 351).

A different approach to exploring how organisations respond to institutional complexity is by examining how multiple logics are reflected in the organisational ‘structure’. Hereby, the authors differentiate between ‘blended’ and ‘structurally differentiated’ hybrids. The blended hybridisation stresses the attempts to combine or layer practices taken from different logics into a single organisation (Greenwood et al., 2011). Secondly, in the structurally differentiated hybrid, separate subunits deal with different logics ‘essentially dividing an organisation into different mindsets, normative orders, practices and processes’ (ibid: 354). Greenwood et al. (2011) highlight the example of universities as structural hybrids. Universities are legitimate only if they use hybrid structural arrangements, presenting multiple professional disciplines and balancing professional and commercial goals. They are expected to embrace the norms and values of the market logic, both in relation to students and to the community they are situated in (ibid). Despite the long-lasting interest in this matter, the number of empirical research on structural hybrids is relatively limited (ibid).

### **\*\*\* 2.5. Managing Multiple Institutional Logics at the Individual-level \*\*\***

Nevertheless, many scholars have made important contributions to the literature of institutional logics by advancing our understanding of how organisations respond to institutional complexity. Yet, most research has treated institutions as macro-cultural mechanisms with little consideration for how institutions are ‘inhabited’ by individuals (Scully and Creed, 1997; Hallett and Ventresca, 2006). An emerging community of scholars has started to address this gap by focusing their attention on the micro-foundations of institutional theory (Hallett, 2010; Hallett and Ventresca, 2006; Binder, 2007). They have proposed different ways in which individuals manage multiple institutional logics; replacing one logic with another, compromising on the co-existing of multiple institutional logics, or blending them over time. These will now be discussed successively.

### **2.5.1. Replacing**

Rao et al., (2003) focus on the individual-level of analysis by examining how institutional change occurs in the context of French cuisine. In contrast to Meyer and Rowans' (1977) and DiMaggio and Powells' (1983) assumption that organisations resemble each other and indicate little diversity, Rao and colleagues (2003) follow the 'pillar' framework of Scott (2001) by arguing that institutional change can occur in three ways. First, through the formation of an institution or the birth of a new logic, secondly through the dissolution of an existing logic or thirdly, as in their empirical case, through replacement. The latter refers to re-institutionalisation where an existing logic is replaced by a new one. In their article Rao et al., (2003) explore the case of replacement by examining how existing institutional logics and role identities are replaced by new logics and role identities.

Their study explores how multiple professional logics in French cuisine – haute and nouvelle – set the stage for identity shifts of individual chefs (Rao et al., 2003; Thornton et al., 2012). Rao et al., (2003) undertake a longitudinal study of elite chefs by interviewing leading professionals in the field to develop an analytical narrative of the nouvelle cuisine movement. Their article draws upon social movement theory to explore how professional chefs facilitate shifts in logics by critiquing a dominant logic and role identity as constraining and celebrating a new professional logic and role identity as enhancing autonomy (ibid).

Hereby the new, nouvelle logic and the role identity was represented by five dimensions namely, culinary rhetoric, rules of cooking, archetypal ingredients used, the role of the chef, and the organisation of the menu. The culinary rhetoric of nouvelle cuisine emphasises innovation and the role of the chef was reframed to that of an innovator, creator and owner (ibid). As Rao et al., state 'chefs under classical cuisine lacked the freedom to create and invent dishes, and the nouvelle cuisine movement sought to make chefs into inventors rather than mere technicians' (2003: 805). Despite this enthusiastic remark chefs realised that embracing nouvelle cuisine was risky, so they paid keen attention to other elite chefs and whether they were able to gain reputation and Michelin stars as a result of their change (ibid). Culinary journalists sympathetic to the nouvelle cuisine played an important role in creating a shared symbolic environment for chefs and the public to appreciate the new logic and identity (ibid). Such theorisation made 'the new logic and identity comprehensible and fostered a shared understanding of what a chef is' (ibid: 820). Hence, this article offers a valuable account of how role identity movement leads to institutional change by replacing one logic and role identity, with another logic and another role identity. Yet, individuals may not always be able and willing to be guided by a single institutional logic. Particularly within professions that operate in multiple institutional spheres individual often have to deal with plural logics simultaneously (Dunn and Jones, 2010).

### **2.5.2. Co-existing**

Dunn and Jones (2010) examine medical education, the supplier of medical professionals, which is situated at the nexus between academia and healthcare. In their empirical work, they focus on two logics central to the profession that co-existed over time – the institutional logic of care and the institutional logic of science. The context of professional education is particularly striking because it offers a key site for struggles that may reveal what causes change in the broader profession as it shapes the values, assumption and identities of the next generation (ibid).

Dunn and Jones (2010) argue that plural logics co-evolve within a profession over time. Their findings indicate that the care logic and the science logic co-exist, moving through various phases of balance and imbalance. The imbalance of science and care was accelerated by the increasing number of Medical Schools that focused on producing primary care physicians rather than physicians who take a scientific approach to medicine, decreasing the prevalence of the science logic in medical education (ibid). Although these new Schools challenged the dominant scientific approach, the practice of medicine relies on both science and care and it is, therefore, unlikely that one logic could dominate for very long (Dunn and Jones, 2010). The authors take this assumption one step further by proposing that maybe ‘all profession have a similar breakdown between a logic that guides their expert knowledge and a logic that guides their practice’ (Dunn and Jones, 2010: 140). Although this provokes an exciting viewpoint, further theoretical and empirical exploration is clearly required to understand how this would precisely unfold on the ground.

Reay and Hinings (2009) provide a similar argument of logics co-existence. Their study is based in the Alberta Healthcare sector where the Canadian government introduced a new logic of business-like health care. Although the logic of business-like healthcare and the logic of medical profession are competing, and each is associated with a different set of behaviour, the logics continue to co-exist, and neither one can be considered dominant (ibid). This led Reay and Hinings (2009) to examine how the rivalry associated with competing logics is managed and how actors in the field can carry out their day-to-day activity.

The authors argue that in order to do the required work, physicians and managers used four mechanisms to manage the rivalry of the logics that allowed them to work collaboratively even though they were guided by different logics (ibid). The first mechanism was centred around differentiating medical decision-making from other decisions RHA’s (Regional Health Authorities) are involved in. Because neither party could accomplish their work without the other, they started to develop new decision-making strategies which recognised the RHA’s legal obligation and incorporated physician's opinion on medical issues (ibid).

Secondly, after several years documents and meetings started to reflect some degree of respect and appreciation of each other's knowledge. Thirdly, RHA's started to develop a distinct identity and distinguished themselves as somewhat independent and not simply as representatives of the government's agenda. As a result, their relationship improved, and they started to form an alliance on small projects 'to get something' from the government (Reay and Hinings, 2009: 641). This was important because it showed that RHA's would publicly support physicians (ibid). Lastly, physicians and RHA's started to develop joint initiatives, for example, the creation of inter-professional teams. The important component of these initiatives is that they were developed and supported cooperatively by the physicians and the RHA (ibid). Overall, these mechanisms have resulted in organisational structures that allow both the medical logic and the business-like logic to co-exists.

The argument of institutional compromise among logics is further advanced by Nicolini and colleagues (2016) who offer an interesting comparative historical study of community pharmacists in the UK, the US, Sweden and Italy. The authors examine what happens to institutional arrangements designed to resolve an ongoing conflict among institutional logics over an extended period of time.

As discussed earlier, prior work on institutional logics tended to frame the relationship of logics regarding domination where one logic exists only until the winning dominant logic becomes prevalent in the field (Nicolini et al., 2016). More recent research, such as Dunn and Jones (2010) or Reay and Hinings (2009) discussed above, argue for the co-existence of logics. Nicolini and his colleagues challenge and advance these insights by introducing the concept of 'institutional knots' to 'identify temporary forms of institutional compromise in which logics are woven together while remaining clearly identifiable' (2016: 229).

Their data, which is built on a combination of interviews and historical document analysis, indicates that the uneasy coexistence of different logics did not result in their blending. For example, notwithstanding the appearance of chain stores representing a corporate logic, the logic of professionalism continued to orient the practice of pharmacist in all countries studied (Nicolini et al., 2016). According to the authors, this issue can be explained by the concept of institutional knotting, which captures the idea that different threads making up a knot can remain visible and recognisable over a long period of time without creating a hybridisation of the dominance of a given logic. Hence, it is argued that 'knotting' is more than the struggle to 'agree to disagree', but it incorporates the creating and stabilising of institutional arrangements that involve agency and effort (ibid).

### **2.5.3. Blending**

Glynn and Lounsbury (2005), on the other hand, provide another important contribution by exploring how individual actors begin to blend multiple institutional logics over time. Drawing on an analysis of critics' reviews of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (AOS), the authors explore how broader shifts in logics shape the discourse of the critics and their subsequent judgement of performance. In more detail, the scholars examine a number of critical reviews in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* newspapers, which offered the only systematic and regular coverage of AOS performances (ibid).

According to Glynn and Lounsbury (2005), the Symphony Orchestra has recently experienced resource constraints, tied to a decline in government support and attendance. In response to these pressures, the Orchestra has increasingly relied on modern 'pop' and 'mainstream' interpretations of classical music, 'creating a cultural threat to the pure canon of highbrow music associated with the Symphony' (Glynn and Lounsbury, 2005: 1033; Glynn, 2002). In line with previous reasoning of institutionalist scholars arguing that shifts in logics are often the result of external shocks, the blending of aesthetic and market logics became salient as a result of a critical event – the musicians strike (Glynn and Lounsbury, 2005). This has caused a blurring of the dominant aesthetic logic in the field, leading to the dispute of what constitutes classical music (ibid). The impact of the musician's strike and the corresponding blending of aesthetic and market logics in the structure of the Orchestra was also discerned by critics in their reviews. Although critics tried to defend the traditional music genre, the language shifted in their reviews when the market logic became more prevalent (ibid). Hence, critics responded by blending more accessible aesthetic logics with the market logic (Thornton et al., 2012).

In summary, the reviewed papers provide important insights on how individuals manage multiple logics in a variety of ways. As indicated above, scholars conceptualise logics as originating within societal sectors such as professions, corporations, the market, the state, the family, and religion whereby individuals and organisations regularly interact on shared rules and beliefs (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Thornton, 2004). Scholars often rely on a reduced explanation of multiple institutional logics by conceptualising change in logics as replacement, whereby one dominant logic that drives field-level practices is abandoned, and another dominant logic takes its place (Dunn and Jones, 2010; Greenwood et al., 2011; Reay and Hinings, 2009). This argument has just been discussed in the review of Rao et al., (2003) where a shift in logics was conceptualised as replacement.

However, from an analytical point of view, the literature developed further. Research has increasingly focused on contexts where multiple logics are concurrent, at least for a limited period of time. This became evident in the discussed studies by Dunn and Jones (2010) examining the co-existence of logics in the field of medical education as well as Reay and

Hining's (2009) research on the Alberta healthcare sector. Nicolini et al., (2016) further advance temporary forms of institutional compromise. Lastly, Glynn and Lounsbury's (2005) research on the Alberta Orchestra explores how critics are shaped by broader shifts in institutional logics. It suggests a slight blending of the market and aesthetic logics, although individuals attempted to maintain the boundaries around traditional music genres. The literature review now moves on to explore the theoretical concept of institutional complexity at the individual-level examining the incompatibility of institutional logics and the corresponding consequences for individual-level responses.

### **\*\*\* 2.6. The Concept of Institutional Complexity at the Individual-level \*\*\***

There has been a growing interest in the phenomena of institutional complexity, as discussed above (Pache and Santos, 2010; Greenwood et al., 2011). Yet, most research has focused on organisational-level responses to these contradictory pressures and neglected how local actors experience and manage this complex terrain (McPherson and Sauder, 2013; Kraatz and Block, 2008). A notable exception includes McPherson and Sauder (2013) who explore how institutional complexity is handled by individual actors in their everyday practice.

McPherson and Sauder (2013) offer an interesting conceptualisation of individual responses and contribute to the recent micro-level inquiries into the ways in which actors manage institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011). Their ground-level perspective aims to challenge the institutional theory's conventional assumption that actors strictly adhere to their home group's dominant logic (McPherson and Sauder, 2013). Rather, it is argued that individuals have a 'home' logic and can simply 'hijack' the logic of others to strengthen their influence on organisational outcomes (ibid).

Drawing on an ethnographic study of a drug court, their study develops a micro-level account to explore how logics are enacted in day-to-day activities. There are four distinct institutional logics that were regularly invoked. The first one refers to the logic of criminal punishment, representing the field-level logic of the state, which focuses the attention of the drug court on the participant's respect for authority (McPherson and Sauder, 2013, Thornton, 2004). The second logic symbolises the logic of rehabilitation, which represents a relatively new cultural view on how the legal system should handle criminal issues such as substance abuse. It is argued that this logic is tightly coupled to the individual's ability to enact change in therapy and treatment facilities. Thirdly, the logic of community accountability is oriented towards the interest of the public. It implies that the drug court is accountable for the community at large. Lastly, the fourth logic refers to the logic of efficiency as the drug court frequently discussed the pressures to work efficient and 'get results' (McPherson and Sauder, 2013: 175).

McPherson and Sauder (2013) analyse the discussion of team meetings to measure the frequency with which the logics were used. The findings indicate that, although individuals may favour the use of their home-logic, their institutional background does not at all determine the type of argument they make and how they employ a certain logic (ibid). The authors take this line of reasoning one step further by arguing that ‘in this sense, the comparison of logics to tools seems apt: logics very much resemble implements that can be used by whoever picks them up and used in ways that suit the purpose at hand’ (McPherson and Sauder, 2013: 178). Although McPherson and Sauder (2013) retrieve this flexibility later by stating that not every logic can be used in every situation as their application is constrained by norms and impersonal skills, they make a significant contribution to our current understanding of how actors manage institutional complexity to influence organisational outcomes.

Hence, the growing body of knowledge on individual-level responses suggests that the degree to which individual actors adhere or resist competing institutional logics shapes how organisations respond to them (Pache and Santos, 2013). Taking a closer look, however, suggests more complexity and variation on the ground (ibid). We need to move beyond the simple resistance/compliance dichotomy and acknowledge that individuals may ‘indeed strongly adhere to a logic or strongly resist it, but they may also be indifferent to it or comply with it without necessarily holding on to all of its core tenets’ (Pache and Santos, 2013: 5).

Pache and Santos (2013) developed a conceptual model of how individuals within organisations experience and respond to two competing institutional logics. The authors argue that depending on the degree of availability, accessibility and activation of a given logic, individuals may relate to the logic in three different ways.

Firstly, they may be novice to the logic which suggests that individuals have no or little knowledge about the logic in the first place. This lack of information ‘may occur when an individual has not been exposed to the logic and its associated demands nor has interacted with others exposed to them’ (ibid: 9). The second possible standpoint describes individuals who are familiar with a given logic, which often occurs through mediated social interaction (ibid). Although an individual may hold accessible information about the logic, the actor does not have strong emotional or ideological ties to it. Lastly, Pache and Santos claim that individuals may also be identified with a particular logic, meaning that the actor feels strongly emotionally and ideologically committed to it. According to the authors ‘such a relationship to a given logic is likely to develop when the individual has not only been socialised into the logics’ worldviews, but has developed, through training or experience, a connection to the logic which provides her with a positive sense of self’ (2013: 10). Pache and Santos stress that professions act as prevailing agents of logic identification and mention the above-discussed study of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra by Glynn and Lounsbury (2005) as a powerful example.

Individuals who are exposed to a single institutional logic can easily conform to its demands, but responses of individuals who are embedded in multiple, competing institutional logics reveal more complexity and variation because ‘complying with one logic may imply defying the competing one’ (Pache and Santos, 2013: 11). Thus, Pache and Santos argue that individuals have a repertoire of responses, which is richer than the simple rejection/compliance dichotomy usually proposed. This advances the oversimplification of relationships between two logics, which has often been portrayed as binary – compatible or incompatible (Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013). In doing so, Pache and Santos (2013) claim that actors employ the following five individual-level responses: ignorance, compliance, defiance, combination and compartmentalisation. These will now briefly be discussed in turn.

Ignorance suggests that individuals show no reaction to an institutional logic. It is not a conscious attempt of resistance, but rather refers to a state whereby actors are simply not aware of the logic itself. Compliance stresses that individuals fully adopt the values and norms of a given logic, suggesting a degree of agency as the individual complies with a given logic at the expense of another one. The response of defiance refers to the explicit rejection of the norms and practices of an institutional logic. This indicates a differentiation to ignorance because it entails an active awareness and disagreement with the resisted logic. Compartmentalisation suggests that individuals purposefully segment their compliance or rejection with competing logics. Whereas actors may fully support an institutional logic in one setting, they may actively resist it in a different context or at a different time. According to Pache and Santos (2013), compartmentalisation offers individuals a way to secure legitimacy by complying with two institutional logics even if they are conflicting. Lastly, the response of combination refers to the attempt to blend the norms and values of the competing logics, allowing individuals to deal with incompatibilities (Pache and Santos, 2013).

Pache and Santos further claim that these responses are moderated by the degree of hybridisation of the context. In more detail, this refers to the degree to which the context that individuals operate in is organised around a dominant logic and challenged by an alternative logic (low hybridisation) or whether individuals are exposed to multiple logics of similar ‘strength’ (high hybridisation) (ibid). The core argument of Pache and Santos rests on the idea that individuals’ responses to competing logics are driven by their degree of adherence to each of the competing logics, that is, whether they are novice, familiar, or identified with the logic.

Building upon the discussed factors, Pache and Santos develop a conceptual model to reflect the complex relationship between individuals and their institutional environment. They propose a grid model of individual-level responses that predict which response organisational members are likely to activate when they face two competing institutional logics. This is outlined as a function of individuals’ degree of adherence to each of the logic, as well as of



the degree of hybridisation of the organisational context. Their model suggests that whereas actors who are identified with a single logic are likely to resist change and resort to defence strategies in the face of competing logics, individuals who are identified with two logics are more likely to contribute to institutional adaptation and change (Pache and Santos, 2013).

It becomes evident that, ‘for the sake of clarity and parsimony’, their model provides a simplified view of institutional influences and neglect the repeated arguments in the literature that individuals may be embedded in more than two logics (Pache and Santos, 2013: 30; Friedland and Alford, 1991; Greenwood et al., 2011). Nonetheless, Pache and Santos make a valuable contribution to our current understanding of the micro-foundations of institutional theory because they offer a systematic, conceptual analysis of how individuals respond to competing institutional logics. The authors call for additional research to explore the micro-level work required to mobilise and sustain the responses of their model (Pache and Santos, 2013). It is suggested that individual-level responses ‘are not straightforward to implement in pluralistic contexts and require, on the part of individuals, a combination of identity work and institutional work’ (ibid, 2013: 31; Creed et al., 2010; Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006).

Thus, these theoretical frameworks become particularly important to advance our understanding of how individuals engage in the reconciliation of multiple, competing institutional logics. I will now continue to elaborate on the framing of institutional work and review the most relevant articles in that respect. Thereafter, this section proceeds to discuss the theoretical framing of identity work. Although identity work does not unfold as a central theoretical framework of this thesis, it can be regarded as an important aspect of institutional work because it conceptualises how institutions are affected by ‘constructing’ and ‘performing’ particular identities (Creed et al., 2010: 1337).

### **\*\*\* 2.7. The Theoretical Framework of Institutional Work \*\*\***

Despite the recognition that institutional complexity can arise ‘in – and from – everyday practices’, institutional responses to such complexity have largely been structural (Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013: 1283). The question of how actors are embedded in multiple logics and how such individuals get motivated and enabled to change the taken for granted practices that define them remains largely unresolved (Lawrence et al., 2009).

The theoretical framework of institutional work attempts to address this shortcoming. Institutional work describes ‘the purposive action of individuals and organisations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions’ (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: 219). It reintroduces the concept of agency into the institutional theory debate by suggesting that individuals have the ability to purposefully maintain or transform institutions (Battilana and D’Aunno, 2009).

The aforementioned definition suggests that institutional work can be grouped into three categories. The first one refers to an individuals' purposive action of *creating* institutions, which has received the most attention in the literature. Particularly in recent years, institutional entrepreneurship has become the phenomena of interest, which centres around 'organised actors who envision new institutions as a means of advancing interests they value highly' (Greenwood and Suddaby, 2006: 29; DiMaggio, 1988). Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) outline ten distinct sets of practices through which individuals engage in activities that have resulted in the creation of new institutions. This involves the reconstruction of rules, belief systems as well as abstract categorisation in which the rules and beliefs systems are altered (ibid).

The second form of institutional work involves individual purposive action to *maintain* institutions. According to Lawrence and Suddaby 'institutional work aimed at maintaining institutions involves supporting, repairing or recreating the social mechanism that ensures compliance' (2006: 230). Although this category has received considerably less attention in the literature, it still remains an important aspect of institutional work because on-going maintenance is certainly necessary to preserve institutionalised phenomena (ibid). Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) outline six types of institutional work that are directed at maintaining institutions, which can be summarised in the adherence of rule systems and the reproduction of existing norms and belief systems.

The third and last category of institutional work involves the purposive action of individuals to *disrupt* existing institutions. As individual interest may not be fulfilled by current institutional arrangements, they may consequently work to disturb extant set of institutions (ibid; Abbott, 1988). This might involve the undermining or fighting of mechanisms that cause others to comply with given institutions (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006). Surprisingly, we know relatively little about how actors engage in the disruption of institutional arrangements, because existing literature in the field has often assumed that institutions are disrupted through the creation and establishment of new ones (ibid). Although this only offers a limited account of the complex institutional work that individuals do on the ground, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) summarise the disruption by arguing that it either involves the disconnection of sanctions and rewards, the disassociation of moral foundations or the destabilisation of existing assumptions and beliefs.

Thus, it becomes evident that institutional complexity has been connected to institutional work insofar as it addresses the individuals' ability to create new institutional arrangements, maintain existing ones, as well as the possibility to disrupt them at the field-level of analysis (Lawrence et al., 2009; Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013).

However, despite the apparent connection between the two theoretical framings, scholars have paid scant attention to practical responses of working with institutional complexity (Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013; Jarzabkowski et al., 2009). One valuable exception includes Smets and Jarzabkowski (2013) who propose a model of institutional work and complexity by demonstrating how individuals construct the relationality of logics in practice. Their study employs an embedded single-case study of English and German banking lawyers to explain how individual practices compose and resolve institutional complexity. The authors stress to take agency and practice more seriously to incorporate a dynamic and relational perspective. This is based on the notion that institutional logics and their degree of internal contradiction are constructed rather than given (*ibid*).

Their research suggests that individuals resolve institutional complexity by moving through four different stages of reconciliation. In the first stage, banking lawyers tried to maintain strange logics separately. The persistence is neither mindless nor effortless, but rather pushes actors to ‘think beyond’ and be critical of their own practices (Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013: 1296). Individuals then move to the second stage where they constructed logics as contradictory because continuous confrontation makes a new logic and its practices harder to reject. In the third stage, individual actors then progress to construct logics as compatible, whereby they selectively recombine existing practices to complete specific tasks and mediate the pressure to get work done. Thus, Smets and Jarzabkowski argue that actors are not necessarily motivated by plans of institutional design, but rather ‘undertaking effortful and purposive improvisation in pursuit of a mundane goal: work task accomplishment’ (2013: 1300; Smets et al., 2012). As a last stage, banking lawyers construct compatible logics as complementary. To overcome the state of continuous improvisation, individuals expand their practice repertoire into formal structures and routines (Smets and Jarzabkowski, 2013). The authors claim that at this point, such work does not solely involve coping mechanisms, but is rather oriented towards creating templates of how to manage anticipated complexity in the future.

Their model offers a dynamic perspective on institutional complexity that explains how individuals construct the relationality of institutional logics in practice (*ibid*). It explicates how and when, individual actors’ recast institutional logics as more or less compatible (*ibid*). In doing so, Smets and Jarzabkowski (2013) address the under-appreciated role of practice to advance our current understanding of how individuals work with institutional complexity (Jarzabkowski et al., 2009).

## **\*\*\* 2.8. The Theoretical Framework of Identity Work \*\*\***

Identity work refers to ‘people being engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness’ (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003: 1165). Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003) emphasise the importance of the social and discursive context as being crucial for our understanding of identity work. In complex and fragmented fields, identity work may be seen as a consciously on-going process, whereas in contexts of high stability and change identity work may be a theme of engagement during crises or transitions (ibid). Thus, identity work is required to underpin identity construction and to manage competing institutional arrangements (Creed et al., 2010; McGivern et al., 2015).

Creed and colleagues (2010) provide an interesting account of how embedded actors are able to transform themselves through identity work. In more detail, they explore the antecedent micro-processes that individuals engage in to reconcile their experience of institutional complexity. Creed et al., (2010) advance our understanding of how individuals become change agents even though they are deeply committed to an institution. The authors draw on the experience of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) ministers in two mainline US Protestant denominations and demonstrate how these actors resolve institutional complexity through identity work. This offers a particularly fascinating and extreme research case because it highlights unique institutional contradictions as the social and moral judgments of GLBT individuals are often justified by the allegation that homosexuality is inconsistent and contradictory with moral tenets of most religions (ibid).

In exploring this context, the authors propose a theoretical model of micro-processes through which GLBT individuals regard themselves as institutional change agents in response to their experience of institutional complexity and marginalisation. The model highlights ‘identity reconciliation’, ‘role claiming’ and ‘role use’ as the nexus of identity work through which the experience of institutional complexity can be resolved (Creed et al., 2010: 1337). Individuals engage in ‘identity reconciliation work’ that enables them to claim and use their institutional roles in ways that challenge institutional norms (ibid). By ‘being the change’ individuals use their institutional role with the aim of creating a new inclusive church (ibid).

This conceptualisation offers an interesting insight into how individuals resolve the experience of institutional contradiction, by specifically highlighting the importance of embodied identity work. Creed and colleagues argue to extend the originally proposed framing of institutional work by Lawrence and Suddaby (2006), in the form of identity work. They suggest that ‘institutional work does not necessarily need to be aimed at either the creation, maintenance, or disruption of institutions, but can paradoxically involve more than one of these categories

at the same time' (Creed et al., 2010: 1337). This argument challenges prior research in the field, which has often assumed that institutional entrepreneurs create institutions, incumbents maintain them, and challengers disrupt them (ibid; Hargrave and Van de Ven, 2009).

Thus, institutions can be affected by the construction and performance of particular identities (Creed et al., 2010). Therefore, it can be argued that both theoretical framings operate at different levels of analysis. Whereas institutional work focuses on the wider field-level exploring how individuals transform or maintain institutions, the construct of identity work operates at the individual-level of analysis to examine the change in individuals over time. Identity work has thus been linked to the creation, transformation and maintenance of institutional arrangements (McGivern et al., 2010).

Therefore, identity work is increasingly regarded as an important form of institutional work because 'identities describe the relationship between an actor and the field in which that actor operates' (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: 223). According to McGivern et al., (2015), institutions provide the 'raw materials for identity construction and identities function as institutional logics, affecting how identities are performed and how people interpret institutions' (2015: 415; Chreim, et al., 2007; Creed et al., 2010). Identity work is thus important for our understanding of institutional work as institutions can be affected through the construction and performing of particular identities (ibid; Creed et al., 2010). Hence, actors can engage in identity work to resolve the experience of institutional contradiction and marginalisation (ibid).

As the interrelationship between identity and institutions requires further attention, McGivern et al., (2015) draw on the interrelated theoretical framings of identity work and institutional work. The authors build on the argument of Creed et al., (2010) by examining how hybrid manager-professionals in the British National Health Service claim and use their hybrid roles. This addresses a neglected aspect of the institutional approach, that is, the concern of who actually engages in institutional work and identity work. The authors zoom into these micro aspects by focusing on professionals in the healthcare sector. A 'professional' is an exclusive identity that has been developed and shaped through training and socialisation, creating social identity boundaries and enhanced careers (Exworthy and Halford, 1999; McGivern et al., 2015).

In more detail, their study explores how medical professionals in managerialist roles attempt to maintain and hybridise their professional identity in organisational and policy contexts that have been increasingly affected by managerialist ideas. This offers an interesting context to explain the way in which hybrids draw on professional and managerial institutional logics as part of their identity work, and consequently affect professionalism at the field-level of

analysis. Their study draws on comparable data from three studies of organisational change in the NHS: a study of the introduction of clinical appraisal (McGivern, 2005); a project on role enactment and service changes in cancer, diabetes, and maternity services (Fitzgerald et al., 2006); and a project investigating healthcare networks (Ferlie et al. 2010). According to McGivern et al., (2015) the similar design of key dimensions enabled comparability between these studies.

The healthcare sector offers a particularly interesting research context because professionals have historically resisted new ways of organising professional work that challenges their dominance and autonomy (Mintzberg, 1989; McGivern et al., 2015). Increasing managerialism and government policies diffusing managerial thinking into the public sector has caused professionals to experience institutional contradictions, with profound consequences for their professional role use and enactment (McGivern et al., 2015).

McGivern and colleagues examine ‘how and why professionals claim and use hybrid roles, how identity work is implicated in this, and the way hybrids draw on professional and managerial institutional logics as part of their identity work and consequently affect professionalism’ (2015: 414). So-called ‘hybrids’ are professionals engaged in managing professional work, and therefore, their roles are framed by both professional and managerial logics (ibid; Fitzgerald and Ferlie, 2000). However, as the authors argue, there is relatively little understanding about why physicians engage in hybrid roles and how professionals are able to deal with external forces (McGivern et al., 2015).

To address this gap, McGivern et al., (2015) develop a model emphasising that hybrids follow five role claiming narratives. These will now briefly be discussed in turn. The first narrative suggests that professionals had been volunteered by their colleagues and felt the obligation to do their ‘turn’ (ibid). The second narrative indicates that individuals engage in hybrid positions because they feel a sense of obligation in response to departmental or managerial issues. The third narrative locates hybrid roles as senior professional positions, dismissing its managerial component. For example, it asserts the professional identity, downplaying how the managerial position influences enactment. The fourth narrative describes hybrid roles as the attainment of hybrid identity work in previous careers. The final narrative suggests that hybrid roles are seen as unexpected mid-career opportunities (McGivern et al., 2015).

By empirically combining these narratives, the authors differentiate between ‘incidental’ and ‘willing’ hybrids. Incidental hybrids are individuals who represent and protect traditional institutionalised professionalism. They are only temporarily in hybrid roles and attempt to maintain professionalism. Willing hybrids are on the other side of the proposed dichotomy of individual hybridisation. It is suggested that willing hybrids have had positive experiences

with management and inter-professional working in the past (ibid). Thus, they develop hybrid professional-managerial identities, either through formative identity work or in reaction to professional role violations (McGivern et al., 2015).

This differentiation provides an important development of existing theory because organisational scholars have often presumed ‘that hybrids are homogenous, affecting professionalism and public organisations uniformly’ (2015: 425). By responding to repeated calls that we need to advance our current understanding of micro-level identities and institutions, McGivern and colleagues (2015) demonstrate more complexity and variation by suggesting a dichotomy of individual hybridisation.

Additionally, McGivern and colleagues (2015) examine how professionals ‘use’ hybrid roles to influence other professionals and consequently organisations. The authors argue that, on the one hand, incidental hybrids use their role to represent and protect professionalism. Willing hybrids, on the other hand, had to reconsider their own perception of good professionalism, reframing the patient's interest from the individual to the collective. Further, willing hybrids legitimise the use of managerialism and professionalism. They engage in personal identity work and develop a new understanding of professionalism by absorbing managerialism into professionalism (McGivern et al., 2015).

Hence, incidental hybrids maintain the personal and professional identity and professional norms and values whilst only temporarily in this role, often by obligation. In contrast, willing hybrids engaged in personal identity work that laid the foundation for ‘being the change’ (Creed et al., 2010) and enacted hybrid professionalism (McGivern et al., 2015). These insights provide an important contribution to our current understanding by examining the relationship between institutions, identity work and institutional work in order to shed light on how hybrids maintain and hybridise professionalism in managerial organisational and policy contexts (ibid). This provides an interesting account for why individuals might engage in hybrid roles in the first place, and how they then make use of their role.

McGivern et al. note hybrid roles in other contexts and emphasise, for example, the need to explore individual hybridisation of academic managers such as ‘Heads of Departments’ (2015: 427). They argue that more research is required to advance our current, limited understanding of how hybrid academic managers engage in the reconciliation of institutional contradiction. To this date, the literature lacks a systematic analysis of how hybrid academic managers experience and reconcile the tension between multiple institutional logics, because ‘it is rare that academics study the lived realities of their own organisations’ (Clarke et al., 2012: 7; Alvesson et al., 2008).

A notable exception includes Deem et al., (2007) who provide an interesting account of the changing management of UK universities. Their study aims to acquire more knowledge about how manager-academics perceive the changing accounts of current University management as well as contributing to future policy on the selection and training of academics (ibid). The research relied on qualitative methods and data generation. In more detail, it is based on three stages of data collection.

The first one involved twelve focus group discussions with academics, managers and administrators from the UK learned societies and professional bodies. The second stage involved semi-structured interviews with manager-academics and senior administrators in a number of universities. In the final stage of the project, detailed case studies of the cultures and management of four universities enabled comparison of the views of manager-academics with those of academics and support staff.

The authors provide a detailed account of their results by illustrating the findings of each phase of their data collection, irrespectively. In stage one, which refers to the focus group, their research suggests that the UK Higher Education system is now highly managerial and bureaucratic, with declining trust and discretion. This is comprised of higher workloads and long hours, finance-driven decision-making, remote senior management teams and an increasing pressure for internal and external accountability (Deem et al., 2007). In phase two, interviewees stress changes to their working environment, such as reduced funding, massification of student-intake numbers as well as the rising importance of research and teaching assessment frameworks.

Interestingly, the authors identified that individuals mentioned three routes to management (Deem and colleagues, 2007). The first category includes so-called 'career track managers' who had frequently experienced full acceptance of their management or leadership role. Career managers were often in pursuit of higher salaries as well as a career in administration to the virtual exclusion of research and teaching (Deem et al., 2007). Secondly, the 'reluctant managers' most often rejected the term 'manager' and saw themselves predominantly as academic leaders who would return to the ranks of research and teaching at the end of their managerial term. According to Deem et al., (2007) reluctant managers were mostly motivated by the fear of incompetence of other academic managers in their department as well as the aspiration to protect professionalism. Finally, there was the 'good citizen' route which was often based on the motivation to repay a perceived debt to the institution by 'giving something back' (Deem et al., 2007: 36).

Although Deem et al., (2007) did not explicitly refer to individual hybridisation, the above discussion demonstrates clear similarities to the empirical findings of McGivern et al., (2015)



and their conceptualisation of ‘willing’ and ‘incidental’ hybrids in the healthcare sector. While these studies advance our understanding of why and how individuals claim and use hybrid roles, we have a limited understanding of the micro-processes that hybrids engage in to reconcile institutional contradictions. In addressing this gap, I aim to contribute to the micro-foundations of institutional theory by providing a more nuanced and systematic analysis of how hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools experience and reconcile multiple institutional logics.

### **\*\*\* 2.9. Concluding Remarks \*\*\***

This chapter has aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of the literatures and theoretical debates that have been utilised as a framework for this research. First, this chapter introduced the literature of institutional theory by discussing seminal work of Meyer and Rowan (1977), DiMaggio and Powell (1983) and Scott (2001). It then outlined the meta-theoretical framework of institutional logics, which ‘provide the organising principle...that create a common purpose and unity within an organisational field’ (Reay and Hinings, 2009: 629).

From an analytical point of view, the literature developed further because scholars have increasingly recognised that contemporary contexts are increasingly characterised by institutional pluralism, that is the existence of multiple, competing institutional logics (Greenwood et al., 2011). Thus, the scholarly focus has shifted to understand how multiple, and often conflicting institutional logics can promote or constrain ‘new practices, identities and modes of organising’ (Bishop and Waring, 2016: 1939; Battilana and Dorado, 2010; Thornton and Ocasio, 2008). Since the conceptual development of institutional complexity, there has been a growing interest in this research domain (Greenwood et al., 2011; Thornton and Ocasio, 2008).

However, it became evident that we currently have a theoretical inconsistency in the existing literature on institutional complexity because scholarly attention has predominantly focused on the reconciliation of conflicting institutional logics at the macro-level of analysis – but we know relatively little about the micro-foundations of institutional theory (Bévort and Suddaby, 2016; Hallett and Ventresca, 2006; Hallett, 2010; Pache and Santos, 2013). To address this gap, an emerging stream of research explores the theoretical framings of institutional work and identity work, which situates the individual at the centre of current debates.

Drawing on both interrelated theoretical framings, research has recently started to examine the role claiming and enactment of hybrid manager-professionals, most notably in the British healthcare sector (McGivern et al., 2015). Although there has been a growing interest in individual hybridisation in other contexts, including Higher Education (Deem et al., 2007), it became evident that we still have a surprisingly limited understanding of the micro-processes

that different hybrids types engage in to reconcile institutional contradictions. Thus, this study aims to contribute to the micro-foundations of institutional theory by providing a more nuanced and systematic analysis of reconciliation strategies and hybridisation at the individual-level of analysis. In doing so, this research explores how hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools experience and reconcile the tensions of multiple, conflicting institutional logics.

## Chapter 3: Policy Developments

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### \*\*\* 3.1. The Political Economy of British Higher Education \*\*\*

The Higher Education sector in the United Kingdom has a long history and universities in the twenty-first century find themselves in a paradoxical position (Jarratt et al., 1985; Collini, 2012). Never before have universities been so numerous and significant, yet never before have they experienced such a disabling lack of confidence and a loss of identity (ibid; Deem et al., 2007).

Over the last decades, publicly funded institutions have become subject to ever more intensive accountability, transparency and the need to justify their existence (Martin, 2011; Collini, 2012). Rationales for these shifts have been linked to market competition and tuition fees, the modernisation of the public sector, and the need to maintain quality as Higher Education moved from an elite to a mass system (Naidoo et al., 2011; Deem, 2004). The understanding that universities require independence from political and corporate influence to function optimally has been eroded (ibid). These developments have resulted in the implementation of funding and regulatory frameworks based on neo-liberal market mechanisms and new managerial principles (Naidoo et al., 2011; Deem, 2001; Dill, 1997).

This chapter discusses the most critical policy changes that have led to these developments. It contextualises the competitive arena and shows how different non-conventional institutional logics have evolved in the field over time. For example, it discusses how the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and the subsequent Research Excellence Framework (REF), the ABS list as well as a stronger emphasis on performance management has led to emergence of the managerial logic in the sector. Similarly, this chapter will discuss the emergence of the commercial logic as well as the consumer logic by demonstrating how the recently introduced Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) has contributed to the emergence of a new institutional hierarchy, which shifts the academic orientation from a learning experience focusing on the development of intellectual freedom and critical thinking towards one aimed at student recruitment and the commercialisation of academic knowledge.

The subsequent section will contextualise the most relevant policy changes in the UK Higher Education sector, beginning with the election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979 until the most recent proposal to introduce a Knowledge Excellence Framework (KEF) in presumably 2020. These institutional developments are illustrated in the following timeline:

Figure 1: Chronological timeline of the competitive arena



This chapter will now discuss each policy and its implications in more detail.

### \*\*\* 3.2. The UK Higher Education Sector: From the 1970s onwards \*\*\*

The UK Higher Education sector enjoyed relative stability up until the 1970s (Deem, 2004). The role of universities was not significantly challenged by the government, perhaps because it was still seen as a relative elite system (ibid). Universities were state-funded, academic knowledge was mostly unregulated except internally by universities and decision-making involved collegial committees or groups of academics (ibid). Hence, universities were autonomous institutions, having the right to decide which students to accept, how and what to teach, which degrees to award, what research to conduct and whom to appoint as their academic staff (Walford, 1995).

The UK was able to significantly expand its Higher Education sector supported by the University Grant Committee (UGC) (Curran, 2000; Walford, 1995). The UGC acted as a buffer between the state and the institutions and had the authority to make decisions on research resources (Currie and Newson, 1998; Deem et al., 2007). The annual grant allocated by the UGC was determined primarily by student numbers, and this enabled a balance between the ‘needs of the nation’, student demand and the availability of places (Shattock, 1989).

Eventually however, the expansionist development of the Higher Education sector began to decline (Deem et al., 2007). Thatcherism was the driving force behind that change and can be seen as a turning point in University development (Currie and Newson, 1998; Walford, 1995). According to Michael Shattock,

‘within three days of Mrs Thatcher’s taking office in 1979, 100 million pounds were cut overnight from the universities’ budgets, and, between 1980 and 1984, 17% were removed from the grants made by the government to the UGC [...]. Four thousand academics jobs were lost, mostly through government-funded early retirement’ (1989: 34)

The UK Higher Education sector changed drastically following the election of the Conservative Thatcher government in 1979. This period was marked by ‘cuts on University budgets, themselves an indication of government dissatisfaction with the way universities were run, and the assertion of a more market-orientated system of Higher Education’ (Shattock, 2002: 237; Rowlands, 2017). It quickly became evident that the government did not regard universities as an investment in skilled labour, but rather as a drain on resources (Walford,

1995). The government initiated first attempts to reduce units of funding per student, shrink academic autonomy and subject Higher Education to management and governance regimes derived from the private sector (Deem et al., 2007: 65). This approach to Higher Education placed considerable emphasis on cultural changes and the need to overtly manage academics and their work in the context of marketisation and privatisation (Deem, 2004).

### **3.2.1. The Jarratt Report**

In 1984, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals set up a steering committee under Sir Alex Jarratt to undertake a series of efficiency studies on the management of universities. This initiative laid the foundation for an increasing emphasis on the managerial logic. The report of the committee, the 'Jarratt Report', was published in 1985 and drew attention on a lack of management accounting systems in universities, and on the need to adopt a more efficient and managerial governance style (Jarratt et al., 1985; Pendlebury and Algaber, 1997; Currie and Newson, 1998).

In greater detail, it argued that in most institutions quantitative measure must play a role in supplementing qualitative judgments by stating, 'a recognised need for reliable and consistent performance indicators. These need to be developed urgently for universities as a whole and for individual universities as an integral part of the planning and resource allocation process' (Jarratt et al., 1985: 22; Ball and Halwachi, 1987). The report included a range of recommendations on operational matters most of which were quickly adopted by universities (Shattock, 2012).

Arguably, the Jarratt report captured a great deal of attention because of its designation of the Vice-Chancellor as the Chief Executive (ibid). Furthermore, the roles of Deans and Heads of Departments were discussed, which serves as particularly crucial for the purpose of this thesis. Concerning Deanships, the Jarratt report stresses 'the dual role which they play [...] They are expected to promote and defend their particular part of the University. At the same time, they are increasingly expected to play a key role in implementing the policies of the University which may be in conflict with the views of their own constituents' (Jarratt et al., 1985: 27).

The report raised prominent issues about the development of decision-making in academic departments as a critical unit for efficient management. The report concluded that Heads of Departments should be good managers as well as distinguished academics and if an individual does not possess both attributes, then the qualities of managerial capability should be given priority in the future selection of Heads of Departments (Eley, 1994). As the Jarratt report suggested to reconstruct the requirements of hybrid academic manager roles, its recommendations were perceived as another profound criticism on universities. In his famous quote, Malcolm Tight captures the perception of many scholars by stating that,

‘to my mind, one of the most damaging inquiries into Higher Education over the last half-century was the Jarratt report published in 1985. To devote just four pages to a mischievous and malevolent investigation (which, *inter alia*, popularised if it did not invent the notion that students are customers, which foisted on the sector the delusion that factory-floor performance indicators are entirely suited to a Higher Education setting, and which led to the abolition of academic tenure and the concomitant triumph of managerialism in the academy) is – indeed – foolhardy’ (Tight, 2009: 53).

These institutional changes signalled a fundamental shift in the evaluative philosophy, a shift from local forms of self-evaluation to standardised measures of outputs (Power, 1997). Power argues that ‘with new information demands new patterns of authority have emerged. For example, Vice Chancellors, in universities now assume the role of chief executives overseeing policy and resource committees’ (1997: 98).

This introduces non-conventional logics into the academic field that individuals now have to be attentive to. Individuals are, thus, operating under the tension of multiple institutional logics, where demands may be in contradiction with each other (Thornton et al., 2012). Hybrid academic managers have to take on these responsibilities and deal with the tension of trying to combine the professional logic with management, leadership and administration (Deem et al., 2007). Simultaneously, individuals who might decide to advance their managerial career trajectory have to start prioritising their leadership responsibilities ‘over and above their other academic work, thus acquiring new identities and perhaps slowly relinquishing old ones’ (ibid: 103).

Although the Jarratt report did not cause this dramatic transformation of the Higher Education system alone, it had severe implications on the governance of universities. It came to symbolise a central initiative towards a new corporate management approach, which profoundly influenced future decisions about institutional structures (Shattock, 2012). These developments were often labelled as the rise of the NPM reforms (Ferlie et al., 1996). The NPM narrative refers to fundamental shifts in the way in which the public sector is run with the ‘desire to introduce new disciplinary technologies designed to inculcate new attitudes, values, priorities, and self-understandings among professionals’ (Thomas and Davies, 2005: 685; Townley, 1994; Du Gay, 1996).

As argued above, these reforms do not only include structural changes, but also attempts to change processes and roles at the individual-level (Ferlie et al., 1996). Professionals increasingly face processes of managerialism and marketisation – characteristics of the New Public Management reforms (ibid). Priorities are being shifted, which places greater emphasis

on performance, primarily through the measurement of outputs (Pollitt, 2007). Based on these changes, the period between 1979 and 1985 laid the foundation for the overtly managerial University (Scott, 1995; Deem et al., 2007).

Since then, many institutional changes have taken place – most notably the replacement of the UGC with the University Funding Council, subsequently renamed as the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). As stated above, the UGC has acted as a buffer between the state and universities whereas the HEFCE is more explicitly an agency of central control (Power, 1997). The HEFCE provides funding to universities by way of the block grant, which is calculated and split between professional activities of teaching and research (ibid). However, ‘since the mid-1980s, the HEFCE has begun to introduce evaluative mechanisms to control the allocation and use of these (diminishing) funds’ (ibid: 98).

### **3.2.2. The Research Assessment Exercise**

As part of its control over the element of block grants, the HEFCE conducts a national system for the evaluation of research in universities. The first of such evaluation exercises called Research Selectivity Exercise took place in 1986, and according to Barker, it ‘represented one of the most institutionalised forms of research evaluation in the OECD economies’ (2007: 3). In short, this exercise is a periodic national peer review organised by units of assessments, which broadly relate to disciplines of subject areas. These units of assessments are evaluated by peer review panels consisting of UK academics, non-UK academic advisors and representatives of research ‘users’ in accordance with performance standards set by the government (ibid). These individuals then grade departments by submissions of their research activities (Jenkins, 1995).

The subsequent exercise took place in 1992, but this time it was termed ‘Research Assessment Exercise’ (RAE) (Deem et al., 2007). In this assessment exercise, all departments are rated from 1 (low) to 5 (high) in response to the panels' judgments of the quality of their research. Thus, a department rated as ‘one’ will receive zero research funding while a department rated ‘five’ received four times as much research support as one rated ‘two’ (Thorne, 1993). The amount of money allocated to institutions and departments varied significantly according to the gradings received and the number of staff considered 'active' researchers (Jenkins, 1995). Thus, many universities used the possibility of cross-subsidising lower rated departments that received little funding at the expense of higher rated ones (ibid).

The periodic undertaking of the RAE resulted in many unintended consequences and caused a previously unknown phenomenon in the world of academia – the creation of a transfer market (Elton, 2000). Hence, the strategy of some departments has been to specifically target scholars

whose quality publications promise to improve the department's research rating, its prestige and, therefore, the overall income of the department (Jenkins, 1995).

Further unintended consequences followed from the well-known effect that all performance indicators distort behaviour in some way or the other (Pollitt, 1987; Espeland and Sauder, 2007). For example, the first RAE used the number of refereed research publications as the leading indicator. The result of this was a proliferation of new journals and the growth of undesirable practices such as publishing the same work slightly differently in multiple journals or splitting one research paper into several smaller ones (Elton, 2000). This was further amplified by the fact that increasing pressure to get published discouraged long-term research (ibid). Some of these distortions had been corrected for the following RAE in 1996. For example, researchers were then allowed to only submit their four best publications, of course leading to other unintended consequences. According to the Elton, 'the pressure now was on for all academics to be 'research active' and to publish [...] and this, in turn, meant that they no longer had a free choice to see their main role either as researchers or as scholars and teachers' (2000: 276). Further, the academic autonomy of intellectual inquiry was curtailed because academics were required to conform to the ideological and publication requirements of highly-ranked journals.

In this respect, it seems, as many academics have been asked to make a choice – hence, the quality of teaching suffered greatly (ibid). Further, there is increasing use of temporary and part-time staff to alleviate research active staff from their teaching duties (Elton, 2000). This distorts the notion of what constitutes a 'good academic' and divides the traditional perception of the professional logic into two fractions – research and teaching. Supporting, Elton argues that, it 'is not only a contradiction to the principle that research, and teaching should support each other, but it is a clear indication that teaching is less important than research' (2000: 278).

### **3.2.3. The End of the Binary Divide**

In 1990, Thatcher resigned as Prime Minister and the leader of the Conservative Party and John Major became her successor. Shortly after, in 1992, the UK government formally abolished the binary divide between universities and polytechnic institutions. The Further and Higher Education Act granted 35 polytechnics full University status, which considerably increased the number of universities in general, and the number of University students more particular (Halsey, 2000 cited in Boliver, 2015: 608; Collini, 2012). As a result of this Act, former polytechnics are still often referred to as 'new' or 'post-1992' institutions.

Since then, universities have operated within a single system, governed by the same rules and administered in a similar way (Taylor, 2003). Hence, numerous concerns have been raised regarding a loss of institutional diversity (ibid). According to Taylor,



‘all universities are expected to work in the interests of national economic well-being and quality of life; to pursue principles of economy and efficiency, and to maximise income from other external sources; the consumers of Higher Education are expected to bear a significant proportion of costs; and all institutions are subject to common procedures for the systematic, external assessment and assurance of quality in both teaching and research’ (2003: 289).

The merger of the two sectors exposed the established universities to greater competition concerning their recruitment and their research and teaching activities (Deem et al., 2007). In fact, institutional differences are most apparent in research activity as research funding varies significantly between universities (Taylor, 2003). The reputation of research contributes ‘significantly to other differences between institutions, especially in academic reputation, international orientation and financial status’ (ibid: 288). According to Taylor (2003), the binary divide encouraged the development of the more organised division of mission, not necessarily through the leadership of the government, but by the clustering of like-minded institutions. This process has already taken place with the formation of the so-called Russell Group, which will be discussed in more detail in the subsequent section below.

#### **3.2.4. Publication of the First University Ranking**

The expansion of the Higher Education sector has increased the demand for information on academic quality and has led to the development of University rankings and league tables (Dill and Soo, 2005). However, University rankings and league table are often met with institutional unease as they have the tendency ‘to use weighted aggregates of indicators to arrive at a single, all-encompassing quality score’ (Usher and Savino, 2006: 3). They are explicitly designed as a comparative measure, ranking institutions against each other with the attempt to measure Higher Education activity across a wide-ranging spectrum (ibid; Hazelkorn, 2007). Hereby, league tables, by their very nature, are meant to boil down the work of entire institutions into single, comparable, numerical indicators (Usher and Savino, 2006; Espeland and Sauder, 2007). According to Hazelkorn, ‘data is primarily drawn from three sources: Higher Education institutions statistics, publicly available information such as teaching quality or research assessments or questionnaires and feedback from students, competitors [or] peers’ (2007: 3).

In response to today’s institutional environment, the practice of ranking has captured the attention of many actors in the field. Published by the government, research or commercial organisations and the media, rankings have become more present than ever. For example, national rankings of British universities are published on an annual basis. These include *The Financial Times*, *The Complete University Guide*, *The Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph* and a joint publication by *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*.

The ranking published by *The Financial Times* is arguably the most valuable and important one for Business Schools and their programmes – at least for the highly-ranked Schools. Interestingly, this ranking is not developed by the UK government, but rather by an independent commercial publisher. Yet, scholars and Business Schools regard it as the most prestigious and crucial ranking publication. The differentiation of origin poses as particularly important because it demonstrates that the market logic is not only pushed by the state, but also by external actors.

Initially, league tables and ranking systems are perceived as providing critical information to help and inform actors in the field: potential students and parents, staff, the government, sponsors and private investors, academic partners and employers (Hazelkorn, 2007). League tables offer an indication of quality with regards to the potential salary range, an indication for employers about what they can expect from graduates as well as an indication to the government and policymakers about the international standards and contributions (ibid).

However, above all, the key focus is on measuring research and teaching performance – both critical ingredients of institutional prestige and reputation (Hazelkorn, 2007; Brewer et al., 2002). Rankings have helped to introduce the logic of the market to Business School managers and academics (Locke, 2014). The pressure on Business and Management Schools scholars is particularly intense because Business Schools have become amongst the largest and most important University departments with regard to institutional funding and reputation (Mingers and Willmott, 2013).

As a result, academics may engage in specific activities that are highly favoured by rankings to improve their status within their own institution as well as on the external labour market. Hereby, academics often refer to journal quality lists. The use of a particular journal list, the one created by the Association of Business Schools (ABS) is particularly prominent among business and management scholars. In the ABS list, journals are rated 1 to 4, with '4' indicating the top journals in their field (Hussain, 2013).

The advocates of the ABS list argue that it provides beneficial effects to academia by providing an objective measure of journals (Willmott, 2011; Mingers and Willmott, 2013). However, this 'one size fits all' approach assumes that a single list can provide a sound basis for comparing and ranking the quality of publications appearing in a wide range of journals (Willmott, 2011). According to Mingers and Willmott the ABS list 'offers a technically elegant fix for a troublesome managerial problem [...] as a worthy replacement for the time-consuming and comparatively unsystematic process of carefully reading and considering scholarly work' (2013: 1067). The business and management research community places a high emphasis on whether the publication record of an individual includes a specific number

of ‘hits’ in the best-ranked journals (Hussain, 2013). In an attempt to achieve this, many researchers are prepared to twist and twirl their work into a format for a ‘4’ rated journal, even though this might frame their research differently than originally intended (Hussain, 2013).

Higher Education institutions are also strongly influenced by rankings in both, their strategic decision making and other managerial processes (Locke, 2014). For example, research-intensive universities reflect these institutional changes in their hiring and promotion policies (Shin et al., 2011). Many universities have begun, although not stated explicitly, to require a certain number of international journal publications as criteria in faculty hiring and promotion (ibid). For example, ‘early career researchers are under pressure to publish in an ABS 4\* journal before they can pass probation’, even though the classification of what constitutes a 4\* journal is constantly revaluated (Mingers and Willmott, 2013: 1063). According to Willmott ‘academics are terrorised by University managers (e.g. Deans) who, as champions or tyrants of list fetishism apply pressure upon us to confine our work to topics, methods, and approaches that are suitable for publication in a small number of so-called elite journals’ (2011: 430).

Rankings exert a significant influence on institutional behaviour ‘whether it is a ‘top’ University seeking to sustain its reputation and improve its brand recognition globally, or a low-ranked institution ‘waking up’ to the importance of reputation, learning the rules of the league tables game and catching up’ (Locke, 2014: 85). Rankings create a hierarchy by creating a ‘single form of excellence’, which are turned into instruments or tools of differentiation (Hazelkorn, 2015). In other words, rankings have developed to become the manifestation of what is now known as the worldwide ‘battle for excellence’ (Hazelkorn, 2015; McLeod and Cropley, 1989). They are perceived to determine the status of individual institutions, measure the quality and performance of the Higher Education system as a whole and gauge global competitiveness (Hazelkorn, 2015).

Nevertheless, the concept of ‘academic excellence’ and what it specifically entails remains undefined. It usually centres around the notion of educational quality, but yet again, there is no clear agreement on what quality is and how it should be measured (ibid; Van Dyke, 2005). In a highly institutional context such as the Higher Education sector, it poses important questions about institutions’ strategy of conformity versus optimal distinctiveness (Brewer, 1991; Patriotta and Hirsch, 2016). Universities experience constant struggles and tensions to show their uniqueness and demonstrate how they are different in an environment that expects them to be the same. Undoubtedly this is further strengthened by rankings and league tables creating a hierarchy of optimal distinctiveness, that is ‘the reconciliation of the opposing needs for assimilation and differentiation of their own work in relation to the work of others’ (Patriotta and Hirsch, 2016: 875; Alvarez et al., 2005; Brewer, 1991).

On an institutional level, the notion of optional distinctiveness can be seen in the way in which organisations position themselves in the field. For example, in 2015, Cardiff Business School has implemented a 'Public Value' strategy to set itself apart from other key players in the field. The Business School states that 'we publicly committed ourselves to a bold new strategy that would inform our research and teaching and see us become the world's first Business School to put the public value at the heart of its operations' (Cardiff Business School, 2017). This ethos is present in teaching, research, and governance seeking to improve social and economic challenges (ibid).

Professor Martin Kitchener, Dean of Cardiff Business School, argues that 'the consensus was that it was an innovate, a bold and quite a challenging strategy, but one that was absolutely appropriate for the School and it should help distinguish our School from our competitors' (Cardiff Business School, 2017). In an environment where competition intensifies, universities have to develop a competitive advantage based on a set of unique characteristics (Melewar and Akel, 2005). This will distinguish themselves from competitors and increase their attractiveness for highly regarded scholars and prospective students.

### **3.2.5. Russell Group Formation**

This differentiation is also reflected in elite 'mission groups' such as the Russell Group which is a self-formed grouping of 24 research-intensive universities. It was established in 1994 to demonstrate the unique interest of its members to engage in teaching and learning within a culture of 'research excellence' (Huisman and Van Vught, 2009; Goddard et al., 2016). The Russell Group was formed expressly to advance its members' interests as large 'research-intensive' universities in contrast to other more 'teaching only' institutions (Boliver, 2015).

According to Evans and Nixon, 'the norms that prevail within the Russell Group are in many – if not most – respects those of status and elitism within the context of Higher Education' (2015: 164). This includes, first and foremost, the pursuit of high-quality research together with more recent additions such as the provision of high-quality teaching and the demonstration of the impact of research in alignment with wider societal needs and interests (ibid). According to Evans and Nixon members of the Russell Group are, therefore 'research-focused, research-active, and accepting of the economic imperatives imposed by the neoliberal cultures that have taken hold of UK Higher Education and are arguably most active in its highest-ranking institutions' (2015: 164).

The Russell Group has been tremendously successful in promoting its member institutions as the 'jewels in the crown' of the UK Higher Education system (Russell Group, 2012). However, this self-proclaimed superiority is increasingly being challenged and there has been a clear stand of opposition to the idea that this group is seen as the premier league of Higher Education

(Coughlan, 2012). According to Scott, universities are ‘more different and individual’ than the identity they share with their mission group, and this is one of the main concerns with group alignment (Scott, 2013). Nevertheless, formations like the Russell Group show how much the landscape has changed, and that league tables and branding clearly matter (Coughlan, 2012).

### **3.2.6. Introduction of Student Fees**

These developments in the UK Higher Education sector came at a price – not just for academics, but most particularly for students (Deem et al., 2007). One of the costs has been the virtual loss of publicly funded education. The potential for such a systematic change was pushed by yet another Steering Committee referred to as the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, chaired by Lord Dearing. The subsequent ‘Dearing Report’, published in 1997, made several recommendations to the government, the majority of which related to training and staff development, quality assurance arrangements, the challenges of new information and communication technologies, institutional management and governance (Dearing, 1997; Greenway and Haynes, 2003).

However, several key recommendations have had a direct impact on the Higher Education funding as ‘students have had to make a contribution to tuition costs in the form of an annual, means-tested fee, undifferentiated by subject or University, initially set at £1,000 per annum and indexed to inflation’ (Greenway and Haynes, 2003: 151). This fee was first introduced in 1998. Later, in the autumn of 2006, tuition fees were controversially tripled (Deem et al., 2007). Undergraduates were now obligated to pay variable tuition fees with an upper limit of £3,000 – even though, most institutions charged the highest possible fee (ibid). At the end of 2010, the UK Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government decided to, once again, radically change the funding structure for universities (Cribb et al., 2017).

The government announced that by the 2014/2015 academic year, government funding for teaching would be abolished for several disciplines, including business, law, social science, arts as well as humanities (ibid). It was recognised that for STEM subject, that is Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, ‘teaching cannot be covered by tuition fees alone – leading to a reduction, but not a termination of funding in these disciplines’ (HEFCE, 2015 cited in Cribb et al., 2017: 156). In order to counterbalance this shortfall, the cap on student fees was tripled once again to £9,000 for undergraduate students starting University in 2012. ‘To sweeten the pill of fees’ and to make it possible for all students to pay their fees, a revised student loan system was introduced (Ball, 2014). The UK student loans are designed for students to pay their fees or endowment only after graduating, subject to how much they are earning (Deem et al., 2007).

Relatively recently, the newly elected Prime Minister Theresa May has announced a change in her party's approach to tuition fees (Coughlan, 2017a). The government stated that the fee repayment thresholds would rise, meaning that graduates will start paying back loans once they earn an annual salary of £25,000, rather than £21,000 (ibid). This will allow many lower and middle earning graduates to save thousands of pounds. Further, the Prime Minister confirmed that fees would be frozen at £9,250. However, there is also a downside to the revised funding structure. Recently, there has been speculation about rethinking interest charges because of the excessive levels of debts students have occurred over the years. By the time of writing, it has now been confirmed that the government is not shifting its initial plans to charge on student loans. Hence, the government will increase the interest charges from 4.6% to 6.1% from the autumn term 2017 (Coughlan, 2017b).

However, this may vary depending on the income of the student – graduates who earn more than £41,000 will pay the top 6.1%, while those with salaries between £25,000 and £41,000 will move on the scale between 3.1% and 6.1% (Williams, 2017). A recent publication by the Institute for Fiscal Studies found that English graduates have the highest student debts in the developed world, based on the combination of high fees and large maintenance loans (Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2017). Labours Shadow Secretary of State for Education Angela Rayner, commented on this issue by stating that young people faced a government which saw 'education as something to be sold and their aspirations as something to be taxed' (2017 cited in Coughlan, 2017b).

### **3.2.7. The National Student Survey**

Hence, as enrolling at University is an increasingly expensive decision for potential students (Dill and Soo, 2005), the government introduced the so-called National Student Survey (NSS) in 2005. The survey is carried out annually and gathers students' opinions on the quality of their courses and their University more generally (Locke, 2011). The purpose of this is to contribute to public accountability, help inform the choices of prospective students and provide data that assists institutions in enhancing the student experience' (HEFCE, 2017).

It remains a responsibility of each institution, which receives public funds to provide a minimum survey response rate anonymously completed by their final year undergraduate students (Locke 2011). The NSS asks students about their University experience, such as their overall satisfaction, satisfaction with teaching, feedback, facilities, organisation and management, and whether their course improved aspects of their personal development – for example, better communication skills and more confidence in tackling complex problems (Gibbons, 2015). The results are then also used as a quality indicator for league tables (Deem et al., 2007). According to Deem and colleagues, the results of the NSS 'were rapidly turned into a league table [and] the government appears to embrace such competitiveness' (2007: 97).

As the competition between institutions has intensified the NSS has led to ‘a renewed focus on so-called student experience, that is the ‘consumer’ aspect of the time spent at University’ (Gibbons, 2015). Universities place a high emphasis on the annual NSS scores because of its impact on future student recruitment rates. For example, Locke (2014) states that a majority of institutions had concluded that they could do something to improve their NSS score by mobilising final year students to engage in the survey. This decision is based on the assumption that ‘satisfied customers’ tend not to respond as willingly as those who are dissatisfied, and so the result would improve (ibid: 85). The increasing attention on competition and market forces evokes a significant transition in the Higher Education sector. According to Locke (2014), the interaction between rankings and the marketisation also results in the expenditure of extensive marketing campaigns, impressive new buildings, and attracting international research stars that intends to signal a market position of high quality. The emergence of various kinds of rankings are also linked to more substantial changes in society and cannot simply be rejected and, in fact, it seems like they have already been accommodated (ibid).

### **3.2.8. The Research Excellence Framework**

In this respect, the mechanisms for measuring research excellence have become more complex and burdensome (Martin, 2011). The Research Excellence Framework (REF) was first introduced in 2014. It is conducted jointly by the HEFCE, the Scottish Funding Council, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland and replaces the RAE (Townsend, 2012; Stern, 2016). This replacement took place with the original intention to introduce a system based primarily, if not entirely, on metrics – and to reduce the cost and burden of the exercise (Smith et al., 2011). Still, the costs involved in undertaking the REF, both for institutions and for the funding bodies, were estimated at £246 million for the UK Higher Education sector, considerably more than estimates for the 2008 framework, which cost around £66 million (Stern, 2016).

In the REF, Universities submit the four best outputs per staff to ‘units of assessment’, corresponding to 36 discipline-based REF subpanels. Recently discussed changes to the HEFCE funding structure increased the incentive for universities to establish a more systematic selection process for the REF (Sayer, 2015). Hence, many universities invest a great deal in preparing their submissions up to the point of organising ‘mock REFs’ to adequately plan for the final exercise (ibid). In the REF 2014, 150 institutions submitted 191,950 research outputs, around 52,061 full-time equivalent staff and approximately 7,000 impact case studies (Farla and Simmonds, 2015).

Once the universities have made their submission, the subpanel reads the individual research outputs and rates them on a scale from ‘one-star’ (1\*) to ‘four-stars’ (4\*). Research graded as 4\* indicates that it is world-leading regarding its originality and significance while research

rated as 1\* denotes research of national recognition (REF, 2014). According to Sayer, ‘the scoring of the outputs is the single most important element in the overall ranking of each unit of assessment’ (2015: 2). The results will determine the level of HEFCE funding allocations, the so-called quality related research funding (QR funding), that each University will receive until the next REF, which is currently scheduled to take place in 2021 (Sayer, 2015; Murphy and Sage, 2014).

Over the years, the RAE and subsequently the REF has supported an improvement in the quality and productivity of the UK research base as determined by journal rankings (Stern, 2016). According to Stern ‘much UK research is world-leading, and the trend in quality continues in an upward direction, in part driven by and dependent upon the selective allocation of funding. REF raises the awareness of researchers to the rigour, novelty, and significance of their research, as well as the importance of international collaborations’ (2016: 10). The REF scores play an important part in attracting new students and staff, it determines the institution's position in league tables, and it can boost the universities research funding and reputation (Ratcliffe, 2014).

However, the REF has also increased in complexity, with an increasing cost to participating universities, to researchers and those doing the assessment (Stern, 2016). For example, since 1992, universities have the choice to decide which ‘research active’ staff to include in their submission rather than having to enter all staff whose contract includes a research element (Sayer, 2015). The classification of staff as ‘research-active’ or by implication ‘research-inactive’ became one of the key stakes of the RAE and subsequently the REF (Smith et al., 2011). This differentiation can have profound consequences for professional esteem and academic careers, either regarding redundancies or being moved to a ‘teaching only’ contract (Lucas, 2006; Smith et al., 2011).

According to Johnston (2015), universities have a balancing act to play in deciding which staff should be included in the REF – ‘do they only enter those academics whose work is likely to be graded either 4\* or 3\*, and so come high up the league tables, or should they enter a wider range, including work that may only be rated as 2\*, in order to get more money whose allocation is based on the average grade multiplied by the number of staff entered?’. To maximise their REF performance, universities might engage in the strategy to hire staff from different institutions shortly before the next REF cycle to enhance their own REF returns (Stern, 2016; Hussain, 2013). Lord Stern identifies an additional consequence associated with this transfer market which is that ‘the recruitment of key researchers close to the REF census date is also an unhelpful driver of asymmetric salary inflation, as institutions compete to attract and retain key individuals’ (2016: 12).



Another significant development that has taken place is concerned with the fact that UK research councils are now required to ensure that the funded research is more closely related to the needs of ‘users’ in the industry (Martin, 2011). More recently, it has been requested that research proposals should explain how the planned research is likely to have an impact (ibid). Hence, the domain of ‘impact assessment’ has been added to the process. According to the HEFCE, the higher weight of research with demonstrable economic and social impact reflects ‘policy aims in all parts of the UK to maintain and improve the achievements of the HE [Higher Education] sector both in undertaking ground-breaking research of the highest quality and building on this research to achieve demonstrable benefits to the wider economy and society’ (HEFCE, 2009 cited in Smith et al., 2011: 1370). The central implication of this is that it will be necessary to demonstrate more explicitly than before the economic, social and cultural impact of research (Smith et al., 2011).

Yet, it is exceptionally complicated to assess impact. Martin argues ‘the very concept of ‘impact’ and its assessment implies a rather linear model of how knowledge from an individual piece of research is subsequently taken up and used’ (2007 cited in Martin, 2011: 250). But such a linear process rarely applies (Martin, 2011). As a result, there is a significant problem in trying to ‘capture’ impact and doing so rigorously and consistently across the full range of sciences in Higher Education institutions across the UK (ibid).

The suggestion that research should be something that informs societies is not novel, but the introduction of ‘impact’ as an explicit and separate element in the REF assessment system certainly is (Townsend, 2012). According to Townsend, ‘research needs to not only move beyond academic circles in order for it to be considered first-rate, but it is only research that has the societal or economic impact that is first-rate’ (ibid: 430). This pushes both universities and academics to engage in a particular kind of research in order to receive the highest ranking, which in turn will receive the highest funding (ibid). Junior colleagues might not have had the time to create impact, and more senior academics might now be excluded from the exercise as their work focuses on conceptual developments rather than on societal implications (Townsend, 2012). Thus, researchers may be influenced by assessment exercises like the REF to reconsider their choice on ‘what research to pursue and within what methodological paradigm’ (McNay, 2007 cited in Smith et al., 2011: 1371; Brew and Boud, 2009).

As impact factors start to play such a vital role ‘in shaping what is worthy of research’ (Townsend, 2012: 431), certain types of research that are contributing to ‘the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment or quality of life, beyond academia’ (HEFCE, 2016) might become more favourable for universities to pursue because those are the research activities likely to be funded (Townsend, 2012). Watermeyer takes this even further by arguing that the introduction of impact as a predominant measure in the REF

can be seen as an ‘infringement to a scholarly way of life: as symptomatic of the marketisation of Higher Education, and as fundamentally incompatible and deleterious to the production of new knowledge’ (2016: 199).

Thus, the aspiration to be included in the REF, and associated pressures from within the institution, could strongly influence academics in their choices about what issues they choose to tackle (Stern, 2016). This has the potential to drive academics towards short-termism and choosing safe and fashionable research topics to ensure reliable and high-quality publications within the REF period (ibid; Hazelkorn, 2015). Such distortions have a real significance for the nature of academic research. In an attempt to meet the professional expectations, academics are pressured to constantly publish their work and to produce high-quality research at the same time. This might lead to a phenomenon called ‘publish-or-perish’, which describes the increasing pressure to produce publishable material, particularly at research-oriented Business Schools (Miller et al., 2011).

Hence, the REF has also caused an important transition in the academic arena. With the recent introduction of the impact agenda, the emphasis has been shifted to the marketisation of academic research. According to Watermeyer, the impact agenda was regarded to ‘correlate with the corrosion of traditional academic values and a fundamental shift in the personality and vision of the University’ (2016: 201). The impact agenda will contribute to the instrumentalization of academic research for the purpose of highly specific outcomes – thus undermining the creativity and imagination of scholars (Smith, 2010; Watermeyer, 2016). As the significance of the impact agenda has recently been confirmed to be at 25% in the upcoming REF, academics are pressured to respond pro-actively (ibid). However, the final rules for the upcoming REF in 2021 have yet to be defined. Once the rules are specified, institutional actors have to make sense of these regulations and how they are shaped. This might, once again, redirect the institutional expectations that academics have to respond to.

### **3.2.9. The Stern Review**

As a response to certain shortcomings of the REF, the UK government commissioned an independent review, published by Lord Nicholas Stern in 2016. The so-called ‘Stern Review’ explored the effectiveness of the REF and provided 12 recommendations on how it might be strengthened in the future. The aim of the review was threefold: to ensure that the REF is fit for purpose and that it is conducted most efficiently to reduce its costs; to consider alternative models for research assessment as well as to make a number of recommendations on how the REF can be strengthened for its next cycle in 2021 (Jones and Guthrie, 2016). These ‘recommendations are designed to tackle important distortions and to deal with some of the cost implications’ (Stern, 2016: 33).

As a first discussion point, Lord Stern draws attention to the selection of staff and outputs as a significant factor in generating costs for institutions by arguing that it can create severe ‘problems with career choices, progression and morale’ of academics (2016: 19). Hence, the review suggests that all staff who have any significant responsibility to engage in research should be included in the REF. This would clearly reduce the burden of staff selectivity (ibid). Although this change may entail other unintended consequences such as the threat for academics to be moved to a ‘teaching only’ contract more quickly in a period of producing low research outputs, it is still an important consideration for the upcoming REF to provide a broad picture of the submitting unit as a whole.

Another essential distortion that has been discussed above is concerned with the increasing fluid labour market, especially in periods shortly before the upcoming REF. To tackle this issue, the Stern review (2016) proposes that researchers should not be able to transfer the credit of their published work to their new employer, but it should rather stay with the original institution where it was created. Yet, the movement of individual academics between institutions should not be discouraged – researchers’ mobility is an essential aspect of individual job satisfaction and intellectual development (ibid).

However, the fact that institutions make great investments in individual academics who might then easily transfer their outputs to another institution can be highly problematic (Stern, 2016). As a result of these potential distortions, the Stern review made the recommendation that ‘output should not be portable’ (2016: 21). This means that output can only be submitted by the institution where it was demonstrably produced. If researchers decide to move institutions during the REF period, their research output should be allocated to the institutions where they were based when the work was accepted for publication (ibid). According to Stern, this would discourage ‘short-term and narrowly-motivated movements across the sector, while still incentivising long-term investment in people [which] will benefit UK research and should also encourage greater collaboration across the system’ (2016: 21).

The Stern review has made an important contribution to developing and strengthening the current political arena in the UK. According to Palmer ‘the proposal to submit all research-active staff to the REF, and the consequential proposals on decoupling and the non-portability of outputs, have received substantial attention’ (2017). However, it is essential to keep in mind that the Stern review provided several recommendations – not policies (ibid).

Nevertheless, it has now been confirmed that the government has adopted some of the suggestions. For example, universities will be able to submit all their staff with a ‘significant responsibility for research’ (TimesHigherEducation, 2017a). Dr. Hackett, the REF manager at the HEFCE, announced that the portability of research output is still possible to some extent

by explaining that ‘the institution where the research output was demonstrably generated and at which the member of staff was employed should retain full credit [...] However, in this cycle, credit will also go to the receiving institution’ (Hackett, 2017 cited in Elmes, 2017).

### **3.2.10. The Teaching Excellence Framework**

The worldwide battle for excellence has become a priority for institutions in the Higher Education sector. Similar to the discourse of research excellence, the notion of teaching excellence is now part of the language and practice of Higher Education (Skelton, 2005). This becomes evident as teaching excellence is increasingly regarded as a way of staying ahead of the competition and securing a favourable position in multiple ranking exercises (ibid). Hence, teaching is increasingly subject to measurement and control, and academics are encouraged to continuously improve their practice by meeting prescribed standards (ibid).

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is the latest policy introduced by government to assess the quality of teaching in universities. It was first proposed in 2016 as a trial year. It aims to ‘build evidence about the performance of the UK’s world-class Higher Education sector, complementing the existing Research Excellence Framework with an analysis of teaching and learning outcomes’ (HEFCE, 2017). A total of 295 institutions took part in the recent TEF (ibid). Drawing on national data and evidence submitted by each institution, ‘the TEF measures excellence in three areas: teaching quality, the learning environment and the educational and professional outcomes achieved by students’ (ibid).

An independent expert panel consisting of academics and employer representative measures the institutions’ undergraduate teaching against ten criteria. These criteria cover statistical data on continuation rates, academic support, student satisfaction survey results, graduate employability, and the percentage of students who go on to work in high-skilled jobs (Weale, 2017; HEFCE, 2017). The metrics for each institution are then benchmarked to take account of differences in its students’ characteristics, entry qualifications and subjects studied (ibid).

Universities will be awarded a gold, silver or bronze status to reflect the excellence in teaching, the learning environment and student outcomes (HEFCE, 2017). Additionally, the government has previously indicated that the TEF will allow institutions to increase their tuition fees, in line with inflation, if they meet a certain baseline quality standard. In the trial year of 2016, many UK leading universities have failed to achieve the highest status in their teaching assessment. Among the Russell Group institutions, ‘just eight out of 21 institutions that took part in the government’s TEF were awarded the gold rating, while 10 got silver’ (Weale, 2017).

Overall, 60 institutions were awarded ‘gold’, 115 ‘silver’ and 55 institutions received the ‘bronze’ status (ibid). Despite the criticism of rankings, being ranked highly can help

institutions with building their public image, forming collaborations and partnerships and attracting potential students (Hazelkorn et al., 2014). However, ‘low rankings can lead to a seemingly unstoppable downward spiral of negative impacts on funding, student enrolment, staff recruitment, and research capability’ (Walpole, 1998 cited in Locke, 2014: 80).

Thus, rankings can do more than merely provide information – they influence how the Higher Education sector thinks about itself, and how its activities are valued and prioritised (Hazelkorn, 2015). Alternatively, as Hazelkorn states ‘in addition to being an information provider, rankings are an opinion former’ (2015: 135). By changing the dynamic within the Higher Education sector, rankings have accelerated competition between institutions on a national and international level (ibid). This also affects student choice as many students choose their University based on prestige and academic reputation (Bergerson, 2010). With rising application rates, higher fees and value-for-money concerns the decision-making process for students is becoming increasingly complex (Hazelkorn, 2012; Clarke, 2007).

Particularly international students who decide to study in the UK regard reputational factors as a significant aspect of their decision-making process (Hazelkorn, 2012). According to McManus-Howard, ‘as distance increases so does the proportion of students placing weight on rankings’ (2002 cited in Hazelkorn, 2015: 147). As such, these students become the primary target audiences and users of rankings (Hazelkorn, 2012). Hence, rankings can have a significant influence on the application and enrolment decision of potential students (Monks and Ehrenberg, 1999; Hazelkorn, 2015). Although this may arguably apply more to newer institutions rather than to well-established ones, the application rate is directly linked to the tuition income of an institution and, therefore, constitutes as a crucial factor. This, furthermore, links back to the fact that the government has previously indicated that the TEF scores will allow institutions to increase their tuition fees, in line with inflation, as previously discussed.

Given the importance of tuition income in the institutional landscape, the TEF will also have profound consequences on how academics priorities their work, because it shifts the academic focus towards excellence in teaching and student experiences (Shellard, 2017). Academics are pressured to reorganise their work to incorporate the increasing importance that is placed on the delivery of programmes and student satisfaction. According to the governments’ minister for universities, science, research and innovation, Jo Johnson, ‘the Teaching Excellence Framework is refocusing the sectors attention on teaching – putting in place incentives that will raise standards across the sector and give teaching the same status as research’ (TimesHigherEducation, 2017b).

However, this development is two-fold. It not only shifts the professional logic of academia towards teaching, but it also causes a greater divide of the professional logic by intensifying

the tension between research and teaching. Many scholars have argued that the requirements of teaching and research are very different as ‘research and teaching do not represent the same dimension of academic investments’ (Fox, 1992: 293; Fuller, 2002; Deem et al., 2007).

During the last decades, the competitive arena in academia has centred around research as the core of the professional logic. Refocusing the attention of academics towards teaching excellence requires individuals to revisit how they position themselves in the field. Academics have to reconfigure and translate these dimensions of the professional logic to successfully engage in their everyday work. However, as full details on how the next TEF will operate are yet to be finalised, these assumptions remain hypothetical at the point of writing. Nevertheless, it is important to reshape the link between teaching and research to avoid institutional tensions within the professional work of academics. As a starting point, there is a great need for the REF and the TEF to have mutually reinforcing incentives – together they have to strengthen the vital relationship between teaching and research in UK universities (Stern, 2016).

### **3.2.11. The Knowledge Excellence Framework**

Alongside research and teaching, knowledge exchange has become a key activity of universities. Thus, the commitment of policymakers to enhance the contribution Higher Education institutions make to the UK economy and society has tremendously grown over the past years (Research England, 2018a). For example, Research England, formed of the Research and Knowledge Exchange functions of the former HEFCE, has invested £67 million in April 2018 to foster collaborative projects between universities and other partners and to drive forward world-class University commercialisation across the country (ibid).

Given the importance of these activities, it was only a matter of time until the British government pushed for an additional assessment exercise to capture the numerous activities universities engage in. In October 2017, the minister for universities, Jo Johnson, has proposed to introduce a knowledge sharing benchmark to assess the commercialisation performance of UK institutions (Cyrus, 2017). The so-called Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF), which will be presumably introduced in 2020, ‘aims to support Higher Education institutions to continuously improve their practice in the area of knowledge exchange’ (HEFCE, 2018). The metrics will provide data on how universities share knowledge, expertise and other assets for the benefit of society – allowing a fair comparison between universities performance in knowledge exchange (Research England, 2018b). The minister argued that the KEF should create a ‘constructive, competitive, dynamic’ environment, but simultaneously warned that institutions could face monetary penalties when failing to meet the KEFs standards, potentially losing access to government grants for knowledge sharing (Pells, 2017; Cyrus, 2017).

Although the pillars of the KEF have yet to be finalised, and a definite evaluation of its structure is clearly premature, critics have not remained silent by arguing that ‘it's easy to be alarmed at the prospect of the KEF, particularly if it ends up matching the scale and complexity of the other legs of the accountability stool, the REF and TEF’ (Wade, 2017). The KEF is being signposted as a means for universities to increasingly re-shift their resources towards commercialisation activities, especially in fields where output can ‘easily’ be measured, such as engineering or medicine (Owen, 2018). Yet, whether the KEF will lead to further distortion of research behaviour and how the metrics unfold in departments of social sciences, such as Business Schools, remains to be seen. At the point of writing, the government needs to further elaborate on the specific requirements of the KEF in order to establish a rationale for what it seeks to accomplish in particular, and how this new metric will unfold on the ground.

### **\*\*\* 3.3. Concluding Remarks \*\*\***

UK universities have experienced various political and economic changes. This includes the number of institutions, the management and governance of universities, how the system is funded as well as the increasing need for accountability and transparency of academic work (Deem et al., 2007). These policy changes have resulted in an environment where multiple and competing logics continue to co-exist for a lengthy period (Reay and Hinings, 2009). The introduction of the managerial, the consumer and the commercial logic have created a direct challenge to the previously dominant logic of academic professionalism (ibid). Each of these logics carries sub-dimensions and motives associated with different organising principles, and each requires a different set of behaviours from social actors within the field (ibid).

Over the last decades, the managerial logic has reshaped all aspects of academic work around an idealised image of corporate efficiency, performance indicators and financial accountability (Winter, 2009). The Jarratt Report symbolises a central point of departure towards a new corporate management approach (Shattock, 2012). It brought into conflict a collegial model of autonomy contrasted with a managerial, bureaucratic logic (Townley, 1997).

These institutional changes signalled a fundamental shift in the governance structures of universities, which profoundly influenced future decision-making processes (Shattock, 2012). Thus, hybrid academic managers now have to deal with the tension of trying to combine the professional, academic logic with the ever-changing expectations of management and administration (ibid). They are expected to internalise the values and leadership responsibilities that reflect the corporate management system – a strong hierarchical structure, budgetary control and performance evaluation (ibid).

This institutional change has forced universities to achieve legitimacy and global reputation from the performance against certain key criteria (Alexander et al., 2017). A key attribute of

the market logic reflects the emphasis on value for money and consumerism (ibid). The government's justification for the 'introduction of a consumerist framework in Higher Education has been linked to a variety of factors, notably the introduction of tuition fees and the need to maintain and enhance quality' (Naidoo and Jamieson, 2005: 268). However, this raises an interesting paradox that academics face in their day-to-day work. One of the primary drivers of marketisation includes the need to accommodate larger numbers of students without comprising teaching quality (Hemsley-Brown, 2011). The increasing pressure on academics to improve their teaching quality with fewer resources highlights the conflicting requirements between traditional, academic ways of working and the consumer logic.

Many rankings and league tables have been developed over the last decades to evaluate academics and universities, leading to a 'tsunami of accountability and transparency' (Caron and Gely, 2004: 1553; Espeland and Sauder, 2007). This expansion has had profound implications within the professional logic and how academics structure their work. Specifically, the REF and the TEF divide the academic logic into two sub-dimensions of teaching and research. This redirects the attention of academics on what is being measured.

On the one hand, the REF pressures academics to 'publish-or-perish', with specific emphasis on being 'impactful' (Watermeyer, 2016). On the other hand, the TEF moves the academic discourse to focus on teaching excellence and student experiences. This intensifies the tensions between research and teaching and requires professionals to learn the new rules of the game and to mediate these rules according to their own interest (Enders and de Weert, 2009). On top of this, the incoming KEF with its focus on commercialisation might further undermine the already fragmented professional logic. As the definite structure of the KEF and its consequences for academic work remains speculative at this point, the extent to which the incoming KEF will lead to a further polarisation remains to be seen.

The different policy initiatives that have been discussed in this chapter have led to the emergence of multiple non-conventional institutional logics in the field of British Higher Education. The following table indicates how these non-traditional logics have been derived from the field-level analysis:



Table 1: Development from public policy to multiple non-conventional institutional logics

Managerial logic	Consumer logic	Commercial logic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Jarratt Report</li> <li>• The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE)</li> <li>• The End of the Binary Divide</li> <li>• First University Rankings</li> <li>• Introduction of the ABS list</li> <li>• The Russell Group Formation</li> <li>• The Stern Review</li> <li>• The Research Excellence Framework (REF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of Student Fees</li> <li>• The National Student Survey (NSS)</li> <li>• The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Knowledge Excellence Framework (KEF)</li> </ul>

It becomes evident that the introduction of different policies over the last decades has led to the emergence of multiple non-conventional institutional logics in the field of British Higher Education. This has altered the way in the expectations about how academics engage in their everyday work and how scholars should be led and managed (Deem et al., 2007). According to Khurana ‘the logic of professionalism that underlay the University-based Business School in its formative phase was replaced first by a managerialist logic that emphasised professional knowledge rather than professional ideas, and ultimately by a market logic that, taken to its conclusion, subverts the logic of professionalism altogether’ (2007: 7). However, actors are not just recipients of institutional logics by mechanically responding to them (Thomas and Davies, 2005). As individuals can actively make sense of their position in the field, the remainder of the thesis will explore how these non-conventional institutional logics are enacted on the individual-level by exploring the way in which hybrid academic managers experience and reconcile the tension between the academic, professional logic and these multiple non-traditional institutional logics that have been identified at the field-level.

## Chapter 4: Research Methods

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This Chapter presents a comprehensive and detailed discussion of the selected methods. In line with the inductive reasoning of this research, this chapter first outlines a deep and ‘thick’ description of the context and the case selection (Gioia et al., 2012). Then, I shall present the philosophical assumptions of an interpretivist ontology and epistemology that underpin this research, thereby providing a coherent justification of the chosen methods. The chapter discusses the exploratory research design of this study and highlights the importance of clearly explicating the unit of analysis, which, in my case, focuses on the individual-level. To assure consistency, the data collection and analysis processes at the micro-level are discussed. In particular, I will provide a detailed account to illustrate how I moved from my empirical data to aggregated, theoretical codes. Lastly, this chapter discusses the employed criteria for increasing the trustworthiness of data. In doing so, I aim to provide an in-depth justification of the selected research method in relation to the overall objective of this research.

### \*\*\* 4.1. Case Selection \*\*\*

The nature of qualitative research places great emphasis on detailed, rich description of social settings (Bryman and Bell, 2011). More specifically, as the interpretive philosophical underpinnings of this research suggest, social reality is not singular and is, therefore, best understood in context (ibid). Although the policy chapter of this thesis has already provided a comprehensive discussion of the British Higher Education context to demonstrate how the non-professional institutional logics were derived from the field level analysis, this section will briefly recap these developments and outline the motives for researching the phenomena in the selected setting.

This research took place in the Higher Education sector in the UK. Several reasons have motivated the choice of studying the phenomena of institutional complexity in this context, because the position of universities, and individual academics, is rapidly shifting (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007). Initially, the role of the Higher Education was not significantly questioned by the government or society because there was a generally agreed view that universities should only be concerned with knowledge and truth (Deem, 2004; Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007). That is an independent community of scholars, dedicated to learning and studying – and nothing else (ibid).

However, as outlined in the policy chapter, the Higher Education sector has experienced significant political changes that challenge this traditional view (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007). Over the last decades the introduction of the managerial logic has led to a cultural change focusing on the corporate efficiency, performance measurement systems as well an increasing

emphasis on academic accountability (Winter, 2009; Deem et al., 2007). Since the election of the Conservative government in 1979, the University sector has been subject to a variety of modernisation endeavours by NPM policies (Deem, 2004; Ferlie et al., 1996). The NPM narrative describes fundamental shifts in the way in which the public sector is run with an increasing emphasis on disciplinary technologies (Deem, 2004). Following these changes, the introduction of the RAE, and later REF has sharpened the importance of academic research activity, not only to increase the quality of research but also to ensure a higher level of performance and productivity in the sector.

Further, the introduction of the market logic has led to considerable changes in the field. The attempt to open up the public sector to market forces has caused a conceptualisation of students as consumers in British Higher Education. With increasing tuition fees as well as the need to maintain quality in the system, further teaching assessment exercises (e.g. the TEF) and student satisfaction questionnaires (e.g. the NSS) were introduced by the government. In addition, there is a greater emphasis on the commercialisation of academic knowledge in order to generate income by securing research grants or by engaging in consultancy work alongside the academic career. Thus, the emphasis today is everywhere on managerial and commercial values – on maximising academic performance, increasing revenue, cutting costs and exploiting new markets (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007).

Business schools stand at the centre of these challenges facing the modern University, because they have become amongst the largest and most important University departments regarding institutional funding and reputation (Mingers and Willmott, 2013). They are expected to generate extensive profit for cross-subsidising other academic departments, educate the increasing number of students enrolling in business-related courses and produce academic research that has significant impact on external organisations and society as a whole. Indeed, according to Thomas et al., ‘the extent to which Business Schools compete for the highest rankings, the best cadre of students and faculty, the greatest number of citations in the highest impact-journals suggests that schools exist in an era of ‘hyper-competition’ (2013: 48; Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007). Under such conditions, it is unsurprising that the whole Business School ethos has begun to alter (ibid).

Hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools are at the heart of this debate. These professionals are usually, as in the interview sample of my thesis, individuals who are not only employed as full-time academics, but also engage in a managerial role, which involves managing professional work, professional colleagues and other staff (Fitzgerald and Ferlie, 2000; McGivern et al., 2015). Thus, their position is particularly framed by managerial, market and traditional academic logics and the contradictions between them (Winter, 2009). Implicit in this debate is the view that the role of hybrid academic managers

is shifting (D'Este and Perkmann, 2011). Hence, exploring how hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools experience and reconcile the tensions between the professional, academic logic and multiple non-professional institutional logics provides a particularly interesting research context. In doing so, I aim to enrich our current understanding of institutional complexity in the field of business and management education.

At this point, it is important to note that the terms Business Schools and Management Schools will be used interchangeably throughout this thesis. It not only incorporates Business and Management Schools as a distinct entity within the University, but also encompasses Management Departments that are arguably more integrated into the University structure. Theoretically, I do, however, acknowledge important distinctions between Business Schools, Management Schools and Management Departments by recognising that the choice of language already signals significant distinctions in identity and belief systems (Ferlie et al., 2010).

On the one hand, Business Schools became the socially constructed and accepted term for an institution of commerce and management education (Thomas et al., 2013). However, they are frequently accused of having a 'narrow' capitalist interest and not serving the needs of society because they have become enthralled by financial gains (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007; Thomas et al., 2013; Currie et al., 2016; Gabor, 2002). Management Schools, on the other hand, often utilise their different labelling to somehow distance themselves from the narrow capitalist interests of Business Schools (Currie et al., 2016). According to Ferlie et al., Management Schools 'might intuitively be thought to be more inclined than Business Schools to adopt the public interest form and to work with public and not for profit organisations as well as private firms' (2010: 60). Although we currently lack empirical evidence to fully support this argument, it indicates theoretical differences in how an institution positions itself in the field (ibid). Lastly, Management Departments may have a similar academic orientation as Management Schools, but they are often more tightly-coupled into their parent institution and might not experience the stand-alone structure of Business and Management Schools.

While there are distinct theoretical differentiations between these institutional models, and even within them, I have decided not to explicate these distinctions when referring to a given institution throughout the text. First, the differentiation has not been supported by my empirical data, meaning that the way in which hybrid academic managers engage in the reconciliation of institutional logics does not seem to be influenced by whether they are working in a Business School, a Management School or a Management Department. Further, the choice is informed by methodological and ethical considerations. By not explicitly referring to the precise label of their institution, the anonymity of interview participants is strengthened.

#### **4.1.1. Personal motives for case selection**

Qualitative research recognises that the researcher is intimately connected to every stage of the research process (Ratner, 2002). This involvement even occurs beforehand when the researcher chooses an exciting research phenomenon. In line with this, I acknowledge that the choice of studying the phenomenon of institutional complexity in the Business and Management School context has also been motivated by personal reasons. As a current Ph.D. student, and former postgraduate and undergraduate management student in the British Higher Education system, I have developed a great interest in how Business and Management Schools are led and managed. During my Master's course (MA in Management and Organisational Analysis) at WBS, I was able to gain a thorough understanding of organisational and managerial practices and their influence on organisational members. My Master thesis on the introduction of performance appraisals at WBS sparked a particular interest by providing me with a first, deeper insight into the interesting research context of Higher Education in the UK.

#### **\*\*\* 4.2. Philosophical Underpinnings: Interpretivism \*\*\***

This research followed the core assumptions of interpretivism. The justification for this lies in the research question, which explores how hybrid academic managers utilise different individual-level strategies to reconcile the tensions of multiple, conflicting institutional logics. Hence, this study is underpinned by an interpretivist ontology and epistemology.

First, ontology is concerned with the nature of reality and the nature of social entities (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988; Bryman and Bell, 2011). An interpretive ontology suggests that reality is socially constructed, and individuals actively create and interact to shape their environment (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). The human world is never a world in itself; as it is always related to a conscious subject, the interpretive researcher attempts to explore and interpret this lived experience of the world (Sandberg, 2005). Phenomena are subjective and involve different interpretations and meanings of reality (Berger and Luckman, 1966). Thus, natural and social worlds are perceived to be different, in that a social world is a process of construction which is not assumed to exist independently of individuals interpretations, values and consciousness (ibid).

Epistemology deals with the nature and forms of knowledge (Cohen et al., 2007). In other words, epistemological assumptions are concerned with what constitutes valid knowledge, how we can obtain and communicate this knowledge and with what it means to know (Scotland, 2012; Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). Rather than seeking law-like regularities, an interpretivist epistemology situates phenomena in a specific context in order to determine the 'motives, meanings, reasons and other subjective experiences in that particular time and place' (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988: 511).

By exploring the individuals' lived experience of the world, this research aims to develop an interpretative understanding of subjective meanings. In other words, this study seeks to explore the patterns and shared meanings that individuals attribute to their action (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988). This assumes that it is not possible to produce an objective description of reality (Sandberg, 2005). Rather, knowledge and reality are socially constructed in and out of interaction between humans and their worlds and are developed, transmitted and maintained in a social context (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Scotland, 2012; Crotty, 1998). Thus, the researcher and research participants interactively construct meanings of reality (Berger and Luckman, 1966). Knowledge is constituted and obtained through seeking a coherent interpretation of subjective meanings of actors and the lived experience of reality (Sandberg, 2005; Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Creswell, 1998). These philosophical assumptions concerning 'reality' and 'the nature of knowledge' are constantly present and directed every stage of this research (Creswell, 1998).

#### **\*\*\* 4.3. Research Design \*\*\***

The research design provides a guiding framework for the collection and analysis of data, reflecting 'the decisions about the priority being given to a range of dimensions of the research process' (Bryman and Bell., 2011: 40). According to Hammersley and Atkinson, the 'research design should be a reflexive process operating through every stage of a project', including the process of collecting and analysing data, developing theory as well as elaborating on the research question (1995: 24; Maxwell, 1998).

To address the research question and to align the research with the discussed philosophical assumptions, I adopted an exploratory research design. The guiding principle lies in exploring phenomena and not in testing hypotheses to develop objective generalisations about phenomena. It allows 'to trace back social phenomena to individual behaviour and the motivations and cultural context producing it' (Reiter, 2017: 140). Thus, exploratory research provides an appropriate framework to examine the perception and experience of individual hybrid academic managers, because it does not aim to focus on the outcomes and results of human behaviour, but rather directly on the causal mechanisms that underlie and produce social phenomena (Reiter, 2017). It seeks to provide new explanations that have previously been overlooked to make sense of existing theory and new empirical data (ibid).

It becomes evident that another important consideration that applies to the research design is concerned with the level of analysis (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Again, it is crucial to align the level of analysis with the research design and the overall research question because 'problems of interference arise when concepts are defined, and data are collected at the level of analysis inappropriate for the theoretical proposition being examined' (Markus and Robey, 1988: 593).

In this study, the unit of analysis is at the individual-level – and I, therefore, focus my analysis on the micro-level data by interviewing individual hybrid academic managers (Waldorff et al., 2013). By defining the level of analysis explicitly, the researcher can analyse the process and the characteristic occurring in social phenomena more accurately (Dansereau et al., 1984; Kim and Love, 2014). According to Kim and Love it is ‘only with clearly specified levels can a study properly postulate what it is trying to find (research question), what data should be gathered (data collection), how the data should be analysed (data analysis), and how the results (inference) are interpreted’ (2014: 8). The data collection process, and how I analysed my data will now be discussed in the subsequent sections.

#### **\*\*\* 4.4. Data Collection \*\*\***

##### **4.4.1. Participant sampling strategy**

The sampling strategy is one of the most critical aspects of the data collection procedure in qualitative research and has profound implications on the quality of data obtained (Coyne, 1997). To address the research question of this thesis, I selected participants using a purposive sampling strategy (Silverman, 2013; Patton, 1980). This enabled me to select individuals who can provide a detailed and information-rich account of the studied phenomena in a way that is consistent with the interpretivist epistemology, which underpins this research (Hennink et al., 2011).

The sampling strategy unfolded during the actual data collection process. As a first step, my supervisor and I met with two Deans of different Business and Management Schools to discuss my research project. Both Deans expressed their interest in the study. Hence, I not only interviewed them personally, but I was also able to contact other hybrid academic managers in both institutions by E-mail. These E-mails included information about myself and my academic background, details about the nature of the study as well as inquiring whether they would be willing to participate. After two weeks a ‘follow-up’ E-mail was sent to potential participants who have not responded to the first inquiry. This aimed to increase the involvement in this study, in case the previous E-mail has been overlooked or potential participants were absent.

To develop a well-rounded dataset, I also contacted hybrid academic managers from other British Business and Management Schools following the same E-mail procedure. This allowed me to include individuals with a vast ranging experience in the phenomena as well as ethical consideration such as better disguising individuals and their provided data. Once the first interviews were scheduled and conducted, I mostly relied on ‘snowball sampling’ to identify more potential participants. Before each interview took place, participants were asked to read a research information sheet outlining the most important aspects of this research.

Further, they were asked to sign two copies of the participant consent form, one for their own reference and one for my records. A copy of the research information sheet and the participant consent form can be found in the Appendices 1 and 2.

Overall, I interviewed 40 hybrid academic managers. Although most individuals have had several hybrid academic managerial positions throughout their careers, the following table shows the most senior managerial role of participants, and, subsequently the position they mostly reflected upon:

**Table 2: Managerial roles of interview participants**

Number of individuals	Managerial role
19	Dean/Head of Department
13	Associate Dean (Research, Teaching/Learning, Engagement)
8	Head of Group

The majority of interviews were conducted face-to-face to minimise the distance between the researcher and the interviewee (Creswell, 1998). Due to geographical and time constraints three interviews were conducted via Skype/telephone. This approach, however, was clearly an exception because the ‘inter-subjective closeness in the face-to-face situation that no other sign system can duplicate’ is particularly important when aiming to gain a deep and thorough understanding of the studied phenomenon (Berger and Luckmann, 1966: 52).

In consultation with the participants, I suggested that each interview lasts for about one hour to offer enough time for a detailed discussion. However, considering the extensive workload and the wide-ranging responsibilities hybrid academic managers face, the proposed time frame varied depending on the availability and flexibility of each interviewee. With explicit permission of each individual, the interview was also audio recorded, and specific parts or quotes might anonymously be presented in this thesis.

#### **4.4.2. Data collection method**

In line with the research question, the ontological and epistemological approach as well as the research design, this study relied on the data collection method of semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are a very common approach in the social sciences because the interview questions can be pre-planned, but still offer enough flexibility to further elaborate on interesting emerging themes (Alsaawi, 2014). Thus, such interview data enabled me to gain a nuanced understanding of the subjective experience of individuals and the institutional pressures shaping their work lives (Bévort and Suddaby, 2016; Geertz; 1973).



The structure and outline of the interview questions can have profound implications on the quality of the obtained data. The interview questions are based on emerging and relevant themes in the literature (e.g. the ESRC study by Deem et al., 2007) to provide a well-developed basis to examine the phenomena. Thus, the developed interview questions are particularly relevant in addressing the overall research question because they help to understand how individuals make sense of and experience the tensions between the professional logic and multiple non-professional logics in the changing field of British Higher Education. I grouped the interview questions into different themes to offer a more structured account.

The first category includes issues around taking a hybrid academic manager role in the first place. I asked interview participants why they decided to engage in a hybrid academic manager position to elicit their motivation and orientation towards the role. I questioned them about their career aspiration and whether they would like to engage in hybrid academic manager roles in the future. This allowed me to get a nuanced understanding of how they regard the development of their future career trajectory. The second category of interview questions is structured around recruitment and performance management. For example, specific questions include their involvement in performance appraisals and how they deal with underperforming colleagues. The third category addresses their leadership and teamwork approach by asking how they work with other academic managers within their own institution. The last category of questions is directed at the changing nature of Higher Education in the UK. I explicitly asked about their attitude towards external guidelines like the REF or the ABS list, as well as their orientation towards engaging with external organisations. Furthermore, I addressed the increasing consumerisation in the sector by explicitly asking to what extent, in their opinion, Business Schools are dealing with consumers rather than students nowadays.

In order to address the overall research question, I also paid attention to the wording of the interview questions. To gain a deep understanding of informants' experiences, I formulated the questions in a way that allows for open-ended probes (Gioia and Thomas, 1996). Thus, the interview questions encouraged individuals to use their own terminology and to 'steer the interview towards issues and concepts that they felt best represented their own experience' (ibid: 374). This allowed participants to provide 'thick' data (ibid; Geertz, 1973). The interview questions can be found in more detail in table 3 below:

**Table 3: Interview questions**

<b>Taking a hybrid academic manager role</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you please start by telling me how you became an academic and how you then moved into this hybrid position? Was it always your ambition to work as a hybrid academic manager? Is your role permanent?</li> <li>• Are academic managers appointed from within or brought into this organisation?</li> <li>• What training (if any) did you receive when starting the academic manager role?</li> <li>• What are your career aspirations now? (E.g. become a more senior academic manager, Dean, Pro-Vice-Chancellor etc. or going back to being in a ‘purely’ academic role?)</li> <li>• What were your expectations before beginning this role?</li> <li>• Have you been able to define your role/function yourself?</li> <li>• Do you think your colleagues see you in a different way since taking that role?</li> <li>• Did taking this position change how you think about yourself in any way? If so, how?</li> <li>• Have you experienced tensions between professional and more managerial ways of doing things in your role? If so, (how) have you reconciled them?</li> <li>• What kind of strategies do you employ to deal with these tensions?</li> <li>• What kinds of metaphors come into your head when you think about Business Schools and your role as a hybrid academic manager?</li> </ul>
<b>Recruitment, performance appraisals and performance management</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you conduct performance appraisals with other academics, if so how?</li> <li>• Have you ever dealt with/appraised academics who are underperforming?</li> <li>• How do you decide that someone is underperforming?</li> <li>• How do you and other academic managers decide on training and developmental needs for other academics in this organisation?</li> <li>• How are conflicts mediated within the Business School?</li> <li>• How do you as an academic manager maintain/change the organisational culture?</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership, teams, and teamwork</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you work with other academic managers in this organisation?</li> </ul>
<b>The changing nature of Higher Education</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What’s your view on business schools engaging with external organisations?</li> <li>• What kind of research should the Business School be doing? With what impact?</li> <li>• What’s your view on the direction that Higher Education is heading towards?</li> <li>• What’s your attitude towards external guidelines e.g. the ABS list, the REF, the TEF, ‘research impact’ and measuring performance against such benchmarks?</li> <li>• To what extent do you believe you can measure what academics are doing?</li> <li>• To what extent do you think Business Schools are dealing with students or customers? How are increasing student fees playing into this?</li> </ul>

As the characteristics of semi-structured interviews suggest, the structure of the interview questions may ‘not follow on exactly in the way outlined on the schedule’ (Bryman and Bell, 2011: 467). I adopted a flexible approach, meaning that specific questions may have been rearranged in the process of interviewing. Thus, the original outline of questions was used as a flexible interview guide rather than as a fixed protocol (ibid). Furthermore, ‘follow-up’ questions were used during the interview to gain a deeper understanding of emerging themes whereby particularly interesting issues from the dialogue were taken into consideration (ibid; Wengraf, 2001).

I discontinued the data collection process after I reached a point of saturation. At this point, further data collection becomes ‘counter-productive’ because ‘the new’ does not necessarily add anything to the overall story or theory (Saunders et al., 2017: 8; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). According to Grady, ‘in interviews where the researcher begins to hear the same comments again and again, data saturation is being reached...It is then time to stop collecting information and start analysing what has been collected’ (1998: 26). Thus, the next section will outline my data analysis process and discuss the progression of codes from first-order codes, to second-order themes and then to aggregated, theoretical dimensions.

#### \*\*\* 4.5. Data Analysis \*\*\*

The qualitative research process is often dynamic and non-linear, where data collection and analysis proceed simultaneously (Frankel and Devers, 2000). Nonetheless, it is essential to demonstrate ‘qualitative rigour’ by following a systemic approach to new concept development and theory building (Gioia et al., 2012). Thus, in order to grasp the phenomena of interest, the researcher requires an approach that is ‘adequate at the level of meaning of the people living that experience and adequate at the level of scientific theorising about that experience’ (ibid: 16).

Hence, the data analysis process followed the techniques and recommendations made by Gioia and colleagues for carrying out a holistic approach to inductive reasoning (2012; Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991). The inductive analysis process suggests that patterns and themes emerge from the data, rather than imposing pre-existing theory on them before starting the data collection and analysis process (Patton, 1980). As Frankel and Devers argue inductive reasoning ‘consists of describing and understanding people and groups’ particular situations, experiences and meanings *before* developing [...] theories and explanations’ (2000: 253).

However, in line with the interpretive philosophical underpinnings of this research, it is essential to recognise that value-free knowledge is not possible (Scotland, 2012). Instead, interpretive researchers assert their beliefs when choosing what to study, how to research and how to interpret their data (Edge and Richards, 1998 cited in Scotland, 2012: 12).

Thus, the data analysis process is guided by the research question of this study, which in turn, is determined by the personal values of the researcher. To put it differently, although interpretive research still aims to develop coherent interpretations of individuals’ meanings, the initial selection of the research questions is inevitably guided by the personal values of the researcher. Srivastava and Hopwood argue that patterns and codes do not appear solely on their own, but they are guided by what the researcher wants to know, ‘how the inquiry interprets what the data are telling her or him [and by their] subjective perspectives, ontological

and epistemological positions, and intuitive field understandings. In short, rather than being an objectivist application of analysis procedures, the process is highly reflexive' (2009: 77).

Gioia et al., (2012) propose the view that individuals are 'knowledge agents', with the ability to explain their intentions, thoughts and actions. As phenomena are subjective and involve different interpretations and meanings about reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1966), we as researchers, have the main purpose of providing an adequate account of the informants' experience (ibid). These meanings are determined via an inter-subjective agreement between the researcher and interview participants. Thus, interpretative theory is inductively grounded, being generated from the data to offer a possible explanation of the phenomena, rather than the absolute truth (ibid).

Following this line of thought, I first transcribed the interviews using the transcription software Dragon. Then I started to analyse the interview data using NVivo and Microsoft Excel. In doing so, I developed a data structure with first-order codes, second-order codes and aggregated theoretical themes.

#### **4.5.1. Empirical (first-order) codes**

In the first step of the data analysis, I repeatedly read through the entire interview transcripts to make sense of the data and to identify basic keywords used by my interview participants (Bryman and Bell, 2011). By generating first-order codes, I determined individual arguments that may be relevant for later theorisation about the data (ibid). At this stage, approximately 300 data codes were generated. To produce a detailed and structured index of common themes, I highlighted the data into relevant codes 'where each [code] captures something important about the data in relation to the research question' (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 87).

#### **4.5.2. Second-order codes**

Through the process of continuous reconfiguration, I further narrowed down the focus to more specific, second-order codes. Second-order codes are those themes used by the researcher to explain patterning of the first order-codes (Van Maanen, 1979). In other words, I used the second-order codes as a way to capture the empirical extracts at a higher level of abstraction (Gioia and Thomas, 1996). I then paid specific attention to possible connections between my second-order codes, how individuals accounted for these relationships, and to what extent my codes related to concepts and categories in the existing literature (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

Thus, I went through an iterative cycle of data analysis to develop a theoretical model explaining this case (McGivern et al., 2017). I moved between the data, emergent themes and existing literature to identify conceptual patterns (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

As I derived at the second, and later the third stage of analysis, it was particularly helpful to discuss the coding process with my supervisors as they are critically distant from the data and were, therefore, able to challenge and interrogate on my interpretation of the data (Currie and Sypridonidis, 2015). Berkowitz (1997) suggests that this is the very nature of qualitative analysis. It is fundamentally an iterative set of processes or ‘a loop-like pattern of multiple rounds of revisiting the data as additional questions emerge, new connections are unearthed and more complex formulations develop along with the deepening understanding of the material’ (Berkowitz, 1997 cited in Srivastava and Hopwood, 2009: 77).

#### **4.5.3. Aggregated, theoretical codes**

Finally, I aggregated my broad second-order codes into theoretical dimensions. Hereby, I moved from a descriptive to a more interpretative mode (Currie and Spyridonidis, 2015; Gioia et al., 2012). The development of aggregated codes is critical in developing persuasive new theories (Gioia and Pitre, 1990; Gioia et al., 2012). According to Gioia et al., this progression of coding builds a data structure, providing a ‘graphic representation of how we progressed from raw data to terms and themes in conducting the analysis – a key component of demonstrating rigour in qualitative research’ (2012: 20).

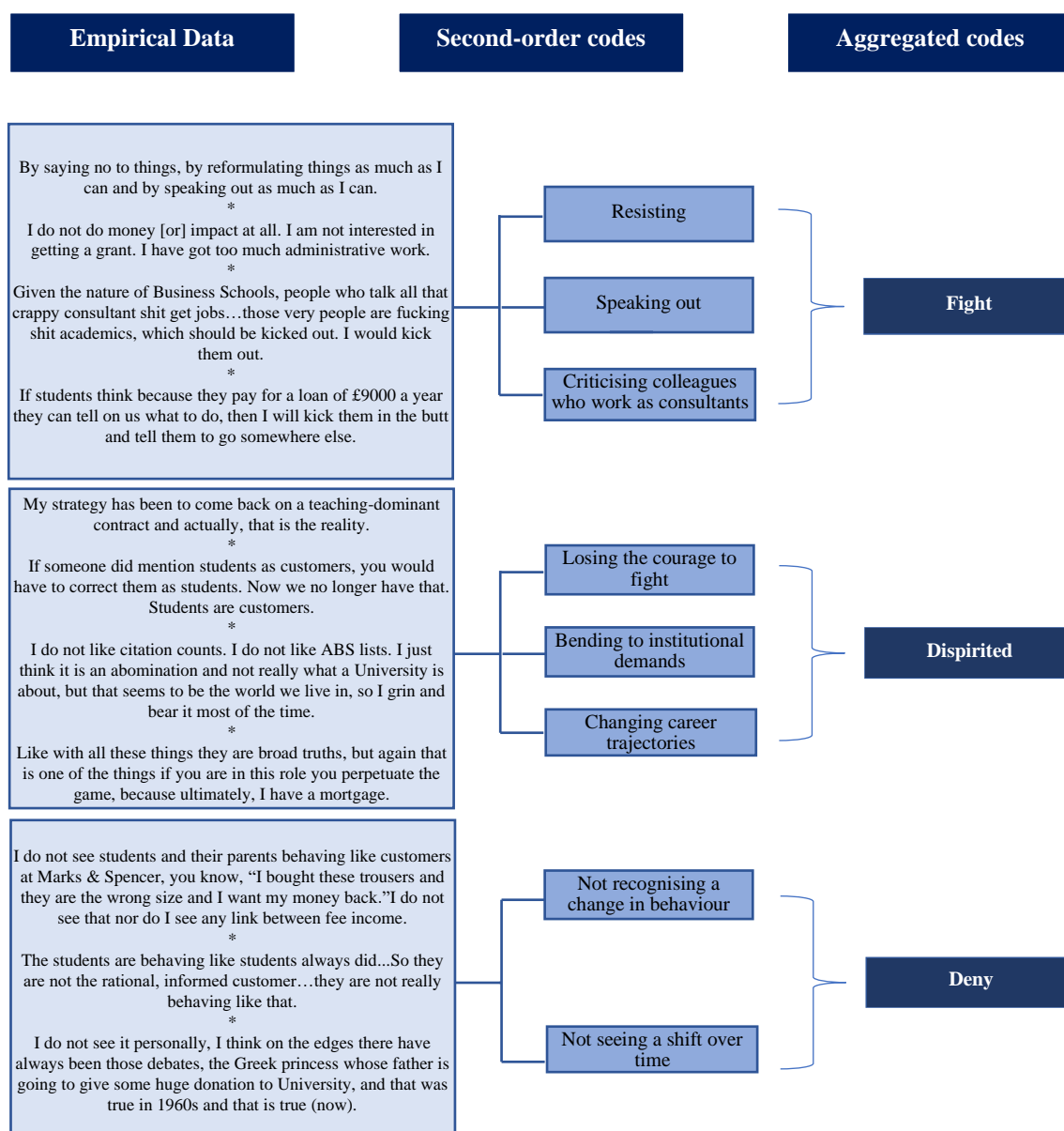
The data structure and the different stages of the data analysis process are illustrated in the following two figures. They display different, distinct features of my data that have been analysed and coded in order to think ‘about the data theoretically, not just methodologically’ (ibid: 21). Figure 2 illustrates the progression from empirical data to the theoretical codes of individual-level responses. Figure 3 displays how I advanced from the empirical interview data to the aggregated codes of individual hybridisation. At this point it is important to highlight, again, that the multiple institutional logics were derived from the field-level analysis. Thus, the following data analysis and the corresponding figures (figure 2 and 3) indicate how those institutional logics were then enacted discursively at the individual-level.

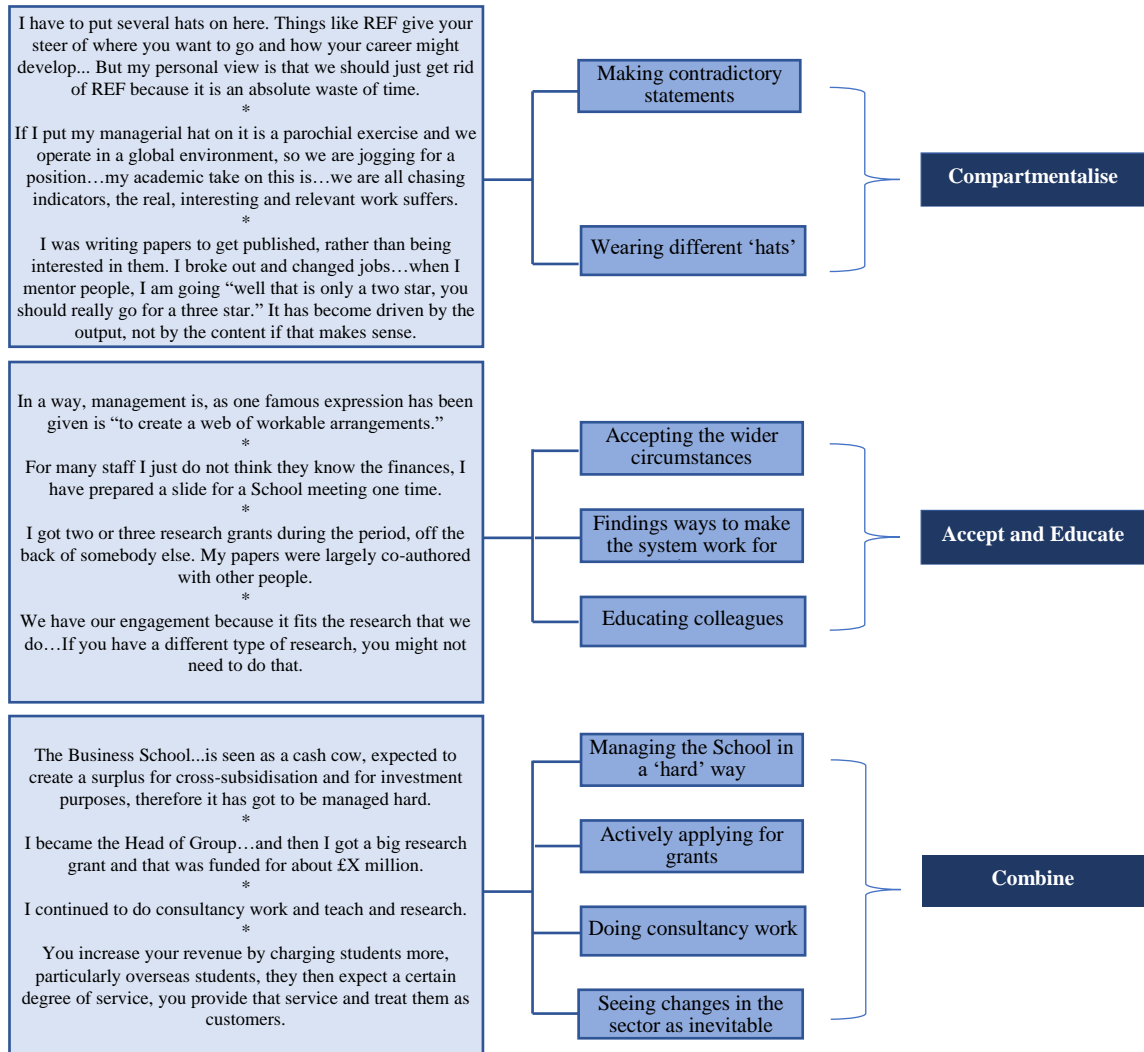
#### **4.5.4. Individual-level responses**

I initially noted similarities between my data and existing theory on institutional complexity. By engaging in this literature, it became evident that the majority of research focuses on organisational-level responses to explore how organisations react to such complexity. However, we have a very limited understanding of how multiple non-professional institutional logics are enacted on the individual-level of analysis. I then moved back and forth between my data and the limited number of existing research on institutional complexity and individuals. I identified Pache and Santos’ (2013) theoretical model of individual-level responses, which provides a valuable theoretical framework to potentially explain my empirical data. The model suggests that individual responses to competing logics are driven by their degree of adherence to each logic and the degree of hybridisation of the context (ibid).

Following this, I analysed and coded my data to explore various individual-level strategies that hybrid academic managers utilise to reconcile the tensions between the professional logic and the different non-professional institutional logics that were identified at the field-level analysis. In a first instance, I moved from the empirical data towards generating second-order codes. These second-order codes displayed in figure 2 demonstrate the explicit ways in which those non-professional institutional logics are enacted at the individual-level. For example, actively resisting orders, speaking out or criticising colleagues who work as consultants were combined into the aggregated, theoretical code of fighting a given non-professional institutional logic. Figure 2 illustrates the three stages of analysis – the progression from empirical data to second-order codes and then to aggregated dimensions:

Figure 2: The progression from empirical data to more aggregated, theoretical codes in reference to individual-level responses



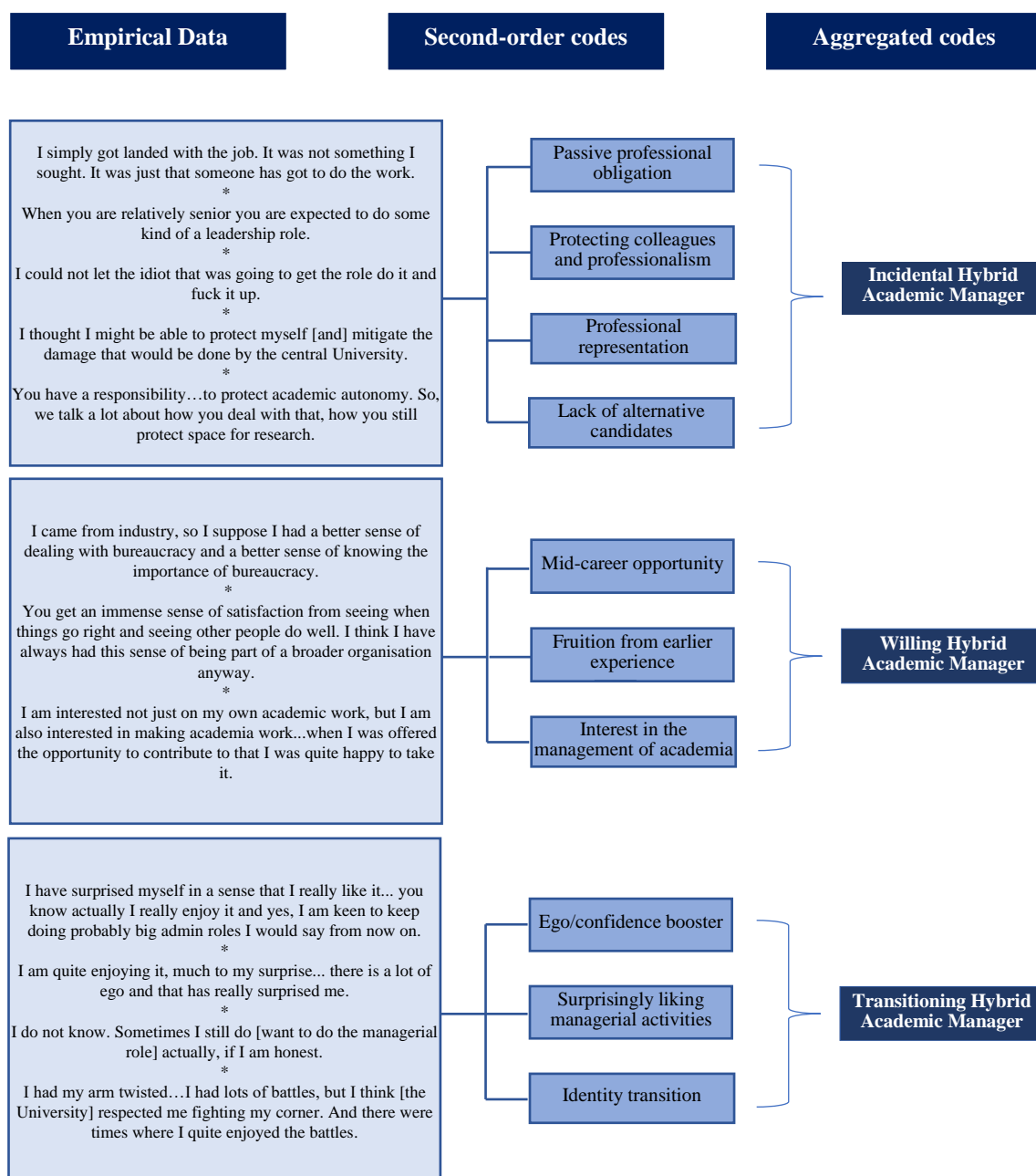


#### **4.5.6. Orientation towards the role**

Building on these findings, I progressed to an aggregated level of analysis by considering how the reconciliation of institutional logics operates across different orientations towards the role. In doing so, I moved back and forth between the data and the literature on hybridisation of professionals. Drawing upon the framework of McGivern et al., (2015), I systematically coded the data around different forms of individual hybrids. Existing research, such as the McGivern et al., (2015) paper, suggest that there are two different types of hybrids – incidental hybrids and willing hybrids. By analysing patterns and connections between previous research and my data, it became evident that there is an additional form of individual hybridisation, which I labelled the ‘transitioning hybrid academic manager’. As Gioia et al., argue ‘we also begin cycling between emergent data, themes, concepts, and dimensions and the relevant literature, not only to see whether what we are finding has precedents, but also whether we have discovered new concepts’ (2012: 21).

I then progressed from empirical narratives towards generating second-order codes. The second-order codes indicate the individuals' orientation and motivation towards their hybrid role. For example, feeling a 'passive professional obligation' to engage in the role, actively attempting to protect themselves, colleagues and academic professionalism, seeing themselves as a professional representative or the responding to a lack of alternative candidates within the academic community. These second-order codes were combined and aggregated into the higher aggregated code of being an incidental hybrid academic manager. Following this procedure, three theoretical dimensions emerged: the incidental hybrid academic manager, the willing hybrid academic manager and the transitioning hybrid academic manager:

Figure 3: The progression from empirical data to more aggregated theoretical codes in reference to individual hybridisation





Again, my analysis and theorisation process were iterative. Following Gioias' et al. (2012) framework, I moved between the data, emergent themes, and the relevant literature. I analysed different, distinctive features of my data to provide a compelling progression to the aggregated dimensions of individual-level responses and the hybridisation of individuals. This coding is illustrated in the figures 2 and 3 to show patterns and connections between the data (Miles and Huberman, 1994; McGivern et al., 2015). In other words, the figures demonstrate the coding process, moving from interview extracts to second-order codes and aggregated dimensions, which I will interpret in more detail in the subsequent chapters.

#### **\*\*\* 4.6. Establishing Trustworthiness of Data \*\*\***

Positivist scholars often criticise qualitative research because the concepts of validity and reliability cannot be addressed in the same way as in naturalist research (Shenton, 2004). Nonetheless, it is still equally important to address specific criteria to increase the truth-value of findings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Johnson, 1997; Shenton, 2004).

According to Lincoln, the primary use of these strategies is to facilitate a better understanding that interpretive inquires requires serious 'consideration of systematic, thorough, conscious' methodological criteria (1995: 276). Hence, my research has been scrutinised by several criteria to ensure a high level of trustworthiness of the data in reference to credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These possible provisions, discussed by various scholars such as Lincoln and Guba (1985; and likewise, Guba and Lincoln, 1981) Shenton (2004) and Bryman and Bell (2011), will now be examined in more detail:

##### *1) Credibility*

- a. Firstly, I adopted a well-established research method and data analysis procedure that have successfully been utilised in previous, comparable projects (Shenton, 2004). For example, while designing this research project, I paid close attention to previous studies in the literature, which have already been discussed in earlier chapters of this thesis.
- b. I familiarised myself with the participating individuals and the organisational context before the actual data collection process took place. As outlined above, I met with two Deans to introduce myself, my project and to discuss their institution in more detail. In other instances, I developed an early familiarity via the consultation of appropriate documents and by studying individuals' bibliography and relevant academic publications (Shenton, 2004).
- c. To increase the trustworthiness of data, I provided a rich and nuanced description of the research context. The policy chapter of this thesis offers a comprehensive discussion of the research setting by chronologically examining relevant policy changes in the field of Higher Education in the UK.

- d. I relied on the proposed strategy of iterative questioning (ibid). I rephrased specific questions at a later point in the interview to return to previous matters raised by interviewees. This process aims to detect discrepancies and establish a coherent interpretation of participants' meanings (ibid).
- e. Voluntary participation increased the honesty of participants. Interviewees had the right to withdraw from the study or from answering any question they did not feel comfortable with at any given point in time without providing any necessary explanation (ibid).
- f. Throughout the entire process, I engaged in numerous debriefing sessions with my supervisors to discuss my progress (Shenton, 2004). Shenton (2004) also stresses the importance of scrutiny of the project by colleagues and other academics. This was achieved through feedback opportunities such as 'annual review' presentations where a panel of academics provided feedback and assessed the development of this study. The fresh perspective of 'outsiders' significantly advanced and improved this research project by strengthening my arguments in light of the comments made (ibid).

## 2) *Transferability*

Transferability is certainly not a major concern in qualitative research, as, in contrast to quantitative research, it focuses on individuals sharing specific characteristics – that is, depth rather than breadth (Bryman and Bell, 2011). As 'qualitative research tends to be orientated to the contextual uniqueness and significance of the aspect of the social world being studied', qualitative researchers are encouraged to provide a rich description of culture (ibid: 398; Geertz, 1973).

Thus, my thesis provides a 'thick' and comprehensive account of the research context to others, but ultimately the findings of this study must be understood within the characteristics of the organisations and even the socio-economic arena in which the data was obtained (Geertz, 1973; Shenton, 2004). This rich description can be seen as offering a 'database for judgements about the possible transferability of findings to another milieu' (Bryman and Bell, 2011: 398). However, it is not the concern of the researcher, but has to be assessed by future researchers in the field.

## 3) *Dependability*

In addressing the issue of reliability, positivist researchers are concerned with the degree to which a study could be replicated to render the same results *ceteris paribus* (Shenton, 2004; Bryman and Bell, 2011). 'This is a problematic criterion to meet in qualitative research, since, as LeCompte and Goetz recognise, it is impossible to 'freeze' a social setting' (Bryman and

Bell, 2011: 395; LeCompte and Goetz, 1982). However, by providing in-depth coverage of every research step, this chapter has offered the reader with the opportunity ‘to assess the extent to which proper research practices have been followed’ (Shenton, 2004: 71).

#### *4) Confirmability*

Although meanings are inter-personally constructed between the researcher and interview participants, a critical self-reflection aims to eliminate the extent to which it may affect the data obtained (ibid). This was continuously evaluated in consultation with my supervisors. I have been reflexive of my personal values throughout the research process in terms of recognising how my fundamental beliefs could influence the collection and analysis of data (ibid). However, it is essential to acknowledge, once again, that meanings are the product of an inter-personal account of the researcher and the interview participant and complete objectivity is clearly impossible – and given the philosophical underpinnings of this research even undesirable.

### **\*\*\* 4.7. Concluding Remarks \*\*\***

In line with the interpretative ontology and epistemology of this research, which deals with highly contextualised qualitative data (Scotland, 2012), this chapter discussed the motivation to select British Business and Management Schools as a research context. As the current ‘scale and continued growth of management education is remarkable and something that is unique compared with other academic disciplines’ (Thomas et al., 2013: 48), it offers a fruitful and exciting research context to explore how individuals experience and reconcile the tensions between the professional, academic logic and multiple non-professional institutional logics. The case selection was further motivated by the personal interest and background of the researcher. This chapter also outlined a comprehensive account of the adopted explorative research design, the sampling strategy as well as the data collection and analysis processes. The section illustrated the progression from first-order codes to more aggregated theoretical dimensions. Lastly, this chapter demonstrated the criteria I adopted to increase the trustworthiness of my data. By presenting a convincing case of my qualitative research, this chapter discussed the provisions of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Shenton, 2004). Overall, the research question and the aim of this study have informed the justification for the selection of the research methods.

## Chapter 5: Findings

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The core of my research is concerned with exploring how hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools experience and reconcile the potential tensions between the professional, academic logic and multiple non-professional institutional logics. This chapter will discuss the key findings of this study and demonstrate how I framed slightly distinctive features of my empirical data.

First, this chapter indicates that individuals do not merely reject or accept the demands of institutional logics but employ a repertoire of six individual-level responses to reconcile the tensions between the professional logic and non-professional institutional logics. The first section of this chapter will provide nuanced quotes from interview participants structured around the three main non-professional logics, namely the managerial logic, the consumer logic as well as the commercial logic.

The second part of this chapter demonstrates that hybrid academic managers are not a homogenous group of professionals, but significantly vary in their orientation towards the hybrid academic manager role. My findings provide empirical evidence on three individual hybrid forms, namely the incidental hybrid academic manager, the willing hybrid academic manager and the transitioning hybrid academic manager.

### \*\*\* 5.1. Section 1: Individual-level Responses \*\*\*

My findings allow me to advance Pache and Santos' (2013) theoretical model by gaining a more nuanced understanding of how individuals experience and reconcile the potential tensions between the professional, academic logic and multiple non-professional institutional logics. Hence, I suggest a modification of the originally proposed repertoire of responses. My findings suggest that individuals engage in the reconciliation of these logics by actively *fighting* the non-professional logic, being *dispirited* to it, *denying* the non-professional logic has an influence on them, *compartmentalising* their standpoint towards the logic, *accepting* the existence of the non-professional logic and *educating* colleagues, or by fully *combining* the non-traditional logic with their traditional academic activities. These strategies are depicted in table 4:

Table 4: Explanation of individual-level strategies:

Strategy	Explanation
Combine	Individuals articulate that the professional logic and non-professional institutional logics can easily be combined as they do not experience any tensions
Accept and Educate	Individuals do not necessarily favour the circumstances invoked by a given non-professional logic, but they accept its existence. Individuals try to find ways to make the system work for them and their colleagues
Compartmentalise	Individuals articulate contradictory responses about how they reconcile a given non-professional logic
Deny	Individuals deny that a given non-professional institutional logic has any influence on them
Dispirited	Although individuals do not support a given non-professional logic, they are not motivated to do anything against it either, because they have lost their courage to fight. They do not believe that their action will make a difference
Fight	Individuals do not support a given non-professional institutional logic and try to fight it actively

My data allowed me to get a thorough understanding about the way in which hybrid academic managers employ these six different strategies to reconcile the potential tensions between the professional, academic logic and multiple non-professional institutional logics – namely the managerial logic, the consumer logic and the commercial logic. As identified in the policy chapter the managerial logic refers to an idealised image of corporate efficiency, which includes management principles that monitor, measure, compare and judge professional activities to enhance Higher Education functioning (Naidoo et al., 2011). The consumer logic invokes the conceptualisation of students as customers in the Higher Education sector (ibid). Levers include ‘mechanisms for greater choice and flexibility, information on academic courses through performance indicators, league tables and student satisfaction surveys, and the institutionalisation of complaint mechanisms’ (ibid: 1145). Lastly, the commercial logic is understood as ‘the efforts of modern universities to make themselves as relevant as possible to the market regime for the sake of financial and reputational security’ (Brown and Schubert, 2000: 35). Commercial success is assessed by income generation, receiving research grants, doing consultancy work and engaging in the field of practice. The first section of this chapter will present my findings structured around these three non-conventional institutional logics.

#### **\*\*\* 5.1.1. The Managerial logic \*\*\***

During the last decades, there have been repeated attempts to reform British public organisations, including universities. Government policies initiating ‘private’ sector styles of working, bureaucratisation and performance assessment have created fast conceptual tensions (Townley, 1994; 1997; Deem et al., 2007). The first section of this chapter will now present my findings demonstrating the strategies that hybrid academic managers utilise to reconcile

potential tensions between their academic work and the managerial logic in business and management education.

### **Strategy 1: Fight**

The first strategy that hybrid academic managers utilise involves an active attempt to fight the increasing managerialism that is being implemented ‘from above’. Interestingly, hybrid academic managers attribute the root cause to the University itself. Thus, they employed specific strategies to protect the virtue of professionalism. For example, one Head of School described his role as ‘a fighter’, who needs to combat against increasing pressures from the University:

‘I realised that I was a bit tougher than I thought. I never thought of myself as a particularly tough or strong person, but I guess you have to be...because you are under so much pressure from above...I mean I had lots of battles, but I think [the University] respected me fighting my corner. And there were times where I quite enjoyed the battles. I don’t come from a privileged background so I’m quite prepared to take my jacket off and have the metaphorical fight. A fighter. And I think you do have to be a fighter at that kind of School, particularly with Management Schools because they want to extract every penny of you...They see you as a cash cow who can provide a stream of income, and so you’ve got to fight your corner to say “we are more than just here to serve your needs”.’ (Interview 37)

Another prominent narrative involved the strategy of resistance (Mintzberg, 1989; Reay and Hinings, 2009; McGivern et al., 2015). Hybrid academic managers enact their hybrid role to defend professionalism, colleagues and their academic interest. One interviewee provided an interesting example of an embargo with the University. By explaining that his/her responsibility is to ‘keep the wolves at the door’, it becomes evident how this individual attempts to protect and defend colleagues through resistance:

‘During my time one of the most difficult issues was that we had a strike on or at least an embargo on marking. The University wanted us to almost give them a list about who was marking and who wasn’t marking. I refused, and so did some other Heads of Departments. So that was a tension between academia and managerialism. That’s when it really came into sharp focus, because they wanted Heads of Departments to act in a way that was different and counter to the interests of their colleagues...there was always the threat that people could have their salaries cut back...The University was threatening to get tough. That was one of the most difficult periods I think, just trying to keep the wolves at the door. So that wasn’t particularly enjoyable.’ (Interview 9)

Additionally, the identification with ‘being a critical management scholar’ has also led to resistance from hybrid academic managers. For example, one individual stressed that being asked to implement managerial methods and techniques has created great discomfort, most

importantly because of his/her critical management orientation. Thus, effort is put in place to resist and protect colleagues from inappropriate instructions made by the University:

‘I think the long-running tensions are always the fact that I would construct myself as being a critical management scholar, and...I am very conscious of managerial methods and techniques, and I have felt very uncomfortable at times by being asked to implement methods and policies and practices that I don't find appropriate. I have done my best to make sure that we don't do the more insane things that the University wants of us and to try to constantly do things in a way that are in the best interest of staff...Being asked to implement or to envoy forms of managerialism – this has made me uncomfortable. [I handled that] by saying “no” to things, by reformulating things as much as I can and by speaking out as much as I can.’ (Interview 40)

Thus, hybrid academic managers not just acknowledge the importance of protecting professionalism, but also attempt to protect and defend their colleagues. For example, one individual noted that a great part of his jobs is to comfort colleagues that suffer from severe stress-related health issues. In doing so, this hybrid academic managers refers to working with counselling techniques, supporting mechanism and occupational health:

‘I got five people struggling with serious mental health issues including being on antidepressants and that's all work stress related. It is not very nice, if a person in front of you is in tears. You can give them a hug, you always have to work with occupational health. I was joking with someone who works in the department and we said, “we have to stop meeting because everybody thinks we are having an affair”. Obviously, you try to make it work, try to find support mechanisms, you try to reduce their teaching, you try to work with occupational health who can give them certain techniques in terms of counselling. There is another law to not change contracts. So, some people say, “can I go on teaching only contracts?”, but that's not allowed. So that's the pressure basically, you either produce or your contract will be terminated, so that adds to the pressure.’ (Interview 25)

Another interesting response evolved around the issue of using humour to reconcile increasing pressures from the University. This unfolded around fighting the excellence discourse by undermining its significance among colleagues. Spontaneous humour is used in a way to reconcile paradox and contradiction (Hatch and Ehrlich, 1993). However, this might create further tensions with individuals at a higher level of management, who do not necessarily encourage this strategy:

‘We are really hard-core into excellence, we do have an excellence award. And I had to nominate people for the excellence award and I just go like “this is just complete nonsense”...And then, in our group I instituted the all-right award. So, the all-right award was basically for doing a decent job, doing a good day's work, nothing spectacular and doing what you need to do, and sort of poking a bit fun out of the excellence thing. But then I got told off yesterday, by my Dean for sending this E-mail so somebody must have forwarded it to him, I don't know. I just say it's nonsense, but obviously that then creates tensions with more senior people in the University.’ (Interview 25)

My findings indicate that hybrid academic managers do not merely fight increasing managerialism coming from the University, but also on a broader, sector-wide level. For example, the implementation of private sector practices e.g. ‘Key Performance Indicators’ (KPI) was regarded as very critical. This interviewee explained his approach to capture the distinctive essence of the Business School rather than focusing on numerical performance indicators:

‘I think this never-ending refrain of performance measurements and KPIs and that kind of shit, nothing is ever quite good enough. You come [less well than expected] in the REF, well you fucking didn’t put enough people in, it is all very negative. I think my antidote to all of that is to try and get people to try a different approach if you like. To try and capture what the essence of this School is about...and then looking forward to how we might build on that distinctiveness at the margins, there are certain people we hire, there are certain people who apply here, and some people how don’t. I’m quite happy with that, there are some people I don’t want to apply here on my watch. The next person can hire who he wants. But the kind of prima donna, CV slacks who are sending their CV just before REF saying you know “I’ll come to your School, you can pay me 200 grand and I’ll pop in for a week in July”. “What the fuck? No”.’ (Interview 17)

Someone else made more explicit references fighting the increasing managerialism, for example by rejecting the ABS list. This not only includes the personal attempt to refuse it, but it also entails encouraging others to disregard the list:

‘I have continually trying to talk down on the ABS list. I’m part of the system in that sense that I have been encouraging people not to put ABS rankings on things that go out because it just legitimises this list otherwise. And there are other ways in which we can decide what publications are working by “oh reading them”. That is not a bad idea either, you know that is what the REF panel does.’ (Interview 39)

In sum, hybrid academic managers utilise different approaches to fight the increasing managerialism in Higher Education. It becomes evident that they identify the root cause coming ‘from above’, that is either from the sector-wide changes or from the University itself, but not from their own ranks at the School-level. To combat these pressures, they attempt to actively fight the increasing managerialism and, in turn, protect professionalism and their colleagues.

### **Strategy 2: Dispirited**

The second form of response also stressed the discomfort of individuals with the increasing managerial logic in the field of Higher Education. Yet, at the same time, they see no motive to fight against a system that is not going to change. Thus, rather than actively pursuing their own interest, they feel dispirited by the managerial logic:



‘I just don’t like it, that’s the thing. I don’t like citation counts. I don’t like the ABS list. I just think it is an abomination and not really what a University is about, but that seems to be the world we live in, so I grin and bear it most of the time.’ (Interview 1)

Another hybrid academic manager criticised external benchmarks because they instrumentalise professional work, and do not reflect the significance of academic research. Nevertheless, this individual explained how he/she defeated to the system because of personal responsibilities, such as a mortgage:

‘I hate benchmarks. I hate them. They instrumentalise everything that we do, the ABS list is an absolute nonsense...Indeed just recently I have published an article in a four-star journal that I think is about as much international significant as my shopping list. I just don't think it's a measure...Like with all of these things there are broad truths, but again that's one of the things if you are in this role you perpetuate the game, because ultimately, I have a mortgage.’ (Interview 34)

The focus of ‘four-star’ publications and primary targeting specific journals that are recognised as world-leading has pushed towards a lack of distinctiveness among the academic community. One individual provided an interesting example of how individuals, and especially young scholars, internalise the very virtue of managerialism and how that unfolds in hiring committees. Thus, rather than being interested in the phenomena and the content of their papers, young scholars increasingly focus on the output by boasting about the journals they have published in. This hybrid academic manager claims that it is ‘depressing’ and ‘soul destroying’ to witness, but he/she has lost their courage to fight this development:

‘Given that, my sense of how you deal with the world is, you just accept that. It’s a shitty thing that you don’t like, and it shouldn’t be there. That’s fine. Park that. Deliver the critique somewhere or make that your writing or make that your weekend political activities. If it’s an object of the world that you cannot wish away, you just do the best you can with it given what you actually are trying to do and what you do think is important. That’s the greatest tragedy, when actually people don’t do that, because of the nature of the way in which it works, people internalise. You witness it most vividly in, unfortunately, in Ph.D. candidates going for their first job, when you’re interviewing them. They are the people who can’t talk at all and who are never going to get a job. They’re just rubbish...The number of interviews I’ve conducted with somebody who has got four four-star finance publications and that’s all they can tell you. If you keep asking them what the work’s about, they might just about be able to tell you what the abstract says, but in a machine-like way and then you end up asking them, “What do you mean by efficiency?” and they can’t answer the question. Yes, there’s a lot of that. Really depressing. Really, really depressing and, again, worse still when you end up in a situation because of subject demand from students or, indeed, because of other members on a panel who can’t see it and when you have to appoint one of those, it’s soul destroying, absolutely soul destroying.’ (Interview 4)

To make sense of the increasing managerialism in the sector, some hybrid academic managers attempt to reposition themselves in the academic community. For example, one strategy that

individuals employed was to switch to a teaching-dominant contract. It is argued that this is a forced, but necessary response to escape the increasing pressures created by the REF:

‘In truth, a lot of what’s happened is as a response to the REF. [The University] made a choice by saying, “are you going to be REF-able?” If there’s any doubt you were given a number of choices. One, voluntary redundancy, two, compulsory redundancy, three, moving to a teaching dominant contract. When they made that decision, it forced my hand...not only was the following discussions not about career choices, it wasn’t phrased in that way, it was all about performance management. It did feel almost like a draconian approach to managing. I don’t want that. I want to be able to research. If I want to research in my own time and to enjoy what I’m researching rather than feel as though I have to churn out article after article. So, I made a choice. It was the right choice I think.’ (Interview 7)

The same individual continued to explain how the system has changed over the past years. It is argued that the introduction of the REF (or formerly the RAE) has caused lack of distinctiveness in the academic field. This leads to a demoralisation of academics by dividing the profession between those who benefit from the REF and other performance-related mechanism and those who don’t. One individual stressed this fragmentation of the profession:

‘The REF was a clear divide. Before then you had a strange mix of people...Now it’s a far starker divide. You’ve got people who are funded, do research and that’s all they do. You’ve then got this middle pool which is the mass of academics who are essentially fighting it out. There’s a danger being brought into this teaching focused contract. The line seems to be moving. The expectations are rising each year. Colleagues who when they joined here would have been seen as good researchers, so they were publishing two articles a year, two, maybe three-star journals, getting some funding. That would have been a star performer 15 years ago. Now they’re the people who are in danger of going on a teaching-focused contract. You can just see it in my colleagues, playing that game and just trying to avoid being sucked into teaching-focused [contracts]. I didn’t want to play that game. I’ll jump before I get made to do something.’ (Interview 7)

Another individual illustrated a similar example where the danger of not ‘being REF-able’ forced him to move to a different institution and then later, switch to a teaching dominant contract. In this particular case, the hybrid academic manager stressed that although he received performance-related for his significant contribution to the University, he received a notification to justify his ‘unacceptable’ research performance by not being REF-able. It indicates the mismatch of incentive mechanisms at the University, forcing this individual to move institutions and contract types in an act of self-defence:

‘During a five-year period, I got PRP (Performance-Related-Pay) three times. I’m not boasting, but it was indicative that what they thought what I was doing was significant for the University and for the School. The same week I got a PRP I also got a letter from HR saying, “You’re not REF-able...what the hell are you doing? Please explain yourself.” So, at that point I thought, “Screw this” and I left...I don’t know if there are any strategies, because you’re fighting a system

that isn't going to change, and I don't want to become bitter. So, for me, I suppose my strategy has been to come back on a teaching dominant contract and actually that's the reality.' (Interview 35)

Thus, although individuals indicate that they do not support the introduction of the managerial logic, they have lost their courage to do anything against it. Hybrid academic managers simply allow the further institutionalisation of managerialism in the field of Higher Education to happen. They perceive themselves in a passive position whereby fighting a system that is not going to change seems hopeless.

### **Strategy 3: Deny**

Not one individual denied the influence of the managerial logic on their academic work and on the Higher Education sector more generally.

### **Strategy 4: Compartmentalise**

It became evident that some hybrid academic managers made contradictory comments about their reconciliation strategies in response to the managerial logic. This is conceptualised as the 'compartmentalise' strategy. For example, one interview participant explained that he/she regarded the rise of Business Schools as a manifestation of the left [wing politics], yet he/she articulated his experience of setting up a Business School himself. The individual started to explain:

'In my lifetime the left [wing politics ideology] has become completely marginalised, and a manifestation of that is the rise of Business Schools. In many ways, the rise of Business Schools is a manifestation of the defeat of the left [wing politics], and a manifestation of that is that former leftists are now in management positions in Business Schools. You know, they've completely sold out their earlier principles.' (Interview 21)

At a different time during the interview, the same individual articulated an opposing viewpoint by explaining his desire to establish a Business School himself. Thus, he actively transferred to another University and established a Business School for them:

'I was sitting on the beach with my wife one day, and I said to her "what I would like to do, is to find a University that hasn't got a Business School and then set one up for them." I just thought it would be an interesting thing to do and I thought about how you would do it, what you would do. And then [removed for anonymity] advertised the job...So that was as near as you could get to exactly what I thought I would want to do – set up a new Business School.' (Interview 21)

Another interview participant made compartmentalising comments about the engagement with managerialism and performance management. On the one hand, the individual criticised the performance-oriented approach of an incoming Dean, yet on the other hand, the same

individual provided an example of how he introduced a formal procedure for underperforming colleagues:

‘One of the key things that the new Dean instituted was focusing attention very much on the Performance Development Review process and looking at research performance to the point that in her first year she read over everybody's Performance Development Review. She knew what was going on in everyone's research. That's quite a degree of surveillance there, and direct control, it's not even sophisticated surveillance.’ (Interview 27)

At a different time of the interview, the same individual explained how he ‘got more managerial’ by initiating more performance management for colleagues whose research projects did not meet certain requirements:

‘I did get used to being a bit managerial in that context and I didn't find that terribly difficult to do because there's a kind of urgency and a requirement to make sure peoples research projects work and they progress. I got used to that way of operating to a certain extent...it wasn't quite as bad as I thought because I assumed that I would have to simply get very tough in that situation, I was coming prepared for that...we still have a residual romp of a small number of staff, who are simply not performing in research terms and yet see themselves as research-active academics, and those cases are going to continue on to become more formal and performance managed and measured. My role is to get that process started, I feel like I have got that process started.’ (Interview 27)

Similarly, someone else reflected on a situation where he saw no other choice, but to defeat to the increasing emphasis of managerialism by relocating to a different institution, because this hybrid academic manager was simply producing output rather than being interested in the research phenomena:

‘My worst experience actually was in my early thirties. So, when this stuff began to kick in. That's about 15, 20 years ago. I had two or three years where I was writing papers to get published, rather than being interested in them. I was relatively successful at it. But I wasn't learning anything. Actually, I broke out of where I was and changed jobs just to get away and find a place where I felt less pressure to publish all the time. That was a sense of achievement.’ (Interview 8)

Yet, at a different time during the interview the same hybrid academic manager continues to explain that he himself pushes colleagues to focus on producing research output and target specific journals rather than focus on the content – the exact same approach that he criticised and escaped from in the past:

‘I, myself, when I mentor people, I'm going “well that's only a two star, you should really go for a three star”. It has become driven by the output, not by the content if that makes sense.’ (Interview 8)

Some individuals articulated their opposing view of the managerial logic more directly, by being aware of the compartmentalising strategy. The metaphor of ‘wearing different hats’ is

used to express their different standpoints, thereby differentiating between a managerial perspective and his/her personal beliefs:

‘I have to put several hats on here...from a School perspective, I can see that it [REF] is a useful tool for benchmarking how well our School is doing. But my personal view is that we should just get rid of REF because it is an absolute waste of time. But obviously they don’t want to do that because it seems like a nice way of periodically telling us how good we are, and how bad all the other universities are. But that is my personal and not my proper view, that is my personal moaning about it.’ (Interview 38)

Similarly, someone else expressed their divided opinion about the REF by wearing different hats. On the one hand, this hybrid academic manager stresses the need to secure a favourable position for Business Schools and the whole Higher Education sector in an international market – hence REF. On the other hand, however, this hybrid academic manager acknowledges that scholars are increasingly chasing targets which only enforces the system they are part of:

‘I think the tail is wagging the dog. If I put my managerial hat on it’s a very parochial exercise and we operate in a global environment, so we’re jogging for a position in this environment, and the REF is a very sort of British kind of thing, most people outside Britain don’t understand it and they don’t care about it, but it requires considerable investment in time and effort and has distorted the academic market...But, essentially, my academic take on this is that when the measure becomes a target it ceases to be a measure. So, we’re all chasing indicators. The real, interesting and relevant work suffers because it’s all people’s perceptions like, “ah, a new target, no it’s journals because I want to be included in the REF” and so on. So, it breeds a kind of conformity [but] I’m part of enforcing this system, I mean I may not believe in it, but I’m part of, you know, telling my colleagues, “why do this...why not put your effort there”.’ (Interview 29)

My findings indicate that hybrid academic managers make contradictory statements about how they experience the managerial logic in the field of academia. Whereas some individuals unconsciously argue that they use different reconciliation strategies across time and space, others are more aware of their conflicting reconciliation by ‘wearing different hats’.

### **Strategy 5: Accept and Educate**

The fourth form of individual-level responses involved hybrid academic managers who do not necessarily favour the circumstances invoked by increasing managerialism, but they are trying to find ways to make the system work for them or as one individual has pointed out:

‘In a way, management is, as one famous expression has been given, is “to create a web of workable arrangements”.’ (Interview 28)

Thus, they attempt to leverage the system by ‘playing the game’. This unfolds particularly around REF submissions. Thus, even though the REF has had a number of negative

consequences for the sector, and academic work in particular, it is perceived and accepted as 'the only game in town'. One individual explains this paradox:

'I think in an ideal world, we wouldn't have REFs. I think it encourages short-termism, it encourages salami slicing, it encourages competition and privileges researching over teaching, it is bad for all sorts of reason. I don't agree with them, but they are the only game in town...There's a paradox for academics, just as there is a paradox for academic managers and institutions. There's a tension there. It is not what I would choose to have as a system, but it is a system and we can't, as it stands, change the system, so we have two courses of action. Either we step out of the system, or we try to leverage within the system. And I think what we tried to do is leverage in the system.' (Interview 26)

Similarly, someone else acknowledged to playing the REF (and formerly RAE) game. It is argued that, in relation to the REF, the academic community has made a deal with the devil by accepting a 'Faustian bargain':

'You might say to some extent it [the REF] is a Faustian bargain that academia has done with the powers to be. It actually kind of said "okay give us rewards and we will give up a significant amount of our freedom"...the first RAE was done in 1986, very small scale, relatively informal, minimal paperwork, nobody saw it becoming the monster that it has become...I mean I played the RAE, the REF game. And I made sure that my School was actually as strong as possible for that kind of thing, and that made me actually engaging with all sorts of things that I might not otherwise have engaged with.' (Interview 33)

Performance management systems, and more explicitly the REF, are regarded as a bureaucratic exercise that provides limited improvement to academic scholarship. It is argued that the REF has little to do with measuring research quality but is simply a mechanism to allocate QR money. One Research Director explains how this perspective unfolds in their hybrid academic manager role and how educating the University and colleagues is an important aspect of his/her responsibilities:

'REF is certainly not measuring research, and we all know that...[REF] is the hoop that we have to jump through in order to get the QR money...it doesn't measure research, and I think anybody who claims that it does just doesn't understand REF, but it measures the things that the people who give us money want to measure. It's their prerogative. Your alternative is to walk away from the QR money, and we are certainly not going to do that...So as long as you are kind of explaining that to people, we can do quite a lot to minimise anxiety about the REF, and at another major job of the Research Director.' (Interview 36)

Thus, another interesting narrative evolved around how hybrid academic managers construct and formulate their role. In order to accept and somehow respond to the changing expectations in the sector, a common strategy of individuals is to use their role as a catalyser to strengthen the research culture of the School. One hybrid academic manager explained how he/she is utilising the role in order to make sure that research is a central theme on everyone's agenda:

‘I’m the only manager in the department who sends around strategies and documents to everybody, because I think that’s the way you need to do if you want to inform people. So currently I’m working on a departmental research strategy...of course alarm bells start ringing because I’m touching on hours that are nicely protected and people probably see it as something that they have ownership of and I start knocking on doors...so I get discussions going, I open up things and I think I have certain ideas. Some, I think, do appreciate me, and it gets discussions going on rather festured and taken for granted issues here.’ (Interview 6)

The same individual continued to explain that an important aspect of his/her responsibility is to educate colleagues and to give them advice on how to manage their research time. This is particularly important because research time is not necessarily fixed in academic diaries as oppose to other responsibilities such as teaching schedules or student appointments. Thus, academics tend to focus on other responsibilities, such as student appointments, at the expense of their intended research hours:

‘My advice to people is “you are not egoistic enough if you are not doing your research in your research time”, because it’s the first thing that people let slip. What is not fixed on your timetable? It is the research time. You pay a lot of attention to students, and it eats away. First of all, I have this conversation, “where did you block time for research” “oh I didn’t have time.” “I can’t keep protecting you if you are not protecting yourself first, block your days in your diary”.’ (Interview 6)

Hence, strengthening the research culture of the School involves much more responsibilities than simply ‘managing for REF outcomes’. Individuals celebrate other aspects that come with the wider responsibilities of REF preparations, such as getting colleagues excited about their research or working closely with younger academics to positively shape their research agenda:

‘If I thought for one second that the Research Director role was just about managing REF I would not be interested in doing it. It is about getting people interested in the ideas that they want to pursue and getting them excited. We had a long period where an early career researcher had been bobbed down in a lot of stuff, and we have been doing lots of work with them in the last six months to really get them excited about their research again, and it is so nice to see, and it is so exciting. And we had some really good feedback. And that’s what the Research Director is about, not the REF.’ (Interview 36)

Hybrid academic managers also use their position to educate colleagues about managerial practices, for example, finances. This strategy aims to make academics more aware of organisational processes within their own institution. One individual provided an interesting example of this strategy, but also highlighted how this may cause a protentional identity violation:

‘For many staff I just don’t think they know the finances. I have prepared a slide for a School meeting one time and it was interesting to learn that a colleague, who is a Business School Dean, she did such a slide as well and she lays to her staff

where the money actually comes from. She said she did it for the same reason that I did it – she said there was a complete disconnect, many academics still don't understand that the research they do is important and vital, but it is not funded off a grant now, it's funded off of student fee income and that does have implications. It has to have implications for the way in which universities allocate time and awards. So, I felt a bit better when I learned that she did it as well. Because you feel a bit bad, you do feel you've gone over to the dark side, you've gone over to management. You're not really an academic now.' (Interview 15)

Someone else highlighted the importance to recognise ones' strengths and to position ones' career trajectory accordingly. Hence, not every academic should be judged by the same standards, but it should rather be based on other aspects like career advancement, seniority or experience. The consequences of lacking such diversity is illustrated in the following quote:

'I think I would like our member of staff to actually just enjoy what they are doing. I especially don't like the notion that we are all judged by the same standard, you know early career researchers, people on teaching only contracts, senior professors. These people should all be judged by relative standards. We were at this training and a Research Director from a large University from south of England said, "when a member of staff publishes a 4-star paper we give them £2000." And I was like "what?" And he was saying what a great thing this was. And I said to him, "well let me get this straight, you are paying your senior male professors skiing holidays? That's what you are doing?" And he said "yes, that's capitalism." Jesus, I would like to think we're not about that at [this University]. For a senior professor who publishes a 4-star paper, that's nothing, that's what he is supposed to do, that's his job. For someone whose midcareer, what an incredible achievement and that should be celebrated.' (Interview 20)

Celebrating achievements and showing colleagues how to improve certain aspect of their working lives may also filter down to little initiatives such as socialising over coffee:

'I always remember an example where we had a 'coffee morning'. That's another thing I introduced. I suggested to have coffee to get people together because that's what we used to do at [the old institution].' (Interview 32)

Someone else explained how there is a lot of support within the senior management team of the School. However, this individual explains how academic colleagues are often suspicious of hybrid academic managers. To diminish this scepticism, the hybrid academic manager attempts to educate colleagues and even professional service staff on how different ways of organising, for example mind maps, could benefit their working processes:

'People genuinely try and support each other and try and support the staff. The staff often don't see it because they always think "they're trying to get us, they are the management, they are doing nothing for us." But being in the position I find that people are very supportive. [For example], mind maps are very helpful, and I use some of those and try to persuade our professional service colleagues to do it as well...what the project is about, what they expect as an output, a time chart, who is leading, what's accountable, how many resources you need, whether the risk, all in one sheet of paper. And I have tried to persuade our professional



service staff to use something like that as an approach and they have been.’  
(Interview 18)

Another interesting narrative evolved around the fact that some hybrid academic managers used escapism as a strategy to reconcile the increasing pressure placed upon them by the managerial logic. In more detail, interview participants exploit their high level of autonomy to make the system work for them in the best way possible, for example, by booking writing retreats or blocking two days a week for travel. This strategy allows hybrid academic managers to re-shift their attention from managerial responsibilities towards academic scholarship:

‘I have some strategies...One strategy is to go on writing retreats, and that gets you away from it all, and you do focus on the writing. I think I need to rethink strategies and I think I need to get rid of some of the things.’ (Interview 11)

Similarly, another individual explained how contractual specifications can best be utilised to allow for authorised ‘free’ time. By simply blocking and reframing intended research time, this individual is able to partially relocate to a different country:

‘I bought a place in Spain because I decided I hate the UK summer weather...So rather than saying I’m flying to Spain, I say “book retreat” so I’m blocking out Friday and Monday which I’m supposed to have because I’m supposed to have two-days research time a week...I’m supposed to have two days so I’m using that as a strategy to actually give more free time, because I probably will not do much work when I go.’ (Interview 32)

In sum, hybrid academic managers attempt to find ways to accept the increasing pressures of the managerial logic, even if they do not support these developments. As my findings indicate this may involve ‘playing’ the REF game or engaging in escapism to strike a justifiable balance between professionalism and managerialism. Yet, hybrid academic managers do not only reconcile the tensions between professionalism and managerialism for themselves, but also make an effort ‘to create a web of workable arrangements’ for their colleagues by educating them about potential reconciliation strategies.

### **Strategy 6: Combine**

The last strategy that hybrid academic managers utilise is based on the notion that the managerial logic can easily be combined with the professional logic of academia, because they do not perceive any tensions. As one interview participant explained, engaging in a hybrid academic manager role allows for a well-rounded career profile:

‘I have been very reflexive about what I want career-wise, continuing to develop and achieve, what I have done as part of the wider collective of the School, where I put my energies so that I keep the balance of research, teaching and leadership together to hopefully be where I can use my gifts most effectively. I think one of the great rewards of an academic career is that you do have opportunities to experience and grow in different ways. So, am I sorry that I didn’t get out 10 or 8

more publications because I took one more leadership responsibility? No.’  
(Interview 31)

Another narrative evolved around the argument that hybrid academic managers are not just interested in their own academic work, but in making ‘academia work’. Thus, rather than striving for less management, one hybrid academic manager argued that the sector needs ‘better management’ including revised training opportunities or improved communication processes:

‘I’m interested not just in my own academic work, but I’m also interested in making academia work. When I was offered the opportunity to contribute to that I was quite happy to take it... I’m not someone who says academics should be less professionally managed, or something like “we want less management in academia”. I’m quite the opposite. I think we want better management and that includes lots of aspects, better training, better communication, better succession planning all that kind of stuff.’ (Interview 23)

Another clear line of reasoning involved the perspective that Business Schools are ought to be managed in a tough way, because there are considerable expectations from University to generate a surplus for investment purposes. This approach has to be filtered down to individual academics to meet given standards:

‘The Business School is seen as a cash cow, expected to create a surplus for cross-subsidisation and for investment purposes. Therefore, it has got to be managed hard. The model that has been adopted within the University for all departments is what we call a premium model. So, you recruit good faculty which involves paying them relatively high salaries in the sector, they produce good outcomes, you can then load that on to fees for postgraduate programmes in particular, and that creates a surplus in a virtuous way rather than to compete on cost, but that means high performance from everyone if you want to maintain that position... I always make it clear that when I’m dealing with faculty. It’s like a tough laugh, the standards are high and I’m trying to support them. But you know the standards are there and they are not negotiable. People have to step up to the mark with good support, otherwise this may not be the place for them to work.’ (Interview 10)

Someone else takes a similar approach by initiating the implementation of performance management in his/her department. However, this was not fully supported by the senior management team and HR. Thus, even though this individual was striving to improve the performance and efficiency of academic colleagues, other hybrid academic managers and professional service staff resisted this development:

‘I’ve been managing people since I was about 19 and so I’m not sort of afraid of that sort of thing. The difficulty with managing academics is that if you sort of set out the things that you want people to do and if they don’t do them, particularly where I’m working, there aren’t any consequences. And whilst you tend to talk about leadership as being something very positive and motivational and stuff like that, but on the other hand, you do need the carrot and the stick. There isn’t really

any stick. There might be in some places. But certainly not where I am at. I've had this experience quite often where a particular task would come through, I would look at the people in the department and think oh yes X could do it and I'd ask them, and they'd either not even reply to the E-mail or just say "no". Sometimes people would say "yes", and I'd be grateful. People seem to be apparently just not willing to help and there was nothing I could do about that. I did try some sort of vague performance management when I first started and found that I got so little support from the other management and from Human Resources that it was clear that it was hopeless, there was really no point in doing it.' (Interview 16)

In a similar vein, a common response among individuals was their active involvement in promoting and implementing external guidelines and measures. In fact, individuals may not only support the further institutionalisation of external guidelines like the ABS list, but, as one individual explained, they may also be involved in creating such mechanism themselves:

'I remember there were half a dozen lists floating around. In fact, I generated a list of a kind for our section, which basically said, "these are the sort of journals that are likely to carry the papers that will definitely be REF-able, these are the journals you might publish in, but that will be for other reasons".' (Interview 2)

The same individual continued to explain his active involvement in integrating professionalism and managerialism. For example, this might include being a member of the REF panel:

'My responsibility in the last REF was Main Panel [removed for anonymity]. So, I led the University's preparations for Main Panel [removed for anonymity], which is all the social sciences, including business and management.' (Interview 2)

The REF has introduced new performance requirements as an aspect of managerialism. Hence, one individual argued, it made no difference to adequately performing academics because they are intrinsically motivated, however underperformers are quickly exposed:

'Well I think the story of REF is a complex one. I've been involved in it right from the very beginning...In fact, I was on the Council, where this has been planned. I've had a big impact on shaping the way this was going to happen, so I'm a great believer in it. The REF has had its negative and its positive consequences, but by and large I think it's more positive than negative...I mean, British universities are quite strong throughout the world. I think the REF and the performance management aspect which goes with it has had a big positive impact...What happened with the REF is that those people who were underperforming were very quickly exposed. All of a sudden, they became accountable, and many of them didn't like that and many of them have left. And many of them of course realised that if they wanted to stay in this world they had to adapt, they had to adjust, and they had to become more productive. So those people have been under a lot of tension, the people who have been underperforming. The people who have been over-performing, it made no difference because they weren't working for the REF, they were working for themselves and their subject area. The REF has created tensions for people who were under-

performing or were not prepared to perform against the new requirements, and that's an aspect of managerialism.' (Interview 12)

Someone else made similar remarks about the perceived positive developments that have occurred in the sector with regards to increasing managerialism. This is directly attributed to the changing notion of institutional autonomy and academic freedom. According to this hybrid academic manager universities have, for a long time, not been managed sufficiently:

'My own view is that universities have, until fairly recently, been under-managed. You had this notion of the autonomous professionals doing what they like, which I don't subscribe to at all, although some of my colleagues still seem to think they can do that. I think the REF, the NSS, all those things are an inevitable part.' (Interview 3).

Hence, some hybrid academic managers regard performance measurements as an inevitable part in today's Higher Education sector. It not only facilitates the identification of under-performing staff, but it also helps to set clear targets that reduce anxiety and nervousness in the academic community. One hybrid academic manager specifically refers to the ABS list and explains how it is used as a bureaucratic mechanism in his/her School:

'The absence of weak performance targets leads to a lot of anxiety and if you set targets, but they're ambiguous you generate a lot of nervousness and a lot of E-mails...so we use the ABS list as a classic, bureaucratic sort of fudge slash faff to calm people down. So, they know where they are, and then we can just deal with the difficult cases around the edges of the process. It's quite useful in that regard...I think it's meaningful to make delineations between journals...If people are getting three papers in Human Relations in one year, you raise an eyebrow and say "very well done", you think three ASQs in a year, you're like "holy shit that's amazing".' (Interview 13)

Further insights have also revealed that individuals may benefit from their managerial position in a way that was not originally intended. For example, one individual explained how representing the Business School on open-days got him/her in contact with international interview participants for their own academic research:

'I'm going to Japan tomorrow, some MBA candidate who not even signed up to the programme...has put me in touch with two people in Tokyo. I met him at an open evening. So, my, because it's externally facing is very useful because I do a lot of qualitative interviews with high power professionals, so it's actually helped in some ways as well.' (Interview 14)

In summary, it becomes evident that some hybrid academic managers do not experience any tensions between their academic work and an increasing emphasis on the managerial logic. Thus, they enact their role to integrate professionalism with managerialism (McGivern et al., 2015). However, the data has also indicated a variety of responses among other individuals. My findings demonstrate that hybrid academic managers employ a repertoire of five different

strategies to reconcile the managerial logic. The response of denying that the managerial logic has an influence on them has not been utilised. A detailed outline of individual-level strategies that are utilised to reconcile the tensions between the professional logic and the managerial logic can be found below in table 5:

**Table 5: Strategies to reconcile the tensions between the professional logic and the managerial logic**

Strategy	Explanation
1. Fight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaking out and resisting:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Resisting and reformulating orders coming from the University</li> <li>b) not providing information about who is marking and who is not marking in the department during a strike, so people will not get their salaries cut</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Criticising trainers during a leadership programme</li> <li>• Refusing to make people redundant</li> <li>• Collecting feedback from staff if they would like the ABS list to be used as a proxy for REF submission</li> <li>• Talking down the ABS list - suggesting to submit to other journals that are not on the list</li> <li>• Building on the distinctiveness of the School</li> <li>• Hiring certain types of people</li> <li>• Encouraging scholars to engage in challenge-led research</li> <li>• Comforting colleagues and finding support mechanisms (working with occupational health to offer counselling techniques)</li> <li>• Using humour (instituting an 'alright-award' in the group in response to the universities 'excellence-award')</li> </ul>
2. Dispirited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grinning and bearing it</li> <li>• Switching to a teaching-dominant contract</li> <li>• Transferring to a different institution</li> </ul>
3. Deny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• /</li> </ul>
4. Compartmentalise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wearing different hats: e.g. personal view on REF would be to abolish it, managerial viewpoint supports it because it allows to compare and benchmark institutions</li> <li>• Leaving an institution because the focus was on writing papers to get published rather than being interested in them vs. telling people to publish in 3* journals rather than 2* journals and using the ABS list to persuade a committee to hire a given person because of his 4* articles</li> <li>• Speaking negatively about the implications of performance management and the degree of surveillance introduced by a new Dean, but then mandating performance management for colleagues who did not go into REF</li> <li>• Setting up a Business School and a journal list, but then arguing the whole rise of Business Schools is a manifestation of the defeat of the left-wing politics</li> </ul>
5. Accept and Educate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening the research culture:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) lots of internal funding opportunities, lots of visitors, lots of seminars, recruiting good researchers/experienced professors, fighting for Ph.D. funding, developing a departmental research strategy to inform people, open-door policy, fighting for people to keep research hours up</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Using the ABS list as a way to refuse a candidate</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the introduction of ‘citizenship’ and entrepreneurial activity’ as part of the performance appraisal (and then informing colleagues about the new possibilities)</li> <li>• Educating colleagues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) preparing a slide on the finances to show scholars where their income/funding is coming from (mostly student fees as opposed to grants), -explaining to colleagues that giving them money for a project reduces the amount available for colleagues’ projects</li> <li>b) explaining REF rules to colleagues to reduce their anxiety</li> <li>c) keeping senior colleagues near retirement around to mentor young faculty on publications</li> </ul> </li> <li>• working on a workload model with colleagues to make sure their time is allocated effectively</li> <li>• persuading colleagues to use effective processes e.g. mind maps to structure a project</li> <li>• Encouraging colleagues to pass on work to support staff</li> <li>• Making colleagues reflect on their emailing behaviour (e.g. through delayed delivery function to disguise when the E-mail was written)</li> <li>• Achievements should be celebrated more</li> <li>• Introducing staff coffee morning so colleagues socialise more</li> <li>• Introducing a separate career track for teaching fellows</li> <li>• Including a Book in the REF submission instead of articles to broaden the horizon of colleagues</li> <li>• Looking for effective ways to implement a process (e.g. by seeking help from support and admin staff)</li> <li>• Escape mechanism: blocking time in the diary as book retreats</li> </ul>
6. Combine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being involved in REF panels</li> <li>• Seeing a positive impact of REF and performance management in HE</li> <li>• Implementing Performance management (e.g. when people have not submitted anything to REF and have nothing lined up, to reduce anxiety so scholars know what is expected of them)</li> <li>• Using the ABS list internally so individuals know where they stand</li> <li>• Enrolling into an MBA for Higher Education management to get a better understanding of this trajectory and for future career aspiration</li> <li>• Using the network of people from the manager role for research</li> <li>• Engaging in the academic manager role to have a more rounded career portfolio</li> <li>• Alignment of organisational interest with personal interests: ‘We are doing what we are studying.’</li> </ul>

### \*\*\* 5.1.2. The Consumer logic \*\*\*

It is widely acknowledged that the field of Higher Education in the UK is increasingly being remodelled by marketisation (Nixon et al., 2016). The perspective of ‘students as customers’ stands as a powerful icon in this debate (ibid). Hence, my data helps to shed light on how hybrid academic managers experience this institutional logic and what individual-level strategies they employ to reconcile potential tensions between their academic professional work and the consumer logic.

#### **Strategy 1: Fight**

The impact of the consumer logic in recent years was perceived to bring clear challenges, which hybrid academic managers actively fight. These tensions manifested itself through increasing student fees, a lack of trust in the academic profession as well as a fear of losing professional integrity and ones’ professional identity. For example, one individual commented on the recent developments in the Higher Education sector and how speculates it may play out in the long-term:

‘I think the issue of the assessment of teaching has changed while I’ve been an academic. It’s become more intrusive in various sorts of ways. There’s no trust in the profession in a way. Turning students into customers. It’s bound to have negative consequences or a downside. But it’s not clear how that might play out in the long term. I mean sometimes our fears are not realised, are they? The fact that you have the fears is a negative consequence already, isn’t it?’ (Interview 9)

One hybrid academic manager explains how the expectation and the quality of teaching and the teaching material is changing as a result of increasing consumerism. This individual provides an example from the MBA programme at his/her School and describes a suggested criteria of another hybrid academic manager that teaching material and references should not be older than three years. To fight against these developments, the individual engages in resistance and refuses to follow this criterion:

‘While there is a tendency to insist that we still call them students and not customers, in practice the kind of things that we are starting to do increasingly within our programmes is catering to our students as customers...For example, we are going through an MBA review process at the moment and one of the criteria that the Director of the MBA programme has said should apply when we are coming up with new teaching materials is that no references should be older than three years, which is just nonsense when it comes to historical grounding – really anything in the business and management field. But it is a good example of where that kind of sensitivity to student demands and dealing with all the material comes to the fore and it shouldn’t really. That’s an issue we will engage with and possibly just simply ignore as a criterion, but it is a good indication of that.’ (Interview 27)

Another hybrid academic manager explicitly stated his/her antagonism towards the increasing student fees. The individual proposes that it is the own responsibility of the academic community to prevent the consumerist behaviour from students to happen – he/she takes a radical stance towards the emergent consumer logic by disciplining inaccurate student demands:

‘I think that the student fee rise in the UK is the biggest mistake they ever made because it is an absurd amount of money. I think good subsidised education, is the best way forward for students. Whether they are becoming customers, that lies with us. We should prevent it from happening. If students think because their parents pay for a loan of £9000 a year they can tell on us what to do, then I will kick them in the butt and tell them to go somewhere else. That's not what you are at University for. So that is something that the students should not be allowed to take ownership of...And I think we have a lot of research active teachers here [that] would definitely fight against it.’ (Interview 6)

Despite tripled tuition fees for undergraduate studies, and even higher fees for MBA programmes, individuals stress that students cannot expect a ‘pre-packaged thing’. One hybrid academic manager argues that he/she does not accept the developments in the sector by criticising the marketised discourse of consumerism:

‘Yes, I can see [the Higher Education sector] changing. You’ve got greater emphasis coming in on teaching and there’s all this marketised discourse of a value-for-money for customers, i.e. students. I mean that’s just bullshit isn’t it? I mean I’ve just given a presentation for the MBA students saying “okay you’re paying 40 grants to do this course, you feel like a customer, I still view you as a student. We’re not here to give you a pre-packaged thing. We’re offering you an experience”. There’s a tension between customer and student, but clearly the political and policy environment is pushing towards more customer orientation. I mean all these ideas they’re not even coming from a Department of Education. In the UK it’s called Department of Business, Innovation and Skills. Who the fuck is that? That’s just like vocational training colleges. Is that it? That worries me a lot.’ (Interview 14)

Similarly, other hybrid academic managers fight increasing student demands, by arguing that students still need to make an effort and understand that attending University differs from A-levels or their previous education. One interviewee stressed that he/she expects students to demonstrate that they are deserving of their qualification, by meeting enforced standards that are set by the academics themselves:

‘Students come off the back off their A-levels...and they expect the same sort of things. That’s fine. What I’ve said to my students is “if you want to get a 2:1 equivalent you have got to show you’ve engaged the literature. The lecture notes I give you is the minimum. I want to see that you’ve gone beyond that and come to your own view about these ideas or theories or whatever it might be”. Sometimes some students don’t quite get that. They think they can just learn the handout and think that’s going to get them a 2:1 and it’s not. Not with me anyway.’ (Interview 9)



In this sense, it becomes evident that establishment and enforcement of educational standards assists hybrid academic managers to re-frame the consumerist perspective towards a long-term relational narrative. One individual explained his/her standpoint by arguing that the consumer logic introduces a unique dynamic into the Higher Education sector. Thus, receiving a University education should not be regarded as simply buying an ordinary product, but rather involves passing specific standards and qualifications:

‘There's a bit of a crucial problem here if you want to think of it as a customer relationship...If you go down to the local garage to buy a car and you've got the money you can buy it and nobody's going to say, “well are you deserving of this car?”. But there's clearly a different dynamic in the context of education, because you have to pass a series of tests that we set. In a sense you want a degree, but you can't get it simply by paying your money and I say to them [students] “well actually you should be quite pleased about that, because the only thing that means that you can get your money's worth is the fact that the qualification has a certain kind of standard which is enforced, so paradoxically the value of this to you is higher because of the fact that it isn't a standard commercial good.” There's a strange kind of dynamic, but one does see it certainly in terms of them being more demanding.’ (Interview 28)

Thus, although a Higher Education degree cannot be seen as a ‘standard commercial good’ or a ‘product’ there is still a greater emphasis on value-for-money in the perception of students. Students increasingly expect a certain service and directly want to reevaluate if the service they receive is worth the investment they have made. One hybrid academic manager provided an astonishing example showing how students make bold statements by questioning the value-for-money during a lecture:

‘In terms of my personal experience and trajectories, it is a true story of somebody saying at the end of the lecture “well I have timed this, and I have worked out what we all paid for this and it was £19,000 and I want to know where the £19,000 of value in that is?”’ (Interview 28)

Someone else made another explicit reference to a changing dynamic and potential unintended consequences of the consumer logic *inter alia* grade inflation, morale and staff bullying. Hence, the individual highlighted the importance to fight this development in order to protect the professional integrity and identity of academics:

‘I don't think it's very good to treat students as consumers, because it sends a completely wrong message about all sorts of things. It also has all sorts of unintended consequences, which I've seen, including grade inflation that students always ride. It can impact staff in terms of their morale and in the way they're bullied actually. If students as consumer trumps academic as professional every time, which it increasingly does in some institutions, then it undermines your professional integrity. It undermines your identity as a professional. For me, I don't think it is a solution.’ (Interview 35)

Echoing the importance of academic integrity, another individual expressed their reluctance towards the commodification of knowledge among the student cohort that is taking place in Higher Education today. This is linked to the decreasing discourse of ‘knowledge for knowledge sake’, and the increasing perception of the government that universities are training and educating the future workforce:

‘I don't like to call students customers, just as you don't want a vicar to call their congregations customers...I really hate the commodification of knowledge. Whenever you hear on television people are saying “you are going to University to be trained to be x.” And I think you are not, you are there just to gain knowledge, there seems to be no legitimate discourse about knowledge for knowledge sake, it is seen to be completely indefensible and I find it profoundly depressing, I really do...And it is partly obvious what the government is about, which is that universities are training our future workforce. I suppose with the expansion of universities and the number of students going up they do just see it as a passport for work. But I hope they get more out of it than that because otherwise what is the point of studying something like Foucault.’ (Interview 40)

In some cases, external measures such as the NSS scores or the incoming TEF were criticised directly. Interviewees explained the set of problems that arise when students evaluate their teaching and other presumably ‘important’ factors of University life such as sports facilities or the quality of food:

‘Look at the NSS scores, students are brainwashed to look at those lists to decide where to study. I guess we can agree that some Universities are better than others, but if you look at how these NSS things are filled in, what students are getting, how they are promoted, what is measured – from your sports facilities to the fact that they don't like the food here, which can bring you down, and therefore you can't recruit, come on! The reputation of the University builds upon good teaching and good research.’ (Interview 6)

Another interviewee stated the increasing pressure, especially on younger academics, to receive good teaching scores. The transparency of teaching evaluation is perceived to be particularly critical because it not only allows students to give their own feedback and be part of the process, but also to review the overall outcome e.g. cumulative teaching scores:

‘The latest thing is, not only do we ask students to evaluate our teaching but now they actually see the cumulative scores of that and all the comments. It is just another thing on top of all the other pressures to people and I'm just surprised they are not complete psychopaths walking down the corridor. Particularly for early career academics, is hugely pressurised now.’ (Interview 40)

Overall, it became evident that hybrid academic managers perceive the increasing consumerism in Higher Education as critical for the overall value of a University degree, the educational experience and for the scholars themselves. By fighting this discourse, they attempt to mitigate the influence of the consumer logic and its unintended consequences.

## **Strategy 2: Dispirited**

Many hybrid academic managers clearly expressed their disagreement with the consumer logic. However, rather than actively fighting against this discourse, some interviewees saw little degree of agency and have lost their courage to fight against it. Hence, they are feeling dispirited by it. Individuals often used the dominant administrative or managerial hierarchy as a justification for this. As one hybrid academic manager explained, he/she experienced little flexibility in trying to bypass administrative structures, and, hence, simply surrendered:

‘One of our little challenges is, we’ve got about 150 extra dissertations to supervise. And we don’t know how the extra dissertations are going to get supervised at the moment. There are various tricks one can do and as you think, “Well, let’s try this line” and then you investigate with the administrative hierarchy and they say, “Oh, unfortunately, you can’t do that” or “Unfortunately, you’ve got to do this before you do that”, by which time it will be too late. You think, “Well, this is ludicrous”. As I say, some people could regard this as a chess game. If you don’t get through on one move, you try the next move. Whereas, I think about the academic work I’m not doing.’ (Interview 1)

Another narrative evolved around financial incentives. Hybrid academic managers argued that the consumer logic in Higher Education is induced by high student fees and the universities desire for income generation. Thus, hybrid academic managers have to deliver and respond to these demands. As outlined above, this was often attributed to the University’s governance and more precisely to Vice-Chancellors:

‘I don’t think academics see students any differently. I think the people that run the University just see them as an opportunity to generate revenue and I think they’re very cavalier in their approach to quality control in the admissions. That’s our experience anyway, which I think is highly regrettable and it will destroy the reputation, ultimately, of the place...But ambitious Vice Chancellors like buildings and they’re not necessarily capable of financial planning.’ (Interview 1)

The changing dynamic that a large number of international students bring to the classroom was also discussed with reference to Vice-Chancellors and their desire to generate more income. One hybrid academic manager criticises that having any majority of people in the cohort fixates the whole group:

‘I teach on an MSc. in International Management and 70% of our students are Chinese. When you get any one particular group dominating a classroom it fixes the dynamic of the group and in an ideal world we would not want that to happen. But the Vice Chancellor wants to build those buildings, and he looks around and says, “I want some more money”.’ (Interview 22)

Financial incentives may also entail conscious efforts by the University to lower standards in order to attract more fee-paying students, particularly from overseas (Bachan, 2017). Someone reported a radical procedure of student admission for the upcoming academic year:

‘We have been told for next year the entry requirements are not our biggest priority. In other words, we have been told, more or less, take as many as you can fit in the van. And it solves the financial problem, but then it completely changes the nature of the cohort, changes who you are teaching, creates almost inevitably all kinds of pedagogic, pastoral issues. I mean the drive to open up to as many international students as possible creates cultural and linguistic communication problems, so there is a real kind of overhead to increasing student numbers, that is either invisible to or not cared about by senior managers, I think that's more of a problem really than raising the fees.’ (Interview 20)

Another interviewee invoked the increasing excellence discourse as an empty signifier. The implementation of infinite feedback loops leads to a made-up reality that ‘looks good on paper’ but serves little purpose otherwise. This submerges down to students because they know that lecturers can not necessarily fail a large percentage of the cohort, causing adverse consequences:

‘We do have to do much more feedbacks forms, and now we have got to get feedback on their feedback, and then they can probably give feedback on our feedback. And you just go “wow, wow, wow” and I don't think they want that kind of infernal loops, because you are creating all this customer activity around that which I don't think the students, nor the staff want. But the excellent system creates this. It all looks good on paper, because you can say “we do this, and we do have a form for this, and then you give feedback” and we become feedback obsessed with feedback on feedback and feedback. This time might be better spent interacting with the students, and I do think they do pick that up and they are quite clever. There's this thing with the exams where we are only allowed to fail a certain percentage, and the students know. Once a student said to a colleague “well I know you have to pass me so why should I make an effort”, and the students are being short-changed because you can't really challenge them, and I do feel sorry for the good students.’ (Interview 25)

Another interviewee criticised the consumer logic by positioning it in the wider political development and the government's desire to create a free market in the Higher Education sector:

‘My fear is they'll simply keep on chasing the next market. We've had the Chinese market which have been drained. Before that we had the Indian market and it's constantly chasing more income. I'm not sure that's the way we should be going...I mean the government wants a free market in education. They also want to have the perception that it's a high-quality education experience, hence REF, hence TEF. The reality is they cannot afford it. Or they do not feel that they can afford a good quality University sector. So, the market is being asked to take that weight. Or more specifically students.’ (Interview 7)

Similarly, someone else directly referred to the neo-liberal policies of the government and explained how their own strategic position is equated with a ‘defeat of the left’ wing politics because everything is turned into a ‘market relationship’:

‘I hate the terminology of customers in all of that trying to turn everything into a market relationship. The neo-liberal policies are squeezing people at both ends of their career. The earlier with student loans and at the end with defined benefit pensions. And in that context, which must be a manifestation of extreme defeat of the left [wing politics]. Pensions and the financing of our studies are becoming more and more market related.’ (Interview 21)

A common response among hybrid academic managers was concerned with the decreasing level of student attendance and engagement. Thus, hybrid academic managers perceive students to make less of an effort since student fees have been increased. Paradoxically, it is argued that some students do not regard the high fees as a motivator for greater engagement or higher attendance, but rather as an excuse to reduce their level of effort:

‘With the increasing tuition fees attendance has definitely gone down, students make less of an effort, so I don't buy this “you pay for something, and for some reason you are much more involved, you are much more demanding”. We are a mixture between, yes, quite demanding in certain ways, but also passive and almost don't care in other ways, there's quite a weird mixture. Yesterday, it made me laugh out loud, because we had an attendance meeting because students are not showing up. And the best one yesterday from a colleague was “there is roadworks, the bus has to take a detour, so it takes too long to get to the University.” And we are talking about a five-minute extra bus ride and they are serious. They say it's not worth it, and I just go “wow”.’ (Interview 25)

Someone made a similar remark about how increasing student fees has had a negative effect on students' attitude. Thus, rather than enthusiastically taking notes and engaging in lectures, this individual explains that students regard the monetisation of academic knowledge to less engagement:

‘I thought, when the fees first came in and you got your first lecture of the year and they would all be sat there making notes and it would have class full of people and they would all be emailing you all the time, and as a matter of fact it was the opposite. Attendance went down when the fees came in. Students were less concern with academic commitments than before. My working theory is rather than treating them like customers they feel like knowledge has now become monetised, they paid for a degree. And now expecting them to study as well, is taking the piss because they paid for it. You know “why don't you just give me the marks I want because I paid for it, and I shouldn't have to study for it as well.” And it feels to me like the monetising of the relationship has actually led to less of an engagement.’ (Interview 20)

It becomes evident that there is a changing rhetoric in the field of Higher Education. One hybrid academic manager explained that he/she has given up correcting other individuals when they refer to students as customers:

‘The rhetoric has been always if someone did mention students as customers you'd have to correct them as students. Now we no longer have that. Students are customers.’ (Interview 7)

The same individual continued to stress that the whole discourse of going to University has certainly changed over the past years. Some academics have lost sight of students and defeated to the logic of consumerism:

‘Financial challenges are such that I don’t think they’ve got the luxury that perhaps we had when we were going through academia at that time. They certainly are not as well read as we used to be, nowhere near. They’re not that committed. They almost see it as a rite of passage now. Whereas before if you got to University you were very lucky. You saw it as a privilege. I’ve got this opportunity to develop myself in this way. Now it’s not like that. It’s almost like okay, “I’ll go into McDonald’s, eat my food and go off. There’s nothing special about it”. We’re not creating that special feel about you’re here at University, you need to develop... You know we have just simply lost sight of students. We’re so divorced from students, we’ve forgotten that we’re in the industry of learning development and career progression and self-development. Some colleagues still get that, but a lot of them don’t.’ (Interview 7)

In sum, hybrid academic managers critically acknowledge the emphasis of consumerism, but believe that their time and effort to fight it will remain unnoticed – and, hence, have lost their courage to fight. By accepting the changing rhetoric, they unwillingly support the increasing institutionalisation of the consumer logic in the field.

### **Strategy 3: Deny**

Despite considerable changes in the field of Higher Education, several participants of this study find the perspective of ‘students as customers’ rather repellent and deny its existence or that the logic has any influence on their everyday work. Instead, one interviewee argued that the service surrounding the product is changing, but attribute this development to improving the academic community itself rather than the choice for students:

‘I haven’t noticed a shift. They have never really positioned themselves as customers. On the academic side, I think it has changed. In terms of the services that are surrounding the product, which is the lectures and the knowledge, we are trying to improve that for sure. But not necessarily for the students, but for ourselves. The basics are that you are trying to inspire, do things in an exciting way. It’s two-way exchange and I think that’s still the same.’ (Interview 18)

Someone else explicitly referenced changes in the funding structure of Universities, but, at the same time, argued that this did not lead to a shift in behaviour amongst applicants. This is attributed to the viewpoint that young students entering Higher Education are not rational informed consumers, but rather make decisions as young adults, even if it relates to a massive investment such as a University education:

‘The government has refinanced, it has restructured universities so that students incur debt. They pay for their degree. I think that has altered the model a little bit for the students in their head, but to be fair they’re behaving like students always did. I asked them how they picked [this institution]. Often, it’s about [the

location], often it's about "it's the best place that accepted me." When I ask them, what do they know about the degree, they know nothing about it. It's like they went into Gap and they weren't sure whether they were going to buy a pair of jeans or a T-shirt. Then they saw something they liked and took it. It's at that level of thought, which is amazing when you think they made a £50,000 investment. They're not the rational, informed customer. They're not really behaving like that. They're behaving like 17-year olds. At 17, Christ, I wouldn't have known anything about it. So, they don't think of themselves as customers in that sense.' (Interview 8)

Some interviewees argued that, personally, they do not see any difference in the interaction with students or applicants. One hybrid academic manager also claims that he/she has not noticed a link between increasing student fees and a change in the behaviour of students. Rather it is argued that students know that they are purchasing a reputation and Universities use that as a useful way to justify element of the consumer logic, for example the greater emphasis on status:

'When we've got visiting days I don't see students and their parents behaving like customers at Marks & Spencer, you know "I bought these trousers and they're the wrong size and I want my money back." I don't see that, nor do I see any link between fee income...I think a lot of them do actually understand what they're buying is the reputation of the University, they're buying the ability to say, "I went to XY Business School." I think it's a narrative that universities have found useful.' (Interview 15)

Similarly, someone else explained that the perceived paradox around receiving donations and accepting specific students in return has always been part of the discourse. However, this did not seem to change or even increase over time:

'I don't see it personally. I think on the edges there have always been those debates, the Greek princess whose fathers is going to give some huge donation to University, and that was true in 1960s, and that is true now.' (Interview 36)

Although the existence of market mechanism in the Higher Education environment is well advanced, my data indicates that hybrid academic managers still deny the overall influence of the consumer logic, and it's influence on their everyday work, more specifically. My data suggest that hybrid academic managers might acknowledge a change in the service surrounding the product, but do not attribute this shifting discourse to the consumer logic itself. Others deny the students-as-customers narrative altogether or do not perceive its influence to grow in importance.

#### **Strategy 4: Compartmentalise**

Interestingly, not one individual made contradictory comments about the consumer logic. This suggests that all participants have a clear and thought through position about the phenomenon.

### **Strategy 5: Accept and Educate**

The Higher Education sector has experienced an increasing emphasis on a ‘students as customers’ discourse, not lastly because of increasing student fees and greater student demands. Several hybrid academic managers accepted this development to a certain degree. Rather than fighting the ‘inevitable’, individuals use a strategy making sure that students understand the underlying principles of professional and educational values. These principles should not suffer at the expense of attempting to receive good teaching assessments:

‘Obviously teaching evaluations is another metric. I think you can't take them too seriously because the role of students as consumers is not to get really good teaching ratings, the objective is to give a really good teaching experience and to hold true to educational values.’ (Interview 26)

Thus, hybrid academic managers acknowledge the increasing consumer logic, but also highlighted the importance of informing and educating students at the same time. It is directly communicated to students that they are not simply buying a degree, but are an important part of the academic community who attend University for a unique experience:

‘There’s so much pressure put on people as managers and so many things going on, like on the teaching side, NSS, keeping the students happy, treating them as customers, all that kind of stuff... We did very well on NSS this year and I think that’s because we’ve worked very hard on the relationship. But that was also about not just dealing with them as customers, it was also dealing with them as members of the academic community of students and pointing out that it was about more negotiation and discussion, expectations, all those kinds of things.’ (Interview 3)

An individual endorsed ‘both sides of the coin’, drawing from his/her own experience as an academic and as a fee-paying parent. It was argued that scholars have to manage students’ expectations – based on academic expertise. However, with changing technology and increasing access to educational material and information the whole dynamic of lecturer vs. student is shifting, which particular unfolds during direct interaction with the student cohort in the classroom:

‘They are seen like customers, and I can see both sides. As a parent, I pay £9000 a year. They are consumers. They are paying for something. When I started lecturing in 1990, students didn't pay a penny and we didn't have the Internet. So, you have something students didn't have, you have knowledge, and the only access to that knowledge was through you and textbooks. Now students just Google things in real time and they literally have the phone and be saying “Mr so-and-so, according to this Maslow was a communist” and I said, “he may have been, but at the moment we are looking at theories of motivation.” So, student attitudes have changed, for sure... This all creates pressures. I think the challenge is to not respond to consumerist attitude by students, but to help them to get the best education they can that might inspire themselves.’ (Interview 26)



Thus, hybrid academic managers acknowledge that students' attitude have changed over the last decades, and most prominently because of increasing student fees. Yet, individuals still try to educate and inspire students to ensure that they receive the best possible education. Hybrid academic managers attempt to communicate and inform students that quality education does not necessarily need to be 'entertaining', but should rather be guided by academic expertise:

'Students pay a lot of money, I think that's bad, I'd rather they didn't pay anything for their tuition fees. I feel that's an unfortunate political development. Does it make them more demanding? Students here have always been a bit more demanding I think and quite rightly so...Do I think that sometimes they get a bit carried away and use that auspice in this sort of way from the service element of the job to the academic one? Yeah, some people do, and you've just got to tell people "just because you're paying the lecture it doesn't have to be entertaining"...Quality education isn't just about doing fun stuff and sometimes we know stuff that you don't. It's a professional relationship rather than a pure customer one.' (Interview 13)

Another hybrid academic manager explained how the relationship between scholars and students is changing. It is argued that students increasingly adopt the customer sovereignty even as far as taking legal action against the Business School and academics more specifically if their expectations are not met. This hybrid academic manager referred to his past experiences in a previous institution to educate colleagues about potential legal consequences of the consumerisation of students:

'I think there are moves towards treating students as customers. We see this right across Higher Education. There are certain aspects of the consumer sovereignty logic that students have adopted. It was interesting when I arrived here. [I argued] "for God sake don't you realise that these bastards will sue you", and they said "don't be ridiculous. Because at [my previous] Business School the bastards would sue you, whereas here they haven't experienced that because they don't have those kinds of students...It is very hard to have a close relationship with a student because you are always worried that as a consumer they might turn against you or other students might pick up on it.' (Interview 34)

The same hybrid academic manager acknowledged positive aspects of bureaucracy and having regulations in place in times where academic expertise is questioned. This perception is based on his/her past experience and indicates how, under specific circumstances, regulations are accepted and supported:

'Again, bureaucracy is good it is a classical Weberian thing, it has taken away a personal element which in some ways is good because there is greater equity of treatment...I made one student really fail and his parents called and burst on the Vice Chancellor and said to give their child another chance, and he plagiarised like hell. I think it was the son of the [removed for anonymity] Ambassador, and of course, that's something different. In fact, bureaucracy was quite good then because I could say "no these are the rules you have to meet them." But yes, I

think students here are treated as students, but there's definitely a push to professionalise student services and all of those things, which I don't think is a bad thing necessarily.' (Interview 34)

My data indicates that although hybrid academic managers might not necessarily favour the increasing emphasis of consumerism in the field of Higher Education, they accept it and try to find ways to educate colleagues and students themselves. This strategy is guided by professionalism and academic expertise to maintain a professional relationship.

### **Strategy 6: Combine**

A number of individuals made explicit references that the field of Higher Education has developed to become an industry and an important exporter for the UK. These hybrid academic managers positioned themselves to find ways of integrating the consumer logic in a substantial way. The following participant stresses that it's a simple matter of economics:

'I think students want to be seen as customers rather than students...They are customers, I mean it is an industry, isn't it? In the UK, Higher Education is probably the third biggest exporter. And the reason for that is that the government flatlined support for Higher Education. Let's say over the last 20 years the money coming from government has been constant, and the costs rise. Therefore, how do you bridge that gap in terms of increasing costs? You need to increase your revenue. You increase your revenue by charging students more, particularly overseas students, they then expect a certain degree of service, you provide that service and treat them as customers.' (Interview 10)

The same individual continues to frame the increasing transactional relationship with students, particularly from overseas, as beneficial because it allows to cross-subsidise other things in return:

'I think increasingly universities, they always have been places for middle-class kids to ensure they stay where they are basically and that hasn't changed even as University numbers have gone up. I think in particular with overseas students you just get rich students and give them a degree or postgraduate degree. But that cross-subsidises other things.' (Interview 10)

Another interviewee expressed the great emphasis on research at the expense of teaching. It becomes evident that increasing student fees lead to an apparent tension within the professional logic because academics need to re-adjust their responsibilities. Thus, rather than merely focusing on research, the NSS and the TEF will further push academics to re-direct their attention towards students in order to incorporate their demands more thoroughly:

'The National Student Survey? Well, it's inevitable...a significant number of people will try and maximise their time for research at the expense of teaching and at the same time you've got students with £9,000 fees or international students with even more, demanding more, quite rightly in a way.' (Interview 3)

Another individual also referred to the importance of external guidelines and league tables that are seen as a crucial reference point for international students in deciding where to study, and consequently where to pay high fees for their education:

‘As much as we hate them, league tables matter, and they have a very direct impact on this School, because we are still very exposed to the Chinese postgraduate market, which was fine while everything was growing. But as soon as you get the slightest wobble and £2 million disappears from your budget and suddenly things aren’t so funny anymore...I think we need to be more attuned to the fact that they are customers and that’s not a bad thing. There’s a lot of concern and criticism about, particularly, the Competition and Markets Authority, the CMA, coming into Higher Education. I have to say, I think it’s a jolly good thing because I think universities have, for too long, been able to treat their students as just students and haven’t been accountable to them as customers in the way that they clearly now are.’ (Interview 5)

Hence, hybrid academic managers argue that the consumer logic is not necessarily linked to students becoming more demanding. Rather it is linked to an overall quality increase in Higher Education, which is perceived as a positive development benefiting everybody:

‘There’s more of a customer orientation. I think that students, in their mind, their psychological contract is that with more resourcing and paying more there’s an expectation of a certain quality, and quality doesn’t have to be demanding. Quality might mean more interesting, creative, dynamic and I think it will vary a lot across students. It is good for everyone.’ (Interview 31)

Others emphasised that, similar to their own role, students are also in a hybrid position. This is attributed to societal and political changes *inter alia* increasing need for employability, student debt and ‘being educated for a purpose’:

‘I mean, life isn’t about dichotomies, they are customers and students. Of course, students have become more instrumental as the economy has toughened. As people are finding it harder to get a job, so they’ve increased the number of students who have gone into subjects like business where people have increased the probability of getting a job...that philosophy has been a powerful one. It comes both from the labour market. It also comes from parents, by and large. If they’re having to pay a lot of money to get their children educated, they want them to be educated for a purpose, and one purpose is to get a job. So, you can see why that’s become an increasingly high value in society, but I don’t think Universities are there just to provide employment for people. I think they’re there for other purposes like to challenge and change society, not just to get youngsters employment.’ (Interview 12)

Another interviewee also linked the hybrid role of students to societal developments and provided a comparable, personal example from being a patient at the NHS:

‘[They are] increasingly customers. But at the same time, they are not mutually exclusive terms, they are students and customers. Have both together, it is a hybrid type. So, on the one hand, they will be consumers, and, on the other hand, they will be students, and they are both at the same time. It is difficult for students,

but it is also as difficult for us as academics. When I think about the healthcare sector, are we patients or are we customers? I'm paying for physiotherapy at the moment, and, on the one hand, I am a patient, but on the other hand, I am paying for it. If I don't get results after a few more sessions, I might go somewhere else.” (Interview 38)

Indeed, one interview participant actively dealt with the issue at hand by conducting a study on student experiences on campus. This research provides an interesting account of the consumer logic by showing that students position themselves as both, students and consumers, but not necessarily all the time:

‘We did some work last year at the University-level about the student experience. We went and asked the students across the University whether they saw themselves as customers or students. The answer was really interesting, because they see themselves as both, but not all the time. When things are going well, they feel they're getting a proper education, as students. When we do something wrong, they're suddenly customers. And they behave like customers and quite rightly. If I was paying £9,000 a year to come here, I'd behave like a customer. If some idiot stood up in front of me and bored the pants off me with some 20-year-old lecture, I would kick off, and I'm perfectly happy that students do that. We're never one thing. We might be a customer in Sainsbury's, but we're a bit more than that, because we do buy into a brand. If we treated all students like students, we would go out of business tomorrow.’ (Interview 5)

Thus, it is also argued that student demands have changed which hybrid academic manager need to be attentive to. The following hybrid academic manager provided an interesting example of how he/she is directly involved in developing a new interdisciplinary strategy across departments to cater for student demands:

‘We are doing something in the Business School...to engage medical students and engineering students in an intensive programme. I was in a group with somebody else from the Business School, somebody else from professional services and somebody else from the Medical School and we were all of a view that the medical students would like to spend time with the Business School students, would like to spend time with the engineering students, because they would recognise the value of hearing a bit more about what other people did and seeing how other sorts of student act and interact around these issues. They're much more acutely aware that their experience as a doctor or their experience as a manager won't just be to work alongside lots of other people just like them. The world will be interdisciplinary, for want of a better phrase, and they're more sophisticated in recognising the sort of skills that they might need to engage with that.’ (Interview 2)

Several interviewees also noted the importance of improving their level of customer service, because with increasing student fees, students can expect a better service. One hybrid academic manager referred to a recent example by explaining how he works with professional service staff to ensure that students receive an adequate service. In his example, this unfolded in a practical way by offering enough seats during a lecture:

‘I had the experience yesterday where it looked like we were going to have a lecture in a lecture room that’s too small for the number of students. That is a sort of customer service thing which was that the admin team hadn’t noticed that the number of students enrolling in it had gone past the number of seats we had in the lecture room, which I just went ballistic about. I think that is a customer service thing. You might in the past have been able to get away with having a lecture where people were sitting on the floor, but you can’t do that. You can’t do that now, and I think that’s fine. You do rarely come across a sort of customer service thing which is misplaced.’ (Interview 16)

In a similar vein, another individual provided an interesting example of incentivising a new customer service initiative for postgraduate students. This hybrid academic manager explained how he/she initiated a new postgraduate hub to improve the perceived service in relation to submitting or collecting essays or asking for administrative advice:

‘The language in place, the approach is increasingly about customers. We got a new building. There are three buildings in my empire. The new one which we opened last year is a postgraduate teaching centre, you know this is where the revenue is made, and we introduced something that we thought was quite novel which is a one-stop shop for the students. Rather than having trailing around campus they submit all their work in this place they go there for advice, they collect all their work there, that kind of stuff.’ (Interview 17)

It also becomes increasingly important for individuals to be attentive to the student’s academic needs. Hence, the way in which academics approach the student cohort in the classroom has changed to guarantee students receive the best service. This is clearly not self-evident in academia as the following quote indicates:

‘I remember my very first job at [removed for anonymity] the then Vice-Chancellor said to the group of new faculty members, “the worst you are at teaching the better because then you will be able to get on with the real work of an academic which is research.” I think that is completely the wrong attitude...We are in a Business School, and most of the students are here to be practitioners. If we try and make our classes all very theoretical then that's not really that helpful for the students. I think we do have a responsibility to try and make the classes more experiential. I never now give my students complex Org. Science [Organization Science] or ASQ articles to read. I give them Harvard Business Review and try to do simulations and activities to kind of get them to actually do things rather than just read and discuss...I think they are customers in some way, they do pay fees, we should be thinking about what their needs are and how we can best service them.’ (Interview 32)

Other hybrid academic managers made comments about different levels of instrumentality across the student populations by particularly singling out MBA students. This is based on the argument that MBA students, in comparison to the rest of the student population, are at the high end of the fee spectrum and have often given up a secure at the expense of further education. Thus, they are seen as having the greatest opportunity costs:

‘MBA's are the extreme case, the most customised students. But I think undergraduates are now paying large fees, overseas undergraduates even more, so they are pretty customer like across the sector, especially at the high end of the spectrum where the fees are higher. I don't know what the MBA fee is, it's almost £25,000 I guess. I mean if I would be paying this I would want things to work.’  
(Interview 19)

Another individual provided a comparison between MBA students and undergraduates, arguing that MBAs are the most instrumental students in the cohort. They have the highest opportunity cost by giving up an income, whilst at the same time, paying the highest fees in the sector. This hybrid academic managers foresees a development in the sector, whereby undergraduates are moving in a similar position by simply buying a reputation and a ‘batch’ at the end of their degree rather than focusing and valuing the educational experience and knowledge they receive:

‘The most instrumental students I have come across would be full-time MBAs students because they have given up an income. They are paying very high fees. They are not earning so there's an opportunity cost as well and they see it, not exclusively, but largely as a route of getting a better job and more income, so it is very financially orientated. Undergraduates until relatively recently, mostly someone else is paying their fees, they don't really know why they are here... That is clearly going to shift to a certain extent because they are expected to look at league tables and all that sort of stuff. But there are limits because they are also buying the name of the institution. If they are treated very badly, they still wouldn't be that annoyed if they had the right batch at the end of it. I think there are different levels of instrumentality.’ (Interview 24)

My data indicates that some hybrid academic managers do not experience a tension between professionalism and the increasing emphasis on the consumer logic, but rather acknowledge that these developments are part of political and societal changes. Thus, hybrid academic managers recognise the need to address the shifting demands by integrating consumerism with professionalism in their everyday work. However, my data indicates more variation at the individual-level by showing that not all hybrid academic managers willingly support these developments. In total, it becomes evident that individuals engage in a repertoire of responses to reconcile the consumer logic in the field of Higher Education. A detailed outline of individual-level strategies that are utilised to reconcile the tensions between the professional logic and the consumer logic can be found below in table 6:

Table 6: Strategies to reconcile the tensions between the professional logic and the consumer logic

Strategy	Explanation
1. Fight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaking out: Telling students that the fees do not give them the right to tell academics what to do</li> <li>• Making sure that students understand that they do not receive a pre-packaged thing</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fighting against this discourse to keep academic integrity and identity</li> <li>• Making sure students understand that they have to meet a given standard set by academics and universities</li> <li>• Regarding TEF and NSS as a downside</li> <li>• Telling students that they need to go beyond the simple requirements to receive a 2:1</li> <li>• Criticizing the Department of Business Innovations and Skills that they are just composed of vocational training colleges and not ‘real’ research-intensive academics</li> <li>• Encouraging the discourse of knowledge for knowledge sake, e.g. by reading beyond requirements and rejecting the commodification of knowledge</li> <li>• Ignoring proposed standards from the MBA Director because it contradicts with academic/scholarly expertise</li> </ul>
2. Dispirited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No longer correcting people if they refer to students as customers</li> <li>• Taking the order from VCs that more international students need to be admitted although it changes the dynamic in the classroom</li> <li>• There is nothing special anymore about going to a University</li> <li>• Seeing student loans etc. as “a manifestation of extreme defeat of the left.”</li> <li>• Trying to improve the administrative side of supervising dissertations, but not getting anywhere because of hierarchy (resulting in a lost will to fight against it)</li> <li>• Feeling sorry for good students when grade inflation/bell curve comes into practice</li> </ul>
3. Deny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not recognising that students behave differently</li> <li>• Not seeing any link between fee income and a change in students’ behaviour</li> <li>• Not buying into the customerisation discourse, but universities have found it useful because students want to buy into a brand</li> <li>• Improvements are just part of professional services and improve the product (lectures and knowledge) which academics do for themselves and not for students or customers, e.g. creating a hub for students as a single point of contact, so they don’t contact the academic anymore regarding admin stuff, e.g. how to hand in an essay</li> <li>• It’s still about being inspiring and exiting students</li> </ul>
4. Compartmentalise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• /</li> </ul>
5. Accept and Educate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepting the increasing discourse and language of this logic</li> <li>• Recognising the increasing possibility of getting sued by students and warning/educating colleagues about it</li> <li>• Convincing students that they are still part of an academic community and part of the educational process</li> <li>• Encouraging a dynamic relationship in the classroom (trying to maintain the nature of teaching)</li> <li>• Involving students and managing their expectations, but making sure that the expertise of academics is valued more (“hold true to educational values”)</li> </ul>
6. Combine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeing Higher Education as a clear industry</li> <li>• Following the view that students are both – students and customers</li> <li>• Encouraging students to be more demanding if things go wrong (as they are paying for it they are allowed to complain and expect a good service)</li> <li>• Conducting a funded survey on campus to incorporate the view of students</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If students would still be treated as students and not as customers Business Schools would go out of business tomorrow</li> <li>• Supporting the move of the CMA coming into Higher Education</li> <li>• TEF will have an improvement on teaching</li> <li>• There is an increasing pressure in society to get employment, and so students expect a job at the end of their degree (not necessarily desirable, but it has increased the instrumentality in education)</li> <li>• Seeing a particular trend in Business and Management Schools, e.g. in contrast to chemistry or art because people in Business Schools study business to get a job afterwards and study not out of pure interest</li> <li>• Seeing them as customers that should receive excellent service</li> <li>• Making sure students can expect a certain level of service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) e.g. offering enough seats</li> <li>b) e.g. reprinting lecture slides because they are too small (as a result of student complaints)</li> <li>c) e.g. building an postgraduate hub 'one-stop shop' for students to manage and hand in all their assignments in one place</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Offering boot camps during the summer to address student demands for more interdisciplinary work across the University (e.g. between the Business School the Medical School and the Engineering School)</li> </ul>
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### \*\*\* 5.1.3. The Commercial logic \*\*\*

This section will now discuss my findings in relation to the commercial logic. The pressures for commercial success are measured by income generation, receiving research grants, doing consultancy work and engaging beyond academia. As 'this devaluation of academic capital is, therefore, likely to challenge the underlying logic and values' (Naidoo et al., 2011: 1148) of traditional academic practices, my findings indicate that individuals employ a repertoire of responses to reconcile this potential tension. These will now be discussed.

#### **Strategy 1: Fight**

It became evident that several interview participants actively decide not to engage in commercial activities. They follow a trajectory that academics should research for the sake of knowledge rather than having to be accountable for the output they produce. Hybrid academic managers attempt to strengthen this viewpoint through resistance:

'Part of my research is in a very strange niche. It does not have any social relevance that I can think of because it takes part in another world that we are. And I like it, "let me be. I can publish this stuff. Don't knock on my door and bother me about socially relevant business. I don't need any money for it, I can do it on my own"'. (Interview 6)



A common response among individuals was based on the argument that they simply have a very limited timeframe that could effectively be devoted to securing grants. Hence, a number of participants purposefully decided to step back from this commitment:

‘I have purposefully not taken on any major grants for three years, and it is because there is no way if I would have taken on another grant and continue to get lots of data and inputs, but I would not be able to get outputs.’ (Interview 31)

Similarly, somebody argued how the responsibilities of their hybrid academic manager role does not allow for further engagement in commercial activities, because there is simply no time to fulfil those responsibilities. Hence, this hybrid academic manager explains his/her lack of interest in engaging in impact generation or securing research grants, and simultaneously, highlights the importance of being a good example to colleagues with this approach:

‘I don’t do money, impact at all. I’m not interested in getting a grant, I’ve got too much administrative work. Some people can do it all. So [a colleague] does it all, and he’s got a young kid, and I don’t know how he does it, but I couldn’t do that, I’m not able to do that, and so we need to tell people that’s okay and that’s still good.’ (Interview 13)

Thus, it becomes evident that hybrid academic managers start to reposition themselves and their responsibilities as a result of their hybrid role, including not focusing on generating income. One individual expressed this necessity to rearrange priorities:

‘I haven’t been too enthusiastic about getting grants, so I set back from that because where does that go? Even in a big project I was leading for the last five years, I have now taken a secondary row to that and let my colleague in engineering lead that, because it needs to be managed for another two years and I just can’t do that. Otherwise my head will explode, because there are too many things going on.’ (Interview 18)

Another narrative evolved explicitly around the engagement with external organisations. One individual justified his/her position because there were simply ‘other things on [my] plate’. It is argued that there is simply no time to build relationship with external organisations:

‘I have to hold my hands up high because [engagement] is not really something I ever did. There wasn’t, and I’m not using this as an excuse, but there wasn’t any kind of established patterns of relationships with outside organisations. Basically, I just felt like I had other things on my plate. It just wasn’t something that I wanted to engage with.’ (Interview 37)

It was also suggested that engaging with external organisations should not necessarily be the main priority of academics. Rather, as one hybrid academic manager argued, engagement with the next generation of business leaders (as in students) provides enough impact already:

‘I don’t really want to take on a major research grant myself...I know the government is partly about “you have an impact on your students, but you should have an impact because we are paying for this research on the business world”.

I'm not convinced by that. I think that if we can impact our students who will be the next generation of business leaders, I think that's an impact enough in itself. I don't see why we need to go out. I'm not saying we should be Ivory Tower. We can work with businesses to conduct research, but the idea that we can impact on business is maybe a little bit problematic.' (Interview 32)

Another individual made a more drastic comment about the difference of opinions in relation to income generation and who should be responsible for managing finances. The scholarship of social science is used as a way to reconcile the pressures that are created with increasing monetary demands from the central University:

'The governing discourse is that the money is not the Business Schools. It doesn't belong to the point of generation, it's the Universities' and more explicitly, the Vice Chancellors' money. Its source is irrelevant... So, we all need a drink to hold on to. I'm not working to fucking finance the building of a catalysis, that is not what I am, and all the people in the School are here for. We got to give them something else. The University grew the idea that Business Schools are there to support enterprise development, which they are to a point. That's not where it ends. Partnerships in England can be doing that shit. We've got something else, we've got the social sciences that they will never have.' (Interview 17)

One of the most drastic approaches to the issue at hand involved attacking colleagues who are engaging in consultancy work. This individual expresses his discomfort with colleagues who mostly direct their attention at generating income on the side at the expense of focusing on academic work:

'A lot of people, they don't actually want to be academics, they want to be fucking business people. So, my attitude is, they are just second rate want-to-be business people. People here, they are always trying to get extra money as consultants. I wouldn't pay them anything as consultants. They are idiots. And they are not doing their job as academics properly. They shouldn't be consultants. Well they are just about good enough to get a job in academia. Given the nature of Business Schools, people who talk all that crappy consultant shit get jobs. But as far as I'm concerned most of them are a waste of space... We've got somebody here who is spending all their time trying to make money on the side as a consultant. That's going to come out, but it never comes out of course because people who are inspecting [through REF] are in favour of those people because they are pro-market. They are actually perpetuating all the stuff about impact. It is favouring those very people who are fucking shit academics, which should be kicked out. I would kick them out.' (Interview 21)

My data indicates that individuals are actively involved in deciding whether they want to engage in commercial activities alongside their hybrid academic manager role. It becomes evident that hybrid academic managers resist the commercial logic, either because of time constraints or because they regard their academic work and their engagement with students as having 'enough impact' already. Thus, rather than engaging in activities that are considered to be subordinate, they stress the importance to focus one's direction on core elements of academic professionalism, such as research and teaching.

### **Strategy 2: Dispirited**

Interestingly, not one hybrid academic manager made comments that would indicate a defeat towards the commercial logic.

### **Strategy 3: Deny**

None of the interview participants denied the influence of commercialisation.

### **Strategy 4: Compartmentalise**

All interview participants explicated firm views on the commercial logic, and not one hybrid academic manager made contradictory comments about this institutional logic.

### **Strategy 5: Accept and Educate**

It became evident that hybrid academic managers did acknowledge a time constraint they face in their role but accepted that generating income and securing grants is seen as an increasingly important part of their responsibilities. Hence, they find ways to make the system work for them and used certain strategies *inter alia* their seniority to 'tick that box':

'I got through [grants applications] relatively okay, because I've got some very good friends...I'm considerably more senior than them, and it was thus politically useful for them to have my name in certain boxes on certain forms. I got two or three research grants during the period, off the back of somebody else. My papers were largely co-authored with other people. It was a bit of a mix...but the money never used to bother me that much. I never used to get that much of a twitch about signing off large sums of money moving from A to B.' (Interview 4)

Although individuals may not personally generate income, they utilised their hybrid position to educate colleagues about the importance of grant capture in a collective sense. This individual emphasises the importance to recognise that engagement can entail a variety of different factors and does not necessarily need to be restricted to working with practitioners or managers from industry:

'I have never really believed that [delivering useful knowledge to managers] is a good idea partly because managers don't want to be told what a useful idea is and the last thing they want is some academic to come...But then there's a whole range of other ways of engagement. I mean we are empirical researchers, we should already have a kind of interest in the world and how organisations and institutions and management works...I mean we have never thought a lot, collectively, about grant capture. The University sets as targets, and we just ignore them, and then they lowered the targets. So, it seems to work. It is not an acceptable response anymore, so trying to enthuse people about what they might get out of grant capture and to remove some of the anxiety has been a big part of the job.' (Interview 20)

The alignment between personal and academic interest was perceived to be a crucial factor for the level of engagement. Somebody explained that engagement should be seen as a necessary part *only* if it fits the research profile of academics:

‘We have our engagement because it fits the research that we do. We do a lot of research on employment policy, and we do a lot of research on trade unions. That’s research that you do with and for external partners. If you have a different type of research, you might not need to do that. And what I would say is that yes, engagement is part of what we do, but it needs to be driven by the activity. It is not something that you do for the sake of engaging with somebody else, but it is something that you do because it fits the activity that you are engaged in.’  
(Interview 23)

As hybrid academic managers may not necessarily favour the increasing responsibilities of commercial engagement, they attempt to find loop-holes in the system, for example, by exploiting their seniority to receive research grants. Other hybrid academic managers may not necessarily engage in commercial activities themselves, but they still utilise their hybrid role to educate colleagues about the potential benefits of commercial engagement. Interestingly, there is a collective agreement that commercial engagement should only be pursued if it is associated with the professional interest of academics.

#### **Strategy 6: Combine**

The importance and necessity of generating income and proving one’s impact on society has clearly generated a considerable debate in recent years. Several hybrid academic managers take a strong stand in this dispute by arguing that it is an unquestionable responsibility of academics to deliver the highest possible scholarly quality *and* to have policy and practice impact:

‘I’ve tried to put forward a philosophy that managerial research is capable of following a double hurdle. A double hurdle being to deliver the highest possible scholarly quality and to have policy and practice impact. Now, these, again, are often posed as dichotomies. You’re either a high-quality scholar over here, or you’re some kind of consultant over there who applies work, you know, it’s competing. My philosophy is to profess a double hurdle, which of course is more challenging, to do them both, if not at the same time then as part of a career.’  
(Interview 12)

Hence, hybrid academic managers regard the engagement with external organisations as an essential part of being a well-rounded academic. This is based on the argument that the justification for research is supposed to serve more than self-gratification by pursuing ‘the highest possible scholarly quality’ *and* having ‘impact on society’:

‘I believe the justification for research ultimately is that it has some impact on society... I can't see what the justification is of somebody sitting at their desks thinking “well I have the right to research on whatever I want no matter if this is

not going to be used by anybody, this is just for my own self-gratification.”  
(Interview 30)

Similarly, someone else stressed the importance for academics to be involved in the field of practice, by criticising colleagues who do not engage with the industry or do not talk to managers more directly. The justification for this lies in the fact that academics receive their salary from an organisation or the wider society. Thus, producing research output that only a small number of academic experts read seems to be unacceptable:

‘A lot of academics think, totally wrongly, in my view, that they’re here just to do research mainly. Now, where do they get that mad idea from? Why do they think society, or an organisation should pay them to spend 60% of their time doing work that maybe two or three of the people they’re probably working with reads, and no one else does?...Far too many academics aren’t involved in fields of practice. A lot of people don’t talk to managers actually. It depends a bit on the discipline, but a lot of economists, finance people just sit in their room and churn numbers. So, it’s a very odd world, and they get quite well-paid for it.’  
(Interview 3)

Societal relevance was not just seen as a crucial responsibility on an individual-level, but also across the wider field of Business and Management. In this sense, Business and Management Schools were compared to other academic fields, for example STEM subjects. By their very nature, they produce much more tangible and applicable outputs for external organisations. This is perceived to threaten the legitimacy of Business Schools:

‘You always need to demonstrate your relevance to society. Currently there are other parts of the University that have more interaction with public sector organisations and private sector organisation than the Business School. You know, STEM [subjects]. Corporate money goes in there, it doesn’t go into Business Schools. A lot of corporate money goes into that because there are solutions that come out that can be directly applicable in manufacturing processes or car plants or something. Business Schools are kind of curiously less relevant for businesses and that going forward is problematic. There’s a potential threat to the whole Business School enterprise in our legitimacy if we don’t have engagement with organisations and we don’t demonstrate that good ideas come out of Business Schools that can influence policy and can influence organisational processes.’ (Interview 14)

Another hybrid academic manager similarly compared Business and Management Schools to other departments. This individual expressed his support for ‘impact’ in a general sense, but explains that the way in which it is framed in the REF might not suit other, less business-oriented departments:

‘I think, it’s inevitable, particularly for Management Schools. I mean the impact agenda is a little bit ridiculous in the sense that if you are doing astrophysics, the way it is phrased it has to be about business. If you are a Management Department, of course, it is a reasonable expectation...I do believe in impact, but

the way it is framed, or the way it's likely to be framed, is not the best, shall we say.' (Interview 29)

Many individuals moved beyond the societal relevance trajectory and expressed their commitment to securing research grants as well as building promising relationships with external organisations more explicitly. One individual stressed that this could include a range of organisations and should not be limited to big, private multinationals:

'Personally, I don't want a lot to do with multinationals, but I don't want [the University] telling me or somebody else that you can't go and work with Greenpeace. I mean I've worked with them and had research grants to work with them and so on.' (Interview 8)

Others made even more explicit remarks about the possibility of working with corporations and big financial institutions.

'I used to be an MBA Director, and I talked to quite a few corporations, and I got some very good friends at HSBC.' (Interview 25)

Somebody else explained how he/she managed to 'juggle' different responsibilities at the same time, ranging from working on a research grant, being engaged in a hybrid academic manager role as well as having personal commitments:

'I had an ESRC grant, I was Head of Department, and I have a young family. It was quite difficult, but I managed to juggle that.' (Interview 24)

My data also suggests an interesting narrative around the motivations of hybrid academic managers to engage in commercial activities and how they framed their involvement. Widening the focus towards strategic thinking and external politics appeared to be an important aspect of their engagement:

'I'm much less interested in the detail about, you know, quibbling over how many hours people are allocated to do this task, where people get offices. I find it very frustrating and I think I also get quite stressed about the detail and the arguments, whereas actually if I'm doing sort of external politics and looking at the strategic picture and bidding for big sums of money, I really quite enjoy that, and I feel energised. I think it suits me better.' (Interview 11)

A different interviewee expressed more tangible motives by expressing side benefits of his hybrid role in relation to working with international partners. In the case of this hybrid academic manager it involved flights to external partners, for example in Africa:

'My colleague focused internally on the quality assurance, improving the quality of the modules and I focused on a number of other activities. We had a network of agents around the world, in Africa, Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, so I did a lot of management of those agents. Nice bits about flying to Africa.' (Interview 35)

Generating income and impacting on society are regarded as important aspects of the academic profile. Hence, participants strived for a combination of scholarship, managerial duties as well as engaging in commercial relationships. This could also involve other tangible aspects e.g. managing space:

‘We’re going to build a new physical building. It brings together applied social sciences from across different parts of the University, co-locates them with each other and with external research partners to work on problem driven societal challenge type research. I’m the academic lead for that...So it’s a personal project. That’s now a £50 million capital building project that I’m the lead for. I hope I can survive getting that done and the next two or three years of the subsequent contract that I expect to be offered and manage to get one or two more things written and published.’ (Interview 2)

Someone else made a similar remark about the commercial aspect of managing tangible ‘space’. However, this interviewee humourized about his past aversion with working in the private sector, but that no longer holds true as, by now, commercial aspects are fully incorporated in his/her duties:

‘It’s funny – I joined academia because I wanted to avoid the corporate world and here I am 10 years later trying to sell over priced products to obnoxious people working in the City...I’m in charge of space as well. It seems like there’s a big commercial aspect because it’s very driven by money. We pay a lot of money for this space. It needs to pay back...there’s a big contract with [a British financial institution], I’ve been going there quite a bit and speaking to them.’ (Interview 14)

Another common response among hybrid academic managers was related to their active engagement in consultancy work. Consulting activities are often strongly informed by research-related motives (D’Este and Perkman, 2011). Thus, individuals stated that they are able to combine consultancy with their academic work:

‘I continued to do consultancy work and teach and research.’ (Interview 26)

For some, the combination of scholarship and engaging in consultancy was a significant part of their career development. One hybrid academic manager argued that he/she established a consultancy firm of their own. Further, this individual is currently working on an invention of a spin out, both alongside his/her academic career:

‘I got a job as a consultant and eventually set up a consultancy on my own, did some part-time lecturing and then I was offered to do the full-time lecturing and do the consulting, sort of on the side as it were. That’s kind of what I’ve done ever since, I’ve been working as a consultant since the late ‘90s [and] I’m working on an invention for a spin out and I need to give that some time to make it work or not.’ (Interview 16)

Someone else used their engagement in consultancy work as a strategy to integrate different aspects of his/her identity. Doing consultancy work is regarded as a natural progression from previous jobs and seen as a 'relief':

'I guess, because I wasn't intending to be an academic, I've always worked...It was just a natural progression to keep on working. Even when I was doing the Ph.D. I was working, I was doing consultancy. I didn't stop, I still do it now. I've always blended studying with work. I've always used that interplay as part of research because I find that interesting. It led to a balance...So I do like the idea that I can research, I can do consultancy...I think it's critically and it's the part of the job that I enjoy. In the consultancy I mainly work with small, medium enterprises and social enterprises, charities and all the rest of it. It's just a relief if anything.' (Interview 7)

Despite extensive experience, the same individual stressed a lack of support from their University. This hybrid academic manager provided an interesting example of how support in negotiations techniques could be helpful, not only for the individual himself/herself, but also for strengthening the relationship between external partners and the University:

'The more I work with [external bodies] the more I get to understand that it's probably the most challenging part of the job. Like yesterday, I had a meeting with one of our resource partners who is based in Africa and it was contract renegotiations. I haven't been trained up in negotiations, it's something I really need to be trained up in...It's a commercial partnership. We're procuring their services. That part of the job is very challenging, because you need to know about legalities, you need to know about the business context. You need to know about the finances. You need to be able to negotiate. That is essentially what the bread and butter of most people who go into business is, that's what you do. But we don't have the support to be able to do that. Yes, I know what I'm supposed to be doing. But there is also the bit where I feel the most exposed when working for the University, because I know that if I was doing it in a business context I would have a law department behind me. I would have commercial contracts behind me. I would have market analysis behind me. I don't feel like I've got any of that here. You're just there on your own, in a room, trying to renegotiate a contract. Not knowing if the institution behind you is going to back you or not. So, you do feel out on a limb. That is the most challenging part of the job because you're literally trying to contract millions of pounds of business and you hope that you haven't cocked it up, which is frightening.' (Interview 7)

In sum, hybrid academic managers regard their engagement in commercial activities, in securing grants, in managing space as well as in doing consultancy work as an essential part of their responsibilities in order to demonstrate impact and societal relevance, not just for their own gratification, but for the wider legitimacy of Business Schools. Nevertheless, my findings also indicate a great polarisation of responses for the commercial logic. Whereas several individuals expressed their engagement, a great number of participants also stated that they are resisting the ongoing commercialisation of academic knowledge. A detailed outline of



individual-level strategies that are utilised to reconcile the tensions between the professional logic and the commercial logic can be found below in table 7:

Table 7: Strategies to reconcile the tensions between the professional logic and the commercial logic

Strategy	Explanation
1. Fight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not seeing the market as the most efficient way to run Higher Education (Publishing articles/books on how Higher Education and Business Schools should be run instead)</li> <li>• Actively not taking on any grants and stepping back from projects because it would be too much to handle and the output could not be guaranteed</li> <li>• Doing research in small niches that do not have any societal relevance</li> <li>• Wanting to be left alone and not be asked about socially relevant business cases</li> <li>• A lot of money is not coming from research funding (but rather from students) so it is not that important</li> <li>• Students should be the main point of impact and not organisations</li> <li>• Impact of Business Schools is much more tangible so the whole concept is questionable</li> <li>• Highlighting the importance of differentiating between a Business and a Management School</li> <li>• Actively not going for income or impact because there is no time</li> <li>• Telling others that it is okay not to do everything</li> <li>• Actively criticising academics who work as consultants (they are not doing their academic job properly and “I would kick them out”)</li> <li>• Seeing the policy context as “almost holding us back and stopping us doing the things that we should.”</li> <li>• Always working with Deans who see long-term growth and success rather than seeing Business Schools as a money-making machine</li> </ul>
2. Dispirited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• /</li> </ul>
3. Deny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• /</li> </ul>
4. Compartmentalise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• /</li> </ul>
5. Accept and Educate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not seeing universities as Ivory Towers and stating that public engagement is important</li> <li>• The academic interest itself should dictate or lead whether academics have relationships with external organisations</li> <li>• Not personally working with multi-nationals, but accepting and encouraging others if they would like to do so</li> <li>• Explaining to colleagues how grant capture can benefit them</li> <li>• Encouraging colleagues to engage with external partners, but only if it fits the research they are doing anyway (it should be activity-led)</li> <li>• Understanding and supporting the notion of having ‘impact’, but not liking the way it is set up/framed</li> <li>• Accepting the development, but not getting “that much of a twitch about signing off large sums of money moving from A to B.”</li> </ul>
6. Combine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively securing large research grants (worth multiple millions)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criticising Business School academics for being “too intellectually self-referential and pursue theory for its own sake”</li> <li>• Managing a social science research park building site (£50 million capital building project)</li> <li>• Academics should highly be involved in the field of practice and demonstrate their relevance to society (“academia should be about following a double hurdle”)</li> <li>• Academics should actively talk to managers</li> <li>• Seeing a lack of engagement as a danger to Business Schools</li> <li>• It’s important to combine all kinds of activities (be it with private, public, NGO, charities etc.) because that gives a Business Schools a real purpose</li> <li>• Working as a consultant alongside (the balance between academia and consultancy makes the job more interesting)</li> <li>• Seeing consultancy as a “relief” from the academic world</li> <li>• Universities should provide better support mechanism to improve the negotiation skills of individuals when talking to external partners</li> <li>• Universities have to do more in helping academics get their word out</li> <li>• Liking the strategic side of the hybrid role, seeing the bigger picture and bidding for big sums of money</li> <li>• Being in charge of space and enjoying the commercial aspect of it</li> <li>• Managing big contracts, e.g. with a financial institution or external international partners</li> <li>• Enjoying the “external facing stuff” and dealing with people from public and private organisations</li> <li>• Arguing that private organisations often know better how universities can support them in comparison to the government</li> <li>• Working on an invention for a spin out</li> <li>• Research should always be practice based</li> <li>• Actively being responsible for external relationships and engagement (for themselves and colleagues)</li> </ul>
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### \*\*\* 5.2. Section 2: Individual Hybridisation \*\*\*

My findings allow me to advance McGivern et al. (2015) theorisation on individual hybridisation, which suggests that some professionals reluctantly and others willingly engage in hybrid roles. The findings of this study support this conceptualisation, but it also enhances the incidental/willing role claiming dichotomy further. My data demonstrates that individuals do not only incidentally or willingly engage in hybrid roles but might also transition from being in an incidental hybrid academic manager position towards becoming a willing hybrid academic manager. Thus, the data indicates a third hybrid type – the transitioning hybrid academic manager. These three hybrid types are depicted in table 8:

Table 8: Explanation of individual hybrid types:

Hybrid type	Explanation
Incidental hybrid academic manager	Individuals represent and protect traditional academic professionalism while only temporarily in hybrid academic manager roles.
Willing hybrid academic manager	Individuals have managerial career ambitions and strive to integrate professionalism and managerialism. They actively apply for the role and see their future career trajectory as being in a hybrid academic manager position.
Transitioning hybrid academic manager	Individuals begin to transition from being in an incidental hybrid academic manager position towards becoming a willing hybrid academic manager.

The following section will now present my findings structured around these three individual hybrid types, beginning with the incidental hybrid academic manager, the willing hybrid academic manager and then progressing to the transitioning hybrid academic manager.

#### \*\*\* 5.2.1. The Incidental Hybrid Academic Manager \*\*\*

My data suggests that academics have different orientations towards the hybrid academic manager role. It becomes evident that some academics attempt to protect and represent traditional professionalism whilst only temporarily being in hybrid academic manager roles. In line with earlier conceptualisations of individual hybridisation, these professionals are termed incidental hybrids (McGivern et al., 2015). My findings support this theorisation and suggest that incidental hybrid academic managers claim their role based on different motivations. First, the data indicates that incidental hybrid academic managers experience a ‘passive professional obligation’ (ibid) to engage in a hybrid role. Thus, they do not actively apply for the position, but accept that the managerial work has to be done:

‘I simply got landed with the job. It wasn’t something I sought. It was just that someone has got to do the work.’ (Interview 7)

Someone else explained that being in a hybrid academic manager role is not what he/she became an academic for and, thus, expressed their desire to step back from the hybrid academic manager role in the near future. Nevertheless, the necessity of hybrid academic managers roles and the corresponding responsibilities are still acknowledged, even though they clearly interfere with their academic activities:

‘I want my life back...It’s not what I got into academia for, it has to be done, and it has to be done well, but beyond that, there are other things. The problem with academic managers is that they have to do a number of different things simultaneously, and if you just do the one thing then it takes over, and you cannot do your research, you cannot write, so all these things suffer. I need to catch up.’ (Interview 29)

Other incidental hybrid academic managers indicate that they are ‘pushed by colleagues’ or encouraged by other hybrid academic managers in the School to take on the hybrid role. One interviewee explained that he/she simply engaged in the role because the Head of Department approached them:

‘I took it on because I felt it was my time. You know, other people had taken on fairly big roles. The Head of Department said “Look, we have this position. Would you take it on?” So, I said “yeah.”’ (Interview 8)

Thus, as other colleagues had already been in hybrid academic manager roles, individuals feel obligated to do their ‘turn’, despite their obvious lack of managerial ambitions:

‘I think some people have a kind of managerial ambition, I have never really had that. I’m just, I’m part of a big group of people and it was really just my turn to lead it.’ (Interview 22)

My data demonstrates another interesting narrative around the motivation of incidental hybrid academic managers to engage in the role after all. They enact their role in order to ‘protect’ (McGivern et al., 2015), themselves, their colleagues and academic professionalism:

‘You have a responsibility...to protect academic autonomy. We talk a lot about how you deal with that, how you still protect space for research.’ (Interview 26)

Similarly, another hybrid academic manager mentioned the need to protect colleagues and professionalism. The uniqueness of universities, in comparison to a shop floor, is explicitly used as an example. Hence, engaging in a hybrid academic manager role is not seen to be a desired career advancement as in other contexts, but rather as a distraction from the real purpose of academics. Interestingly, the root cause is attributed to the University itself:

‘This is what’s different about universities, in my view, from biscuit factories [where] somebody on the shop floor regards it as a promotion to become a manager. If you’re a University teacher, you regard it as a pain and something you might have to do for a little while, either to protect yourself, to protect your colleagues or just out of Buggins’ turn, but essentially it’s a diversion from a real purpose...I thought I might be able to protect myself, I might be able to mitigate the damage that would be done by the central University [but] being part of a great managerial chain is not my aspiration.’ (Interview 1)

Another interesting narrative emerged around ‘professional representation’. My findings show that there is a common expectation in the sector to act as a professional representative with increasing seniority. Thus, individuals acknowledge the unwritten expectation in the academic community to engage in a hybrid academic manager role because ‘when you’re relatively senior you’re expected to do some kind of a leadership role’. One individual explained that engaging in a hybrid academic manager role is not simply an expectation at their institution, but it is contractually determined that academics become the Head of the Department at some point. This leaves little leeway for incidental hybrid academic managers to resist:

‘When you’re a professor, it’s expected that at some point you will be Head of Department...Part of the contract you sign is asking you to accept that at some point you may be required to be Head of Department. Some people try to get out of it. But it’s in the contract that you’ve signed although I always thought it would be onerous and it takes you away from your research in many ways and there’s lots of committee meetings and all these responsibilities. It’s difficult to imagine a department existing without having someone doing that work. It is a part of the job, it’s inevitable it comes around and it’s someone’s turn to do it, so that’s what happened.’ (Interview 9).

However, this contractual agreement is not particularly common across the Higher Education sector. Several incidental hybrid academic managers merely engaged in their hybrid role because there was a lack of alternative candidates among staff. One interviewee noted a lack of agency in the decision to take on the hybrid academic manager role:

‘It wasn’t necessarily an active decision, it was sort of nobody else wanted to do it.’ (Interview 25)

Others stated that by simply not having a ‘natural aversion to *not* doing management’ they were slightly presupposed to engage in hybrid academic manager roles because it sets them apart from other individuals in academia who often resist and actively avoid hybrid roles:

‘It’s just I haven’t been trying to avoid it, rather than actively seeking it. As you may know about academia, what tends to happen is, it’s not so much people stepping forward, it’s everyone else stepping back – you happened to be standing when everyone else sits down in musical chairs...I don’t think people do really choose roles and I think it’s one of the real problems in academia.’ (Interview 35)

Someone else made an explicit statement about his determination to prevent another, less suitable candidate from engaging in the available hybrid role. Thus, it became more important for this individual to diminishing potential damage by taking ‘one for the team’, and almost generously taking on the hybrid role himself:

‘I couldn’t let the idiot that was going to get the role do it and fuck it up majorly. [I] worried about the candidate that was going to be most likely to get it, I had to stop that from happening in my mind and had to take one for the team, so here I am.’ (Interview 17)

In sum, my data indicates that incidental hybrid academic managers feel a ‘passive professional obligation’ (McGivern et al., 2015) to do their ‘turn’. In doing so, they only position themselves temporarily in hybrid roles and enact their role to protect themselves, colleagues, the School, academic autonomy as well as academic professionalism more broadly. Thus, engaging in hybrid academic manager roles is not perceived as a personal career advancement, but rather as a diversion from the real purpose of academic scholarship, that is research, teaching and producing knowledge for its own sake. This is illustrated in table 9:

Table 9: Orientation of incidental hybrid academic manager towards the role

Hybrid type	Orientation towards the role
The incidental hybrid academic manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simply doing their ‘turn’</li> <li>• Feeling an obligation to do the role with increasing seniority</li> <li>• Being asked by colleagues or more senior hybrid academic managers</li> <li>• Not regarding the hybrid academic manager role as a career advancement or a promotion</li> <li>• Doing the role because there is a lack of alternative candidates</li> <li>• Protecting themselves, colleagues and professionalism</li> <li>• Seeing the managerial role as a diversion from the real purpose of academics</li> <li>• Recognising that the work has to be done <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Not actively seeking the role, but not necessarily having an aversion to management</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### \*\*\* 5.2.2. The Willing Hybrid Academic Manager \*\*\*

My data suggest that some individuals willingly engage in a hybrid academic manager role and do not perceive managerial roles to be in tension with academic professionalism. These willing hybrid academic managers actively seek and apply for hybrid positions. They regard it as a ‘stepping stone’ and a ‘mid-career opportunity’ (McGivern et al., 2015), to further advance their career trajectory on the managerial side. Thus, not only do they have managerial ambitions to progress in their hybrid career by aspiring similar roles in the future, but they also have a fundamental interest in the political field of academia and the implications of recent policy changes in the sector. Hence, willing hybrid academic managers recognise the positive gratification that being involved in a hybrid academic manager position can entail:

‘Nobody would step up and do it, which I thought was odd. I thought, “I can do that. I can do it differently to my predecessor, which is true. I can start to sort out some of the issues in the School and make a contribution to it and colleagues’ development.” ...I’ve quite enjoyed doing it too. I thought I might enjoy it, but I didn’t think I’d enjoy it as much as I have.’ (Interview 5)

Thus, the orientation and motivation towards the role might not only involve striving for personal satisfaction, but also the satisfaction they receive from seeing colleagues succeed:

‘It is a challenging job and you get an immense sense of satisfaction from seeing things go right and seeing other people do well. I think I’ve always had this sense of being part of a broader organisation anyway.’ (Interview 15)

Another narrative evolved around their perceived position in the School and the fruition from earlier managerial experience (McGivern et al., 2015). Willing hybrid academic managers have often held similar hybrid positions in other institutions in the past or, as the background of my interviewees suggests, they enter the field of academia having previously worked in the private industry. Hence, willing hybrid academic managers do not follow a negative

association with performance management or other managerial approaches, but rather recognise the benefits that bureaucracy might entail, even in the context of academia. As one individual explained:

‘I came from industry, so I suppose I had a better sense of dealing with bureaucracy and a better sense of knowing the importance of bureaucracy. A lot of academics like to think that bureaucracy is an evil and it’s not something they want to deal with. But actually, the reality is, dealt with properly, bureaucracy can help us all. I suppose I had that view because I came from [a private organisation].’ (Interview 35)

Similarly, someone else expressed interest in being involved in a variety of responsibilities. Due to earlier fruition from previous ‘work’, this hybrid academic manager perceived ‘blending’ managerial and professional duties as a motivating balance:

‘So, I’ve always blended studying with work. It led to a balance. I’m fairly motivated, mainly because I don’t like getting bored...I’d rather be doing things.’ (Interview 7)

However, the willingness to engage in a hybrid academic manager role was not only based on personal incentives to take matters into their own hands, but also on representing the School and the field of social science more generally:

‘I have always been somebody who’s had a view and been more than happy to express those views, and I thought it was only fair to accept some responsibility...I had the self-confidence to think I might do it better than other people. I had always had a view and expressed it, and I felt it was only fair to put up because I wasn’t going to shut up. Then, once you move into the University arena, it was really to present the Business School and social sciences in that space, because otherwise, we would tend to get drowned out and ignored.’ (Interview 2)

Someone else made similar remarks and expressed their interest in improving the reputation and success of their own School. This also offered the opportunity to gain new experiences and improve one’s knowledge in the field of leadership:

‘It was partly duty expectations as well as a sincere desire for the School to succeed...it offered an opportunity to see the other side of the School, if you like, in terms of leadership.’ (Interview 32)

Interestingly, the motive of willing hybrid academic managers also aggregated to their involvement in the sector as a whole. Thus, individuals did not only claim the hybrid academic manager role to represent their own institution, but also to fulfil their interest in being involved in shaping academia on a macro-level:

‘I’m interested not just on my own academic work, but I’m also interested in making academia work...When I was offered the opportunity to contribute to that I was quite happy to take it.’ (Interview 23)

Similarly, someone else expressed their interest in being involved in a variety of responsibilities. This includes professional academic activities such as teaching but also the possibility to satisfy their interest in the implications of Higher Education policy:

‘I was never the kind of incredibly, totally focused researcher who when you asked them what they do they do one thing, that’s what they do. I was never like that. I’ve always been interested in teaching, I enjoy teaching and Higher Education policy and its implications.’ (Interview 15)

It became evident that the interest in Higher Education policy and the management of academic closely linked to their own scholarly interest. Thus, willing hybrid academic managers attempt to use and integrate managerialism and professionalism (McGivern et al., 2015). For example, one willing hybrid academic manager who has extensively published on the topic of ‘leadership’ explained that engaging in a hybrid academic manager role offers an opportunity to ‘practice what you preach’:

‘It seems to be one of the responsibilities of an academic is to be a leader, which means to be an innovator. Not just in the scholarly sense of developing new ideas, but also for developing institutions. I think that’s a very important responsibility of academics, to lead and to build the institutions of which they are a part and not just to be preoccupied with themselves...people used to joke to me and say “now you’ve got to practice what you preach, now you’ve got to deliver what you’ve been researching on all these years”, and I think that was a fair challenge.’ (Interview 12)

Thus, having been engaged in researching organisations, managerial practices and managers in other public and private institutions provides them with a unique position and knowledge base. It is argued that hybrid academic managers are always able to frame their role in a way to combine their intrinsic research interest with the hybrid academic manager role itself:

‘I thought I’d enjoy it. But if you’re interested in organisation studies and organisation theory then those sorts of roles are always a case of the theoretical stuff you’re interested in. If you’re interested in interactional sociology, then you see a lot of stuff that’s interactionally interesting. If you’re interested in structural sociology or sort of systems of thoughts, knowledge, expertise, you see all of that as well. If you’re interested in bureaucracy you see all of that, power and money and rules and so it’s kind of all-around you...And you’re dealing with people who are extremely interesting and have got interesting things to say, but also quite sort of individualistic and so it’s quite good fun. It’s a human zoo kind of thing.’ (Interview 13)

The connection between the role itself and the intrinsic motivation to research in the area of Business and Management and related fields provides notable positive aspects. This does not just have implications for the own personal interest and motivation to engage in the hybrid role, but also for the individual perception on training needs. One individual compared their position and knowledge base to other hybrid academic managers from less business-related departments, for example from the history department:



‘You might say that the research is a training because my field is [related], so I was interested in it because of the connection with the research field. It wasn’t like being a medieval historian and becoming Head of Department. There was a connection with the research, and that made it more interesting to me.’ (Interview 19)

In sum, my data indicates that individuals proactively claim hybrid academic manager role attempt to integrate professionalism with managerialism (McGivern et al., 2015). By being engaged in managerial responsibilities in the past, either at other institutions or even in the private industry, they acknowledge positive aspects of bureaucracy and performance-related mechanisms. Thus, willing hybrid academic managers regard their role as a necessary and valuable element of the academic career in order to represent their School and the social sciences more generally. This might either be based on their personal interest in the policy changes in academia or by connecting the hybrid role to their own research in the Business and Management field. This is explicated in table 10:

Table 10: Orientation of willing hybrid academic manager towards the role

Hybrid type	Orientation towards the role
The willing hybrid academic manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively seeking the hybrid academic manager role</li> <li>• Having been involved in previous management roles either in academia or in the private industry</li> <li>• Blending their research and managerial responsibilities (seeing a connection between their own research interest and the managerial activities)</li> <li>• Being interested in the management of academia and policy developments in the Higher Education sector</li> <li>• Getting an immense sense of satisfaction from succeeding in the managerial role</li> <li>• Deriving satisfaction from by seeing colleagues’ improvement</li> <li>• Making a difference to colleagues’ academic development and striving to strengthen the success of the School as a whole</li> </ul>

### \*\*\* 5.2.3. The Transitioning Hybrid Academic Manager \*\*\*

Interestingly, my data indicates a third hybrid academic manager type. It becomes evident that the orientation of individuals towards the hybrid academic manager role may not necessarily be a fixed categorisation but may also involve a dynamic process of transition. In more detail, the findings of this study demonstrate that individuals may transition from being in an incidental hybrid academic manager position towards becoming willing hybrid academic managers. These individuals, although they have had a negative aversion to management in the field of academia in the past, begin to perceive positive aspects of the managerial role that they were initially unaware of:

‘If you would have asked me ‘how do you feel about doing something like that?’ In advance of it, I think I would have said “it is not something I’m looking forward to”, but I actually enjoyed it...I loved being in a position where I had to

tell whoever needed to listen, I really enjoyed that...and I think I dealt, in the main, pretty well with that and possibly if not probably surprised myself.’ (Interview 37)

Someone else stated that originally, he/she had no intention in being involved in a hybrid academic manager role, but felt an obligation to do their ‘turn’ after the encouragement of colleagues. However, this individual began to shift from their original incidental position towards being motivated to ‘having a crack’ at a hybrid managerial position in the future:

‘It clearly interferes with a whole bunch of other things that I really enjoy doing, writing and conducting research...it wasn’t something that I particularly wanted to do, but after I have been encouraged by a whole bunch of people I just felt like it was kind of my turn...Sometimes I still do actually [want to be engaged in a hybrid academic manager role], if I’m honest... I wouldn’t mind having a crack at being Head of Department again’ (Interview 39).

Others stated more explicitly that being part of the senior management team in the School was regarded as an important motive to engage in the role. Several participants argued that this came as a total surprise. Thus, individuals decided to shift their focus of their academic profile by aiming to increasingly engage in management positions in the long run:

‘You are part of the senior management group in the School. You’re involved in other decisions that take place. I quite enjoy that, because one of the frustrating things about being an academic is you’re often in the background, you’re doing your teaching and your research. If you’ve got maybe a bit more of a proactive personality that can be a bit frustrating. It gives me another outlet. My wife was saying to me, “you’ve got a new lens of life.” She thinks I’ve got more of a spring in my step now than I did before. I’m still passionate about ideas...but I feel like I’m developing parts of myself that were previously asleep and, it seems pathetic, but it’s an exhilarating feeling in some sense.’ (Interview 14)

The same individual continued to explain his changing career trajectory. To strengthen his expertise and knowledge in the field, the individual decided to enrol for an MBA on Higher Education Management. This would allow for further advancement in a hybrid career by expanding his knowledge base on hybrid academic manager roles more thoroughly as well as continuing to be engaged in academic activities:

‘I feel more rounded as a person. I’m pretty enthusiastic about it, and in fact, I’ve signed up to do an MBA at [a prestigious institution]. They do an MBA there especially focusing on Higher Education management. I probably see my future trajectory as being in administration, still doing my research. Part of the reason for me doing this MBA in Higher Education management is probably because I’m conscious of that.’ (Interview 14)

My data also demonstrates an interesting narrative, which shows that transitioning hybrid academic managers surprisingly perceive their hybrid role as an ‘ego’ booster. They begin to ‘build up confidence’ because they are able to accomplish tasks that were originally perceived to be very challenging:

‘I’m quite enjoying it, much to my surprise...there is a lot of ego, and that really surprised me. How much ego you find in it and how much that sustains you in a horrible sense. The fact that you’re actually catching yourself at being quite good at things that you thought were very difficult [and] in the back of your head what’s going on is a sense of, “I’m very good at this. I’m very, very good at this” and that builds your confidence and that enables you to do other things.’ (Interview 4)

Similarly, someone else explained how being involved in hybrid academic manager roles built up more and more confidence. This was not only based on personal evaluation or increasing familiarity with the field of business and management education, but also because of positive feedback from other individuals:

‘When I got enough experience in Higher Education and particularly in the business and management field in Higher Education, I guess I build up more confidence to take on those kinds of roles. Partly, I think, it was over choice, partly, it was because other people thought I could do it.’ (Interview 33)

Another element that hybrid academic managers begin to acknowledge about their role centres around building networks and better relationships that were previously non-existent. This was regarded as a positive, and enjoyable aspects about the hybrid academic manager role:

‘I didn’t think that I was going to be particularly good at it. I also knew that these types of responsibilities can take an enormous amount of work and responsibility and eat into your time of research. I have always seen myself as a research active academic, and as a consequence of that, I did not really want to take on senior management roles...I was asked by the former Head of School if I would be interested in doing it and I couldn’t quickly enough find a way of saying no effectively... I was slightly forced into it. And I suppose subsequent to taking it on I think my thoughts about it have changed quite a bit. It does become an interesting job, and it presents some interesting challenges, and there are an awful lot of things that are enjoyable about that sort of job. Particularly, when it comes to meeting and getting to know staff.’ (Interview 27)

My data demonstrates that the orientation towards the hybrid academic manager role is not necessarily a fixed dichotomy whereby individuals are either willing or incidental to engage in a hybrid academic manager role. Rather, the findings demonstrate more complexity at the micro-level by showing that individual hybridisation is a dynamic process. Individuals may transition from being in an incidental hybrid academic manager role towards becoming willing hybrid academic managers. Thus, the individuals’ perception of the role begins to change. They recognise positive aspects about the hybrid academic manager role leading to a change in the perception of self (Sturdy et al., 2006). Transitioning hybrid academic managers begin to value their involvement in decision-making, meeting new people and building networks beyond the immediate academic community, as well as gaining self-confidence by accomplishing tasks that were originally perceived to be unattainable. This is demonstrated in table 11:

Table 11: Orientation of transitioning hybrid academic manager towards the role

Hybrid type	Orientation towards the role
The transitioning hybrid academic manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognising positive aspects about the engagement in a hybrid role <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) being involved in decision-making</li> <li>b) being part of the senior management team</li> <li>c) building a new network by meeting other hybrid academic managers in similar roles</li> <li>d) noticing a desirable personal change and feeling more ‘rounded’ as a person</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Seeing the role as an ego booster that builds up confidence</li> <li>• Starting to identify with the managerial responsibilities</li> <li>• Striving to be engaged in further hybrid academic manager roles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Enrolling in an MBA programme to gain further knowledge and qualifications</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Being surprised about the sense of satisfaction the hybrid role can entail</li> </ul>

### \*\*\* 5. 3. Concluding Remarks \*\*\*

Overall, the chapter has presented the key findings of this study. First, my data indicates that hybrid academic managers utilise six different strategies reconcile the tensions between the professional, academic logic and the non-professional logics namely the managerial logic, the consumer logic and the commercial logic. It is suggested that individuals engage in the reconciliation of these logics by actively *fighting* the non-professional logic, being *dispirited* to it, *denying* the non-professional logic has an influence on them, *compartmentalising* their standpoint towards the logic, *accepting* the existence of the non-professional logic and *educating* colleagues, or by fully *combining* the non-traditional logic with their traditional academic activities. The findings of this study, furthermore, demonstrate that individual hybrids are not a homogenous group of professionals, but individuals use different role claiming narratives to willingly or incidentally engage in the hybrid academic manager role. My empirical data demonstrates more complexity at the individual-level of analysis by suggesting a third type of hybrid – the transitioning hybrid academic manager. It becomes evident that individuals begin to recognise positive aspects about the hybrid role and, therefore, transition from being in an incidental hybrid position towards becoming a willing hybrid academic manager. The subsequent chapter will discuss these findings in more detail and elaborate how they are positioned and contribute to the wider literature on institutional complexity in the field of business and management education.

## Chapter 6: Discussion

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This chapter explicates how the findings of this study are positioned in the wider literature on institutional complexity, institutional work, and individual hybridisation and how they make important theoretical and practical contributions. I will demonstrate how this research illuminates and advances theoretical insights on institutional complexity in the field of business and management education.

My thesis contributes to our current understanding of the micro-foundations of institutional theory. This research demonstrates how multiple non-conventional institutional logics are enacted discursively on the individual-level. In doing so, this thesis contributes to our current body of knowledge as we currently lack a clear, understanding of how individuals translate logics into action as they engage in everyday activities – particularly in organisational environments that are located at the intersection of multiple institutional fields (Kraatz and Block, 2008).

Thus, this thesis has examined how hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools experience and reconcile the potential tensions between the professional logic and multiple non-professional logics, namely the managerial logic, the consumer logic and the commercial logic. My findings suggest that individuals engage in the reconciliation of these logics by actively *fighting* the non-professional logic, being *dispirited* to it, *denying* the non-professional logic has an influence on them, *compartmentalising* their standpoint towards the logic, *accepting* the existence of the non-professional logic and *educating* colleagues, or by fully *combining* the non-traditional logic with their traditional academic activities.

Secondly, my data indicates a reconceptualization of individual hybridisation, by suggesting that there are three different types of hybrid academic managers. Willing hybrid academic managers enthusiastically seek hybrid roles in an attempt to reconceptualise outdated professionalism (McGivern et al., 2015). As a result, they develop professional-managerial identities (ibid). In contrast, incidental hybrid academic managers maintain their personal and professional identities and are often only temporarily situated in hybrid roles (McGivern et al., 2015). They engage in institutional work to protect professionalism, academic autonomy and their colleagues (ibid). My findings indicate a third type of hybrid academic managers. Transitioning hybrid academic managers are individuals who, over time, begin to transition from their incidental position towards becoming willing hybrid academic managers, often at their own surprise. In the process of transitioning, they begin to identify themselves with the responsibilities of the management role and, as a result, start to reframe their sense of self (Sturdy et al., 2006).

Given the institutional pluralism of the British Higher Education context, hybrid academic managers have to engage in the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics simultaneously. The findings of my study advance this line of thought further and demonstrate that there are different patterns of individual-level responses across multiple logics and across different hybrid types. It becomes evident that there is an interesting correlation between the level of conformity and the stages of institutionalisation. Thus, hybrid academic managers do not reconcile different logics in a homogenous way, but arguably exhaust their level of agency in line with the level of enforcement of each institutional logic. This suggests an important development, because it reveals more complexity at the micro-level and advances our current understanding of institutional complexity in the field of business and management education.

After discussing the theoretical contributions of my study, this chapter will outline the policy implications and propose actionable insights for policymakers and other hybrid academic managers. The findings suggest policymakers need to ensure that performance assessments (REF, TEF and the incoming KEF) have mutually reinforcing incentives to diminish further distortions of research behaviour and a greater division of the academic profession. It is argued that further tensions between the professional work of academics and non-professional logics could decrease the prevalence of hybrid academic managers in the field. Policymakers and hybrid academic managers have to be attentive to these potential risks for example by reassessing the existing workload models and incentive mechanisms in Higher Education to increase the interest in hybrid academic manager positions. Furthermore, they could particularly benefit from paying close attention to transitioning hybrid academic managers, either by carefully selecting their scope of responsibilities or by offering specifically targeted training courses to support the process of transitioning.

Lastly, this chapter will discuss possible directions for future research to invite further questioning in the field. I suggest that future research would benefit from advancing my findings even further by exploring how the reconciliation of institutional logics varies across different University departments, for example, in Medical Schools. With a growing prevalence of hybrid professionals in the context of Higher Education, and healthcare (McGivern et al., 2015), it would also be particularly fruitful to further examine the progressive hybridisation (Noordegraaf, 2007) of transitioning hybrids. Lastly, I suggest exploring how the findings of this study could be aggregated to the organisational-level of analysis. For example, I argue that cross-level research could explore how the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics varies across different status organisations. This would furthermore advance our current understanding of institutional theory in the field of business and management education.

### \*\*\* 6.1. Theoretical Contributions \*\*\*

Today's environment is continuously characterised by institutional pluralism, as 'many organisational contexts are becoming embedded in competing institutional logics that impose conflicting demands on organisational members' (Pache and Santos, 2013: 4, Kraatz and Block, 2008). Scholarly attention has predominantly focused on understanding how organisations respond to such institutional demands, with little consideration on how such tensions unfold at the individual-level of analysis (ibid). The absence of individuals in existing research on institutional logics creates a degree of theoretical inconsistency in the literature (Bévoort and Suddaby, 2016).

In an attempt to solve 'the people problem in contemporary institutionalism', emerging scholarship has started to pay particular attention to the micro-foundations of institutional theory (Hallett and Ventresca, 2006: 214). This encompasses an expansion of institutionalism to offer a more nuanced understanding of 'action, interaction and meaning' (ibid: 213). Still, most studies in the literature follow the assumption that individuals either comply or reject an institutional logic (Pache and Santos, 2013). However, this notion only offers a simplified explanation, and taking a closer look inside organisations, suggests more complexity (ibid).

The 'important, yet often invisible' (Currie et al., 2012: 938), concept of institutional work offers a valuable theoretical framework to explore that complexity more thoroughly because it reintroduces the concept of agency into the institutional theory debate by suggesting that individuals have the ability to purposefully maintain or transform institutions (Battilana and D'Aunno, 2009). Usually taken for granted, institutional work represents the purposeful action of individuals 'aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions' (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: 216; Currie et al., 2012). Thus, individuals may indeed simply comply or reject institutional norms, but they may also be indifferent to it, or accept it without necessarily internalising all its core values (Pache and Santos, 2013; Lok, 2010).

#### **6.1.1. Individual-level responses of hybrid academic managers**

Following this line of thought, Pache and Santos (2013) offer a novel contribution to move beyond the compliance/rejection dichotomy. They develop a conceptual model that casts light on the way in which organisational members react to competing institutional logics. The core of their theoretical argument is based on the assumption that individual responses to competing logics are moderated by their degree of adherence to each of the competing logics (novice, familiar, identified) and the degree of hybridisation of their organisational context. The second factor refers to the degree to which the context in which individuals operate is organised around a dominant logic and challenged by an alternative logic (low hybridisation) or exposed to multiple, competing logics of relatively similar strength (high hybridisation) (ibid).

Combining these factors, Pache and Santos (2013) suggest a repertoire of five individual-level responses (ignorance, compliance, defiance, compartmentalisation and combination) that individuals employ to respond to competing logics in various scenarios. They contribute to the emergent literature on institutional change and attempt to predict which strategy organisational members are most likely to utilise in response to two institutional logics.

My research complements Pache and Santos' (2013) conceptualisation of individual-level responses, but also advances their model in three ways. First, Pache and Santos (2013) offer a theoretical model of individual-level responses. To support their argument, they draw on a variety of papers in the literature. Nevertheless, we currently lack an empirically-based understanding of how individuals engage in the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics. To my knowledge, this study is the first attempt to advance their model in a single, empirically-based context.

Secondly, the findings of this study offer a more detailed understanding of how multiple non-conventional institutional logics are enacted discursively on the individual-level. 'For the sake of clarity and parsimony', Pache and Santos outline a simplified view of institutional influences (2013: 15). The authors rely on a baseline situation where individuals are faced with only two competing logics, in an organisational context of one dominant logic and low hybridisation. However, as noted earlier, it is widely acknowledged in the literature that organisations and individuals may be embedded in more than two logics (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Greenwood et al., 2011). My study addresses this shortcoming by focusing on the potential tensions of three institutional logics namely the managerial logic, the consumer logic as well as the commercial logic. This offers a more nuanced and careful analysis of the competing logics at play and moves beyond their simplified framework towards understanding individual-level responses in a world that is increasingly characterised by institutional pluralism (Pache and Santos, 2013; Kraatz and Block, 2008).

Thirdly, by empirically examining a professional context, my research focuses on a specific aspect of Pache and Santos' model (2013). This is based on the assumption that the hybrid academic managers in my sample progressed from the academic ranks and, therefore, fully identify with the professional logic. They are not only knowledgeable about the values and practices of the professional logic, but also derive their sense of self from compliance with these norms (Pache and Santos, 2013). Thus, rather than attempting to provide an all-encompassing explanation for different institutional influences under different situations for different individuals, my research provides a nuanced account of how individual-level responses operate in the professional context of academia.



In doing so, I offer a more detailed and nuanced account of how hybrid academic managers engage in the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics in a single, empirically-based context. Hence, my findings suggest a modification of the initially proposed repertoire of responses to reflect the different forms of institutional work that hybrid academic managers utilise in the field of business and management Higher Education. My findings suggest that individuals employ six strategies to reconcile multiple institutional logics: *'fight'*, *'dispirited'*, *'deny'*, *'compartmentalise'*, *'accept and educate'*, and *'combine'*. These empirical findings allow me to complement Pache and Santos' theoretical model by incrementally advancing our current understanding of institutional theory at the micro-level of analysis.

In more detail, the first response involves hybrid academic managers that actively *fight* the values and practices introduced by a non-traditional logic. This lends empirical support to Pache and Santos' (2013) proposed response of defiance. This strategy involves 'resisting' and 'reformulating' instructions and the 'explicit rejection of the values, norms and practices prescribed by a given logic' (ibid: 13).

Pache and Santos (2013) suggest that the response of defiance might vary in its degree of resistance 'ranging from refusal to comply with the prescriptions of a given logic, to more active attempts at contradicting or attacking them with the goal to make them disappear' (ibid: 13). My data supports this argument, indicating that individuals utilise less drastic responses to 'fight' non-traditional logics. For example, it became evident that hybrid academic managers might use 'humour' around colleagues as a way to implicitly undermine the significance of non-traditional logics (Fleming and Spicer, 2003). Humour is believed to comprise a mechanism that individuals utilise to reconstitute paradoxes and ambiguities underlying everyday practices (Hatch and Erhlich, 1993). The findings of my study lend empirical support to this argument. By 'poking a bit fun' out of the 'excellence discourse' and the University 'excellence-award' (for example, one individual clearly expressed their discontent by introducing an 'alright-award' in the School to honour colleagues who simply do 'a decent job'), hybrid academic managers challenge managerial and market logics in Business and Management Schools.

Although my data lends empirical support to Pache and Santos' (2013) conceptualisation, the findings of this study advance their model by indicating that fighting a given logic can be twofold. I suggest that the motive of individuals to fight a given logic might also rest on the willingness to maintain the values, norms and practices of another, complementary logic. Through 'defensive institutional work' (Maguire and Hardy, 2009; Lawrence et al., 2013), hybrid academic managers actively attempt to maintain academic professionalism and protect themselves and their colleagues. This strategy unfolds on the ground by 'comforting' co-workers and 'finding support mechanisms' such as 'working with occupational health' or

‘offering counselling techniques’. This is an important theoretical development because, as Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) pointed out, existing studies have often overlooked how actors work to maintain institutions, with some notable exceptions, e.g. by Currie et al., (2012) or McGivern et al. (2015).

Thus, although my data and Pache and Santos’ (2013) conceptualisation indicate a degree of overlap, I suggest to not only focus on the active attempt of individuals to fight a non-traditional logic, but also to incorporate the individuals motive to maintain professionalism. Thus, by advancing our current understanding of ‘fighting’ a given logic, I suggest that it is equally important to incorporate the aspect of maintenance.

The second response identified is being *dispirited*. This strategy signposts a novel advancement to Pache and Santos’ (2013) model of individual-level responses as they have not acknowledged a similar strategy. In more detail, my data indicates that individuals do not favour the imposed institutional demands from a given logic, but they do not believe that it is worth fighting against it any more. They think that their action will not make a difference and have simply given up trying. Thus, although hybrid academic managers might have the knowledge and resources to fight a non-traditional logic, these individuals have lost their courage to do so.

This indicates a moral foundation focusing on the loss of will and demoralisation. Similarly, the literature suggests that competing sets of beliefs and values within the academic organisations causes low faculty morale (Currie, 1996). Cook argues that demoralisation can be defined as the ‘deprivation of courage, spirit, feeling disheartened, bewildered, thrown into disorder and confusion...feeling unable to cope with problems, powerless to change the situation’ (1996 cited in Currie, 1996: 110). Individuals perceive that they have lost control over the situation and, with growing change and uncertainty in the sector, demoralisation has continuously increased (Currie, 1996).

The third strategy that hybrid academic managers utilise is *denying* that the non-traditional logic has any influence on their work. Pache and Santos (2013) suggest a similar individual-level response labelled ignorance whereby individuals demonstrate a lack of reaction vis-à-vis institutional demands.

However, my findings suggest an alternation of the original conceptualisation, as described by earlier research (Pache and Santos, 2013). It becomes evident that hybrid academic managers might well be aware of a shifting discourse and do not deny the pure existence of a given institutional logic, but rather do not actively attribute its influence to the logic itself.

Interestingly, this strategy was only utilised in response to the consumer logic – similar comments about the managerial logic and the commercialisation of Higher Education have not been made. Arguably, the consumerism discourse is a relatively recent development in British Higher Education and has not been fully institutionalised. Hence, hybrid academic managers might still be able to deny its influence. Rather than attributing any changes to an increase in student demands, individuals suggest that they are merely ‘improving the services that are surrounding the product’, but only for ‘ourselves’ [the academics] and not for the ‘students’.

Thus, my findings suggest that, in addition to this earlier conceptualisation, individuals may experience a shift in discourse, but simply deny its actual point of origin. They do not necessarily experience a lack of awareness of the logic’s influence but attribute this influence to another root cause. This introduces a level of agency into the debate. Individuals are not, as originally proposed by Pache and Santos (2013), passive receivers of institutional demands, but rather actively reconstruct these institutional demands to make sense of their influence in another, alternative way. My findings demonstrate a need to move beyond the somewhat limited conceptualisation of an unconscious self and additionally recognise the active involvement of individuals in their decision to deny the logic’s influence altogether.

The fourth individual-level response refers to hybrid academic managers who *compartmentalise* their compliance with competing institutional logics. In line with Pache and Santos’ argument, compartmentalisation may occur across time and space. Individuals may consciously decide to ‘enact competing logics in the same place at different times (for instance, when interacting with different people), or in different places (for instance, in different organisational contexts)’ (ibid: 13).

Doolin (2002) provides a similar argument by stressing that clinicians seemingly resisted the introduction of management within the public healthcare system, but adopted enterprising behaviour in a different context, more specifically in their private clinical practices. The argument is based on the notion that clinicians attempted to resist the decline of their historical professional autonomy, by reinforcing the traditional status as an autonomous practitioner through the engagement in private practice (ibid). Thus, individuals compartmentalise their compliance with the changing institutional demands of the healthcare sector to negotiate their sense of self (ibid).

My findings lend empirical support to Doolins (2002) argument as well as Pache and Santos’ (2013) conceptualisation. Interestingly, hybrid academic managers only utilised this strategy in response to the managerial logic. This might be justified by an indisposition of articulating one’s favour for management. To prevent a potential identity violation by ‘moving over to the dark side of management’ (McGivern et al., 2015), participants may articulate socially

desirable standpoints about management to ‘outsides’ e.g. the researcher, but ultimately engage in implementing managerial practices. This is consistent with earlier seminal writings in the field of sociology on self-presentation (Goffman, 1959). Goffman discussed the presentation of self for defining one’s position in social order and for facilitating the performance of role-governed behaviour (1959; Leary and Kowalski, 1990). As individuals engage in self-presentation to influence other’s reaction to them, they tend to match their self to the ‘perceived values and preferences of significant others’ (ibid: 41).

Hybrid academic managers may purposefully attempt to segment their compliance with the managerial logic by ‘wearing different hats’. It became evident that some individuals disagree with managerial tools like the REF or the ABS list when putting on their ‘personal hat’, to the extent of arguing to get ‘rid of REF because it is an absolute waste of time’. Yet, when discussing its implication from a ‘School perspective’, the same hybrid academic managers clearly recognise REF as ‘a useful tool for benchmarking’. Although these individuals may not have fully internalised the managerial logic, they act as ‘marginalised actors who are committed to the institution in which they are embedded’ (Creed et al., 2010: 1336). Following this line of thought, my data echoes earlier research on compartmentalisation.

However, my findings also advance our current understanding of compartmentalisation. In more detail, I suggest that compartmentalisation may not only involve the conscious attempt of individuals to segment their compliance, but they may also unconsciously compartmentalise their responses towards competing institutional logics. Thus, this response may not only be a purposeful decision of the individual to separate their compliance with competing logics ‘across time and/or across space’ (Pache and Santos, 2013: 13), but also involves an unconscious component whereby individuals make contradictory statements about their experience and reconciliation strategies without necessarily being aware of it.

As a fifth response, individuals *accept* a non-traditional logic, and simultaneously *educate* their colleagues on how to ‘make the system work’ for them. Pache and Santos (2013) make similar remarks by labelling this strategy as combination. The authors argue that individuals deal with institutional incompatibilities by attempting to blend some of the practices of competing logics. My findings support this argument and demonstrate that hybrid academic managers utilising this strategy do not necessarily favour the circumstances invoked by a given logic and have not fully internalised its norms and values. Some experience potential professional identity violations (Pratt et al., 2006; McGivern et al., 2015) or ‘feel a bit bad’, because ‘you are not really an academic now’ as ‘you have gone over to the dark side, you have gone over to management.’.

Further, the notion of ‘game-playing’ unfolds as a central concept of ‘accepting’ the existence of a non-traditional institutional logic. As individuals do not fully support the values and norms of the logic, they attempt to create an impression of correct compliance by finding ways to ‘game the system’. The pressure to ‘publish-or-perish’ facilitates an environment of co-authoring where several individuals form ‘little cliques’ and ‘publish like crazy’ because colleagues ‘just automatically put my name on pretty much anything’.

By simply rationalising the game, hybrid academic managers stimulate a classic ‘Emperor’s New Clothes’ dilemma. It is widely acknowledged that hybrid academic managers struggle with the high expectations of fulfilling their managerial and academic responsibilities at the same time. The pressures to demonstrate ‘excellence’ in various areas simultaneously exists nonetheless. Thus, rather than admitting that ‘Heads of Departments are not writing, [because] it’s a universal problem and if they are writing they are fucking up the Head of Department job’, hybrid academic managers nourish that spurious view in the sector in an act of self-defence.

It also became evident that other individuals utilise their hybrid academic manager role, and the accompanying resources, to ‘hold true to educational values’. For example, they work ‘very hard to make research [a] part and partial’ aspect of their institution’s culture. By ‘organising research seminars’ with ‘external speakers’, ‘fighting for Ph.D. students’ and ‘developing a departmental research strategy’ that ‘is sent around to each and every individual in the department’, individuals accept their managerial responsibility, yet, use their role to strengthen the professional logic within the field to make sure ‘research does not slip off the agenda’.

These hybrid academic managers recognise the changing circumstances in the field of Higher Education and attempt to ‘create a web of workable arrangements’, for themselves and ‘colleagues’. This suggests an advancement of Pache and Santos’ (2013) conceptualisation, because it demonstrates that individuals do not just attempt to reconcile incompatibilities for themselves, but also for colleagues.

They ‘educate’ and ‘help’ co-workers to allocate their time effectively according to ‘the workload model’, ‘enthuse people about what they might get out of grant capture’, or ‘prepare a slide for a school meeting’ to ‘show staff where the money actually comes from because there is ‘a complete disconnect’. In doing so, individuals do not merely engage in institutional work for their own benefit but attempt to extend this towards the collegial level. By framing their hybrid academic manager role as an educator and supporter among other professionals, they create a state of affairs that allows them to balance professionalism with non-traditional demands seemingly.

The sixth individual-level response involves hybrid academic managers who have fully internalised and *combine* multiple traditional logics. The conceptualisation of this strategy echoes Pache and Santos' (2013) individual-level response of compliance. The strategy suggests that individuals do not experience any tensions and articulate that allegedly 'competing' logics can easily be combined. My findings indicate that individuals have constructed working patterns reflecting the values of a managerial system, including budgetary control, income maximisation, commercialisation and performance management indicators (Winter, 2009; Deem et al., 2007). Some individuals regard the influence of non-traditional logics as having a 'positive force on teaching' and argue that the British Higher Education sector is a clear 'industry'.

The individual's effort to 'combine' multiple logics reflects earlier accounts in the literature on institutional complexity. Previous studies have highlighted the blending of multiple institutional logics, including an analysis of critics' reviews of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (Glynn and Lounsbury, 2005), medical education (Dunn and Jones, 2010) and even in British and international universities (Deem et al., 2007 and Winter, 2009).

### Summary

Thus, existing literature has started to seek explanations for the micro-foundations of institutional theory to understand how individuals respond to institutional contradictions. My findings lend empirical support to earlier conceptualisations by showing that individuals do not simply comply or reject a given institutional logic. Rather hybrid academic managers engage in institutional work to reconcile multiple institutional logics by either complying or rejecting institutional norms or by denying them, or by accepting the logic without necessarily internalising all its core values (Pache and Santos, 2013; Lok, 2010). This unravels more complexity on the ground and offers a detailed and nuanced understanding of institutional processes at the individual-level of analysis.

More specifically, I complement Pache and Santos' (2013) theoretical model. My study is the first attempt in the literature to advance their model of individual-level responses in a single, *empirically-based* context. Additionally, my study moves beyond Pache and Santos (2013) somewhat simplified conceptualisation by exploring how individuals engage in the reconciliation of *multiple* institutional logics. Empirically, this is an important advancement because it is widely acknowledged in the literature that organisational-members constantly face institutional pluralism and potential contradictions (Pache and Santos, 2013; Kraatz and Block, 2008). Further, I extend a specific part of their model by explicitly selecting a professional context, with the assumption that the hybrid academic managers in my sample fully identify with the professional logic, as all of them progressed from the academic ranks

and did not come into the organisation from the industry as ‘outside managers’. In doing so, I aim to shed light on the way in which individual-level responses operate in the *professional context* of academia.

Taking these advancements into account, I demonstrate that hybrid academic managers respond differently to institutional contradictions than the existing literature suggests. Hence, my findings suggest an alteration of the originally proposed repertoire of individual-level responses and demonstrate how hybrid academic managers engage in institutional work to reconcile potential tensions of multiple institutional logics. I address Pache and Santos’ (2013) call for additional work to explore the micro-level required to mobilise and sustain the strategies outlined. As the individual-level responses are not straightforward to implement in pluralistic contexts, Pache and Santos suggest that they ‘require, on the part of individuals, a combination of identity work and institutional work’ (2013: 31; Creed et al., 2010; Jarzabkowski et al., 2009).

#### **6.1.2. Individual hybridisation**

My study draws on institutional work, and partly on identity work, to explore how hybrid academic managers engage in the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics. Institutional work has served as the primary theoretical lens of this thesis to understand how individuals engage in the purposeful action of changing or maintaining institutions. However, institutions and identity are fundamentally interrelated (McGivern et al., 2015), because ‘identities describe the relationship between an actor and the field in which that actor operates’ (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: 223). To this end, it became evident that the identity work, as a form of institutional work (McGivern et al., 2015), provides an equally interesting framing to explore the phenomena.

Identity refers to the subjective meanings and experience of individuals making sense of themselves in relation to others, and how an individual addresses the question ‘who am I? and – by implication – how should I act?’ (Alvesson et al., 2008: 6). Identity construction requires ‘identity work’, which ‘describes the ongoing mental activity that an individual undertakes in constructing an understanding of self that is coherent, distinct and positively’ (ibid: 15). Individuals craft a self-narrative drawing in cultural resources, memories and the desire to reproduce their sense of self (ibid; Knights and Willmott, 1989; Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003).

Identity work is required to manage tensions between personal identities, professional roles and during role transition (Chreim et al., 2007; McGivern et al., 2015). Surprisingly, little effort has been made to understand hybrid roles in the field of academia. A few exceptions include Winter’s (2009) comparable study of academic identity schism in British and

Australian Higher Education, By et al., (2008) or Brown and Humphreys (2006) research on the group and organisational-level of analysis.

Nevertheless, a limited number of studies have started to explore hybrid roles in other contexts, most notably in healthcare. The literature suggests that some hybrid professionals (e.g. medical professionals in managerial roles) reluctantly and others willingly perform hybrid roles (McGivern et al., 2015; Fitzgerald and Dufour, 1997; Kitchener, 2000; Forbes et al., 2004). For example, McGivern and colleagues (2015) draw on both related theoretical frameworks of identity work and institutional work to examine how hybrid medical professionals in the British National Health Service enact and use their hybrid role.

In contrast to earlier research in the literature, McGivern et al., (2015) suggest that hybrids are evidently not a homogeneous group of professionals. Empirically, it is differentiated between ‘incidental hybrids’ who represent and protect traditional institutionalised professionalism while only temporarily in these hybrid roles, and ‘willing hybrids’ who use and integrate professionalism and managerialism. Medical professionals, as well as academics, both constitute powerful professional groups working in managed professional organisations. This allows for a transferral of ideas from healthcare to the context of Higher Education. In doing so, my research in the field of academia echoes McGivern et al., (2015) by suggesting similar findings – some hybrid academic managers reluctantly and others willingly engage in hybrid academic manager roles.

#### **6.1.2.1. The incidental hybrid academic manager**

Incidental hybrids are often only temporarily in hybrid roles and feel obligated to do their ‘turn’, because ‘it has to be done’. Incidental hybrids do not actively seek the role because of desire, but because they are often convinced or ‘pushed by colleagues’ (Forbes et al., 2004). Similarly, others had their ‘arm twisted’ and experience a passive professional obligation (McGivern et al., 2015) because ‘I couldn’t quickly enough find a way of saying no’. The passive professional obligation particularly increases with seniority. Incidental hybrids feel a pressure to engage in hybrid roles, because when you’re relatively ‘senior’ you’re expected to do some kind of leadership role. They regard themselves as professional representatives; not only because of professional seniority, but also because ‘I was older’. Others ultimately decide to engage in the hybrid academic manager role because of reservations to be managed by somebody they objected to (Forbes et al., 2004), as ‘I couldn’t let the idiot that was going to get the role do it and fuck it up’.

The primary motive for role engagement is not only to ‘protect’ traditional professionalism (McGivern et al., 2015), or ‘academic autonomy’, but also to protect their colleagues. For example, one interviewee explained that ‘you regard [the hybrid role] as a pain and something



you might have to do for a little while, either to protect yourself, to protect your colleagues...but essentially it is a diversion from the real purpose'. It is apparent how incidental hybrid academic managers regard their engagement in hybrid roles as a 'diversion' from the real purpose of academic professionalism.

#### **6.1.2.2. The willing hybrid academic manager**

Willing hybrids enthusiastically seek hybrid academic manager roles and 'actually applied for it'. Some have engaged in previous hybrid work or bring managerial experience from the private sector before joining academia. Individuals have 'always blended' professional responsibilities with managerial duties leading to a 'balance' or a 'double-hurdle' between the two. Thus, willing hybrids do not experience any tension between professionalism and their managerial role and fully identify with the values and norms of the non-professional logic.

Some regard their current managerial position as a 'stepping stone' for more senior managerial roles in the future. This is in line with McGivern et al., findings suggesting that individuals regard their hybrid role as an attractive 'mid-career opportunity' potentially leading to a permanent hybrid career (2015: 420). At this point, it is essential to emphasise the clear distinction to incidental hybrids, who, on the one hand, are only in the role for a limited period of time. Willing hybrids, on the other hand, do not regard their role as 'just transactional', but develop hybrid professional managerial identities (McGivern et al., 2015).

Willing hybrid academic managers do not only get an 'immense sense of satisfaction' from engaging in their role, but they also express their interest in 'making academia work' as a whole. This might either unfold at the organisational-level or even sector-wide. They recognise and positively embrace the industry changes in the field of British Higher Education whereby 'the REF, the NSS, all those things are an inevitable part', because 'universities have until fairly recently, been under-managed'. The long-standing notion of the 'autonomous professional' is considered to be 'outdated' and 'unrealistic' and calls for an attempt to reconceptualise professionalism (McGivern et al., 2015: 423).

Thus, willing hybrids 'critically reflect on professionalism' (McGivern et al., 2015) to avoid feeling 'bad' because they have 'gone over to the dark side, over to management [where] you're not really an academic now.' Through identity reconciliation work, individuals attempt to reconstruct coherence and align norms with their personal self-narrative (Pratt et al., 2006; Creed et al., 2010; McGivern et al., 2015). To socially 'validate' their permanent hybrid identities, willing hybrids integrate managerialism with professionalism (ibid).

My research lends empirical support to prior research on hybrid professional manager roles. Earlier research emphasises the incidental/willing dichotomy, whereby incidental hybrids maintain their professional identity and norms, rhetorically positioning themselves only

temporarily in those roles (McGivern et al., 2015; Forbes et al., 2004). Willing hybrids, in contrast, proactively claim hybrid roles by willingly integrating professionalism and managerialism to legitimate their hybrid position within the wider profession (ibid; Pratt et al., 2006).

#### **6.1.2.3. The transitioning hybrid academic manager**

Existing research on individual hybridisation emphasises the importance of individuals' willingness to engage in the hybrid role might be 'perhaps more relevant even than preparation' (Montgomery, 2001: 224). McGivern and colleagues take this line of thought further and suggest that 'learning to *be* a hybrid may, therefore, be more important than learning to *do* management' (2015: 427). However, as the very wording of *becoming* indicates, my data suggests a process of transition rather than a fixed or static state of change.

My argument is based on the notion that becoming a hybrid professional manager not necessarily begins with the conscious decision of an individual to willingly engage in a hybrid role, but rather involves an underlying, dynamic process of transformation. Individuals may start to transition from being an incidental hybrid academic towards becoming a willing hybrid academic manager; a third hybrid type that I termed the *transitioning hybrid academic manager*. Transitioning hybrid academic managers are professionals who, over time, transition from their original incidental hybrid role towards becoming willing hybrid academic managers. My research indicates two crucial components of this concept that need to be emphasised here: the element of time and the element of surprise.

It becomes evident that transitioning from being an incidental hybrid academic manager towards becoming a willing hybrid academic manager only happens as 'time' progresses. One hybrid academic manager noted: 'you have to learn how to be a manager by imagining what a manager would say, by saying it and seeing if it works out for you and then, over time, it becomes part of your discourse.' Thus, transitioning from one hybrid academic manager type to the other does not happen instantly, and arguably not even all at once, but rather involves a gradual process of improvising and experimenting with a new managerial self.

Similarly, transitioning from being in an incidental hybrid academic manager position towards becoming a willing hybrid academic manager encompasses an element of 'surprise'. As one interviewee stated, 'I almost surprised myself at the transition that I have made.' This emphasises the unintentional motives that transitioning hybrid academic managers originally pursue. Much to their own surprise, transitioning hybrid academic managers begin to experience a sense of satisfaction from engaging in a hybrid academic manager role, either by discovering new aspects about themselves or by gaining novel insights about the managerial responsibilities, or both.

For example, they start to recognise that engaging in a hybrid academic manager position offers a platform to ‘have a say’ by being ‘part of the senior management team’. Individuals start to reframe their sense of self by moving from the ‘background’ to the centre stage (Spurgeon and Ham, 2011). Similarly, through continuous involvement and experience transitioning hybrid academic managers build up ‘confidence’ and ‘ego’. They begin to realise that they are actually capable of succeeding in hybrid academic manager roles leading to a change in the perception of self (Sturdy et al., 2006). Furthermore, Scott (2008) argues that professionals are increasingly seeking specialised management training. Formal qualifications such as an MBA can serve as a mean to acquire the self-confidence to gain legitimacy in senior management teams and ‘in the classroom’ (Sturdy et al., 2006).

Nevertheless, I speculate that the process of transitioning might not only unfold in a progressive continuum, but might also happen in reverse, that is moving from willingly engaging in a hybrid academic manager position towards becoming an incidental hybrid academic manager. In particular, this contrary development may be related to seniority and to the increasing responsibility that senior individuals face, especially when their hybrid role is anticipated to become permanent. Another hypothetical reason for this reverse transition might entail a slightly changing spectrum of responsibilities, for example, by engaging in a similar hybrid academic manager role at a different institution. However, as my data has not provided empirical support for this supposition, it remains speculative at this point and will not be discussed in more detail here.

### **6.1.3. Pattern of responses across multiple institutional logics**

As hybrid academic managers are deeply embedded in various institutional ties, individuals have to engage in the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics simultaneously (Pache and Santos, 2013). Yet, ‘the ties that individuals develop with each of these logics should not be assumed of equal salience (Greenwood et al., 2011): individuals may be influenced by different logics in different ways’ (Pache and Santos, 2013: 8).

Building upon the previous argument it is, however, vital to not only acknowledge heterogeneousness amongst institutional logics, but also amongst hybrid academic manager types. Whereas most existing studies assume that individuals respond to institutional complexity in a homogenous way, my research reveals more complexity and variation at the individual-level of analysis. Institutional complexity is constructed as a subjective framing – whereas some hybrid academic managers experience a high or medium degree of institutional contradictions, others demonstrate that multiple logics can easily be combined. For these individuals, the impact of multiple logics may not be a forced choice between competing demands, but rather an increase in the number of demands that must be met (Goodrick and Reay, 2011). My study develops this line of thought further and argues that the patterns of

individual-level responses differ across multiple logics and across individual hybrid academic manager types. This will now be discussed in more detail by focusing on the managerial logic, the consumer logic and the commercial logics successively.

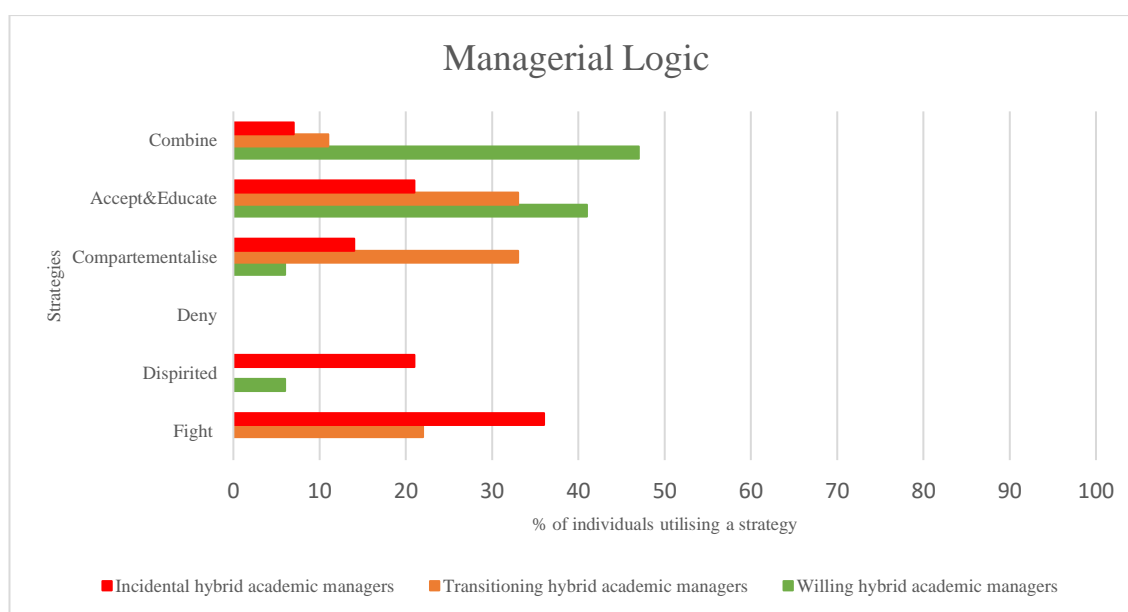
#### **6.1.3.1 The Managerial logic**

The managerial logic describes the introduction of ‘private’ styles of working and new governance structures into the field of Higher Education (Deem et al., 2007). These reforms signal various radical changes, including increased performance management, which monitor, compare, measure and judge academic activities, and, therefore, fundamentally shift the underlying cultural values through which professionalism is conceptualised and represented (Naidoo et al., 2011; Deem et al., 2007).

Thus, the increasing emphasis on managerialism in Higher Education has caused a change in expectations about how academic knowledge work should be led and managed (Deem et al., 2007). Many critics have berated hybrid academic managers for ‘abandoning the fundamental ideas and visions’ of Business Schools as generators of knowledge (Thomas et al., 2013: 52). Yet, the current scholarship lacks a systematic analysis of individual-level responses to explain how hybrid academic managers experience and reconcile the protentional tensions between their academic, professional work and the increasing managerialism in Higher Education.

My research addresses this gap by demonstrating that hybrid academic managers utilise six individual-level responses to reconcile competing institutional logics. These include: *‘fight’*, *‘dispirited’*, *‘deny’*, *‘compartmentalise’*, *‘accept and educate’* and *‘combine’*. I coded each interviewees engagement with the managerial logic according to these six strategies. It is important to highlight that, although individuals may employ different strategies at different points in time, my overall coding suggests that there was a consistent strategy that each individual utilised in response to the managerial logic. This was particularly useful for analytical purposes at the micro-level and demonstrates different patterns of responses across the three hybrid academic manager types. This is illustrated in the following figure 4:

**Figure 4: Reconciliation of the managerial logic across three hybrid academic manager types**



A close look at the managerial logic suggests that incidental hybrid academic managers, and some transitioning hybrids, engage in institutional work to maintain the level of professionalism. According to Lawrence and Suddaby (2006), institutional work that is aimed at maintaining institutions includes supporting, repairing or recreating the social mechanisms that ensure compliance. Incidental hybrid academic managers enact their hybrid role to actively fight the increasing managerialism in Higher Education to the highest degree. This is aligned with previous research in the field of individual hybridisation of professionals (e.g. McGivern et al., 2015). My data echoes the literature and shows how incidental hybrid academic managers attempt to ‘protect’ and ‘represent’ professionalism. They ‘continually try to talk down on the ABS list’ or ‘resist’, ‘refuse’ and ‘reformulate’ instructions coming from the Senior Management Team of their institutions. Thus, incidental hybrid academic managers do not simply engage in a ‘battle’ against managerialism at the industry level, but even at their own University. Willing hybrid academic managers, in contrast, do not utilise this strategy.

Although individuals might have the knowledge and resources to oppose the managerial logic and fight it to a certain extent, my data indicates that incidental hybrid academic managers and interestingly even willing hybrid academic managers have lost their courage to do so – leading to the second strategy of being dispirited. It is argued that the introduction of the REF, and former RAE, signposted ‘a clear divide’, creating distinct divisions in the field of academia. In particular, the data indicates that incidental hybrid academic managers regard the REF as a performance measurement exercises which demoralises the field by dividing academics into individuals who ‘benefit’ from the current apparatus and those who do not. REF is regarded as a dividing rule leading to a ‘fragmentation of the profession’ (Jones, 2013a).

Interestingly transitioning hybrid academic managers have not articulated a feeling of being dispirited in response to the managerial logic. The very concept of transitioning suggests that individuals experience an underlying and dynamic process of transformation – they begin to transition from their original incidental hybrid position towards becoming a willing hybrid academic manager. Thus, they do not feel dispirited by the managerial logic, but instead begin to incorporate its values and practices actively. As suggested earlier, my empirical data only supports this transition on a progressive continuum, but I speculate that hybrids may also experience the transition in reverse, that is moving from a willing hybrid position towards becoming incidental hybrids. Empirically, the reverse transition would particularly manifest itself in this strategy because individuals would begin to lose their courage and will to support the managerial logic, and therefore, feel dispirited.

The third strategy of compartmentalisation is only utilised in response to the managerial logic. As willing hybrid academic managers have a clear sense of their orientation towards increasing managerialism, they are least likely to compartmentalise their response. On the other end of the spectrum, my data shows that incidental hybrid academic managers do engage in compartmentalisation by wearing ‘different hats’. Similar remarks have been made in the literature arguing that, in order to prevent a potential identity violation, individuals may articulate socially desirable standpoints about management across time and/or space (Pache and Santos, 2013).

My data indicates that transitioning hybrid academic managers are most likely to compartmentalise their response because their orientation towards the role is currently in-flux and in a dynamic process of transformation. As they begin to transition from being incidental hybrid academic managers towards becoming willing hybrid academic managers, they may not have fully made sense of their ‘new’ self, and hence make contradictory statements.

Thus, transitioning hybrid academic managers engage in ‘identity work’ to manage the tensions between personal and professional identities, because in academia ‘it’s culturally unacceptable to express that you’re ambitious for power’ (Kreiner et al., 2006; McGivern et al., 2015; Chreim et al., 2007). As they still feel partially reluctant to articulate their favour for management, transitioning hybrid academic managers rather attempt to articulate a socially desirable standpoint to outsiders (Goffman, 1959).

Interestingly, the notion of ‘shame for power’ has also been noted by hybrid academic managers who engage in the reconciliation strategy to accept and educate the shifting institutional arrangements in Higher Education. These hybrid academic managers may have not fully incorporated the changing circumstances invoked by the managerial logic and, therefore, engage in ‘identity reconciliation work’ (Pratt et al. 2006; Glynn, 2008; Creed et al.

2010; McGivern et al., 2015). Identity reconciliation work is a form of institutional work, suggesting that individuals reformulate their own understanding of what constitutes ‘good’ (McGivern et al., 2015) professionalism by reformulating their position in the field.

My data shows that transitioning hybrid academic managers make repeated references to ‘admitting’ one’s positive standpoint towards management, signals that they have not fully internalised the values and norms of managerial logic and almost feel like engaging in ‘dirty work’ (Hughes, 1964). However, other individuals argue that by framing their hybrid role as an educator and supporter among other professionals, they create a condition that allows them to balance professionalism with non-traditional demands seemingly. As Figure 4 indicates, all three types of hybrid academic managers enact their role this way, following a logical continuum of hybridisation from incidental, to transitioning and to willing hybrid academic managers.

Taking this notion further, Noordegraaf (2015) suggests that public organisations, including Higher Education institutions, experience a hybridisation of professional work, whereby professional and managerial boundaries are blurred. In the context of British Higher Education, the managerial logic has been embraced, and to an extent even been enforced, for a long period of time. Arguably, it has almost been incorporated and thus institutionalised *alongside* the professional logic – moving towards a form of ‘hybrid professionalism’ (Noordegraaf, 2015: 6). As ‘management’ increasingly becomes a legitimate part in professional institutions, the debate has moved beyond an oppositional understanding of professionalism and managerialism to incorporate emerging hybrid professional work practices (ibid; McGivern et al., 2015; Farrell and Morris, 2003; Adler et al., 2008).

My findings complement these insights and demonstrate a detailed account of how hybrid academic managers engage in institutional work to combine the managerial logic with professionalism, thus creating a context of hybrid professionalism. Although all hybrid academic manager types have articulated some action to combine these logics, mostly willing hybrid academic managers purposefully engage in institutional work to create a context of hybrid professionalism (Noordegraaf, 2015).

For example, by being part of the ‘REF panel’, implementing ‘performance management’, even though there is little support from management and the Human Resources department’, or by using the ‘ABS list as a classic, bureaucratic’ mechanism, willing hybrid academic managers indicate how multiple logics are combined on the ground. In doing so, willing hybrid academic managers move beyond the traditional contradiction of professionalism and managerialism and demonstrate how ‘hybrid professionalism’ (Noordegraaf, 2007) might unfold at the micro-level of British Higher Education.

At this point, it is essential to emphasise the unique position of being a hybrid academic manager in Business Schools again. My data indicates that individuals regard the engagement in a hybrid academic manager role as an opportunity to explore ‘theoretical’ stimulating issues on a practical basis with regards to, ‘bureaucracy’, ‘power’, ‘money’ and ‘rules’ that are ‘all around you’. Because of their scholarly expertise, they feel an obligation to ‘walk the talk’, and ‘practice what you preach’ to ‘deliver what you have been researching all these years’. Interestingly, all three types of hybrid academic managers argued along these lines.

#### **6.1.3.2. The Consumer logic**

The consumer logic describes the conceptualisation of students as customers in the British Higher Education environment (Naidoo et al., 2011). The government rationale for introducing a consumerist framework can be linked to increasing student fees and the attempt to maintain quality in the sector as it has moved from an elite, to a mass system (Deem et al., 2007, Deem, 2004; Naidoo and Jamieson, 2005). This includes ‘mechanisms for greater choice and flexibility, information on academic courses through performance indicators, league tables and student satisfaction surveys, and the institutionalisation of complaints mechanisms’ (Naidoo et al., 2011: 1145).

Van Roon notes ‘European Schools see rankings as a valuable source of business intelligence, that can drive decision making aimed at developing school’s products and services’ (2003 cited in Thomas et al., 2013: 43). Given the great exposure to the international postgraduate market, my interviewees explained that the ‘slightest wobble’ in the league table rankings can make ‘£2 million disappear from your budget’ and ‘suddenly things aren’t so funny anymore’. Hybrid academic managers in my study acknowledge that they have to be attentive to these demands as a combination of ‘pricing, and league tables’ have a very direct impact on Business Schools performance and their standing in the industry. With an increasing emphasis on ‘image management’ (Thomas et al., 2013), most hybrid academic managers know that poor performance in league tables can lead to further challenges and, hence, invest much effort to avoid damageable pitfalls (Starkey and Tiratsoo, 2007; Espeland and Sauder, 2007).

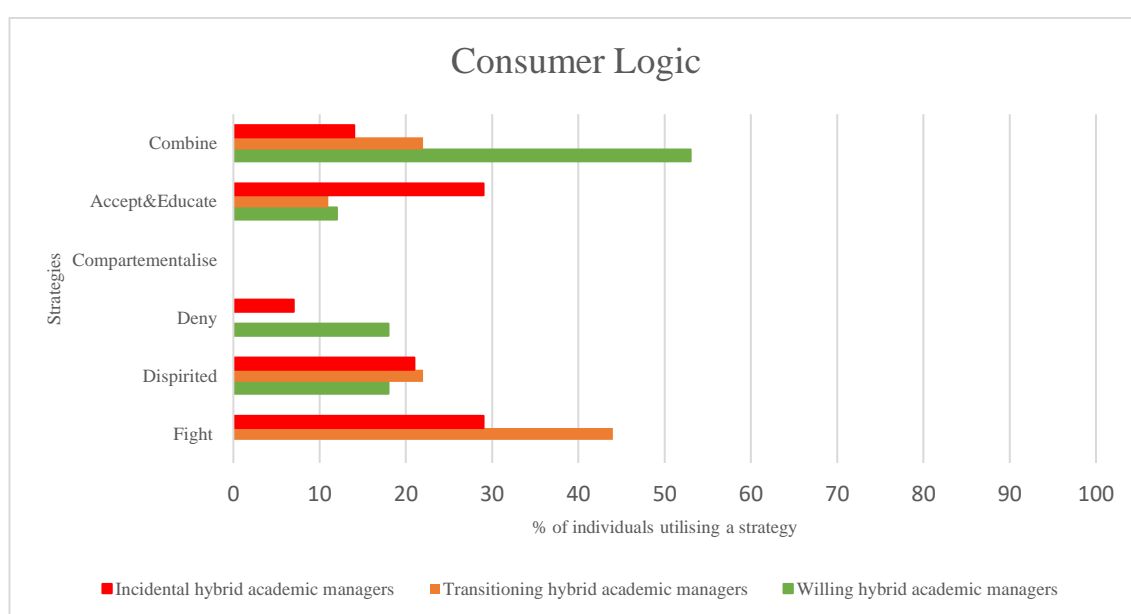
Despite the increasing theoretical and practical relevance of league tables in the UK, we have a very limited current understanding of how the consumerism of Higher Education unfolds on the ground. Most of the established literature enriches the discussion by providing an interesting account of consumerism from the students point-of-view (Wilkinson and Grisoni, 2005; Nixon et al., 2016). Despite this, there remains little empirical research that examines how the reconciliation of the consumer logic operates on the other side of the coin. My study addresses this gap by exploring how hybrid academic managers experience and reconcile the consumer logic. In doing so, my findings shed light on a neglected topic in the literature and provide a



detailed account of individual-level responses to increasing consumerism in the Business and Management field.

As noted earlier in relation to the managerial logic, my data suggests that hybrid academic managers utilise six individual-level responses (*fight*, *dispirited*, *deny*, *compartmentalise*, *accept and educate* and *combine*) to reconcile competing institutional logics. Again, I coded each interviewees engagement with the consumer logic according to these six strategies. It became evident that, in line with the argument made about the managerial logic, individuals may employ different strategies at different points in time, but my overall coding suggests that there was a consistent strategy that each individual used in response to the consumer logic. This is illustrated in the following figure 5:

**Figure 5: Reconciliation of the consumer logic across three hybrid academic manager types**



It becomes evident that there are substantial variations in the reconciliation of the consumer logic across different hybrid academic manager types, besides the fact that, in my study, no hybrid academic managers compartmentalised their response. This suggests that all individuals articulate and represent their clear standpoint without making contradictory statements about the consumer logic.

Most notably, willing hybrid academic managers acknowledge that the consumerism of Higher Education can easily be combined with academic professionalism. As the government has ‘flatlined’ the support for Higher Education over the last couple of years, mostly willing hybrid academic managers regard the development of the sector into an ‘industry’ as an inevitable part of the progress. Transitioning hybrid academic managers begin to adopt a similar standpoint by acknowledging that students are more demanding because ‘that’s the nature of

consumerism’ and ‘if we treated all students like students, we would go out of business tomorrow’. This is in line with earlier accounts in the literature suggesting that hybrid academic managers largely regard students ‘as a unit of resources, rather than an inevitable part of the academic community’ (Deem et al., 2007: 113; Johnson and Deem, 2003).

However, this viewpoint only offers a somewhat limited and one-sided discussion and does not account for further variation of individual-level responses. Several scholars in the literature have stressed the ‘emergence of a dominant idea that suggests getting a ‘good degree’ is an entitlement paid for by their fees’ (Molesworth et al., 2009: 279; Naidoo and Jamieson, 2005). This is consistent with my data as incidental academic managers who regard the ‘students-as-consumer’ conceptualisation as more critical and are, therefore, less likely to combine the consumer logic with professionalism.

Incidental hybrid academic managers in my study argue that ‘with the increasing tuition fees, attendance is definitely gone down, students make less of an effort’. Although this notion is somehow counter-intuitive, it offers thought-provoking insights. The discourse fosters a mode of existence, where ‘students seek to have a degree rather than to be learners’ and have somehow successfully reformulated this behaviour into the viewpoint that Higher Education is now their right (Molesworth et al., 2009: 277). However, learning and studying for a degree requires engagement of the student community (Hamm, 1989). Commitment and engagement ‘are critical – education is not a passive service’ but requires the student to contribute to the desired outcome (Guilbault, 2018: 297).

My data lends partial empirical support to this argument by showing that transitioning and incidental hybrid academic managers fight the increasing consumerism of Higher Education to protect their ‘professional integrity’. Hybrid academic managers utilise a mechanism of self-defence and communicate to students that they do not receive a ‘pre-packaged thing’ and ‘can’t be spoon-fed a degree’. They purposefully attempt to maintain the logic of professionalism and enforce the compliance of standards set by the University and not the students themselves.

Interestingly, my analysis indicates that not all hybrid academic managers retain their courage to fight and resist the consumer logic, however, almost the same proportion of all types of hybrid academic managers, simply feel dispirited to do anything against the increasing consumerism in British Higher Education. They believe that their action to fight the consumer logic will not make a difference because the whole sector ‘simply lost sight of students’. Others have simply given up trying because the rhetoric in the sector is changing. In the past, ‘if someone did mention students as customers [hybrid academic managers] would have to correct them as students. Now we no longer have that. Students are customers.’

It is widely acknowledged that marketisation is remodelling British Higher Education institutions (Nixon et al., 2016). Nevertheless, my findings suggest interesting insights by demonstrating that hybrid academic managers are still able to deny the increasing consumerism in the sector. The strategy of denial is only present in response to the consumer logic – it has not been utilised to reconcile the managerial or the commercial logic. It can be argued that the consumer logic has not been fully institutionalised into the Higher Education sector and hybrid academic managers might still be able to deny its influence up to a point. As discussed above, this response does not refer to the presence of the logic itself, but rather to its influence on professionalism. Hybrid academic managers do not attribute any changes to an increase in student demands but claim that they are simply ‘improving the services that are surrounding the product’, for ‘ourselves’ [the academics] and not for the ‘students’.

With an increasing level of performance enforcement, the strategy to deny the influence of increasing consumerism is most likely to change. The TEF, preliminary introduced in 2016, has fostered such developments. My data supports this argument as interviewees argue that the ‘assessment of teaching’ has become ‘more intrusive’. The market pushes for effective teaching methods, and students seek maximum outcomes for minimal input (Molesworth et al., 2009). This re-shifting of ‘power’ pushes academics into a mode where ‘they reluctantly give students what they need to pass, rather than encourage a reflective, critical orientation to the world’ as originally assumed in Higher Education studies (ibid: 283).

#### **6.1.3.3. The Commercial logic**

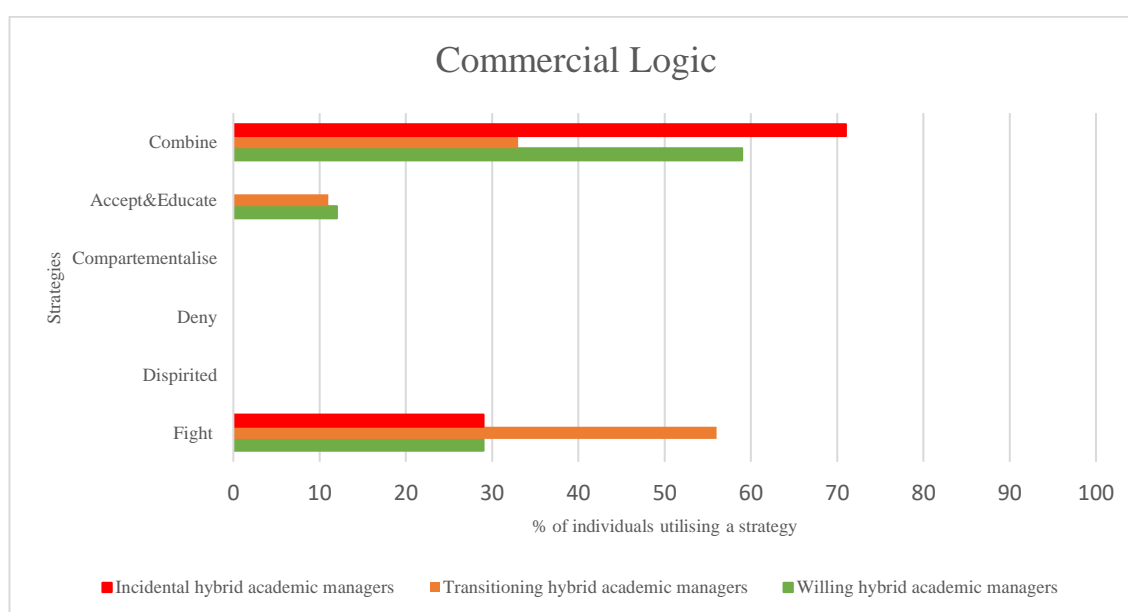
As the focus of funding transcends from the public to the private sector, universities, and Business Schools in particular, have become more dependent upon their responsiveness to commercial agendas (Willmott, 2003). The commercial logic describes a move towards the marketisation of Higher Education, which includes placing a greater emphasis on income generation, receiving research grants, doing consultancy work and engaging in the field of practice. In this regard, Robertson identifies a possible move away from ‘the production of knowledge based on institutionally constructed academic disciplines towards forms of production based on the application of knowledge to specific problems in specific social, economic, and commercial settings’ (2000 cited in Clough and Bagley, 2012: 179).

Promoters of the ‘third stream agenda’ argue that universities have adopted economic and social development as a new mission, in addition to their core activities of teaching and research (Clough and Bagley, 2012; D’Este and Perkmann, 2011; Etzkowity, 1998). Whilst some scholars take an optimistic standpoint by arguing that commercial activities encourage a culture of entrepreneurialism with financial and reputational benefits to universities and the state (ibid), others criticise a progressive tightening between research activities and ‘the needs of industry’ (Willmott, 2003: 130).

Implicit in this debate is that the role of Business School academics, and hybrid academic managers in particular, is shifting (D'Este and Perkmann, 2011). Yet, we know relatively little about how hybrid academic managers respond to the increasing commercialisation of Higher Education in the UK and lack a systematic and detailed analysis of individual-level responses.

My research addresses this gap, as it provides a more nuanced understanding of how hybrid academic managers experience and reconcile potential tensions between the academic and the commercial logic by demonstrating that individuals engage in various individual-level strategies (*'fight'*, *'dispirited'*, *'deny'*, *'compartmentalise'*, *'accept and educate'* and *'combine'*). Again, I coded each interviewees engagement with the commercial logic according to these six strategies. In line with the argument made about the managerial logic and the consumer logic, individuals may employ different strategies at different points in time, but the overall coding suggests that there was a consistent strategy that each individual utilised in response to the commercial logic. This is illustrated in the following figure 6:

**Figure 6: Reconciliation of the commercial logic across three hybrid academic manager types**



It becomes evident that the reconciliation strategies in response to the commercial logic demonstrates a great level of polarisation. Engagement in commercial activities is still considered to be relatively 'optional', as concrete enforcement strategies in the British Higher Education sector have not been introduced, yet. Consistent with this argument, my empirical data indicates that all three types of hybrid academic managers engage in relatively 'active' reconciliation responses, as no interviewee utilised the strategies of being dispirited, denying the logics influence, or compartmentalising ones response to the commercial logic. This suggests a high level of agency as hybrid academic managers actively interpret institutional

logics (Currie and Spyridonidis, 2015) and can, to a certain extent, decide whether they want to focus their attention on commercial activities.

Although the data indicates a clear pattern of responses, there are slight variations across the different hybrid academic manager types. Interestingly, mostly transitioning hybrid academic managers attempt to fight the commercialisation of knowledge by doing research in ‘small niches that do not have societal relevance’ or by trying to guarantee that they work with Business School Deans who ‘basically knew how to get long-term success, long-term growth, the kind of expansion that would last, that would be quality expansion’ rather than seeing the Business Schools as a ‘money-making machine’.

One possible explanation I propose is that transitioning hybrid academic managers experience a cognitive state of dissonance (Festinger, 1962) between different logics. Cognitive dissonance, as a state of mental conflict, occurs when individuals perceive that a pair of cognition is inconsistent (ibid; Van Lange et al., 2012). As Festinger argues ‘when dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance’ (1962: 3). Arguably, transitioning hybrid academic managers have already put considerable effort into making sense of the managerial logic and the consumer logic because of the explicit enforcement mechanisms in place. Therefore, they have little intention to increase the complexity of their role further by engaging in commercial activities. I theorise that they are compensating for that embracement by fighting the third and least institutionalised commercial logic, mostly through resistance.

To prevent a possible cognitive dissonance or overload by having to confront the new logic of commercialism as well, these transitioning hybrid academic managers are trying to protect themselves from further administrative burden. Because ‘I just felt like I had other things on my plate’ they attempt to actively resist the demands introduced by the commercial logic. Thus, to cope with the demanding process of transitioning, they attempt to focus their attention on core activities and avoid further complexity. In line with this reasoning, my data indicates that willing hybrid academic managers are eager to embrace more functional differentiation because they have already made sense of their identity transition. In contrast, incidental hybrid academic managers fight the increasing commercialisation of academic knowledge to maintain the professionalism in the field.

Yet, all hybrid academic manager types have a critical view of following the government’s requirement to show ‘a clear line between the research and some tangible outcome in the economy’. Particularly in the social sciences, impact is much more ‘intangible’ and should not be held against the same standards as ‘engineering’ or the ‘life sciences’ where ‘new modern molecules’ can easily be picked up by a ‘pharmaceutical company’.

On the contrary, other transitioning, incidental and willing hybrid academic managers do not support this perception by arguing that commercial activities can be fully combined with academic professionalism. They criticise that ‘Business Schools are too intellectually self-referential and pursue theory for its own sake’. As knowledge outcomes from STEM subjects are more ‘directly applicable’ for organisations, ‘Business Schools are kind of curiously less relevant for businesses’. This poses a potential threat to ‘the whole Business School enterprise and our legitimacy’. To counter this development, hybrid academic managers attempt to follow a ‘double-hurdle’. It is argued that ‘managerial research is capable’ of delivering ‘the highest possible scholarly quality and to have policy and practice impact’. Thus, academics should be highly involved in the field of practice and demonstrate their relevance to ‘society’.

Taking a closer look at the breath of the commercial logic, it becomes evident that there are considerable differences in the framings and channels of engagement among hybrid academic managers. Willing hybrid academic managers regard the commercialisation of knowledge as an inevitable responsibility of academics in the current Higher Education environment either by demonstrating the relevance of Business Schools to society or by engaging in profitable activities such as creating spin outs or working as a consultant alongside their academic career.

Interestingly, incidental hybrid academic managers are even more likely to combine commercialisation activities with their academic work, but they frame their motivation for the engagement around the job itself. They argue that it ‘makes the job more interesting’. Rather than ‘quibbling over how many hours people are allocated to do a task’ as part of their managerial responsibilities, they favour the ‘external politics’ and ‘looking at the strategic picture’. The different modes of working allow for a great level of ‘variety’ or the possibility to ‘give an example of our practice’ during teaching. Empirically, this is a significant development, because it suggests there are differences in interpretations of engagement and motivations among hybrid types. Whereas willing hybrid academic managers may simply recognise the commercialisation of knowledge as a necessity in today’s Higher Education ‘industry’, incidental hybrid academic managers might instead interpret commercial activities as a valuable balance to their managerial responsibilities.

D’Este and Perkmann argue that most academics are keen to retain their autonomy by ensuring that collaborative work and industry engagement is ‘conducive to – or at least compatible with – their research activities’ (2011: 332). The alignment between academic research and the commercialisation of knowledge unfolds in the reconciliation strategy of accept and educate. Consistent with these insights, my findings demonstrate that some willing and transitioning hybrid academic managers engage in collaborative work and commercial activities because it offers an opportunity to ‘empirically’ explore their motivation for organisational studies. They

argue that commercial engagement ‘needs to be driven by the activity’ and the ‘research we do’ and should strongly be informed by research-related motives (ibid).

Other willing and transitioning hybrid academic managers are not necessarily involved in commercial activities themselves, but still accept the growing responsibilities of demonstrating scholarly relevance outside of academia. They regard industry engagement as an activity that, given the extensive workload and the wide-ranging responsibilities as a hybrid academic manager, remains optional. By educating and ‘trying to enthuse people about what they might get out of grant capture’, individuals attempt to contribute to the department's financial success.

However, it can be speculated that the recent formation of the KEF, as well as the increasing emphasis on ‘impact’ in the REF, will lead to a shift in individual-level responses. The extreme polarisation of ‘optional engagement’ is most likely to decline. Once performance measurements are fully implemented and enforced, engagement in commercial activities might increase in importance, and hence the reconciliation towards this logic might change. This implies a shift in the role of hybrid academic managers (D’Este and Perkmann, 2011). The ability to engage in ‘blue-sky’ research might decrease over time and academics will need ‘to contribute to debates about the direction of society’ more clearly.

### Summary

It becomes evident hybrid academic managers experience competing institutional logics that often impose conflicting demands on their work (Pache and Santos, 2013). Yet, the absence of individuals in existing research on institutional complexity creates a theoretical gap in the literature (Bévort and Suddaby, 2016). There have been repeated calls to enrich our current understanding of the ‘many, complex and often creative ways in which individuals respond’ to multiple, contradictory logics (Thomas and Davies, 2005: 685; Bévort and Suddaby, 2016).

By addressing this gap, my thesis contributes to our current understanding of the micro-foundations of institutional theory. My research demonstrates how multiple non-conventional institutional logics are enacted discursively on the individual-level. In doing so, I contribute to our current body of knowledge as we currently lack a clear, understanding of how individuals translate logics into action as they engage in everyday activities, particularly in organisational environments that are located at the intersection of multiple institutional fields (Kraatz and Block, 2008). Thus, my thesis has explored how hybrid academic managers experience and respond to the tension between the professional, academic logic and multiple, non-conventional institutional logics in the sector.

First, this research demonstrated that hybrid academic managers employ a repertoire of six individual-level responses to engage in the reconciliation of contradictory institutional logics. This provides a nuanced and empirically-based account of individual-level responses and reflects the different forms of institutional work that hybrid academic managers utilise.

Secondly, this study has argued for a reconceptualization of the individual hybridisation dichotomy, by differentiating between incidental, willing and transitioning hybrid academic managers. I demonstrated that becoming a hybrid professional manager not necessarily begins with the conscious decision of an individual to willingly engage in a hybrid role, but rather involves an underlying, dynamic process of transformation.

Thirdly, I have provided an insightful analysis of how different patterns of individual-level responses vary across multiple institutional logics and across individual hybrid types. It becomes evident that there is an interesting correlation between the level of conformity and the stages of institutionalisation. Thus, hybrid academic managers do not reconcile different logics in a homogenous way, but arguably exhaust their level of agency in line with the level of enforcement of each institutional logic. This suggests an important development, because it reveals more complexity at the micro-level and contributes our current theoretical understanding of institutional complexity in the field of business and management education.

It should, however, be emphasised that these insights may similarly unfold in other settings and may be transferable to other higher education sectors around the world. Deem et al., (2007) argue that the desire of governments and universities to become a recognised global player means that similar policy initiative are taking place in many other countries as well. In more detail, the worldwide meanings that are attached to the public service higher education are in flux, especially in the context of competition in relation to the changing definitions and conceptions of knowledge as well as the reconsideration that public funding for higher education is no longer necessarily considered as a favourable thing (ibid). Thus, hybrid academic manager in other countries have to deal with similar tensions and conflicts and may, therefore, utilise similar strategies to reconcile multiple conflicting institutional logics.

Similarly, although this research has specifically focused on the context of higher education, numerous individuals outside academia may experience institutional complexity with similar tensions and a range of conflicts in their everyday work. Individuals may experience conflicts within other professions, specifically in other professionalised public service organisations. For example, my findings may explain how hybrid managers in healthcare, social care or education utilise different strategies to reconcile the tensions of multiple, conflicting institutional logics.



## \*\*\* 6.2. Practical Contributions \*\*\*

My findings also provide actionable insights for hybrid academic managers and policymakers alike. As argued above, policymakers could pay close attention to reshaping the linkage between teaching and research to avoid institutional contradiction within the professional work of academics. As Lord Stern (2016) has argued there is a great need for the REF and the TEF to have mutually reinforcing incentives, that is strengthening the vital relationship between teaching and research in British universities. This argument can also be extended to the introduction of future performance measurements such as the incoming KEF. It is important to ensure that the KEF and the ‘other legs of the accountability stool, the REF and the TEF’, will have compatible incentives to diminish further distortions of research behaviour and a greater division of the academic profession (Wayde, 2017).

My data indicates that several hybrid academic managers experience a ‘mismatch’ between the ‘incentives’, ‘the promotion mechanisms’, and ‘the work that we have to do’. Thus, ‘people stepped back’ because the ‘incentive mechanisms are completely misaligned with what’s required’. Given the current research-oriented environment universities place the greatest emphasis on rewarding ‘their research stars’. Thus, the engagement in a hybrid role redirects attention away from the activities that are valued the most – producing world class research (Jones, 2013b). In a ‘very material sense,’ it creates ‘massive holes’ in their CVs and, thus, discourages them to take on the role in the first place.

To address these concerns policymakers could, for example, develop an attractive incentive scheme that would make the hybrid academic manager role more appealing in the first place. As financial rewards alone do not appear to motivate professionals to engage in a hybrid role, practitioners could place a greater emphasis on personal development and improving the perceived status of hybrid academic manager roles. Recent research in the field of healthcare similarly suggests the importance of improving the career paths for medical hybrid professionals (Buchanan, 2013; McGivern et al., 2015).

Another option to address this issue could, for example, include reassessing the workload model, and the formal responsibility one individual holds while engaging in a hybrid academic manager role. As suggested earlier, transitioning hybrid academic managers might experience a state of cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1962), by confronting multiple non-traditional institutional logics simultaneously. Thus, hybrid academic managers who are responsible for recruitment and promotion procedures should be particularly attentive to the insights that further involvement of transitioning hybrid academic managers in a third, less regulated institutional logic might result in counterproductive consequences.

Additionally, a reassessment of the existing workload models in the sector could simply include sharing the role with another hybrid academic manager. Pragmatically speaking, splitting the position could either create a clear differentiation between various responsibilities, or it could lead to greater collaboration and teamwork. Although this is not a common approach in academia yet, a limited number of participants of this study were in a 'sharing position' and stressed the potential benefits of this model whereby, for example in the case of a Director of Research role, you can have the potential benefit of 'someone separate looking after REF, and [...] someone separate looking after grant capture'.

Nevertheless, this approach might lead to some unintended consequences. Personal disagreements between the sharing parties or conflicts on strategic decisions might bear a negative benefit-cost ratio. Thus, further research on how such a 'role sharing model' might become more acceptable and how the implementation might unfold on the ground is much needed. Yet, it can provide a practical solution to overcome and specifically tackle some negative aspects that individuals associate with taking a hybrid academic manager role.

Furthermore, policymakers and academic experts could, collectively, develop specialised training courses, such as seminars and workshops that adequately equip individuals for such demanding roles. These could cover a variety of practical issues such as 'using the appraisal process properly' or 'things like student recruitment numbers and planning and budgets' to develop 'practical skills that help you deal with the real-world processes'. It could also extend to the 'social and political side of the role', which is much more 'difficult'. Training and exploring 'whether they like dealing with people, whether they can deal with people' as well as focusing on 'counselling skills and very basic techniques' might be particularly helpful.

Training courses might not be limited to hybrid academic managers from Business Schools, but academic specialists in, for example, 'business, psychology, sociology and education all have the potential to contribute to management development programmes' (Waring, 2017: 553). Taking together individual experts from multiple disciplines and even institutions would allow for a well-rounded and insightful experience for potential hybrid academic managers to engage with peers even before taking the role itself. In line with this argument, Nicholson stresses that socialisation before and even after the role transitions affects how roles are enacted (1984 cited in McGivern et al., 2015: 427). The findings of this study provide empirical support for this claim. Hybrid academic managers often regarded 'socialising' and the 'people you meet', 'the experiences you share', 'the conversations you have' and the 'peer network you can develop' as the most 'valuable aspects' of training seminars.

Additionally, it would be particularly helpful to develop training courses that are specifically directed at potential transitioning hybrid academic managers. As this research suggests,

individuals are often ‘surprised’ by the positive aspects a hybrid academic manager position entails. For example, giving hybrid academic managers an opportunity to ‘have a say’ by being ‘part of the senior management team’, has been noted as a positive, yet surprising, element of the job. It would be particularly fruitful to address potentially unwarranted concerns about an individual’s ability to ‘actually do the job’. Transitioning hybrid academic managers repeatedly expressed self-doubt based on the notion that they ‘didn’t think [they] had it in [them]’. Specific training courses could provide exercises to build up the ‘confidence’ and ‘ego’ of individual hybrid academic managers more precisely to foster the process of transitioning.

Overall, this research not only advances our theoretical understanding of the phenomenon, but also adds valuable practical insights for policymakers and hybrid academic alike. To address the associated negative aspects of the role, it may be particularly helpful to move beyond our current, somewhat static viewpoint of hybrid academic manager roles towards offering more flexibility, for example by making the ‘role sharing model’ more prominent. Similarly, it may be particularly fruitful to revise the existing training and networking opportunities offered. This not only includes technical guidance about the job itself but should also be extended towards the coaching of soft skills, socialising, and self-esteem. The associated benefits of having ‘appropriately trained and more emotionally aware’ (Waring, 2017: 553) hybrid academic managers are obvious and provide the conditions to potentially increase the prevalence of willing and transitioning hybrids in academia.

### **\*\*\* 6.3. Future Research \*\*\***

This study provides a maximal openness for further research (Patriotta, 2017). By proposing several avenues for future research, I invite further questioning and exploration to advance our understanding of how hybrid academic managers engage in the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics. For example, it would be interesting to explore how the reconciliation of logics operates on ‘the other side of the equation – namely, the top leadership of the University itself’ (Thomas et al., 2013: 53). This research has provided a comprehensive study of how hybrid academic managers inside Business and Management Schools engage in the reconciliation of institutional logics. However, as a future avenue of research, it is arguably equally important to explore how other key hybrid academic managers inside Universities reconcile multiple institutional logics. As Thomas and colleagues (2013) suggest, the leadership of the University may simply have no choice, but to treat Business Schools as cash cows, as the overall financial situation may dictate this. Given our current, limited knowledge base on the reconciliation of logics across different ranks of hybrid academic managers, research directed towards this domain would be highly fruitful.

Similarly, following Scott's insight that 'organisations are opportunistic collections of divergent interests', it would be most valuable to explore how hybrid academic managers in different academic departments engage in the reconciliation of institutional logics (1967: 23; Binder, 2007). Hybrid academic managers in this study have often made comparable remarks to colleagues 'in history or physics'. This might reveal astonishing differences and further enhances our current understanding of the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics in academia as a whole.

It would also be interesting to explore and compare hybrid academic managers in Business and Management Schools with hybrids in other departments that also place a high emphasis on the commercialisation of their academic knowledge. A comparison between Medical Schools and Business Schools might be particularly insightful (Ferlie et al., 2010). Although both disciplines have experienced increasing commercialisation of academic knowledge in their field, there are arguably fundamental differences in the way in which hybrid academic managers reconcile multiple institutional logics. One thought-provoking aspect might be the difference in costs of educating a medical student in comparison to a business and management student. Given the embeddedness of both departments within the broader institution, the issue of 'cross-subsidising' comes to the fore. It would be particularly interesting to explore how this aspect unfolds on the ground and how hybrid academic managers in both Schools reconcile this tension. Although my research has provided a first insight on 'one side of the coin', further research within other academic departments is clearly warranted.

Future research could additionally explore the progressive hybridisation (Noordegraaf, 2007) of transitioning hybrid academic managers to develop a more nuanced understanding of the concept. The growing prevalence of willing hybrids, in academia and other professional contexts such as healthcare, may indicate that management is increasingly considered to be a legitimate sub-speciality within professional organisations (McGivern et al., 2015). McGivern et al., stress that 'empirically, this is an important development, which extends earlier research on hybrids' (2015: 426; McDonald et al., 2009; Currie et al., 2012).

However, as the findings of this study and other research indicates, the maintenance of institutionalised professionalism remains powerful (McGivern et al., 2015). As discussed earlier, I speculate that the transitioning hybrid academic manager might not only unfold on an upward continuum, that is moving from an incidental position towards becoming a willing hybrid academic manager, but also in reverse. Professionals might willingly engage in a hybrid academic manager role, but over time move towards becoming an incidental hybrid academic manager. Thus, it would be interesting to explore whether the process of 'transitioning' might also occur in a contrary way – that is from being a willing hybrid towards being in an incidental hybrid position.

Future studies might explore the motives of this transitioning process to theorise how it unfolds on the ground. However, given the fact that this concept is a novel contribution to the literature of individual hybridisation and has not been discussed in earlier studies, more research is needed to examine the concept of ‘transitioning hybrids’ among a wider and purposefully selected sample of hybrid professionals, for example in healthcare, social care or law.

Lastly, I encourage future research to look at how multiple individual-level responses to competing logics ultimately aggregate to the organisational-level of analysis. Similar calls have previously been made in the literature (Pache and Santos, 2013). For example, future research could explore how the reconciliation of institutional logics operates across different status organisations. According to Racko et al., ‘status differentiation represents hierarchical positioning of actors based on accumulated acts of deference’ and can, in the case of academic organisations, ‘be derived from their positioning in University research rankings or league tables’ (2017: 5; Sauder et al., 2012; Sauder, 2008).

Thus, by focusing on the recent REF results (% of 4-star research activities) as a proxy indicator for status (Sauder, 2008), I suggest clustering the organisational sample into three categories: ‘low-ranked Schools’, ‘middle-ranked Schools’, and ‘high-ranked Schools’. A similar status metric has been used in previous research (Racko et al., 2017; Sauder, 2008).

Prior research in the field suggests the notion of ‘middle-status conformity’ meaning that conformity is high in the middle yet low at the top and the bottom of the status hierarchy (Phillips and Zuckerman, 2001). Hence, a series of studies have produced an inverted U-shaped relationship between status and non-conformity arguing that professionals at both higher and lower status organisations are equally likely to engage in non-conventional work (Dittes and Kelley, 1956; Phillips and Zuckerman, 2001).

This is based on the argument that, on the one hand, higher status organisations are endowed with the authority to revise existing institutional arrangements, without the fear of losing their legitimacy (Racko et al., 2017; Sherer and Lee, 2002). On the other hand, lower status organisations are excluded from the reproduction of institutional arrangements and are less likely to value participation in them (Phillips and Zuckerman, 2001; Racko et al., 2017). According to Racko et al., lower status organisations ‘are often disadvantaged by existing institutional arrangements and may have little to lose by engaging in work that diverges from the institutional status quo’ (2017: 5; Kraatz and Zajac, 1996). Hence, it is the middle-ranked organisations that are most likely to conform (ibid; Phillips and Zuckerman, 2001).

Consistent with these insights, future researchers could explore how different pattern of responses emerge depending on the institutional logic in question. In particular, it would be interesting to obtain a more nuanced understanding of the phenomena by exploring the degree

to which status influences the adoption of non-conventional logics - an issue that has previously been overlooked by assuming uniform responses to multiple institutional logics. It would advance the homogenous explanation of status and conformity proposed in the literature and suggests a development of existing theory to incorporate the degree to which status influences the adoption of non-conventional logics. This will hopefully stimulate more theoretical and empirical discussions about how the reconciliation of institutional logics operates across different status organisations.

### Summary

Overall, my research offers several avenues for future research. I argued to advance our current understanding of how hybrid academic managers engage in the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics even further. This might either be accomplished by looking at different ranks of hybrid academic managers (e.g. at the University-level) or by comparing and exploring the reconciliation strategies of hybrid academic managers in different departments. This argument is in line with existing research in the literature emphasising ‘Medical Schools as a potential comparator’ to Business and Management Schools (Ferlie et al., 2010: 61).

I encourage additional research to explore the concept of the transitioning hybrid academic manager that has been originally suggested here. I propose examining whether the process of transitioning only occurs in a progressive direction or whether, as I speculate, it might also happen in reverse, that is moving from being a willing hybrid towards being in an incidental hybrid position.

Finally, I have offered a first attempt to understand how my findings could be aggregated to the organisational-level of analysis. By bridging the gap between the individual and the organisational-level of analysis, scholars would address repeated calls to focus on cross-level research in institutional theory (Battilana, 2011). I hope this brief discussion on future research offers new inspirations for additional studies in the field.

## Chapter 7: Conclusion

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This research has enriched our understanding on institutional complexity and advanced the theoretical insights on the micro-foundations of institutional theory. To this end, the thesis has examined how hybrid academic managers in British Business and Management Schools experience and reconcile the tensions of multiple, conflicting institutional logics. This chapter will now summarise the most important aspects of this research and iterate how it has advanced our current understanding of institutional complexity in the field of business and management education.

Professional public service organisations in the UK have been subject to various modernisation endeavours by the government. Specifically, these changes include fundamental shifts on how academic work is perceived and assessed, how the sector is run and who has access to Higher Education (Deem et al., 2007). The introduction of the managerial logic stresses the importance of public accountability of academics to increase the quality and productivity of the Higher Education sector. Similarly, a greater emphasis on quasi-market mechanisms has led to considerable changes in the field. Academics have to increasingly demonstrate the impact of their research to external organisations and society as a whole. Furthermore, the rapid expansion of Higher Education from an elite to a mass system as well as the introduction of tuition fees has considerably shifted the educational narrative towards seeing students as customers (Deem, 2004; Deem et al., 2007).

Thus, it becomes evident that the field of Higher Education experiences competing institutional logics that often impose conflicting demands on organisational members (Pache and Santos, 2013). Yet to this date, most research has focused on organisational-level responses to contradictory pressures and neglect how local actors experience and manage this complex terrain (McPherson and Sauder, 2013; Kraatz and Block, 2008). We currently lack a clear, understanding of how individuals translate logics into action as they engage in everyday activities – particularly in organisational environments that are located at the intersection of multiple institutional fields (ibid).

The absence of individuals in existing research on institutional complexity creates a theoretical gap in the literature (Bévort and Suddaby, 2016). There have been repeated calls to enrich our current understanding of the ‘many, complex and often creative ways in which individuals respond’ to multiple, contradictory logics (Thomas and Davies, 2005: 685; Bévort and Suddaby, 2016). By addressing this gap, my thesis contributes to our current understanding of the micro-foundations of institutional theory. It has explored the empirical context of academia, and British Business and Management Schools in particular. This research has

explored how hybrid academic managers engage in the reconciliation of multiple, conflicting institutional logics. I examined the ‘important, yet often invisible institutional work’ (Currie et al., 2012: 938) carried out by hybrid academic managers to provide empirical insights into how institutional complexity is managed in everyday practices and how logics are invoked on the ground. Thus, my study makes three valuable contributions to the literature stream on institutional complexity at the micro-level of analysis.

First, my research advances Pache and Santos’ (2013) model, which argues that individual responses to competing logics are driven by their degree of adherence to each logic and the degree of hybridisation of the context. To my knowledge, this thesis has been the first attempt in the literature to enhance their model. I lend empirical support to their conceptualisation but offer a more detailed and fine-grained account by exploring how individual hybrid academic managers reconcile multiple institutional logics in the field of business and management education. My findings advance their conceptualisation, not only by specifically examining a professional context with a high degree of hybridisation, but also by exploring how hybrid academic managers respond to three institutional logics simultaneously. This modifies and extends Pache and Santos’ model (2013) empirically. I identify six individual-level responses that hybrid academic managers utilise to reconcile competing institutional logics, demonstrating a richer and more nuanced understanding at the micro-level of analysis.

My thesis responds to Pache and Santos’ (2013) calls stressing that the current literature needs to have a more nuanced understanding of the micro-level work that individuals engage in. As their model remains silent about the way in which individuals draw upon institutional work and identity work it only offers a limited account about the implementation of individual responses. My research addresses this shortcoming by providing a detailed analysis of how individuals reconcile multiple institutional logics by implementing the responses into their everyday work activities.

Further, this study advances our current understanding of individual hybridisation. The extant literature differentiates between ‘incidental hybrids’ who represent and protect traditional professionalism while only temporarily in hybrid roles, and ‘willing hybrids’ who use and integrate managerialism and professionalism (McGivern et al., 2015). My research lends empirical support to McGivern et al., (2015) from the field of academia, but advances their insights further. I suggest a state of progressive hybridisation (Noordegraaf, 2007), whereby hybrid academic managers move from their original incidental position towards becoming willing hybrid academic managers. My thesis argues that becoming a hybrid academic manager does not necessarily begins with a conscious decision, but rather involves as an underlying process of transformation. This *transitioning hybrid* type provides a more dynamic picture of individual hybridisation at the micro-level than initially assumed in previous studies.



Third and lastly, my research takes this line of thought further and discusses how the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics varies across these three different hybrid types. I provide an insightful analysis of how different patterns of individual-level responses emerge across the managerial logic, the consumer logic and the commercial logic. It demonstrates that the notion of institutional complexity is not a 'given' but should rather be regarded as a constructed and subjective framing. My data indicates that institutional actors are active participants in interpreting institutional pluralism (Currie and Spyridonidis, 2015). Thus, rather than responding to different logics in a homogeneous way, individuals exploit their level of agency differently according to the level of institutionalisation of each logic. Empirically, this suggests an important development because it reveals more complexity at the micro-level by demonstrating an interesting correlation between the individual-level response of hybrid academic managers and the level of enforcement of a given institutional logic.

Nevertheless, the current study is not without limitations. For example, this research did not account for all possible logics that hybrid academic managers might have to respond to. The field of academia is constantly changing and evolving, which might introduce different institutional logics into the context over time. For example, the Higher Education sector is currently undergoing significant technological developments, with a rapid expansion of online education (Nicol, 2016). Similar remarks can be made in reference to other institutional logics that are constantly growing in importance, such as social and gender equality in the workplace, or institutional logics of culture and religion fuelled by increasing globalisation. Hybrid academic managers have to respond to these changes and acknowledge that these institutional logics may introduce new opportunities and challenges into their everyday work. Thus, this thesis did not aim to provide a definite and all-encompassing account of the institutional context of Higher Education, but rather a nuanced analysis of the different individual-level strategies that hybrid academic managers utilise to reconcile the tensions between the academic, professional logic and the three prevailing institutional logics in the sector.

In doing so, I expanded our current theoretical understanding of institutional complexity at the micro-level of analysis. As recent government policies initiating private sector styles of working have altered the conventional professional orientations of Higher Education institutions, and Business and Management Schools in particular. As a response, they started to incorporate managerial thinking and market mechanisms into their core vision (Thomas et al., 2013). Hence, the sector experiences complex tensions between the traditional institutional logic of academic professionalism and the constant reconfiguration of institutional boundaries.

The institutional environment of British Higher Education is changing, and Business and Management Schools are increasingly re-positioning themselves within the academic field. Given the institutional pluralism of the modern British Higher Education context, hybrid

academic managers have to engage in the reconciliation of multiple institutional logics simultaneously. These pressures have significantly reshaped how hybrid academic managers position themselves in the field and how they conduct their day-to-day work. My research has provided empirical and theoretical evidence by demonstrating how hybrid academic managers experience and reconcile the tension of institutional complexity to better understand the changing nature of British Business and Management education.

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# Appendices

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## Appendix 1: Research Information Sheet



### **Research Information Sheet**

#### **Exploring how hybrid academic managers utilise different individual-level strategies to reconcile the tensions of multiple, conflicting institutional logics.**

I invite you to be interviewed as part of my Ph.D. research project. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. If there is anything that is not clear, please do not hesitate to ask me for further clarification.

#### **What is this research about?**

This research aims to examine the experiences of how hybrid academic managers utilise different individual-level strategies to reconcile the tensions of multiple, conflicting institutional logics. It will explore how interview participants experience their hybrid academic manager role to examine how multiple non-conventional institutional logics are enacted discursively on the individual-level.

#### **How will your data be used?**

I would like to audio record and transcribe your interview to enable me to better analyse these data later on. I will follow ethical practice in doing so. All information that you provide will be handled in strict confidence and will be stored securely on a password protect computer and destroyed after ten years.

I will analyse and report (anonymised) findings as part of my Ph.D. research project. I also plan to use the data for future publications and conference presentations. Brief extracts and quotes from your interview may be reproduced in my Ph.D. thesis or in future academic publications and presentations. All findings will be anonymised to ensure that no individual or organisation can be identified.

#### **What should you do if you have any questions or concerns about this research?**

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please do not hesitate to contact me via E-mail: s.behrens@warwick.ac.uk or phone: +44 (0) 7453328179. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time, although I will be unable to withdraw any information that has already been analysed and reported. If you wish to withdraw from this study, please contact me using the contact details above.

Should anyone have any complaints relating to a study conducted at the University or by Warwick University's employees or students, the complainant should be advised to contact University of Warwick Research and Impact Service, details as below:

University of Warwick Research and Impact Service, University House, University of Warwick, CV4 8UW Coventry, Telephone: +44 (0) 24765745732



## Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form



**WARWICK**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

### **Participant Consent Form**

#### **Exploring how hybrid academic managers utilise different individual-level strategies to reconcile the tensions of multiple, conflicting institutional logics.**

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in my study. If you have read the Research Information Sheet and understand and agree with its content fully, please complete and sign two copies of this form. Please give one copy to the researcher and keep one for your own record.

Please indicate with a tick your agreement (or disagreement) with the following:

Yes      No

- I understand the nature and purpose of the study:
- I have had the opportunity to discuss the study with the researcher:
- I understand that the interview will be recorded and transcribed, and that I may request to see the transcript for further clarification if needed:
- I understand that the content of the interview will be confidential, and solely accessed in its original form by the researcher:
- I understand that I can withdraw at any time from the research up to the point my data has been formally reported, even after the interview has started, without giving a reason, by contacting the researcher:
- I understand that brief, anonymous extracts from the interview may be reproduced in the Ph.D. thesis, academic publications and presentations:

I wish to take part in this study.

Participant signature:

Date:

Participant name:

Researcher signature:

Date:

Researcher name: