Art and design course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum and the implications of these approaches for students

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This thesis results entirely from my own work and has not been offered previously for any other degree or diploma.

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Abstract

The higher education art and design curriculum is often discussed in terms of change and development both in literature and university initiatives. However, the different approaches to the art and design curriculum are often not evident in these discussions. My study offers a model whereby the curriculum might be presented and discussed.

My study integrated two stages of analysis to investigate the art and design curriculum. The first considered the pivotal role of academic course leaders to the curriculum, an under researched factor. Using phenomenography as a research design I interviewed twenty academic course leaders to constitute the variations in perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum. The second stage used literature on the higher education curriculum. Analysing this literature I established five distinct curriculum perspectives, each offering a different view of academics, knowledge and students in the curriculum. Integrating these curriculum perspectives I developed a curriculum perspectives framework that enabled me to analyse the variation in course leaders' approaches to the curriculum for their benefits, limitations and implications for students.

I find course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum constitute five variations ranging from the curriculum as the control of content and projects, to the curriculum as a complex conversation in which students and staff as a community have agency. The latter suggests new opportunities for co-construction of the curriculum. My analysis of this variation suggests these variations should be seen as hierarchically inclusive. This means the most advanced approach to the curriculum is inclusive of all the others, primarily because in a mass higher education sector with a diverse student body, to enable student agency it is critical to give access to knowledge. Finally, I present a Curriculum Approaches Model that offers a view of the curriculum for those seeking to develop or enhance curriculum practices.

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1 Chapter 1 Introduction

Higher education academics' conceptions or perceptions of the curriculum are key to the ways in which the curriculum is shaped. Course leaders, academics that lead a course of study, are particularly pivotal in the curriculum. Academics' conceptions or conceptualisations of the curriculum, found in empirical research or literature, are sometimes presented as incrementally progressive. This progression is represented theoretically in a linear model from product to process to praxis or from control to emancipation. My concern regarding these theoretical representations is similar to Grundy's (1987) concern that curriculum theories can often focus on either the 'foundations' or the 'structure' of the curriculum, but often do not focus on both. Reviewing literature on the higher education curriculum offering different views of the curriculum I develop a framework to analyse the variation in academics' approaches of the curriculum. This led me to consider whether any variation in academics' conceptions and approaches to the curriculum are more complex than suggested by these linear models and how I could provide a better model. This is the main contribution of my study to new knowledge.

1.1 Aims and rationale

The aim of my study is to research A&D course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the HE curriculum and analyse the implication of these approaches for students. The rationale for my study is, by analysing the A&D course leaders' curriculum approaches I offer a model by which those seeking to change or develop the A&D curriculum might consider it.

A&D course leaders are critical in the designing, delivering, enacting, enhancing, developing (additional verbs discussed Chapter 3) curriculum, which provides the context for student learning. In literature this aspect of the course leader is underdeveloped as there is a greater emphasis on generic leadership and management skills, discussion on the curriculum is largely absent. I argue A&D course leaders' approaches are critical as they have implications for students' relationship to the curriculum in terms of the ways they are seen and enabled to attend, participate, engage or have agency.

The A&D HE curriculum is discussed as a site in need of social, political, technological, environmental or ethical change, development or enhancement. Whilst recognising the importance of these concerns, I have become increasingly aware of the curriculum being the silent partner in these discussions. Through my study I propose a model by which A&D curriculum approaches might be discussed, developed and enhanced. By focusing on A&D course leaders and the curriculum I seek to add to the literature on the A&D course leader and the A&D HE curriculum.

1.2 Context of research study

My study takes place within three small UK A&D colleges (around 1500 students each) all part of the same university. In this context the course structure of undergraduate study has remained within the traditional model of a single named course made up of units, rather than for example a programme of core and elective units.

In the three A&D colleges there are multiple types of university staff engaging with the A&D curriculum including academics, technicians, administrators,

technologists, managers, educational developers, library staff and building staff. However, from my experience there is a group of academics that are pivotal in leading teams through the planning, designing, organising, delivering, enacting, development of the curriculum, these are the course leaders.

The twenty course leaders participating in my study each lead a disciplinary specific course within the A&D subject (QAA, 2017). These include design courses (graphic design, interior design, theatre design, textile design, illustration, product design) and art courses (fine art, painting, sculpture, photography). The use of the terms ‘discipline’ and ‘subject’ in A&D is far from consistent. For example, Shreeve and Sims (2008) describe A&D as a discipline that is divided into professional spheres and subjects whilst the UK Quality Assurance Agency of Higher Education (QAA, 2017) describe the A&D subject divided by disciplines, this topic is further discussed in Chapter 3. For my study I will use the QAA (2017) A&D subject divided by disciplines

The UK A&D HE curriculum can be seen as a form of practice-based, vocational, professional, disciplinary, enquiry-led or problem-based education. It has complex roots in the history of the A&D colleges, the binary HE system (1965 – 1992) and the current mass HE sector. This means the A&D curriculum is a complex site where different imperatives and tensions often compete for recognition in the curriculum. Within the A&D curriculum these imperatives and tensions include the relationship of theory and practice, the role of A&D disciplinary skills (often expressed as technical skills) and the relationship to new technologies. Within the context of the A&D curriculum in a mass HE university these imperatives and tensions include the diversification

of the student body, new audit mechanisms, notions of generic or transferable skills, graduate attributes and capabilities and the introduction of a formal research culture.

I have been involved with the A&D curriculum as a student and academic for over thirty-five years. For the past five years, as Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching I have become aware many aspects of my work in relation to what are often articulated as teaching and learning initiatives that would be better addressed at a curriculum level (Barnett and Coate, 2005). Additionally, A&D educational research is similar to that in broader HE where the focus tends to be on teaching and learning rather than the curriculum (Tight, 2012). This means there is little A&D educational research explicitly linking with broader HE curriculum literature. Examples that are contrary to this include Orr and Shreeve (2017) who conceptualise of the A&D curriculum as a 'sticky curriculum', Houghton (2016, 2008) disciplinary perspectives on the Art curriculum and Blair et al. (2008) who call for an inter-disciplinary A&D curriculum. There is also a larger body of literature on A&D pedagogy that despite not explicitly referring to curriculum has relevance. This literature is drawn upon within my review of HE curriculum literature. What is absent from literature is research into the A&D curriculum that seeks to investigate the different approaches taken by academics. This is problematic as whilst there is a body of educational research and university initiatives calling for curriculum change there is insufficient educational research, and hence knowledge, on the A&D curriculum per se.

1.3 Chapters and research questions

Following this chapter (Chapter 1), I review literature on the course leader finding a lack of literature discussing or theorising the relationship between the course leader and the curriculum (Chapter 2). As course leaders are academics leading courses, I choose to review literature discussing academics and the curriculum (Chapter 3). I find in my review that how the relationship between the academic and curriculum is viewed is dependent on the particular perspective of the curriculum literature. Establishing five curriculum perspectives I discuss the relationship of the academic to the curriculum. From the first of these, 'factors shaping the curriculum' I establish there are a large number of factors shaping the curriculum, one of which is the academic. I also establish the academic is also often key in filtering, translating and shaping the other curriculum factors. This leads me to develop my first research question:

RQ1: What are the variations in art and design course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum?

To answer this question, I discuss my choice of phenomenography as a research design (Chapter 4). I collect data by interviewing twenty A&D course leaders and through analysis constitute five variations in course leaders' perceptions of, and five variations in course leaders' approaches to the curriculum (Chapter 5).

Through my continued review of the curriculum perspectives, I find each offers insight into the academic, the role of knowledge and the relationship of students to the curriculum. By integrating these findings I develop a

‘curriculum perspectives framework’ formed from two axes. One axis of recontextualised knowledge practices which represents opportunities for students to bear their personal knowing and a second axis representing control to agency of students within the curriculum. Considering my ‘curriculum perspectives framework’ in relation to the A&D course leaders’ approaches to the curriculum I define my second research question.

RQ2: What are the benefits, limitations and implications for students of the variation in course leaders’ (and course team) approaches to the curriculum?

To answer this second research question, I use my ‘curriculum perspectives framework' to analyse and discuss the variation in course leaders’ approaches to the curriculum (Chapter 6). From this I present a ‘Curriculum Approaches Model’ offering a more complex, yet comprehensible view of the A&D curriculum approaches. My study takes place within a specific A&D context and although I make no claim for generalisability, the ‘Curriculum Approaches Model’ and other findings may have relevance to discussions or research in other A&D contexts or within other disciplines.

2 Chapter 2 Art and design course leaders

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I discuss research into course leaders, the academics leading higher education (HE) courses. Looking at A&D course leaders, I then consider research on course leaders more generally. Establishing the nomenclature used to describe the academic leading an HE course of study, I then discuss two strands of literature, the first seeking to develop an understanding of course leaders and a second seeking to develop course leaders. I identify a gap in literature on course leaders and the curriculum.

2.2 Art and Design course leaders

A&D HE academics are often appointed from those with an active A&D professional practice, unlike many university disciplines where a PhD and research profile are a more likely progression to an academic post. This affects the academic identity of A&D academics, more likely to identify as professional ‘practitioners’ than ‘academics’ (Sabri, 2010). This is beginning to change with the development of the A&D PhD (Elkins, 2009), although this can be contentious (Elkins, 2009; Mottram, 2009). A&D professional practice and its relationship to teaching practices of A&D academics has been researched and theorised by Thornton (2013), Daichendt (2010) and Shreeve (2008). Although all are important texts these do not tend to focus on the curriculum contexts in which these A&D academics teach. In A&D HE these contexts might be defined as the course, units/modules or what is loosely called the curriculum. A&D course leaders are academics who have transitioned from A&D practitioner teachers having applied and been

appointed to lead the course. This means their identity from A&D 'practitioner' to A&D 'practitioner teacher' (Shreeve, 2008) or A&D 'practitioner teacher researcher' (Thornton, 2013) has a further career step to A&D 'practitioner teacher researcher leader', this means they are likely to view their identities as 'blended professionals' (Skelton, 2012).

Undertaking searches of Google scholar and scopus using the term 'course leader' (and the other nomenclatures discussed) combined with 'Art and Design', 'Art' and 'Design' I found no articles specifically regarding A&D course leaders. In terms of books there is only the Q-Arts publication of the transcriptions of interviews with course leaders (Rowles, 2011) that offers no analysis of the data. I also found in reviewing A&D educational literature more generally that course leaders are rarely mentioned. Yet A&D course leaders have a pivotal position in relation to A&D HE, particularly in relation to the curriculum.

2.3 Research into course leaders

The HE course or programme leader is little researched or defined (Lawrence et al., 2018). Literature available on course or programme leaders can be considered in two strands. Firstly, a strand of literature that develops an understanding of course or programme leaders (Antoniadou et al., 2018; Vilkinas and Cartan, 2015; Mitchell, 2015; Murphy and Curtis, 2013; Milburn, 2010; Krause et al., 2010; Mercer, 2009; Blackmore et al., 2007). Secondly, a strand of literature on ways the course leaders or programme leaders might be supported and developed (Lawrence and Ellis, 2018; van Veggel, 2017; Cahill et al., 2015; Clarke et al., 2011). Before discussing these two stands it is important to clarify the nomenclature of course leader and programme

leader. Mitchell (2015) writing on the 'programme leader' identifies a number of different terms that are used, listing course director, programme director, programme convenor, programme co-ordinator and course leader. In my analysis of the top twenty UK A&D courses from the 'Complete University Guide' (2018) I found that the title of the person identified on the course website as overseeing the course or programme was course leader (7), programme director (6), programme leader (3), programme manager (2) course director (1), unidentifiable (1). Senior (2018) in referring to this range of titles suggests the preferred nomenclature within HE literature, particularly within the UK, is programme leader. Senior (2018) clarifies programme leaders are 'academic staff who hold primary responsibility for managing and overseeing the delivery of whole degree programme(s) within a Higher Education Institution' (p.11). One of the reasons for the variety of nomenclature lies in the multiple ways in which HE courses can be constructed in the UK. For example, where a student has options of different units or modules across university departments a course may not have a single leader. In my study within three A&D colleges, there are no optional units and course leaders are responsible for the entirety of a student's HE course. This means course leaders in my study may have a slightly more important role in relation to the curriculum than in other contexts. Another reason for the use of 'course leader' may be the scale of the HE institution, van Veggel and Howlett's (2018) review of literature on course leadership located within small specialist UK HE institutions (defined by Bhardwa, 2017) uses the nomenclature of 'course leader'. This is consistent with the A&D colleges in my study, each small and specialist. So in terms of definition, the

course leader is the academic holding primary responsibility for leading and managing a whole degree course (or similar). In the context of my study this includes managing the team of academics who work on the course, although in the HE sector course leaders do not always manage other academics. Using this definition, I use literature discussing the course leader, even if a different nomenclature is used. For the purposes of clarity and consistency, the term course leader will be used in place of all other titles.

2.4 Course leaders

In relation to understanding course leaders, literature tends to focus on: the ill-defined nature of the role; the management of others; the demands and effectiveness of leadership and the administrative burden. Additionally, Milburn (2010) recognises explicitly the importance of course leaders on the quality of student learning and programme innovation. Course leaders have:

> a unique and influential role in providing the academic leadership, their influence arising out of the uniqueness of their substantial position at the interface between the university and work environment and the need to ensure institutional policy directives are translated into effective education within the curriculum. (Milburn, 2010, p.88)

It is this 'translation' of policy within the curriculum that is of relevance and how these translations might be affected by course leader perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum. Importantly, Milburn (2010) recognises course leaders have a 'critical point of influence' that is overlooked and underdeveloped in literature. Milburn's (2010) analysis of current role descriptors finds the central functions of the role are 'academic leadership', 'curriculum innovation' and 'accountability for the delivery and quality of the

programme' (p.89). In interviews with 12 academics, he found 'academic leadership' was seen as 'research and scholarly activity', as 'purely functional and managerial' and as providing a 'vision'. Milburn cites an example of vision referring to an academic who stated academic leadership is about taking a curriculum forward from a blank sheet of paper and taking people with you in developing them and the curriculum. This is similar to Clarke et al. (2011), who posit how course leaders' approach to the curriculum might be critical to both the role and the transformation of the curriculum and Krause et al. (2010) who state the importance of this pivotal role in developing the curriculum in the interests of students, universities and the broader community. So developing an understanding of course leaders' approaches to curriculum could be critical in both supporting the role, developing the curriculum, and perhaps most importantly developing the interests of students.

2.5 Developing course leaders

Responsibilities of the course leader have changed in the UK HE system over the last twenty years. Early literature focuses on the ways in which course leaders in a mass HE sector are managing increased workloads, particularly in relation to administration and its relationship to the delivery of teaching (Paterson, 1999). Later literature focuses on the developmental needs of course leaders, although the curriculum is largely absent with only very small incidental references made. Contrary to this absence of the curriculum in literature about course leaders is the recent Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) publication (Lawrence and Ellis, 2018). Rowena (2018) develops an interesting model of programme leadership comprising of nine activities aiming to 'rethink the role toward an area of

opportunity, one that can harness and deliver programme coherence alongside staff and student satisfaction' (p.14). Of most relevance to the curriculum are 'programme delivery and quality assurance', ' programme design, approval, modification and withdrawal' and 'curriculum and programme reviews'. As discussed in Chapter 3, curriculum is a complex idea and terms such as 'delivery' and 'design' take a particular view of the curriculum. Quinlan and Gantogokh (2018) go much further in linking course leaders to the curriculum, stating the 'curriculum is the most significant aspect of the socio-cultural environment for students and is the focal point of programme leadership' (p.16). Their position goes beyond the more practical leadership and managerial concerns towards recognition of the importance of course leaders and the curriculum.

2.6 Conclusion

What seems largely absent from the literature on course leaders is their relationship to the curriculum. Course leaders require considerable knowledge to devise, plan, design, organise, deliver, enact, coordinate, develop, experience, engage, enable, a curriculum. The large number of verbs in front of curriculum in the last sentence is deliberate and will be the topic of the next chapter.

3 Chapter 3 Academics and curriculum

3.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, I identified a literature gap in relation to course leaders and the curriculum. Finding this gap I have decided to focus more broadly on the academic and the curriculum. In higher education (HE) curriculum literature, how the relationship of the academic to the curriculum is viewed is highly dependent on how the curriculum is considered or theorised. In this chapter, I review five different curriculum perspectives:

1. Factors shaping the curriculum
2. Curriculum design
3. Curriculum as student development
4. Curriculum and knowledge
5. Curriculum as practice

From these curriculum perspectives I establish my research questions and develop a holistic 'curriculum perspectives framework'. The curriculum perspectives are presented in an order that supports an explanation of my framework.

3.1.1 Literature on academics and curriculum

There is a small body of literature focusing specifically on academics and the curriculum. A complexity in reviewing this literature is the variety of terms used. To unravel this I suggest there are three different focuses in 'academics and curriculum' literature:

(a) Empirical research

Research into the variety of ways academics view and approach the curriculum. Terms used include ‘orientations’ (Roberts, 2015) and ‘conceptions’ (Fraser and Bosanquet, 2006).

(b) Literature review

Different academics’ views and approaches to the curriculum based on literature review. Terms used include ‘conceptions’ (Eisner and Vallance, 1974) ‘orientations’ (Eisner, 1985), ‘approaches’ (Toohey, 1999), ‘conceptualisations’ (Annala et al., 2016),

(c) Theoretical/practical literature

Literature that discusses different theoretical/practical views of the curriculum. Terms used include ‘perspectives’ (Posner, 1992), ‘types’ (du Toit, 2011) ‘differentiations’ (Shay, 2013) ‘models’ (O’Neill, 2015), ‘theories’ (Annala et al., 2017) and ‘frameworks’ (Bovill and Woolmer, 2019). For the complexity of ‘models’ available see O’Neill (2015, p.30). This literature is important to my study as it is often used to discuss academics’ different approaches to the curriculum.

In (c) I connect ‘theoretical/practical’ as all curriculum literature in this focus has both theoretical and practical implications that should not be viewed separately. However curriculum literature can tend to focus towards one more than the other. Annala et al. (2017) see this as ‘normative theorists’ who have focused on outcomes and ‘critical theorists’ who have focused on ‘the social implications of knowledge’. These differences in curriculum literature are very similar to the findings of Grundy (1987), discussed later.

What is important is that these different focuses intersect in complex ways, for example, empirical research studies usually involve literature review and theorisation. This can be exemplified by discussing two empirical research studies, Roberts (2015) and Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) and who each draw on different literature leading to two different typologies.

Roberts' (2015) research into academics' orientations to the HE curriculum draws on literature focusing on the differences in 'typical' disciplinary knowledge practices (Neumann et al., 2002; Becher and Trowler, 2001). Roberts's (2015) findings are presented in a typology that can be found in HE literature, for example Trowler (1998) empirical research and literature review of 'ideologies' in the new university and Toohey (1999) discussion using literature of 'curriculum approaches'. This typology, based on the underlying philosophical or ideological beliefs about the purposes of education, has roots in school curriculum literature (Eisner, 1974, 1994; Posner, 1992). Terms used and their definitions vary, I present Toohey (1999) 'curriculum approaches' typology as an example:

- Discipline / Traditional
- Performance or system-based
- Cognitive
- Experiential or personal relevance
- Social critical

This typology and its relevance to my study are discussed in section 3.2.1.

Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) discussing variations in academics' conceptions of the curriculum claim they fall neatly into a 'product orientation' or a 'process orientation'. This draws on curriculum studies and suggests the underlying difference in curriculum approaches. This typology, discussed or utilised in some literature on the HE curriculum (Annala et al., 2017, 2016; O'Neill, 2015; du Toit, 2011), is presented as:

- Syllabus (Bobbitt 1918)
- Product (Tyler 1945)
- Process (Stenhouse1975)
- Praxis (Grundy 1987)

Curriculum studies, is a research tradition analysing and critiquing the moral, political and ideological aims behind the various conceptualisations of curriculum, most often in compulsory school education. In higher education literature this curriculum typology has been used to suggest the incremental improvement of the curriculum as 'product to process' (du Toit, 2011), or 'product to process to praxis' where the latter is a higher order of curriculum conceptualisation. This is exemplified in Annala et al. (2016) framework for conceptualising curriculum literature approaches, discussed in the next section.

3.1.2 Literature on the higher education curriculum

Literature on the HE curriculum is 'characterised by a relatively small number of books and articles that take a general overview and a large number that focus on specific approaches to, or elements of, the curriculum and course design' (Tight, 2012, p.65-66). My review focuses on literature with this

general overview of the HE curriculum because it offers a view of the relationship between the academic and the curriculum. Annala et al. (2016) analyse sixty-two articles on the HE curriculum and develop a framework for conceptualising literature approaches. (see Figure 3.1)

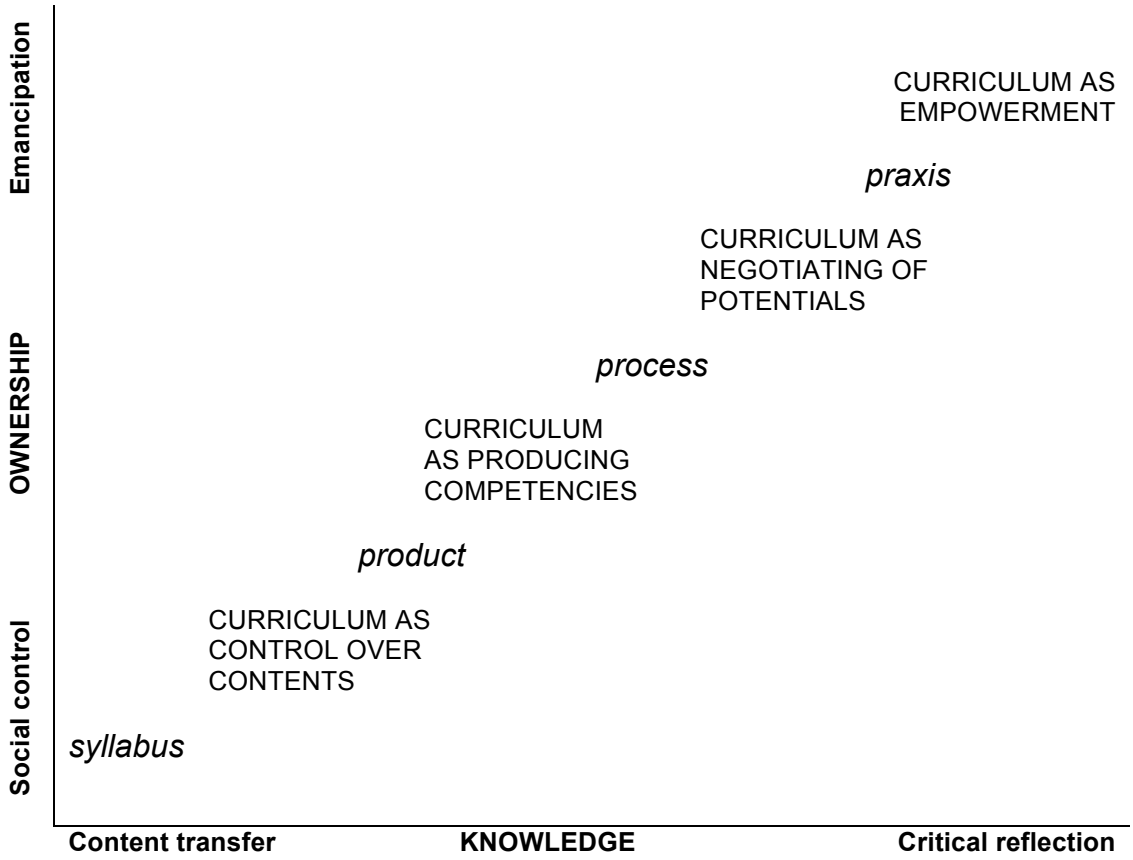


Figure 3.1: Framework for conceptualising curriculum literature approaches (adapted from Annala et al. 2016 p.174).

Annala et al. (2016) find it was not possible to define an article within a single approach with each article including several approaches. Although they did find curriculum articles had a similar vocabulary, but differed in their orientation to ‘knowledge’ and ‘ownership’ (p. 173). This suggests a more complex framework might be needed for a review of broader higher education curriculum literature.

3.1.3 Curriculum perspectives

So how might I construct a view of the HE curriculum through the literature available? Grundy (1987) finds curriculum literature can tend to focus on foundation but not structure or structure but not foundation. Looking at Annala et al. (2016) framework as an example. What curriculum structure does literature on curriculum as empowerment suggest? And what curriculum foundation does literature on curriculum as control over content suggest? To consider this I returned to the small body of literature on the HE curriculum in books taking a general overview and was able to identify five distinct curriculum literature approaches. These curriculum literature approaches do not fall easily into the curriculum typologies discussed but instead each offered a more complex view of both the possible foundations and structure of the curriculum. Using this notion of different 'views' of the curriculum I have decided to title these 'curriculum perspectives'. These curriculum perspectives are:

1. Factors shaping the curriculum (Lattuca and Stark, 2009)
2. Curriculum design (Machk, 2018)
3. Curriculum as student development (Barnett and Coate, 2005)
4. Curriculum and knowledge (Wheelahan, 2010)
5. Curriculum as practice (Blackmore and Kandiko, 2012)

These curriculum perspectives are similar to Bovill and Woolmer's (2019) four curriculum frameworks. Bovill and Woolmer (2019) see these frameworks as specifically devised within HE and offer different conceptualisations of the curriculum, each offering an understanding of student curriculum co-creation possibilities. Bovill and Woolmer's (2019) curriculum frameworks are:

1. Academic staff definitions of curriculum (Fraser and Bosanquet, 2006)
2. Constructive alignment (Biggs, 1996)
3. Knowing, acting and being (Barnett and Coate, 2005)
4. What counts as knowledge and 'framing' (Bernstein, 2000)

The first four of my curriculum perspectives align with Bovill and Woolmer's (2019) four curriculum frameworks, with each 'curriculum framework' being a specific example of one of my curriculum perspectives. For example, 'constructive alignment' is an example of 'curriculum design'. Bovill and Woolmer (2019) do not include work on 'curriculum as practice', perhaps because it is not often referred to in curriculum literature. I have included 'curriculum as practice' because it offers another distinct view of the curriculum. I do not to use 'frameworks' to describe the different curriculum literature as this term is used in some contexts, to describe frameworks by which the curriculum is organised.

As I am interested in making greater connections between HE curriculum literature and A&D educational research literature I will discuss relevant A&D educational research literature at the end of each curriculum perspective.

3.2 Factors shaping the curriculum

Factors shaping the curriculum are multiple and complex. Lattuca and Stark (1997) develop the concept of the curriculum as 'academic plan' made up of the purpose, content, sequence, learners, instructional processes/resources and evaluation/adjustment. In the second edition of this book, Lattuca and Stark (2009) change the sub-heading of their book, to 'academic plan in context'. This is important because they now situate their plan within a

sociocultural context and present a model that ‘makes explicit the many factors that influence the development of academic plans’ (Lattuca and Stark, 2009, p.5). Within the sociocultural context there are two forms of influence, ‘external influences’ and ‘internal influences’. Although Lattuca and Stark (2009) are promoting the academic plan for the development of the curriculum they recognise what happens in action may be very different. For example, they give multiple examples in their text of where the academic plan is an iterative process or even where academic planning is a challenge to autonomy, informality and creativity. They recognise the role of individual academics in the process of creating academic plans and offer a ‘contextual filters model’. This model builds on the work of Toombs (1977) who suggests academics ‘translate’ considerations of ‘content’, modified by ‘context’ into ‘form’. Lattuca and Stark (2009, p.118), using this model propose ‘content’ is defined by academics’ ‘background and characteristics’, ‘views of their academic field’ and their ‘purposes of education’. Interestingly, factors in ‘context’ such as ‘student characteristics’, ‘student goals’, ‘program and college goals’ influence curriculum decisions but are not seen to influence content.

There is a small body of literature considering how contextual factors shaping the curriculum are translated by academics. Roberts (2015) conceptualising the HE curriculum as a ‘field of decision making’ develops a theoretical framework from literature identifying eight factors. This framework is similar to Fanghanel’s (2007) study that finds seven filters conditioning pedagogical constructs influencing academics’ ways of conceptualising and approaching

teaching and learning. I present a comparison of Lattuca and Stark (2009), Fanganhel (2007) and Roberts (2015). (See Table 3.1)

Lattuca and Stark (2009) Academic plans in sociocultural context	**Fanghanel (2007) Filters conditioning pedagogical constructs**	**Roberts (2015) The field of curriculum decision making.**
Educational process Educational Outcomes	External influences (Macro)	Educational purposes
External Influences For example: Market forces, Government, Accrediting agencies, Disciplinary associations		Socio-political context
Academic 'contextual filters model'.	Academic labour (Macro)	Academic identity
	Research-teaching Nexus (Macro)	Research
Internal Influences Institutional Influences For example: College mission, Resources, Governance	Institutional contexts (Macro)	Institutional context
Unit Level Influences Faculty	Department (Meso)	
Discipline	Discipline (Meso)	Discipline
Student Characteristics	Pedagogic Beliefs (Micro)	Students
Academic Plan: Purposes – content – sequence Learners, Instructional Resources, Instructional Processes, Assessment and Evaluation		Teaching and Learning

Table 3.1: Comparison of Lattuca and Stark (2009) Fanghanel (2007) Roberts (2015).

What is of interest to my study in comparison, is firstly the similarities but also that the academic is critical in 'filtering' (Lattuca and Stark, 2009; Fanghanel 2007) or 'decision-making' (Roberts, 2015) in relation to the contextual factors

of the curriculum. Next I considered how this filtering or decision-making by academics has been discussed or conceptualised in literature.

Roberts (2015) identifies five 'curriculum orientations' shaping academics' responses to educational change. Roberts (2015) argues that 'participants beliefs about educational purposes align their beliefs about other key influences to create a coherent orientation to curriculum decisions' (p.550).

I now compared Roberts (2015) 'curriculum orientations', Toohey (1998) 'curriculum approaches' and Eisner and Vallance (1974) 'curriculum orientations' (an early text in my review of literature). (See Table 3.2).

Conceptions of the curriculum **Eisner and Vallance (1974)**	**Curriculum approaches** **Toohey (1999)**	**Curriculum orientations** **Roberts (2015)**
Academic rationality	Discipline / Traditional	Discipline-based
The development of cognitive process	Cognitive	Professional and Academic
Self-actualisation, or curriculum as consummatory experience	Experiential or personal relevance	Personal relevance
Social reconstruction-relevance	Social critical	Social relevance
Technology	Performance or systems-based	Systems design orientation

Table 3.2: Comparison of Eisner and Vallance (1974) Toohey (1999) and Roberts (2015).

Some licence has been taken in aligning these conceptions, ideologies and orientations, as there are some differences in the typologies used. However, there are also clear threads running through the typologies indicating similarities.

What seems unclear is exactly how academics' approaches to the curriculum are influenced by these conceptions, approaches or orientations. Roberts (2015) connects these approaches to disciplinary understandings (Becher, 1989). This seems unsatisfactory, for example viewing 'physics' as 'discipline-based' and the 'arts and social sciences' as 'personal relevance' is reductive of these disciplines. I also have concerns about disciplinary exceptionalism in discussions on pedagogic practices (Wareing, 2009). For example many A&D pedagogic practices, although perhaps named differently are similar to those in other disciplines (Ashwin, 2019).

Trowler (1998) who presents a very similar typology of HE 'ideologies' offers the most helpful reminder of the benefits and limitations of such typologies in empirical studies:

> Interview data, then, needs to be treated with caution and the ontological claims of ideological positions should be modest. Ideological sets represent not categories but rather preferences which actors to some extent choose or reject in any given social context. (p.78-79)

This is important, as within a single interview with an A&D academic I would expect to find elements of all or most of 'curriculum orientations' in Roberts (2015). This led me to consider literature which researched how academics might experience or conceive of the curriculum differently.

Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) research academics' conceptions of the curriculum using phenomenography as a research approach. This means they do not research the curriculum per se but the variation in academics' experience of the curriculum. When referring to 'conceptions' of the curriculum

Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) are researching 'both what academics perceive to be the curriculum and their understandings and experiences of this curriculum' (p.271). Their data comes from interviews with 25 academics from a variety of disciplines, a broad range of academic roles and very different levels of experience. Interviews used a key set of questions seeking to gain a description of each participant's conceptions of the curriculum. Fraser and Bosanquet (2006, p.272) present the variation in academics' conceptions of the curriculum as:

Category A: The structure and content of a unit (subject);
Category B: The structure and content of a programme of study;
Category C: The student experience of learning;
Category D: A dynamic and interactive process of teaching and learning.

Reading Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) findings I considered a number of questions. Could the range of academic roles used in the research explain some of the different conceptions of the curriculum? After all, an associate lecturer on one day a week teaching on a unit is likely to have a very different conception of the curriculum than a fulltime professor? Could there be disciplinary differences and are these conceptions of the curriculum likely to be found in an A&D context? Another question was whether using 'conception' is potentially confusing in the context of broader curriculum literature, as in other literature 'conceptions' (Eisner and Vallance, 1974), 'concepts' (Marsh, 2009), 'conceptualisations' (Annala et al., 2016) of the curriculum are used to describe theoretical curriculum approaches. Partly for this reason, and other more complex reasons discussed in Chapter 4, I use the term 'perception' in my first research question. Having identified the

literature gap regarding the course leaders and the curriculum, in Chapter 2, and considering academics and factors influencing the curriculum in this Chapter I was able to develop my first research question:

RQ1: What are the variations in art and design course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum?

How I decide to answer this question is discussed in Chapter 4.

Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) state 'the present focus on curriculum research in HE does not, however, provide a framework for understanding why it is academics conceive of the curriculum in the ways revealed in our research' (p.279). To address this they draw on the philosophical underpinnings informing compulsory education curriculum theorists: Cornbleth (1990), Grundy (1987) and Kemmis and Fitzpatrick (1986, cited in Fraser and Bosanquet, 2006). These curriculum theorists articulate the curriculum as a form of cultural or contextualised social process, practice or praxis. Grundy (1987) asks the question:

> ''What sorts of beliefs about persons and the world will lead to the construction of what educational practices, particularly the educational practices which are encompassed by the term "curriculum"?'' (p.7).

In answering, Grundy (1987) explains in trying to theorise the curriculum she was faced with three approaches to curriculum foundations. Firstly, the traditional Tyler (1949) approach to curriculum where, 'aims, objectives, decision-making regarding content, implementation and evaluation strategies all pre-supposed a philosophical foundation which was never exposed'

(Grundy, 1987, p.1). Secondly, the Stenhouse (1975) approach to the curriculum demonstrated it was possible to construct the curriculum in a different way. And thirdly, an alternative approach to the curriculum from the 'new left' Marxist critique, who propose other theoretical foundations but leave what this means for the curriculum structure entirely unclear (Grundy uses the examples of Apple, 1979 and Giroux, 1981). Grundy (1987) explains her choice of Habermas's (1972) theory of 'knowledge-constitutive interests', seeing this as a coherent 'foundation for foundations'. 'Knowledge-constitutive interests' (Habermas, 1972) is a theory of the fundamental human interests influencing how knowledge is constituted or constructed. Habermas (1972) identifies three 'knowledge-constitutive interests', which are 'technical interest', 'practical (communicative) interest' and 'emancipatory interest'. These interests guide our search for knowledge and imply concepts of ourselves, other people and the world. Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) use 'knowledge-constitutive interests' to interrogate the reasons for the variation of academics' conceptions of the curriculum. They align their analysis of variations of academics' conceptions of the curriculum using the 'knowledge-constitutive interests' and with product and process orientations to the curriculum. (see Table 3.3)

Category	Habermas (1972) 'knowledge-constitutive interests'	Product/process orientations
A. The structure and content of a unit (subject).	Technical interest	Product focus teacher-directed
B. The structure and content of a programme of study.		
C. The student experience of learning.	Practical interest	Process focus student-centred
D. A dynamic and interactive process of teaching and learning.	Emancipatory interest	

Table 3.3: Reasons for variation in conceptions of the curriculum. Adapted from Fraser and Bosanquet (2006, p. 277).

Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) make findings similar to Annala et al. (2016) in the more advanced conceptions of the curriculum moving from a product to process focus. Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) in their deeper interrogation of the variation of academics' conceptions of the curriculum using 'knowledge-constitutive interests' that the critical aspects of the curriculum are knowledge and the relationship of academics and students.

In reflecting on the interrogation of the categories of description in Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) I returned to Grundy (1987) and the concern that a curriculum theoretical framework needs to consider both 'foundation' and 'structure'. Raising the question: to what degree could Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) conceptions of the curriculum and their interrogation of these using Habermas's (1972) 'knowledge-constitutive interests' relate to the 'foundation' and 'structure' of the curriculum? So in Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) Categories A and B clearly have 'structure' but what are their

‘foundations’? And Categories C and D have ‘foundations’ but perhaps more importantly what is their ‘structure’? These questions made me start to consider alternative ways of analysing the variation in course leaders’ perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum.

3.2.1 Factors shaping the Art and Design curriculum

There is a very small amount of literature taking a holistic view of the A&D curriculum in its contemporary sociocultural context. Orr and Shreeve (2017, p.84) present the A&D ‘sticky curriculum’ in context using a diagram which owes its schema, and some content, to the concentric circles of the schematic presentation of the Bauhaus curriculum (Gropius, 1922). In Orr and Shreeve’s (2017) schema the outer circle of sociocultural political milieu, decrease concentrically through university culture, learning community and teams, pedagogic practices, a penultimate ring of knowledges, process, practices and materials and in the centre the students’ ‘creative self’. This is not dis-similar to Lattuca and Stark’s (2009) more general academic plan in sociocultural context except for the more direct placing of the student at the centre. Orr and Shreeve (2017) in discussing their schema direct the reader to their chapter on the contextual nature of the construction and nature of meaning in A&D (Orr and Shreeve, 2017, p.39- 55) and remind us that the disciplines or subjects of A&D are culturally, socially and geographically located. Taking a disciplinary or subject approach to the Art curriculum, Houghton (2016) writes on the way that the curriculum has become a space for different historic conceptions or pedagogies of art. This resonates with Prideaux (2003) who describes the concept of the ‘sabre-toothed curriculum’ where ‘some people may support values that are no longer relevant’ (p.268). Sabre-toothed

curriculum comes from the fable that cave dwellers continued to teach hunting the sabre-toothed tiger long after it was extinct. I am reminded of the large role that academics' disciplinary and pedagogic beliefs play in relation to the curriculum.

3.2.2 Summary

Academics' perceptions of the curriculum are an important factor in the HE curriculum, because academics are shaped by and shape the other factors shaping the curriculum. Here, their personal experiences, values, beliefs, ideas, prejudices, professional and academic identities are likely to be key in *filtering, interpreting, translating* the contextual factors of the curriculum.

In literature on factors shaping the curriculum I found a number of terms used to describe academics' positions in relation to curriculum. What became clear is it is important to consider what data is used to support any claims made, and the interrelationship of empirical research, literature reviews and theorisations. This is particularly important if comparisons are to be made.

In considering the factors influencing academics' curriculum decisions it is important to remember these factors are not only forces to which academics respond they are often factors which academics have considerable agency in shaping. The lack of literature on A&D course leaders, identified in Chapter 2, combined with my critical review of literature on the factors shaping the curriculum led me to develop my first research question:

RQ1: What are the variations in art and design course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum?

I continue to review the literature exploring different curriculum perspectives to find if there are ways in which I might consider the implications for students of these variations in the course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum.

3.3 Curriculum design

Curriculum design is concerned with the planning, organisation, delivery and assessment of the HE curriculum. Curriculum design is often used interchangeably with course design (Mackh, 2018) or programme design (O'Neill, 2015). Books from 'curriculum design' are often written as guidance or 'how to' texts for academics to support the design of courses in HE. Their intention is to support academic curriculum designers in a number of areas, such as meeting the challenges facing courses in a changing university context, reflecting on their own educational values and beliefs and considering how the curriculum is developed in teams. These books often use a similar chapter structure, for example Toohey (1999), O'Neill (2015) and Machk (2018) all have chapters that are all loosely (with slight differences in terms used) structured as follows; educational philosophy or theory, aims and objectives, course or programme structures, teaching and learning strategies and evaluation methods. The sequence of these chapters represents an approach to curriculum design based on the curriculum's outcomes. The vocabulary of this outcomes-based curriculum and course design is of goals, course aims, course objectives, learning outcomes, assessment criteria and constructive alignment. Of the five curriculum perspectives 'curriculum design' does the most to define structural aspects of the curriculum, although there

are foundational roots in ideas of constructivist education and theories of learning from psychology.

Constructive alignment (Biggs, 1996) is an influential concept seeking to support the alignment of learning outcomes and assessment criteria to support the planning of teaching and learning activities. The ‘construct’ element comes from constructivist ideas of education where knowledge is viewed as that constructed by the student. In this sense it is considered a student-centred model of curriculum, although it is important to recognise it can be interpreted very differently by academics. For example, Prosser and Trigwell (2014) found qualitatively different ways in which academics experience constructive alignment, particularly in relation to their approaches to teaching. Teachers who describe their approach to teaching as involving conceptual change are more likely to see learning outcomes in holistic terms and assessment as integral to teaching. Whereas those who described approaches to teaching in terms of transfer see study in terms of the parts on which assessment was focused. This range of approaches suggests academics involved in curriculum design interpret the concepts within constructive alignment very differently.

Much literature on curriculum design proposes a linear sequence that goes forwards (e.g. Mackh, 2018; O’Neill 2015). Alternatively, Fink (2013) builds on ‘backwards design’ (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005) and ‘constructive alignment’ (Biggs and Tang, 2011). Fink (2013) proposes that ‘significant student experiences’ are designed to meet the assessment of an objectives led curriculum. Although this offers an alternative curriculum design approach, it is important to remember ‘backwards’ design processes are still linear. Contrary

to these linear design approaches Ziegenfuss (2007) finds in her phenomenographic research, five variations in approaches to course design within the same academic context (I have added some words in brackets to the categories for clarity).

1. As part of a bigger picture (holistic approach)
2. Process or sequence-driven
3. Needs focused (student)
4. Outcome based
5. Within a structure or framework (this is related to content, either internally chosen or externally imposed)

An important finding in the research of Ziegenfuss (2007) is that these 'five approaches were creatively combined, customised, and manipulated to meet the unique needs of individual faculty members' (p.78). As in 'factors shaping the curriculum', academics are playing an important role in interpreting, either individually or in teams, how the curriculum is constructed, this time through design processes that are not necessarily linear.

Ziegenfuss's (2007) curriculum design approaches are likely to be influenced by the way that knowledge is viewed in the curriculum. In 'curriculum design' knowledge is often discussed in its multiple forms as an outcome of student learning. As an example I present Toohey's (1999, p.49-64) curriculum approaches and the related view of knowledge (see Table 3.4). It is also worth noting that in some curriculum design literature that knowledge can be largely absent (e.g. Mackh, 2018).

Curriculum approaches	View of knowledge
Traditional or disciplinary	knowledge is conceived as existing independently
Performance or systems based	knowledge is what is evident in students performance
Cognitive	knowledge is personally constructed
Experiential or personal relevance	knowledge is that which is personally significant and personally useful
Social critical	knowledge is constructed within our historical and cultural frameworks

Table 3.4: Toohey's (1999) curriculum approaches and view of knowledge.

Toohey's (1999) approaches and the view of knowledge is a useful reminder of the multiple ways in which knowledge can be viewed in the curriculum. However, Toohey (1999) suggests most teachers in HE value the goals in all of these approaches and forms of knowledge.

> If asked, most teachers in higher education would say they value all or most of the educational goals found in these different approaches; a broad knowledge of the discipline and the way knowledge is structured within it, skilled performance, cognitive development and high levels of intellectual ability, personally meaningful learning which is strongly integrated into the individuals knowledge base, and the ability to think critically about social issues. (p.67)

I agree with Toohey (1999), hence my interest in the ways in which academics' 'values' are a factor in the curriculum design. As an example, there is a body of literature on learning outcomes exemplifying the way in which a very dominant feature of curriculum design is discussed, challenged and contested.

3.3.1 Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes have been developed as one of the building blocks for a transparent higher education system and qualifications in the UK and Europe (Adam, 2004). They are a global development with multiple but broadly similar definitions (Prøitz, 2010). Essentially, learning outcomes are statements defining the knowledge, skills and abilities a student should be able to demonstrate at the end of a period of learning.

Some literature claims learning outcomes support student learning (Adam, 2004) and are supported by students as part of their learning experience (Brooks et al., 2014). Havnes and Prøitz (2016) in their conceptual investigation of the assumptions of learning outcomes conclude:

> learning outcomes clearly direct teaching and learning and students' learning activities, opening the way for feedback and dialogue between and among teachers and students. More over [learning outcomes] can support internal dialogue and enhance self-assessment. (p.219)

However, they also suggest when academics are asked to apply the learning outcomes concept in course design and teaching practices the contested nature of knowledge and learning surfaces (Havnes and Prøitz, 2016).

Hussey and Smith (2008, 2003, 2002) develop a body of research around the use of learning outcomes that finds learning outcomes have become the tools of an auditing process rather than having a direct relationship with classroom teaching. This view is supported by Furedi (2012) who suggests 'many academics regard the annual ritual of updating and specifying the learning outcomes in their module as a pointless performance' (p.2). Contestation also

comes from those who believe it is not able to predict the outcome of learning (Brancaleone and O'Brien, 2011; Buss, 2008).

Dobbins et al. (2016) researching academics enacting learning outcomes find these positions are much more complex and are not always polarised between tick-box accountability and student-centred learning. This suggests in my interviews with course leaders I will find very different ideas and accounts regarding the use of learning outcomes.

There is insufficient space here to go into all aspects of course design that include decisions on timetabling, learning environments, academic staffing, technical support, assessment planning and pedagogic practices. However, what is important is how academics' approach to the curriculum is influenced by their understanding and practices of curriculum design. For example, how academics make choices as to how to use (or not to use) learning outcomes, assessment criteria and ideas of constructive alignment in the curriculum.

3.3.2 Art and Design curriculum design

I have found no books specifically focusing on the design of the HE A&D curriculum. There is however, a body of literature in articles focusing on outcomes-based curriculum design and A&D. This focuses on the problem of assessing learning outcomes in a creative or A&D context. Arguments against learning outcomes in A&D include that they cannot be enterprising (Penaluna et al., 2014), cannot be used to assess creativity (Kleiman, 2017) and measure performativity rather than emergent and negotiated learning (Addison, 2014). Davies (2002) an important early advocate of learning outcomes and constructive alignment in A&D education, critically reflects on

the recurring problem with learning outcomes (Davies, 2012). He recognises only curriculum designers understand how things fit together, whereas new or part-time academics may only see unit outlines and may only have a sense of them using their own professional experience. Davies (2012) also recognises that the mapping of learning outcomes and assessment criteria into complex matrices can be overwhelming for staff and students. These matrices may appear methodical and structured but can lead to the loss of the original intentions of constructive alignment. Buss (2008) recognises learning outcomes are not entirely inappropriate in contexts where learning is clearly observable and measurable, however he challenges the one-size fits all approach. Buss (2008) suggests instead the use of intended, expressive, holistic and emergent learning (or ancillary) outcomes. The expressive and emergent learning outcomes are particularly relevant to A&D as learning is a personal negotiation with the tutor as work progresses, often with unexpected outcomes. Alternatively, Addison (2104) proposes a new tool to underpin curriculum design as learning outcomes systems have resulted in 'assessment as learning' (Torrance, 2007). Addison (2014) promotes the idea of using 'cultural historical activity theory framework' to allow 'designers to build in possibilities for dialogue and negotiating educational objectives and evaluative criteria based on students' motivation/need and changing circumstances' (p.321). Addison (2014) also discusses extracurricular activities where assessment regimes are often suspended particularly when engaging students with staff research. This is particularly relevant to my study as it is not uncommon for academics to see things as 'inside' or 'outside' the curriculum. A good example of this is the use of the term 'hidden curriculum',

which despite its use in curriculum theory as the hidden social dimension of the curriculum causing inequality (Margolis, 2001), is used in some A&D contexts to describe anything outside the curriculum's formal processes and structures having value (NAFAE, 2016). Lastly, it is important to remember there is considerable variation in A&D students' conceptions of assessment using learning outcomes (Shreeve et al., 2003).

3.3.3 Summary

Academics in the context of the literature relating to the curriculum design are '*designers*' and then '*deliverers*' of the curriculum as defined by course outcomes, learning outcomes and the teaching and learning methods used to enable students to meet these outcomes. Whilst outcomes-based curriculum design models remain the default in UK HE, the literature suggests academics understand and perceive these curriculum design concepts, tools and processes very differently. Whilst some academics may see curriculum design tools such as learning outcomes, assessment criteria, constructive alignment and assessment matrices as opportunities for the development of learning and teaching others may view their role more in terms of an '*auditor'* for quality processes. Likewise, whist designing or interpreting these curriculum design tools, particularly learning outcomes and assessment matrices, some academics may view them as open-ended and flexible whist others may see them as closed-ended and absolutely fixed. This will change the way in which they view their role as '*evaluators*' of student learning through assessment and ultimately the curriculum.

The structural curriculum factors in 'curriculum design', although developed on particular foundational theories are influenced by the multiple 'approaches',

‘orientations’, ‘conceptions’ academics have of the curriculum. In any HE sector, but particularly a mass one, it is essential courses or programmes can articulate the aims and objectives of the curriculum, presenting the relevance to students’ future lives. Curriculum design is a critical element in the development and organisation of pedagogical opportunities and spaces for academic staff-student interactions. However, foundational aspects of the curriculum can get lost within structural objective-based curriculum losing focus on opportunities for students’ holistic development.

3.4 Curriculum as student development

There is a body of literature focusing on how the curriculum can develop the student as a person to meet the conditions of uncertainty and complexity in the unknown future of the 21st century. Barnett (2004, p.247) defines this as the ‘ontological turn for higher education’ explaining the turn away from an emphasis on ‘what students acquire’ through education (an epistemological concern) to the question of ‘who students become’ (an ontological concern). Barnett (1990-2018) has published a series of influential books on the university in a ‘world of super-complexity’. Barnett (2004) terms super-complexity, as a situation in which the contemporary university is facing new questions.

> Questions of the kind now being identified are characteristically open-textured questions that yield, in global and pluralist world, interpretations that are not just different but which are incompatible; and there is no straightforward way of resolving those differences. (p.249)

Barnett (2005) claims knowledge in this context is giving way to multiple and even local ‘knowledges’ and the university becomes an institutional means for developing capacities to live with ‘strangeness’ at both a personal and societal level. So how might this pluralist view of knowledge and the needs of 21st century graduates in the world of super-complexity be addressed in the curriculum? Barnett and Coate's (2005) ‘Engaging the curriculum in higher education’ is a key text as, based on research into curricula in UK universities, it offers a proposition about the development of the HE curriculum. Barnett and Coate’s (2005) argument is that the curriculum has not been seriously engaged with in HE and for the curriculum to go forward, the idea of ‘engagement’ is fruitful. Furthermore, if the curriculum is to be designed to ‘engage’ it needs a framework. The framework they propose has the dimensions of ‘knowing, acting and being’. Barnett and Coate (2005) recognise while these three are already present in every curriculum, the extent to which they are explicit varies considerably and so does the way they are brought into a coherent relationship with each other. I now consider each of the elements of this curriculum framework of ‘knowing, acting and being’ (Barnett and Coate, 2005), a particular approach to this framework and then students’ and academics’ engagement in the curriculum.

3.4.1 Knowing

Knowledge and its relationship to the curriculum have changed. Looking at these changes Barnett and Coate (2005) find two contrasting forms of knowledge accomplishments opening up in HE. The first, a knowing ‘that is less concerned with knowledge, as such, but more concerned with being able to manipulate knowledge in knowing performances’ (p.92). They see this

negative aspect as a product of an over-forming of specific outcomes, perhaps a result of objective-led curriculum design, discussed earlier. The other, they regard as a positive development, which is a 'form of knowing in which formal knowledge is brought to bear and the limitations revealed in the struggle to engage with problems of the world' (p.92). This is the situation in which 'knowledges – both formal and informal – are brought together in the session of an enlightened and even ethically grounded set of actions' (p. 92). Barnett and Coate's (2005) main point is knowledge is becoming more a point of students' capacities in relation to knowledge and knowledge is becoming a matter of 'knowing'. This knowing, rather than knowledge, is closely related to the 'being' aspect of their framework.

3.4.2 Acting

Barnett and Coate (2005) are interested in the kinds of action universities might inculcate. Recognising the action domain of the curriculum is not the simple process of identifying skills. Barnett and Coate (2005) see the action domain as the part of the students' education that requires practical skills and know-how. Barnett and Coate (2005) make the distinction between 'subject based skills', 'transferable skills' and 'employment related skills' (sometimes called 'personal professional development'). 'Subject based skills' are explicit (often found in learning outcomes) or tacit, formed by the discipline and institution. Barnett and Coate (2005) recognise that this division of skills is far from simple, asking:

> what values do these skills have in preparing students for a broad range of life and employment experiences beyond the boundaries of their subject areas? Should the acquisition of skills be more than an

> acquisition of capabilities within the subject area, and if so in what way? (p.95)

Both of these questions have become key concerns in the HE curriculum literature and have been debated in literature on 'graduate employability', particularly through the idea of 'transferable skills'. The notion that skills learnt in one context 'transfer' to that of another has been challenged (Hager and Hodkinson, 2009) and many writers seek to move beyond the possessive instrumentalism of the 'skills' discourse towards 'graduate identity' (Hinchliffe and Jolly, 2011; Holmes, 2001). The graduate identity and capability approach to employability has led some universities to develop graduate attributes frameworks. Barnett and Coate (2005) see the designers of the curriculum faced with a choice as to whether capabilities they include are distinct from or integrated within the discipline. This is a critical point and in my interviews I expect complex conversations on whether 'skills', 'capabilities' and 'attributes' are integrated or separated in the curriculum. One small body of literature supporting the integrated view of the curriculum as student development focuses on disciplinary or subject 'ways of thinking and practising', discussed after the next section on 'being'.

3.4.3 Being

'Being' is perhaps the most complex element of Barnett and Coate's (2005) curriculum framework. They state it is not a fashionable term and has overtones of metaphysics or undetectable entities of human qualities. In support of Barnett's ideas (e.g. Barnett, 2004) Dall'Alba and Barnacle (2007) writing on the ontological turn in HE state:

> Knowing is always situated within a personal, social, historical and cultural setting, and thus transforms from the merely intellectual to something inhabited and enacted: a way of thinking, making and acting. Indeed, a way of being. (p.687)

Dall'Alba and Barnacle (2007) referring to the ideas of Heidegger (1998/1967a, 1993/1978, 1968 cited in Dall'Alba and Barnacle, 2007) and Barnett (2005, 2004) discuss the move from 'knowing-the-world' to 'being-in-the world'. Dall'Alba and Barnacle (2007) see explicitly incorporating ontology into HE involves a reconceptualisation of learning. This reconceptualisation means a move away from 'knowledge transfer or acquisition toward a knowing that is understood as created, embodied and enacted' (p. 683). This means the curriculum becomes a 'vehicle' for developing the student as a person so they are prepared for the changing and uncertain world (Barnett and Coate, 2005). This has implications for curriculum design as Barnett and Coate (2005) suggest:

> The logic here is that curriculum design has to be seen not as spaces to be filled but as the imaginative construction of spaces in which students – as adults – are likely to build their own energies and commitments and so to flourish in worthwhile ways. (p.112)

The metaphor of curriculum as a constructed space works well and has resonance with Grundy's (1987) discussion of the difference between a concern with the construction of a house by a draftsperson, clients and builders and the concern with the 'houses in which people already live, the reasons they live in such houses and what the house might look like should they wish to move to another' (p.6). This cultural view of the curriculum is interesting because this metaphor extended to consider the course leaders

would suggest they are, alongside other academics, technicians and students, the architects who design, build and then inhabit this curriculum space.

It is important to also recognise the relationship between being and knowing in the curriculum. Here the ontological and epistemological are brought together, as Barnett and Coate (2005) state 'forms of knowing produce forms of being' (p.110). In practical terms this means academics 'practising their trade, in getting students on the inside of modes of thought' (Barnet and Coate, 2005 p.110). Importantly, whilst 'forms of being' are a curriculum foundation concern they also have implications for curriculum structure.

3.4.4 Ways of thinking and practising

Anderson and Hounsell (2007) look at the disciplinary dimensions of the curriculum framework of Barnett and Coate (2005). Building on research into student learning (Marton and Säljö, 1997; Entwistle, 2003; Ramsden, 2003,) they seek to capture the distinctive feature of the disciplines with which students engage. They see these distinctive features as 'Ways of Thinking and Practising' (WTP). Within this concept of WTP Anderson and Hounsell (2007) see the knowledge domain existing 'in a dynamic relationship with the practices that are implicated in its creating, interpretation and use' (p.463). This view of knowledge as practices adds an additional dimension to understandings of knowledge, student engagement and the role of academics in the curriculum. The knowledge practice dimension is exemplified through Anderson and Hounsell (2007) who use 'communities of practice' (Wenger 1998), a theory largely absent from Barnett and Coate (2005). A discussion on the implications for the role of the academics and students within 'communities of practice' comes later in my review of literature on 'curriculum

as practice' (see section 3.6.1). Barradell et al. (2018) use WTP to highlight the complexities of the HE curriculum and claim that it supports an understanding of the curriculum in 'four key ways'.

1. WTP can help foster an integrated and holistic view of the curriculum.
2. WTP helps to focus learning on multiple knowledge forms, as well as production, circulation and application.
3. WTP signal the importance of simultaneously inducting students whilst developing student agency.
4. WTP helps focus learning on real-world needs.

All are useful in considering the structural elements of the curriculum framework of 'knowing, acting, being' (Barnett and Coate, 2005). Barradell's et al. (2018) third point is of particular interest to my study as it represents an important structural challenge in the curriculum, which is, how to 'simultaneously inducting students whilst developing student agency'. **This suggests structurally the curriculum may well have to balance student control and agency to effectively support all students.**

3.4.5 Students' engagement in curriculum

Student engagement is often used in vague or confusing ways (Ashwin and McVitty, 2015). In considering student engagement in the curriculum Barnett and Coate (2005) ask how can the curriculum be shaped so engagement on the part of the student will come about? To answer these questions, they first make clear that student engagement is not the engineering of the curriculum to produce capabilities or the design of curricula as producing engagement as an outcome. Barnett and Coate (2005) view 'engagement' in both the students

and the academics, and it is in both working on the ‘students’ aspirations’ that engagement takes place. This is a critical point in curriculum design and enactment which Barnett and Coate (2005) address through ‘space’ in the curriculum.

The focus on learning spaces in HE has been researched through notions of learning space (Savin-Baden, 2008), physical spaces (Boys, 2011) and new hybrid and virtual spaces (Middleton, 2018). Barnett and Coate’s (2005) curriculum space, is defined as ‘attitudinal space’, the students’ individual relationship to the course and learning, and ‘collective space’ where the curriculum is a relational and dialogic site in which all collectively flourish. In the context of curriculum design with a focus on learning outcomes, assessment criteria, activities and assignments, Barnett and Coate (2005) ask, where is the space for students to come into themselves? This is an important issue when considering the current dominant model in UK HE and is likely to be part of the course leader interviews. Having discussed students’ engagement in the curriculum how might academics engage the curriculum?

3.4.6 Academics’ engagement in curriculum

Engaging academics in the curriculum is challenging due to its lack of visibility (Barnett and Coate, 2005). Barnett and Coate (2005) use the metaphor of seeing a train on the tracks and trying to understand the railway system. This metaphor works well, as it is possible for academics to view the curriculum as the day-to-day or week-to-week activity whilst the bigger picture is not in view, however it might be more appropriate to say the academics are on the train. Barnett and Coate (2005) propose overcoming this limited view by thinking about and discussing the curriculum explicitly, encouraging imaginative ideas

for conceptualising it and designing research projects examining aspects of the curriculum. In relation to course leaders, although not specifically mentioned, they are clear the idea of ‘managing the curriculum’ is not the best resort and call for ‘leadership’ of curriculum design and development.

3.4.7 Art and Design curriculum as student development

Barnett and Coate (2005) use the framework of knowing (knowledge domain), acting (action domain) and being (self domain) as a schema to discuss disciplinary approaches. They analyse the ‘curricula in arts and humanities’ using this schema with the knowledge domain forming the most dominant component, the self and action domains being considerably smaller and not integrated with each other. This analysis is not consistent with my experience of A&D curriculum and draws an important issue to the fore. Arts education and its curriculum, of which A&D are a part, do not group well with the Humanities disciplines for educational research purposes. In actuality the A&D curriculum is much better represented by Barnett and Coate’s (2005) schema for ‘professional subjects’ where the knowledge domain is given less prominence ‘as professional subject areas tend to be externally orientated and their curricula often reflect the professions they represent, rather than changing concerns within the academic discipline’ (p.78). Also with the ‘professional subject schema’ the action domain is a substantial component and so is the self-domain. They see the integration of action and self-domain as a key factor of professional subjects due to the influence of educational theories such as reflexive practice. They find this is evident in nursing studies through the use of ‘learning journals’ and ‘reflective diaries’ and ‘log books’. This is consistent with the A&D curriculum in my study where the reflective

practitioner theories of Schön (1991) have been influential and reflective diaries, blogs, log books and journals are evident in the curriculum, particularly as part of assessment practices.

Orr and Shreeve (2017) see student engagement in the A&D curricula as a mixture of Barnett and Coate's (2005) 'knowing, acting and being' framework. Orr and Shreeve (2017) also see this curriculum framework is in tune with most A&D educators who see students as new practitioners 'to be drawn into art and design education through practising and developing their identity alongside appropriate skills to enable creative practice to evolve and develop' (p.20). They highlight the complexity of 'knowing' in A&D subject disciplines because 'codified knowledge within these disciplines is not highly visible' (Orr and Shreeve, 2017 p.20). Curriculum and knowledge is the focus of the next curriculum perspective.

3.4.8 Summary

Barnett and Coate's (2005) curriculum framework of 'knowing, acting and being' is not just a useful tool for curriculum development, its intention, but is potentially useful in the consideration and analysis of current curriculum.

The academic in 'curriculum as student development' is referred to as a curriculum *designer,* but the focus is very different to that of literature on 'curriculum design'. The emphasis in 'curriculum as student development' is on a *design-in-action* where the curriculum is theorised as an 'art form' where it is not just delivered but 'enacted in a nuanced way, with interplay and imaginative offerings' (Barnett and Coate, 2005, p.45). In this context curriculum design and pedagogy are hard to differentiate.

Curriculum engagement is both that of academics and students meeting the students' aspirations, rather than those pre-described by the academics. Academics are *engagers of student's aspirations* (individual and collective), who are designing the curriculum as *developers of pedagogy,* who are engaged as *scholars* of the curriculum.

In the 'curriculum as student development' there are three building blocks, 'knowledge', 'skills' and 'student becoming'. Knowledge and skills are often being interpreted too narrowly in the curriculum, particularly as some skills may not play a part in the student's future (Barnett and Coate, 2005). 'Student becoming', the third curriculum building block is represented in the language of 'the self', 'being' and 'becoming', it is where 'terms such as 'capability', 'self-realization', 'self confidence', 'self-understanding' and even 'self-reliance' come into play' (Barnett and Coate, 2005 p.63). These are important considerations for the contemporary curriculum.

A&D is a form of vocational education (Orr and Shreeve, 2017) and its curriculum is better represented in Barnett and Coate's (2005) 'curricula in the professional subjects' than their suggested 'curricula in the arts and humanities'. Barnett and Coate (2005) suggest professional vocational curricula offer particular insights into how 'domains of knowledge, action and self can be reshaped into a curriculum based on being, acting and knowing' (p.79).

In terms of a foundation of the curriculum, 'knowing, acting and being' (Barnett and Coate, 2005) and WTP (Anderson and Hounsell, 2007) offer important discussions on the role of knowledge and knowing. In terms of the structure of

the curriculum, Barraddell et al. (2018) also offer important WTP foundational and structural considerations, seeing the curriculum should be integrated and holistic, involve multiple knowledge forms, meet real world needs and both induct students into disciplinary knowledge practices and give students agency simultaneously. This last dual aspect related to students is a key aspect of 'curriculum and knowledge', discussed next.

3.5 Curriculum and knowledge

A renewed interest in the central role of knowledge in the curriculum in discussions on the school curriculum is often cited within what was defined as the 'crisis in curriculum theory' (Priestley 2011, Edwards 2011). There are a number of contemporary educational theorists, scholars and researchers who focus on knowledge to discuss HE. They do so building on the social or critical theories of Durkheim (Young, 2003), Archer (Case, 2015), Adorno (McArthur, 2013), Bhaskar (Wheelenhan, 2010) and Bernstein (Donnelly and Abbas, 2018). In relation to the curriculum, Bernstein is a particularly dominant voice as his concepts and ideas can be specifically related to the curriculum and have been developed by contemporary curriculum theorists.

Bernstein developed the sociology of knowledge on the foundations of the work of sociologist Durkheim (Moore, 2013). Bernstein develops a number of concepts and ideas across a relatively small body of literature, I have found the best way to understand these is by starting with his last texts as these represent his final theoretical considerations. In this respect Bernstein's last book, 'Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity' (2000) is particularly important as it develops theories of Class Codes and Control Volumes I – IV (1971, 1973, 1975, 1990) into 'pedagogic codes', the 'pedagogic device' and

'knowledge structures'. The role of knowledge in a contemporary understanding of HE has become important for a number of reasons. As Ashwin (2014) makes clear:

> Knowledge is at the centre of students' engagement with higher education. So much so that it seems almost platitudinous to argue that it is the critical relationships that students develop with knowledge that makes a university degree a higher form of education. (p.123)

However, 'platitudinous' this is, others scholars argue the acknowledgement of knowledge is a challenge against other educational research tendencies (Maton, 2014) or contemporary curriculum approaches (Wheelahan, 2010). As, Maton (2014) drawing on the 'social field of practice' of Bourdieu (1993) and the work of Bernstein (2000) states:

> Knowledge is the basis of education as a social field of practice – its creation, curricularization, and teaching and learning of knowledge which make education a distinctive field. Yet a *subjectivist doxa* in educational research reduces knowledge to knowing, and a deep-seated tendency towards constructivist relativism, based on a long established but false dichotomy with positivist absolutism, reduces knowledge to power. The result is knowledge-blindness. (p.3)

This concern about knowledge is also recognised by Barnett and Coate (2005) who suggest it is 'fashionable' to emphasis the idea that knowledge is constructed within 'constructivist' or 'social constructivist' ideas of learning. Barnett and Coate (2005) suggest this is at the expense of recognising that in HE students' personal knowing engages with the 'knowledge corpus'. This suggests links between the curriculum perspectives, which are discussed later in section 3.7.1.

Communicating some of the complexities of the theories and ideas of Bernstein and scholars who have developed his ideas is not simple. In my other curriculum perspectives I have discussed the curriculum perspective and then followed this with a section on related A&D literature. As Bernstein's concepts and their development by other scholars, give a distinct view on the specific disciplinary or subject curriculum I have decided to integrate the A&D curriculum literature (including literature on the broader Arts and Humanities) into each section. Before doing so it is important to try and clarify a particular aspect of A&D education and that is the use of 'discipline' or 'subject'. Although mentioned in my introduction, I have left this discussion until now as Bernstein's (2000) writing offers insight into this particular issue.

3.5.1 Disciplines and regions

Defining what is a discipline in an academic context is complex as disciplines often change in academic contexts (Kreber, 2009). This complexity is heighted in A&D by the relatively new development within the university sector (Efland, 1990; MacDonald 1970). As mentioned in Section 1.2, A&D is sometimes described as a discipline with subjects (Sims and Shreeve, 2011) or a subject with disciplines (QAA, 2017). This lack of clarity may stem from attempts to define A&D knowledge per se rather than knowledge in the A&D curriculum. In considering the forms of knowledge in the A&D curriculum Bernstein's (2000) 'regions' is a particularly helpful concept.

Bernstein (2000) develops the idea of 'regions' (from regionalisation) as curriculum involving the 're-contextualisation of singulars and face inwards towards singulars and outwards towards external fields of practice' (p.55). This relates well to the A&D curriculum, as disciplines are often described as

driven by external A&D professional fields of practice but also faces inward to the discipline, and other disciplines used in the construction of the curriculum.

An important historical issue in the development of the A&D HE curriculum that started with the question, what do developing A&D students need to have knowledge of other than A&D professional practice to make the curriculum degree level? In 1960 the first Coldstream Report recommended closing the technically orientated National Diploma (the main form of A&D higher education) and replaced it with the Diploma in A&D, which was to be a 'liberal education' that was 'of sufficient breath and significance to give art students an education with the equivalent discipline and the same sort of stimulus as a University course should give an undergraduate' (Coldstream Report, cited in Ashwin, 1975, p.93). This new curriculum had 15% of the course devoted to the history of the subject and complementary studies, the latter to improve students' 'written and spoken English' (p.99).

Rintoul (2017) describing the development of this element of the A&D curriculum, decides on the title of 'critical and contextual studies' (CSS). I am aware of many other titles, 'A&D history', 'cultural studies', 'theory', 'critical theory', 'critical practice', 'visual culture' and 'research'. There is insufficient space to go into the different meanings of these titles, however as Rintoul (2017) points out referring to a similar list of terms, 'not withstanding important differences, these terms allude to a common curricular 'space' that has had a problematic position within or alongside side the studio-based elements of the course' (p. 3). Within this problematic position, some of the debates include the role of 'theory and A&D practice', 'writing and A&D practice', 'critical thinking and A&D practice' and ultimately whether these should be taught and

learnt separately or integrated. In my study, I will use Rintoul's (2017) title of CSS while recognising it might not be acceptable to all participants in my study.

The teaching aspect of the CSS curriculum element has traditionally been designed and delivered by distinct academic staff (Shreeve, 2008) sometimes from an external department. More recently there have been initiatives in the sector to integrate CSS (Rintoul, 2017) and some academics teach across both studio and CSS. CSS staff can come from different disciplinary backgrounds, such as A&D history, history, philosophy, cultural studies, English literature and many others. They may also come from multi-disciplinary backgrounds, having an undergraduate in A&D, and a post-graduate qualification in a different discipline. These academics are more likely to have PhDs and be focused on formal research. The 'problematic position' in the curriculum defined by Rintoul (2017) is created as much by CSS being perceived as the theoretical and intellectual element of the curriculum as A&D practice-based curriculum elements being perceived as not theoretical or intellectual. Perhaps the best way to view this curriculum division in a contemporary A&D curriculum is of 'practice and theory' as it links the issue with other practice-based forms of HE. There is insufficient space here to reflect on literature focusing on practice-based education and 'theory and practice' however it is important to acknowledge this suggests a division between theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge.

In many respects A&D HE curriculum meets Bernstein's definition of a vocational 'region'. A challenge to this definition of A&D as a 'region' could be within Art which could be seen to have its own distinct disciplinary theories

(Kocur and Leung, 2012) or philosophies (Kul-Want, 2010), however in terms of the HE curriculum this is far from consistent (Elkins, 2001). The same is true in Design where what constitutes the CSS element of the curriculum is variable and often down to course teams or even individual academics. This is important because course leaders are key in leading on the A&D curriculum as a form of 'region' (Bernstein, 2000), meaning they are often involved in selecting, organising or co-ordinating knowledge from other disciplines to support CSS components which are either integrated (Rintoul, 2017) or separated in the A&D curriculum.

Shay (2013) analyses knowledge practices and the curriculum, to develop a framework for differentiating four types of curricula: generic, practical, theoretical and vocational/professional. In vocational/professional curricula 'theory' is selected or marshalled to make sense of practice. In the A&D curriculum the process of selecting or marshalling CSS can be seen as an integrated or separated part of curriculum design and its enactment.

3.5.2 Pedagogic codes

In developing pedagogic codes and their modalities of practice Bernstein develops a key set of concepts and ideas. His central aim is to create models using a code system, which can generate specific descriptions of the ways in which knowledge systems become part of consciousness. Bernstein (2000) summarises his concerns into, 'how does power and control translate into principles of communication and how do these principles of communication differentially regulate forms of consciousness with respect to their reproduction and the possibilities for change?' (p.4). He develops two concepts relevant to discussion on the curriculum.

Classification

First is the concept of ‘classification’, that is essentially about the way in which different knowledge is separated with either strong or weak boundaries. Bernstein’s (2000) writing was predominantly considering compulsory education where disciplines and subjects compete for independent space in a single curriculum. However, in the context of my study this is still a relevant concept as although I have chosen to research A&D there are knowledge boundaries between the A&D disciplines and subjects, between practical and theoretical knowledge, and between what are defined as generic knowledge, professional knowledge and disciplinary knowledge. Bernstein (2000) summarises this concept of classification clearly:

> Where we have strong classification, the rule is: things must be kept apart. Where we have weak classification, the rule is: things must be bought together. But we have to ask, in whose interest is the apartness of things, and in whose interest in the new togetherness and the new integration? (p.11)

Framing

Whereas classification provides the limits of knowledge boundaries, framing refers to the controls of pedagogic interactions. Bernstein (2000) states:

> Where framing is strong, the transmitter has explicit control over the selection, sequence, pacing, criteria and social base. Where framing is weak, the acquirer has more apparent control (I want to stress apparent) over the communication and its social base. (2000 p.13)

So framing is an important concept in considering any curriculum. Within this framework there are two rules, ‘social order’ and ‘discursive order’ (Bernstein, 2000).

Social order refers to the forms that hierarchical relations take in pedagogic relations and expectations about conduct and character. Bernstein (2000) discusses the ways in which ‘acquirers can be seen as labels’ (p.13) according to the nature of the framing. In strong framing they might be labelled as ‘attentive’ or ‘receptive’. Whilst where framing is weak then ‘labels will become equally trying for the acquirer as he or she struggles to be creative, to be interactive, to attempt to make his or her own mark’ (Bernstein, 2000, p.13). So how academics ‘label’ students in communication, positively or negatively, offers clues as to the nature and framing of pedagogic interactions. Recognising how academics articulate students’ relationship with the curriculum through labelling will be part of the consideration of my analysis.

Discursive order refers to two rules, ‘instructional discourse’ and ‘regulative discourse’, of which the former is embedded in the latter and the latter is always dominant. Where framing is strong and ‘instructional discourse’ and ‘regulative discourse’ are explicit, Bernstein defines these as a ‘visible pedagogy’, but where framing is weak and ‘instructional discourse’ and ‘regulative discourse’ are implicit Bernstein defines these as an ‘invisible pedagogy’.

I would expect in my interviews with course leaders to find examples of weak and strong classification and framing in discussions on the curriculum. I am not going to discuss the way in which Bernstein developed code formulations, as there is insufficient space here and they do not add further to my discussion. Bernstein’s ‘pedagogic code’ theories have been developed further by Maton (2014) as ‘legitimation code theory’ (LCT) discussed later in section 3.5.4.

3.5.3 Pedagogic device

Bernstein (2000) develops the 'pedagogic device' in response to the question:

> are there any general principles underlying the transformation of knowledge into pedagogic communication, whether the knowledge is intellectual, practical, expressive, or official or local knowledge? (p.25)

Bernstein's (2000) concern is that of a large number of educational studies focusing on the reproduction of inequalities in educational systems, 'most studies have studied only what is *carried* or *relayed*, they do not study the constitution of the *relay* itself' (p.25). From the focus of these studies:

> Pedagogic communication is often viewed as a carrier, a relay for ideological messages and for external power relations, or, in contrast, as an apparent neutral carrier or relay of skills of various kinds. (Bernstein, 2000, p.25)

From this concern regarding the pedagogising of knowledge and pedagogic communication, Bernstein using language theories develops the 'pedagogic device'. Bernstein's (2000) 'pedagogic device' provides the intrinsic grammar (Bernstein clarifies grammar is meant in a metaphoric sense) of the 'pedagogic discourse' within three inter-relating knowledge rules. These are the 'distributive rules', the 're-contextualising rules' and the 'evaluative rules'.

Distributive rules 'specialise access to fields where the production of new knowledge may legitimately take place, whether this knowledge be intellectual (academic) or expressive (arts) or crafts' (Bernstein, 2000, p.115). Although, it

is good to see the arts included as a knowledge field, the separation of the intellectual from the expressive is a problematic that might be seen within the theoretical or practical knowledge dichotomy, this is discussed later.

The re-contextualisation rules 'regulate the work of specialists in the re-contextualisation field who construct the 'what' and 'how' of pedagogic discourse' (Bernstein, 2000, p.115). The pedagogic discourse, Bernstein clarifies as more of a 'principle for appropriating discourses from the field of production, and subordinating them to a different principle of organisation and relation' (Bernstein, 2000, p.115). This conceptualisation of the process by which disciplinary or professional knowledge becomes curriculum knowledge is critical in considering the relation of academics to the HE curriculum. Particularly as, unlike most school education, it is possible for academics, such as the course leaders in my study, to be involved in the production, re-contextualisation and evaluation of disciplinary knowledge (Ashwin, 2014).

The 'evaluative rules' in pedagogic device regulate pedagogic practice at the classroom level (Bernstein, 2000), which in the context of my study would be within the A&D studio, lecture hall or technical workshop. The evaluative rules constitute specific pedagogic practices concerned with recognising what counts as valid acquisition of instructional and regulative texts (Singh, 2002) defined through pedagogic discourse.

Pedagogic discourse is important because, it 'selects and creates specialised pedagogic subjects through its contexts and contents' (Bernstein, 2000 p.31) and it embeds two discourses, 'a discourse of skills of various kinds and their relations to each other and a discourse of social order' (p.32). This latter point

is important because as Bernstein (2000) identifies, in what he defines as 'the secret voice of pedagogic discourse', these two discourses of skills (instructional) and morals (regulative) are one and the same. This makes me mindful in my study to remember when academics are discussing skills in the curriculum they are also discussing values and visa versa.

Researching in a HE context Ashwin et al. (2012) see Bernstein's (2000) pedagogic device as an alternative to the 'academic tribes and territories' thesis (Becher, 1989; Becher and Trowler, 2001) for conceptualising disciplinary knowledge practices and teaching and learning processes. Building on this Ashwin (2014) clarifies:

> focusing on the relations between 'knowledge-as-research', 'knowledge-as-curriculum', 'knowledge-as-student-understanding' offers a powerful way of gaining a sense of the transformative power of higher education because it brings into focus the ways in which higher education transforms students' understanding and identities. This involves a deeper sense of how student engagement with knowledge and curriculum can transform their relations with themselves and the world. (p.124)

It is important 'knowledge-as-research' should be seen as the development of A&D knowledge practices both within the academy and in the professions of the 'art world' (Becker, 1984) and what is often termed 'creative and cultural industries' (Howkins, 2001). The notion of the 'A&D knowledge-as-practices' and its re-contextualisation into the 'A&D knowledge-as-curriculum' is important to my study for two reasons. Firstly, because it recognises the A&D curriculum is a site in which students construct knowledge 'in relation' to collective A&D knowledge practices, as opposed to an individualised notion of

un-contextualised creativity. The term, ‘in relation’ is consciously chosen because this can also mean disruption, innovation, rejection and challenge.

3.5.4 Knowledge structures

Central to the sociology of knowledge is the position that forms of knowledge are not equal (Shay, 2013). Bernstein (2000) discusses two different ‘forms of knowledge’ that he suggests are realised in two different discourses. Bernstein recognises these two discourses are often situated in literature within a wide range of dualistic terms (see Bernstein, 2000, p.156) forming ‘a complex multi-layered structure of pairs operating at different levels of individual and social experience’ (p.156). Having considered the possible pitfalls of this approach he justifies developing language to describe the two forms of knowledge. By doing this he is enabling a more productive and general perspective that can open up new research possibilities and interpretations. Bernstein develops the ideas of ‘horizontal discourse’ typified by everyday or common sense knowledge and ‘vertical discourse’ that forms a coherent, explicit and systematic principled structure. Vertical discourse takes the form of:

> a coherent, explicit and systematic principled structure, hierarchically organised as in the sciences, or it takes the form of a series of specialised languages and specialised modes of interrogation and specialised criteria for the production of texts as in the social sciences and humanities. (Bernstein, 2000, p.157)

Viewing A&D disciplinary or subject knowledge as a series of specialised languages and specialised modes of interrogation and specialised criteria for

the production of texts is dependent on recognising the production of A&D artefacts as similar to that of the production of written texts (and visa versa).

From these knowledge discourses, Bernstein develops two knowledge structures. A hierarchical knowledge structure which looks like this:

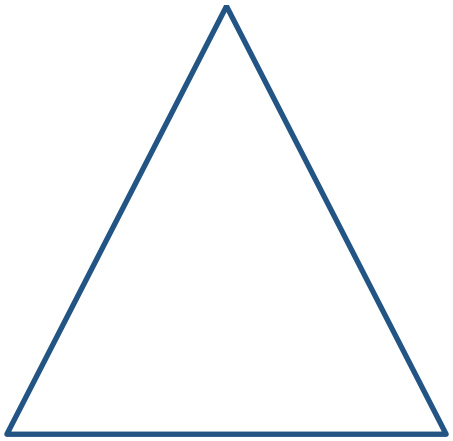


Figure 3.2: Hierarchical knowledge structure. (Bernstein, 2000, p.161)

This form of knowledge attempts to create very general propositions and theories, which integrate knowledge at lower levels, and in this way shows underlying uniformities across an expanding range of apparently different phenomena (Bernstein, 2000, p.161).

In contrast, horizontal structures 'consist of a series of specialised languages with specialised modes of interrogation and criteria for the construction and circulation of texts' (Bernstein 2000 p.161) found within the social sciences and humanities. The horizontal knowledge structure look like this:

$$L^1, L^2, L^3, L^4, L^5, L^6, L^7 \ldots . L^n$$

Figure 3.3: Horizonal knowledge structure. (Bernstein, 2000, p.161)

In considering the curriculum in relation to these knowledge structures what is particularly important is what counts as development. In hierarchical knowledge structures, development is seen as the development of theory that is more general, more integrating than previous theory (Bernstein, 2000). In horizontal knowledge structures, what counts as development is the introduction of a new language. As, ‘a new language offers the possibilities of a fresh perspective, a new set of questions, a new set of connections, and apparently new problematic, and most importantly a new set of speakers’ (Bernstein p.162). This has enormous resonance with A&D where often the posing of new questions is often seen as more important than providing answers. Bernstein suggests this new language can then be used to challenge the hegemony and legitimacy of more senior speakers, who may be ‘cut off from acquiring this new language because of trained incapacity arising out of previous language acquisition, and a reduced incentive, arising out of the loss of their own position’ (Bernstein, 2000, p.162). I have seen this time and again in A&D education, for example where students have innovated approaches to the discipline that academics find hard to comprehend. Many A&D academics see this student innovation as central to A&D pedagogy. This is important because it has implications for the way in which knowledge might be understood and acquired in the curriculum.

Additionally the A&D curriculum may involve both horizontal and vertical knowledge structures. Many A&D curricula involve a relationship with industrial research and manufacturing, involving other disciplines or subjects, for example, engineering (product design), biochemistry (textiles) and new communication technologies such as computer science (graphic design). This

is dependent on the way in which the course leaders and course team construct the curriculum as a vocational ‘region’.

Bernstein sees a resemblance between ‘horizontal knowledge structures’ and ‘horizontal discourse’ particularly in how they are acquired. In the discussion of this connection Bernstein (2000) develops the idea of the acquisition of a ‘gaze’. A ‘gaze’ is acquired through the social, which constructs the ‘perspective’ of the horizontal knowledge structure. This ‘perspective’ can be found within the re-contextualisation principle of the pedagogic device and the dominant perspective within a transmission may be a function of power relations among academics, student pressure groups and market or state regulations. Karl Maton (2104) has developed ‘knowledge structures’ and the notion of the ‘gaze’ (Bernstein, 2000) into ‘knowledge-knower structures’ and ‘legitimate code theory’ (LCT). Maton has written extensively on the knowledge-knower structures in the ‘arts and humanities’ often with a focus on the ‘canon’ (Maton, 2014, 2010). Unfortunately much of this writing, that does offer possibilities for a critique of the CSS element of the A&D curriculum, does little for an analysis of the practical elements. I found the use of the ‘arts and humanities’ to discuss the A&D curriculum unsatisfactory in my previous discussion of Barnett and Coate’s (2005) ‘arts and humanities curricula’ framework, see section 3.4.7.

There is a very small body of literature that considers A&D HE through LCT, notably seeing it as vocational curriculum. Giloi (2015) analysing graphic design assessment practices using LCT, finds that even though a ‘specialist knower’ is valued that ‘there is always potential for conflict and challenge of the valued gaze’ (p.232). This is a reminder that the acquired ‘gaze’

(Bernstein, 2000; Maton, 2014) in the pedagogical relationship is not always from teacher to student but can be from student to teacher. This is very like the ‘reverse transmission’, conceptualised by Orr et al. (2014) where students explain their ideas (not academics), developing their own curriculum via the project centred learning and are the experts in their own work. Although I recognise the pedagogic interaction described as ‘reverse transmission’, there is a dimension missing.

This is best discussed by considering Shay and Steyn (2016) who analyse vocational design curricula as a recontextualised region. Using LCT they see knowledge progression in vocational curriculum involving two movements. The first movement is in ‘knowledge practices that are context-independent (that is simplified and stripped of their real world complexities)’ (Shay and Steyn, 2016, p.141). This is evident in A&D preparation courses and first year assignments where academics set very broad-based projects that are highly simplified and essentially context independent. The second movement is to ‘increasingly context-dependent (where solutions are highly specific to a particular problem)’ (Shay and Steyn, 2016, p.141). This is evident in the third-year work of A&D students who work on context-dependent personal or collective projects. For this second movement Shay and Steyn (2016) use Bernstein’s vertical knowledge structure to describe the increasing capacity to create general propositions and theories, which move from context-independent to context-dependent. This suggests a student’s relationship to A&D knowledge practices is a matter of the ways in which they develop personal knowing in relation to recontextualised knowledge (be these context-independent or context-dependent) within the curriculum. The

recontextualisation of knowledge practices into the curriculum has been traditionally been undertaken by the A&D course leader and team. Shay and Steyn's (2016) description of the move from context-independent to context-dependent knowledge is offered as the way A&D students access 'powerful knowledge'.

3.5.5 Powerful knowledge

'Powerful knowledge', unfortunately named as it can easily be confused with 'knowledge of the powerful', offers a conceptual understanding of knowledge enabling an engagement in society's political, moral, ecological and other kinds of debates (Young, 2008). Young and Muller (2013) chart the development of the term 'powerful knowledge' as a sociological concept. They discuss its origins in the work of Durkheim and recognise 'power' and 'knowledge' are too general and open to too many diverse meanings. Clarifying and exploring the idea of 'powerful knowledge', Young and Muller (2013) argue specialised knowledge has a different purpose than non-specialised knowledge. They make it very clear they do not see the difference as a matter of value, say of a preference for one discipline or subject over another. This is important because in other writing on this topic, the curriculum is described as needing to focus on 'objective knowledge' and 'truth as a normative goal' (Wheelahan, 2010) not a particularly evident focus of the A&D curriculum. Orr and Shreeve (2017) who discuss A&D pedagogy as a form of social constructivism but make a few references to texts from 'curriculum and knowledge', state in their conclusion:

> If powerful knowledge offers the ability to engage in 'society's conversation' (Wheelahan 2010:1), then those students who become

> artists and designers are engaging through the ways that they change the world around us: in performances, communication and the visual and material aspects of life. (p.36)

This view of A&D is similar to that of Young and Muller (2013) who defend the arts as a form of powerful knowledge that connects people to the collective.

> Whereas the sciences speak to the particular from the general, the arts speak to the universal in the particular, and can enable people to feel part of a larger humanity. It is this freedom that Bernstein (2000) is referring to when he argues that disciplines are resources for 'thinking the unthinkable' and the 'not yet thought'. (p.246)

Young and Muller (2013) argue any artistic endeavour involves engagement with conventions, something often absent from literature on A&D pedagogy where student-centred 'creativity' is seen to create knowledge as if with no context. I view these A&D conventions more as a form of knowledge practices which recontextualised into the curriculum offer opportunities for students to develop their own knowledge and ways of knowing. Young and Muller (2013) clarify their view, 'what distinguishes the arts from other forms of 'powerful knowledge' is that although they have conventions, they are explicitly licensed to violate them, 'to entertain, to surprise, to outrage, to be original' (p.246). This is important because A&D disciplines do have conventions evident in the A&D curriculum and students are actively encouraged to discover, challenge and disrupt these to develop new forms of knowledge.

What is important in 'curriculum and knowledge' is 'it is the conventions (or boundaries) of the discipline, the arts and sciences alike, provide conditions for being able to transcend them' (Young an Muller, 2013, p.2013). In searching for clearer definitions of 'powerful knowledge' I came across Shay

(2012) where she ends her article with the example of a student trapped in poverty that is rejected to study medicine (due to grades) so instead enrols on a BA Media Studies course. This student eventually undertakes a PhD where she makes a documentary about her mother. Shay states the student has become a knowledge producer. Viewing powerful knowledge as the ability of students to become knowledge producers (Neary and Winn, 2009) is important and suggests the kind of access to knowledge A&D students are provided through the A&D curriculum.

3.5.6 Epistemic access

'Epistemological access' was a concept developed by Morrow (1994) in the context of post-apartheid South African education. This has been shortened to 'epistemic access' (e.g. Young 2010) and is well described by Wheelahan (2007, p.648):

> A focus on specific content for a specific context means that the meaning of that content is exhausted by the context. Unless students have access to the generative principles of disciplinary knowledge, they are not able to transcend the particular context. Students need to know how these complex bodies of knowledge fit together if they are to decide what knowledge is relevant for a particular purpose, and if they are to have the capacity to transcend the present to imagine the future. Knowledge is not under their control. This simultaneously denies them epistemic access to the structures of knowledge relevant in their field and social access to the 'unthinkable'.

Luckett and Hunma (2014) use the 'gazes' and 'lens' of LCT (Maton, 2014) to consider epistemic access in the humanities. Luckett and Hunma (2014) acknowledge the difficulty in unravelling the epistemic from the social in their

analysis. Concluding that the challenge for pedagogy is ‘how to talk explicitly about what is valued, how to demonstrate the interactional practices and model the gazes and lenses’ so that ‘students acquire the rules of the game and display the right kinds of knower attributes and dispositions, a ‘specialised consciousness’ (p.196). This is also a challenge for the curriculum.

3.5.7 Summary

‘Curriculum and knowledge’ offers a number of concepts useful in describing and considering academics and the curriculum, particularly the A&D curriculum.

Firstly, how the A&D curriculum can be viewed as a form of vocational or professional curriculum described as ‘regions’ (Bernstein, 2000). Regions are constructed from different disciplinary configurations. In the case of my study, how the A&D curriculum has been historically enhanced, supported, aligned, validated, disrupted, invaded (dependent on your point of view) by humanities and other disciplines. This view offers a consideration of the way in which course leaders and team construct the A&D curriculum using knowledge practices from other disciplines. How these different disciplinary knowledge practices are integrated or separated is a critical matter in the design and enactment of the curriculum and as to whose interest this integration or separateness serves (Bernstein, 2000).

Secondly, how the control of the selection, sequencing and pacing of these knowledge practices within the curriculum is also a critical factor in understanding the academic and student relationship. Although I have decided not to explicitly use code theory (Bernstein, 2000), particularly

‘classification’ and ‘framing’, this literature and those who have developed Bernstein’s ideas, have confirmed the key dimensions of the curriculum are knowledge and students’ relations with it. Additionally, rather than seeing the A&D curriculum as broadly classified or framed in a particular way, I expected to find a broad spectrum of approaches within the interviews with course leaders.

Thirdly, and perhaps the most useful insight into the curriculum, Bernstein (2000) offers is the ‘pedagogic device’ including the concept of knowledge-as-curriculum (Ashwin, 2014). That knowledge practices outside of the curriculum are different than those in the curriculum seems remarkably obvious but is almost entirely absent from other curriculum perspectives.

Fourthly, seeing A&D as both a horizontal and vertical knowledge structure is a reminder that as the context of my study is within A&D it may be difficult to view the findings of my study as relevant to other disciplines with clear horizontal or vertical knowledge structures.

Fifthly, ‘knowledge and the curriculum’ offers two important interlinked concepts, ‘powerful knowledge’ and ‘epistemic access’. These offer an insight as to why knowledge in higher education makes it ‘higher education’. ‘Epistemic access’ is an important concept as it enables a consideration of how access to powerful knowledge is structured within the curriculum. **This is important for my study as conceptions of the curriculum claiming emancipatory ideas that do not acknowledge the importance of epistemic access to knowledge for all students may be making claims beyond their reach.**

Course leaders, as academics, in the context of ‘curriculum and knowledge’ are those ‘constructing’ the A&D curriculum as a region, making ‘pedagogic decisions’ regarding the pacing, connections and interaction of students to A&D and other knowledge practices. Academics are also explicitly involved in ‘knowledge-as-research’ either through academic research or professional innovation and most importantly re-contextualising knowledge practices into the curriculum as ‘knowledge-as-curriculum’. Importantly knowledge-as-curriculum should not be seen through a product notion of curriculum (as Lindén et al. 2014 found to be a common conception) but as the process by which students have opportunities to gain ‘epistemic access’ to ‘powerful knowledge’.

3.6 Curriculum as practice

Practice theories are a type of social theory initially sketched by Bourdieu, Giddens, Taylor, Foucault and others (Reckwitz, 2002). The terms ‘social practice theories’ and ‘practice theories’ are used interchangeably in literature. Although there is a large body literature using social practice theories in educational research, seeing the curriculum through practice theory constitutes a relatively small body of curriculum literature. The emphasis of this literature is often on curriculum development (Blackmore and Kandiko, 2012) or on making better connections, between say curriculum and work (Billett, 2003). I have only included ‘curriculum as practice’ to consider a few points related to my study. Some literature refers to practice theory as a broad approach and others focus on a particular scholarly tradition within practice theory. These scholarly traditions include, communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), activity theory (Engeström, 1987) and the social practice

theories of Schatzki (1996). Some practice theories have developed predominantly within the context of educational research, such as practice architectures (Mahon et al., 2017). There is insufficient space here to explain each of these practice theories in depth, so I only discuss curriculum literature that uses these theories.

3.6.1 Curriculum and practice theories

Viewing the curriculum as a community of practice has been discussed as an alternative model to outcomes–based education (Parker 2003, 2002). It has also been used to discuss the ways in which staff and students might work together in a community of practice in the curriculum to create new learning cultures (Annala and Mäkinen, 2017). Within the curriculum as a 'communities of practice' students are those with 'legitimate peripheral participation' and academics are 'old-timers' (Lave and Wenger, 1991). This might represent the hierarchical structure present in most HE institutions, although James (2007) clarifies in the changing university this 'old timer' status is far from fixed and stable and is under continual change. Knowledge in communities of practice is 'a matter of competence with respect to valued enterprises' and 'knowing is a matter of participating in the pursuit of such enterprises' (Wenger, 1998, p.5). This model of knowledge as 'competence' and 'participation' in relation to the curriculum has limitations (Barnett, 1994). This begs the question in a mass HE sector, what are students participating in and what are they becoming competent at? (Barnett, 1994). Critically, Ashwin (2012) points out communities of practice assume knowledge practices are the same outside the curriculum as those that are recontextualised within the curriculum. Ashwin (2012) argues that it is not an appropriate assumption in a mass HE

system to focus on preparing the next generation of researchers, academics or professionals. This seems entirely correct and although communities of practice, has promoted social ideas of learning, it has also been used to defend more out-dated cultural reproduction models of curriculum excluding the more diverse needs and experiences of students in a mass education system (Jary and Lebeau, 2009).

Curriculum literature using activity theory tends to focus on alternative models for ways in which curriculum goals and content might be conceptualised and on the ways in which the HE curriculum might be better related to work (Billett, 2003). I would agree with Ashwin (2012) that activity theory can emphasise the 'ways in which students and academics are an integral part of teaching-learning environments rather than suggesting that teaching and learning environments are constituted before they come in relation to it' (p.63). This emphasis on the complexity of the relationship between interactions and environments is also the focus of 'practice architectures' (Mahon and Kemmis, 2016). Using activity theory as either a heuristic or a developmental tool in analysing the curriculum has clear opportunities, as the site in which these interactions take place, but is not the focus of my study.

Some literature uses the term 'social practice' more broadly. Weller (2012) writing on the modularisation of many contemporary universities courses comments on how this has led to intellectual, social and personal fragmentation of the curriculum. Weller (2012) claims a social practice understanding of the curriculum experience requires universities to embed into their curricula three opportunities. Firstly, the curriculum is used to enhance student awareness of 'their relationship to the field(s) of knowledge through

disciplinary self positioning' (Weller, 2012, p.24). Secondly, the curriculum formation is contextualised where 'lecturers explore their role in historicising and contextualizing the collective field of knowledge by articulating the formation of the curriculum to students' (Weller, 2012, p.25). Thirdly, lecturers and students acknowledge their mutual participation in disciplinary communities of practice and the importance of collaborative learning. These are important to my study as Weller (2012) suggests the curriculum is co-constructed and contextualised by academics and students.

3.6.2 Art and Design curriculum as practice

As A&D is a form of practice-based education with both academics and students identifying as 'A&D practitioners', theories such as 'communities of practice' have had resonance. This has also enabled a close relationship between 'A&D practice' and 'teaching practice' (Shreeve, 2008). The concept of 'communities of practice' (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) has been used to develop ideas of social learning in the A&D educational research (Drew, 2003, 2004) and has fallen into the everyday language of A&D academics and management initiatives. The concept of social learning with an emphasis on practice, identity, community and modes of belonging have all contributed to an understanding of learning that is more complex within the curriculum.

Other practice theories have not played such a dominant role in A&D higher educational research, although for example activity theory has been used as a heuristic in the work of Shreeve (2008) and proposed as an alternative to learning outcomes by Addison (2014). I have found the work of Schatzki

(1996, 2002) particularly interesting in considering practices and discuss a consideration of using his work in my study at the end of Chapter 4.

3.6.3 Summary

The practice theory view of the curriculum is not the focus of my study, although it has potential for further research using a different research methodology. In my study I see the curriculum as a practice, as a useful reminder the curriculum is a socially constructed phenomenon. The knowledge of concern in 'curriculum as practice' is not just 'in' the curriculum but also 'of' the curriculum. This knowledge 'of' the curriculum is intimately connected to disciplinary 'ways of thinking and practising' (Barradell et al., 2018) and pedagogic practices. The curriculum, with its foundations, structures and the ways it is constructed (including co-constructed) is also a body of knowledge in its own right having relevance across all disciplinary and professional HE. Whilst, Barnett and Coate (2005) call for academics to engage in curriculum 'proposals' and 'scholarship' and many scholars call for more discussion about the curriculum and curriculum theories in HE (Annala et al., 2016), there is also an important opportunity within these to view the curriculum as a practice. This would see academics and students as *curriculum practitioners*.

3.7 Summary of curriculum perspectives

It is evident that the curriculum perspectives are largely independent only very occasionally referring to each other. There is also only a very small body of literature discussing what this curriculum shares or any differences, an example is Bovill and Woolmer (2019). In all of the five curriculum perspectives the ultimate goal is essentially the development of the student

within the curriculum, be this viewed differently. What differs most is the role of knowledge and the implications this has for the student's relationship to the curriculum. This focus on knowledge and the student is consistent with Annala et al. (2016) framework for conceptualising curriculum approaches in literature, discussed earlier. I present a summary of the relationship of knowledge, students and academics within each curriculum perspective (see Table 3.5).

Curriculum Perspective	**Knowledge in the curriculum**	**Relationship of students to curriculum**	**Relationship of academics to curriculum**
Factors shaping the curriculum	Knowledge is often seen for its relevance beyond the curriculum (e.g. professional, personal, social).	Students have characteristics shaping academics' views of the curriculum.	Filter, translate and interpret other curriculum factors.
Curriculum design	Constructed by the student within the boundaries set by defined outcomes.	Participating or experiencing the curriculum.	Designer, planner, deliverer, evaluator of course and course outcomes and/or student experience
Curriculum for student development	Students engage in knowledge as a form of 'knowing'. Co-constructed by students and staff.	Engaging in the curriculum through knowing, acting and being.	Engaging in the curriculum with students to meet student's aspirations. Scholars of curriculum.
Curriculum and knowledge	Recontextualised from curriculum-as-research to curriculum-as-knowledge.	Offered access to acquire powerful knowledge so as to be enabled to take part in societies complex conversations.	Re-contextualising knowledge practices into curriculum-as-knowledge. Offering epistemic access to powerful knowledge.
Curriculum as practice	Socially, historically and culturally constructed.	Curriculum practitioners.	Curriculum practitioners and change agents.

Table 3.5: Curriculum perspectives - knowledge, students and academics.

I now consider how I might relate knowledge and knowing in the curriculum and academics' and students' relationship to the curriculum using the curriculum perspectives.

3.7.1 Knowledge, knowing and curriculum

Each curriculum perspective offers a slightly different view of knowledge and knowing in the curriculum. These can at times be contradictory or seem irreconcilable but alternatively can be seen to intersect in ways that suggest different views of knowledge and knowing in the curriculum. For example, Shay (2012) who I locate in the curriculum and knowledge perspective states:

> I am not saying that generic qualities and dispositions have no place in our curricula for the 21st century. Ron Barnett's foregrounding of 'being' in the curriculum is a crucial corrective in conceptualizations of the curriculum. Neither am I saying there is no place for deep context-embedded practical skills. What I am saying is that ways of being and ways of doing must have epistemic anchoring in disciplinary forms of knowledge. This is what makes higher education, *higher* education. (p.18)

This is a reminder that much literature on the curriculum seeks to offer a particular view, to defend or promote a concern. Shay (2012) identifies three discrete aspects to the curriculum; disciplinary knowledge, practical skills and generic qualities and dispositions (sometimes expressed as graduate attributes or identities). Similarly, Barnett (2009), who I identified within 'curriculum as student development' is clear that curriculum in HE is a pedagogic vehicle for effecting changes in students through encounters with particular kinds of knowledge. Using a small 'd' for discipline, to denote a broad field of intellectual and/or professional endeavour he makes a claim for

the importance of disciplinary knowledge very similar to that found in ‘curriculum and knowledge’. Whilst it is clear that in both the ‘curriculum as student development’ and ‘curriculum and knowledge’ that students’ identities are developed through encounters with knowledge. Knowledge within ‘curriculum as practice’ is often (but not always) seen though a social constructivist or constructionist view of knowledge that suggests knowledge is socially, historically and culturally located. This view of knowledge is shared within ‘curriculum design’ literature although this knowledge construction in the curriculum is controlled through the constructive alignment of learning outcomes, learning evidence and assessment criteria (Biggs, 1999) or the design of experiences (Fink, 2013). For example, ‘knowledge’ is a distinct assessment criteria in the context of this study that course leaders and their team use to evaluate student assessment submissions. The social realist educational scholars, who I situate in ‘curriculum and knowledge’ see this social constructivist view of knowledge as a form of relativism which can lead to ‘knowledge-blindness’ (Maton, 2014). I take the view that it is possible to see how knowledge might be understood as a disciplinary or professional body of theoretical and practical knowledge, to which students socially construct their own knowledge and ways of knowing. It is also important to remember this disciplinary or professional knowledge does not constrain the ways in which students construct knowledge, but instead offers opportunity for epistemic access to powerful knowledge leading to direct challenges of the limitations of knowledge.

Knowledge is highly complex taking many forms, often within dichotomies such as, ‘everyday knowledge’ and ‘specialist knowledge’ (e.g. Bernstein,

2000) or ‘practical knowledge’, ‘disciplinary knowledge’ and ‘theoretical knowledge’ (e.g. Muller and Young, 2014; Muller, 2014). There is also the very critical issue of ‘whose knowledge’ are we talking about? Barnett (2005) writes about the end of capital ‘K’ knowledge, which has ‘given way to multiple and even local knowledges (plural)’ (p.785). This latter point has been deeply acknowledged within debates and discourses around the widening of participation of HE, the internationalisation and decolonising of the university curriculum. There is insufficient space here to discuss the relevance of all these discourses as they are not the topic of my study. However these discourses are part of the reason for the study, which is to offer a clearer model of the A&D curriculum approaches which can then be critiqued. One specific aspect of this critique of the university and its curriculum has been the historic separation of knowledge from practice leading to limited opportunities for the creation of new knowledge bases (Andrews, 2018). Although this is changing, Muller and Young (2014) argue ‘it is time transcend the standoff between disciplinary knowledge and practice-based accounts of knowledge’ (p.127). ‘Knowledge practices’ is a useful term used in discussing the curriculum (e.g. Ashwin et al., 2012; Anderson and Hounsell, 2007) as it collapses the knowledge-practice duality whilst also recognising the necessary plurality. It also recognises the multiple forms of knowledge in the curriculum (Barradell et al., 2018). This has led me to conceptualise one axis of the curriculum perspectives framework as ‘recontextualised knowledge practices’ and at the other an engagement with this knowledge as a form of ‘personal knowing’ (see Figure 3.1). This relationship is a critical dimension in that it makes the higher education curriculum a form of ‘higher’ education.

3.7.2 Academics, students and curriculum

In my review of curriculum literature, I found the position of academics and students differed in each curriculum perspective. In ‘curriculum design’, academics are ‘deliverers’ of the curriculum, this positions students as those who receive it by ‘participating’. Academics may also be the designer and enactor of ‘experiences’. Although this offers more autonomy for students, it positions them as a form of ‘audience’ or ‘participants’. In ‘curriculum as student development’ both students and academics are ‘engaged’ in the curriculum. This curriculum engagement is with the student as a human being, through ‘knowing, acting and being’. ‘Knowing’ is a form of engagement with informal and formal knowledge supporting the development of identity (being) and interacting with real world problems (acting). In ‘curriculum and knowledge’, the importance of giving all students epistemic access to powerful forms of theoretical knowledge that enable societies complex conversations, positions the student slightly differently again. This is a more complex position, best articulated through Barradell et al. (2018) who conclude the curriculum should both induct students into disciplinary (or professional) ways of thinking and practice whilst simultaneously developing student agency. This is a clear reminder the curriculum is a site where the relationship between academics and students can be seen through an axis of control to agency. It is also a reminder whilst student agency might be a curriculum goal it can only be achieved for all students through elements of controlled pedagogic decision-making by academics within the curriculum. Finally, ‘curriculum as practice’ suggests that viewing academics as ‘curriculum practitioners’ may offer new opportunities for students.

How students are labelled by academics as ‘attending’, ‘participating in’, ‘experiencing’, ‘acquiring’, ‘engaging in’, ‘co-creating’ in’ the curriculum has pedagogic implications (Bernstein, 2000). These labels can be found within the curriculum perspectives and suggest different levels of control over students in the curriculum. Klemenčič (2015) introduces an additional theory of ‘student agency’ to that of ‘student engagement’. Whilst I agree with Klemenčič (2015) that this agency is complex and often found in transformative experiences outside of educational structures I am interested in how the curriculum might support this. This adds another ‘label’ where students are seen to have ‘agency’ in the curriculum. I therefore include a secondary axis to my curriculum perspectives framework of control to agency (see Figure 3.4).

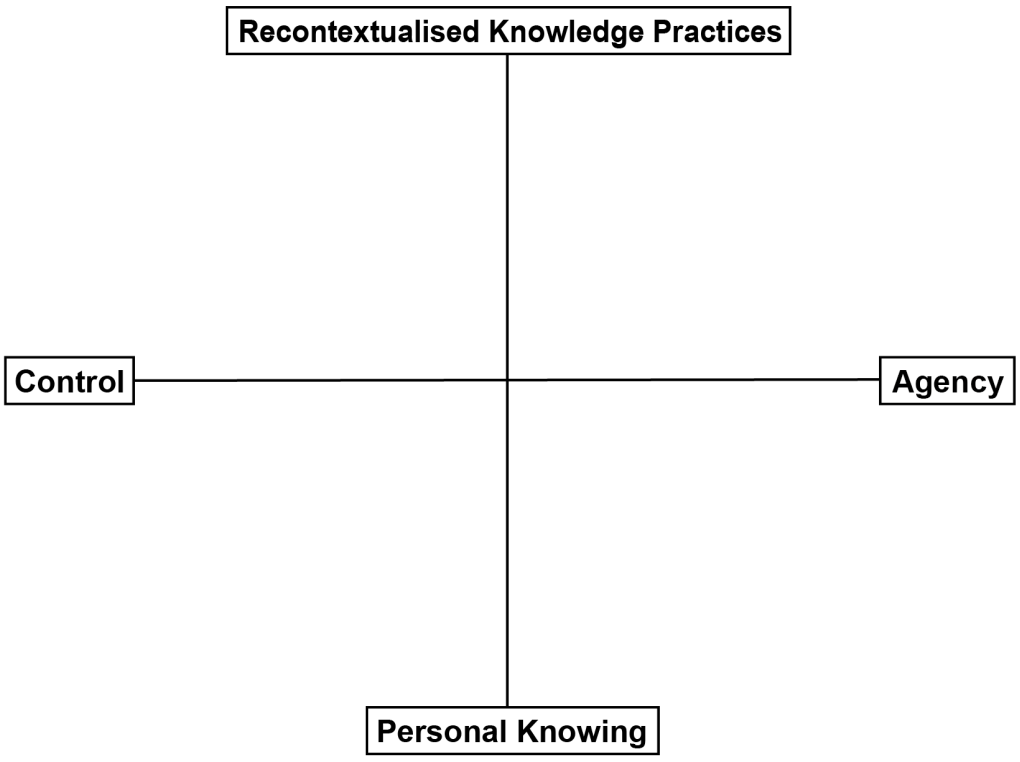


Figure 3.4: Curriculum perspectives framework.

3.8 Conclusion

In Chapter 2 I established a gap in literature regarding A&D course leaders and the A&D curriculum. Due to this gap I chose to focus on academics and the curriculum. The relationship between academics and the curriculum in literature was highly dependent on how the curriculum was theorised or discussed. I identify five curriculum perspectives that might help develop an understanding of academics and the curriculum. From the first, 'factors shaping the curriculum' I find the critical role that academics have within the HE curriculum. From this I established my first research question:

RQ1: What are the variations in art and design course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum?

Considering the foundational and structural aspects of the curriculum I then established that the main differences between curriculum perspectives lies in their epistemological position and the way in which academics and students relate to the curriculum. From this I developed a 'curriculum perspectives framework' (see Figure 3.4) that has a recontextualised knowledge practices to personal knowing axis and a control to agency axis. Having considered Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) use of 'knowledge constitutive-interests' (Habermas, 1972) to analyse the variations of academics' conceptions of the curriculum, I decided alternatively to analyse the variation of course leaders' approaches to the curriculum in terms of their implications for students. To do this I decided to use the curriculum perspectives framework, developed from my review of curriculum literature, as a heuristic. This decision led to my second research question:

RQ2: What are the benefits, limitations and implications for students of the variation in course leaders' (and course team) approaches to the curriculum?

I now look at the ways in which I can research answers to these questions.

4 Chapter 4 Research design

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I explain my decision to use phenomenography as a research design to answer my first research question:

RQ1: What are the variations in A&D course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum?

First discussing the theoretical underpinnings of phenomenography I present the interrelated concepts of 'structure of awareness', 'outcome space', 'categories of description' and 'unit of study'. Defining my unit of study as the course leaders' 'perceptions' of the curriculum, I then connect these methodologically to course leaders' approaches to the curriculum.

The data for my study is interviews with twenty A&D course leaders. In this chapter I explain the process of data generation and how I ensured as an insider-outside researcher that all ethical considerations were addressed. Presenting and discussing the participant profile information I then consider the phenomenographic analysis of this data. Discussing the reliability and validity of phenomenography I consider some of its limitations. These limitations and the findings of my review of curriculum literature led to my second research question:

RQ2: What are the benefits, limitations and implications for students of the variation in course leaders' (and course team) approaches to the curriculum?

This question is answered using the findings of my review of curriculum perspectives in Chapter 3, in this chapter I briefly discuss the theoretical and

methodological rationale. Before concluding the chapter I discuss alternative research approaches that I considered.

4.2 Phenomenography

Phenomenography is an interpretivist approach to social research predominantly used in educational contexts. The origin of phenomenography lies in research into student's approaches to learning by Marton, Svensson, Dahlgren, Saljo and others at Gothenberg University in Sweden in the 1970s (documented by Richardson, 1999). Although 'phenomenography' as a term had been previously used in other contexts related to phenomenology, its use in relation to this 1970s body of research was not introduced into literature until the early 1980s (Tight, 2016). Phenomenology is a separate theoretical philosophical movement and researchers using phenomenology analyse phenomena seeking to find its 'essence' (Dahlberg, 2006). Although based on a similar epistemology phenomenography has 'different aims, goals and methods, and thus different results' (Larsson and Holmström, 2007, p.63). In discussing the theoretical and historical development of phenomenography Svensson (1997) clarifies:

> Phenomenography is not a system of philosophical assumptions and theses, and it is not derived or deduced from such a system. It is an empirical research tradition. This means that metaphysical beliefs and ideas about the nature of reality and the nature of knowledge do not come first. (p.164)

As an empirical research tradition phenomenography sits alongside a number of other social science qualitative research methods (Richardson, 1999) and when introduced was discussed as complementary to other research

approaches (Marton, 1981). Svennson (1997) states ‘there are no direct and simple relation between general ontological and epistemological assumptions and the character of an empirical research tradition’ (p.164). However, he explains the importance of clarifying theoretical assumptions within empirical studies.

Within literature on phenomenography there is a variety of ways in which phenomenography is characterised. Tight (2016) observes that phenomenography is called ‘an approach, a depiction, a method, a methodology, a movement, an orientation, a paradigm, a perspectives, a position and a programme’ (p.321). Marton and Booth (1997) in articulating the idea of phenomenography as a ‘research approach’, state it is ‘not a method in itself, although it has methodological implications’ and neither is it a ‘theory of experiences although there are theoretical elements to be derived from it’ (p.111). Tight (2016) suggests that as phenomenography has both a distinct theoretical and methodological framework (albeit with some variations) that it meets the criteria of a research design. A particularly interesting aspect in the development of phenomenography in educational research is that the historical, theoretical and methodological approaches of phenomenography are often developed and discussed simultaneously.

4.2.1 Non-dualist ontology

Marton (1981) in presenting phenomenography, makes a claim for the distinctiveness of this new approach to research. Rather than a first-order perspective where a researcher aims to describe various aspects of the world, phenomenography takes a second-order perspective where the researcher describes people’s experiences of the world. This second–order perspective

aims to describe, analyse and understand the 'experiences' of groups of people in relation to phenomena. In phenomenography the subject and the phenomena are not viewed separately, rather the subject's 'experience' of the phenomena is the relationship between the two. Therefore, reality is understood as something constituted between the person and the world and as such phenomenography has a non-dualist ontological perspective (Marton, 2000). However, it is important to note that phenomenography does not claim to have direct access to these experiences. Rather phenomenography is an empirical research approach that analyses the variation in these experiences. This variation is found through phenomenographic analysis of the descriptions of experience given by people in the research sample. In my phenomenographic study I am not seeking to describe the A&D curriculum, I am viewing the A&D curriculum through the variation in ways that course leaders experience it. I gain access to these experiences of the A&D curriculum through interviews with course leaders.

4.2.2 Structure of awareness

> We cannot separate our understanding of the *situation* and our understanding of the *phenomena* that lend sense to the situation. Not only is the situation understood in terms of the phenomena involved, but we are aware of the phenomena from the point of view of the particular situation. (Marton and Booth, 1997, p.83)

Marton and Booth (1997) in discussing what it means to experience something in a different way state that an experience has a structural and a referential aspect. To experience something in a particular way we have to discern it from its context. But we also need to discern its parts, the way they

relate to each other and the way they relate to the whole. The structural aspect of experiencing something is therefore two-fold: discernment of the whole from the context **and** discernment of the parts and their relationship within the whole. Marton and Booth (1997) turn to the concept of 'horizons', taken from phenomenology, to develop their conceptual ideas. They see the 'external horizon' as that which surrounds the phenomena (including its contours) and the 'horizontal horizon' comprises the phenomena itself, its parts and its structural presence. Marton and Booth (1997) go on to state that intimately intertwined with the structural aspect of experience is the 'referential' aspect, the meaning.

In relation to the A&D curriculum it can be experienced and perceived in its entirety discerned from its context (e.g. within the university, higher education, society) and it can be perceived as the elements from which it is constructed (e.g. units, projects, timetables, staff-student interactions, graduate employability). The referential aspect of the A&D curriculum will be found intertwined within different course leader perceptions of it. For this reason in my analysis I consider the discernable parts (e.g. teaching) and the context (e.g. university) of the A&D curriculum and how they are described within each constituted category of course leaders' perception of the curriculum, I define as 'key characteristics'.

4.2.3 Outcome space

The 'outcome space' is the 'logically structured complex of the different way of experiencing an object' (Marton, 2000, p.105) and is the sum of the variations of conceptions of the phenomena. Marton (2000) further clarifies the non-dualist ontology of phenomenography by stating that the 'outcome space'

turns out to be synonym for ‘phenomenon’ and ‘an experience of an object is thus not a subject shadow of the real object, but a part of the whole which is subjective and objective at the same time’ (p.105). The different variations in perceiving, understanding, experiencing the phenomena, within the outcomes space are called ‘categories of description’.

4.2.4 Categories of description

The categories of description, within the outcome space are the limited number of ways of perceiving, understanding or experiencing a phenomenon. Or, put the other way around, ‘the complex of categories of description capturing the different ways of experiencing the phenomenon is the outcome space’ (Marton and Booth, 1997, p.125). This limited number of ‘different ways of experiencing’ are typically represented as a typology (Ashworth and Lucas, 1998) that is hierarchically ordered (although this is not always the case). This is one of the main assumptions of the theoretical framework of phenomenography (Tight, 2016). The theoretical development of this assumption can be found in the explanatory framework of the ‘structure of awareness’ (Marton, 2000). This had been previously called ‘anatomy of awareness’ (Marton and Booth 1997) and is a framework not always referred to in phenomenographic studies perhaps because it has become part of the implicit assumptions of researchers.

What is important in phenomenographic analysis is that the meaning of each category of description is not seen distinctly and is developed in relation to the others (Entwistle, 1997). This relational aspect is critical in understanding the way data is analysed. Whether categories of description are discovered (Prosser, 2000) or constructed (Ashworth and Lucas, 1998) from the research

data is also a theoretical concern. For example, Richardson (1999) calls for phenomenography to recognise its constructivist roots and relationship with grounded theory, suggesting categories of description are 'constructed'. Alternatively, Prosser (2000) considers that 'a phenomenographic perspective is more akin to an act of discovery (or constitution) rather than an act of verification' (p.37). Interestingly, Prosser's bracketed 'constitution', which is not an act of discovery, offers an interesting alternative because the categories of description are not constructed or discovered but constituted within the analysis of the outcome space. In presenting the categories of description specific quotes from the constituted data are cited that best represent the category and key characteristics.

The categories of description within the outcome spaces are logically related and can be hierarchically related (although this is not always the case). This hierarchy within the outcome space is constituted by the researcher/s through phenomenographic analysis. This hierarchy of the categories of description is not unproblematic, and there are concerns regarding this hierarchy and 'authorised conceptions' (Ashworth and Lucas, 2000; Webb, 1997). Phenomenographic analysis and authorised conceptions are discussed in section 4.3.

4.2.5 Unit of description

Marton (1981) in an early text on phenomenography identifies the unit of description as the 'conception'. However, Marton (1994) writing later in 1994 defines phenomenography as 'the empirical study of the limited number of qualitatively different ways in which various phenomena in, and aspects of, the world around us are experienced, conceptualised, understood, perceived and

apprehended' (p.4425). In this later definition, the unit of study that was originally expressed as 'experience' and 'conceptions' (Marton, 1981) has been broadened to include 'perceptions', 'understandings' and 'apprehensions'. It is very common in phenomenographic studies for the notion of 'conception' to be expressed as a list of other possible terms. So what is the unit of study in my phenomenographic research study? Marton and Pong (2005) are clear that phenomenography researches 'conceptions' and make a strong case in the context of their particular phenomenographic study. However, phenomenography has extended beyond its original interest, teaching and learning, and been used in a large number of different contexts (Tight, 2016, p.327 provides a useful list). Reviewing recent phenomenographic studies I find the unit of study varies from, 'conceptions' (Figueira et al., 2018), 'understandings' (Sator, 2018), 'perceptions' (Sterner et al., 2018).

One particularly important debate on the use of 'conceptions' was between Marton (1996), Säljö (1996, 1997) and Richardson (1999). Central to this, Säljö (1997) argues that phenomenographic data should be understood as the account of practices. He sees the search for 'conceptions' as not unlike the psychological process which the early phenomenographic researchers were seeking to challenge. Säljö (1997) concludes 'we could learn much more about actors' definitions of the world if we viewed their accounts as primarily attempts at communicating in situated practices rather than as ways of experiencing' (p.188). This debate is one of the reasons why some phenomenographic research based on interviews use 'accounts' as the primary unit of analysis (Ashwin, 2006).

One issue to resolve is the 'unit of study' in my phenomenographic study. To consider this I return to Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) 'academics' conceptions of the curriculum' that they define as 'both what academics perceive to be the curriculum and their understandings and experiences of the curriculum' (p.271). In my study by interviewing course leaders I will not gain access to whether they understand the curriculum, as to 'understand' the curriculum would be to lay claim that the curriculum was a fixed entity that was to be comprehended. I am researching the A&D course leaders' 'experiences' of the curriculum through their 'accounts' but these are not the unit of the research. Perhaps, my struggle between 'conception' and 'perception' in relation to phenomenography is down to the non-dualist position. In a dualist ontology 'conceptions' might be in the mind, and 'perceptions' from the outside world. To give an example, I can see a chair and my 'conception' of a chair will help me understand it. However, it is through experiencing and perceiving a variety of chairs and their possibilities that I develop a more complex 'conception' of a chair. Consequently, if I interviewed people about their experiences of a specific chair in context I would be predominantly accessing their 'perceptions' of that specific chair in context, of which there would be variations. As my research study is focused on a specific A&D curriculum in a specific context I feel it is more accurate to claim that I am researching course leaders' 'perceptions' of the curriculum.

This decision also helps me address my concern about confusion of the term 'conceptions' in curriculum literature, which can also refer to idealised curriculum models or theorised academics' orientations in literature (e.g. Eisner and Vallance, 1974). This was discussed in section 3.1.1.

So why might A&D course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum be important?

4.2.6 Approaches

Early phenomenography focused on student learning and the underlying reasons why students took different 'approaches' to learning (Svennson, 1976; Marton and Saljo, 1997). This focus on 'approaches' was important because it moved away from an understanding of student motivations or orientations beyond the individual student. 'Approaches' has stayed a key part of phenomenography, possibly because it suggests a practical component of the research. What I mean by this is that the relationship between 'conceptions' (or my 'perceptions') and 'approaches' is important as it explains why the research may be important. Considering my research study, course leaders are giving accounts of their A&D curriculum. Using phenomenographic analysis I will constitute a typology of categories of description from the data. If these categories of description have no bearing on how these course leaders approach the curriculum in practice it is difficult to see the point of the research. To consider this concern I reviewed the work of Trigwell and Prosser (1996) and Trigwell et al. (1999). Trigwell and Prosser (1996) offer a relational perspective of approaches to teaching found that 'conceptions' of teaching and learning held by academics showed 'strong relations between conceptions of teaching and approaches to teaching' (p.275). This suggests that that course leaders' 'perceptions' of the A&D curriculum might be related to their 'approaches' to the A&D curriculum. For this reason I have included 'approaches' as part of my research question. Trigwell et al. (1999) continue their line of enquiry with research into the relationship between teachers'

approaches to teaching and students' approaches to learning. Although being clear not to 'make mention of causality or the direction of causality' (p.68) their study shows 'relations between teacher's approaches to teaching and student approaches to learning'. In my study researching how course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum might enable me to also research the variation in course leaders' approaches to the curriculum is important. This is because my ultimate concern is about the way in which course leaders' approaches restrict or offer opportunities for students to engage in the curriculum. This is discussed in 4.3.5.

4.2.7 Research studies

Research using phenomenography is far reaching and goes well beyond teaching and learning (Tight, 2016). I developed my understanding of phenomenograpy, not only in reading literature that explains, clarifies or reflects on phenomenography but also by reading a considerable body of phenomenographic research studies. Notable books included Rossum and Hamer (2010) who utilise multiple phenomenographic studies incrementally to build a model of student development and enterprise learning and Brew (2006) an early reading on my research journey. These books and the dozens of phenomenographic studies in articles means that much of my development as a phenomenographer has been through literary osmosis.

Phenomenography has had advocates in A&D HE with Davies (2000), Drew (2003) and Shreeve (2008) each making considerable contributions to A&D pedagogic research communities.

4.3 Data generation

The generation of data in my phenomenographic study was carefully planned within the theoretical and methodological imperatives of the research design. Interviews are the most common form of data generation and the approach taken in this research plan. Guidance on how to conduct phenomenographic interviews was gathered from a broad range of texts, however key were Bowen (2005), Åkerlind (2012) and Gansemer-Topf and Rands (2016) who discuss approaches to constructing interview questions. Bowden (2005) recommends starting each interview with the same question and Åkerlind (2012) provides a structure of contextual, primary (open and situated) and unstructured questions, all used in the design and enactment of my interviews. An additional dimension added to the questions was that of 'time' which might best be described as past-present-future continuum. As the participants in this research have experienced the A&D curriculum as both a student (past) and as a course leader (present) and will have ideas about the development of the curriculum (future) my questions explored this continuum.

Baker and Edwards (2012) ask 'How many qualitative interviews is enough?' and conclude that 'it depends' (p.42) based on the epistemological and methodological questions about the nature of the research. The number of participants in phenomenographic studies is relatively small, twenty or fewer are common (Tight, 2016a). The participants for my study were twenty course leaders who lead and manage undergraduate HE courses at three small Art and Design colleges that are part of the same university. There are only twenty undergraduate HE course leaders employed at these colleges, so it is not a sample but all the course leaders in this context. I selected to use only

undergraduate course leaders, despite having access to postgraduate course leaders, because I was interested in the sample having as few differentiating features as possible. However, I did include Foundation Degree and Graduate Diploma course leaders as they are working at undergraduate level. The primary reason for this was because I considered that undertaking a phenomenographic study with sixteen people may lead to difficulties in identifying the variation in categories of description.

The recordings were transcribed with the understanding that the translation of sound recordings into text is in itself a form of interpretative, analytic and learning process (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). The interviews generated around 30 hours of recorded material that translated into around 150,000 words. All the interview transcripts were given a number with the course leader names and course titles removed to ensure that as far as possible my personal knowledge of individuals, all of who are work colleagues, was 'bracketed'. Bracketing is a method used in qualitative research to mitigate the potentially harmful effects of the researcher's preconceptions that may taint the research process. This includes the researcher setting aside previous knowledge or presuppositions about the subjects or objects of their research. Bracketing has its roots in the phenomenology tradition, although the term is used in other research contexts. Tufford and Newman (2012) after discussing the problems of defining 'bracketing' offer a strong model for integrating bracketing into the entire methodology of qualitative research. Although I have discussed 'bracketing' in this section it played a part in all parts of my study, from project conceptualisation to writing. Particularly helpful in this process was Ashworth and Lucas's (2000) list of presuppositions that should be

bracketed in phenomenography. All of these have been considered in this research design. Top of their list is ‘importing earlier findings’, which in the case of my study meant bracketing Fraser and Bosanquet (2006). Patrick (2000) reflecting on her research using phenomenography suggests that she would rather see ‘bracketing out’ as ‘becoming conscious of one’s expectations, and actively challenging them!’ (p.133). This active position is important, particularly in relation to my position as an inside researcher.

Another concern in phenomenographic data analysis is the idea of ‘authorised conceptions’. This idea arose from discussions of phenomenographic work in subject disciplines where the textbook or teacher might hold a correct or best conception of a phenomenon. This could clearly be a problem should the teacher undertake a phenomenographic study, as in their analysis they might only seek to find the most correct conception. In relation to my study, this has resonance as an Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching where I might seek what either I believe, or literature positions as the most correct perception of the A&D curriculum. Bracketing during participant interviews and data analysis was therefore critical. Webb (1997) challenges the power relationship in phenomenography and argues ‘the conversation is uneven as only one of the parties has the power to categorise and judge’ (p.202). Ashworth and Lucas (1998) pick up on the same point and call for a more active consideration in the research process. This is why my ethical considerations as a researcher are particularly important in all phases of my study.

4.3.1 Ethics and research considerations

To conduct my research I interviewed twenty course leaders at the three colleges where I am Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching. This presented a number of ethical and practical considerations that I discuss through the concept of the 'insider' and 'outsider' researcher. The concept of the 'insider-researcher' is based on a dichotomy of 'the insider' and 'the outsider' in the research process (Merton, 1972). Mercer (2007) challenges this dichotomy in favour of a continuum with the two abstracts as end points. I agree with this critique and accept that as a researcher I have a particular set of characteristics which individually may or may not give me an 'insider' or 'outsider' position in relation to the research topic, be these to a greater or lesser degree along the continuum. I address this by discussing my 'insider-researcher' and 'outsider-researcher' position in relation to my research study and identifying any relevant issues. In doing this it is also important to remember Mercer's (2007) critical point:

> The more we conceive of insiderness and outsiderness as an 'either/or' duality, the more we are tempted to judge one as better than the other. Conversely, the more we conceive of them as points on a continuum, the more likely we are to value them both, recognising the potential strengths and weaknesses in all manner of contexts. (p.7)

As an A&D academic and A&D practitioner with over twenty-eight years of experience in A&D colleges I am most certainly an 'insider-researcher'. This situatedness and context are what Costley et al. (2010) view as the most important aspect of work-based research. They identify a number of benefits of work-based research: to draw upon shared understandings and trust, to

study a particular issue in depth with special knowledge, to gain special access to people and information, to unravel issues beset with paradox and ambiguity. These benefits all bear significance to this research as the languages and practices of A&D and its pedagogies are often complex and my specialist knowledge built up over years enables a deeper analysis and development of connections. However, Mercer (2007) after identifying very similar benefits of the 'insider-research' identifies a number of possible downsides of the 'insider-researcher', which also need to be considered.

Mercer's (2007) first concerns can be summarised as 'familiarity', where assumptions are not challenged, common prior experiences not shared and norms not articulated. Having already undertaken some pilot interview research on a different topic the use of 'you know what I mean' (as more than a disfluency) or 'as we were saying yesterday' arose from participants with whom I was familiar. To counteract this I have made sure that all correspondence, including the request for interview came from me as a student of Lancaster University. I also reiterated before the interview began that the interview was for my PhD research and I was not interviewing in my capacity as Associate Dean but as a student. As the latter may have the effect described by ironic process theory (Wenger, 1984) where the interviewee is more like to think about my role as Associate Dean, the style of my delivery was critical in ensuring the participants felt it was a confidential space. I also reminded the participants that their interview was for an external audience beyond the disciplines of A&D hence that they should try to answer the questions not just for me but also for the audience of my study. Familiarity with the participants was also an important issue. I knew some of the participants

more than others, this meant that I needed to be mindful that the interview process was neither too familiar nor too distant. Again this supports the view that the dichotomy of insider/outsider is a continuum that recognises that a close or distant relationship with the interviewee will elicit good research outcomes, as long as this relationship is considered in the interviewer's approach.

Although an 'insider-researcher', I also have aspects of the 'outsider-researcher'. In addition to my post I have worked as an associate lecturer, senior lecturer, course leader, programme director, dean and in other associate dean roles. This meant that in relation to the course leaders, particularly in my senior roles, I could be positioned as 'outsider'. It also means that there were issues connected to prior experience of working relationships and power issues to consider. Although not a manager of any of the course leaders, I often worked with them in a supportive (e.g. teaching and learning bids) and developmental role (e.g. staff development). Floyd and Preston (2017) define the role of associate deans within 'distributed leadership', and my experience matches their research in that the role is not often understood by colleagues above and below in the hierarchical structure. Mercer (2007) raises the concerns regarding the 'insider-researcher', such as sensitive topics not being raised or people not sharing for fear of being judged but these are just as applicable to my role as an 'outsider-researcher' within the college management structure. A real concern was that participants might overly focus on information that they believe as Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching I needed to hear as part of internal politics. Finally, this insider-outsider research offers both personal professional development and

potentially opportunities for organisational development in the context of my study (Anderson and Jones, 2000) and possibly in other contexts.

In my ethics submission to Lancaster University Ethics Committee, which included copies of all correspondence with staff, I addressed the issues identified here. For example, using the Lancaster University logo and Lancaster University email to contact potential participants, strategies were critical in staff perceiving me more as a student of Lancaster University as opposed to Associate Dean of the A&D colleges. I also ensured that both in the written material and verbally at interview that course leaders, were fully aware of the anonymity of the process and that they would not be identifiable in the data. In advance of the interviews one particular challenge was that all courses in my study were due to go through revalidation, part of a five year cycle at the university. As there was a relatively new senior management team there were likely to be conversations regarding curriculum changes. To address this I acted quickly to ensure all interviews took place before the initial conversations were programmed.

4.3.2 Interview schedule

I am researching undergraduate A&D education for my PhD at the University at Lancaster. Could we start off with you telling me a bit about yourself, your role and the course that you run? (open question to make interviewee comfortable).

PAST

What was the curriculum like on the course/s that you have studied? Has this had any influence on your current role?

Where did you get your understanding of how to design and organise the curriculum?

PRESENT

What is your role in relation to the curriculum? Particularly as a course leader and have you been involved in any curriculum developments?

How do you think your subject curriculum has changed in the UK?

How or why do you think particular groups of students perceive the curriculum differently?

FUTURE

What do you see as the key challenges for the A&D curriculum in the future?

What is your ideal curriculum? If you had a blank sheet of paper how would you like the curriculum to be?

Thank you for this contribution to my research.

4.3.3 Interview changes and challenges

Other than challenges identified before the interviews the actual process offered an interesting new challenge and opportunity. Interestingly the first question about 'tell me a bit about yourself, your role and the course that you run?' ran from a few seconds in one interview to over thirty minutes in two others. In the latter the focus was a long narrative about their career that whilst fascinating meant interviews overran and sometimes it was hard to focus on the research topic. I overcame this by allowing some interviews to considerably overrun. I also discovered that at the end of interviews by asking 'what do you think of the topic of my research?' I would elicit more relaxed and frank responses where people would reflect on what they had said. These

reflections often included clarification on what had been said or offered alternative views. After the first interview this became part of the interview process, participants were informed the recorder was still on and that it would form part of the data.

4.3.4 Participant profile

All course leaders completed the Participant Information Sheet agreed by Lancaster University's Ethics Committee. The following data was obtained:

Course leader

Participants are course leaders for 16 Batchelor of Arts degree (BA), 2 Foundation degree (FDA), 2 Graduate Diploma (GD). All of these courses are undergraduate courses, the three year BA is the traditional degree route, the FDA is a two year vocational course which also can include a third year top up to BA and GD is a one year course equivalent to the final year of a BA course. There are 12 Design and 8 Art course leaders, this is representative of the proportion of students studying Design or Art at the colleges.

Gender

The study included an equal number of male and female participants, divided proportionately across A&D, however there is no intention to use this as a factor in my analysis. This is not representative of the student body at the colleges that are two thirds female. Research into this gender imbalance in A&D education can be found in Hopper (2015).

Age

The age ranged from 37 to 54 with an average age of 48. This was particularly interesting as in Shreeve's (2008) study of A&D practitioner teachers the average age was 38. For many of these course leaders their identities and practices as academics will have been formed through the relationship of their A&D practice and teaching practice in their thirties (Shreeve 2008) but they are now course leaders.

Ethnicity

All staff identified as white. This is not representative of the student body. The lack of diversity in A&D HE academics is of serious concern particularly when considered in relation to student attainment issues (Finnigan and Richards, 2016) or the lack of diversity in the creative arts (Arts Council, 2019) and creative industries (CIF, 2017). The focus of this research study does not overtly relate to these issues however in having a better understanding of the A&D curriculum it is intended that my study can contribute to any work seeking to change or enhance the curriculum to tackle student attainment and increase diversity.

Nationality

The nationality of staff was 18 British, 1 European and 1 North American. There are strong historical (Efland, 1990) and contemporary connections in UK, European and American A&D education. It is not uncommon for students to gain Masters or PhD qualifications across this international context.

Discipline qualifications

The highest qualifications of the course leaders were 3 PhD (all from the university in which they work), 16 Master of Arts (MA) or equivalent, 2 BA or equivalent. The MA is still the predominant exit qualification for these academics, as the development of the PhD in A&D is relatively new (Elkin 2009). The PhD alongside the development of university research cultures has led to new forms of enquiry (Quinn, 2015) and an additional focus for A&D practitioner teachers (Thornton, 2013).

Teaching qualifications

18 course leaders have teaching qualifications (12 from the university in which they work), 2 have no teaching qualification. That HE staff should gain teaching qualifications was a recommendation of the Dearing Report (1997) and is an agenda that has gained greater prominence with the recent UK government Teaching Excellence Framework. Nearly all staff took the qualification within employment so it was not a prior requisite for employment as an HE academic.

4.3.5 Data analysis

Key to phenomenographic analysis is that the non-dualistic position of phenomenography means that methodologically the data must be seen collectively for the purposes of analysis (Åkerlind, 2012). As I am not seeking to assign particular perceptions of A&D curriculum to individuals but rather find out the variation in the way that the A&D course leaders perceive the curriculum this is a critical part of the research design. Braun and Clarke (2013) comment that it is tempting to see analytic guidelines as recipes that have to be precisely followed, however they see good qualitative research as

'analytic sensibility'. This is quite a vague concept but perhaps talks slightly to my phenomenography by literature osmosis, mentioned previously. In constructing the analysis stage of my research design, the work of Dortin (2002), Sin (2010), Åkerlind (2012) were all of use, in that all describe or reflect specifically upon the phenomenographic analysis process.

Åkerlind (2012) describes the paper-based approach of piles of paper, notes and the ability to physically move them in the space. Åkerlind (2012) clarifies 'a primary feature of constitution of categories of description is the search for key qualitative similarities within and differences between categories' (p.118). So analysing similarities within coded utterances and their possible meaning and considering the differences is an iterative process. Åkerlind (2012) describes phases of the phenomenographic analysis stage thoroughly although perhaps this more succinct statement summarises the process:

> In concrete terms, the process looks like this: quotes are sorted into piles, borderline cases are examined, and eventually the criterion attributes for each group are made explicit. (p.118)

Starting with printed copies of my interviews, akin to Åkerling (2012), I quickly made the decision to move my data to a computer-based analysis. What became apparent was that using computer manipulation and the editing possibilities of Microsoft Word would be more efficient and also enable greater connections to be made. After a period of manipulating the data I moved the project to NVivo, a piece of software designed for qualitative research. After importing all my transcripts into NVivo I started by completely coding the first three interviews into nodes. I then started to build the nodes across all twenty transcripts. Once I became highly familiar with the data I found it necessary to

start a completely new file with nodes that more broadly represented what I had found across the data. Although I was already 'bracketing' the individual sources, as discussed, what became really apparent was that by using NVivo at this stage I had completely forgotten the source of the data and was analysing all twenty interviews holistically. Through this process I coded over seventy identified ways that the curriculum was articulated, these included codes such as 'curriculum as flexible', 'curriculum as transformative' and 'curriculum as engaging'. I also created nodes that focused on the course leader, the curriculum changing and the contextual curriculum factors identified in Chapter 3. The ability to retitle nodes in NVivo software was highly effective, as it has enabled me to re-title and merge nodes during the coding process. This enabled what Åkerlind (2012) describes as the iterative process with 'a focus on parts and the wholes' (p.120).

As discussed 'bracketing' is essential in all parts of the research process. Ashworth and Lucas (2000) suggest that it is important not to presume a definite structure whilst collecting and analysing data. During my initial coding phase I was particularly mindful not to look for any form of connections but to consider the meaning of data in its context. Entwistle (1997) provides some cautionary points for phenomenographers, seeing the interpretative aspect as like historical research which comes as much from contested interpretations as definitive finding. In terms of the last stage of the data analysis:

> This stage involves the researcher in an analysis of the meaning of each Category in relation to every other one, a consideration of individual variations in the ways each Category is exemplified by individual respondents, and through a logical analysis of these differences. (Entwistle, 1997, p.133)

In my phenomenographic analysis of course leader interviews it was possible to find examples of most of the categories of description in a single interview transcript. What became evident when analysing the data is that within each participant's data it was possible to find dominant perceptions. Using NVivo it was possible to track these dominant perceptions to coding which pertained to the course leaders' approaches to the curriculum. So, whereas perceptions are views of the curriculum based on experience, approaches are descriptions of contextualised curriculum practices.

In this process I was clear about the remit of phenomenography to find the variations of the ways in which a phenomenon is experienced and perceived. I am not claiming to align these perceptions and approaches within individuals, as it would not be possible to demonstrate causation. However, by reanalysing the variation of perceptions of the curriculum in the data it was possible to constitute the variation in description of course leaders' approaches to the curriculum.

4.3.6 Reliability and validity

The rigour of phenomenography, like that of other qualitative methods, is discussed theoretically and methodologically (Cope, 2004). The reliability of phenomenography often relates particularly to the research procedures used to ensure fidelity to the participant's relationship to the unit of description being investigated (Sandberg, 1997). One concern of reliability is that of replicability, put simply, would another researcher make the same conclusions about the outcome space? For example, one statement from a participant could be assigned to two or more categories of description. One solution to this research design problem has been the use of what is called 'interjudge-

reliability' (or inter-rater reliability). This involves giving the outcome spaces and quotes or entire transcripts to an individual or a group to study externally, although it can also involve working on phenomenographic analysis in research teams (Bowden and Green, 2005). This allows a secondary perspective on the outcome space and the categories of description. However, Sandberg (1997) challenges 'inter-judge reliability' on the basis of its epistemological inconsistency with phenomenography:

> The researcher cannot escape from being intentionally related to the research object, the categories of description are always the researchers interpretation of the data obtained from the individuals about their conceptions of reality. In other words, the categories of description are intentionally constituted through the researcher's interpretation. (p.208)

Rather than 'interjudge-reliability', Sandberg (1997 p.210) calls for 'interpretative awareness' through phenomenological reduction stating a useful five-step process. I have responded to these five steps, so that as a researcher:

1. I am orientated to the phenomena as it appears throughout the research process.
2. I am orientated to describing what constitutes the experience under investigation, rather than attempting to explain why it appears as it does.
3. I treat all aspects of the lived experiences under investigation as equally important.
4. As researcher my search for structural features is carried out with free imaginative variation by adopting different interpretations of the data.

5. As researcher I use intentionality as a correlation rule to assist in explicating the variations.

Building on this work Cope (2004) proposes ‘interjudge communicability’ to ensure the rigour of the research and underpins this with an analytical framework of a structure of awareness, proposing this to have eight stages. I view both Sandberg (1997) and Cope (2004) as important to my research design and agree with the issues around interjudge-reliability. Cope (2004 p.8) proposes eight requirements for validity within phenomenographic research, rather than list these here, I offer my reply:

1. I have acknowledged my background as A&D teaching and learning lead and scholar.
2. I have clarified that the sample is actually a full set in the context of this research.
3. I have explained for issues of convenience that I have included course leaders who do not run BA courses.
4. I have justified the design of my interview questions.
5. My strategies to collect unbiased data are included.
6. I analysed the data in the early phases without imposing an existing structure, by bracketing the work of Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) and not initially looking for categories (Ashworth and Lucas 1998).
7. I have described the analysis method in detail.
8. I have accounted for the processes used to control and check interpretations made throughout the analysis (e.g. communicating, discussing and further analysing my outcome space and categories of description with my research supervisor).

This last point was important, as it was through ‘inter-judge communicability’ that I shared and developed my research analysis to ensure it was valid and reliable.

4.3.7 Generalisability

Generalisability is the term used to discuss the extent to which research findings obtained in one context are representative of other contexts. The issue of generalisability is not just an issue for phenomenography but that of qualitative research more generally (Sin 2010). Silverman (2005) suggests that qualitative case studies in institutional interactions do not have much meaning in terms of the traditional ‘distributional’ understanding of generalisability but does think they could have another important role. Using the concept of ‘possibility’, Siverman (2005) suggests that they have generalisability as ‘possibilities’ of practices in other contexts.

One aspect of my study that I find particularly interesting is that course leaders, and academics generally, have experience of the curriculum as both a student and as an academic, most often with generational and geographic differences. As a result my research study investigates the participants’ perception of the A&D curriculum that extends well beyond the physical site and time of the research study. Another particularly interesting aspect in developing my interview questions, through multiple iterations, I found questions could be categorised into past, present and future. Interestingly, asking questions about future curriculum, offered some of the most interesting data about the participant’s experiences of the curriculum. This means that although claims to generalisability cannot be made, I hope that there will be

findings that offer possibilities of perceiving and approaching the A&D curriculum and the HE curriculum more broadly in other contexts.

4.4 Limitations of phenomenography

So far I have considered the theoretical and methodological aspects and benefits of phenomenography but what are its limitations? Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) having made their phenomenographic analysis ask 'why the variations and orientation exist' (p.278) and use an additional level of analysis to do this. Similarly, Shreeve (2008) having undertaken a phenomenographic analysis draws on the work of Berglund (2004) to use activity theory (Engeström, 1987) as a heuristic tool to contextualise the experiences of her interviews within their working contexts. A particularly important paper in my research journey was Trowler and Wareham (2007) that offers a critique of phenomenography. They see three problems with phenomenography, 'there is a failure to acknowledge the significance of social structures for individual behaviour: the individual is privileged over the social group; results tend to be descriptive rather than explanatory' (Trowler and Wareham, 2007, p.6). This is perhaps exemplified in Meyer and Eley (2006) who critique Trigwell and Prosser's (1999, 1996) 'inventory of approaches to teaching' research that is rooted in phenomenography. Meyer and Eley (2006) view the limited dimensionality within phenomenography as not taking account of the contextual complexities of university teaching and ultimately are concerned that the 'inventory of approaches to teaching' (Trigwell and Prosser, 1999, 1996) may be used to evaluate university teaching. This is an important point of reflection for my study as phenomenography offers a research design that enables me to develop an answer to my first research question. However,

deciding to establish the variations in course leaders' perceptions, and approaches to the curriculum leaves me to consider not just the reasons for this variation (Fraser and Bosanquet, 2006) but what can be deducted from this variation.

4.5 Analysing the variation in course leaders' approaches

I now discuss how I decided to answer my second research question.

RQ2: What are the benefits, limitations and implications for students of the variation in course leaders' (and course team) approaches to the curriculum?

In considering how to consider and discuss the variations of A&D course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum it was important to ensure that I did not contradict the ontological or epistemological position of phenomenography. Ashwin and McLean (2005) outline how the phenomenography of Marton and Booth (1997) and the critical pedagogy of Freire (1996) can be brought together. Marton and Booth (1997) has been used multiple times in this thesis and is a particularly dynamic presentation of phenomenography as it situates the concepts developed within the context of the 'structure of awareness'. Freire's (1996) 'Pedagogy of the oppressed' is a highly influential text that is part of what is termed 'critical pedagogy'. 'Critical pedgogy', in the context of HE is that which 'develops students' intellectual and moral attributes (communicative reason) so that they are disposed to think creatively and act responsibly with others to ameliorate the problems of contemporary society' (McLean, 2006, p.128). What is of interest to my study is that Ashwin and McLean (2005) discuss the connection between phenomenography and critical pedagogy. They do this by reconciling the epistemological non-dualism

of Freire (1996) with ontological non-dualism of phenomenography. Ashwin and McLean (2005) reconcile these two approaches through the concept of 'academic engagement', which importantly involves both teacher and student. This connection of phenomenography and critical theory is important as it made me consider an aspect of Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) approach to analysing the variation of academics' conceptions of the curriculum. I considered some rhetorical questions. What criteria are being used in the constitution of the hierarchy of the categories of description? Could this be a critical pedagogy perspective? Does their subsequent analysis of this variation using the 'critical theory' of Habermas (1972) just reveal the critical pedagogy that intuits their constitution of the hierarchical variation? This led me to reflect on the underlying values from which my data would be analysed. Whilst I have chosen not to explicitly use 'critical pedagogy', the underlying assumptions in the constitution of the course leaders' perception of and approaches to the curriculum is that education is for both the benefit of the individual student and society (McLean 2006).

4.6 Alternative research approaches

The initial driver of my study was my interest in the A&D curriculum. In considering ways to research the A&D curriculum I considered a number of other alternative approaches. Having an interest in social practice theories, particularly the work of Schatzki (2002, 1996) I considered viewing the curriculum as a 'nexus of practices' (Hui et al., 2017) but ultimately agree with Nicolini (2012) that Schatzki's work can be used in a reductionist way when used as a framework by social researchers. Nicolini (2012) concludes on this issue that 'arguing that such a structure is there is one thing, representing it as

part of an empirical research study is another' (p.181). Another consideration was the amount of metaphors that are used to discuss the A&D curriculum both in day-to-day interactions and in literature, Orr and Shreeve's (2017) 'sticky curriculum' being a recent example. This led me to consider systematic metaphor analysis (Schmitt, 2005; Pitcher and Äkerlind, 2009) as a possible approach to my study. Relevant to my research design decision, Patrick (2000) also considered metaphor analysis before moving to phenomenography. She identifies that phenomenography and metaphor analysis has some common ground. Ultimately, like Patrick (2000), it was the possibility in phenomenographic analysis to go beyond the individual case to the views of the collective which was appealing and why I chose phenomenography as the research design for my study.

4.7 Conclusion

In researching the A&D course leaders' perception of the curriculum, my first research question, phenomenography as a research design offers an appropriate approach. Its non-dualist position and its focus on a second order perspective appeal as I am not seeking to reductively assign these perceptions of the A&D curriculum to individuals. Rather, I am interested in the complexity of the A&D curriculum and the variations in the ways it is perceived as a collective phenomenon. Phenomenography as a research design offers both theoretical concepts (such as the outcome space and categories of description) and methodological considerations (such as the phenomenographic data generation and analysis) that are in alignment with my research aims. Developing my analysis of the course leaders' perceptions of the A&D curriculum further to analyse course leaders' approaches to the

curriculum enables a consideration of situated curriculum practices. This then gives me the opportunity to use my ‘curriculum perspectives framework’ to consider these course leaders’ approaches to the curriculum and their implications for students. Ensuring that my insider-outsider research has fully considered all ethical dimensions in undertaking my study and that the findings are reliable and valid was also fully considered in this chapter. Whilst it is recognised that claims for the findings generalisability may be limited it is hoped that the findings will be useful as a heuristic in the discussion of both the A&D curriculum and the HE curriculum more generally. In the next chapter I present the findings of the phenomenographic part of my research design.

5 Chapter 5 Course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum

5.1 Introduction

In Part 1 of this chapter (Section 5.2) I use the data generated from interviews with the course leaders to undertake a phenomenographic analysis of the variation in course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum. I constitute five categories of description from the outcome space, titled Categories A – E. In presenting my analysis I identify the following key characteristics of each Category as teaching, learning, students, curriculum structure, knowledge and purpose of education. These are presented at the end of each Category. In Part 2 of this chapter (Section 5.3) I undertake a further analysis of the data constituting five variations in course leaders' (and course team) approaches to the curriculum, titled Approaches A-E. In both parts of this chapter I use quotes from the interview transcripts (Tr), identified through the participants number, to illuminate how the perception or approach was constituted from the data. It is notable that quotes selected to represent the constitution of a Category or Approach become longer as the Category or Approach becomes more advanced and therefore complex.

5.2 Part 1: Course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum

When referring to 'perceptions' I am referring to what course leaders perceive to be curriculum in their current situated practice, based on their past and present experience of the A&D curriculum and their ideas of its future. Five qualitatively distinct variations were constituted from the interview data.

The variation in course leaders' perception of the curriculum as:	
Category A:	The content and projects to be delivered to students.
Category B:	The structure of the course to enable student outcomes.
Category C:	The design, planning and co-ordination of the student experience.
Category D:	Dynamic, interactive and evolving through student engagement.
Category E:	A learning community of students and staff.

Table 5.1: The variation in course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum.

5.2.1 Category A: The content and projects to be delivered to students.

In Category A, the curriculum is perceived as the content of the curriculum.

> The curriculum is the content really, the content and the learning, the delivery of the information for learning really. (Tr17)

> I suppose the curriculum holds the syllabus that you're delivering; it's the overarching direction. (Tr19)

Here the curriculum content is information to be taught to students. Teaching is seen an act of delivering content, through transmission to students. Students are seen as being enabled to learn by this act of teaching delivery.

> The curriculum is what we need to deliver to enable the students to gain knowledge and skills and expertise in both a broad educational way and a specific, more specific, way in terms of subject. (Tr19)

As discussed, a central focus of A&D practice-based curriculum is the project (sometimes called assignments in other disciplines) this can be seen as the

curriculum content. In this Category the projects as content can take precedence over the curriculum.

> I'm more sort of keen on projects than the curriculum. I mean they are the curriculum to a certain extent but the coming up with new projects, running them through, seeing if they work and then tweaking them. (Tr4)

Knowledge practices in this Category A are fixed and compartmentalised. This was particularly evident in the description of the CSS elements of the curriculum. Here content is something filling the curriculum, which has insufficient space. A particularly dominant form of delivery of this content was the lecture.

> I tried to give a history of design for example across 110 years when I first started and the time that I have been a course leader to I have to kind of incrementally go up here every year and that last lecture which was essentially 2000 to now was the originally 2000 to something is now 2000 to 2018. Within the period of time of that I've got enough you know between 2012 and 2018 I've got enough material to do another lecture which takes us into another era. (Tr1)

For students to be in attendance while content or projects are delivered is learning and a form of achievement. Students who do not attend are failing to participate in the content or projects and not achieving. The differences in successful students and failing students is often seen in terms of attendance, for example, when one participant was asked about different types of students they defined two groups.

> Groups of students that understand really basically that attendance equals achievement and groups of students that don't, now I'm

> hoping our new attendance admin system is really going to support us on this. (Tr5)

In Category A, the curriculum is also seen to be administrative, and a bureaucratic tool often externally imposed.

> But yeah, I guess part of the answer is really administrative isn't it? There are briefs; there are units; there are things that we – the hand-downs, that we have to fit our curriculum into. (Tr13)

This fitting of content, projects, units and workshops into the curriculum is a fragmented perception of the curriculum. A holistic perception of the curriculum is largely absent in Category A. This means the purposes of education can be largely absent in Category A or very narrowly defined as skills development.

For a summary of Category A key characteristics see Table 5.2.

Category A: Key characteristics	
Teaching	Delivering
Learning	Outcome
Students	Attending
Course structure	Projects / assignments Units
Course documentation	Administrative
Knowledge	Content
Purpose of education	Skills development

Table 5.2: Category A key characteristics.

5.2.2 Category B: The structure of the course to enable student outcomes.

In Category B the curriculum is perceived as the course structure enabling student outcomes.

> The curriculum is a structure of learning and a structure of teaching which supports and encourages learning within a subject or territory or a discipline with a view to leading to an outcome which could potentially be professionally relatable or discipline relatable like a kind of entity at the end which is relatable to the outside world and within a university and HEI context. (Tr1)

The curriculum structure is viewed as supporting the outcomes of the curriculum for students. In Category B teaching is still delivering but the focus is on learning in the right way.

> The curriculum is the structure you put on to try and find the way to, well for the students to be able to do the learning in the right way and it also is the place where that structure allows you to have a content. (Tr2)

Students in Category B are seen to be participants in the curriculum who are seen to choose whether to participate or not.

> We can establish what we want to happen at the beginning of the course and incrementally how that builds through a three-step process a three-year process, and students subjected to that process and can be incredibly passive in their participation. (Tr3)

Knowledge practices in Category B are seen as those having professional or disciplinary outcomes for the student and for the profession. Learning is often an outcome supporting progression to a specific vocational outcome.

> There's a conversation about the relevancy of what the outcome is in relationship to the outside world, so there is this kind of, in some ways a kind of circular process in terms of understanding what the value of the learning is in relationship to the outcome, the relationship to the final destination and what it is for. It's quite a kind of endeavour, I haven't really had to explain it before. (Tr1)

In Category B the structure is not just the units and the years it is also the day-to-day timetable. To not participate is to not learn.

> but this is constantly about the framework, and that curriculum framework every day counts, every day counts and I am really becoming more and more aware of that, that just seeing some of their final projects, those that haven't engaged you can see in their final work, they don't know how to articulate and I'm not just talking in terms of words but visually or touch or whatever multi-sensory, it might be a sound piece, it might be a drawing, it might be a script because my students are coming up this whole range of work from my course but they can't do that if they don't access the teaching so then of course comes back to the curriculum. (Tr11)

Learning in Category B is an outcome but is also gaining access to bodies of knowledge and ways of knowing. However, this is most often expressed through the conceptualisation of demonstrated practices through skills.

For a summary of Category B key characteristics see Table 5.3.

Category B key characteristics	
Teaching	Delivery
Learning	Outcome
Students	Participating
Course structure	Projects, units and course
Course documentation	A guide
Knowledge	Vocational skills
Purpose of education	Specific vocation

Table 5.3: Category B key characteristics.

5.2.3 Category C: The design, planning and co-ordination of the student experience.

In Category C the curriculum is perceived as the design, planning and co-ordination of the student experience. It is important to recognise this is not the students' experience per se, but the preconceived intention of the curriculum to provide an experience. Category C is complex in that it often involves both structural and experiential notions of the curriculum.

> The curriculum to me is the glue of the course isn't it? It's the – it's what your intentions are in the learning, so it's the learning outcomes; it's the narrative of the curriculum, the journey. It's not, you know a curriculum can be designed in a unit but it should be designed in the year and it's designed in three years; this huge journey that students are going on, so to me the curriculum is the articulation of a course's teaching and learning experience and the learning outcomes of that experience. (Tr12)

> The curriculum is the intentions of the course and how they apply and how they roll out those intentions in terms of, you know, making their intentions about, making them successful; making an enjoyable and positive and accumulative experience for the students. (Tr10)

Category C is often described in the data using spatial metaphors, such as the ‘student journey’ or the curriculum as a ‘landscape that is navigated’.

> It’s the landscape. It’s the landscape that you design. (Tr10)

Teaching in Category C is facilitating positive and accumulative opportunities for students to gather experiences. Learning is experiential. Students in Category C need to attend and participate but also the curriculum is engaging the person.

> So I think the sense of constantly engaging the person is the fundamental key to the student experience. And I think from beyond there it's trial and error. So we've done things that haven't been a success. We've changed it. Got better. And then year on year we built. So. There's no simple answer to that. But I do think you need some principles or coordinates to navigate your way around how you deliver something. (Tr7)

Category C is particularly distinctive from Category B primarily because Category C considers in greater depth the characteristics and needs of the individual and identified groups of students entering a course of study and their diverse exit opportunities.

> What’s important about a curriculum is that it’s designed in a way that is thinking about both the entry point of the students and who they are but also about the exit point and what we’re educating the students for; so the purpose and direction. (Tr10)

In Category C the perceived purpose of education is to develop the individual and the curriculum is designed to support the development of student’s attributes, knowledge, awareness and ways of knowing.

> So curriculum has to do with a set of whatever you would call it – attributes, skills, awareness, knowledge that you would help a person to acquire over the course of the education and that you would have an understanding of the general kind of degree of preparation your students are arriving with and a general idea of where you want them to end up and then everything, the curriculum is designed to do that. (Tr11)

Alongside these ideas of attributes, competence and skills, knowledge practices are seen more as an acquired way of knowing. The outcome for students is still defined by the curriculum in its institutional context such as the university and professional vocational requirements.

> It's developing an exciting and engaging and successful curriculum to provide what the university wants the course to be. (Tr14)

> Enabling all of the students within our curriculum to gain all the skills and sensibilities or attributes that they will need to flourish beyond because enabling them to have careers in this field is really important. (Tr5)

Within Category C the purpose of education is facilitating student's development of vocational competencies needed for work or vocation beyond university. However, it is important to note that these vocational competencies are those perceived to be essential by the course leader and course team and not the student.

For a summary of Category C key characteristics see Table 5.4.

Category C key characteristics	
Teaching	Facilitating learning
Learning	Journey to be experienced
Students	Experiencing
Course structure	Course & university
Course documentation	Designed
Knowledge	Competencies
Purpose of education	Generic employability and attributes development

Table 5.4: Category C key characteristics.

5.2.4 Category D: Dynamic, interactive and evolving through student engagement.

In Category D the curriculum is perceived as the students' engagement in a dynamic, interactive and evolving curriculum as a site of interaction with academics. This has characteristics of an iterative design process where feedback and evaluation from students is responded to in real time. The curriculum is highly flexible, adaptable and changing through interaction.

> The students really like that when they see 'OK we're going to stop what we're doing and we're not going to do that next project because actually we've identified that for you guys this would be a better project' and they feel then that's – you're paying attention to them and that's currency for them, that they've not had something done to them; they've had some sort of shaping in that experience, it's quite meaningful for them actually, that they are being listened to and people are actually, certain things are responding to their needs because they do change; they are changing. (Tr12)

In Category D teaching and learning is highly adaptive and interactive in meeting the needs of students, understood through feedback and evaluation. The curriculum is that which focuses on the individual student whilst offering opportunities for peer interaction.

> I see it as very student-led, so it's very much about individual students' practices, but I do think there are certain things that we do need to map out to create a collective experience. (Tr16)

> So that when we walk into a studio, students will be learning from each other as well as from their tutors, it will be much more interactive. (Tr7)

In terms of the curriculum's context it is seen in a broader way. For example, perceptions of the curriculum in Category D often include seeing pre and post curriculum connections as integral to the curriculum.

> It's a big part of things for us; when actually the biggest part of the curriculum is seemingly not in the curriculum itself; it's post-graduation. It finds its way into the three years of study perhaps retroactively... retrospectively. It finds its way back that way but a big focus for me is on how students are equipped when they finish and how to address where students are at when they have finished and that's building communities, that building structures and infrastructures for practices, dialogue, debate, career opportunities, professional opportunities; so a big part for me is that area, which seems to be kind of outside of the remit but I actually think it's probably the most crucial part of the process. (Tr9)

In Category D knowledge practices are actively developed within the discipline to which individual students and groups of students, create dialogues, debates and professional opportunities. In Category D knowledge practices are

selected by academics, although there is space for these to be contested by students through dialogue. This is within the curriculum as a form of interaction. The complexity of this interaction is seen to be impossible to represent in curriculum documentation or policies.

> I suppose in a way the curriculum can't possibly tolerate that level of complexity in its written form. (Tr3)

The purpose of the curriculum in Category D is to offer significant life experiences. The outcome of this curriculum is offering both vocational and academic progression simultaneously.

> The curriculum should be professionally relatable or discipline relatable like a kind of entity at the end that is relatable to the outside world and within a university and HEI context. (Tr1)

In this Category D the curriculum is viewed in its context within the university sector as a whole (many course leaders talked about the influence of their role as external examiners in other universities) and the world beyond.

For a summary of key characteristics of Category D see Table 5.5.

Category D: Key characteristics	
Teaching	Interactive
Learning	Interactive
Students	Engaging
Course structure	Course, university and life beyond
Course documentation	Not able to contain complexity.
Knowledge	Individually constructed through engagement with subject.
Purpose of education	Significant life experience

Table 5.5: Category D key characteristics.

5.2.5 Category E: A learning community of students and staff

In Category E the curriculum is perceived as a learning community of academics and students.

> If we're genuinely committed to the idea of there being a learning community then everyone's is a learner, students and staff alike, so you know, I get very excited about that idea because I think all the staff I work with are genuinely interested in learning stuff themselves, developing bodies of knowledge alongside people not in isolation. (Tr3)

This learning community in Category E operates at multiple complex levels of relationships and interactions.

> So the other bit is messy and fudgy and human and vague sometimes but you know we can all find instances of the things we're talking about where our interactions with students kind of oscillate between the professional, the transactional, the educational, the empathic, the pastoral, you know, things that are happening across these different planes of human experience and they're happening

> almost simultaneously, I think it just becomes increasingly synchronous and I suppose in a way the curriculum can't possibly tolerate that level of complexity in it's written form but the human beings who are kind of holding on to developing the curriculum will have some innate understanding of the very complex nature of the relations. (Tr3)

Teaching and learning in Category E is a form of exchange. As is the curriculum-in-action, that is formed from the co-creation of activity.

> There will be a sense of how the activities are, kind of, created by them and by us and how that kind of happens. So there is an exchange, constant exchange, process of exchange. (Tr7)

The curriculum in Category E is a mutually adaptive process. Students are given agency to adapt, change, flex or even run the curriculum.

> I have recently done a number of developments in our curriculum, which is to hand over the running of the curriculum to the students, I think that is the future. (Tr7)

In Category E learning in this context is a process of change and transformation shared by academics and students alike.

> A conversation I had last night at the private view of the show with a third year student who I know has had a very challenging time, because of the place that they came from originally, I mean that educationally and probably socially, when they come up and you know that some transformation positive transformation has happened and even if it happens right to the very end of the process then that's the bit when you understand that there's some value and quality in the curriculum to allow for that. (Tr3)

In the context of the commodification of HE, which individualises the cost of education, this community and agency is seen as a way to resist.

> Community is kind of a necessity; community is a space where, should there be a need to resist, and there probably is a reason for a need to resist, something, then community becomes a forceful space to do that. (Tr9)

In Category E knowledge practices are constituted between the collective and the individual's perspectives. Most importantly in Category E knowledge practices that form the curriculum are brought to bear by both academics and students collectively.

> I guess it goes back to what I started with, about how do we look at curricula as a mobile form and can we invite our students to create that curriculum, even within the framework that we've been given. (Tr13)

> It's more nuanced and complicated than that from my point of view but it is certainly predicated on sets of activities, things which in a way are constructed in a way for people to undertake, but more interestingly evolved into much more co-creative or co-dependent sets of activities. (Tr3)

Additionally, in Category E the curriculum is perceived as outside the institutional capacity to quantify or qualify its provision and positions the curriculum in relation to the world beyond.

> I think my own conception is sometimes in conflict with the institution's, partly because the institution has to kind of – you have to leave with a qualification and it has to be accredited and it has to have a number of qualities about it which are assessable or at least quantifiable, but sometimes I think, when you're teaching a subject,

> some of those qualities aren't quantifiable and if they are they're using a system that's not really the best for that so I think university structures aren't often the best so my understanding of the curriculum is that you're trying to teach the subject, but I believe that that subject is quite a dynamic, pluralistic subject that is about your place in the world, so essentially I'm trying to get across to young people that their place in the world is often that of a consumer and so I guess what we're trying to encourage is a sense of somebody having power to be creative and not just be a consumer, but to be something other than that and to have some kind of control over their negotiation of the world. (Tr15)

In Category E the transformational aspect of the curriculum is not only seen through the students' personal transformation but through their contribution as active citizens in the transformation of the social world.

For a summary of key characteristics of Category E see Table 5.6.

Category E: Key characteristics	
Teaching	Exchange
Learning	Transformation
Students	Agency
Course structure	Course, university, life and world beyond
Course documentation	Not able to contain complexity
Knowledge	Co-constructed through challenging discipline or subject Collective
Purpose of education	Individual and social transformation

Table 5.6: Category E key characteristics.

5.2.6 Comparison to Fraser and Bosanquet (2006)

In section 3.2.1 I discuss Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) research into academics' 'conceptions' of the curriculum. In section 4.2.5 I discuss my

decision to research course leaders' 'perceptions' of the curriculum. In terms of my findings there are comparisons to be made (see Table 5.7).

Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) academics' conceptions of the curriculum as:	**Course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum as:**
A: The structure and content of a unit (subject).	A: The content and projects to be delivered to students.
B: The structure and content of a programme of study.	B: The structure of the course to enable student outcomes.
No direct comparison.	C: The design, planning and co-ordination of the student experience.
C: The student experience of learning.	*No direct comparison.*
D: A dynamic and interactive process of teaching and learning.	D: Dynamic, interactive and evolving through student engagement.
	E: A learning community of students and staff.

Table 5.7: Comparison of Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) academics' conceptions to course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum.

Categories A and B are broadly aligned with similar findings. Within A&D curriculum structure is often articulated as 'projects' (Orr et al., 2014) so this is different in my Category A. My study focuses on 'course' rather than Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) 'programme' (the difference between 'course' and 'programme' is clarified in section 1.2) and in my data I found that the structure was most often described as enabling student outcomes, so was part of my Category B.

My Category C does not align with Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) Category C. This is because in my data analysis I constituted two variations within the data related to the design and planning of the course. One focused on the design and planning of units and outcomes that were constituted in my Category B, and the other on the design and planning of the curriculum for

students to experience. This latter focus was a very dominant in the data and justified its own Category. It was most often described by participants as the 'student experience' I have therefore used this in the title of my Category C, however it is not the same as Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) Category C 'the student experience of learning'.

Any data in my study that suggested the curriculum was perceived as how the student actually experienced it, as suggested in Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) Category C was constituted in to my Category D. Both my Category D and Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) Category D seem to align well with the focus being on student engagement through an active learning and teaching environment.

In Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) text describing Category D only has a small body of text conceiving the curriculum as a collaborative process. In my data I found I was able to constitute an additional Category E: 'A learning community of students and staff'. This suggests that the curriculum is being perceived beyond Category D student engagement to a new level of student agency. Perhaps because Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) study was undertaken in 2006 and there have since been numerous developments in higher education, or because A&D has a particular pedagogic approach, I was able to constitute an additional Category E.

Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) see their categories A and B as having a product focus and their categories C and D as a process focus. This might mean that using this terminology that my constituted Category C might be described product-process focus on the curriculum. Additionally, Category E

seen in this light might represent the praxis focus on the curriculum (Grundy, 1987).

5.2.7 Summary of variations in course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum

Having analysed my data to constitute five categories of description I present the ways in which this were characterised (see Table 5.8). This shows the incremental way in which these interrelated characteristics of a category form a perception of the curriculum.

	Category A: The content and projects to be delivered to students.	**Category B: The structure of the course to enable student outcomes.**	**Category C: The design and planning of the student experience.**	**Category D: Dynamic, interactive and evolving through student engagement .**	**Category E: A learning community of students and staff.**
Teaching	Delivering	Delivering Offering access	Facilitating learning	Interactive	Exchange
Learning	Outcome	Outcome Accessing	Journey to be experienced	Interactive	Exchange
Students	Attending	Participating	Experiencing	Engaging	Agency
Course structure	Projects Units	Course	Course & university	Course, university and life beyond	Course, university, life and world beyond
Course document-ation	Admin.	A guide	Designed	Not able to contain complexity	Not able to contain complexity.
Knowledge	Content	Vocational skills	Knowing Competence	Individually constructed through engagement with subject	Co-constructed through challenging subject Collective
Purpose of education	Skills	Specific vocation	Employability and attributes development	To offer significant life experiences	Individual and social transform-ation

Table 5.8: Summary of Categories A to E key characteristics.

5.3 Part 2: Course leaders' approaches to the curriculum

In Part 1 of this chapter I have presented the five constituted categories of description for course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum (see Table 5.1).

In Part 2 of the chapter I return to the data to analyse how these perceptions of the curriculum are described as approaches to the curriculum.

5.3.1 Approach A: Course leader (and course team) controls the content and projects of the curriculum

In Category A the course leaders' perception of the curriculum is as 'the content and projects delivered to students', see Table 5.2 for key characteristics.

The perception of the curriculum as described in Category A indicated an approach to the curriculum where the course leader (and team) is focused on what will be delivered to students as the receivers of the curriculum.

> The curriculum is what we deliver to the students. It's decided on by the course team, the contents. (Tr17)

In Approach A to the curriculum I have bracketed the 'course team' as their involvement in the curriculum is often inconsistent, left unclear or absent in these descriptions.

> So the curriculum in delivery is me and the way that I want to do things I guess, and in conversation with my colleague and I think I was quite controlling when I came in. (Tr10)

> In terms of content, I work with each of the staff to decide, you know, what the contents going to be; I will allow staff to bring certain content they want to bring and will look at the overview. (Tr17)

The issue of control is a key element of Approach A to the curriculum. So whether it is just the ‘course leader’ or the ‘course leader and the course team’, the content and projects are described as a form of control over the curriculum and essentially the students and their learning. Students are nearly always absent from descriptions of Approach A.

> It feels like you are through, team meetings, with our current staff teams, it feels like, and all the workshops, it feels like we have a say in a part of the curriculum, things being changed. I’d say I have, in this course, just because I’ve written most of the projects and had the ability – not ability – or control, what’s the word? I’ve been able to, for whatever reason, test them out and write things and move things within the system. (Tr14)

In Approach A knowledge practices are fixed and something to be gained, it is often connected to the perceived professional knowledge in the subject fields and most often seen within the context of ‘skills’.

> I see the curriculum as what we need to deliver to enable the students to gain knowledge and skills and expertise in both a broad educational way and a specific, more specific, way in terms of subject. (Tr19)

In Approach A to curriculum course leaders (and the course team) do not just control the curriculum, but also often describe being controlled by managers or quality processes.

> A lot of it whether its dealing with commercial practice or whatever the units are called they are the things that underpin the course and it's always a manager who set those in advance so you don't usually get a chance to play with those. (Tr4)

In Category A this perception of the curriculum one particularly noticeable characteristic in the data was the fixed and compartmentalised nature of knowledge, which was most evident in descriptions of the elemental aspects of the curriculum. This was evident in course leader approaches to the curriculum where different bodies of knowledge are distinct and unconnected within the curriculum.

> I think it's better if different tutors run different areas so if you've got a history tutor and you're working on studio work, your history tutor will expect you to produce work for the history sessions, even though your studio tutors are expecting you to be finalising maybe design work. (Tr18)

This is of particular relevance to the CSS elements of the curriculum where student learning is distinctly different from that of the practical elements. In Approach A the curriculum is a kind of mechanical process of putting together these separate elements.

> There's a range of ways of approaching the curriculum but you sort of need the basic nuts and bolts in order to move forward. (Tr20)

This can be a managerial concern about controlling and organising course content.

> I manage it; I kind of manage it and more or less design it with obviously the cooperation of my team but I think I've been too – I can be quite controlling that way I think and that's something that I've probably learned that I probably need to let go a bit because if you want to do everything, you're just going to get exhausted and then you're kind of, sort of, left on your own doing everything because you've kind of alienated everybody because you've taken over all the course content. (Tr10)

In Approach A the curriculum was often constituted by descriptions of course leaders being overwhelmed by their workload as so much activity is centrally based around course leader input.

5.3.2 Approach B: Course leader (and course team) manages the structure and outcomes of the curriculum

In Category B the course leaders' perception of the curriculum is 'the structure of the course that enables student outcomes', see Table 5.3 for key characteristics.

In terms of approach to the curriculum it is a structure of projects, units, blocks, years that produce the required outcomes set by the course leaders (and course team). Here again I have bracketed 'course team' and in these descriptions the course team is notably absent.

> I was the best person for the job because I'd seen the building blocks and could see how the skills build on each other so it's that thing about having a foundation of skills and then building on those and by having that overview of three years, I've really loved putting that shape together and seeing, you know, what order things should be in to progress and test out their skills to then improve and build on them. (Tr14)

A dominant characteristic of Approach B is a very high focus on vocational skills. With teaching seen as delivery, learning is seen as the act of receiving. A student's ability to demonstrate vocational skills forms a large part of Approach B. That means that student learning is often dominated through the correct practices and processes of the professional subject or discipline. In Approach B, the structure is a way to achieve this vocational focus.

> The curriculum is the structure you put on to try and find the way to, well for the students to be able to do the learning in the right way and it also is the place where that structure allows you to have a content, which students understand they're engaging with. (Tr2)

Approach B often includes a very direct analogy between the curriculum and available resources. The curriculum is described as the staffing budgets and the rooms available.

> I have an overview of all of the units and what happens in each of the units in terms of the practicality of them, in terms of delivery matching, in terms of matching numbers of teaching hours, teaching spaces and all that kind of stuff in relation to what the outcome could be. (Tr1)

This resource focus of Approach B can lead to the course leader role being perceived more as managerial, where power (particularly over resources) is seen as residing elsewhere.

> So my course leader role in some respects is managerial and that's the reason why I find it quite interesting that we are called course leaders we used to be called course directors, I see myself more as a course manager because whilst I have influence I do not have power. (Tr1)

This structure-based view in Approach B often has a focus on how units build on each other throughout the course.

> My role in relation to the curriculum is that I hope the curriculum will have a basic, robust structure that we know works and then the thing that I'm interested in, I suppose, is projects, delivering projects that are sort of put on top of those structures so the structures are sensible and sort of cascade forward correctly. (Tr20)

> There’s is a curriculum which you can say is, if you have a course then you have a series of units which then inform the overall kind of ambition of what the course is but each unit would have to be individually kind of packaged so that it then it also has to relate to each other and so it means that there's a lot of negotiation and conversation that needs to take place between what is the identity of each of those units and then how do they go back to the course. (Tr1)

Documentation in Approach B is part of the way of controlling this curriculum structure.

> We work with a course handbook that we have to write the units, you know that gives you the structure doesn’t it. (Tr20)

This structure is a way of controlling or managing student learning. However, this structure is often discussed for its capacity to support student learning and transition.

> I believe in a structure with my students; I believe they have a structure that they can rebel against or push against because I think that’s healthy and I think, you know, you give them scope within that for something to be familiar and then they can deal with the unfamiliar so I think you have to have that interwoven balance. (Tr12)

> The overall organisation of the curriculum is a basic kind of structure to send someone through a three-year transformation within the education so the curriculum is the big structure. (Tr11)

In this course leader Approach B the focus is on the structural aspect of the curriculum. Whilst this structure is predominantly described in terms of control and transmission it can also be described as something to be challenged by students.

5.3.3 Approach C: Course leader and course team design and co-ordinate the student journey

In Category C the course leaders' perception of the curriculum is 'the design and planning of the student experience', see Table 5.4 for key characteristics.

This course leader and course team approach to the curriculum is based on an experiential conception of learning and so course design and its enactment are based on the idea of accumulating experience.

> The curriculum is the intentions of the course and how they apply and how they roll out those intentions in terms of, you know, making their intentions about, making them successful; making an enjoyable and positive and accumulative experience for the students. (Tr10)

In Approach C teaching is facilitating these experiences. Knowledge practices are viewed through forms of knowing, often within ideas of procedural knowledge, particularly knowing how to do things and acting in the world.

> As course leader I'm facilitating that experience so that the students can – even if they don't become an A&D practitioner or whatever, they leave knowing how to research; knowing how to make; knowing how to interpret ideas; knowing how to solve problems that they give themselves and also have a different kind of view of the world, a different attitude, you know a kind of 'can do' kind of attitude; very practical, positive and motivated so yeah there's lots of things bundled in there I think. (Tr15)

Approach C is often articulated through spatial metaphors of landscape, journey or narrative. As well as ideas of facilitating learning, there is also the idea of setting up challenges on the course as a kind of obstacle course.

> My role is to get them where they need to go and that's got to be though a curriculum that is challenging, really challenging and innovative so that they get the best kind of learning experiences. (Tr7)

> I think as a Course Leader you have the whole narrative, not that the Unit Leaders don't, but you are, you're looking for the vision for the course and how, with your team, that can be implemented at different parts. (Tr12)

In line with the dominant spatial metaphors, in Approach C documentation is often seen in these terms, here as a map.

> We all know we can see curriculum as it's expressed in a document and the piece of paper and you know we go through lengthy processes to arrive at that document and that document then forms a map or a template for a series of experiences or interactions that happen over in our case a three year period. (Tr3)

Importantly, in Approach C the course leader and course team approach the curriculum as the design, delivery and enactment of the curriculum for students to experience. These are not the students' experiences of the curriculum per se but those envisioned by the course leader and course team.

5.3.4 Approach D: Course leader and course team engage students in a dynamic, interactive and evolving curriculum

In Category D the course leaders' perception of the curriculum is 'dynamic, interactive and evolving through student engagement' see Table 5.5 for key characteristics.

The course leaders' perception of the curriculum as described in Category D indicated an approach to the curriculum where the course leader (and course team) is focused on the curriculum as a dynamic, interactive and evolving curriculum. At the heart of Approach D is seeing the curriculum as a creative endeavour that changes in enactment with students.

> I guess we've got a very dynamic understanding in the course that I teach on what curriculum can be, as we see it as a very creative act. (Tr12)

> The curriculum should evolve and I mean we've got an endlessly evolving cultural kind of landscape haven't we and the way things are done is different and I have to learn from the students as well about how things are done because they're the people who are going to be doing it. (Tr20)

The course leader and course team use continual student feedback to iteratively develop the curriculum. In Approach D the curriculum is perceived as a highly flexible and evolving entity. Academics see the course not only as what is designed, delivered or enacted but often see it as the students on the course.

> The curriculum is in a way arguably augmented by a staff team and a group of academics but it manifests itself and it changes and it evolves through the complexion of the students who are on the course or the students who are the course effectively, so the approach I think that I would take or I would want to take, hopefully I take towards this thing called curriculum is yes we take a relatively structured approach to what it is in its paper form at the very beginning but then as it kind of evolves and mutates there's sufficient elasticity inside of that curriculum to allow for there to be more circular conversation about what is appropriate, what is useful what

> is, what can then become manifested in the sets of experiences by the students. (Tr3)

Students' feedback can take the form of contesting the best ways to do things and this means the curriculum is always active.

> The curriculum I think is always sort of contested and is always developing and is always active, I suppose, so I don't think it's a static thing. (Tr6)

Many course leaders in my study had undertaken a teaching qualification and had been involved in action research projects within the curriculum, indicative of Approach D. The curriculum context for these course leaders was a significant point of reflection and a space to rethink teaching and learning opportunities.

> All of us are always reflecting and talking about how we might do things differently and it's a completely on-going process that, of reflecting and rethinking things. (Tr19)

Course documentation in Approach D such as timetables and assignments are flexible to meet the negotiated needs of students.

> We don't see it as a static timetable procedure and even if it is static, its static because we've programmed it in, and it works, and it's something that we don't want to replace so we actively review every unit and every project we teach every year because we want to get feedback from students but also find out if it's actually meeting the learning criteria getting what we want out of students and giving them the experience that we need so for us building a curriculum making a curriculum is a very creative process and it's very dynamic and that has challenges because it means it can open up space. (Tr4)

In Approach D the curriculum is seen in pedagogic terms and is geared to opening up a space for dialogue with students.

5.3.5 Approach E: Course leader, course team and students have agency in the curriculum as a complex conversation

In Category E the course leaders' perception of the curriculum is as 'a learning community of students and staff', see Table 5.6 for key characteristics.

In terms of course leader and course team Approach E these are described within the context of agency for students as part of a community of learners. This suggests the need for a new set of course leadership abilities.

> I think students are going to have a great impact on the way their courses are run and I think students should shape and lead and create their own futures, I think that's already happening but I think we have to support them much more in doing that, and that requires a kind of dynamic set of thinking, leadership and implementation initiatives. (Tr7)

These ideas are based on the commitment to see everyone with the curriculum as having a voice and in their being a learner.

> If we're genuinely committed to the idea of there being a learning community then everyone is a learner, students and staff alike, so you know, I get very excited about that idea because I think all the staff I work with are genuinely interested in learning stuff themselves, developing bodies of knowledge alongside people not in isolation. (Tr3)

In Approach E the curriculum is afforded the risk to go beyond established structures and offer students more complex opportunities. This can be seen in students not just developing ways of knowing within disciplinary or subject

knowledge but being involved in the re-contextualisation of knowledge practices in the curriculum.

> A curriculum that required students to set up experiences where they could start to engage in subject matter in a different way through a process that they felt relatively comfortable with, engaged by or interested in, if we could build that into the curriculum I think that if you could formalise it but it's formalised in such a way that you never know really what's going to happen with that experience, and there's a degree of agency which is afforded to the students which perhaps a lot of curricula doesn't afford, so maybe the principal there is OK well, a space for students to kind of initiate learning experiences to understand both their own learning and other peoples learning. (Tr3)

In Approach E the course leader role is that of negotiator, to ensure that all the course teams' and students' experiences and values are accommodated within the curriculum.

> I think my role as the person who leads on curriculum development is to try and create, I suppose make a convincing argument for taking an approach, to not sort of specifying an end point, but taking an approach that actually starts to accommodate this whole range of experiences that are coming in. (Tr7)

In Approach E the course leader is aware of the curriculum as a socially construction spanning the past, present and possible futures.

> I see my role at the university as a kind of anchor for the future and that the courses are kind of mini links between the present and the future, so we are in, we are in an integral position firstly to connect those two things. (Tr7)

This can offer space for resistance and action to address real world problems, such as social or environmental concerns.

> Community is kind of a necessity; community is a space where, should there be a need to resist, and there probably is a reason for a need to resist, something, then community becomes a forceful space to do that. (Tr9)

In Approach E to the curriculum, the course leader, course team and students as a community are equally engaged in the construction of the curriculum as a space of dialogue about the discipline or subject within the context of world possible futures.

5.3.6 Summary of variation of course leaders' approaches to the curriculum

Making a further analysis of the data from which I constituted five Categories of course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum, I was able to establish five Approaches to the curriculum (see Table 5.9).

The variation in course leaders' approaches to the curriculum.	
Approach A	Course leader (and course team) controls the content and projects of the curriculum.
Approach B	Course leader (and course team) manages the structure and outcomes of the curriculum.
Approach C	Course leader and course team design and co-ordinate the student journey.
Approach D	Course leader and course team engage students in a dynamic, interactive and evolving curriculum.
Approach E	Course leader, course team and students have agency in the curriculum as a complex conversation.

Table 5.9: Variation in course leaders' approaches to the curriculum

In Approaches A and B the role of the course team was not often mentioned or was uncertain, hence the 'course team' are in brackets. In Approaches C and D, the course team were highly evident in descriptions about the design, enactment or iterative processes of the curriculum. Only in Approach E did course leaders see students as having a leading role within the curriculum.

5.4 Conclusion

Using phenomenography as a research design I was able to appropriately collect data from interviews with twenty A&D course leaders and make an analysis of the variation in A&D course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum. I constituted five variations in A&D course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum. Comparing this with Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) academic conceptions of the curriculum, I find that I had constituted two differences in the Categories. Firstly, the constitution of my Category C that describes the design and enactment of the student experience. Secondly, a new Category E

that describes the curriculum as a learning community, where the curriculum is co-constructed in its enactment. Making a further analysis, I constitute five A&D course leader Approaches to the curriculum. These Approaches are discussed in the next chapter using my curriculum perspectives framework as a heuristic tool.

6 Chapter 6 Analysis of course leaders' approaches to the curriculum and the implications of these approaches for students.

6.1 Introduction

Having established in Chapter 5 the variation in A&D course leaders' approaches to the curriculum (see Table 5.9), I now discuss each within the curriculum perspectives framework established at the end of Chapter 3 (see Section 3.7.2). Discussing each variation of A&D course leaders' approaches to the curriculum within the curriculum perspectives framework enables a discussion of the benefits and limitations of each approach and particularly the implications for students.

6.2 Approach A: Course leader (and course team) controls the content and projects of the curriculum.

Lindén et al. (2015) discussing curriculum 'content' in their study suggest:

> behind all the different curriculum conceptions, the role of disciplinary and theoretical knowledge was often seen as that of 'content knowledge'. As such, it was often neglected as unimportant in curriculum practices, because the connotation of 'content transfer' referred to a behaviourist-type and old-fashioned curriculum (p.3).

So how might Approach A with a focus on content and projects be located within the curriculum perspectives framework? Viewing content and projects as recontextualised knowledge practices enables a more complex understanding of the benefits and limitations of Approach A.

Benefits

A benefit of Approach A is that academics can deliver content, for example through presentations and project assignments, so that students can view a range of disciplinary or professional knowledge practices. The control of this delivery of knowledge practices, particularly in a mass (potentially) non-elite HE sector can be critical in ensuring that all students have exposure to a wide range of diverse knowledge practices. It can also ensure that those without privileged access to these knowledge practices have opportunities to find out about the range of disciplinary and professional knowledge practices available.

Limitations

A limitation of Approach A is that the re-contextualisation of the knowledge practices into the curriculum is entirely controlled by the course leader (and possibly the course team). Similarly, the benefits of Approach A rely on a commitment to the diversity of these knowledge practices. In Approach A, this commitment can often come down to an individual academic's contribution, meaning an individual has to bear the weight of presenting an isolated different view. For example, in my data I found a female course leader single-handedly trying to introduce feminist knowledge practices within a course that had been traditionally led by an all-male academic team. A major limitation with Approach A is its inability to offer students ways of bringing their personal knowing to the recontextualised knowledge offered in the curriculum. This limitation was evident in my data, where recontextualised knowledge practices are presented through over simplified historical narratives of the discipline or profession and in project assignments that have very narrow competence and

skills orientations (evident in my data in descriptions of highly vocational A&D work in the curriculum). Both of these examples highlight a lack of space in the curriculum that enables students to recognise the relevance of these knowledge practices to their own personal interests, developing identities and life goals.

Another limitation of Approach A is that curriculum knowledge practices are compartmentalised with a lack of connections between the types of knowledge practices in the curriculum. For example, I have discussed the A&D curriculum as a vocational or professional 'region' where course leaders (and course teams) often constitute the A&D curriculum from other disciplines. A good example came from my data where a course leader described the course curriculum as a 'joint honours', with one part 'studio practice' and the other part 'A&D history'. This lack of integration of practical knowledge and theoretical knowledge limits student learning because they do not have access to the relationship between context-independent and context-dependent knowledge (Shay and Steyn 2016). This separation of theoretical and practical knowledge can be found in descriptions of 'personal and professional development' and 'disciplinary or professional elements' of the curriculum. This separation is often communicated through the concepts such as 'transferable skills' that see student development as compartmentalised. This compartmentalised view of knowledge practices can lead to a perception of the curriculum from academics that the curriculum has no space left, is too full and being crammed with content. This is often exacerbated by the diversity of students within a mass and internationalised HE sector as in Approach A

the way to recognise the diversity of knowledge practices needed is seen as adding more content to the curriculum.

Lastly, a major limitation is that the course leader controls the recontextualisation of knowledge practices in the curriculum and dispenses these to a passive course team (willing or unwilling) and student body. It is important to acknowledge in a mass HE sector that Approach A can be a default solution when required to address large student groups. The control and limits on necessary interaction can facilitate very large numbers, such as multi-course lectures or offsite projects and assignments that disperse students into external environments. This does not mean that these pedagogic practices do not have a role in the curriculum but that used unreflectively without proper consideration of their role within the curriculum they can have negative implications for student learning.

Implications for students

In Approach A whilst students may gain access to the presentation and delivery of recontextualised knowledge practices, there is insufficient space for developing personal knowing. This means that students lack opportunities to bring their own cultural or local understandings of knowledge practices or ways of knowing to the curriculum. Approach A can lead to academics viewing students as empty vessels to be filled with the ‘correct’ knowledge practices and their associated skills. This means that students who do not attend or participate in the ‘delivered’ curriculum are often seen in a deficit model, particularly those who do not attend, and labelled as ‘not interested’ or ‘not engaging’.

Approach A represented within the curriculum perspectives framework shown in Figure 6.1.

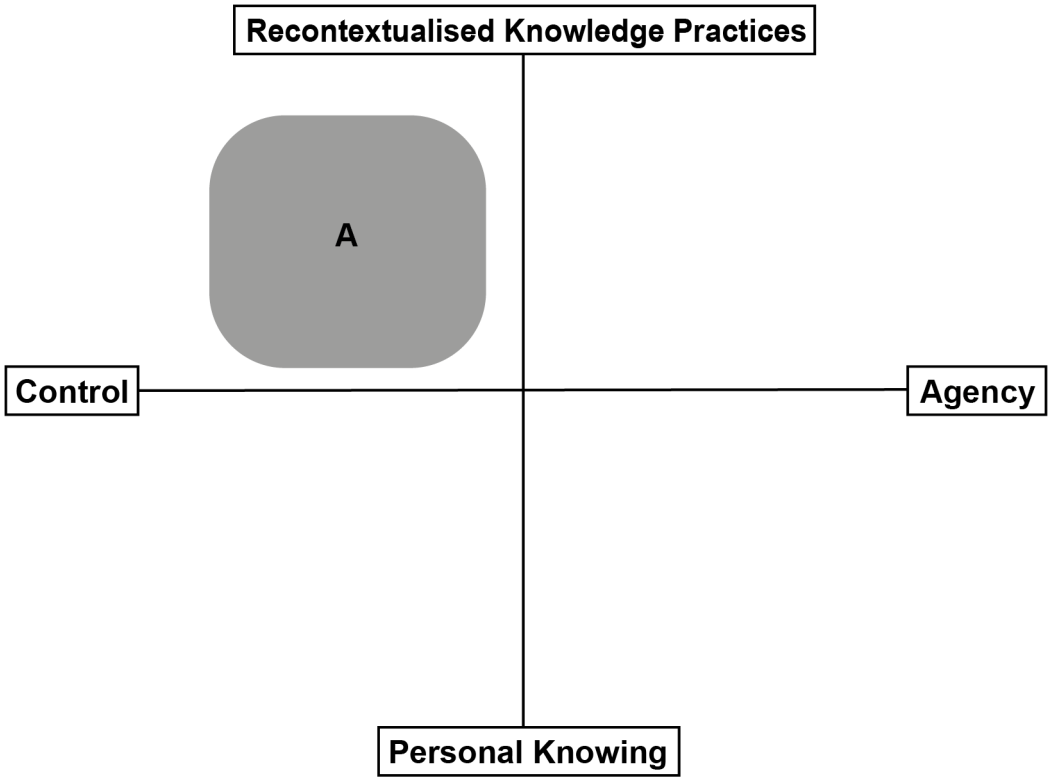


Figure 6.1: Approach A in the curriculum perspective framework.

6.3 Approach B: Course leader (and course team) manages the structure and outcomes of the curriculum.

Course leader (and course team) Approach B is driven by the externally required outcomes of the curriculum. These outcomes are shaped by the course leader (and the course team) within their re-contextualisation of disciplinary and professional knowledge practices to meet the perceived needs of the student body and/or the profession. Additionally, the curriculum in a mass HE sector has included outcomes for students that are often seen as outside of disciplinary and professional knowledge practices. These are expressed in curriculum theory as ‘genericism’ (Wheelahan, 2010; Bernstein, 2000) and in curriculum practices as elements or notions, such as

'professional and personal development' or 'transferable skills'. Whether the curriculum is perceived by the course leader to be preparing students for an academic or professional career or has broader educational aims is a very large factor in the structured outcomes of Approach B. It is important not only to see this outcomes-based Approach B in curriculum design methods, as it is also reflected in the enactment of the curriculum in the interactions of academics and students.

Benefits

The benefits of course leader Approach B to the curriculum is that students are encouraged by academics to bring their personal knowing to the recontextualised knowledge practices in the curriculum. 'Allowing' students to recognise the potential of these knowledge practices in the curriculum for their future helps students to define their 'personal projects'.

Limitations

However, personal knowing and the development of 'personal projects' is very much within the parameters and limits of the recontextualised knowledge practices defined by the course leader (and possibly the course team). Personal knowing is seen in Approach B as that which is brought to the discipline or profession that academics 'perceive' have utility in the student's future work as an academic, professional or other. I have indicated that it is academics that 'perceive' this utility, as in Approach B student's 'personal projects' that fall beyond those perceived as relevant by academics are not supported or encouraged.

Implications for students

In my interviews with course leaders I found staff describing Approach B in quite different terms for students. For example, one participant described the curriculum structure like an ‘obstacle course’ whereas another described it as a ‘highly supportive structure’ that enabled students’ professional development. This suggests the diversity of course leaders responses to objectives-led curriculum design ideas found in my review of literature (see Section 3.3.1). However, within both of these examples the students are positioned on a fixed track to a predefined destination of knowledge and skills acquisition. In Approach B students are intended to leave the curriculum with a fixed disciplinary or professional identity, this does not address an important aspect of the contemporary HE curriculum to support the needs of students in a changing world.

Approach B represented within the curriculum perspectives framework shown in Figure 6.2.

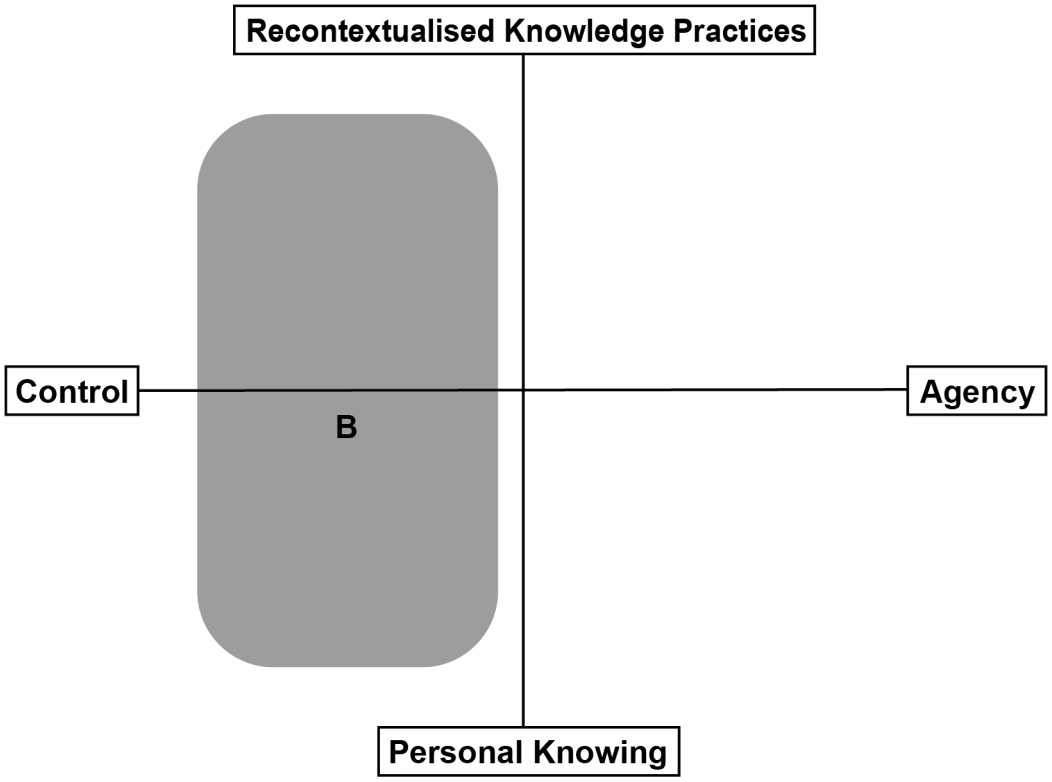


Figure 6.2: Approach B in the curriculum perspective framework.

6.4 Approach C: Course leader and course team design and co-ordinate the student journey.

In Approach C the course leader and course team design and plan the curriculum and also co-ordinate students learning based on the 'perceived' student needs and interests. I use the term 'perceived' as these are still controlled by the course leader and course team. Learning in this context is a journey of the self from one place to another and in this respect has ontological aspects beyond those formed by the discipline or subject. This can include the transition of the student away from home (sometimes a considerable distance), the development of new relationships, opportunities in new geographic locations, the development of university ways of learning, the list is extensive. Although still considering disciplinary and professional concerns Approach C locates the course within the university (or college)

context. In Approach C the perception of the needs of students are based on university initiatives or formal student feedback mechanisms.

Benefits

In Approach C disciplinary and professional knowledge practices are recontextualised into the curriculum for students on the basis that they offer the best, perceived experiential opportunities. Approach C is sensitive to the *perceived* characteristics of students and their *perceived* prior knowledge and has some resonance with Biggs's (2003) 3P Teaching and Learning Model. This model connects learning objectives (Product) to learning activities (Process) with the teaching context and 'student factors' (Presage). However, although the outcomes of the curriculum are a background focus, it is the kind of experiences that can be provided that lead curriculum design. Approach C might be typified through the idea of 'curriculum mapping' where course teams come together to map (often through a complex timeline) the curriculum. Bringing course teams together can create collegiality (Uchiyama and Radin, 2009) or be an opportunity to address new initiatives, such as embedding graduate capabilities (Whillier et al., 2012) or competencies (Wachtler and Troein, 2003). Approach C has resonance with Fink's (2013) 'creating significant learning experiences' in that it has both an 'objectives' and 'experience focus'. Here course teams can see the planning, delivery and enactment of the curriculum as a creative design process, however importantly it rarely involves students in this process.

Limitations

Students in Approach C are required to demonstrate competencies in skilled ways of knowing. A problem here is in this evidence-based performance led curriculum these ways of knowing can become knowing without knowledge (Barnett and Coate, 2005). This problem can become evident in a mass HE sector where, for example, learning outcomes and assessment criteria can over dominate the learning process (Torrance, 2007) and assessment evidence becomes the learning goal. Alternatively, these ways of knowing are strongly connected to curriculum goals that produce certain specific ways of knowing and 'becoming' or 'being' (Budge, 2016). For students where the curriculum meets their clear 'personal project' this can be very engaging (Jary and Lebeau, 2009). However, for students with less clear or unrelated personal projects this form of academic or professional 'becoming' is not engaging and can be alienating (Mann, 2001).

In the A&D Approach C is highly evident perhaps because ideas of knowledge practices are often vague or undefined in the context of the practical elements of the curriculum. In contrast, curriculum elements added from other disciplines particularly the humanities or philosophy are seen as legitimate knowledge with a big 'K'. This can lead to a separation in the A&D curriculum where practical knowledge is a form of contextualised individual knowing in practice (often seen as 'making') and theoretical knowledge is seen as detached intellectual thinking (often seen as 'writing'). This is a separation in different knowledge practices that fails to offer students access to 'powerful knowledge' (Wheelahan, 2010). In Approach A where knowledge can be

detached from knowing, in Approach C personal knowing can be detached from knowledge.

Implications for students

Students in Approach C are experiencing the curriculum. Students are labelled by academics as ‘strong students’ that attend and take part in activities, and ‘weak students’ who do not attend and/or do not take part in activities. The curriculum is there to experience and the motivation to attend and participate is seen only as a student’s choice rather than considering the student’s contextual situation (for example, many students have to work whilst at university or might be carers). Approach C in certain contexts has much to offer students, as personal ways of knowing are often at the forefront of curriculum activities, be these individual or collective. Approach C in A&D education can be particularly important in a multidisciplinary curriculum, such as in the compulsory school sector, where other disciplines might offer less recognition of personal ways of knowing (Bernstein, 1975). However, in the context of HE, Approach C has limitations for students in that it often fails to recognise the importance of knowledge practices in shaping these personal ways of knowing. This failure might be seen through the notion of ‘competence’ where knowledge can be reduced to a very specific form of skills acted out in a specific context as ‘doing’ (Barnett, 1994). Bernstein (2000) is helpful in clarifying the problems here ‘according to competence theories there is an in-built procedural democracy, an in-built creativity, an in-built virtuous self-regulation’ (p.43). Whilst Bernstein (2000) is writing about theories, I found that although not specifically named as ‘competence’ in the interview data this concept was often implied in Approach C. Students are often

assumed by academics in Approach C as having these 'in-built' aspects to which Bernstein (2000) refers. In not recognising the differences in epistemic access to knowledge practices (often referred to as 'cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1986) in A&D educational research), Approach C can reinforce social or cultural inequalities. Put simply, Approach C whilst often appearing quite dynamic (there is always lots of activity to see), has positive implications for those students with personal access to knowledge practices (such as those with parents or their friends with A&D careers) and can have negative implications for those without this personal access.

Approach C represented within the curriculum perspectives framework shown in Figure 6.3.

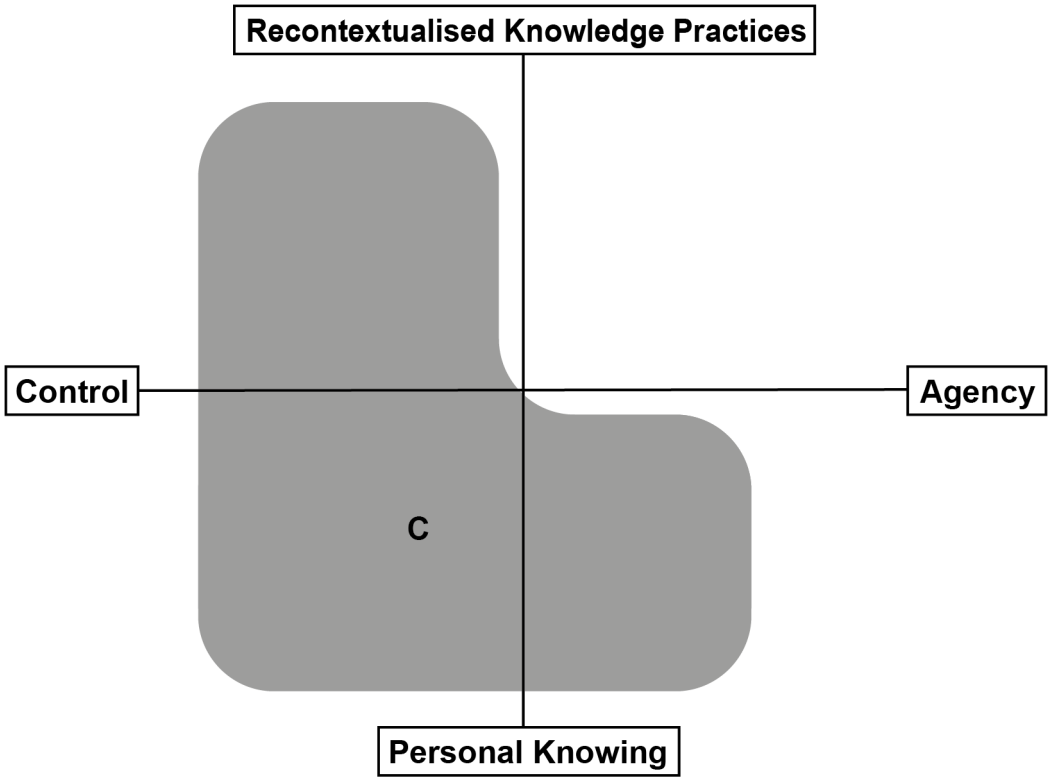


Figure 6.3: Approach C in the curriculum perspective framework.

6.5 Approach D: Course leader and course team engage students in a dynamic, interactive and evolving curriculum.

In this course leader and course team Approach D, curriculum and pedagogy become undifferentiated though the engagement of staff and students in the curriculum. The curriculum becomes a living and breathing entity open to change and growth. ‘Academic engagement’ (Ashwin and McLean, 2005) in Approach D is both academics’ and students’ engagement with the curriculum as opposed to just the students’ engagement, as in Approaches A to C.

Benefits

The curriculum here is a design or ‘artistic’ problem (Barnett and Coate, 2005) where the course leader and course team use their creativity to create an exciting, interesting and intellectually engaging curriculum. The curriculum is often understood as a space for interactions and is organised according to what pedagogic opportunities exist. The curriculum might be expressed as a site of ‘pedagogic decision-making’ that provides space for students to become, know and act (Barnett and Coate, 2005). It is important to recognise that this pedagogic decision-making within Approach D should not be seen as entirely distinct from Approaches A, B and C as Approach D often takes a complex view of product and process views of the curriculum. This means the course leader and course team see both the potential, but most importantly recognise the limitations, of Approaches A, B and C. For example, the outcome-based aspects of Approach B are seen as both opportunities for, and the promotion of, flexible and imaginative dialogue around learning, whilst recognising and discussing the limitations of this system with students. In my study data could be seen in the development of highly sophisticated ideas

around ‘dialogic assessment’ where imaginative learning outcomes (such as those promoted Hadjianastasis, 2017), self-assessment and peer learning plays a critical learning role. To offer an example, of a pedagogic decision-making approach to the curriculum I refer to a particular example. Jones (2007) reflects from a teaching and learning perspective whether the lecture is an outmoded medium or instrument of inspiration? In isolation this question does not offer the opportunity to consider the lecture in its curriculum context and the lecture might be seen as an example of Approach A. However, if this question is framed within a pedagogic decision-making context it would ask, ‘what is the role of the lecture in the contemporary curriculum?’. This question offers a greater contextual understanding of the potential of this pedagogic form and its benefits for students.

Knowledge in Approach D is constructed by students by engaging personal knowing that interacts with knowledge practices in interactive and dynamic ways, often challenging the limitations of the recontextualised knowledge practices. This challenge is developed in students through learning seen as critical reflection (Meizrow, 1998) and self-authorship (Baxter Magolda, 1999). In the A&D HE curriculum critical reflection has played a role in developing the curriculum, often in practical elements of the curriculum influenced by Schön (1991) and in the CSS elements by critical theory. Because knowledge practices are not compartmentalised within Approach D both practice-based and theoretical-based views of knowledge are not seen as distinct. This enables students to make connections between different forms of enquiry.

It should be noted, that although I have used the term ‘course leader and course team’, in my study they are not always in alignment in their Approach.

Particularly in Approach D where I found two course leaders struggling with a course teams that they described as having Approach C. There are likely to also be examples of a reverse situation, although my findings are based on interviews with course leaders so the voices of course teams are absent. However, what I do recognise is that course teams may take a contrary or even conflicting approaches to the curriculum.

In A&D Approach D is evident in many contexts. Eighteen of the twenty A&D course leaders in my study had undertaken a teaching qualification and the majority discussed the positive impact of this on their understanding of teaching and learning. Many spoke of experiencing the A&D HE curriculum from over twenty years ago that appeared to them to be entirely absent from their view as a student, considering it to be an entirely unstructured educational experience. For many the opportunity to develop a better student experience was a major motivation for becoming an academic and a course leader. There were alternative views in the data but these were very much in the minority.

Approach D might be seen as a particular strength of the A&D curriculum as a form of ‘professional subject’ (as presented by Barnett and Coate, 2005, p.77) where knowledge practices and personal ways of knowing interact to offer both ‘ways of thinking and practising’ (Barradell et al., 2018) and particularly forms of ‘knowing, acting and being’ in the world.

Limitations

So far, I have not discussed any limitations of Approach D. And whilst it offers the highest and most inclusive perception of teaching and learning, the focus

of my study is on the curriculum. In my data I found Approach D was interactive with academics and students engaging in the curriculum, however students were still viewed as part of the iterative processes of the curriculum rather than involved in the actual ‘construction’ of the curriculum.

Implications for student

Students and academics in Approach D are engaging in a dialogic curriculum where power relations are often considered non-evident. Important to note the term ‘considered’, as academics still make the main decisions regarding the curriculum particularly in terms of its creative design and initial enactment. Students in Approach D are given the opportunity to critically engage in recontextualised knowledge practices using their own personal forms of knowing, this enables them to form their own professional or disciplinary ways of thinking and practising (Barradell et al., 2018) and link forms of enquiry within the curriculum. However, the re-contextualisation of knowledge practices into the curriculum is still predominantly in the control of the course leader and course team, although students often have space to contest these.

Approach D represented within the curriculum perspectives framework shown in Figure 6.4.

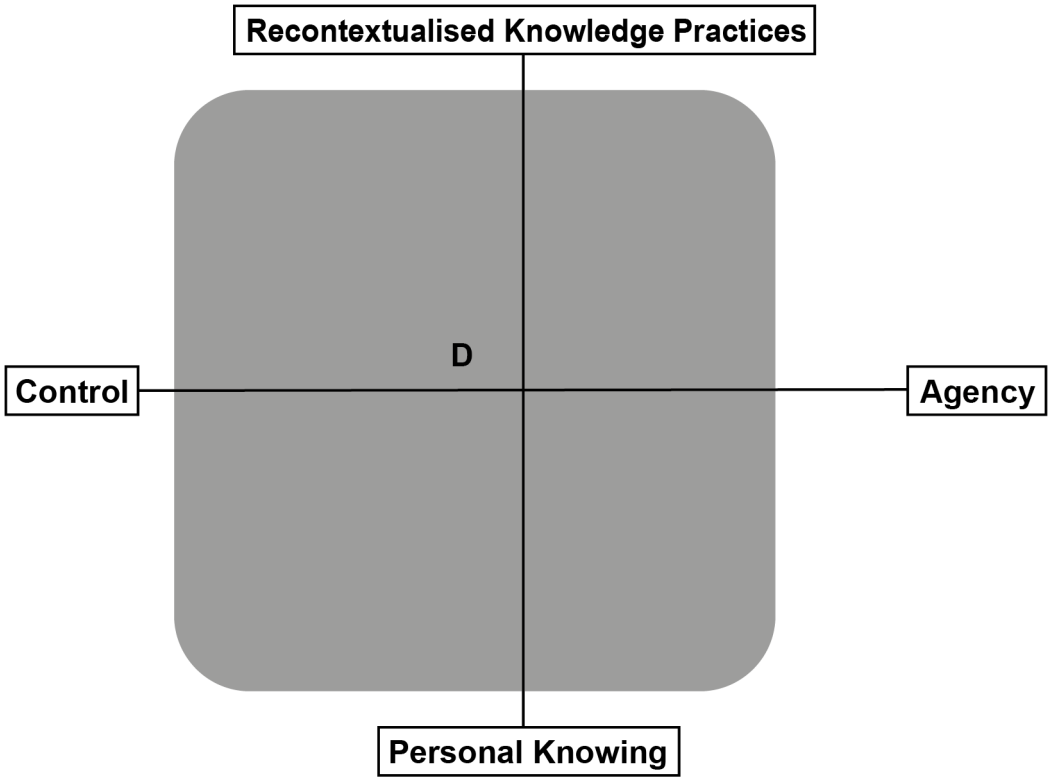


Figure 6.4: Approach D in the curriculum perspective framework.

6.6 Approach E: Course leader, course team and students have agency in the curriculum as a complex conversation.

Approach E, was found to be connected to the course leaders' perception of the curriculum as a learning community, where as far as possible all members of the learning community are equal within it, but importantly acknowledge any power relationships. Approach E positions the curriculum as a social process (Grundy, 1987) that reflects the beliefs, values and power relationships of the context in which curriculum is designed and enacted (Weller, 2016). This can be seen within the ideas of critical pedagogy, such as those exemplified in McLean (2006). Critical pedagogy is a largely optimist view of the role that HE can have in transforming both individuals' life worlds and contribute to changes in society, particularly tackling problems associated with inequalities. Critical pedagogy suggests that the agency of students in the curriculum is a

critical dimension. In literature this turn towards ‘student agency’ in educational scholarship is well articulated by Klemenčič (2015):

> studentship is highly conductive to engagement due to its liminal and developmental characteristics. In other words, students are likely to be highly “agentic”, that is they seek to exert some influence on their educational trajectories, their future lives and immediate and larger social surrounds. (p.12)

In practice, the development of this student agency in the curriculum can be seen in the co-creation of curriculum through student involvement in curriculum design (Bovill, 2014). Bovill and Woolmer (2019) offer a clear picture relating to the co-creation ‘of’ or ‘in’ the curriculum, connecting opportunities for co-creation to how the curriculum is conceptualised. In the context of my study it was not student co-construction ‘of’ the curriculum design that was found in the data but co-construction ‘in’ the enactment of curriculum-design-in-action (Barnett and Coate, 2005) and as a complex conversation.

Benefits

Whereas, knowledge in Approach D is that created or co-created between academics and students in the interaction of their personal knowing with the recontextualised knowledge practices in the curriculum. In Approach E students additionally have agency to be involved in the re-contextualisation of knowledge practices in the curriculum as a site of co-construction. The reasons why Approach E is important are threefold. Firstly, Approach E recognises the diversity of students and their access to local knowledge practices in the mass global HE context and offers ways in which this access

can be shared collectively. Secondly, through Approach E students learn not only to become knowledge producers (Neary and Winn, 2009) but also understand how knowledge is communicated and changed through pedagogic interaction (Weller 2012). And thirdly, Approach E offers ways in which new knowledge communities can be constructed and developed.

Limitations

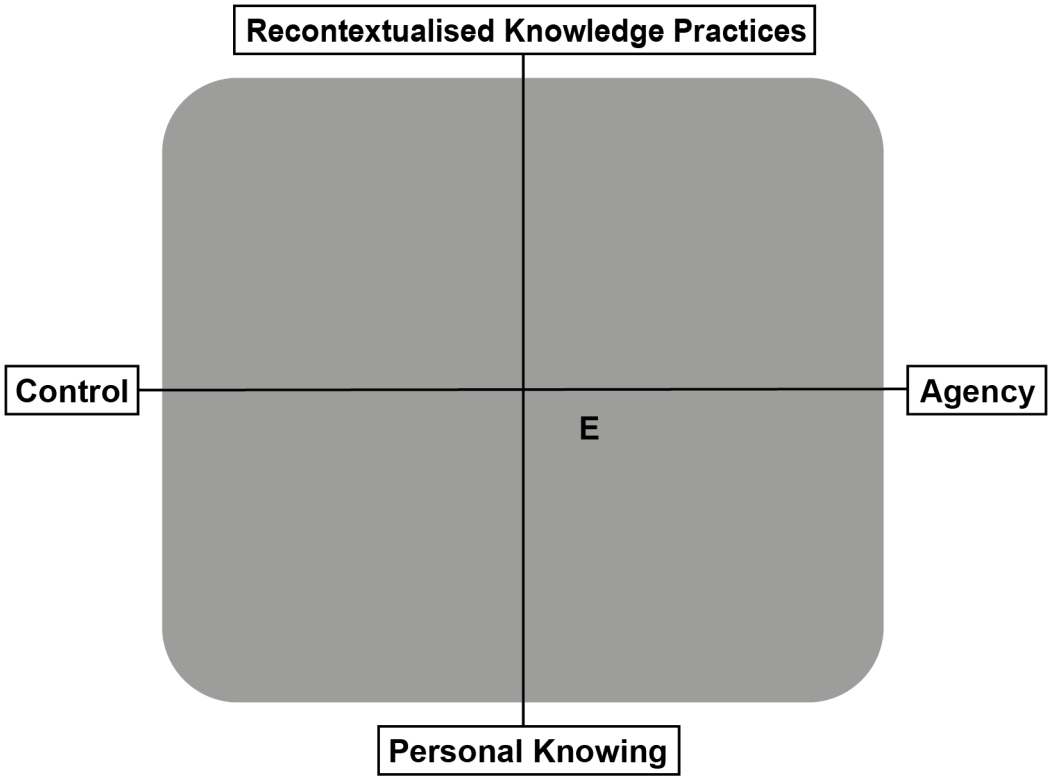
Approach E is the most advanced approach to the curriculum so might be the approach with the least limitations. However, one course leader's description of the curriculum had some of the key characteristics of Approach E but this was isolated with no descriptions that might be constituted in Approaches A-D. They describe their view of the curriculum as incompatible with the bureaucratic university, educational decline and the increased number of students. This is a reminder that my study takes place within a mass internationalised university and that the curriculum approaches discussed are in this context.

Implications for students

In course leader and course team Approach E, students are active citizens in both the curriculum and the world. As such they have agency, as active producers of knowledge and ways of knowing that shape the contexts in which they live and work, including the curriculum. Experiences of agency are preparation for agency in the world and contribution to society (McLean, 2006). This agency means students shaping the curriculum can be seen as complex as the ways in which academics shape the curriculum. In Approach E

the implication for students is that they can be involved in the co-creation of the curriculum within its multiple connotations.

Approach E represented within the curriculum perspectives framework shown in Figure 6.5.



6.5: Approach E in the curriculum perspective framework.

6.7 Conclusion

I have discussed all five of the course leaders' (and the course team) Approaches to the curriculum using my curriculum perspectives framework as a heuristic. Through this discussion I recognise the complexity of the A&D curriculum in a mass HE sector. My findings suggest course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum are better understood as hierarchically inclusive. This means that Approach E is inclusive of Approaches A, B, C, and D recognising the benefits and limitations of each of

the curriculum Approaches for students. My findings suggests that in a mass HE sector with a complex body of students that need different types of engagement (Jary and Lebeau, 2009) that the curriculum can be simultaneously perceived and approached by course leaders as product, process and praxis. This simultaneity can involve the pre-planning of curriculum spaces involving curriculum design and pedagogic decision-making (product), the enactment of the curriculum as pedagogy-in-action (process) and the ultimate aim to offer disciplinary or professional education, which gives students agency to shape knowledge practices through developing their own personal knowing (praxis).

Based on the hierarchical inclusion of the Approaches A to E when considered within the curriculum perspectives framework I finally present my ‘Curriculum Approaches Model’ in the final Chapter 7.

7 Chapter 7 Summary of findings and conclusion

7.1 Introduction

In Chapter 6, I analysed each of the course leaders' Approaches A to E using my curriculum perspectives framework. In this summary I focus on Approaches C and E as they offer a discussion of the limitations and opportunities within the A&D curriculum. I then consider the variation in Approaches A to E in relation to different knowledge practices in the A&D curriculum and present my Curriculum Approaches Model. Finally I suggest the limitations of my study and how these might be addressed through future research. Before doing this I review my research objectives and rationale and summarise the finding of my review of HE curriculum literature.

7.2 Objectives and rationale

The aim of my study was to research A&D course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the HE curriculum and analyse the benefits and limitations of these approaches considering the implication for students. The rationale for undertaking my study was that in analysing the A&D course leaders' curriculum approaches I could offer a model for those seeking to change or develop the A&D curriculum.

7.3 Findings: review of higher education curriculum literature.

There is confusion in the terms used to describe and/or analyse the variation in academics' approaches to the curriculum. My review suggests caution when making connections between different literatures, and that the source of findings should be considered foremost.

Taking a holistic view of different perspectives on the HE curriculum literature offers an opportunity to consider the complex relationship of academics, students and knowledge to the curriculum. This enables a consideration of both the 'foundations' and 'structure' of the curriculum (Grundy, 1987) or as Annala et al. (2017) categorise in literature, 'critical' or 'normative' theoretical curriculum positions. I offer a brief summary of the findings of each curriculum perspective.

Factors shaping the curriculum: Course leaders are a critical factor in the curriculum as they offer opportunities for course team and student engagement in the curriculum.

Curriculum design: Course leaders as curriculum designers and decision-makers can use the tools of objectives based curriculum imaginatively to support students' development and engagement with knowledge (Hadjianastasis, 2017).

Curriculum as student development: designing and enacting a curriculum framework that offers students opportunities to develop 'knowing, acting and being' (Barnett and Coate, 2005) and disciplinary or professional 'ways of thinking and practising' (Barradell et al. 2018).

Curriculum as knowledge: 'personal knowing', a central aspect of 'knowing, acting and being', is formed in HE though an engagement with recontextualised knowledge practices (Barnet and Coate, 2005; Bernstein, 2000). Epistemic access to these knowledge practices is critical to support **all** students, as is the opportunity for students to challenge the limitations of these knowledge practices to produce new knowledge.

Curriculum as practice: course leaders, course teams and students might view the 'curriculum as practice' (Weller, 2015) offering exciting opportunities for the co-creation of the curriculum.

Discussing these curriculum perspectives in reverse order I present a synopsis of my holistic overview. The curriculum might be seen as a practice. The curriculum involves student engagement with knowledge practices. Curriculum knowledge practices are those recontextualised from disciplinary or professional knowledge practices. Engaging students with the curriculum recontextualised knowledge practices involves offering both epistemic access for **all** students and opportunities to challenge the limitations of these knowledge practices. This enables students to develop new knowledge and 'personal knowing'. This 'personal knowing' is critical in student development as 'knowing, acting and being'. This development can be supported by the curriculum design of spaces for dialogic interaction (Barnett and Coate, 2005) and outcomes that are flexible and imaginative (Hadjianastasis, 2017). From this holistic view of the curriculum perspectives I was able to develop a curriculum perspective framework, which I used as a heuristic to analyse course leaders' approaches to the curriculum.

7.4 Findings: Course leaders' perception of, and approaches to the curriculum.

I present a summary of the findings of my first research question.

RQ1: What are the variations in art and design course leaders' perceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum? (See Table 7.1 and 7.2).

The variation in course leaders' perception of the curriculum as:	
Category A	The content and projects to be delivered to students.
Category B	The structure of the course to enable student outcomes.
Category C	The design, planning and co-ordination of the student experience.
Category D	Dynamic, interactive and evolving through student engagement.
Category E	A learning community of students and staff.

Table 7.1 Variation in course leaders' perceptions of the curriculum.

The variation in course leaders' approaches to the curriculum.	
Approach A	Course leader (and course team) controls the content and projects of the curriculum.
Approach B	Course leader (and course team) manages the structure and outcomes of the curriculum.
Approach C	Course leader and course team design and co-ordinate the student journey.
Approach D	Course leader and course team engage students in a dynamic, interactive and evolving curriculum.
Approach E	Course leader, course team and students have agency in the curriculum as a complex conversation.

Table 7.2 The variation of course leaders' (and course team) approaches to the curriculum.

7.5 Findings: Analysis of course leaders' Approaches A to E using my curriculum perspectives model.

I now summarise the findings of my second research question.

RQ2: What are the benefits, limitations and implications for students of the variation in course leaders' (and course team) approaches to the curriculum?

I analysed all five of the course leaders' Approaches A to E using my curriculum perspectives framework. I have decided in my summary to initially focus on Approach C and Approach E as they respectively offer a discussion on a limitation and opportunity for the A&D curriculum. I then discuss the main finding of my study, a holistic view of variation in course leaders' Approaches A to E.

7.5.1 Approach C: Course leader and course team design and co-ordinate the student journey.

Course leaders' perception of the curriculum Category C and approaches to the curriculum Approach C were very dominant in the data and was described in a wide range of contexts.

A brief summary of Approach C within my curriculum perspectives framework suggests:

Course leader and team

- Design and co-ordinate the curriculum as experiences that enable students to develop competencies in an A&D vocational curriculum.

Knowledge practices

- Are those chosen and supported by the course team to which students are offered the opportunity to demonstrate 'competence' as a form of personal knowing through 'doing'.

View of students

- Have ‘in-built’ creativity and self-regulation, prior epistemic access is often taken for granted and motivation to attend and participate is a student’s choice rather than the student’s contextual situation.

Approach C assumes that what is designed in the curriculum is that experienced by students. Approach C is flawed because it does not recognise that students’ motivations and prior knowledge, particularly in a mass HE context, are diverse and therefore so are the ways in which they experience the curriculum. Approach C, is based on a competence view of the curriculum and assumes that students have ‘inbuilt’ creativity and self-regulation. Not viewing these factors as socially or environmentally constructed can reinforce social or cultural differences and inequalities.

Key observation: in the context of this study discussions on the more advanced Approaches of D and E may be useful in the development of the A&D curriculum. This may also be of use in other A&D contexts and in other professional subjects where competence models of learning are fore-fronted.

7.5.2 Approach E: Course leader, course team and students have agency in the curriculum as a complex conversation.

Course leaders’ perception of the curriculum Category E, in relation to Fraser and Bosanquet’s (2006) ‘conceptions’ is a new variation. Category E was evident in descriptions of situated practices of Approach E. In Category E, the perception of the curriculum had moved to not only include teaching and learning interactions but a consciousness and discussion of the power

relations in curriculum decision-making and enactment. A brief summary of Approach E within my curriculum perspectives framework suggests:

Course leader and team

- Recognise the benefits and limitations of Approaches A, B, C, D and involve students actively in the curriculum decision-making, this includes involving students in the re-contextualisation of knowledge practices into the curriculum.

Knowledge practices

- Integrated theoretical and practical knowledge, offers the development of personal knowing through challenging these knowledge practices to create new knowledge.

Students

- Have agency as active citizens and active producers of knowledge practices that shape the contexts in which they live and work, including the curriculum.

Experiences of agency in the curriculum are preparation for agency in the world and contribution to society. The way students shape the curriculum should be seen as complex as the ways in which academics shape the curriculum. Bovill and Woolmer's (2019) suggestion that academics conceiving the curriculum as Fraser and Bosanquet's (2006) Category D are more likely to consider curriculum and knowledge 'co-creation' is evident in my data. However, in my phenomenographic analysis I constituted a new hierarchically inclusive Category E and Approach E. In this data I found descriptions of students active in the enactment of the curriculum and in the recontextualisation of knowledge practices. This offered an opportunity for

students to integrate practical and theoretical knowledge within the A&D curriculum.

Key observation: Approach E is an important development for the A&D curriculum as it connects the 'ontological turn' (Barnett, 2004) in HE with epistemic access to powerful knowledge (Wheelahan, 2010). This is evident in students being actively involved in the recontextualisation of knowledge practices within the curriculum. This suggests that in the context of this research and in the broader HE sector, discussions on the different ways students agency is enabled in curriculum construction is critical for the future of the HE curriculum.

7.6 Approaches A to E

I now summarise findings regarding the variation of Approaches A to E.

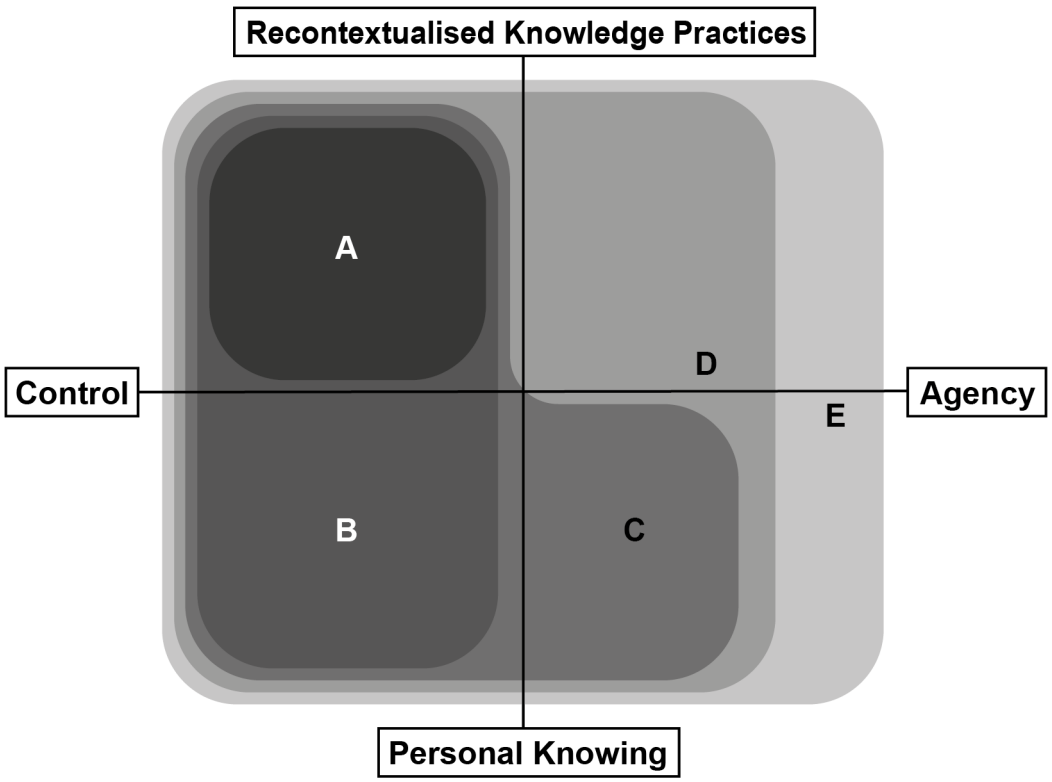
7.6.1 A&D curriculum and knowledge practices

In the A&D curriculum as a vocational region recontextualised knowledge practices from other disciplines are used to verify, support, enhance, critique (dependent on the view taken) A&D practice (Shay and Steyn, 2016). I found that the separation or integration of the theoretical and practical knowledge in the curriculum aligned within the conceptions of, and approaches to the curriculum. In Approach A the curriculum was often separated as theoretical knowledge in 'contextual and critical studies' elements (often described as an uncontested history of the discipline) and practical knowledge within A&D practical elements in studio projects. In Approach E practical and theoretical A&D knowledge were integral to the curriculum and an opportunity for students to bring knowledge practices to the curriculum.

Key observation: Approach E suggests a development in the A&D curriculum where knowledge practices, with their theoretical and practical considerations, are recontextualised in the curriculum by both academics and students.

7.6.2 Curriculum Approaches Model

The main finding of my study, and contribution to new knowledge, comes through the analysis of the variation of A&D course leaders' Approaches A to E within the curriculum perspectives framework. This establishes that the A&D course leader Approaches should be seen in a hierarchically inclusive way. This means course leader Approach E includes Approaches A, B, C, and D, recognising the benefits and limitations of each for students. This suggests in a mass HE sector where the curriculum should meet the needs and aspirations of a complex body of students, the most advanced approach to the curriculum involves simultaneously perceiving and approaching the curriculum as product, process and praxis. This simultaneity can involve the pre-planning of the curriculum spaces using curriculum design and pedagogic decision-making (product), the enactment of the curriculum as pedagogy-in-action (process) and opportunities for students to gain epistemic access to disciplinary or professional knowledge practices whilst developing their personal knowing by having agency in the curriculum as a practice (praxis). Based on the hierarchical inclusion of 'perceptions of' and 'approaches to' the curriculum I now present the 'Curriculum Approaches Model' (see Figure 7.1).



Curriculum Approaches Model

Key:

A: Course leader (and course team) controls the content and projects of the curriculum.

B: Course leader (and course team) manages the structure and outcomes of the curriculum.

C: Course leader and course team design and co-ordinate the student journey.

D: Course leader and course team engage students in a dynamic, interactive and evolving curriculum.

E: Course leader, course team and students have agency in the curriculum as a complex conversation.

Figure 7.1: Curriculum Approaches Model.

Key observation: my 'Curriculum Approaches Model' offers opportunities for the discussions on the development or changes in the curriculum. This is because each Approach (A to E) has different opportunities or limitations for

students within the curriculum suggesting that different strategies for development or change will be needed.

7.7 Limitations of my study and future research

One limitation of my study is my choice of course leaders, as this does not represent the views of the rest of the academic team, technical staff, administrators and students. I focus on course leaders as they are pivotal in the curriculum and their approaches often offer or restrict access and involvement by other staff or students. I see this as the beginnings of a conversation around the variation in A&D curriculum approaches and see the findings of my study as a beginning for research about other staff and students involvement in the curriculum.

I discussed the methodological limitations of phenomenography in Chapter 4. One particular criticism is that phenomenography does not reveal the structural or ideological factors that might play in the reasons for the variation of conceptions (or other unit of study). Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) address this matter using Habermas (1972). This remains a question in my study, which I leave open and would involve further research.

In relation to the connection between ‘perceptions of’ and ‘approaches to’ the curriculum I make no claim of causation between the two. As I am researching the variation of each I make no claim that they are intrinsically related as other factors may be at play (Trigwell and Prosser 1999 p.68 discuss a similar issue). I do not see this as a concern as I have been able to meet my research aims. However, to establish any causation would require further research.

While I make no claims for generalisability, I hope the findings of my study are of use in other discussions and research on the curriculum in other contexts.

7.8 Policy and practice: a conclusion

My study contributes to several scholarly calls for a greater focus on the HE curriculum. Barnett and Coate (2005) see engagement of academics in the curriculum as a matter of scholarship and project development. A&D academics identify as 'A&D practitioners' and 'teaching practitioners' (Shreeve 2008). Weller's (2012) call for the curriculum as practice, which in the most advanced Approach E would suggest course leaders, the course team and students are 'curriculum practitioners'. Developing course leaders and course teams as 'curriculum practitioners' with a focus on pedagogic decision-making, rather than just the co-ordination of teaching and learning might lead to greater coherency in discussions on the relevance of particular pedagogic practices and their contextual relationship within the curriculum. This also offers opportunities for students to have agency, like academics, all operating as 'curriculum practitioners' to shape the curriculum.

My study has presented a more complex view of the variation in course leaders' approaches to the curriculum, presented in my Curriculum Approaches Model (see Figure 7.1). This is so that those seeking to change or develop the curriculum approaches through policy or practice have a more complex but comprehensible model.

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