

**How important is the local when thinking global?**

**Internationalisation at a research-led university**

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## **Declaration**

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

## **Signature**

# **How important is the local when thinking global?**

## **Internationalisation at a research-led university**

### ***Abstract***

This thesis examines the importance of local factors associated with a research-led university's move toward greater internationalisation. The study explores the university's rationales for internationalisation along with forces acting to enable and constrain successful internationalisation. Attention is focused on the perceptions of individuals at different levels of the academic hierarchy.

The study provides data that add local detail to national and sector surveys of internationalisation. The key data source is 16 semi-structured interviews with staff at the university including senior university leaders and academic staff. Additional information is derived from documents relating to the university's internationalisation projects. All data are analysed from an insider-researcher position.

The study's findings suggest that local factors of place, tradition and individual agency are important items in shaping internationalisation endeavours. Personal and professional international experiences can create a positive approach for extending international activities within the university. This is offset by concerns about economically driven rationales and the privileging of international as opposed to locally based research. The conceptual

framework locates the study within the multifaceted globalisation discourse and creates a structure for examining the significance of local factors, which tend to be overlooked in internationalisation research. Perceptions of internationalisation are analysed in a structure-agency framework. The discourse and metaphors employed are also examined.

Similar universities are likely to follow similar paths in response to globalising forces and to pursue greater internationalisation, but their particular trajectories are likely to be coloured by local conditions. Whilst the specifics of this university's local context may not be readily transferable, it is suggested that other universities would do well to attend to their own local context when thinking globally.

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## ***Abbreviations***

BERA	British Educational Research Association
DIUS	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
GATS	General Agreement on Trade in Services
HECSU	Higher Education Careers Services Unit
ICT	Internet and Computing Technologies
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PMI2	Prime Minister's Initiative Phase 2
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UoL	University of Liverpool
UK	United Kingdom
XJTLU	Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

This chapter introduces the main focus of the study, the research aims, questions and limitations. It shows the conceptual framework that was developed to organise the literature and to analyse the findings. Finally, it outlines the structure of the rest of the thesis.

### ***Aims of the study***

The thesis examines issues around the development of an internationalisation strategy at the University of Liverpool, a research-led university in the North of England. My interest in this area originally derived from several opportunities to work overseas on behalf of the university. I developed a commitment to understanding more about the underpinning rationales and the structures required to support these activities. Relatively recently the university moved overtly to position itself as a 'global university' with options to contribute to the process through involvement in working parties. Undertaking a PhD thesis enabled me to formalise an academic underpinning to go alongside practical engagement; a happy convergence of personal interest, academic study and professional work.

The research aims of the study are to examine the importance of local factors in the internationalisation endeavours at the university. The research brings together some of the significant theoretical threads and highlights implications for practice. The move to greater internationalisation for universities in the

United Kingdom (UK) is framed within a globalising context, so the first research question is:

*1) What are the global/national drivers that are influencing the university's internationalisation?*

Internationalisation is one of the responses open to universities in response to globalisation. Internationalisation is the process of increasing the integration of internationally based activities into all the operations of a university. This may range from increasing recruitment of international staff and students through to changing strategies and systems to promote greater international and intercultural dimensions to all facets of the university (J. Knight, 2004).

Globalisation is a complex and contested term; it involves those flows and forces that operate across or despite national boundaries (Held & McGrew, 2003). It can be characterised as creating a context or structure that invokes a response from most universities in the UK but particularly from research-led universities that increasingly find themselves operating globally as well as locally. So the second research question is:

*2) What are the enabling and restraining factors for internationalisation at the university?*

The language of this question was derived from Lewin's (1964) work on change; specifically his presentation of force field analysis as a means of understanding the initiation of change processes. The research seeks to identify the specific rationales for internationalisation at the university.

Staff at the university will have different responses to internationalisation. I have argued in this thesis that generating data around individuals' positions on internationalisation forms an important part of developing a rich picture of the local factors that contribute to the more visible institutional trajectory. The third question addresses these aspects:

*3) How are staff interpreting internationalisation at the university?*

'Local factors' refers to issues that are directly related to the university. This is to differentiate from national or global considerations and from other universities. The term includes elements such as history and location. It also specifically includes the agential actions of staff at the university.

The actions of the university and of staff infer that there will be the potential for changes to practice derived from the research. These may be situated at the university itself and may offer other universities comparable options for change. The fourth research question is:

*4) What are the implications for practice?*

This research focuses on a single university and at a particular time when moves to internationalisation were initiated. So, what does this thesis have to offer the wider educational research community? Firstly, internationalisation is a rapidly growing and multifaceted area and there is a great deal still to learn about the various threads of globalisation and internationalisation. Secondly and more specifically, Marginson and Rhoades (2002) claim that there is insufficient research into some of the detail and connections at a local

level; where local refers to particular institutions and even to individual staff members. They argue for incorporating more rich detail into the wider internationalisation and globalisation picture as research with a national or sector focus inevitably occludes local detail.

This thesis offers some of that rich picture detail for a particular institution. I argue that local factors are an important dimension in understanding internationalisation. An approach that foregrounds local factors may be useful for explorations in other institutions.

#### *Delimitations of the study*

The study concentrates on the rationales, enablers and restrainers for internationalisation. One basis for framing the study is the first step of Lewin's (1964) Three Step model of change; the unfreezing or initiating stage. The study does not address the longer term implementation or completion stages of a change process (if the stages can be neatly separated).

The research is sited in a research-led university with its own particular historical trajectory and location. Both of these elements emerged as important dimensions in the study and are explained and developed throughout the text. In seeking to develop rich picture research within the limitations of a PhD thesis, comparisons with other institutions are not included.

Similarly in framing the research, I had to make decisions about the level and unit of analysis. In taking a focus on a single university, the global and international levels are used to inform the study rather than being included in

the study. Regional and national influences and agencies are also brought into the discussion as needed.

As an insider researcher there were a plethora of possibilities for interview participants. In order to respond to the research questions and to create manageable boundaries, I elected to restrict the interviews to people in leadership positions at the university and to a selection of academic staff. This meant excluding non-academic staff and students. The rationales for the decisions regarding who to interview are explained further in the Methodology chapter.

### ***Theoretical lenses***

A number of theoretical and analytic themes are woven together to help to interpret the university's activities. These are described in more detail either in the Literature Review chapter or at the point in the text they are used for analysis or explanation.

The theories are outlined below in Table 1: The key theories employed in the study

Name	Contribution	Authors
Glonacal-agency heuristic ( <u>Global</u> – <u>national</u> – <u>local</u> )	Supports a focus on the local and on agency Highlights existing local ‘layers and conditions’	Marginson and Rhoades
Force field analysis	Adapted to create an initial organising framework Highlights levels and ‘forces’ involved in developing internationalisation	Lewin
Transformative globalisation	Outlines characteristics of globalisation Foregrounds local responses to globalisation	Held et al, Tikly, Appadurai
Internationalisation rationales	Typologies of rationales for internationalisation: ‘national’ focus Enables comparison with findings	Knight, Middlehurst and Woodfield
Organisational Isomorphism/ Allomorphism	Convergence and divergence theories Similarities in internationalisation and local variation	Vaira
Structure-Agency	Theorising from interview data: Explains ‘how’ agential actions occur	Archer, Bhaskar

Each of these theoretical threads in the research story contributes in an interconnected yet different way. They are all linked by a focus on, or allowance of, local factors in their conceptualisations. When theories are seen as inevitable simplification of the social world then each theory provides a focus on certain aspects and not on others (Ashwin, 2009). For example Lewin’s ‘force field analysis’ is deployed primarily as an organising framework and is used to simplify by examining influences on internationalisation at differing levels. Theories that have been shown alongside globalisation, internationalisation rationales, and organisational isomorphism/allomorphism

are focused at the different levels within the organisational framework. Structure-Agency theories are used to explicate structure-agency interactions, where agency may be enacted by individuals or institutions (the university in this case).

A key theme in the research is the importance of attending to local factors when considering internationalisation strategies and activities. The glonacal-agency heuristic is an initial reference point. It provides an anchor for this 'local' focus in a model that aims to display some of the complexities of internationalisation by showing the various levels, linkages and the importance of pre-existing existing local conditions (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002).

Theories of globalisation locate the study within a wide literature on globalisation and its impacts on higher education; transformational globalisation theories provide a focus on local responses as an inherent feature of globalisation. Typologies of rationales for university internationalisation are used for analytic comparison with the research findings; their focus is on commonalities across the sector and internationally. In focusing on commonalities they obscure differences that may accrue as a result of differences in local conditions.

The analysis of the data occurs at two levels: institutional and individual. At the institutional level the ideas derived from Organisational Isomorphism and Allomorphism show how universities can respond both in similar ways and in divergent ways to the external flows and forces of globalisation, including how local factors are part of the dynamics (Vaira, 2004). At the institutional and at

the individual level Structure-Agency theories are used to examine emergent structures and agential responses to them (Archer, 2003; Archer, 2007). The examination of agential responses links back to the glonocal-agency model and helps to focus to the very local level of individuals interviewed in the study. Taken together the theoretical lenses connect global flows and forces with local agential action.

Three of the theoretical lenses are shown below in Table 2: The theoretical framework for the study

'Glonocal-agency' heuristic (Global – national – local)	Supports a focus on the local and on agency Highlights existing 'layers and conditions'	Marginson and Rhoades
Transformative globalisation	Outlines characteristics of globalisation Foregrounds local responses to globalisation	Held et al, Tikly, Appadurai
Structure/Agency	Theorising from interview data: Explains 'how' agential actions occur	Archer, Bhaskar

These three theories are linked by their drawing attention to the local dimensions in globalisation. Transformative globalisation theories examine globalisation and clearly articulate the complexities and the role of local factors. Marginson and Rhoades (2002) pick out some of the linkages and mechanisms and begin to articulate the 'how' of global influence and agential influence. They describe the various agents and the connections rather than

the actual detail of how structures and agents interact. This is covered in ideas derived from structure-agency theories.

*Structure of the remainder of the thesis*

The following chapter provides a depiction of the setting in which the research was carried out. It shows the first part of the historical context derived from an examination of relevant documentation. Chapter 3 situates the research in the field of globalisation and internationalisation and develops the conceptual framework in more detail. The methodological approach is described in Chapter 4 with attention to the nature of insider research. The details of the findings are presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 and are based on quotations from interviewees and include the initial analysis. Finally, Chapter 8 brings the thesis together with some theoretical and practical implications.

## Chapter 2: Research Setting

The University of Liverpool is the site for this research. The university's documentation is used to present global/international dimensions of the university's activities. The focus is on the university's activities as a whole rather than on individual departments. Like other research-led universities there is a wide range of international collaborations, primarily in the research area, although the university does have two significant international relationships based on learning and teaching.

Documents related to internationalisation were reviewed at the outset and throughout the project. Tight (2003) argues that:

“it is difficult to imagine any one undertaking a meaningful piece of social research which did not involve some documentary analysis...”  
(p188).

So, documentary analysis introduces the context for the research and also was part of my ongoing involvement and interest in the pragmatics of the development of internationalisation strategies. Documents are important not just in reporting but also because they can be seen as ‘attempts at persuasion’ in that they “do not simply reflect, but also construct social reality and versions of events” (May, 1997 p164).

Examining the university's Annual Reports 2006-08 in this light shows a change in the way the term ‘global’ is used. There is a reasonable continuity

of the association of 'global' with international educational relationships and with research activity. What is noticeable is the introduction of the terms Global Reach, Global University and Global Brand. Not surprisingly this accords with my perceptions internally of terms that are being used (or not used) in discussions and working groups. Global University is a recent development in the university's self presentation. It is an example of the use of language and positional authority to shape and create agendas. Drawing on Trowler (2003) the deployment of the term Global Reach is an example of a usage that "does not just represent reality, but helps create it" (p132). It is a precursor to more substantive internationalisation developments. The term has come into use at the university but is not defined, so the development of meaning in this context is ongoing.

The Annual Report (2008) is subtitled 'An international dimension' with the first pages given over to examples of the university's Global Reach. This is framed within "an increasing competitive global higher education environment" (p7). Two key examples of international developments are shown. The first is the establishment of Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University (XJTLU) near Shanghai; a partnership whereby XJTLU offers University of Liverpool degrees and its students are able to come to Liverpool (paying full international fees) to complete the final two years of their undergraduate degrees. The second is a partnership with Laureate Education "the world's largest global operator of universities in the private sector" (p7). Again this arrangement offers University of Liverpool degrees, so that it is claimed that the university is "the premier provider of wholly-online degree programmes in Europe" (p7). These are the models for future growth as the "University is

positioning itself as a global institution offering a distinctive international experience for staff and students” (p7).

These ambitions involve significant change at the university. Like many other universities, the university is aiming to improve its research performance and attract greater numbers of international students; as well as attending to the myriad of nationally imposed requirements. Part of the background for this research is the multiple change initiatives that are underway; internationalisation being one of five major themes being developed. The others are: Research Performance, Student Experience, Knowledge Exchange and Widening Participation.

Global considerations have only relatively recently achieved such prominence at the university. Two of the interviewees provide some of the historical development of the university’s international activities; a mix of aspiration and planning along with serendipity. This is shown in the findings in Chapter 5: Rationales for internationalisation. Internationalisation is a central practical development in order to realise the university’s global ambitions. The next chapter moves to consider the literature on globalisation and internationalisation and to frame their inherent complexities.

### **Chapter 3: Literature Review**

The study explores some of the reasons why the university is developing an internationalisation strategy within an increasingly globalised world. It examines how a selection of staff within the university perceives internationalisation and the rationales for internationalisation. Greater internationalisation is one of higher education's possible responses to global changes.

Studies exploring internationalisation tend to focus at the level of the international, the national or the higher education sector as a whole. There is a need for more research at various levels but specifically at the local institutional level according to Marginson and Rhoades (2002). They call for studies that focus down to the professionals who enact and formulate policies at the local level: "We need work that attends to local response and reality, explores local institutions, and considers local practices" (p286). This research examines local responses at one institution. These include its rationales for internationalisation, specific constraints and enablers and individual responses to internationalisation.

The literature review begins with an outline of definitions and meanings of internationalisation and globalisation. Internationalisation is shown as interconnected with globalisation. Next, force field analysis from Lewin's (1964) Three Step model of planned change is used as a framework for

organising and simplifying the forces that act on a university's consideration of internationalisation. These forces are shown as operating at different levels: global, national, institutional and individual. As outlined in the limitations section regional, sector and departmental levels are either not included or considered briefly. At each level there are aspects of the forces that act as drivers for internationalisation or as restrainers and resistances. Further, the forces at one level, such as at the global, can be seen as creating a context or structure within which an institution acts as an agent and frames its own responses. This is echoed as the institution moves toward greater internationalisation; it in turn creates a structure within which individual staff act as agents in ways that may, or may not, support the institution's internationalisation. Next the key typologies of university rationales for internationalisation are outlined. The review concludes with consideration of the theoretical positions that support the analysis.

### ***Internationalisation***

Internationalisation refers to specific policies and strategies that governments and institutions undertake to add international dimensions to their activities either 'at home' or overseas. It is intertwined with globalisation. However, they are related but different processes.

Globalisation refers to flows and movements across borders and forms part of an environment in which the international dimension of higher education is becoming more important (J. Knight, 2004). The flows and forces of globalisation create a context or structure that impact on higher education

institutions that may choose to pursue greater internationalisation as one of their responses to this changing context. At this stage of the discussion, context is taken to the mean “that which surrounds”, where surrounds or includes may involve enablement or constraint at ‘lower’ levels but does not imply direct causation (Cole, 1996 p134). Wider interpretations of context and structure are developed in the concluding discussion on structure-agency. Globalisation is outlined more fully following the consideration of internationalisation and presentation of the organising framework.

#### *Definitions of internationalisation and levels of application*

Internationalisation can be defined at a variety of ‘levels’ where there may be different interests and hence different foci for the definition. Level in this study refers primarily to global, international, national, institutional or individual levels. Definitions may be focused clearly at one level:

A systematic and sustained effort by government to make higher education (HE) institutions more responsive to the challenges of the globalization of the economy and society (Elliott, 1998 p33).

The national government as the focus is shown as attempting to effect institutions in response to globalisation. Definitions have been developed subsequently that have a more explicit focus on the institutional level.

In order to be useful a definition of internationalisation also needs to avoid being so broad that it becomes a catch-all term and to avoid being so narrow that it excludes genuine internationalisation activities. Accordingly, a useful definition must be broad enough to include a range of activities and settings,

be seen in combination with a conceptual framework and be able to provide parameters that can be measured (de Wit, 2002; J. Knight, 2004).

Internationalisation is defined as:

The process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education (J. Knight, 2004 p11).

This definition was formulated in order to be relevant to both national/sector and institutional levels. It is sufficiently broad that it can be applied in a range of settings and to different countries. The definition is widely accepted in UK higher education, it allows for an institutional focus and it supports analysis of dimensions and functions at the university. It does not, at this stage, identify rationales, drivers, activities or intentions (J. Knight, 2007). To become a more useful and meaningful concept internationalisation needs to be further delimited and the terms employed need to be analysed and explained (J. Knight, 2004; J. Knight, 2007; Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2007).

Following Knight (2004) the terms employed are explained as:

*Process* signifies a developmental and ongoing effort

*International, intercultural and global* are taken together to illustrate the breadth of internationalisation. *International* shows the relationships between

nations and cultures; *intercultural* reflects the diversities that exist within countries and institutions; *global* refers to the world wide aspect.

*Integrating* refers to embedding internationalisation into mainstream activities and policies in a sustainable and central manner.

*Purpose, functions and delivery*: In this case *Purpose* is taken to mean the overall aim and direction of the university. *Functions* represent the primary tasks of the institution, shown as teaching/learning, research and services. *Delivery* refers to educational programmes. In the case of the university, as a research-led institution, it needs to be noted that research is at least an equivalent aspect of internationalisation alongside educational programmes. These appear to have been given some primacy in Knight's explanation as a result of being shown as a *Function* (teaching and learning) as well as *Delivery* (educational programmes).

In a detailed report, commissioned by the Higher Education Academy that examines internationalisation in the UK context, Middlehurst & Woodfield (2007) do not devote a great deal of space to definitions but they do distinguish Knight's definition as the most commonly used in UK higher education. Other organisational reports (see for example UNESCO 2004, OECD 2008) identify definitions that they take to guide their discussions; most of these either use Knight's definition or have substantive similarities with Knight.

Internationalisation is shown as bringing global and international dimensions into the activities of the university. The next section uses Lewin's concept of

force fields to frame and examine how forces, both external and internal to the university, impact on moves toward greater internationalisation.

### ***Lewin's force field analysis***

Force field analysis is part of Lewin's (1964) Three Step model for change. It is used as the basis for developing an organising framework for the forces acting to drive toward or resist internationalisation within higher education in general and specifically applied to the university. Lewin's work is seminal. However, recent theorising on change has developed new understandings of change processes applicable to higher education. Despite reservations over both the overall model and the metaphorical language employed, aspects of Lewin's work make a useful departure point for untangling, simplifying and presenting the complexities of globalising forces and institutional responses.

A brief review of Lewin's Three Step model of change and force field analysis is followed by a defence of his overall approach. Reservations about Lewin's use of metaphors precede suggestions for expansion of the metaphorical language. An organisational framework based on Lewin's ideas is then used to analyse the 'forces' impacting on internationalisation.

### ***Outline of Lewin's Three Step model***

The Three Step model is one part of Lewin's (1964) wider approach to planned change that provides an integrated approach that can be applied to groups, organisations or to society (Brown, 1998; Burnes, 2004b). The model consists of three phases: Unfreezing, Moving and Refreezing. Unfreezing

involves generating the readiness and motivation for change (Schein, 2004), Moving is the stage where the forces at play cause realignment and repositioning and Refreezing secures the change in the new 'quasi-stable' position (Lewin, 1964; Burnes, 2004a).

In this particular context I am using Lewin's model as a conceptual construct, based on Weber's diagnostic tool; the 'ideal-type'. An ideal-type is not employed to accurately represent any particular reality but is a way of simplifying complex realities and enabling analysis of real-life situations (Delanty, 2005; Hamilton, 2000). Ideal-types are judged on whether they are useful, not on their literal accuracy in representing the truth of a situation (Silverman, 2004). The effects of globalisation on institutions and the forces at work to enable or constrain internationalisation are complex and interweaving. These operate across a number of levels and each level has the potential to influence actions at other levels. This complexity is simplified by using Lewin's model of 'force-field analysis' as a framework for representing the forces that impact on the university's internationalisation project.

The research is concerned with the situation at the beginning of a change process; the unfreezing stage in Lewin's Three Step model. Lewin's device of force field analysis is taken here as a starting point in the analysis. I am using it as a framework for organising the literature review. Before embarking on the review the terminology of force field analysis is outlined, general examples are shown and the position of Lewin's work in contemporary thinking on change is discussed.

The Three Step model is applied to Lewin's (1964) construct of the field where:

all behavior (including action, thinking, wishing, striving, valuing, achieving, etc.) is conceived a change of some state of a field in a given unit of time (pxi).

For an individual, the field is the individual's 'life space', which consists of the individual concerned and the psychological environment as it exists for the individual. This involves both facts known to the individual and anything that can be shown to have demonstrable effects. For a group, the equivalent to the individual life space is the group's 'social field', which includes the group itself and its 'ecological setting' (p200). Understanding context is a critical factor in any analysis of organisational change. Changes within a field are based on alterations in the distribution of forces within the totality of the field, where a force is the "strength and direction of the tendency to change" (p256).

Events within any field are determined by the distribution of forces within the field. The ability to understand, and potentially predict, occurrences within the field is based on an analysis of the forces operating within a field. Lewin uses the term 'quasi-stationary state' to refer to the state prior to a change and asserts that this state occurs because the forces driving in the direction of change are (temporarily) balanced by forces resisting change. Lewin (1964) points out that change and constancy are relative and that "group life is never without change, merely differences in the amount and type of change exist"



### *Critiques of Lewin's approach and responses*

Lewin's work has attracted four main criticisms:

1. It is too simplistic, static and linear,
2. It is applicable only to incremental and isolated change projects,
3. It ignores organisational politics and power relations and
4. It is a top-down, management driven model.

In a reappraisal of Lewin's approach to planned change Burnes (2004a) challenges these criticisms and argues that Lewin's approach is still relevant and that, implicitly at least, it is still widely used.

In addressing the first criticism that Lewin's approach to change is too simple and linear, Burnes (2004a) claims that this interpretation stems from a misreading of Lewin and that in fact he viewed social settings as being in constant change. As an example, culture is described as "a live process like a river that moves but still keeps a recognizable form", so that group life is treated as a "quasi-stationary' process" (Lewin, 1964 p172). Despite the straightforward metaphor of unfreezing, moving and refreezing Lewin described complex interactions between forces within an organisation and the effects on the organisation of its context.

Responding to the second criticism that Lewin's model is only applicable to incremental and isolated change, Burnes (2004a) contends that incremental change contributes to transformational change and Lewin's (1964) examples of change often refer to political and wider socio-cultural change. Similarly the

third criticism of ignoring issues of power and politics is refuted by examining examples of change cited by Lewin (1964). These include changing attitudes around racism and discrimination where issues of power and politics are central. The fourth criticism, that the model is a top-down approach, Burnes (2004a) counters by claiming that Lewin recognised that "the pressure for change comes from many quarters not just managers and leaders" and that successful change requires the "active, willing and equal participation of all" (p995). Lewin's (1964) writing regularly refers to the interdependence within groups and emphasises the need for group learning in any planned change process. Change can be initiated from the top but requires a 'felt need' and commitment from all involved (Burnes, 2004a; Schein, 1996).

In addition to the rebuttals of the criticisms of Lewin's approach, an analysis of models of change carried out across a range of disciplines by Elrod and Tippet (2002) showed that most exhibited a marked consistency and alignment with Lewin's Three Step model of change. Further, Hendry (1996) claims:

Scratch any account of creating and managing change and the idea that change is a three-stage process which necessarily begins with a process of unfreezing will not be far below the surface (p624).

### *Recent developments in theorising change*

Lewin's uses 'social field' as an all encompassing term for all 'forces', known and unknown, that impact on an organisation. Recent developments offer

considerably more detailed explanations within the social field of the interactions at play during a change process. Knight and Trowler (2000) distinguish different perspectives on change and implicitly associate Lewin with a technical-rational perspective. They argue that a technical-rational approach is an unsuitable lens to view change initiatives at universities as universities are 'loosely-coupled' with distributed power and that strong departments often have considerable effective autonomy (P. Knight & Trowler, 2001). In contrast, the Social Practice perspective contains a number of elements useful for exploring change in universities, one key factor is the "*situated* character of cognition and rationality" (emphasis in original) (P. Knight & Trowler, 2001 p23). As dialogic organisations universities are home to multiple viewpoints and interpretations of policies so that meanings are developed locally.

This attention to the situated and to the local has connections with the work of Marginson and Rhoades (2002) as they argue for more studies that focus on local interaction and agency. Additionally, it connects to ideas on structure-agency that are part of the conceptual framework of this study. Lewin (1964) also refers to "social powers which limit the freedom of action" of individuals (p162), effectively structures that constrain (or enable) agency. Before using Lewin as an organising framework the limitations of the Lewin's metaphors are discussed.

### *Limitations of Lewin's metaphors*

Central to this analysis is the metaphor of unfreezing; the stage of initiating change. Unfortunately this metaphor does invoke an image of a solid state

that is at variance with Lewin's repeated representation of change and quasi-stationary states within any field. Lewin describes fields as being in temporary equilibrium as a result of the forces that are acting in a field, rather than describing solid or fixed positions. Also, the metaphor of unfreezing and the image of a solid block tend to hide real live people effecting agency within an organisation. It presents change as happening to an organisation (unfreezing it), often requiring a top down leadership approach to effect change. This is at variance with many of Lewin's examples and his interest in group dynamics.

The metaphor of forces, driving and restraining, invokes an active mechanical image and whilst this may be tenable in some cases, it does not capture the more subtle influences that may enable or support change or resistance. An example of this is the privileging of certain forms or language or discourse as a consequence of a pervasive economic model of globalisation.

Discourses are about what can be said, and thought, but also about who can speak, when, where and with what authority. Discourses embody the meaning and use of propositions and words. Thus, certain possibilities for thought are constructed (Ball, 2006 p21).

This can result in limiting the thinking of globalisation in non-economic terms and making economic globalisation the default position. So, the co-option of language appears as a largely hidden enabler of certain ways of thinking rather than a force per se, for or against internationalisation.

The metaphor of active forces limits the visibility of other elements in the discussion of the impact of globalisation on local institutions. Marginson and

Rhoades (2002) refer to the 'layers and conditions' where current activity is based (p292). This concept is captured vividly in Ball's (1994) description of policy enactment as "the 'wild profusion' of local practice" (p10). Perhaps change to current activity could be presented as a 'wild profusion of local practices', grounded in the 'layers and conditions' that represent the history and traditions of an organisation and its workgroups.

Foregrounding the notion that locally prevailing structures and circumstances modify globalising forces highlights the local and provides a potential augmentation of Lewin's metaphor. At this stage Lewin's conceptualisation of force field analysis

is taken as the basis of an organising framework that is the point of departure for examining the active 'forces' that impact on the university's internationalisation project.

### ***An organising framework for internationalisation***

The organising framework retains 'Force' as a term in keeping with Lewin's terminology but it is recognised that it masks some facets that are brought to the fore later in the discussion. These forces are complex and interrelated. They are analysed at different levels from global, through to national, institutional and individual. At each level different facets of these forces may act either to enable change towards internationalisation or act to resist change. Force field analysis examines forces in both an organisation's internal structures and interactions and in its external environment. Figure 2, below, outlines these forces, which are then discussed in more detail.



*Figure 2 Forces acting on internationalisation development  
Adapted from Parchoma (2008)*

## ***Globalisation***

Globalisation is a multifaceted term with a variety of interpretations. It refers to entrenched and enduring patterns of interconnectedness across the globe (Held & McGrew, 2003) and includes flows of capital, trade, ideas and people across national borders. UNESCO (2004) define globalisation as

the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values and ideas .... across borders. Globalization affects each country in a different way due to each nation's individual history, traditions, cultures, resources and priorities (p6)

This definition illustrates a key point for this project; the idea that differing effects occur in response to globalisation. In this example there is a national focus. However, the same principle applies at institutional and individual level; so whilst this definition focuses at the national level the importance of existing history and cultures is brought to the fore. The level of focus is different but this idea connects to the earlier discussion on the 'wild profusion of local practices' and the importance of attending to existing 'layers and conditions' (Ball, 1994; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002).

Globalisation implies the blurring of national borders so that flows of finance, values and ideas are mediated by transnational organisations such as international finance markets, the International Monetary Fund, Non-Governmental Organisations, Transnational Corporations, and the United Nations, rather than by nation states. Barriers represented by national borders, whilst not superseded, are permeated by global flows and

transnational organisations (Beck, 2005; Held & McGrew, 2003; Marginson & Sawir, 2005). The impact of global flows and transnational organisations results in nations becoming increasingly enmeshed in global networks and power relations.

Present day global networks are based on developments in internet and computing technologies (ICT). This means that the global flows of capital, in particular, can move with a speed and intensity that was not possible in earlier periods of globalisation. Just as capital is transferred almost instantly around the globe, so too are news and ideas; as a result distant events can rapidly have local impacts independent of national borders.

Despite the diminishing importance of national boundaries the impacts of globalisation remain strongly determined by national or local conditions. Globalisation is seen as a process that involves movement towards both greater interdependence and integration. As such, one of the major tensions in globalisation is between homogenisation and heterogenisation; between global flows and local responses (Appadurai, 1990). There are global trends that appear to represent homogenisation such as the spread of fast foods and fashion and the use of English as a lingua franca. At the same time nations retain significant but variable ability to determine their local responses to global trends.

Existing national strengths or weakness can lead to profoundly different local effects. Economically and culturally powerful countries can resist or take advantage of globalisation; poorer and developing countries are often further marginalised (Altbach, 2007; Tikly, 2001). The effects of globalisation are felt

unevenly and national power remains an important factor in responding to the forces of globalisation. In many ways this is mirrored at a university level, where strong research-led universities are able to take advantage of global opportunities in comparison to small regional institutions or developing country universities (Altbach, 2007; Sidhu, 2006). As well as having unequal impacts globalisation is subject to multiple interpretations.

The interpretations of globalisation can be broadly categorised as hyperglobalist, sceptical and transformalist (Tikly, 2001). Hyperglobalists argue that globalisation signals the end of the nation state. The hyperglobalist interpretation of globalisation is often dominated by neoliberal financial rhetoric and under-represents the continued role of nation states in funding higher education and setting policy directions. Sceptics claim that globalisation is really just regionalism and that many parts of the globe are not engaged with globalisation. As such it is of limited applicability and has little to offer as an explanatory theory. Sceptics often under-emphasise the growth of transnational organisations and the impacts of changes in global financial markets (Held & McGrew, 2003; Steger, 2003; Tikly, 2001).

A transformalist perspective of globalisation recognises that it is a contested term and that there is a shift to greater interconnectedness. The transformalist perspective also accepts that the consequences of globalisation are far from automatic and are unevenly experienced (Ball, 1998; Giddens, 1990; Tikly, 2001). Central to the transformalist perspective, for the purposes of this investigation, is the significance of local responses. This is shown by Giddens (1990) in his explanation of globalisation as

the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice-versa... Local transformation is as much a part of globalisation as the lateral extension of social connections across time and space (p64).

### *Localisation as a response to globalisation*

Localisation is therefore an inherent part of the process and an expected response to the flows of globalisation. Appadurai (1996) refers to the emergence of local responses in a globalising world as “global facts take local form” (p18). The transformalist position acknowledges the impact of globalisation but also recognises that globalisation is not the same as homogenisation and highlights the notion that local sites retain the ability to respond and reinterpret according to their own needs.

Local choices are enabled or constrained by emerging global flows and structures. However, globalisation is not an inevitable irresistible force; it creates new possibilities and limits and it is mediated, managed and contested by governments, organisations and individuals (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 2003; Marginson, 1999). The transformative approach, with its emphasis on local responses, offers the most useful interpretative framework of globalisation as this study investigates how the university develops its own response to the influences of globalisation by moving towards greater internationalisation.

### *Globalisation and higher education*

Higher education is not only acted on by the forces and flows of globalisation but it also influences globalisation “as a major driving force in knowledge-intensive and information societies” (UNESCO, 2003 p6). In knowledge economies economic success is based on a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities, such as knowledge and innovation, rather than on physical inputs or natural resources (Powell & Snellman, 2004). By virtue of their role in the production and dissemination of knowledge, universities are acknowledged as having a central role in the knowledge economy, which is in turn a central feature of globalisation (Egroun-Polak, 2008; Pilsbury, 2007). Universities have a global role in economic development through their contribution to capacity development, research and knowledge transfer. Higher education is thus actor and acted on in the globalised world.

The global flows of finance, knowledge, people, values and ideas across borders all have impacts on higher education as a sector and on individual universities in particular. The following section considers how global forces can act as drivers towards internationalisation either by acting directly or by creating a context that is conducive to internationalisation. Restraining forces are also considered.

## ***Global forces and internationalisation***

### *New markets and Neoliberalism*

New technologies and rising global demand are creating new markets for higher education and new ways of satisfying those markets (Middlehurst, 2002; Parchoma, 2006). Increasingly higher education is being discussed in terms of markets and in the language of neoliberalism that prioritises markets over state provision of goods and services (Deem, 2001; Gaffikin & Perry, 2009). The opening of markets through the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the harmonisation of European higher education systems through the Bologna Process are examples of agreements that facilitate the development of international markets and exchange in education. The impetus to pursue international markets is compounded by reduction in national funding of higher education.

The discussion of globalisation and higher education in terms of markets and competition for resources; financial and human is described by Teichler (2004) as suggesting that the “major ‘global forces’ relevant to higher education are only those of ‘turbo-capitalism’” (p23). He argues strongly that actors in higher education risk being overly absorbed in managerial and operational concerns and that they “need to raise their views above the operational” and address substantive issues such as global understanding, global learning and global ecology (p23). This view is echoed in Kellner’s (2000) call for educational strategies that promote social justice within globalising change.

Trends outlined so far suggest a dominant neoliberal/marketisation discourse in globalisation. This can be presented as opportunities for resource acquisition and strengthening of a university's position. There is a risk that globalisation as a neoliberal juggernaut becomes increasingly dominant and overwhelms other vital concerns in higher education. Globalisation is far from a benign phenomenon and undoubtedly has uneven impacts (Altbach, 2007).

The neoliberal discourse has been called into question following the recent global credit crunch and is critiqued for its emphasis on individualism, a reliance on markets to achieve public goals and the commodification of education (De Vita & Case, 2003; Sandel, 2009). Despite this critique it is likely that the momentum towards the marketisation of higher education will continue for some time (Ninnes & Hellstén, 2005).

There are new opportunities for universities to develop markets for services such as educational programmes, consultancy and research projects. There are also recruitment markets; manifesting as growing global competition for staff and students. Increased mobility of staff and students means universities are able to compete in the recruitment of staff and students from around the globe. Successful recruitment of 'top' students and staff is both dependent on and contributes to the international reputation of the university.

#### *The Global University, league tables, reputation*

One element in the ability to compete in international markets is the external perception of image and identity (Davies, 1992); succinctly described as "an emerging international market in prestige" (Crewe, 2004 p1). A leading university's reputation is now measured in a global setting and the idea of the

'Global University' is gaining currency. This emerging university model is characterised by: global brand, comprehensive excellence in all activities, global research impacts, global mission, diverse staff and student mix and global co-operation with business and similar universities (Mohrman, Ma, & Baker, 2008; E. Thomas, 2007). Exactly what this characterisation represents is highly debatable. Whilst a 'diverse staff and student mix' can be crudely measured it does not necessarily represent any specified internationalisation goals without further definition and development. 'Comprehensive excellence in all activities' is an idealised and potentially empty term. The use of abstract almost immeasurable rhetoric is accompanied by efforts to measure and compare universities at a global level.

International and national league tables provide one measure of reputation that prioritises research performance and feeds into the interlinked strands of reputation, the ability to attract staff and international competitiveness for research funding and students. League tables are having a significant impact. According to Marginson (2007) "University rankings are powerful. They compel public attention and shape the behaviour of universities and policy makers" (p2). These interrelated factors create an emergent structure within which research-led universities are choosing to, or being driven to, internationalise.

### *Interconnectedness and globalisation*

A central idea in globalisation is the interconnectedness of economies and societies so that the pervasive flows of globalisation are virtually unavoidable (Altbach & Knight, 2007). This is particularly true of universities, which claim

to have almost inherent international reach. There are few UK universities who do not describe themselves as 'international', whatever that might mean in each case, or who are not developing internationalisation strategies (Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2007). UK higher education is bound up in international events and there is a certain inevitability about some form of engagement with global flows. For universities, the extent that this engagement represents new and radical developments, or is merely a redressing of existing activities, depends upon the individual responses of institutions. For example, all universities have some freedom of choice about how they articulate and manage their student recruitment policies; how they choose to balance commitments to a local widening participation agenda and to international recruitment.

#### *Student demand worldwide*

Internationally, student numbers in higher education continue to rise with UNESCO (2003) estimating that there are over 100 million students in higher education worldwide. Many governments have rapidly increased the numbers of young people entering higher education in order to fulfil the perceived needs of knowledge based economies that require more people for higher level technological and economic roles (Trow, 2007). However, demographic trends in most economically advanced nations mean that the numbers of young people of traditional university entry age are set to decline. Higher education institutions may be facing a slowing national demand whilst international demand for higher education is rising. The international demand for higher education is facilitated by increasing student mobility as a consequence of international structural changes (such as GATS and the

Bologna Process), advances in ICTs and demands for education that leads to the possibilities of employment across national boundaries (OECD, 2004; Olcott, 2008b).

### *Internet and computing technologies*

ICTs are integral to the rapid flows of ideas, finance and services around the globe and the internet is “the primary vehicle for the globalization of knowledge and communications” (Altbach & Knight, 2007 p134). ICTs are also integral to developing new forms of programme delivery into markets that were virtually inaccessible until recent times. The development of real time interactive technologies means it is now becoming realistic to offer innovative forms of learning opportunities rather than simple delivery of materials (J. Knight, 2004; Laurillard, 2008; UNESCO, 2004). An initial use of ICT was to deliver resources electronically, rather than in paper form, but the mode of learning remained essentially the same. At best there is now the promise of flexible learning opportunities and high quality university programmes available around the world.

There are cautions to this promising vision of improved access and ease of study in that existing inequalities are reproduced. Developed countries and powerful institutions dominate the production and dissemination of knowledge (Altbach & Knight, 2007). The realities of access to ICT and ICT literacy are significant challenges for developing countries. In addition, the promise of new pedagogies using ICT is still to be fully realised.

Nevertheless, new ICT based learning systems are being developed and e-learning is becoming more established throughout higher education

(Laurillard, 2008). Developments in ICT are a key factor in creating opportunities for new forms of programme delivery and new markets.

### *Private provision*

The increasing sophistication of ICT, trade agreements in higher education and rising demand have allowed 'for-profit' providers to enter new international markets (Mendivil, 2002). There is a growth in both numbers and types of providers, including: corporate universities, for-profit private institutions, media companies and education brokers (de Wit, 2008). A notable example of a private institution is the university's joint venture partner, Laureate Education, which has over 200,000 students in offshore operations and on-line programmes (de Wit, 2008). Again, the emergence of new opportunities and new markets for traditional universities is accompanied by increasing competition from 'for profit' universities and the dangers of commodification of education as it is 'sold' worldwide.

### *Use of English*

One factor in globalisation is the "exponential adoption of 'English' as the global language in commerce" (Olcott, 2008a). The English language has established a dominant position in global higher education. It is the medium for most scientific papers, for academic discourse on the internet and is the language of instruction for most international students studying abroad (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Whilst not a driver in the sense of other factors in this section, it is a significant advantage for countries such as UK, United States of America and Australia that have an established record of international educational provision in English.

Although there is an inherent advantage for English speaking countries this position cannot be taken for granted as other countries such as Germany, India and Singapore (Bone, 2008) are offering programmes taught in English and often at less cost than UK higher education.

The forces of globalisation and the associated international drivers create a context that calls for a response from governments and from institutions. Greater internationalisation of a university's functions is one of the possible responses to the impact of globalisation on higher education. As well as providing a structure that impels a response from individual universities the same forces of globalisation act on national governments and their agencies, which can be said to behave as intermediaries between global forces and institutions. Governments shape their national higher education context partly in response to global pressures as well as in response to national political pressures.

### ***National rationales for internationalisation: an economic emphasis***

National considerations intersect with both international and institutional levels of globalisation and internationalisation. As such, nations will be responding to globalising forces and attempting to direct their national higher education sector in accord with the government's policy priorities. Internationalisation policies can be categorised in terms of rationales that are: economic, political, academic or social/cultural (J. Knight, 2004). Rationales are the motivations

for internationalisation; they represent the 'why' of internationalisation (de Wit, 2000). Whilst all of these rationales are likely to be present in any nation's policies, different countries prioritise these rationales differently; the global forces that influence rationales for internationalisation are intertwined and interdependent rather than singular and deterministic.

The UK government emphasises the economic benefits of international education (DIUS, 2007; House of Commons, Education and Skills Committee, 2007). This national emphasis on an economic agenda aligns with the view of globalisation as primarily an economic and financial force, although it must be stressed that the debate is around the degree of emphasis placed on the various global/national forces that contribute to driving institutional responses.

As the UK government provides the majority of funding to universities it has considerable leverage in influencing sector and institutional priorities. The Prime Minister's Initiative Phase 2 (PMI2) launched in 2006 has the overall aim

To secure the UK's position as a leader in international education  
and sustain the managed growth of UK international education  
delivered both in the UK and overseas (DIUS, 2007 p3).

The initiative is framed by reference to the accelerating globalisation of education, increasing mobility of staff and students, the importance of the transnational education to the UK economy and the UK's position in the global market. This economic background is augmented by a briefer reference to the benefits of intellectual vitality, cultural richness and to the forging of trade

and diplomatic links. Even in the section pertaining to non-economic benefits, references to trade links have been inserted. This emphasis on the economic rationale for internationalisation demonstrates its importance, at the national level, as the pre-eminent driver for internationalisation.

The economic focus of UK national policy on higher education is compounded for universities by moves to mass provision and a continued relative reduction in funding. Reduction in government funding acts as a catalyst for universities to develop alternative revenue sources (Olcott, 2008b). This reinforces the economic dimension of internationalisation.

The UK higher education sector has been successful in competing in education markets but concerns are expressed that the UK's endeavours risk being seen as 'just about making money' rather than engaging in longer term collaborations that provide a greater focus on global education gain (Bone, 2008). A negative perception of the UK sector as a whole can therefore potentially impact on an individual university's entry into international markets.

A global and national context exists that provides a powerful economic rationale for research-led universities to respond by expanding their international activities. Research by Middlehurst and Woodfield (2007) shows that for the majority of universities "an economic dimension (whether viewed positively or negatively) was dominant, both as a driver and as a policy response" (p23). Alongside the economic discourse universities, acting agentially within a global/international structure, are able to respond with their

own internationalisation strategies based on their own rationales. The next section considers some of the rationales and commonalities in internationalisation for UK research-led universities.

### ***Institutional rationales for internationalisation***

As well as presenting globalisation as framing an emergent structure to which universities respond; universities have particular rationales that frame their responses. Although economic drivers are to the fore in the UK discourse on internationalisation there are other rationales that provide motivating reasons for both institutions and individuals to engage with internationalisation.

Rationales (or drivers) for internationalisation are grouped by Knight (2004) into four categories:

1. economic,
2. political,
3. social/cultural and
4. academic.

Branding, or international reputation, is an emerging category for institutions (J. Knight, 2004). The political rationale appears to relate to the government level rather than the institutional level, with research-led universities being increasingly concerned with their international reputation (Crewe, 2004). In summarising rationales for internationalisation Middlehurst and Woodfield (2007 p31) present an updated version of Knight's (2004) typology of institutional rationales for internationalisation:

<b>Rationales</b>	<b>Constituent element or focus</b>
Social and cultural	National cultural identity, Intercultural understanding, Citizenship development, Social and community development
Political	Foreign policy, National security, Peace and mutual understanding, National identity, Regional identity
Economic	Economic growth and competitiveness, Labour market, Financial incentives, Income generation
Academic	International dimension to research and teaching, Extension of academic horizons, Institution-building, Profile and status, Enhancement of quality and curriculum development, International academic standards, Research collaborations
Competitive	International branding and positioning, Strategic alliances, Knowledge production, Knowledge transfer
Developmental	Student and staff development, Institutional learning and exchange, Capacity building, Technical assistance

Table 3: Rationales for internationalisation

Clearly, these categorisations overlap, 'Competitive' is closely tied to 'Economic' and could be re-presented as Knight's (2004) 'Branding' that would also include 'Profile and status'. In addition, the political rationale is

retained in both typologies despite its clear link to the government or national level rather than being a primary institutional concern. Individual institutions will have different considerations and traditions that influence the balance of rationales for their internationalisation strategies. Neither of these typologies emphasises the impact of local factors.

Research-led universities are likely to be engaged in considerable internationally based research. In many disciplines there will be a ready acceptance of internationalisation. The benefits of internationalisation to individual universities can be summarised as: the ability to attract top quality staff and students, an increase in revenue (research funding and student fees), innovation in curricula and teaching and the fostering of international understanding (Bjarnason, 2007).

Despite the case for internationalisation for research-led universities the situation is complex. Within any institution there will be competing agendas and institutional and individual reasons either for not engaging in or for resisting internationalisation. At a departmental level, courses may be funded for specifically local needs as is the case in National Health Service training and powerful professional bodies like the General Medical Council can have an influence over course requirements that transcends university aims. University leaders have to balance these considerations and it may be that internationalisation is not seen as a top priority. At an institutional level many of the issues raised above have a counterpoint. Conflicting university agendas and priorities create a multiplicity of change projects and of demands

on staff and institutional resources. It is almost certain that there will be constraints of time and finance in all institutions and considerable challenges in assessing and managing risk in international ventures.

#### *Research based factors*

Whilst being research-led is a significant advantage in internationalisation it also has its complexities. Research performance, as well as differentiating from less researched focussed universities, can also lead to perceptions of a lesser reputation than more elite universities (Marginson, 2006) and simply not being in the top 100 or top 50 on an international ranking table may diminish a university's international options. A push for international research may favour comparative and quantitative research and disadvantage more in-depth qualitative studies; so greater internationalisation could create a tension with efforts to increase relevance in social science research (Ackers, 2008).

#### *Existing layers and conditions*

Most research-led universities will have traditions that contribute to their current cultures and structures. The university is a civic university, one of the group of UK universities founded in Victorian times in large cities. Civic universities were born out of the desire of local industrialists to develop expertise to support local industry as well as more 'noble' motives of improving standards of health and education in their region. Whilst the notion of serving industry or working with industry is increasingly part of a university's missions (Newcastle University, 2009), the more noble purposes are expressed by Barnett (2007): "the idea of the civic university speaks to agendas of the enlightenment, public service and a generous sense of

citizenship itself" (p25). Concepts such as this remain valued and woven into the fabric of many universities.

UK civic universities have over one hundred years of well established layers and conditions, including a research-led ethos. These conditions provide not only the advantages in internationalisation discussed earlier, but also potential disadvantages. These include: collegiate management structures that may not be sufficiently fleet or flexible in responding to rapid change, reward systems that favour research rather than teaching or entrepreneurial activities and perhaps some complacency as a result of already being considered part of an elite group of universities.

### ***Individual positions***

Lewin's force field model as an organising framework shows the driving forces for change and the forces resistant to change. Structurally it is likely that driving forces for change will be supported and initiated by institutional leaders, whereas forces of resistance may be dispersed through the organisation either as personal psychological defences or embedded in organisational culture and therefore be 'hard to get at' (Schein, 1996). At the individual level there is a range of possible positions on internationalisation, including strong motivations for resistance.

### ***Philosophical positions***

There is likely to be a wide variety of opinion amongst staff as to the purpose of universities and on the neoliberal marketisation discourse associated with

globalisation. Responses to the marketisation discourse around internationalisation can be expected to vary from full acceptance of the necessity to develop new markets, through to rejection of developments that challenge strongly held views of the purpose of universities. The marketisation discourse will be one more rationale for the acceptance of internationalisation for some staff and for others it is likely to be a source of significant resistance to internationalisation (Caruana & Spurling, 2007; De Vita & Case, 2003). Staff holding 'traditional' views about the fundamental purposes of universities are, at the least, likely to be sceptical about the motives and benefits of globalisation/internationalisation. As these are contested terms there is a significant debate to support resistant positions (De Vita & Case, 2003; Naidoo & Jamieson, 2005; Rizvi & Lingard, 2000).

This is a wide field and for the purposes of this thesis the debate around the changing purposes of universities is briefly sketched in order to frame and locate additional voices to the market discourse. Historically, these traditional views may be summarised as conceiving the university as a site for critical reason, for the pursuit of truth and are closely bound up with holding academic freedom as a core value (Barnett, 2004; Winter, 2009). Barnett (2004) raises the question as to whether universities have any responsibility to engage with the wider world on the basis of a university ideal rather than engagement simply for institutional benefit (profit, enhanced reputation). This type of question is outside the remit of this theses but it does provide a rationale for resistance to market led internationalisation based on a philosophy of higher education.

### *Critique of negative connotations of resistance*

The term resistance has been used following Lewin's depiction of forces 'driving for' change and forces 'resistant to' change. Resistance almost inevitably carries negative connotations such as: intransigence, reluctance to buy in and failure to recognise the need for change. Labels like this can divert attention from the real problems of implementation and also individualise issues of change, effectively blaming others and making them responsible for changing in order to reach a solution (Fullan & Miles, 1992). Labelling resistance changes the focus from organisational processes to individuals. Negatively construed resistance is quite different from a highly legitimate standing *for* long held values and positions.

Rather than adopting an either/or stance that polarises internationalisation and traditional university values there are strong arguments for recognising the importance for universities to move beyond simply being entrepreneurial and business driven and also to engage with multiple narratives and complex uncertainties (Barnett, 2004; Trowler, 2004).

### *Agency and ability to pursue personal projects*

Within any organisational structure there is the opportunity for individuals to exercise agency and to advance projects that are important to them (Archer, 2003). Internationalisation provides a university structure that is either advantageous or not for staff to pursue their professional interests. How staff interests align with the university's internationalisation activities will influence their position on the process of internationalisation.

Historically, academic staff have considerable agency and ability to decide their professional priorities. In the face of multiple change initiatives many staff have some freedom to elect not to engage, or to engage at a surface level, with university internationalisation. Combined with institutional reward systems that prioritise research, for many staff there will be little reason to challenge the status quo and seek to make changes that develop internationalisation. In addition, many staff are motivated by deep personal interests in research and teaching and are minimally motivated by institutional needs for increased revenue streams.

#### *Research and teaching priorities*

The nature of an individual's research interests will also support or inhibit acceptance of the rationales for internationalisation. Some staff will be engaged in international research collaborations, others will be committed to locally focused research projects and see no immediate benefit in a shift to an international focus.

Similarly, staff whose primary interests are teaching and local students may well be resistant to changes that privilege international dimensions that are tied up with research performance and reputation. There are also concerns that international students require more support than the institution may provide.

In general terms, staff at universities have probably experienced international travel, worked with international students and are aware of the discussion about the international history of universities. Many staff are probably at ease with the international dimension of their work and their working context.

Others will have a strong commitment to local issues and this may manifest as resistance to greater internationalisation.

Academic staff are likely to have a range of positions in response to moves toward greater internationalisation. This positioning will form part of the political contestation within an institution as interest groups and individuals seek to influence institutional direction and advance their own interests (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Trowler, 2003).

### ***The glonacal-agency analytic heuristic***

The organising framework highlights the 'levels' involved and the forces that act to create the circumstances where moves to internationalisation may occur. Implicitly it provides a means to represent the place of agency within globalising structures. It does not show how interactions may occur nor does it provide adequate metaphors for exploring the complexities involved. Marginson and Rhoades (2002) present an analytic heuristic that retains a focus on levels but shows how forces and agency interrelate within and between the levels.

In introducing their heuristic Marginson and Rhoades (2002) criticise the prevailing models that focus on national systems. They aim to emphasise the "simultaneous significance of global, national and local dimensions" and the role of agency in shaping or resisting global patterns (p282). These three dimensions are represented in the rather ugly term glo- na- cal; glonacal. Agency is employed with the double meaning: agency as an organisation (such as the World Bank) and agency meaning individual or collective action (as in human agency). Globalisation is not presented as being deterministic

and inevitable, so the national dimension is still important and they bring the local dimension further to the fore than many analyses.

In also stressing the interactions and intersections between the levels Marginson and Rhoades (2002) aim to show how the exercise of agency by agencies, collectives and individuals can shape global flows as well as “undermine, challenge and define alternatives to global patterns” (p283). Thus globalisation is more than just a reified ‘force’ acting on institutions. It is mediated at the various levels through the agency of individuals and groups in higher education.

The glonacal-agency heuristic (p291), shown in Figure 3 below, highlights numerous areas for research in exploring interactions between levels and within levels:

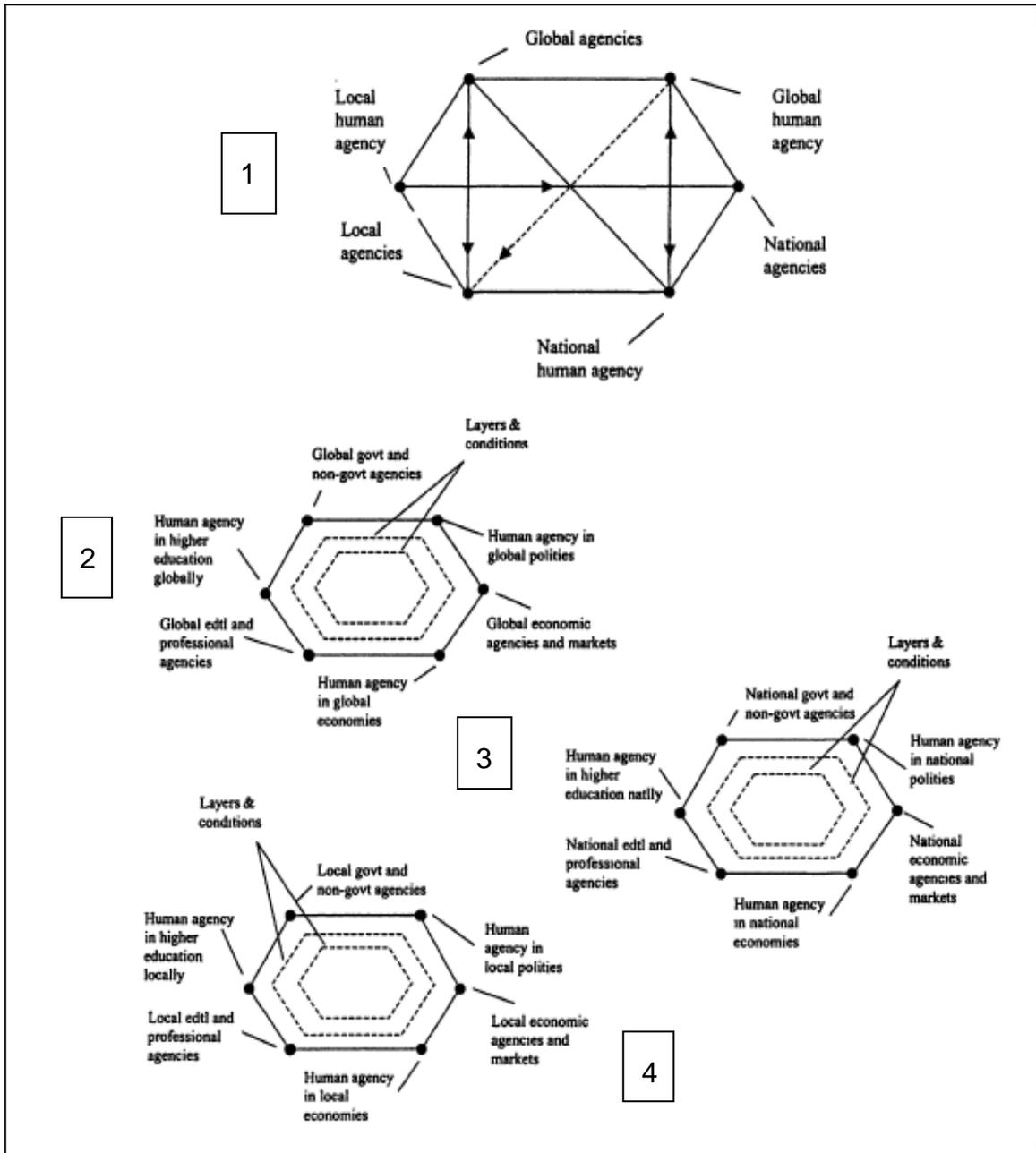


Figure 3: Glonacal-agency heuristic

The four parts of the diagram each focus on a different aspect of the heuristic. The first draws attention to the role of agency at global, national and local levels. In this research the key level is the local level, both university actions and the question of the influence that individuals have on local (university level) adoption of internationalisation. This is not to neglect the fact that there

is also agency by staff from the university at national and global levels; there is, but it is outside the scope of this study. The second part of the overall diagram has a global focus and shows the global agential links. Importantly this part of the diagram introduces Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) ideas around layers and conditions, drawing attention to the fact that developments do not occur on a blank sheet. Changes will be mediated by these existing layers and conditions, by which they mean 'historically embedded structures' and 'current circumstances'. The third and fourth parts of the diagram follow the same pattern, showing in turn national agential links and local agential links and retaining the underlying layers and conditions.

These underlying layers and conditions represent an important thread that connects various facets of the conceptual framework. In the earlier critique of Lewin's metaphor of driving and restraining forces, attention was drawn to the occlusion of factors that are not 'forces' but that are part of the context within which change is affected. Existing layers and conditions foregrounds the local context and how it shapes moves towards (or against) internationalisation. A further connection is with the transformative perspective of globalisation and its recognition that globalisation is not an inevitable and irresistible force but is mediated at all levels including the local (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Held et al., 2003). This shaping and mediation is carried out through purposeful action at a local level and the local does not rest in empty space but in the richness of pre-existing layers and conditions.

A Social Practice approach to change with its emphasis on the 'situated' aspects of change initiatives reinforces the importance of the local reminds us

that change is always interpreted and implemented locally (P. Knight & Trowler, 2001). Policy developments, such as internationalisation initiatives are shaped, not merely implemented, by ground level actors (Trowler, 2003). However, it is recognised that individuals/workgroups do not have full control over social reality; they are limited by existing social structures (Trowler, Fanghanel, & Wareham, 2005). Here the existing social structures have commonalities with Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) layers and conditions. Agential action is constrained (or enabled) by pre-existing social structures/ layers and conditions and it is shaped by local social interactions. Proposed changes such as greater internationalisation will be "interpreted and mediated by pre-existing local cultures" (Trowler et al., 2005 p436). I would argue that understanding the specifics of the local is therefore an important element in understanding the implementation of internationalisation strategies.

Social Practice Theories draw attention to local (and social) dimensions of changes processes. They also point out that change innovations have more chance of success if they are seen profitable (beneficial) to those involved and if they are aligned with their existing interests (Trowler, 2005).

This raises two further issues for this research. Firstly with regard to agency, the ability of individuals and workgroups to link their projects (courses of action) to internationalisation agendas is critical in determining outcomes. People need to be able to see how their interests can be enacted in an internationalising structure and this in turn influences the development of institutional activities. Secondly, some existing interests will be threatened as changes disrupt current power distribution; so opposition from 'losers' is to be

expected. This is likely to appear as 'resistance' in the Lewinian framework. As part of a process it is not in itself negative nor unexpected.

Globalisation involves a number of interconnected flows and forces that act on both governments and universities. Globalisation creates a context or structure within which universities are pressured to respond.

Internationalisation can be framed as one means of responding to the external environment with the university acting as an agent in a 'globalised structure', which in turn creates a new local university structure. Internationalisation creates a structure within the institution that in turn invokes a response from individuals within the institution who then exercise their own agency in advancing projects and concerns of their own that may or may not influence or support the institution's move towards internationalisation. The extent of this will depend on congruence of views, position and power of influence of each individual. Nested structures are emergent where agential activities at one level create structures for the next level.

The following section briefly outlines a view of structure and agency that is based on Critical Realism (Bhaskar, 1979; Bhaskar, 1989) and Social Realist Theory (Archer, 2003; Archer, 2007). This is used in the concluding chapter to help explain the research findings.

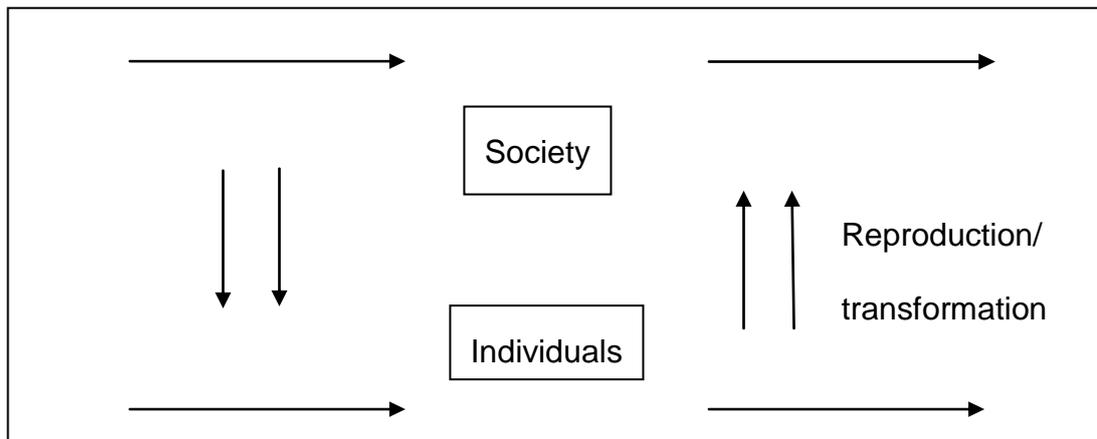
***Structure-agency: The relationship between society and individuals.***

Social structure and human agency are seen as being interdependent but distinct. This leads to consideration of how they interact. Traditionally in social theory there are two broad views. The first sees social objects as the results of human behaviour (voluntarism). In this view people create society, which is just an expression of their beliefs and knowledge (Hartwig, 2007). The second sees social structures as external to individuals and determining or coercing individual action. That is reification of social structures; to treat them as objects “independent of our thinking about them” (Pring, 2000 p96).

An alternate model proposed by Bhaskar (1989) recognises the dual character of the world and the independency and interdependency of social structure and human agency. Society is neither created by individual activity nor does it determine it:

People do not create society, for it always pre-exists them. Rather it is an ensemble of structures, practices and conventions that individuals reproduce or transform, but which could not exist unless they did so. Society does not exist independently of conscious human activity (the error of reification); but it is not the product of the latter (the error of voluntarism) (p76).

The model is represented in Figure 4: Society-individual interactions



Society provides the conditions for human actions as well as constraining and enabling them (Bhaskar, 1989 p77). The language of constraining and enabling, although not the same concepts, resonates with Lewin's restraining and driving forces.

If social structures influence agents then it is necessary to provide a mechanism for this to occur. If structure is held to be 'objective' and agency 'subjective' then they are ontologically distinct and irreducible to each other and so it is essential to examine the interaction between them (Archer, 2003). This will require the identification of causal powers for both societal structures (structure) and individuals (agency).

Structures could be said to influence agents through 'conditioning'. This not deterministic but provides conditions and limits to the situations with which agents interact. To use Archer's (1996) example: "There may be the most sophisticated conversations in so called primitive societies, but they will not be about atomic physics" (p197). This connects to a point elaborated earlier that individuals do not create current social structures, as they are already in existence before any interaction with them, but individuals may contribute to

the transformation or reproduction of social structures. The situations that individuals find themselves in provide the conditions that may constrain or enable their projects (courses of action); for example being a native English speaker is currently advantageous if we wish to engage in projects (courses of action) with international aspects (Archer, 1995; Archer, 2003). Constraints and enablements are terms that do not exist as separate entities they are activated in relationship with specific agential projects. Social structures have a reality that precedes interaction with human projects but they do not in themselves carry out actions; social structures “require active ‘functionaries’” (Bhaskar, 1979 p51). Structural causal powers are not enacted until they interact with a human project. At any stage in a project the agent(s) involved can react, plan ahead or change direction. For this reason the influence of structures produces tendencies rather than pre-determined outcomes, as agents can and do respond in different ways, thus leading to differing outcomes. Agents possess characteristics that social structures do not, such as intentionality, thinking, caring or believing. Thus, structural causal powers are activated in response to specific personal projects and the interplay between these is mediated by human reflexivity: the capacity for internal deliberation on external realities and subjective experiences (Archer, 2003; Archer, 2007).

Archer (2007) proposes that: “The subjective powers of reflexivity mediate the role that objective structural or cultural powers play in influencing social action and are thus indispensable to explaining social outcomes” (p5). In other words, the discussions in critical realism about the transformation of social

structures and the effects of structure on agents have human reflexivity at their heart. This begins the explanation of *how* structure and agency interact.

So, globalisation provides a structure within which universities can make agential decisions and actions, including moves toward internationalisation. In turn moves toward internationalisation in institutions begin the creation of new internal structures. Although it might be argued that context is a better term as it suggests a less intransitive state than structure, which implies existence over a long(er) time. However, structure is used at this stage to refer to those emerging formations that have sufficient institutional solidity to frame agential responses. These agential responses are determined by individuals' personal projects; courses of action they wish to pursue. So, if people's interests, personal and/or altruistic, are enabled by emerging structures of internationalisation they are likely to support or advance the institution's internationalisation agenda. Thus whether or not the institution's internationalisation agenda aligns with individuals' personal projects is an important element in its success and, according to Marginson and Rhoades (2002), an under-researched area in the literature on internationalisation.

As discussed earlier, the rhetoric of globalisation permeates national rhetoric through to the institutional level, where each institution must respond in some way to these prevailing ideas and drivers. The dominant economic rationale is not a particularly subtle way to stimulate full institutional and individual support for greater internationalisation and there is a need for more nuanced policy making and instruments. In making the case for internationalisation institutions would do well to ensure that their internal strategies and policies

are in turn nuanced and appeal to their local and internal audiences (Stensaker, Frolich, Gornitzka, & Maassen, 2008). It is the central premise of this thesis that greater attention needs to be paid to the local and individual in researching internationalisation developments.

## **Chapter 4: Methodology and Methods**

This chapter describes the approach taken to the research and the research design. It also addresses some of the challenges of insider research and outlines the data analysis process.

The research takes a constructivist interpretivist methodological approach. A constructivist approach to the research implies that meaning is constructed in the interaction between subject and object; people interpret their world and create meanings in their interactions with the realities of the world (Crotty, 2004). The research was carried out with an aim of understanding how the individuals involved interpreted internationalisation at the university. According to Pring (2000) “to understand people requires understanding the interpretations of what they are doing” (p96). Individuals will act on the bases of these interpretations and therefore events need to be examined from the point of view of the participants rather than the researcher (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2008).

### ***Research design***

This study was concerned with generating a description and interpretation of the driving and restraining forces that impacted on the university’s move toward greater internationalisation. It also aimed to problematise some of the metaphorical language employed in Lewin’s force field analysis and to explore

more of the 'local' factors that affect this university's internationalisation experiences.

The research design grew out of my interest in, and knowledge of, the internationalisation and other change processes that were underway at the university. So the first step in the design process was a general scanning of the local context. Initial data were generated through my reading of internal documents such as briefing/consultation papers that set the scene for internationalisation. These data were augmented by conversations with people involved in planning meetings. Together these provided a context and a direction for the research.

The second step in data generation was the initial interviews. Detail of the process is covered in the insider research section. These initial interviews were analysed by re-reading the transcripts, developing a sense of the data and identifying initial themes. This first analysis was carried out 'manually' and I used technology once engaged in more intensive analysis. The original interview questions were refined as some of the questions were less fruitful than others and as I gained a better sense of the time involved. Some themes such as the interviewees' understanding of terminology appeared interesting from the beginning but receded as the interviews and analysis proceeded. In contrast the significance of issues around locality and the local gained in importance as the process continued.

Interviews with university and academic leaders were concluded and analysis commenced in more detail. The third step overlapped with this analytical stage and involved interviews with academic staff. The major part of the

analysis was then completed, although I returned to the process as the writing continued. I aimed to use writing as a means of developing my ideas throughout the process. This was frustrating at the beginning as I was unsure what my ideas were in the early stages. However, it became a more and more useful approach as I developed a better sense of the data and my ideas about them. Throughout the process I kept a researcher log and reviewed internal and public documents.

### ***Methods***

In this research I used semi-structured interviews to gather data on individuals' interpretations of their role in, or their perceptions of, the development of internationalisation at the university. Interviews can be broadly conceived as data gathering or data generating. In the data gathering conception interviews are attempts, more or less successful depending on the skills of interviewers and interviewees, to collect data that accurately reflects the interviewees' reality. This approach tends to depersonalise the interaction and emphasise an external reality beyond the interview itself. It overlooks the inherently interactive nature of interviews. In the data generating conception of interviews the interviewee and interviewer jointly construct the data (Rapley, 2004). The interview encounter creates a situation where the interviewee presents themselves as "a specific type of person in relation to a specific topic" (Rapley, 2004 p16). The data generated is seen as highly dependent on the specific interactional context of the particular interview (Rapley, 2001). Whilst terms such as jointly constructed and co-constructed

(Cohen et al., 2008; P. Knight & Saunders, 1999) appropriately draw attention to the shared endeavour and situationally located aspects of the interview, in turn they tend to draw attention away from the aim of the interview: to understand the interpretations of the interviewee.

### *Interview participants*

Inevitably in qualitative research decisions must be made about whom to interview (Ball, 1990). Interviewing is a time consuming process and so selecting interviewees was done purposefully as I was seeking to understand how policy was developed and interpreted at different levels of the organisation. Interviews were carried out with staff from three broad levels of the university. These levels were termed: university leaders, academic leaders and academic staff. The notion of levels within the university is presented as clearly delineated categories whereas some of the interviewees might be seen as spanning categories through their multiple roles. Nevertheless these levels do delineate their major responsibilities in relationship to the university's internationalisation agenda. In a study of this size there are significant choices to make about who *not* to interview as well as who to seek to include in the interview schedule. The rationales for inclusion are discussed; followed by the logic of the exclusion criteria. The levels, brief description and numbers are outlined in Table 4 below:

<b>Level</b>	<b>Positions</b>	<b>Number</b>
University leaders	Vice Chancellors (past and present). Pro Vice Chancellor. Strategic Partnerships Director	4

Academic leaders	Pro Vice Chancellors or Deans. All leading internationalisation related policy development projects	3
Academic staff	Range across faculties and including: research focussed, teaching focussed, Professorial, Head of Department	9

Table 4: Interview participants

‘University leaders’ are concerned with reading and analysing the wider external context and interpreting these environmental influences and devising the broad strategic responses that the university will follow. At a global level the external impacts include changes in global higher education markets, mobility of staff and students, opportunities presented by technology, prestige of UK higher education and the dominance of the English Language. In addition, national imperatives are also critical. National higher education policies set down the funding regime, the research and teaching targets and the general directions for the sector. University leaders are in a position to shed light on the thinking behind their interpretations of these broad themes. In addition they are able to discuss the alignment of their strategic direction with the university’s traditions and aspirations.

‘Academic leaders’ describes those senior academic staff with specific responsibilities for coordinating the work of fleshing out the policy direction set out in the strategic plan. These academic leaders led working parties that contributed to the development and implementation of internationalisation at the university. They were responsible for interpreting and shaping the policy direction in ways that would work in this university at this time. Their views

are important because how they understood and carried out their roles could have a significant impact on the development of policy detail.

'Academic staff' denotes the broad category of academics who would be affected by a focus on internationalisation. Policy development and implementation is a long term process and the full detail of the impacts is not known. So the focus of these interviews was on their perceptions of the policy. These perceptions whether they are 'accurate' or not form a significant part of the context for the development of internationalisation. Perceptions may well become part of the enabling or restraining forces that will impact on the policy implementation process.

#### *Selection criteria*

Within the context of this research project there are constraints and opportunities that delineate the choice of interviewees. This principally relates to the numbers and selection of academic staff interviewed as they were drawn from a large and diverse group, in contrast to the leadership levels.

At the leadership levels the notion of 'my choice' of interviewees was redundant. It was straightforward to identify key respondents. They were all staff who held particular positions or who were responsible for relevant tasks. At the university leadership level the potential interviewees were identified by their roles and experience in the internationalisation process. Included in this category were the past Vice Chancellor, the current Vice Chancellor, a Pro Vice Chancellor with significant involvement in, and knowledge of, the university's internationalisation to date and a Senior Director with international responsibilities.

At the academic leadership level the staff interviewed were those senior academics who led the process of developing the practical dimensions of the internationalisation policy.

At the academic staff level there were quite different considerations in selecting interviewees. An initial decision was made to interview staff from the three faculties and to seek staff from both professional and traditional disciplines. Additionally, I decided to interview a total of nine staff; three from each of the three faculties. This decision was a combination of pragmatics and the estimation that this was likely to provide a rich field of data. As data analysis was continuing alongside the interview process it was possible to make an initial judgement that in terms of 'rich data' the interview strategy was effective. Academic staff were chosen 'at arm's length'. I asked colleagues from the three faculties for names of staff that they knew were informed in some way about the internationalisation process. The criterion was that they had an opinion, not that the opinion was of a particular type; for example for or against. I chose not to interview anyone with whom I had a close working relationship.

Clearly these are broad criteria. Strategic sampling is a process of selecting interviewees that allows for example selection for significance relevant to aspects of the research project (Mason, 2007). In this case it was to obtain perceptions of that which may or may not contribute to enablers and constrainers of internationalisation at a local level. Would staff's experience and perceptions of internationalisation affect the university's internationalisation agenda? How might their perceptions influence their

agency? How did perceptions of internationalisation relate to their own work, their personal projects? It is reasonable to ask: what about interviewing academic staff who might constitute a category of ‘don’t know’? In a wider research project this would be potentially important. However, interview based research is constrained by practical resource (time) based issues. This research has specific constraints and I decided that selecting in the first instance, and at this stage of the university’s process, for staff with ‘an opinion’ was an important delimitation. I recognise that this may tend to include those with a positive view of internationalisation. On the other hand academic staff are not prone to uncritical acceptance of the ‘company line’, so I was confident that the interviews would generate a range of opinions.

A further delimitation in the study was to include solely academic staff and to exclude non-academic staff and students. The primary reason for these exclusions was the pragmatics of time. I think that the views of a range of non-academic staff would make an informative additional step to this study. Similarly, students were not included because of time limitations. Also, students have a different relationship with the university, which as well as enriching a future study would have taken it in a different direction.

The primary method of data generation was semi-structured interviews. This approach was framed by an analysis of institutional documents and augmented throughout by my own reflections, reading and discussions with colleagues. In addition, there was an ongoing data generation and reflection process as a result of being an insider researcher engaged in the university’s processes and being specifically involved in a project relating to

internationalisation. This is covered in the section on insider research that follows consideration of the ethical issues.

### ***Ethics***

Research is framed by two overarching principles: the advancement of knowledge and respect for participants in research (Pring, 2000). Historical debates have focused on cases that highlighted practices that would now be considered unethical and these have led to the development of ethical guidelines for the conduct of research ranging from the World Medical Association's Declaration of Helsinki (2008) to University and departmental guidelines. However, there remains considerable debate and no universal internationally agreed ethical standards in research (Bryman, 2004; Ryen, 2004).

Practice guidelines have been developed within different research fields that are appropriate to the research field. The British Educational Research Association's Ethical Guidelines (BERA, 2004) outline principles and guidelines for research in education in Britain. The guidelines show the key areas of responsibility that researchers have to their participants; I have excluded those sections that relate to minors and vulnerable persons. BERA (2004) considers that all research should have an ethical respect for: the person, knowledge, democratic values, quality of educational research and academic freedom (p5). The responsibilities to participants are: voluntary informed consent, avoidance of deception, right to withdraw, right to privacy

(confidentiality/ anonymity) and clarity and minimising of any detriment or harm to participants.

Research increasingly involves a requirement to adhere to guidelines. However, it is important to be aware that these guidelines derive from principles that include a concern for subjects. Costley and Gibbs (2006) refer to an 'ethics of care' that centres on a principled approach to ethics rather than a compliance requirement approach. There is a balance needed in that it is important to have an ethical culture as well as guidelines/requirements that support researchers in ensuring ethical practice. Institutions, as well as individual researchers need to recognise both the principles and the requirements involved in ethical research.

Research ethics practice at the university has evolved along these lines. The UoL's (2006) Policy on Research Ethics involving Human Participation in setting out its Policy Principles refers to meeting the "requirements of research governance and research good practice" (p1). These are to be consistent with the Declaration of Helsinki (2008). The default central procedures for research involving human subjects were based on medical antecedents and were therefore often cumbersome and with irrelevant sections for much educational research. This has been frustrating and seen as adding little to the research process. As a result, more recently the approval process has been devolved to the appropriate school or departmental ethics committee.

The very recent setting up of our departmental ethics committee has alleviated problems with the central process but on the other hand the committee's procedures are still evolving despite a clear willingness of

members to support ethical educational research. The formation of a departmental committee has meant that our department has been able to take the first steps towards ethical research practice that is based in an educational context, promotes a culture of ethics as well as meeting university ethical guidelines.

In order to commence research it is necessary to demonstrate adherence to the guidelines outlined by BERA (2004) and UoL (2007). A key mechanism for this is an informed consent form that outlines the research and shows the measures taken to protect identity and highlights the rights of participants.

However, the issues in insider research are often more complex than outlining the research and securing agreement to take part. All the participants were familiar with the research process, knowledgeable about research protocols and gave their consent readily. It is likely that their decisions had already been made following the initial requests to take part and they were well aware of the guidance that would be required.

Issues relating to harm or detriment are also complex. It is difficult to protect the identities of those senior staff (institutional leaders and academic leaders). They are a small group of people and are well known within the organisation. Their identities can be partially protected by grouping them into the two categories. In order to further protect their identities I decided to multiple-code all interviewees' comments. This is because if it is possible to recognise the author of a particular quotation, it would then be possible, from the participant code, to identify all the quotations made by that person. Some of the views put forward by this group of staff mirrored positions taken in public,

so that for those views the risk of harm to the participants in these cases was negligible.

It was important to have a process that could be seen to be fair, as an interpretivist approach means that the researcher is centrally involved in constructing an interpretation of transcripts. These interpretations may take a form that does not suit elite and powerful interviewees. There are serious considerations involved. As an insider, and an employee, any possible critical and unpalatable interpretations need to be presented with care and must be sustainable. Perhaps more importantly, interviewees and researcher have entered a relationship with a measure of implied trust. I do not think that elite interviewees expect their views to be exempt from legitimate academic critique. I do think they expect to be treated fairly; that is to be reported accurately and in context. All the transcripts were returned for confirmation of accuracy and in only one instance was there a request for reconfirmation before using a small section of personal information in the thesis.

### ***Ontology/ Epistemology***

This research adopts an interpretivist position, located within critical realist ontology. Critical realism arose as a philosophical attempt to provide a unified approach to science that eschewed positivism but without endorsing the extremes of relativistic post-modernism. Important to this research is the understanding that our interpretation of events, such as globalisation, exists independently of their reality despite the fact that our actions and interpretations can over time shape the events themselves.

Critical realism's ontology and epistemology can be seen through Bhaskar's (1979) distinction between the intransitive and transitive dimensions of knowledge. In the intransitive dimension 'things are however they are' (ontology). These are the features of reality that exist independently of our beliefs about them. Beliefs/understandings about these things/objects are transitive; our knowledge is fallible or provisional (epistemology) (Potter & Lopez, 2001). If our ideas change (transitive) it does not mean that the object/thing itself has changed (intransitive). This is straightforward to see in the physical world. Our understanding of the nature of atoms has changed dramatically; atoms have probably not changed much just because we now know more about them! In the social world the situation is more complex as social realities are influenced by our knowledge of them. However, changes are likely to take place over relatively longer periods of time. New knowledge may well impact on the nature of social realities but it is important to note that changes are likely to be as a result of knowledge generated by earlier rather than current researchers. Research findings are unlikely to have immediate significant impacts on the objects of their study (Sayer, 2000). In the context of this research the forces of globalisation act on institutions and individuals in very real ways. However, how we come to know about such forces and the responses to them are through an interpretivist epistemology. Our knowing is context bound, incomplete and subject to change and revision.

Thus critical realism strives for a more objective understanding of reality but incorporates the realisation that we observe and infer from our own perspectives; our knowledge is situated and fallible. According to Scott (1998), "all knowledge is relative to the values of the investigator and yet can

still embody factual, objective knowledge about historical situations” (p105). Value judgements are contestable; factual statements form essential knowledge. Critical realists, like interpretivists, accept that social phenomena are intrinsically meaningful and that meaning has to be understood not measured.

In other words, reality ‘is how it is’ (realist ontology) but we will interpret the world according to our (fallible) understandings (cautious epistemology). Sayer (1992) asserts that this means that method is treated in a practical manner and “methods must be appropriate to the nature of the object we study and the purpose and expectations of our inquiry” (p4). Critical realism proposes that knowledge about the social world is inherently fallible and has an acceptance of a relatively pragmatic approach to methodology. The interpretation of events, by me as the researcher, then invokes a place for including my own reflexive position.

### ***Reflexivity***

As the researcher I have an inevitable influence on how the data is selected, collected and presented. The aim of this section is to make these processes as clear as possible and to discuss the limitations that derive from the approach taken. The approach is constructivist in that the outcomes of the interviews are seen as having a jointly constructed meaning (Cohen et al., 2008; Holstein & Gubrium, 2003). In the epistemological position adopted the research is seen as “a fundamentally interpretive activity ... driven by an interpreter” (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2001 p7). Data are produced and

interpreted in the interactions between the researcher and the researched so that the role of the researcher needs to be illuminated (Ball, 1990). Mason (1996) refers to having to analyse “your role in the process” (p41) and Alvesson and Skoldberg (2001) call this reflexivity as drawing “attention to the complex relationship between the processes of knowledge production and the various contexts of such processes as well as the involvement of the knowledge producer” (p5).

The following section identifies some of the key dimensions that have influenced my role in shaping the research. These are framed in terms of insider research.

### ***Insider research***

Insiders conducting research within their own organisation have privileges and challenges by virtue of their insider status. This section examines the construct of insider research, its advantages and disadvantages and deals with my own position in carrying out insider research.

Insiders and outsiders are able to access different sorts of knowledge by virtue of their membership status, where insiders are members of the social group and outsiders are non-members (Delaney, 2007; Merton, 1972). In this dichotomous approach insiders are presented as having privileged access and by virtue of their involvement in the life of the group they can have full awareness of the unwritten codes and symbolism of the group. These insights are difficult to achieve for outsiders. However, an outsider can be

seen as being a “disinterested scientific onlooker of the social world” (Schuetz, 1944 p500) who has the advantage of not being “caught up in commitments to the group” and is more able to be an objective inquirer (Merton, 1972 p32).

As an Educational Developer at the university I can be considered an insider; a person with “privileged access to knowledge” (Merton, 1972 p15). In my situation the immediate case was of having privileged access in terms of permission to carry out the research within the university and the support and contacts to carry out interviews. Discussions with my line manager meant that she was familiar with the emerging lines of inquiry and willing and able to facilitate interview access to the Vice-Chancellor. The opportunity to carry out this interview came quickly and easily and is in accord with claims that access to elites for research purposes is not always the difficulty that is shown in the literature (Delaney, 2007). The option to interview the Vice-Chancellor and other senior staff also implied that the research was both known and supported at the highest level of the institution and this had positive repercussions in organising interviews with other members of staff. Interviewing the Vice-Chancellor first meant that other staff were more likely to follow his lead and agree to be interviewed. This facility of access is one of the perceived benefits of insider research, which also include: knowledge of culture, politics, and networks, a shared history and the potential to evaluate the authenticity of accounts (Arksey & Knight, 1999). However, the straightforward insider/outsider split based on group membership is disputed as overly simplistic; people are not that easily categorised. We are all

members of multiple groups, sometimes overlapping, often not (Labaree, 2002; Mercer, 2007; Merton, 1972).

My position is also more complex than the simple insider/outsider dichotomy might suggest. I am an insider by virtue of my employment at the university but I am an outsider to the higher levels of the university's hierarchy. I am an insider by virtue of position within the university, nationality and broad age profile to most interviewees. This provides the potential advantages. However, I am an outsider by virtue of responsibilities and academic specialisation. I have commitment to the university's projects, but not the level of involvement of many of the interviewees. These multiple positionings represent simultaneous insider and outsider roles (Hellowell, 2006; Labaree, 2002; Mercer, 2007).

One dimension not to the fore in the literature is the change over time, specifically relating to topic expertise, which occurred as the research progressed. Carrying out the research meant that my theoretical knowledge and knowledge of the organisation developed over time. This is illustrated in that initial interviews were characterised by exploring the history and drivers for internationalisation at the university from the perspective of a largely naive enquirer. In later interviews I held a much more substantive grasp of internationalisation and often interviewees would be aware of this situation. Interviewing across the strata of the university and across time presents different advantages and disadvantages *within* the research project rather than being able to view the research project as an undifferentiated example of insider research.

### *Power relations: Interviewing elites*

Researching within my own institution involved carrying out interviews where there was at times a significant imbalance in power relations. Several of the interviewees have roles of considerable power and status at the university. There are challenges associated with this but the basics of good interviewing still apply, in particular being well prepared, focusing on the goal of learning as much as possible about the views of the interviewee and aiming to ascertain how they arrived at their decisions or positions (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Delaney, 2007; Ostrander, 1993). One particular challenge is that of simply receiving the official spokesperson's view on a topic. Whilst understanding the official position forms part of the research, I chose to follow Delaney (2007) in engaging with how or why a person thinks the way that they do and seeking their personal experiences or perspectives on the issues.

A shared appreciation of the value and role of research is one factor that may contribute to offsetting the institutional structural imbalances. All the interviewees approached were familiar with the research process and readily agreed to take part. In addition, most interviewees in positions of power volunteered to provide further information, without my need to request ongoing interaction, as suggested by Thomas (1993). Thus the nature and focus of the organisation also impacts on the interview relationship.

One of the dangers of becoming 'sucked into the perspectives' of powerful interviewees is described as the 'Dilemma of Seduction' (Delaney, 2007). This refers to the experiences of interviewing as a relative equal (briefly) people with the power and prestige to shape events. This was part of my

interviewing experience. I found it easy at the end of the interviews to be in agreement with the world views of the interviewees and to risk losing a critical perspective. Elites are often persuasive and eloquent people; they are practiced both at being interviewed and at influencing others. To counter this, I aimed to see the interview as representing a worldview that reflects a structural position in society (Delaney, 2007) and to engage in discussions within the institution that allowed me to sustain a more critical standpoint.

### *Role conflicts*

In carrying out research within my own university there are tensions around the roles of researcher and practitioner. These exist in different dimensions including changed relationships in carrying out interviews and the different outcomes desired in research and daily work (Arksey & Knight, 1999). The changed relationships occur with colleagues who are “temporarily transformed into research subjects” (Costley & Gibbs, 2006 p89) and following the research the researcher continues to be involved with the participants and with the organisation, so that the role of detached observer who leaves on completion of the research project is not available.

The researcher has an obligation to provide new insights and analyses that may not be amenable to those who acted as informants. There is the possibility of disadvantage to both the researcher and the researched in the process of insider researcher. This is an ‘ethics of care’, where consideration needs to be given to the potential impacts on individuals, relationships and the institution (Costley & Gibbs, 2006). There is a balance to be struck in negotiating these dual roles whereby the practitioner’s insider knowledge is

useful in generating a rich picture but the objectivity of the researcher is also needed in analysis. In addition, choosing a topic that is relatively non-controversial is another consideration (Anderson & Jones, 2000). The topic may be non-controversial but given the variety of opinions held within a university on a topic such as internationalisation it is almost certain that the interpretation will challenge some views, the key point is not so much that the topic is controversial or not but that the analysis can be sustained.

Research and practitioner work also often have different goals. Research may aim to provide original insight, to problematise and raise questions and to meet scholarly criteria, whereas practitioner work is more likely to be focussed on practical problem solving and providing recommendations. The insider researcher needs to be mindful of the different audiences and requirements. In my case this tension occurred because I was involved with a project about Global Citizenship for students at the university, which overlapped with the development of the internationalisation strategy. Despite this inherent advantage of involvement as a practitioner I had to keep the practice and research endeavours separate or at least to recognise when one was impinging on the other.

### ***Data gathering process and data analysis***

This research is qualitative, interpretive and iterative. It was carried out from an insider perspective within a single institution with the aim of gaining insight into the development of an institutional policy and how this was experienced by a range of university staff. Qualitative research has a diverse range of

approaches and nuanced interpretations within this variety. However, a number of approaches share generic analytic skills that include 'thematizing meaning' (Holloway & Todres, 2003). This is the process of reducing large quantities of transcription data and "imposing some kind of order on the data", in order to move from description to interpretation (Robson, 2002).

### *Thematic Analysis*

This analysis primarily drew on Thematic Analysis and was informed by techniques from Grounded Theory. Both approaches seek to identify patterns in the data and to develop themes or categories for further interpretation; one of the bedrocks of qualitative analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Spencer, Ritchie, & O'Connor, 2006). At a pragmatic level both approaches offer useful tools for categorising data but there are differences in their fundamental aims. Thematic analysis explicitly recognises that analysis can be both inductive and deductive; developing themes from the data or analysing in terms of themes derived from existing theory (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic analysis was selected as the approach to data analysis rather than basing the analysis on grounded theory, as the aim of grounded theory is to create theories that show how relevant concepts fit together and explain events. Corbin and Strauss (2008) describe theory as "a set of well developed categories (themes, concepts) that are systematically interrelated through statements of relationship to form a theoretical framework that explains some phenomenon" (p55). Grounded theory in its classic formulation argues that the researcher should approach the data free of pre-conceived

categories and work inductively to generate theory that is grounded in the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Holton, 2008). Whilst it was one of the aims of the research to develop theory related to internationalisation, I could not claim that theory generation was the sole aim of the research or that it was free of a priori assumptions (Charmaz, 2005; G. Thomas & James, 2006). The data analysis was thematic analysis with ideas also derived from grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Lempert, 2008)

Thematic analysis is at a basic level a “method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006 p79). It is also used to interpret data. It is therefore a process of recognising patterns within the data, describing (coding) the patterns and then interpreting the patterns (Boyatzis, 1998). Themes were taken to be “relevant phenomena” that enabled me to “reduce and combine data” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008 p159).

Some of these themes were derived from the data and represent ideas that had not necessarily been anticipated in preparing the interview questions. An example of this is the importance that a number of interviewees attached to location; to the City of Liverpool

In contrast, other data were clearly derived from the interview questions and represented responses to interview questions that aimed to explore interviewees’ views on specific subjects. An example of this is the discussion, based on Lewin’s framework, of the role of the university’s research links as (mostly) an advantage/enabler in internationalising. This formed a coherent theme derived from interview questions, which were in turned derived from a

theoretical perspective; Lewin's enablers and constraints in change processes (Lewin, 1964).

This type of research is iterative. Initial themes were identified or were part of the research design. At first, these themes were often only conceived in general terms, accurately described by Ryan and Bernard (2003) as "abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs" (p87). The process of describing them and deciding on examples from the text that belonged or did not belong in a particular theme, or category, was an iterative process that involved continued refinement of the themes. Themes were decided on in terms of whether they contributed something important to the overall research question. As such, some themes were prevalent because they were derived from interview questions; others represented unexpected responses, were less prevalent but nevertheless offered interesting insights; a good example of this being the lack of ethnic diversity at senior levels of the university's hierarchy. The process of analysing data involved this 'seeing' a theme and continued with 'seeing it as', meaning describing or coding the theme, followed by interpretation (Boyatzis, 1998).

#### *Application of Thematic Analysis*

The actual process of analysis broadly followed the six phases outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006) and is shown in Table 5:

Familiarisation with the data	Transcription and re-reading
Generating initial codes	Coding systematically across the data

Searching for themes	Collating all relevant data into themes
Reviewing themes	Checking the themes 'work', producing a thematic map
Define and name themes	Ongoing analysis and refining, identifying the overall story
Report	Final analysis and selection of extracts

Table 5: The phases of thematic analysis

I transcribed 12/17 transcripts myself. The remainder were transcribed by a professional transcriber and followed the pattern I had established in the initial transcriptions. The aim was to gain a thorough understanding of the data and to produce a verbatim account of the interview aiming to preserve meaning and in a format that lent itself to analysis and citing i.e. observing written punctuation conventions and removing distracting fillers and repetitions.

Transcription is not a neutral process. It is part of the interpretive process whereby face to face interview conversations become fixed and abstracted into the written form. In transforming from oral to written form and its associated conventions there is a loss of tone of voice and body language (Kvale, 2007). This was compensated for by checking the audio-tapes if there was a sense of important meaning being lost or compromised. At my request some of the interviewees clarified uncertain items in their transcripts.

Coding was carried out using NVivo software. Codes were constructed on the basis of having: a label (name), a description of its characteristics and a description of any qualifications/exclusions (Boyatzis, 1998). Codes identified features in the data that appeared interesting; initially at the most basic level

as the data were organised into meaningful groupings (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These were equivalent to in-vivo codes; “concepts using the actual words of research participants rather than being named by the analyst” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008 p65). The refining of the names and descriptions continued throughout the analysis. The process of coding supported pattern recognition and this in turn influenced coding choices. As the data were being coded from an early stage of the interview process the initial interviews tended to have an influence on subsequent coding. I found it important to keep notes (Lempert, 2008) and to reflexively guard against this, particularly as initial interviews were conducted with university leaders who already occupy positions of influence. This was augmented by discussions with colleagues who had different roles and different positions on the internationalisation process.

Codes were also developed that directly mapped onto the interview questions. Clearly, the questions generated patterns of responses that were categories or themes that represented those “higher-level concepts under which analysts group lower-level concepts according to shared properties” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008 p159).

Interview questions about the advantages and disadvantages that the university had in internationalisation led to themes around rationales for internationalisation that enabled comparisons to existing typologies. The wording of ‘advantages and disadvantages’ was settled on early in the process. I had commenced with ‘rationales and constraints’ and at times needed to enter into a discussion in order to clarify meanings. ‘Advantages

and disadvantages' opened up a range of responses that were ultimately gathered into themes that included rationales. Rationales is an obvious example of a theme that was developed deductively from reading the literature. It also corresponded with ideas that I was developing at the time about using Lewin as an organising framework. Other themes were not anticipated at the outset; most notably themes around 'local factors'. These arose from the data and adhered more closely to the inductive category development outlined by Corbin and Strauss (2008).

In building these themes, I would claim that they are authentic in that the wording of the interviewees played a central role in their development even when the interview questions directed attention to particular topics. However, in interpreting the world there is no single correct account and it is reasonable to expect that other perspectives would produce other valid accounts from the data (Maxwell, 2002). Research accounts are "always *constructed* by the researcher(s) on the basis of the participants' accounts and other evidence" (italics in original) (Maxwell, 2002 p49). I have attempted to use the language and views of interviewees and to reflexively recognise my role in interpreting their accounts.

## Chapter 5: Rationales for Internationalisation

The findings are reported in Chapters 5, 6 and 7, each organised around a key theme from the data. Quotations from interviewees are interspersed with commentary and relevant literature. In general, the literature focuses at the national level and on how institutions respond to globalisation. Similarly, institutions are treated in the main as an undifferentiated category. However, transformative globalisation ideas highlight that there will be local responses to globalising forces. In order to learn more about the significance of the local, analysis needs to be fine grained and situated within the more generalised theorising.

Local contexts frame agential reposes and responses differ. Structure and agency are intertwined not separate (Archer, 2003). Structure is taken to mean enduring social conditions that “to a greater or lesser extent influence actors’ forms of thought, decisions and actions” and that may “facilitate or constrain actors’ capacities to achieve their objectives” (Sibeon, 2004 p53). This designation of structure has similarities to the interpretation of context as ‘that which surrounds’ that was given earlier. At this stage of the discussion structure and context are seen as ‘influencing’ agential action. We will return to structure-agency in the concluding chapter to examine the interactions between them and the influence of agential action on structure. In addition, an alternate rendering of context will be examined that takes more explicit account of the effects of agential action, where agential action refers to both individual and institutional actions.

It is important to pay attention to the local in more detail than is generally the case as this is the arena of much agential action. Results from this study illustrate the importance of attending to the local specifics of an institution as well as attending to characteristics that it shares with similar institutions.

Four themes are identified in the research as rationales for internationalisation at the university:

1. Economic,
2. Educational Benefits,
3. Strengthen the University and
4. Contributing to the 'Greater Good'.

There are connections and linkages between these rationales. The economic rationale is to the fore but the other themes remain significant. I aim to show that whilst the dominant themes relate to existing literature the significance of local context that is shown in this research is less thoroughly explored.

Table 6 below shows the themes identified and where relevant their sub-themes. It also shows the outline description that is used in depicting the themes:

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>	<b>Description</b>
Economic	Markets	Respondents highlighting the importance of markets and competitiveness in general terms
	Student fees	Specific reference to fee income from international students
	Reputation	Reputation of the university as a key component of competing in markets: students for fees and staff for research performance. Linked to research performance
Educational Benefits	For home students	Intercultural learning: perceived benefits from having international students in classes. International employability.
Strengthening the University	History and current culture	Local context, the nature of the university Links to research Perceived problematic aspects of current position as support for desired changes
The Greater Good	Wider contribution	The role of the university in making a wider contribution beyond its own needs.
	Part of a wider community	Relates to research and to economic themes Research is a vehicle for achieving greater good aspirations and there are economic considerations

Table 6: Rationales for internationalisation identified in the research

### ***Economic rationales***

#### *Markets*

The preponderance of an economic rationale is clearly in accord with existing typologies of rationales for institutional internationalisation that all foreground the economic imperative (Caruana & Spurling, 2007; J. Knight, 2004; Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2007). An economic thread runs through many of the rationales presented, often this is expressed in terms of an imperative related to external conditions: “Because we’ll have to do it, whether we like it

or not we're in a market place..." (UL34). In addition, an imperative that related to the survival of the university was put forward:

...in a sense economic benefit is a prerequisite for the other things we're talking about. You can't do things if you don't have the money, and that's why I want to keep saying that universities, even in the traditional sector, have to make a surplus, because if you don't make a surplus you're going down the tubes, you're not going to exist (UL30).

This economic imperative for survival is also argued to be connected to external factors such as the state of the UK economy following the credit crisis:

I think without that we won't survive... look at the research funding; look at the number of students of coming in in future years. The UK market will shrink; the UK economy is in a big mess, this will directly translate into the funding available for higher education and research so if this university wants to grow further the UK market will be more and more competitive and will be shrinking at the same time. So we have to look abroad, otherwise we will shrink as well (AS11).

For all but two respondents 'international students' was a cipher for full fee paying international students; not students who were international and European or international and British but from an ethnic minority. International students are being valued here as sources of fees rather than as

offering cultural enrichment or as part of the debate about academic standards. This unstated assumption underlines the significance of the economic discourse in rationales for internationalisation. However, before continuing the discussion on the economic thread that runs through the research I want to stress that no respondent had a 'pure' economic rationale for internationalisation; all respondents either wove in additional rationales or challenged the economic hegemony.

The language of markets and economics permeated responses and this often led to imperatives to internationalise, such as: "we have to look abroad", where 'look abroad' is clearly referring to recruiting international fee paying students. Further examples from the quotations above are: "we'll have to do it whether we like it or not", and even universities in the "traditional sector have to make a surplus". I maintain that this use of imperative is an 'argument of necessity' for taking an economic approach to internationalisation. The use of this language may be an example of being 'captured by the discourse' (Trowler, 2001), where the adoption of specific forms of language, in this case that of neoliberal economics, closes down the options for other ways of framing the discussion.

However, Trowler's (2001) work shows that academics are quite cable of 'bilingualism', that is using the language of markets when it suits but switching to other 'languages' when required. One example shows a clear understanding of the need to use the appropriate discourse:

if you're into the management of universities, there's a kind of short-hand speak; it's not that you don't remember what it's really about,

but the thing in front of you is the economy of the institution, .... and often government puts this in terms of economic impact, so I have to put it in terms of economic impact. But that doesn't mean you've forgotten what the whole thing is about ..... you don't suddenly forget thirty-odd years of teaching and research just because you've moved (UL41).

This research shows that there are a number of rationales for internationalisation, arguably each with their own languages. Will repeated use of the neo-liberal discourse eventually drown out the other voices? This remains an open question that will be revisited in the concluding section after having heard more of the economic and other rationales for internationalisation. The economic rationale for internationalisation that relates directly to student fee income is well rehearsed in the literature and is echoed in respondents' views on the university's reasons for internationalisation.

#### *Student fees*

A straightforward perception of the university's rationale for internationalisation is:

getting in more overseas students to get in more fee income  
basically (AS16)

This is based on the additional income that can be generated from international students:

I know the university is trying to get more money because there's more monies that can come to them for teaching an international student than there are for teaching a domestic student (AS24).

Several of the respondents linked the rationale of the necessity of generating fee income with other threads in the pattern:

a view I have some sympathy with I must say given the underfunding in universities but it does make life very difficult for teaching for example (AS25).

Here fee income is linked both to a wider structural issue, underfunding and to practical concerns, difficulties of teaching. This comment neatly illustrates awareness of related threads and shows that a rationale, for example, an economic rationale, is rarely singular. Borrowing and adapting from Trowler et al's (2005) discussion of 'policy bundles', that is, combinations of policies that address different areas, where policies interact with each other and often contain paradoxes. In the same way, rationales are expressed together, address different concerns, are interrelated and are often paradoxical.

As would be expected in a university there are a variety of opinions and the motivations for internationalisation are not uncritically accepted. This sentiment is powerfully expressed:

I haven't thought about this before I don't think they've got any notion of community in this because it seems to me what universities are doing and [this university] is in common with the rest really is operating like large-scale fishermen, trawler boats,

they're following where the shoals are, and if the shoal disappears in one part of the world they'll go and exploit another one and they're not at all interested in how that relates to the local community or building relationships up (AS19).

This staff member makes the case against the economic exploitation of international students purely for fee income. It contrasts with the avowed multiple motivations expressed by some leaders at the university and it illustrates the opposition to crude models of student recruitment for purely economic reasons. The economic rationale is both present and critiqued within the university. On one level it is about getting in “more fee income”, but it is also part of the pattern that motivations are usually multifaceted and intertwined even if the economic discourse is repeated and appears dominant. The next sub-theme in the economic rationales is reputation and this begins to exhibit differing strands and complexities.

### *Reputation*

Reputation could clearly be articulated from a number of perspectives and be placed in themes other than as part of an ‘Economic rationale’. I chose to code it in an economic category rather than follow Middlehurst and Woodfield (2007) and present ‘Profile and Status’, which I take to be equivalent to reputation, as part of their ‘Academic rationale’. I argue that reputation is being used ‘in the service’ of competitive advantage and of economic goals. The ability to compete in international markets is related to reputation (perception of image and identity) (Davies, 1992). It is integral to Crewe’s (2004) “emerging international market in prestige” (p1). Reputation in global

higher education is largely based on research performance and recognition by peers and so it has an academic foundation. However once established, reputation is then deployed in competitive markets in order to secure: international students (fees), international staff (prestige and research performance), research collaborations (funding and research performance) and inter-institution collaborations (potentially all of the above). Success in these endeavours then contributes to enhanced reputation.

Rationales often overlap and are rarely exclusive, but they will be accorded differing priorities (de Wit, 2000). Reputation and, by extension, research performance are closely linked in this case to the university's history and aims and will also feed into the theme of 'Educational Benefits', either directly or indirectly.

### ***Educational Benefits rationales***

This theme emerged as being primarily focused on Educational Benefits for home students and to a lesser extent benefits to the institution from the presence of international students. The study examines the perspectives of staff not students so the educational benefit is expressed in terms of perceived benefits by staff from having international students in classes. These can be differentiated into: Global Citizen and Employment, Student Experience and Inter-cultural Learning, Raising Standards and 'Influencing Us'. The first two of these sub-themes can be readily checked against other typologies, whereas the second two I found more surprising and represent areas for further exploration.

### *Global citizen and employment*

The first two comments illustrate a sense of the university's obligations to provide an education for a globalised world:

...shouldn't all of our graduates know more about them [global issues] than just reading the newspapers and have a more informed view? ... Issues such as: climate change, the EU, [world] medical issues (AL05).

This generalised comment that it is good for students to know more about global issues is amplified and taken to also enable students to operate in a global context:

First of all, there's a kind of moral driver that if we actually think that the world is becoming more internationalised and possibly globalised in that sense then we ought have students and give them a kind of education that actually fits them for that purpose (UL37).

A similar sentiment is captured in the following comment but this also contains an inkling of some of the passions displayed around internationalisation, in this case around its potential benefits. In Chapter 7 I will argue that individuals' experiences and felt expressions offer an alternative lens to dry economic rationales and show some of the passion and commitment that is an under-represented dimension of the internationalisation discourse:

I also think it is educationally valuable that our students should be prepared for a world that is by definition global. They should be

directly acquainted with and have direct experience of other cultures, other societies and that's why the network is I think educationally exciting, we can say come to the university, you can spend part of your time still studying [our] university degree in another country in another society. I think that's a fantastic opportunity to offer our students (UL21).

For many students the essence of this argument will be accurate. However, there will be others who will want a less 'global' view of the world and who will aspire to working within their local community; presenting the 'global' as exciting risks overlooking the importance of local contributions. These two dimensions are not mutually exclusive and there needs to be consideration of how rhetoric can privilege one aspect over others. A more pragmatic view of the value of internationalisation relates to global employment opportunities:

We know this from HECSU [Higher Education Careers Services Unit] that employers look for international experiences. It's one of the differentiating factors. It's slightly alarming; there are anecdotal reports from some HECSU members, that British employers prefer overseas students because de facto they have international experience (UL30)

This comment has an implied imperative for internationalisation but this time it is around student needs rather than institutional requirements. It perhaps also contains the assumption that British employers share the same views and by extension that British students are all seeking employment in globalised settings.

### *Student experience, Inter-cultural learning*

Again, this sub-theme picks up a point that is well expressed in the literature; that is the belief that having internationalisation students in class can lead to a richer experience and enhanced inter-cultural learning (Montgomery, 2009). Without wishing to go too far into the debate, it is worth stating briefly that I think the presence of international students in class is a beginning to inter-cultural exchange but much more is required to realise the benefits; it is a necessary but not sufficient condition for inter-cultural learning (De Vita, 2006; Wright & Lander, 2003). Interviewees gave a number of practical examples of the benefits for home students from the presence of international students in class:

The [home] students actually quite enjoy it, I mean I quite enjoy it as well, but you are aware that it's a very different year in which there are international students ... it becomes a much better mixing pot for people to understand other people around them ... and I think it's quite salutary for UK students to realise that actually, however much they moan about under provision and under resourcing, actually they could be far worse off and some of the international students have made huge sacrifices to come here (AS25).

One international staff member's expression of the philosophical purpose of universities is linked with a more prosaic plea that (some) English students may need to gain a wider focus:

I have a very academic outlook on what a university is. In my mind you come to university to learn more about your subject, to learn

more about people around you and the subjects that they're studying and to be exposed to a whole lot of different outlooks, ethos's, religions, cultures, everything; this is really where you gain perspective on the fact that the world doesn't focus every day on having a cooked English breakfast and a sarnie for lunch and beans on toast for dinner; there are a whole bunch of different ways of living and I think for any university that is really trying to sell itself as a hub of enlightenment and education, that's very important (AS15).

These two comments are illustrative of established Social/cultural and Educational rationales for internationalisation (de Wit, 2000; J. Knight, 2004; Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2007). The following section takes a turn to a less well documented benefit of the presence of internationalisation students.

### *Raising standards*

There is a significant debate about the problems and challenges of including international students and providing adequately for them. This is often expressed in as a deficit view or alternatives to a deficit view i.e. there are problems to solve in taking on international students (Leask, 2001; Montgomery, 2009). My intention is not to enter this debate but to foreground an alternate experience, where international students are helping to raise academic standards:

I would be more than happy to have more international people on board because in the lecture hall, in the practical, in the lab exercises, always they are the ones who are most keen to get additional knowledge, to engage fully and so on. So it's great to

have them on board and they also bring up the rest, I mean you have two or three people that are fully engaged and they will drag along the majority of the class and that's a positive thing also for the UK students ... I think it's a very positive thing to have a mixed class in front of you because the good ones will bring up the others and very often the good ones are overseas students that are much more keen on learning. So even for our UK or home students it will be a positive thing to have international people in there (AS11).

This is not an isolated comment at the university (Strivens, 2009). There are caveats. This experience is reported more in, but is not limited to, 'technical' or mathematical based subjects. It is less common, but not absent, in subjects requiring more nuanced language skills. Also, many of these students have come to the university from specific well-established inter-university collaborations that provided in-country preparation for UK higher education. However, I would argue that this type of experience further problematises the deficit model of accepting international students and although contextually specific it provides an infrequently articulated rationale for internationalisation.

These observations may or may not be generalisable but they do illustrate the importance of a full exploration of the context of each institution's internationalisation project and point to the value of studies grounded in local experience. In a similar manner, as well as discussing the benefits 'we' can impart to 'others' there are insightful comments about the possibilities of the institution being influenced itself through the process.

### *'Influencing us'*

The idea that a university, and those who work in it, will change through its greater internationalisation is an inherent part of the process. However, this is usually expressed as changes that the university will initiate and direct; it is not often expressed as inviting change that is a response to the arrival of new people and ideas:

You don't exactly create rounded citizens by making them do Pure Maths, Applied Maths and Physics, believe me. So I do think that we do want to influence what we're doing but also we want to be influenced by people coming here ... I think that being influenced by an international agenda is a very very exciting thing for us. I really do think it is exciting (AL13).

Change at 'university' level is mirrored by this summary of how the curriculum can change as a result of international student influences:

It's always quite interesting really, and it's slightly selfish of course, because a lot of the stuff you learn from them, ... you can then put back into the syllabus next year and can use it as examples and so on, so that's broadening your horizons generally (AS16).

These comments direct attention to 'unknowable' benefits from internationalisation and although not part of this research the comments illustrate the importance of attending to serendipitous occurrences that because they were not planned are potentially not brought to light or are taken for granted.

These examples of local occurrences lead to considerations of how local conditions at the university provide a context that, whilst sharing characteristics with other research-led civic universities, when taken together create a unique local situation with particular rationales for internationalisation.

### ***Strengthening the University rationale***

This theme emerged as developments that would enhance the position of the university. As such the theme is closely related to the existing situation at the university. Some aspects are connected to university history and others to existing problems where there is an aim to resolve these problems. Initially this theme was characterised as 'University history and aims' but expressed like this it is not a rationale in itself. However, I mention it now because the emergent theme 'history and aims' does resonate with Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) layers and conditions in their glonacal-agency heuristic and is further discussed in the concluding chapter.

Most interviewees at the university leader and academic leader levels clearly linked the university's history and aims with the rationales for internationalisation. Their comments reflected both their roles and their length of time in positions related to internationalisation. So, some interviewees were able to give a more historical perspective; others were looking forward and describing internationalisation as one means of responding to perceived problems at the university that derived from its historical trajectory. This section looks briefly at reported significant historical factors, identifies

structural challenges and shows that internationalisation is seen as key in positioning the university as a research-led global institution.

### *Historical factors*

The university is a civic university and part of the Russell Group (an association of 20 major UK research-intensive universities). As such, being research-led is a central defining feature of the university and is integral to its past and future. However, senior figures in the university expressed considerable reservations about its position and performance in the 1990s:

[the university] given its character age and wealth was underperforming and had nothing particularly distinctive about it. ... It was just looking a bit dowdy, old fashioned, complacent and excessively prudent and bottom line focussed (UL22).

At that time the university was undoubtedly wealthy in comparison to similar institutions and had performed relatively poorly in indicators such as the Research Assessment Exercise, Teaching Audit and international student recruitment. An incoming university leader summed up the situation as:

the institution seemed at least to me and to others to have become slightly parochial and slightly inward turned, and one of the things ... was [to] give the institution confidence that they could actually play on a world stage. There was a kind of morale boosting, internal cultural reason for pushing the international agenda (UL37).

It seems clear that internal local considerations were building up drivers for change:

[we] needed to do something different and something which was risky; well it would be risky because it was going to have to be different, so not in our characteristic prudent manner (UL29)

As well as an internal reason for internationalisation there was an imperative expressed about the need to retain the university's research-led status:

at that time the dominant things were: we had to secure the continuing status of [the] university as a research intensive university. That was a principal concern and was bound up with internationalisation, because becoming a major international player on the basis of your teaching strengths is much more tricky to manage in a lot of ways. So it had to be on the basis that we were Russell Group and research intensive (UL29).

The university was characterised by prudence and relative underperformance and needed to make changes. These changes needed to be linked to its research-led tradition. That analysis was contemporaneous with an exploration, and rejection, of regional initiatives as a way forward, the presence of key personnel having an international vision and the growth of global opportunities in higher education. A very particular set of circumstances, at a particular time, led to the university's international developmental trajectory. So whilst from a distance it may appear that the university has taken a similar path to other research-led universities that

perspective masks the detail of the local factors that determined the actual route taken.

### *Structural factors*

Before considering how the university's aims were shaped by its past it is relevant to examine the structural factors that emerged as a theme in the research. Again this was largely confined to responses from the leaders within the university as might be expected given that it is part of their role to consider this type of issue. The major component that emerged in relation to structural factors was size. Most of the university and academic leaders described the university as small in comparison with other Russell Group universities and needing to grow in order to fulfil its aims. This is summarised:

We're too small a university full stop. That's the starting point. We're the smallest Russell Group university for the range of studies that we do. We are small in so many ways within the sector, and yet aspire to do so many different things. That is one of our major structural problems at the moment. In a sense we can actually turn that around; we're a very small university for what we are, this is a way to become bigger, given there is no growth possibility from home students, or home government funded students, within the foreseeable future. So in that sense it is a challenge I agree to grow a small university in that way, but given that being small is in itself a problem for us, it would seem to be a logical solution to the problem (AL15).

Here internationalisation is presented as a solution to the problem of being a relatively small university with wider aims. The argument for greater size is presented as being both economic; in order to support the practicalities of research activity, and intellectual; in order to create the intellectual environment for research and learning:

If you want to be comprehensive, if you want to sustain a multi-faculty university, with a spread of subjects, you have to have scale. It is most obvious in the case of the science subjects where size does matter. But I would even argue that it is important elsewhere, although not for reasons of economies of scale, it is more to do with the intellectual ferment you can create in big department. Big departments can have a wider range of activities they can sustain a post graduate culture that the students themselves find very enlivening (UL28).

Leaders within the university are putting forward the argument that the university is small for the activities it wishes to undertake; that is to support a multi-faculty university that is research-led. To be research-led and competitive is 'bloody expensive':

if you are a research institution and you want to be competitive globally in research, and it is a global competition, and it's fierce, and it's relentless and it's bloody expensive... to sustain a world class research-led university the average number of students just goes up and up and up. That's just an economic argument, actually spreading the overhead, and a way to achieve this in a globalised

higher education market is to recruit greater numbers of international students (UL21).

The economies of scale are combined with the intellectual gains from larger departments; taken together the claim is that growth is essential and international student recruitment is a central means to achieve this.

This section shows a seamless argument that links university structural problems with an internationalisation aspiration that connects economic and intellectual benefits. It illustrates the interlinked nature of threads in the internationalisation discussion. At this stage it is a rather unproblematic account, partly because the ideas are derived from the leadership strata of the university, who are all 'bought into' the 'size matters', economic and internationalisation agendas, and partly because this section is structured around rationales *for* internationalisation at the institutional level. Challenges to this view arise from priorities within multiple change initiatives and from individuals with other priorities and concerns.

### ***The Greater Good rationale***

One respondent encapsulated this notion, quoted Martin Luther King: "*I cannot be everything I ought to be until you are everything you ought to be*" and connected the quotation to the role of the university:

I think that's true, not just on an individual level but also on a society level. We in this country, we in this university, cannot be everything

we ought to be, unless we are helping others to be what they can be. I think that to me is the ennoblement of life [part of the university's motto]. The ennoblement of life is not limited; if it means anything it has to be universal otherwise it doesn't mean anything (UL27),

And the Greater Good is also expressed as making life better:

I think university is fundamentally about teaching and about research. Why do you do these things? You do these things because we think we make life better (UL23).

Other expressions linked to ideas about the purpose of universities and reflected widely held 'non-economic' views:

we are part of an international community and what we're about is sharing experiences and everything else on an intellectual level rather than it just being about business (AS26).

The sentiment of being part of a wider community is again articulated and expanded and connects these aspirations with the ability of the university to contribute:

you have to have a connection to a wider global sense of the injustice and inequality in the world, which everybody has, who is not blind in the West. I think some of the things we do in the institution can actually address that (AL08).

The motivation is to have an impact on the world and that's a noble objective and very fitting for a university. All I would say is; let's have an impact on the world and not lose money whilst we're doing it (UL27).

This is about the university having a wider role than just operating as a business unit; although respondents were clear that the business imperative could not be ignored. A specific example of these ideals in operation is provided in the university activities in Malawi and pragmatics of a commercial environment are also included:

Malawi is a place where, part of our global responsibility is to say there are some parts of the world, normal rules don't apply. So we engage in PG [Post Graduate] activity in Malawi not to make money; we teach postgraduate students because we want to improve the research base in Malawi, to tackle the problem of malaria in Malawi. So we have said ... we can't extend that relationship everywhere in the world because that's commercially suicidal (AL09).

It was clear in discussions that this sense of the purpose of the university and the desire to contribute to global solutions was expressed in a heartfelt manner.

This aspiration was present in many of the responses and across a number of areas of the research inquiry. It is included here as it stands by itself as a rationale and the way respondents connected it to commercial realities shows

again the interlinking of rationales for internationalisation. As someone who holds a view that we need to find ways to combine commercial reality with a Greater Good role of universities within the unrelenting marketisation discourse, it was encouraging to encounter the juxtaposing of these strands of thought. This Greater Good rationale is another example of personal perspectives influencing university approaches to the subject. The role of individual agency will be addressed in the concluding chapter.

Investigating perceptions of the rationales for internationalisation forms a part of the response to the research question: *“What are the driving and restraining factors for internationalisation at the university?”* Rationales, as the ‘why’ of internationalisation (de Wit, 2000), provide a driver that is articulated from within the university and from the university’s perspective. It provides a specific local response that can be related to rationales derived from wider studies covering a range of institutions (J. Knight, 2004; Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2007).

### ***Comparison with typologies in the literature***

The findings from this research are compared with Middlehurst and Woodfield’s (2007) rationales as they are reporting in a UK context and are explicitly building on Knight’s (2004) well established rationales: social/cultural, political, economic and academic.

The themes developed in this research and Middlehurst and Woodfield's (2007) rationales are compared in summary in Table 7 below:

<b>Research Themes</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Rationales (M&amp;W)</b>	<b>Constituent elements or focus</b>
<b>Educational Benefits</b>	Intercultural learning, International employability.	<b>Social and Cultural</b>	National cultural identity, Intercultural understanding, Citizenship development, Social and community development
	Not shown	<b>Political</b>	Foreign policy, National security, Peace and mutual understanding, National identity, Regional identity
<b>Economic</b>	Markets and competitiveness in general terms, Specific: fee income from international students. Reputation of the university re competing in markets: Linked to research performance	<b>Economic</b>	Economic growth and competitiveness, Labour market, Financial incentives, Income generation
	M&W 'Competitive' seen as part of the economic theme	<b>Competitive</b>	International branding and positioning, Strategic alliances, Knowledge production, Knowledge transfer
<b>Strengthening the University</b>	Local context, the nature of the university. Links to research. Perceived problematic aspects of current position as support for desired changes	<b>Academic</b>	International dimension to research and teaching, Extension of academic horizons, Institution-building, Profile and status, Enhancement of quality and curriculum development, International academic standards, Research collaborations
<b>The 'Greater Good'</b>	University making a wider contribution beyond its own needs. Relates to research and to economic themes. Research is a vehicle for achieving greater good aspirations	<b>Developmental</b>	Student and staff development, Institutional learning and exchange, Capacity building, Technical assistance

Table 7: Comparison of rationales for internationalisation

Some similarities are shown; most obviously in the shared Economic theme and in Educational Benefits / Social and Cultural, which exhibit considerable overlap. Economic and Educational Benefits rationales may be expressed in

varying terms but it is clear that there is strong concurrence and that these rationales are well established. I have argued earlier that Reputation can be seen as a sub-set of an economic rationale. This is not so clearly brought to the fore in other typologies but Knight (2004) does state:

Given the increasing emphasis on competition at the international level, it is tempting to introduce a new category that recognises the importance that institutions are giving to *branding* or developing a strong international reputation (emphasis in original) (p21).

This research does suggest that reputation needs to be more strongly positioned as a rationale for internationalisation, including its economic impacts. In a similar way Competitive is presented in this research as a subset of an Economic rationale rather than a distinct theme in itself, whereas Middlehurst and Woodfield (2007) elect to present it as a distinct rationale separate from Economics (or Academic). I find it difficult to see how Competitive is by itself a rationale rather than the descriptors shown being activities undertaken in order to achieve intuitional aspirations; whatever they may be.

There is no theme in this study that equated with the Political rationale that is shown as an institutional rationale by both Knight (2004) and Middlehurst and Woodfield (2007). It appears to me that these authors have conflated the national and institutional levels when they presented their summaries and that Political rationales are largely or entirely confined to national motivations. This can be seen from Middlehurst and Woodfield's (2007) categories within the Political rationale: foreign policy, national security, peace and mutual

understanding, national identity and regional identity. I doubt that universities are opposed to any of these reasons for internationalisation but they appear primarily as national concerns and not as motivations for individual universities.

There is some overlap between the theme Strengthening the University and Middlehurst and Woodfield's (2007) Academic rationale where one of their descriptors is Institution-building, which I would take to be directly comparable with Strengthening the University. On the other hand they see Profile and Status as a descriptor of an Academic rationale, whereas I have argued that Reputation is being deployed in the service of Economic objectives.

Rationales that derive from data that contribute to the theme Strengthening the University are a substantive theme. It is not surprising that individuals being interviewed in a specific context by a member of the same institution provide responses that include a strong local flavour. This richness appears to be lost in studies where results from a range of institutions are collated. In neither of the typologies used for comparison is significant attention drawn to the way in which local factors influence internationalisation (J. Knight, 2007; Middlehurst & Woodfield, 2007). This is not an argument for generalising from the specifics of this research but it is an argument for recognising the importance of local conditions and including this as a category in future typologies. The importance of the local will be argued further in Chapter 6, which discusses perceived advantages and disadvantages in internationalisation.

The final theme under rationales was the Greater Good. Whilst this is, at its core, a discrete theme it also can be seen to be connected to the 'purpose of universities' debate. There is some concurrence with Middlehurst and Woodfield's (2007) Developmental rationale. However, their descriptors include items that I would be more likely to categorise under Strengthening the University (Institutional learning) as well as items that related more closely to the Greater Good (Capacity building; assumed to be in other organisations). One further reason for arguing for retention of a Greater Good theme is that it is a clear demonstration of motivations that are neither economic nor linked in some way to economic rationales. As the economic discourse is so strongly to the fore it is an important point to position non-economic rationales with some equivalent status. In addition as is shown later, Greater Good aspirations connect strongly with individual projects and therefore with their sense of important work, which often includes international activities. It also draws attention to the importance of local data down to the level of departmental and individual concerns in internationalisation research.

This provides a place to consider the possibility of combining the Greater Good role of universities and commercial imperatives. Indeed several of the respondents did that by speaking in favour of making a positive contribution but cautioning against 'losing money while doing it'.

This tension is described by Gaffikin and Perry (2009) as being a choice of either further appropriation of "the language of business and marketing" and adaptation to trends that "yield lucrative returns" or that universities will "remain faithful to a core education mission"? (p138). Rather more

dramatically, Gumpert (2000) suggests that we are at a defining moment in the history of higher education and argues that the reorganisation of universities to meet modern needs of business, marketisation and efficiency could actually change the purpose of universities. There is a danger that the argument is presented as a choice between two alternatives: lucrative returns or core educational mission.

This leads to the question as to whether universities will be able to forge a new 'organic response' to the conflicting tensions that characterise their environments (Barnett, 2004). I agree with the thrust of Barnett's question and suggest that fostering an organic response is in accord with university history (over the centuries) rather than 'a choice between'. It seems that staff within the university are conscious of this tension and are thinking through the issues. Whether or not the university is able to enact an 'organic response' to the tensions will be an area for further research.

## **Chapter 6: The University's Advantages and Disadvantages in Internationalisation**

In the literature review I argued that Lewin's (1964) employment of the term 'forces' to describe factors that drive toward change or resist change invokes a mechanical and active image that tends to exclude elements that might be shown to support a context that enabled change or resistance to it. It is not necessarily absolutely clear where the boundary is between, for example, an active rationale for internationalisation that could be characterised as a driver for change; an economic imperative being a straightforward example and a supportive context that makes it easier to move toward internationalisation; the globalisation discourse is an example.

The following sections discuss the themes that emerged from the research when interviewees were asked to identify what they thought of as advantages and disadvantages for greater internationalisation at the university. Advantages and disadvantages were conceptualised as enablers and constrainers of internationalisation in order to capture the distinction from the more active forces driving for change; including the university's rationales for internationalisation. At this stage in the process there is less emphasis on active resistance to change as the enactment process is not yet impacting greatly on staff work patterns.

The themes identified are shown in Table 8 below:

<b>Enablers – Advantages in internationalisation</b>	<b>Constraints – Disadvantages in internationalisation</b>
Liverpool the place	Liverpool the place
Reputation: Research-led	Reputation: Research performance
Networks: Laureate & XJTLU	
People attributes: Leadership, staff expertise, willingness	People: Philosophical positions
	Internal: Systems & structures, Resources (time & money), Restructuring, Diversity

Table 8: Enablers and constraints at UoL

The table shows themes that emerged as both potentially enabling and constraining: ‘Liverpool the place’ and ‘Reputation’, where reputation is largely based on perceptions of research performance. ‘Networks’ represents two critical external structural relationships and ‘Systems and Structures’ describes internal university organisation.

‘Philosophical positions’ includes views expressed that were critical of internationalisation or articulated concerns for locally based projects that might suffer from a change in focus.

‘Restructuring’ includes the challenges brought about from multiple change initiatives. It does not address the process of developing the internationalisation strategy. The following sections examine these themes;

where themes span both enabling and constraining they will be discussed together.

### ***The Significance of 'Place'***

Notions of place emerged as an important dimension of the research. This was expressed by some respondents either conceptually, in relationship to elements of the university's aims, or specifically, in relationship to the importance of Liverpool the city in the university's internationalisation project. The functions of a modern university have different degrees of connection with a specific place. In the natural sciences many research programmes are global and collaboration can and does occur irrespective of location:

For me research is nothing about geography, nothing at all (AL07).

This refers to inter-personal collaborations such as writing papers rather than, for example, physicists who travel from all over the world to Geneva to work at CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research). So, big scientific hardware is located 'somewhere' but the related collaborations are global. If the work of 'big science' can be considered apart from place, this is not the case for many social science research projects that are deeply connected to location and seek to have local social impact:

One thing that I am really interested in the moment is the relationship between that [internationalisation] and the pressure on researchers to increase the social relevance and policy impact, because I think there is an immediate policy tension there, between

trying to be international which often means being more abstract in scale and more theoretical in scale and trying to achieve meaningful policy impact which often means in other countries publishing in local languages, writing reports that aren't necessarily in those top level journals. There is a kind of tension between the two I think, and I think as a researcher it's quite hard to pull those two things off without doubling the amount of output and things that you do, which is what we've been doing really .... So it's not always appropriate I think, in some areas it wouldn't be appropriate to kind of force an internationalisation agenda on people if they were doing very in depth local studies of poverty or local economies or something (AS10).

There is a potentially serious tension between big money, big science internationalised research and social science research that is locally based and less glamorous in an internationalisation context. University functions other than research also have differing relationships to place.

Learning and teaching is historically locally bounded by physical presence in classroom and by underpinning cultural assumptions:

Learning and teaching could also be regarded as placeless; it is certainly becoming more placeless except that it is always affected with a cultural dimension which makes it less easily geographically transferable than research is (UL35).

This cultural aspect may be becoming less clear-cut as, for example, UK higher education practices adjust to multi-cultural participants. However, there is a predominance of western pedagogic practice in most higher education irrespective of location (Crabtree & Sapp, 2004; Grigorenko, 2007). This analysis of place and learning and teaching becomes more complex by adding in the impact of virtual learning environments, which change relationships in local settings and make distant relationships possible.

Similarly, Widening Participation and Knowledge Exchange have multiple relationships with place. Traditionally Widening Participation is locally grounded but as universities undertake development projects worldwide these often involve 'aid' or for Greater Good dimensions that have an equivalence to Widening Participation seen in a global light. There is a risk in stretching the fundamentally local activity to add on a global dimension if it distracts from connections to the local:

It seemed to me a big risk to put all your eggs in this kind of globalisation thing and forget that one of Liverpool's real advantages, and it really struck me when I came to work here, because having worked in xxxx the student population in xxxx was much more mixed, a lot of our students came from outside the region, from the South and things and when I started teaching here I realised that we really drawing very heavily on our local population, people who want to be in this part of the world and that is often perceived as a weakness, but I see it rather as a strength (AS19).

Knowledge Exchange has a local/regional development facet as well as commercial worldwide patenting of knowledge based products or processes:

In one sense you can licence or patent anything worldwide, it's placeless, but on the other hand we know that the whole purpose of engaging in that activity is to capture the benefits of knowledge creation for your area or region (UL28).

University functions have a varied relationship with the place where the university is located; although of course universities have a major economic and cultural impact on the places, usually cities, where they are sited:

...by being a large employer, by contributing to the economy in the sense of all the inward traffic: visitors, students, all of the conferences and hotels and therefore all they spend. ... as a university and its interaction with the people, it is about offering services as well as just degrees; continuing education, CPD, access, the new museum, ... I think links us to the city a bit more, because, I think it is probably a constant battle actually, because so much of what a university does is national to global, you can sometimes forget where you are physically based (AL04).

This relationship to a specific place varies with the function of the university. However, in this specific case the city of Liverpool is regularly presented as a significant factor in the university's moves to greater internationalisation. In the main the city is seen as an advantage or enabler with a limited number of reservations expressed.

### *The city of Liverpool and the university's internationalisation*

#### The brand name of Liverpool itself (AL08)

In this section, I argue that the university's particular location has a direct impact on its internationalisation project and that this is an illustration of the importance of attending to local factors set within a globalising context; 'place' affects global ambitions. Being a civic university with a long standing connection with the local community was an important point raised by several interviewees. Next the varying relationships between a modern university's functions and its place/location are outlined. In this particular case, as the university seeks to develop a greater international presence, the connection to the city presents significant advantages by virtue of the city's worldwide recognition.

Civic universities were founded in the Victorian era by the "great benefactors and industrialists" of the city (AL07) and were born "of the desire of a local economic elite to establish higher education in their cities" (UL21) in order to serve the needs of local industry and the community. A civic university is characterised by having a "broad curricula, covering all of the sciences, arts, humanities, medicine and so on" (AL05).

Civic universities have as strong local tradition that might be considered to be at variance with the university's aim to internationalise. Despite this possible tension the term "global-civic university" (AL09) is a conceptualisation for reconciling the global-local tension. Part of this argument is derived from Liverpool's history as a well established trading port and a well known city:

I think Liverpool as a place has a history of good international links and I do think that that helps because people know where we are for a start, we have a reputation. I'm not talking about the university, I'm talking about the city now (AS09).

This theme of Liverpool as a well recognised city was strongly represented in responses. The point about recognition through music was made tongue in cheek:

Well everybody seems to know the Beatles, who I believe were a popular singing band in the 1960s (AS16).

Making the comparison with other cities that have civic universities, the world wide recognition of Liverpool the city is claimed to confer a real advantage to the university:

If you run through any of the other civic universities and I doubt that anyone has got the same the same kind of presence on a global stage that Liverpool has, the place I mean rather than the university (AL08).

One or two of the cities with civic universities may want to dispute that statement but Liverpool itself represents a significant advantage:

So if we bring it down to the level of the civic universities we have the advantage of Liverpool, because still Liverpool is known. It may not always be known for the right reasons but clearly the Beatles is such a huge thing, football is such a huge thing that the name can

be used as brand and that's something we should benefit from (AS20).

The comment that the city is not always "known for the right reasons" does point out that the city's reputation is not without problems:

Its association with urban blight and things like that, and its distance from London, so that global city thing. I think it's rather hard to make Liverpool look attractive to a lot of people from abroad because it's not seen as one of these big cosmopolitan cities, most members of staff who want to come to the UK want to go to London, possibly Oxford or Cambridge for the prestige (AS27).

The city is not part of the 'golden triangle' of London, Oxford and Cambridge and neither the city nor the university could present itself in that category.

It would be foolish to ignore Liverpool's historical social problems and that some of its international visibility has been related to the slave trade and its role as a colonial hub. Despite these often negative associations Liverpool is a well known city:

Liverpool is a recognisable city in the UK isn't it? It's always up there because of its history ... even if it was only with the slave trade, the fact of the docks; it's always been looking outwards, instead of being in the middle of a land mass. Maybe we should revisit our history and our roots (AS26).

More recently, through music, the Beatles and the football team the city has a worldwide 'brand' that can only be advantageous to the university's internationalisation agenda. Recent events such as the success of the European Capital of Culture and the twinning agreement with Shanghai provide further worldwide recognition. The university's ambition is 'to be a global university' (UoL, 2009). Recognition of the city is important in and offers a counter to the view of international perceptions described by Thomas (2007):

as far as the overwhelming majority of the Japanese population are concerned, there are only two universities in the United Kingdom: Oxford and Cambridge. When I travel in North America I am constantly reminded that most of the people I meet don't even know where Bristol is, never mind whether it has a university (p4).

In contrast, many people overseas *do* know where Liverpool is and do know of the city, so local factors, in this case location, the city, are an important dimension in international ambitions.

The university has the opportunity to connect with the recognition of its location in promoting itself worldwide. The worldwide recognition of the city is used to further an argument that the university can best serve the city by a worldwide focus:

if we would like to try to serve Liverpool in the best possible way then we have got to also adapt that aspiration of serving the world .. by and large Liverpool University if it's serving Liverpool in the right

way, if Liverpool is a world city then we have got to be a world university (AL06).

This idea of serving the city by performing internationally is furthered by using international standard research to support city development and demonstrate an aspect of civic responsibility:

I see the civic responsibilities not just on the training side, I also see it on the what's now called the knowledge exchange side and there internationalisation can now be a help, because this will mean that the city and region will be provided with top information that is unique internationally and can show that Liverpool is, well leading things, not just on a level within the UK but above that ... we now have programmes that are linked around Living with Environmental Change; Living with Climate Change, several links into the City Council ... they are open minded to go beyond that and really to incorporate the latest scientific findings into decision making. A very open discussion is going on there and I'm very happy about that, so we are acting as a civic university in this respect (AS11).

It could be claimed that serving the community through internationalisation is a self-serving argument used to bolster a rationale for a direction that the university wishes to take in its own interests. Even if that is accepted, it does not accord with the emphasis that staff throughout the university placed on the local dimension in their responses. In many ways the local is shown as important both in terms of serving the community through international

activities and using the worldwide reputation of the city to support the university's ambitions.

Despite a limited number of reservations, the city is a significant enabler (advantage) in the university becoming more international. As covered earlier, the reputation of the city is not in itself a rationale for internationalisation; it is not in Lewin's (1964) terms a driving force for change, but it is a significant enabler. It makes it easier to think in terms of internationalisation when the local 'place' provides such a unique international brand.

The local context discussed in terms of place is one element of an analysis of the university's 'total social field' for internationalisation. Another element that has been referred to earlier is reputation. Previously it was covered as a factor in an economic rationale in helping to determine market competitiveness. In the next section, I will discuss reputation in a more academic context, where reputation is measured in terms of research performance and may be either an enabler or constrainer in internationalisation.

### ***Reputation: Research-led, Research performance***

If we define ourselves as a research-led university I think international excellence should be the driver or the benchmark that all of us, in all our activities, should strive for (AS20).

There is a mutually reinforcing relationship between research performance, league tables and international reputation. Starting with research performance: to be 'world class' requires international recognition, at least in terms of citations and big research grants, and leads to improved league table ratings. League tables are one manifestation of international reputation. International reputation enhances opportunities for securing international collaborations, staff and students. All contribute to improved performance. This is a straightforward analysis of a complex situation and it does ignore pre-existing advantages and personal connections. Nevertheless it encapsulates the vital importance of reputation as an enabler for internationalisation.

I am differentiating in this section between improving reputation/research performance as a rationale for internationalisation and the role of reputation/research performance as an enabling or constraining influence on internationalisation. The interviewees' perceptions of the university's existing reputation and research performance are related to the concepts of enabling and constraining. This shows effects that both enable and constrain. From this I argue that reputation is a significant factor in the university's internationalisation. Furthermore, like place, it is another illustration of the importance in examining the local context within more general globalising trends. Even similar institutions will not have the same local considerations and it obscures significant contributing factors when institutions are 'lumped together' to produce overarching trends.

Despite that critique of the general obscuring the local the university does benefit from one generalised perception, which is the overall high esteem of UK universities:

UK universities are international organisations with long-established links with universities and other organisations around the world. ... UK universities have a long tradition of welcoming international students and researchers attracted by the wide range of high quality courses and educational support, and a world class research base (Universities UK, 2005 p2).

This is unsurprisingly, from Universities UK, a positive picture. It is supported by some respondents' comments: "On one level, all British universities are very attractive" (AS10) and in one specific example:

the training and preregistration preparation for most of the health disciplines is very much better in the UK than it is in a lot of Europe (AS17).

Respondents' comments are positive about UK higher education but often have a reservation attached:

... the UK has always had a very good reputation for delivering on the educational agenda and because we are very used to people wanting to come here and still all of the people that you talk to when you ask them why they chose to come to the UK they will give you a very predictable answer. I think we tend to maybe ride on our

reputation a little bit and I must admit, although this is probably a totally British attitude (AS18)

The university thus benefits from the positive perception of all UK universities.

In general, respondents stated that the university had a good reputation and benefited from membership of the Russell Group in terms of internationalisation:

I think its advantages are that it's a Russell Group university (AS30),

... we do have a good reputation in terms of our academic standards. I think we are a respected university and a well known university and again that comes with the city as well (AS21)

One respondent succinctly tempers this positive view and clearly articulates an issue with rankings:

Our great advantage is membership of the Russell Group but we are out of the 20 universities in the Russell Group we are emphatically 20<sup>th</sup>, which isn't going to help at all (UL36).

So, being in the Russell Group is undoubtedly advantageous, but being bottom of this group is definitely not advantageous. Improving rankings and particular areas of excellence are vital in securing international collaborations:

... heading in the right direction in the league tables that will also help. I know these rankings are very important and I think in

particular subjects it [the university] has got a lot to offer to potential partners so it has got very clear research strengths in some areas which is going to be a magnet, like it has been to the University of CDEF, they know all the RAE [Research Assessment Exercise] scores, they know which are our top performing departments. They are particularly keen to set up student and staff exchanges in those particular areas (AS12).

This interviewee is not alone in differentiating areas within the university and identifying that excellence is not ubiquitous:

also there is no doubt that there are some pockets of real excellence within the University, both in learning and teaching and in research activity as well, which are known across the world. So I think from that point of view we're quite well placed, yes (AS18).

These comments begin to illustrate that reputation is not just an undifferentiated university attribute, although the university will have some overall reputation summarised, for example in league tables. Also, in identifying 'top performing departments' and 'some pockets of excellence' this points to the notion that as well as acting to enable internationalisation; reputation may also constrain internationalisation.

In addition to having the enabling benefit of a good reputation this is clearly recognised as not being an unproblematic area. In making judgements other people will make comparisons and the university does not have the prestige of some institutions:

lots of countries are very status and image conscious and that means they would like to work with the best, and of course we are not Oxbridge and we've not done terribly well in the RAE compared with some places (AL11).

This reference to the RAE contains an assumption about the role of league tables in how decisions are made about reputation and therefore the university's prestige as a potential partner:

The fact that it's only 40<sup>th</sup> in the RAE, you know that if other, if for example other overseas universities were looking for a university or someone to partner with I kind of think: Oh, they might be looking a bit further up the list in terms of the National Assessment Exercise (AS22).

The university's position in league tables is rather appropriately captured in a football analogy:

I think it is a problem with the perceived lack of standing. It's a difficult nut to crack, there are a lot of universities like Liverpool competing in that particular bit, it's like trying to get out of the championship into the premier league, it's a tough league to get out of, a lot of people are scrapping and they're all pretty comparable (AS23).

In summary, the university has a good reputation overall and is advantaged by being a member of the Russell Group or at least by having some areas with a worldwide reputation for excellence. Thus reputation is an important

enabler for internationalisation. This is tempered by a moderate standing in league tables relative to comparable institutions and clearly not being amongst the Oxbridge elite.

I think that it is reasonable to claim that overall the university's reputation is an enabler in internationalisation but that it is not completely unproblematic. There will be areas and potential partners where the university's reputation constrains or precludes international collaboration.

The next section looks at two relationships that are quite specific to the university and are significant elements in the university's internationalisation project.

### ***Networks: Laureate & XJTLU***

Because we've got these advantages of XJTLU, the Laureate link and Liverpool the place we have got the scope to capitalise, small c rather than capital C, on the agenda and it is something that does good for the university and does good for its staff and students and does good for the world, without sounding blasé (AL16).

This quotation sums up one interviewee's perceptions of the 'external' advantages that the university possesses in internationalisation. The links the university has with Laureate and with XJTLU are characterised in the research as external networks. There are of course many other external relationships but these two were by far the most explicitly mentioned and connected to the

future of the internationalisation project. The analysis begins with a brief review of the origins of the relationships. Inter-weavings with the university's history and the economic rationale for internationalisation are shown. This is followed by an exploration of the particularities and advantages of the two relationships. Perceptions of constraint are included in each sub-section. Finally, a brief summary is presented and the importance of local/contextual understanding in internationalisation research is reaffirmed.

The university had a long standing link with Laureate through an online collaboration and was at the stage of developing its ideas on ways to internationalise. These two facets were beginning to coalesce:

So there were two things that had an affinity; the relationship with Laureate and the wish to open a campus (UL22).

The key moment in cementing the venture revolved around emerging opportunities in China:

.. to talk to Laureate, to our partners in the online business about whether they would be interested in going into Shanghai. Of course at the time they were, and then the happy coincidence that Xi'an Jiatong university, which had originally been in Shanghai, ... wanted to get back to the Eastern seaboard for obvious reasons. The Chinese government wouldn't let them unless they had an overseas partner, ... which put us in quite a nice negotiating position (UL30).

Laureate provided the financial resources that enabled the university to operate in China without significant financial risk. In the longer term, Laureate gained a foothold in the burgeoning Chinese higher education sector from which other options are likely to unfold. In the short term they cemented a relationship with a Russell Group university that allowed them to enhance their brand and quality assure their online programmes:

... having a Russell Group university on the books, as it were, it is a big thing for them (UL23).

XJTLU was able to open a campus near Shanghai and enter a relationship with the university that allows them to offer their students a dual degree with the university and study opportunities in the UK.

The university gained a close collaboration with a rapidly developing Chinese university in a strategic location and secured a 'supply' of Chinese fee paying students who had exposure to western teaching methods within an institution that was modelled on the university's processes. In addition, the relationship with Laureate opened new opportunities through close collaboration with the Laureate network of universities. At this point there was a certain degree of serendipity about the developments, clearly acknowledged as part of the process:

I think that's life. I think that's how it is, really UL30).

This fortuitous convergence of interests began the expansion of the partnership between the university and Laureate and the developments at

XJTLU, which formed the cornerstone of the university's thinking around internationalisation:

... maybe there are other ways in which the Laureate network could actually help us globalise, because Laureate has already got a global network we then began to think in terms of how that might help, and then as soon as we'd done that we thought, well we've really got to have an internationalisation strategy here, rather than just picking low hanging fruit (UL23).

'Picking low hanging fruit' refers to recruiting international fee paying students from anywhere in the world that happens to be easy to do at a particular time. This resonates with an earlier quotation that made the analogy of exploiting international students like trawler boats exploiting readily available shoals.

Real benefits, beyond student recruitment, are said to come from stability in the relationship:

... in order for everybody to benefit from internationalisation, ..., you have to have a certain element of stability in the relationships and in the activity. If they're only there for five minutes, nobody's going to benefit at all, either economically or in any other way. So, I think you've got to have something where you can project, five years, ten years at a minimum down the line, in order to get cultural benefit, in order to gain research benefit, in order to gain economic benefit, because the investment, particularly in the partnership way of working, a genuine globalised thing, is very opportunity cost heavy.

... The opportunity cost is very significant, so you can't be in it for a couple of years, and we wouldn't have learned what we might have learned about setting up a university either if we had just walked away from it once the thing was up and running (UL37).

These quotations make the case for the university's approach to internationalisation. It derives from the university's research based reputation and its desire to respond to its historical and structural strictures. There is an explicit economic rationale but this is accompanied by recognition that longer term academic benefits are more likely to accrue from longer term relationships.

This rationalisation is created in a retrospective account of the situation but it does accord with my insider's perceptions of those events that were known within the university. There was congruence amongst those interviewed and again accordance with anecdotal accounts over the timeframe involved. Tellingly, there was also the acknowledgement of the serendipitous nature of the story and whilst there clearly was considerable strategic thinking involved there was no claim that it was solely a carefully thought out plan.

One of the underpinning elements in the rationalisation is the stated need to be involved in partnerships and the fact that Laureate has a network of universities:

When I'm talking about globalisation, I am talking about that genuinely distributed activity which probably means you're part of a network, which probably means that the network needs

management capacity of its own and that means capital. I think there are only relatively few universities that have that kind of size of turnover to actually support that. (IW - Which Liverpool does?) Yes but Liverpool is on the margins without a partner, and that's one of the reasons why we've looked for a partner who can provide both management expertise and capital [Laureate] (UL23).

It is clear the networks are seen as having an important role in the university's future development.

[a network] will protect against some of the viscidities in the market. It will help with our market penetration. It will help us do the business that we do of learning and research and knowledge exchange in more efficient ways and it will help create an identity for us, a differentiation in crowded market place (UL40).

This comment furthers the argument for global network membership using a market rationale and one of creating identity and differentiation (reputation).

There are other global university networks that the university could approach:

We have explored all the other global membership organisations and part of the strategy is that we should continue to explore these different international university membership organisations and establish which is the most appropriate one, or ones for us, should we wish to join (AL08).

This appears as a perfectly reasonable approach, but it does overlook the possibility that 'should we wish to join' well established networks of

comparable universities; they may not be interested, having established their own relationships. Although this was not stated, the Laureate network may have been the most readily available network rather than the best network for the university if the choices were completely open.

The relationship with the Laureate network is substantively different from those networks involving approximately equal institutions:

...what we bring as a university to the Laureate worldwide network is a different factor: we're not part of the Laureate network, we are a research-based university, most of the Laureate network are teaching based universities, ... If you like the role for us as a hub it is because there is very little flow between the Laureate universities one to the other. Whereas it's possible to see a world where there's quite a flow of students particularly undergraduate students onto masters programmes here. In the same kind of way as the XJTLU relationship has or might develop (AL09).

The advantage to the university of recruiting Masters level students is clearly shown in this comment, as is the asymmetrical relationship within the network.

This is another thread in the argument for uncovering detail at a local level around internationalisation rationales and approaches. Simply using the term network without detailing and differentiating the approach from more common global university networks would obscure the advantages and disadvantages of this type of network. There are specific issues in this case concerning the value base of a 'for profit' private enterprise and a traditional UK university:

... Laureate's mission statement, which is to: by high quality education, and by high quality research, to improve the lot of citizens globally (UL30).

This aspect of the public presentation of the Laureate network shows considerable fit with a traditional university and would meld seamlessly with the university's own aspirations. However, this masks a potential for real tension in the relationship in the value base of a 'not for profit' university and a 'for profit' investment company. There are advantages in internationalisation for the university but also risks in association with a profit driven organisation.

Given that this is taken as the correct path for the university to travel there are clear advantages that have been articulated by university leaders. Within the university some staff are broadly accepting of the relationship without having received much information on developments:

So far I have had little connection with them so from my very limited experience I think this is a very positive thing (AS28).

I think the relationship's not entirely straightforward; ... The online xyz is a great success, they're very good students and they are getting [our] university's degrees, they are university students and Laureate are simply our partners in delivering the programme. So I don't think there is anything to be objected to there, I think that's a benefit to the university (AS14).

Perhaps it is not surprising that busy academics have little experience of Laureate if it doesn't affect them directly, I think it is more surprising that so

little is known about this central relationship and so little debate has occurred within the university on engaging closely with a 'for profit partner.

the question is not so much whether or not to have private investment in higher education, it is actually the terms under which that investment takes place. That is the real key issue (UL39).

This is a core argument from university leaders. It centres around two ideas. The first is that it is happening anyway and in a number of ways: research relationships with companies, charitable donations from wealthy individuals (such as the Gates foundation), knowledge exchange agreements and venture capital funded spin off companies. The second idea is based on students and student fees, again this is already happening; home and international students pay fees. Ideologically this relates to debates about whether higher education is a private or a public good:

My view for what it's worth is that higher education is both a public and a private good; there are returns to society as a whole, which is the rationale for public investment in higher education, ... and there are also private returns to private individual students because they get a rate of return on their lifetime earnings that is very attractive which is why they want to pile into higher education (UL21).

Also, current constraints on public finances worldwide are likely to accelerate moves toward greater contributions from students in the form of higher fees.

Engaging with the private sector is justified by arguing that private financing is already happening and that there is an inevitability that this will grow due to

pressures on public finances. This argument will not appeal to those who believe that higher education is primarily a public good. It may be that even those who accept the thrust of the argument will be reticent about taking the further step of a close relationship with a 'for profit' organisation where the details of the relationship are only known to a few senior staff.

At the university, because of the relationship with Laureate it might be expected that there would be more debate on the issues. Speaking from an insider perspective and from my own position within the university, this simply has not occurred. In saying that I recognise that I might not be privy to the debate but I can say that it has not been raised in public fora to any extent. Surprisingly little is known about Laureate as evidenced by many of the interviewees, for example:

Not enough of us know enough about Laureate at the moment. I think that is something that needs to be opened up. There's a few Laureate experts and there's lots of us that know a bit about it, but I don't think I have ever met anyone from Laureate yet, for instance, and I'm sure I should have done. So because that seems to be so central to our international expansion plans ... I don't think that has been good enough yet (AL05).

This concern is expressed at a practical 'on the ground level' and represents one area where more 'needs to be opened up'. It was outside the boundaries of this enquiry but it did become apparent to me that the nature of the relationship is also not openly known: for example who holds advisory, consultant or board level positions in each organisation. In future I expect that

these questions will be asked and hopefully answered but at present any discussion is confined largely to practical considerations.

There are risks and concerns in the association:

of course you worry that something will go wrong somewhere and Laureate will fold, or something like that (AL04).

it would be dangerous for us to be overly dependent on Laureate (UL39).

However, so far it does not appear to have caused any significant tension or difficulties:

I think that potentially before we started there could have been just a brand issue with the fact that we've been associated with a commercial provider but I don't know that that has hurt us at all. I'm not sure; I've not really got any evidence that it has hurt us (AL13).

There are reasonable expectations that more will be developed within the relationship:

I don't think we're using Laureate as much as we should (AL06).

I think we can use them in several ways: they are useful for our students to be able to go to for a while, to increase the notion of our people being global citizens, and I think vice versa, ... I would hope that their better graduates could be a slightly captive market for coming to do postgraduate degrees here, and then the other

interesting thing is, which is a bit longer term, that some of their staff don't have PhDs and they're keen to get them and keen for it to be Liverpool PhDs. So I can see that as probably one of the most effective longer-term ways of building research links (AL05).

This final comment looks forward to developing the academic base to the relationship. It is possible that stable long term relationships will be built within the Laureate network. I would argue that for a relationship with a 'for profit' partner to be sustainable the links need to become founded on academic connections as well as the pervading financial/reputational considerations. This will connect with the espoused motivations of the institution, but more importantly it will resonate with the driving motivations of individuals within the university.

The other significant network relationship that the university has is with XJTLU in China.

XJTLU is a unique venture. [It is] going to give us an edge I think. We have a lot of weaknesses as a university, that is one of our strengths that we have still to build upon (AL08).

The advantage that XJTLU confers the university by way of international student recruitment is an obvious economic benefit. The advantage rests in a long term stable relationship and a secured supply of students who have had experience of western approaches to learning and teaching:

The obvious way in which we will make money this year for the first time is by taking students from the institution into Liverpool (UL30).

The experience the university has gained is undoubtedly an enabler of its internationalisation ambitions in ways that go beyond immediate student recruitment. These can be categorised as experience in such ventures and a competitive edge over comparable institutions. Both of these feed into a sense of achieving something distinctive and a confidence in the university's abilities.

... we wouldn't have learned what we might have learned about setting up a university if we had just walked away from it once [it] was up and running (UL41).

The learning is dependent on entering into a long term commitment and forms a basis for future international activities:

... it is really our experiment, isn't it?... If we can get that right, and I think we can, then it serves, at least as a partial model, for how to do things elsewhere, because obviously the second time round ought to be a little bit easier, although of course, different areas are different... (AL11).

I think it is a sensible model. Partly it is experiences that we have gained, I don't exactly mean fortuitously, but we have acquired expertise in a way that we didn't realise quite how important it was going to be at the time: like the XJTLU collaboration, like the Laureate online collaboration both of which started 6-7-8 years ago

and have really grown enormously and both give us, in different ways, an edge (AL15).

The setting up and the success of the XJTLU venture in China are seen as important learning experiences for the university and advantages for future internationalisation. Also, it confers an edge:

the fundamental distinctive thing about Liverpool was just that it did see, somewhat earlier than a number of similar universities, the inevitability of this and made a move which enabled us to, in a particular arena, pre-empt and create a profile for ourselves and pre-empt the moves of others which has already repositioned us somewhat (UL36).

The edge is described in terms of profile demonstrating another link between internationalisation and reputation. So the university is seen to have acquired reputational advantage and some differentiation from similar universities:

I am quite proud of XJTLU; there is only ourselves and Nottingham who have got something like that. I think it genuinely gives another dimension, because, human nature, we're always comparing ourselves and being compared, ... that's one thing we've got that they haven't. It is distinctive (AL05).

XJTLU is a source of pride and so far a successful operation. Those involved were aware that the venture was not without risk.

Professor Ian Gow was the founding Provost of the University of Nottingham's Ningbo, China campus. He argues that China is an aggressive partner and that without proper homework the risks are considerable:

The reality is that when it comes to higher education, China may be more of a threat than an opportunity. There is no question in my mind that China is aiming to become - and is well on the way to becoming - the new global hub for higher education. I am not saying that we should not get involved with China. However, British institutions must stop viewing this aggressively ambitious country through rose-tinted spectacles. Make no mistake: China wants to be the leading power in higher education, and it will extract what it can from the UK.

UK institutions are rushing to partner with China but the risks are very considerable. They are capable of gaining more from the partnerships than we are if we do not do our homework properly and negotiate a win-win situation. At present we may procure a short-term win, but without thought will lose out in the end. It is not enough to hope it will all be ok in the long-term (Gow, 2007 p7).

In response to a question on the points raised by Professor Gow one of the university leaders involved stated:

I think they are aggressive partners, ... I think the UK is quite an aggressive partner, so you run a risk in investment in any country in any business, that the country will expropriate your investment. ... I

couldn't in all honesty see why they would want to reject the connection ... we haven't yet had any reason to doubt the good faith of our Chinese partners, on the contrary (UL37).

It does appear that risks have been anticipated. The risks presented by Professor Gow are framed in the context of national Chinese ambitions. Whether or not the university is in a position to anticipate or manage the associated risks is for the time being conjecture.

In summary, I perceive that the XJTLU collaboration is an enabler of the university's internationalisation agenda. The economic benefits are clearly evident, whether or not educational and cultural benefits will be equally realised is less certain. Laureate and XJTLU are specific local factors in internationalisation. Both are framed within a largely market discourse with other academic rationales expressed less strongly. Both carry risks of drawing the university too closely into overtly 'for profit' ventures.

***People: staff expertise, leadership, willingness***

In the discussion above regarding external networks one of the factors enabling further internationalisation is the experience or expertise gained by the institution and in this category; by individuals:

So I think we've been learning a lot there. ... Then you start to build up gradually a cadre of people here who have actually been and done it and that makes a real difference (AL04).

We've built up a central core expertise in dealing with China (AL07).

Added to this People theme is the importance of leadership in directing the university toward internationalisation:

It has a V.C. who is a man with a mission. ... I think that leadership is really important and then developing this strategy in the way that it has been done, has really put everybody on their game a little bit (AL13).

It might be considered a moot point whether leadership is an enabler or driving force for internationalisation. I chose to include it with People issues and as an enabler because leadership is not in itself a rationale for internationalisation. Leadership articulates and persuades and as such acts as an enabler, albeit a critical one. In addition in the way leadership is referred to in this situation it is limited to a very few individuals and so can be characterised as a People factor.

In addition to the expertise gained by staff who have had direct experience of the university's internationalisation projects and leadership there is a further People enabling dimension. This is the more generalised 'willingness' of staff to engage with internationalisation in the future.

There's got to be a willingness on the part of staff within the institution hasn't there to engage in the process and you know any system is only as good as the people working in it? So I think generally, people who are working in higher education institutions are very used to the idea of internationalisation (AS09),

I think that we do have a number of people who feel quite comfortable going to far flung places, and I wouldn't say evangelising, but contextualising the university and that is really important; you can't do that by phone. ... So it depends upon the individuals and again like so many things in universities or actually in general in any business, it comes down to leadership and people taking responsibility and saying: Yes, I'll do it (AL13).

Characterising this as a generalised 'willingness' implies it is not particular to this university and nor is it universal. Many people will not be either philosophically willing or practically able to go to far flung places. Nevertheless if there is a sufficient willingness this is another dimension of the People factor that will act as an enabler for internationalisation.

So far the discussion has covered primarily those themes that enable internationalisation at the university. There are two remaining themes from the research that have a more constraining effect.

### ***People: Philosophical positions***

Amongst the group of staff that were interviewed no one was unequivocally opposed to internationalisation. However, some staff did express important reservations:

Sometimes I'm not entirely sure whether on the basis of the drive to attract international students, and there is no doubt about it that that

brings money with it, I wonder sometimes whether we're taking our eye off the UK market and the European market and I'm not entirely sure that that's such a good idea. I think we might turn round and just realise that we've possibly swung too far in the opposite direction (AS09).

I don't think there should be a strategy for internationalisation, for internationalising the university, because that's working on an assumption that internationalisation is the bee's knees in all contexts, I think it is context specific. So I think what the university needs to be doing is developing the best research, the best teaching, a healthy working environment, all those kinds of things and where internationalisation comes in it should be encouraged but I'm not sure it's a top-down global in a sense of a university thing. ... I am very positive about it but not about knee-jerk policy reactions that are based on income generation (AS27).

I think that these reservations are likely to be more widely expressed and probably more forcefully when internationalisation begins to impact more widely across the university. At present, for most staff internationalisation has not required any change to working practices and as discussed above 'the debate' on partnerships with a 'for profit' organisation has not happened. When it does, strongly held philosophical positions will act as a constraint on internationalisation and surface legitimate concerns about the university's economic directions.

### ***Internal: Systems & structures, Change, Resources, Diversity***

This theme refers to the way the university is organised in terms of its committees and its business processes (to use the term that is currently employed at the university). No doubt this reflects tensions between 'traditional' collegial type structures and a more managerial approach to running the enterprise (Deem, Hillyard, & Reed, 2008; McNay, 2006).

#### *Systems & structures*

This theme emerged quite strongly in the responses from leaders within the university. It is a 'hot topic' across the university and more connected to general debates about restructuring rather than being specifically connected to internationalisation. The essence of these comments is summarised:

I think we need to re-plumb as it were, quite a lot of our professional services. That is not to say that there's anything that we don't need any more; far from it. ... I just think that we're still configured for a good old fashioned civic university in the north of England (AL05).

The connection to a wider range of changes is expressed:

There is one endemic problem and that is that we are doing so many different things at the same time at this institution. The many diverse connections that spin out from one activity, creating an internationalisation strategy, and connecting those to other ongoing activities, like reorganisation for example. So there are issues around connections to other activities inevitably when you're going through such rapid change (AL16).

I think the essence of this theme concerning structures and systems is more concerned with academic committees and how the university is run:

[The] committee structure is not fit for purpose; it's got to be changed, it's just got to be changed but that will happen (AL07).

We have to modernise them. Depends what we mean by systems, they range from information systems, which frankly are not fit for purpose, through to I suppose what in the private sector would be called business processes; how we do our business, which also need to be streamlined and modernised and made slicker and crucially now that students are paying fees they need to be much more customer focussed ... We are presenting a service, it happens to be a public service rather than private one but we need to be very service oriented (UL39).

The impact of a fee paying culture is shown in this need to improve customer service and is part of a re-orientation that is occurring across the sector. The language employed, for example 'fit for purpose', is lifted directly from the language of management and as in other institutions it is becoming increasingly common. Also significant is the role of traditional university committees in a more business focussed environment:

I guess it's inevitable, it's a new stage. There's a big tension in the UK higher education between committee based consensual academic governance on the one hand and line management based approach to running things where individuals have got

responsibilities and answer to the next person up for delivery of agreed things whether or not people have decided to vote for them or not. ... It is managerial, although it can't really be much else, otherwise you are moving too slowly and you are being dictated to by people who have a vote but maybe don't have an informed awareness of the issues or any sense of personal urgency about getting the issues right or wrong, which has always been a problem about getting academics to decide anything. They have a lot of opinions and a very variable amount of actual understanding or information, because it's not their full time job, but their full time job makes them think they are good at that kind of thing (UL22).

Traditional collegial structures give academics a voice in the running of the university. Restructuring (re-plumbing) and more managerial approaches to meet business needs, including internationalisation and a market focus, may change the purpose of universities (Gumport, 2000).

Future studies will be needed to identify how internationalisation and a stronger business focus influences changes to university structures and how it expresses and enacts its overall purposes. At present, it is claimed that university systems need re-organisation and that they act as a constraint in effecting the business involved with internationalisation. Again the language of business and management is to the fore in discussions.

### *Change*

This theme considers two aspects of change: generic reluctance to change and the amount of change at the university:

that is just a really generic thing, that people just don't want to change (AL06).

It is accepted that change and culture change can be difficult. Faced with multiple change initiatives people find ways to avoid significant change:

...there's a natural tendency for the status quo and to put all sorts of arguments forwards as to why change is the wrong thing to do. ... I do think that that is just a really generic thing, that people just don't want to change (AL13).

Culture change is really really hard and very very very gradual unless someone is prepared to administer a real, a genuinely disruptive shock, which could be about to happen actually, because of the RAE results rather than because of internationalisation (UL29).

The challenges of managing culture change are compounded by the amount of change that is undertaken simultaneously.

how many straws on the camel's back can we actually stand? (AL11).

The concern about amount of change is summarised in the 'straws on a camel's back' adage. Leaders at the university recognised the demands that are likely to be put on to staff:

I slightly worry about the larger scale of how much we are trying to change in this place, ... , we're trying to push hard on research

excellence, and then to turn around to all the staff and say: 'oh, and there's just one other thing, we need a complete redesign of the curriculum' (AL05).

This is a big programme. You know we're doing RAE stuff, we're doing departmental reviews, we're doing academic restructuring, we're doing performance management, we're doing strategic planning and we're hitting people with lots of stuff (UL40).

This recognition of the problem of 'hitting people with lots of stuff' was tempered by a recollection of how well in fact the institution had absorbed internationalisation initiatives to date without significant impact:

I think the danger is that things will change disappointingly slowly so that you hardly notice. It's amazing how the place has swallowed and digested XJTLU actually. It is already routine in the departments involved, without necessarily being that transformative in any particular way, it has just become another thing they do rather in the way they do all the other things they do (UL22).

This observation comes from a leader at the university rather than those on the ground so may need to be viewed with care. However, it does point to the university's capacity to respond to change; whether this is by absorption or adapting may depend on the amount of change. It does seem that so far the university has absorbed internationalisation initiatives. How far that can continue is beyond the scope of this investigation.

*Resources: time & money*

This section is covered briefly as it represents a theme that is well recognised in many organisations:

By time I meant finding the time to do this job, in the context of other activities that are going on (AL08).

to be perfectly honest I've not been able to devote as much time to it as I would have liked, simply because of the demands of my time (AL06).

This dimension of the theme was repeated by those involved with actioning the internationalisation planning process. The immediate challenge of fitting in the planning with all the other activities appeared to be manageable (just). However, there are concerns expressed that implementation of internationalisation needs a quite different approach:

I'm very conscious that we are just trying to fit quite important stuff here, literally around everything else that is going on, literally spare moments and of course. ... The implementation, you can't just squeeze that into spare moments. ... what we mustn't let happen is that this all just fizzles, because that would make the cynics even more cynical and it will make the optimists upset (AL05).

Time is a constraining issue as is its close companion; money.

Money is a constraint, obviously, you need money to do things, that's why Laureate is so useful ... (UL29).

Money is needed for all manner of practical, and costly, projects in response to greater internationalisation:

The only problem we have is space; I mean where will we put more students? (AS13).

One interviewee presents the issue in a way that is both symbolic and pragmatic; referring not simply for the need for 'lavish stuff' but that 'small amounts' are practically available:

I think there does seem to be a, there seems to be a desire on the one hand, ... [for] academics to engage, say with other academics on research programmes and then this inability to find small amounts of money relatively. Not lavish stuff but just to get the air fares and the hotel accommodation. Just to get people there and these are like hygiene factors to me, they come up all the time and so it's almost as if we're talking grandly about this and then not seeding the activity through our processes or budgets (UL27).

This is more interesting as it relates to mindsets not just money:

And that will be a test for us because it's not the scale of the money, it's actually the intention to say: 'right we're going to back this with something', we live in a realistic world, people know that they can't have everything in one go (UL27).

This is a small illustration of how systems are unable to deliver relatively minor 'hygiene factors' to facilitate the university's internationalisation aims.

### *Ethnic diversity*

It [the university] doesn't look international (AS21).

This theme focuses on the 'look' of the university, including the diversity amongst staff. It exerts no direct active pressure, but represents a perception that may be interpreted as the university not displaying its international aspirations through its appointments. The theme was not widely presented by interviewees but I think this could be because the majority do not see this issue in the way that minorities or outsiders might:

in terms of the higher up the scale you go, then it seems to get a little bit whiter (AS12).

This is important in that for international or minority staff the perception may be that the university is not international in its outlook nor in its recruitment and promotion practices:

I would say the profile of staff and, I might be wrong but again it's the perception, I think sometimes it's as important as the reality if not more important because that's what you think. In terms of do we have international staff who are in a position and high profile enough to lead certain things and to put things forward? (AS29).

A comparable comment addresses the facilities employment profile and the 'look' of graduation ceremonies:

We haven't got any sense of ethnic diversity in the leisure, catering or residential accommodation provision whatsoever at the moment.

It's still the case that the university just has a white British middle class appearance; graduation ceremonies, except for certain subjects, if you go to medicine it almost exclusively white middle class, vets is all women, white middle class and so on. So that's a big problem (UL36).

The problem being that it is difficult for minority staff to see role models:

Where are your role models, where's your inspiration, it's very difficult to see them and I think that's what we need to, it's important to address that (AS12).

This is another illustration of the importance of attending to local peculiarities. The university can be seen as insufficiently international in its 'look'. No senior positions are held by people who could clearly be seen to represent the international. Almost all senior staff are white males. Whilst this may be unfair in terms of their commitments to developing greater internationalisation; how the leadership strata of the university is perceived by others is one facet of internationalisation. This is a debate beyond the remit of this research but it does draw attention to the need for consideration of how the rhetoric and language of internationalisation is evaluated in terms of corresponding actions and appearances.

The university is under similar pressures to other research-led universities. This will lead to similar solutions in internationalising in a global context. However, local factors play a significant role in how solutions are enacted. The university can claim to have important and particular advantages of its

location, its agreement with the Laureate group and its relationship with XJTLU. These local circumstances will undoubtedly influence an internationalisation trajectory that whilst broadly similar to other institutions will be at the same time unique. These local circumstances form part of the context within which individuals exercise agency both on behalf of the university and in pursuit of their own interests.

## Chapter 7: Individual Influence and Agency

In this chapter I discuss the roles that individuals take in interacting with the university's internationalisation agenda. I have taken two elements to this derived from the interview data. The first element is the influence that formative personal experience has had on individuals' interest in and commitment to internationalisation; the second is the link between professional projects that matter to the individual and internationalisation.

### *Personal experiences*

Individuals' personal experiences appear to be a strong motivator for creating similar opportunities for current students:

I can't tell you how important that period of time was for me when I was living outside the UK, because everything changed for me, absolutely everything changed. ... I just can't help but think that if we could try to help some of the students, to experience that same thing, then that would be absolutely marvellous for them (AL13).

This is an unambiguous example of a link between an important formative experience and passion for internationalisation in the form of the student experience. The experience is based on this individual's opportunity to travel. However, it is also possible to benefit from international experience when the 'international' is brought to the university:

I think going to university for me was one of the most enlightening experiences I have had or ever will have. I came from a very small town in the deepest, darkest pine forests of southern XYZ and I met people from all over the world when I went to university the first time and there were a couple of academics that I had who were involved in teaching me who went out of their way to try and enrich and enlighten their students and this was all done by exposure to people travelling from other countries or from different universities interacting with them on a social level, listening to their ideas; it was an absolutely fabulous experience (AS15).

It was quite clear to me that these experiences were pivotal to the interviewees' perceptions of the value of university experiences and the significance of 'the international' in that experience. Another expression of the importance of international experience was expressed by a staff member who 'knew' that going to Africa was a 'big personal thing' and the university provided that opportunity:

I went to Medical School knowing that I wanted to go and work in Africa, and I went to Africa when I was an undergraduate student and absolutely loved it.... that's just a big personal thing for me and it's basically altruistic. I suppose I like being there, I like African people, the thing I find exciting about working in Africa and it's not, perhaps something that's reflected in all aspects of globalisation is that as well as doing the work there, there's the large capacity building element in the involvement of a UK institution there (AS13).

This interviewee wove in a number of strands of internationalisation in the replies. There is a recognition that work in Africa/Malawi is a different aspect of globalisation than linking with, for example, an American institution:

it's not, perhaps something that's reflected in all aspects of globalisation is that as well as doing the work there, there's the large capacity building element in the involvement of a UK institution there. So it's not just like it might be with an American [institution], it's not just a matter of exchange, it's a matter of training, capacity building and bringing up Malawians and equipping them, and I find that very exciting as well.

I think the idea of internationalisation involving Malawi is different from links with American universities or links with China or something in that there is a much greater differential in skills and resources and it does, I think, carry a more capacity building an altruistic element, it's not just a straight exchange of skills and in that kind of a way. So I find it more complex but more rewarding (AS13).

The work in Africa carries its own personal reward in contrast to working with a comparable institution in the West. However, this cannot be done on purely altruistic grounds, it needs to be funded and at international standards:

I have been very aware that in order to do it you have to get the money in and justify it in a useful "fashion", it has to be what the

fundes want to fund, it needs to be advancing the general cause, it has to be research that stands up at international level (AS33).

In addition to these aspects is an awareness that the development work is a crucial endeavour that has enduring value:

In Malawi and it's the individuals actually who were trained by being part of your research projects but you think that's actually what the lasting value here was. ... I think a lot of people have that from training individuals in this country as well but I'm just very conscious that in Malawi if you don't train them possibly nobody will (AS13).

This response encapsulates disparate elements of internationalisation. There is the personal commitment and passion that is the focus for this section. It shows how personal experience at undergraduate level has influenced a career. There is the recognition that the work has to be economically justified to fundes and be carried out at international standards. In accord with the Greater Good rationalisation for internationalisation there is the statement: 'if you don't train them possibly nobody will'.

In outlining their glonacal-agency heuristic Marginson and Rhodes (2002) argued for a greater focus on the rich data that shows interactions between local individual agency and the internationalisation context. These examples exemplify just this type of interaction. Personal experiences have impelled actions that support international activities. These actions become more feasible within an internationalisation context.

### *Professional commitments*

The second element in this Individual influence and agency section concentrates on more professional dimensions of international activities, although for many academics professional dimensions have a high personal component. The differentiation from the first dimension (personal experiences) is that the major component is expressed primarily in professional terms.

It derives from an emergent theme in the data that internationalisation ought to be linked to personal projects/professional interests. People are more likely to affect agency (support or oppose internationalisation) if it is personally meaningful to them. In these examples it is the opportunity to operate at the highest international standards that is discussed. This element arose from a discussion in one of the interviews:

It [internationalisation] ... should be something that academics actually want to do. The way we've done it in Liverpool and China, is when you get somebody who is sceptical, we send them out there, and so far, to a man and woman they've come back and said, 'this is exciting, I want to be part of it' (UL30).

(IW) So there's got to be some personal excitement, ...

Oh, I think so. Absolutely, absolutely. I don't think simply saying: overseas experience or whatever anyone wants to call it is going to be something we're going to put in the assessment mix. I think

people are pretty sceptical about that. I think what you've got to do is say 'look, it's good fun!' (UL30).

(IW) I think sometimes on that, we often present arguments very rationally, when actually the motivation is, this could be fun.

Yes, exactly. Well, I mean in our corridor in Liverpool we all said that – if it ain't fun, don't do it.... But to take that slightly more seriously, it is about remembering why you got into the job in the first place. You're not in it simply either for your own career structure, or to serve the corporation. You're in it because you want to be in it (UL30).

Linking internationalisation to current areas of interest; those items that make work fun or, 'what you want to do'.

At the institutional level this means that institutions need to align their international activities to support their strategic goals, not the reverse (Olcott, 2008a). At Monash University for example there is a requirement that internationalisation must "significantly advance at least one of the core functions of the university: education, research and community service" (McBurnie, 2000 p64). Economic goals and the business of internationalisation are not an end in themselves, they support academic goals, but academic endeavours are also individual projects and interests and these motivate academics rather than making money for the university:

In everything I've said so far, I've not mentioned finances at all and there are financial drivers in terms of overseas students and fees

and if you want to grow the university really and truly in terms of the undergraduate population, this is the only way you can do it. There's no other way you can do it. That's all very good but I don't wake up every morning with that and think to myself: I've got to make more money for the University and I'm going to do that by having an internationalisation agenda. I certainly don't think that. I'm involved in fee negotiations with other universities but if that's the driver then there's something wrong. It's much more in the guts than that (AL07).

Internationalisation is seen by some as an important goal for the institution and so it is a professional goal to foster internationalisation:

Personally I think it [internationalisation] is central to the transformation of the institution that we're trying to achieve; to make it a more global institution, more of a global presence and to make it a more cosmopolitan campus (AL16).

For others it is more explicitly linked to personal/professional research agendas. It is a career area and also has personal spin offs in terms of enjoyment:

I was interested in it as a career area, ... I do think how developing international research has changed my own career, ..., and how it's changed the way I do research I think it had a really massive impact to the enjoyment of my job, the value of the work that I do, the ability to do comparative work ... for me one of the important things

in research is contextualisation and more I understand about the country the more I understand how it works and the better the comparative research that we do. So I've had some really positive experiences of working with people in different countries. ... I think it's made my research more interesting (AS10).

Another expression of the centrality of internationalisation or perhaps the importance of relating research projects to international standards:

For me personally I wouldn't like to do second rate stuff and if I go and do scientific research on a topic I don't just want to do something that is of my own interest, I really want to increase the body of knowledge that is available and this means it has to be on a level that is internationally accepted so that others do pick it up and do use it and do build on that (AS11).

There are different ways that an international dimension is personally important to staff. This sense of personal commitment to professional projects that support an internationalisation agenda are demonstrations of local agency in a globalising context. I expect that where there are deep commitments to local agendas those involved would also effect agency in opposing internationalisation efforts.

Internationalisation is often presented as something that institutions alone do without reaching down to explore the individual actions and motivations that may support or constrain internationalisation. It seems clear from this research that there is a dominant economic discourse that can hardly be

ignored. However, its dominance carries risks in that it is not a motivator for many staff at universities and a pervasive economic discourse hides local individual factors that are perhaps the real personal motivators for action.

The process of data analysis shown in the methodology chapter combined with the 'rich descriptions' of the quotations build a picture of both the detail and the interweaving of the themes. The university has rationales for internationalisation that arise in a globalised context and so are likely to exhibit similarities to other research-led institutions. Alongside these similarities local factors produce a highly individual instructional internationalisation trajectory. This is enacted at an individual level and staff exercise agency within the institutions internationalising context. Examining local factors and individual motivations helps to add depth to more general descriptions of internationalisation.

## **Chapter 8: Conclusion**

This chapter returns to the research questions and briefly summarises the research findings. The section on theoretical implications explores the key research findings further and suggests areas for future research where applicable. Implications for practice are also outlined.

### ***Research questions***

#### *Drivers influencing internationalisation*

The first research question creates the space to examine the university's rationales for internationalisation, the wider global/national drivers and to compare them with established typologies: *'What are the global/national drivers that are influencing the university's internationalisation?'*

The research identified four main rationales: Economic, Educational Benefits, Strengthening the University and the Greater Good. As discussed earlier the first two had clear congruence with other typologies of internationalisation rationales. The economic rationale has significant ramifications and implications and is considered in more detail.

The economic rationale for internationalisation is a pre-eminent finding and the language of the market permeates the discussion. Globalisation is associated with a neoliberal discourse. This discourse is one of the means of shaping and influencing the globalisation and internationalisation debate.

The research showed examples of neoliberal language throughout the interviews. It was manifest in the language of markets; international students being equated with fees income and in a variety of expressions of imperative; 'we are in a market'; 'we have no choice'. Discourse reflects social contexts and helps create them, it shapes the language available for debate; this can be through privileging certain concepts and absencing others (Ball, 2006; Trowler, 2001). So the language of the market has entered higher education and shapes the thinking within higher education.

Academics are not automatically 'captured by the discourse' (Trowler, 2001). A small scale study by Qualter and Willis (2009) showed that Heads of Departments do not necessarily actively contest managerial developments if they believe they can successfully protect their departments from institutional incursion. So it is uncertain how strong the influence of the neoliberal discourse is in practice. However, this research showed that it is certainly pervasive. In addition an academic discourse is present in the internationalisation discussions at the university but without the pre-eminence of the marketisation discourse. This may be partially explained in that many of the interviewees have positions that require them to operate within a market-conscious higher education context, but clearly numbers of other staff used similar language. There are implications of this aspect of the research both for further research and for practice in ensuring that the marketisation discourse does not drown out other discourses; for example the academic discourse. This links back to the contention derived from the data that staff will be motivated by personal and professional projects, whilst being mindful of economic considerations they are not likely to be driven by them.

The institution is clearly bound up in the marketisation demands for the well-rehearsed and understandable reasons of the effective reduction in domestic funding, the global competition for reputation and all that flows from a secure international position.

It is reasonable to assume that other research-led universities will be similarly strongly pressured to respond to the global economic discourse and according to Vaira (2004) there will be significant similarities; isomorphic responses. An economic thread must be included in any explanation of internationalisation in UK universities.

However, I believe it is vital to draw on other aspects of the research to show that this marketisation discourse is not an unproblematic or determining factor. I have used the term local to refer primarily to a single institution, but the single institution as well as being an actor itself contains many voices and motivations that are also local.

The internationalisation rationales characterised as Strengthening the University and the Greater Good whilst not being exclusive to the university did show some divergence from other typologies. I would argue that this is a manifestation of agential action within a globalising structure.

I highlighted in Chapter 5 the similarities and differences between the themes derived from this research and the established typologies of Middlehurst and Woodfield (2007) and Knight (2004). I concur with Knight that there is an emerging category of 'branding' and that might be closely related to the term 'reputation' that emerged in this research. It was notable that Reputation had

clear academic as well as economic uses and implications. Future research may unpick this relationship in greater detail and reputation may be a term that resonates with academic institutions, rather than branding for use in developing the typologies on rationales for internationalisation.

Another element that was implicitly shown by Middlehurst and Woodfield (2007) was the theme characterised as the Greater Good in this research. This is an important area to research further and to show more explicitly. I base this on the notion that a key motivator for academics is derived from their personal and professional projects. Again there is a link to agential action and the importance of considering the local when thinking internationally.

The findings also showed important interweaving and connections amongst the rationales. For example Reputation had economic and academic dimensions. Strengthening the University involved both academic strengthening (research and reputation) and growth in size that incorporates economic motivations. Greater Good reasons for international activities had the caveat of ensuring that 'we don't lose money while doing it'. It is very difficult and perhaps undesirable to attempt to isolate single determining factors but instead to highlight the complexity and interconnectedness.

#### *Factors enabling and restraining internationalisation*

The second research question is grounded in the exploration of local factors at the university and specifically those factors that do not fit easily in Lewin's depiction of forces that act for or against change. *'What are the enabling and restraining factors for internationalisation at the university?'*

The themes that were developed from the data were: Location, Reputation, Existing Networks, People (staff at the university) and Internal University Characteristics. The university is perceived as having a strong, but not completely unproblematic, advantage in internationalisation as a result of its location in the city of Liverpool. This represents an important local factor that will influence this university's internationalisation trajectory and is an example of the type of rich detail that is often absent in large scale comparative studies. Other comparable universities may not have location as a particular advantageous characteristic. However, they may well be able to identify their own singular defining characteristics.

The academic (research) reputation of the university is also seen as an advantage. In comparison with the theme of Location this is not unique to the university. It does serve to differentiate it from teaching-led universities but also research reputation differentiates the university from the strong elite research universities. So, research reputation is an advantage but one shared with similar and potentially competing universities.

Other research-led universities will also have a range of existing international networks; often based on research collaborations. In addition to a range of research collaborations the university's relationships with Laureate and XJTLU are seen as significant to the university's internationalisation endeavours. They are dissimilar from other key networks and relationships in that they are primarily teaching based at this stage. They have an underlying economic rationale and it will be an area for further research, to explore the

logic involved in an avowed research-led university pursuing teaching-led relationships that are intended to lead to future research collaborations.

The final two themes that emerge from the data: People and Internal University Characteristics will have their parallels in other universities. Some elements within these themes, such as leadership, will vary between universities as they each seek to chart their particular directions. How leaders at universities prioritise internationalisation will undoubtedly influence the interpretation and strength of commitment to internationalisation. This provides another example of the usefulness of moving beyond the foregrounded and often shared rhetoric on internationalisation to explore local levels of commitment to the process.

Central to this thesis is the argument that it is important to pay analytic attention to the local in order to gain a richer understanding of internationalisation trajectories of institutions. Global/national forces are mediated by local factors (layers and conditions). Thus outcomes will be varied, partially as local 'layers and conditions' are varied.

The second research question is addressed in that it identifies the specifics of the local situation at the university. This can be conceptualised as one expression of localisation in a globalising context (Appadurai, 1990; Held et al., 2003) and the importance of attending to the richness found at local institutions (Marginson and Rhoades, 2002).

### *Staff interpretations of internationalisation*

The third research question sought to uncover the thoughts and feelings of academic staff in response to the emerging internationalisation agenda: '*How are staff interpreting internationalisation at the university?*' The data from this question was analysed into two main themes: personal experiences and professional commitments. It is part of my argument about the importance of the local that these personal experiences and commitments can be seen as the springboard for the exercise of personal agency. Marginson and Rhoades (2002) have argued that attending to the local is very much part of the means of understanding the outcomes of global forces. They did not explain, nor did they set out to explain, how agency is affected, in this case within a globalising context.

### *Implications for practice*

The fourth research question addresses the issues around implications for practice; both at the university and potentially at other universities: '*What are the implications for practice?*'

The implications for practice identified in this research are locally based. However, many of the elements identified will resonate with other similar organisations. They are derived from identifying tensions shown in the research.

There is a tension in UK universities shown in the debate around 'purposes of universities' (Barnett, 2004). This was demonstrated in the data with some interviewees clearly expressing a managerialist position and others referring

to 'traditional' university values. Whilst it is possible to highlight these differences, it was also apparent that most interviewees were well aware of a multiplicity of positions and were not necessarily dogmatically located. University leaders in particular need to consider how best to foster a version of Barnett's 'organic response' to a changing context; without this conceptual level of debate there is the risk that operational considerations will drive the evolving university agenda.

One of the 'local factors' demonstrated in this research was the importance of the city of Liverpool as an enabler of internationalisation. The University of Liverpool can explicitly link its internationalisation endeavours with the global recognition of the city of Liverpool. Whilst it is recognised that not all UK research led universities will have commensurate advantages, there will surely be specific local factors that can be linked to their internationalisation agendas. I would suggest that all universities that are engaged in internationalisation should articulate their own unique global-local characteristics.

The other two of this university's 'local factors' in internationalisation have inherent market/neo-liberal dimensions: XJTLU and Laureate Education. As the neoliberal discourse has a dominance in globalisation discussions it is essential to ensure that other dimensions to internationalisation receive at least as much 'air-time' as economic considerations. Acknowledging that this is from my own perspective, this has not occurred at the university and it represents a gap in the current internationalisation project. It is unfortunate that the public discussion is largely centred on the pragmatics of economic

advantage and managing the international student intake. It was clear from the data that the staff interviewed did, on the whole, recognise the importance of the economic dimension but that this needs to be balanced with academic concerns. Academic staff will be motivated by academic issues. This would seem to be self-evident but it may be overshadowed by the economic discourse and therefore leaders at any institution would do well to ensure that other concerns are given priority.

The issue of managing the international student intake was not central to this research but interviewees did bring it into their responses and Bone (2008) stresses that long term stable recruitment relationships are essential to the UK's continued reputation. Therefore institutions need to ensure that academic staff are well supported in departments where there are increasing numbers of international students. This is an area where the real rationales for internationalisation may be shown. If there are significant numbers of internationalisation students and minimal resourcing there is the risk that both staff and students will turn away from the internationalisation agenda. On the other hand, if there is adequate investment in supporting the internationalisation endeavour then it is likely that longer term benefits will follow. Universities need to take a long term view to increased international student numbers and develop appropriate systems and support for staff and students.

One interesting aspect in the research was the positive comments on the quality of many international students, with the proviso that this may be found mainly in maths related subjects. This is a clear opportunity for further

research in a variety of institutions to discover the extent of these perceptions. If prevalent, it is equally an opportunity to develop a strand of the academic discourse on internationalisation that presents the academic benefits of taking in high quality international students.

Strengthening the university was a rationale for internationalisation presented by most of the senior staff interviewed. Only one senior staff member referred to ethnic diversity as a concern. Ethnic diversity at a senior level in the university seems to me to be an important symbolic as well as practical sign of the university's commitment to internationalisation. Whilst this is a sensitive area, it is one that deserves to be addressed further and it represents one way of strengthening the university from an international perspective. I think that one essential implication for practice at this university, and potentially at others, is to include steps to ensure that greater multiculturalism is a visible as well as rhetorical facet of internationalisation.

An important focus in the interviewee data was around the link between internationalisation and reputation; often based on big science projects. On the other hand some of the data drew attention to the tension in overlooking the importance of locally based research that addresses local social relevance. In seeking to add international dimensions to all research to meet institutional goals and international research measures there is a risk at the university and in the sector that important local research becomes overshadowed. There is reputational pressure for international standard research that feeds into international league tables, yet social impact is often locally based. One interviewee referred to needing to present their research

twice for differing fora. This may be an issue that requires further exploration so that research meets both international and local needs.

The research showed the term global-civic university to be gaining some currency at the university. Explicating this emerging term creates an opportunity to ensure that the civic dimension is an equal, not merely an add-on in internationalisation. This was specifically referred to as 'doing good in the world but without losing money whilst doing so'. It seems to me that this is a good point of departure in the practical realisation of internationalisation as something more than international student fees income. This notion of civic university does extend its reach beyond the traditionally defined local community and so represents a changing meaning and emphasis. There is an inherent tension in that most staff at university are likely to support 'doing good in the world', but many may not wish this to be at the expense of local considerations. There are implementations for practice as this university, and others, seek to balance global and local responsibilities and perhaps a caution that in seeking to develop 'global reach' local community considerations are not overlooked

Any university would do well to act on Stensaker et al's (2008) suggestion of ensuring that there are nuanced messages about internationalisation that appeal to internal audiences. The Monash model of a requirement that any internationalisation activity must be shown to serve academic goals (McBurnie, 2000) provides one practical counterbalance to the unsophisticated economic rhetoric for internationalisation.

The notion of a nuanced approach is related to considerations of agency and personal projects; this is covered from a theoretical perspective in the following section. At a practical level the university can create structures that further support individual staff's international projects. This is not the same as attempting to manage all internationally based projects from the top down but a suggestion that systems are reviewed to ensure that, at the very least, they do not make international endeavours unnecessarily bureaucratic. At best, universities will articulate nuanced messages alongside the development of increasingly flexible systems that support academic staff's international projects.

Although it was one of the delimitations of the study, I think that the views of a range of non-academic staff would make an informative additional next step from this research. Internationalisation tends to privilege academic issues, and whilst these are obviously critical, nevertheless non-academic staff also fulfil vital roles at all levels of an internationalisation endeavour.

### ***Theoretical implications***

Before examining the factors at work in globalisation, it is worth taking up a point made by Ashwin (2009) about the importance of letting research evidence 'knock up against' theory in order to contribute to theory development. In this section I will move through the key theories employed to organise, simplify and understand the data and offer some ideas for extending the theories.

### *Glonacal-agency heuristic*

Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) glonacal-agency heuristic is one model that is used to support the argument for attending to local as well as to global and national factors. Despite having used important concepts from Marginson and Rhoades (2002) there are possibilities for clarifying their model that have been derived as a result of considering its value in relationship to the data from this study.

The first point is straightforward; at no stage do they clearly explain the meaning they attach to the term local. So it may refer to any grouping below the level of national. Institutional is one logical interpretation of local but they also refer to individual agency, which clearly also operates at a local level. It would be useful to clarify the meaning(s) they ascribe to local.

The second point is not central to this analysis, but it is interesting to note that Marginson and Rhoades (2002) incorporate politics, economics and education as three points on their hexagonal (along with three expressions of agent/agency). Examples are provided to justify their inclusion but there is little discussion about why only three points are included or why these expressions and not others.

### *The organising framework*

The organising framework was developed in order to present some of the complexities involved in globalisation and the global/ national/ internal/individual forces that impact on a university as it moves towards greater internationalisation. It is a useful starting point in identifying

forces/actions at the various levels. The national level was briefly included as was a regional (European) level through the Bologna Process.

The university was treated as a unitary whole for the purposes of analysis and of delimiting the study. This is a simplification as universities can be argued to be a conglomerate of disciplinary territories without a single culture (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Silver, 2003). Nevertheless, it is the university that is initiating new interpretations of internationalisation and developing new strategies. Future studies would be highly informative in revealing how departments are themselves responding to changing agendas.

I have already argued that Lewin's use of metaphors is limiting in that it draws attention to forces and images of solid states in need of unfreezing. All models place attention somewhere and necessarily this means that other aspects may not receive sufficient attention. This research highlighted the importance of factors in internationalisation that are not necessarily forces. They are factors that may enable or restrain internationalisation, for example the history of the university and its location. Local factors need to be shown in the metaphors employed and as having 'influence upwards'; this will be considered further using a structure-agency model.

The enabling and restraining factors are brought to the fore in Marginson and Rhoades (2002) conceptualisation of layers and conditions that underlie a change toward greater internationalisation. Similarly, Ball's (1994) image of a 'wild profusion of local practices' invokes a lively and localised picture. In the theoretical framework for this research these ideas and images are incorporated to enhance the attention to local practices.

Lewin's model also simplifies the direction in which the forces are shown to operate. One contribution from this simplification is the notion of emergent structures and their effect on the level below. This focus on hierarchical one-way forces hides the two-way reciprocal influences; the affect of agency as institutions and individuals act in relation to projects and concerns that have significance for them.

### *Globalisation creating a structure*

If globalisation leads to emergent structures, then universities can 'choose', with varying degrees of freedom to enact internationalisation strategies. Archer (1996) describes this as: "social interaction is seen as being structurally conditioned but never as structurally determined" (p83). The emergent internationalisation strategies in turn begin to create structures that enable and constrain individuals in pursuing their own projects. This can be seen as a set of nested structure-agency interactions with an increasing movement toward what I have termed a 'local' context. Importantly then, structure (globalisation) is not purely deterministic and agents are not completely free, they operate within the constraints of particular structures.

### *Structure-agency*

Structure and agency (action) are seen as interdependent: "society provides the conditions for human actions as well as constraining and enabling them" (Bhaskar 1989 p77). Yet at the same time, human actions "for the most part unconsciously reproduce (and occasionally transform) the structures governing their substantive activities of production" (Bhaskar, 1879 p44). Actions occur within an existing structure, it may in turn shape that structure

for future action. Thus Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) layers and conditions can be seen as structures that have been created by historical action and which now shape current activity. Structures provide 'rules and resources' that actors draw on in their actions and actors act as "knowledgeable and competent agents who reflexively monitor their action" (Bryant & Jary, 2001 p2). In this conceptualisation, structure is not a barrier to action; it is both enabling and constraining. Here, there is a clear echo of Lewin's driving and restraining forces and now additionally indicating the mutually constitutive aspect of the interaction of structure-agency. Structures have real effects, they frame action, either enabling or constraining, and provide 'rules and resources' for action. Agents act unconsciously or knowledgably and their actions impact and shape structures.

#### *Local responses - agency*

Whilst it is claimed that agency shapes structures, not surprisingly there is less room for locally based agency (i.e. individuals at the university) at the global level. Agency, as personal action, tends to have its impacts at the next level up. So university staff are likely to be acting within and affecting university internationalisation structures. This is not an absolute, although not the focus of this research, there are examples at the university of staff who interact at national and at regional levels. This idea accords with Marginson and Rhoades' (2002) depiction of Reciprocity, where influence flows in more than one direction, and Strength, which refers to the magnitude of influence.

This research shows examples of structure-agency interactions. Particularly, and not unexpectedly, leaders within the university are effecting agency and

influencing the emerging structures around internationalisation. Influence is not confined to institutional leaders; other interviewees expressed positive (and negative) views toward internationalisation.

### *Interpretations of context*

Hierarchical conceptions of structure that influence the level below align with the notion of 'context that surrounds'. Inevitably this is a simplification that hides other important aspects. In this case it is the ideas of agency influencing structure and of context as 'weaving together' (Cole, 1996; Sibeon, 2004). So far I have used structure and context (as that which surrounds/contains) somewhat interchangeably. Next I would like to differentiate them and introduce a metaphor that foregrounds more of the concept of context as 'weaving together'.

### *Structure and context*

One of the hallmarks of social structures is that they endure; they exist prior to the phenomena under consideration (Bhaskar, 1989; Sayer, 1992). Context appears to me to be a more fluid concept. It can incorporate social and institutional structures but at times it is also readily transformable and constantly emerging (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004). Thus structure and context are both socially constructed and influence social construction, but context may include more local and immediate constructions. They may well be overlapping concepts with structure highlighting the more enduring and widespread dimensions and context also allowing for more immediate and situated dimensions. For this discussion I have presented globalisation as creating structures within which institutions act agentially; specifically

developing internationalisation strategies in this study. Also I argued that internationalisation creates a structure within which individuals act agentially to further their own projects. It may be more accurate to refer to emergent structures or contexts.

The term structure can invoke a physical image with a sense of relative permanency that is not necessarily an attribute of the term context. Context seen as weaving together allows us to explore the connectedness within the findings that was shown throughout.

Returning briefly to the comparison of typologies for internationalisation; these types of tables of rationales tend to foreground the distinct and separate nature of the rationales and their interconnectedness retreats to the background. Context as weaving together provides a lens for highlighting the connectedness. Here context “cannot be reduced to that which surrounds”, the divide between the phenomenon and its context is not clear cut but “ambiguous and dynamic” (Cole, 1996 p135). The ‘dynamic’ is never a settled matter and is described by Holstein and Gubrium (2004) as “how participants in interaction continue to co-produce the very context they inhabit through that very interaction” (p299).

### *Weaving metaphor*

Continuing with the weaving metaphor, I propose that production of internationalisation projects can be pictured as a weaving project. Relatively powerful enduring elements can be pictured as the warp that frames the weaving. The threads of the weft build up through the contributions of the various actors. These would include threads that have significant similarities

with threads that might be seen in other universities' weavings (isomorphism). The more that 'local' threads, with their differing 'colours and textures', are woven in, the more unique the weaving will appear and the more we will see a 'wild profusion of local patterns'. The patterns will be similar due to shared structural factors and isomorphic pressures. The patterns will differ (allomorphism) based on the weaving in of local colour and texture including individual contributions. In this metaphor the connectedness of the threads is emphasised and the enduring structures are overlaid but still integral to the whole. Weaving also implies that the project is active and ongoing; it is not a finished product, the warp is extensive.

The discussion on context contains important elements: structure or context that enables or constrains and weaving together the ongoing production with numerous inputs, where patterns are created and interconnected. This leads back to the idea that context influences action and is produced through action, either immediately or over a longer time in the case of emergent structures.

*University agency: Shared outcomes and local variation*

Global forces act to create both homogeneity and heterogeneity. How is this explained at the university level? Vaira (2004) outlines a theoretical framework drawn from studies on organisational change that brings together theories of convergence and divergence of responses by organisations in a similar field and facing similar external pressures. This is the situation faced by a research-led university in a globalised context. Convergence theories emphasise homogenisation of response and imply largely deterministic forces at work (structural emphasis). Divergence theories emphasise heterogeneity

of response and imply a greater importance of local factors (agential emphasis). This has also been characterised as isomorphic or idiosyncratic response (Stensaker & Norgård, 2001). In attempting to bring together these two concepts, Vaira (2004) claims that: “we cannot afford to neglect neither the macro-institutional processes and pressures, nor the local responses to them” (p496). Metaphorically, one focuses on the forest, the other on the trees. They address different levels of enquiry. Vaira (2004) argues that emphasising the differences and the duality in these theoretical approaches can be overcome by the concept of Organisational Allomorphy, where an allomorph is “a morphological variant of the same morpheme depending on the context of use” (p498). In this case the global context (processes and pressures) do not impact on a neutral space; local layers and conditions (to stay with Marginson and Rhoades) are inherited and they too frame the space for agential response by the university.

Effectively this provides a theoretical lens for considering the local in a globalising context. At the university the three most clearly identified uniquely ‘local’ factors are the city of Liverpool, the development of XJTLU and the relationship with Laureate Education. The trajectory that the university’s internationalisation takes cannot be understood without close consideration of these unique local characteristics, as well as characteristics shared with other research-led universities. In foregrounding this particular set of local ‘layers and conditions’, this research highlights the importance of examining the equivalent local characteristics at other universities. Like the structure-agency interdependence, internationalisation at universities needs to consider the global-local interdependence.

*Individual agency: Personal projects as the key to agential behaviour*

Local factors can also be used to include individual action and the research identified several examples of strong personal commitments. These were broadly either based on personal formative experiences that led to a commitment to create comparable opportunities for current students or professional commitments to research or teaching, which find expression in international standard research or capacity building. I have argued that these commitments are key to agential behaviour and that it is important to understand more of how these commitments connect with emergent internationalisation structures.

Structural enablements and constraints are terms that do not exist as separate entities; they are activated in relationship with specific agential projects; individuals' specific commitments to action. Social structures have a reality that precedes interaction with human projects but they do not in themselves carry out actions; social structures "require active 'functionaries'" (Bhaskar, 1979 p51). Structural causal powers are not enacted until they interact with a human project. At any stage in a project the agent(s) involved can react, plan ahead or change direction. For this reason the influence of structures produces tendencies rather than pre-determined outcomes, as agents can and do respond in different ways, thus leading to differing outcomes at a local level.

Agents possess characteristics that social structures do not, such as intentionality, thinking, caring, believing etc (Archer, 2003). Thus, structural causal powers are activated in response to specific personal projects and the

interplay between these is mediated by human reflexivity; the capacity for internal deliberation on external realities and subjective experiences (Archer, 2003; Archer, 2007). Individual experiences and commitments will influence how they respond agentially to emergent structures at the university with their associated enablements and constraints.

This is an example of how research at a local level can contribute to a richer understanding of the internationalisation process. It corresponds to “Human agency in higher education locally”, one of the links in Marginson and Rhoades’ (2002) glonacal-agency heuristic and so contributes to their call “to consider the local in exploring the global” (p305).

Finally, this research has identified a number of theoretical and practical implications as well as ideas for future research. It has shown a richness of data at a local level that impact on one university’s internationalisation endeavours. Given the prevalence of the neoliberal discourse it is essential that other voices are heard that articulate other rationales and agential projects in internationalisation. The local is important when thinking globally.

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