

2011

Steering in the same direction? : an examination of the mission and structure of the governance of providers of pathway programs

Rodney A. Gillett
Edith Cowan University

Recommended Citation

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STEERING IN THE SAME DIRECTION?:
AN EXAMINATION OF THE MISSION AND STRUCTURE OF THE
GOVERNANCE OF PROVIDERS OF PATHWAY PROGRAMS

Rodney Allan Gillett

This thesis is presented in fulfillment of the
requirements of the degree of Doctor of Education

Faculty of Education
Edith Cowan University

November 2011

USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

The Doctor of Education Program and the Role of the Portfolio

The Doctor of Education program aims to prepare students for leadership roles in the knowledge society. The principal requirement is completion of five coursework subjects - each requiring one semester of full-time study to complete. These are Methods of Investigation, Learning in the Knowledge Society, the Governance of Education Institutions, Education and the Global Economy, and Curriculum and the Knowledge Society. As an additional requirement, candidates undertake research into a theme relating to two or more of the coursework units and present the research in a portfolio of 30,000 to 60,000 words.

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the mission and structure of governance of three providers of pre-university pathway programs based in Australia and operating on a global basis. The aim of the research was to investigate changes, if any, to the purpose and form of governance in this sector for which virtually no research has been undertaken. The literature review of governance in the higher education sector on a global scale in relation to universities revealed an increasing trend toward a corporate style of management. The literature also revealed that the distributors of pathway programs are operating in a highly competitive international environment. It became apparent that models of governance are undergoing re-adjustment to meet the needs of the market and to ensure commercial viability for the content provider. As a result, new models are emerging and changing the approach to the manner in which governance is undertaken.

The method of investigation for this study was a cross-case study of three major education providers engaged in the delivery of pathway education programs on a global basis. Each of the cases selected had a different ownership structure; - a public university; a not-for-profit education organisation; and a publically-listed corporation. By looking closely at the two main parts of the framework of institutional governance, firstly, at the *structure* (organisational form); and secondly, on the *mission* (purpose of the organisation) it was possible to determine the salient features of governance and draw a conclusion as to the governance model adopted. The use of Burton Clark's (1983) *Triangle of Co-ordination* provided a theoretical framework to evaluate the models of governance and to place them in the relevant context; that is, dominated by one of the elements in the triangle: the government, the academy, or the market. In addition to the two central parts of governance, the elements of quality assurance and accountability that are fundamental to good governance were examined to provide additional evidence of the model adopted.

The small-scale investigation revealed a convergence between public and private providers in their governance structures but not necessarily in their missions. The findings were that all three education organisations have adopted governance models that are based on corporate principles. However, while each of the entities had adopted a corporate structural mechanism this does not fully align with their stated missions. The examination of the mission and structure of the respective governance frameworks of each of the case studies showed a convergence to the market spectrum of Clark's model.

Declaration

I certify that this portfolio does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without any acknowledgement any material submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education;
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in text; or
- (iii) contain any defamatory material.

I also grant permission for the Library at Edith Cowan University to make duplicate copies of my portfolio as required.

Rodney A. Gillett

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the many people who contributed to the compilation of this portfolio. In particular, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to:

- my thesis supervisors, Associate Professor Jan Gray and Associate Professor Glenda Campbell-Evans, for their enduring patience and understanding, and willingness to support me to the very end to ensure completion of the portfolio;
- Glenda's understanding of the issues and insights was of tremendous assistance as was her meticulous and timely feedback, and highly constructive advice;
- those who participated in the study for allowing me to carry out the data collection via interview that provided such valuable insight into their educational organisations; their openness and willing to share was refreshing in the age of "commercial-in-confidence";
- former work colleagues and close friends, Peter Krikstolaitis and Clive Keevil for their personal and professional support over the years;
- my wife, Yong-sun, for her patience and proof reading;
- my son, Jeremy, for challenging me with his growing up and his barracking for Collingwood, and;
- friends and colleagues who offered advice, resources and expertise, in particular, Jarrod Hingston, Susie Ballantyne and Fiona Wiebusch.

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Chapter One - Introduction

"Governance: the term derives from the Greek word κυβερνάω [kubernáo] which means to steer" (Rosenau, 2004, p. 14)

Overview

The higher education sector has undergone a range of profound changes over the past two decades. Increased pressure to generate additional funding other than from public sources, increased options for students to study in various modes, and the entry of private providers has dramatically changed the landscape. These changes have heightened the level of interest and concern for quality issues in higher education and has put governance at the forefront of policy debates. This focus on governance has resulted in much public discussion about the relationship between performance by higher education institutions and their governance policies and practices. Most research into governance in higher education has focused on the university sector, with an emphasis on the public

institutions. This research has largely drawn on case studies that analyse changing policies in approaches to governance. The providers of pre-university pathway programs such as Foundation Studies programs, Certificate IV and Diploma courses, and English language programs have not been subject to systematic study. This study seeks to address that issue by examining the governance of providers, both private and public, in the pathway program sector.

This chapter provides an introduction to the nature and concept of governance in the worldwide higher education context. Firstly, it examines the concept of *governance* and determines a suitable definition for use in this study. Secondly, *pathway programs* are explained along with an overview of the form and type of providers engaged in this form of distributed education. The effect and influence of quality assurance and accountability in relation to governance in higher education is also introduced. The chapter concludes with a narrative about the purpose, significance, and structure of the study.

What is Governance?

The use of the term *governance* is a relatively recent trend that has gained wide currency in the past two decades as greater scrutiny has been applied to publically-funded organisations. This has been closely related to the overall growth in concern in about accountability and transparency in the expenditure of public monies. Consequently, the governance of public organisations engaged in service delivery such as health and education have received increasing public attention.

For higher education bodies these pressures have arisen in the context of growing globalisation, the extension of the market paradigm to the sector, the rise of the knowledge economy, greater emphasis on information communication technology, diminishing funding from government, and the advent of mass higher education with increasing numbers of students making discerning choices about where to study.

The increased focus and attention on governance in recent years has meant that the term 'governance' has become more

expansive, and as a result, more diffuse and overused. The literature on the topic reveals that it is a contemporary subject among scholars of a broad range of subjects including but not limited to politics, philosophy, economics, and education. There is a general consensus among researchers that governance "is a relatively recent coined term for an age-old phenomenon" (Hirst, 2003, p.12). As noted in the opening quote to this chapter the term originates from the Greek word for "steering boats". The metaphor is applied to "steering" an organisation or business.

The indistinctiveness of the concept of governance makes it inherently difficult to define. There are actually a large number of meanings attributed to the term. According to Rhodes (1997) there are at least seven uses of the term governance relevant to the study of public administration. As Hirst (2003) points out, "... the concept is relatively imprecise; it has multiple meanings that can be applied to a range of entities both public and private" (p. 13). In their study of governance in the higher education context, Kezar and Eckel

(2004) note that each theory about governance has a different definition; "Almost every book and article avoids any clear or precise definition ..." (p. 375). However, as they point out, most definitions of governance encapsulate the processes of policy making and decision making within higher education.

This ambiguity reflects the changing dynamics in relation to governance in higher education. As Fried (2006) states, some of the stable distinctions of the past, for instance between public and private, autonomy and interdependence, power and legitimacy, have become blurred; it has been in this context that governance has been reasserted to provide clarity to the situation. According to Fried, the increased discourse about governance "is a symptom of the search for a new balance of societal forces, actors, and structures which no longer follow the given rules and patterns" (p. 80).

It is important for the purposes of this study for there to be a reasonably clear understanding of what the term governance means. Most attempts in the literature to formulate

the concept of governance in relation to higher education governance combine four elements according to the *Glossary of Quality Research International*: (1) the internal working of the higher education institution; (2) its relationships with external bodies including government; (3) the maintenance of academic freedom; and (4) the critical role of higher education and the need to maintain and reinforce public trust in institutions (Harvey, 2011).

The definition provided by Maassen (2003) captures the combined essence of these four elements. He states that,

Governance is about the frameworks in which universities and colleges manage themselves and about the processes and structures used to achieve the intended outcomes – in other words about *how* higher education institutions operate. (p. 32)

The use of the term governance can be applied at the national, local, or institutional level, but the focus in this study is on the organisations themselves and the factors –

both internal and external – that have influenced the way they operate.

In examining the concept of governance this definition of governance should not just be seen as a detached set of rules that define the process and mechanism of institutional decision making. Instead it should be considered as a concept that is contingent upon the context and the environment. The concept of governance has emerged within a context of devolution of state authority as a result of major changes to the external environment. It is apparent from the research for this study that this new context requires new approaches to understanding the steering of higher education.

What are Pathway Programs?

The form of distributed education that is the focus of this study is *pathway programs*. These are enabling or preparatory programs offered by providers from English speaking countries that provide a means of entry into universities for foreign students who are not native users of

English. This course of study usually only requires one to two years of full-time study. These programs are designed to not only academically qualify international students but also to equip them with "the kind of study practices and background knowledge that are expected in an Australian university" (University of South Australia, 2009, p. 3).

The curriculum is usually focused on the content areas of the intended undergraduate program. By doing so a Foundation program focuses on preparing students for the subjects that they plan to study at university. The common feature of pathway programs (including Foundation Studies, English for Academic Purposes (EAP), and Certificate IV courses in Business Studies and Information Technology) is the emphasis on English language components (Coleman, 2003).

The genesis of pathway programs in Australia extends back to 1984 when UniSearch, a private English language provider in Sydney, developed an articulation agreement with the then New South Wales Institute of Technology (which became the

University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) in 1988). It developed an EAP course with additional content for Business and Information Technology to be accepted as an entrance standard for undergraduate programs (Fiocco, 2005).

The first program to be referred to as a "Foundation Studies" program was instigated by the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in 1988 when it established a program to train over 400 nurses from Indonesia (O'Halloran, 2004). The University of New South Wales could see an opportunity for "a focused program of academic, cultural, and language preparation for international students" that would not only provide entry into the university, but more importantly "equip them with the skills and confidence to go on and succeed at university" (O'Halloran, 2004, p. 6).

UNSW subsequently became a major provider of university preparatory programs such as Foundation Studies and English language programs. Other universities seeking high numbers of international students such as Monash, Curtin, and RMIT soon entered the field (Adams, 1998).

However, it was not just the universities that were the providers of pathway programs. As Fiocco (2005) notes, in Western Australia in the early 1990's the private sector played a pivotal role in the introduction of such programs: "... the Certificate IV Foundation program articulating into a Diploma, thus providing for entry into the second year of university (was) made into an art form in this state" (p. 154). The first kind of programs offered off-shore by the universities were for degree or diploma programs, but it increasingly became evident that there was a major opportunity for entry programs such as Foundation Studies (McBurnie & Pollock, 2000). This was mainly due to changing demand as increasing numbers of international students expressed "a preference to undertake English proficiency training in their *home* country prior to moving to the *host* country for study in university programs" (McBurnie & Pollock, 2000, p. 86).

These off-shore developments in international education coincided with the emphasis on external English language proficiency tests such as the International English Language

Testing Service (IELTS) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for admission into higher education institutions. Castle and Kelly (2004) show that the key driver for the growth of off-shore courses was the increasing demand from students for qualifications in English that would enhance their prospects for further study and/or professional employment.

Who are the Pathway Program Providers?

There are a number of providers in Australia engaged in distributing pathway programs both in-country and off-shore. The public providers include universities, technical and further education colleges (TAFEs) and state education departments. The major public providers are the University of New South Wales, Monash University, and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (Adams, Burgess & Phillip, 2009).

It should be noted that other universities with a large number of students enrolled in pathway programs like Macquarie University and Curtin University have commercial arrangements

with a private provider while institutions such the University of Technology, Sydney and the University of Wollongong have established a controlled entity specifically for this purpose. The major private providers are Study Group (owned by CHAMP Private Equity), Navitas Limited (a publically listed education management company on the Australian Stock Exchange [ASX]), ACT Education Solutions (a subsidiary company of US not-for-profit education organisation ACT Inc. based in Sydney), and a recent entrant, Kaplan Education (a subsidiary of US testing preparation company, Kaplan Inc., which is owned by The Washington Post Company).

Australian Education International (AEI, 2009) figures show that about 50% of student numbers are shared between the public and private providers for Foundation Studies, but that the public universities dominate the English language space with over 80% of market share. It is worth noting at this juncture that about 70% of the students registered in Foundation Studies with private providers are in a collaborative partnership with a public university.

Quality Assurance

The recurring theme in the delivery of educational programs is quality assurance. This is an all embracing term that covers "all the policies, processes and actions by which the quality of higher education is developed and maintained" (Campbell & Rozsnayi, 2002, p. 23). It is essential that quality be maintained whilst sustaining the commercial viability of the programs. The implementation and evaluation of appropriate quality assurance protocols and the concomitant audit process is a crucial element in the delivery of pathway programs. It is an important means by which to ensure that the education and commercial imperatives of such programs are maintained.

Given that the delivery of pathway programs is not necessarily on-site, the manner and method of delivery of these programs has changed considerably. This has necessitated the provision of appropriate mechanisms for quality assurance to ensure appropriate delivery of the program. By ensuring compliance to the quality assurance standards required by the

new national regulatory body, the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA), a provider can ensure academic credibility of the program. The application of a rigorous and transparent quality assurance process by a provider is crucial to acceptance by the market according to industry insiders (P.V. Krikstolaitis, personal communication, July 19, 2009 and C.R. Keevil, personal communication, August 15, 2009). This view is shared by Baird (2007) who claims that quality audit findings have become marketing tools for many providers.

The model for quality assurance for a provider in an offshore setting is based on ensuring the teaching centre adheres to the process through an audit process. The auditors report their findings to an academic board or committee that is responsible to the governing body. For this process to be effective a proper reporting system based on good governance must be put into place to by the provider. This in turn should ensure that the delivery mechanisms provide for proper teaching and learning procedures as well as administrative processes that ensure the integrity of the credential.

The issue of quality assurance, according to Adams (1998), is the major issue in terms of opportunity risk for the provider. McBurnie and Pollock (2000) emphasise the importance of quality assurance in the delivery of programs in off-shore campus operations. The authors stress the success of the venture largely depends on business considerations to ensure that the opportunities offered are realised. The impact and influence on the market is a constant theme in the narrative on the governance of pathway programs.

Accountability

Strongly aligned to quality assurance is the increasing demand for improvement in *accountability* in the sector, particularly for those institutions that benefit from public funding. There has been a series of government reviews in Australia such as the West Report in 1998 (Rytmeister, 2009) and the United Kingdom (UK) like the Dearing Report released in 1997 (Shattock, 2006), that have recommended major changes in governance policies and practices in higher education.

Given the delegated authority that most universities and colleges have to make decisions, governments have increasingly developed mechanisms for accountability. Some of these instruments include performance reports by universities and/or their departments, standard evaluation of research and teaching, and regular external reviews. In parallel with this movement, "buffer organisations such as accreditation agencies and national advisory boards have been developed to assess institutional performance and to report back to government" (Sporn, 2003, p. 37). The net overall effect is increased emphasis on accountability for the higher education sector.

This increased public focus on governance in the higher education sector is largely a result of the changing environment. The past two decades have witnessed profound changes to the sector marked by massification and commercialisation that have created a new policy environment. The higher education sector has been swept up in the changes generated by the principles of "New Public Management" (Rhoades & Sporn, 2002, p. 6) that oversaw the corporatisation

of government utilities and the adoption of corporate sector values. These changes in the public policy environment have been mirrored in the approach to changes to governance of universities and colleges.

As governments have delegated more responsibility to institutions for reporting on their respective operations the level of accountability has become more pronounced. This has been manifested in the establishment by governments of regulatory agencies for accreditation and quality assurance.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to provide an understanding of the governance of providers of pathway programs based in Australia. By closely examining the mechanisms of governance it is possible to develop an understanding of how the providers are managed and organised and the consequent implications for accountability and quality assurance. This study focuses on the organisational elements of governance. This consists of two main parts, firstly, the *mission* (the

purpose of the entity), and secondly, the *structure* (the organisation of the entity's governing body).

The research questions for this small-scale investigation are:

1. What forms of governance are used by providers of university entrance pathway programs?
2. For what reasons did providers create governance structures as they have done?
3. What is the relationship between the mission of providers of pathway programs and the governance structures adopted?

Significance of the Study

The examination of the mission and structure of governance for the providers of pathway programs requires further insight and understanding in order to explain and account for the models and processes of governance adopted by these entities. The models for monitoring and reporting on governance for providers operating in the sector are many and

varied according to the status of the corporation, be it public or private. It has become apparent that the models are undergoing re-adjustment to meet the political and legal requirements as well as commercial imperatives to ensure effective operation in the marketplace. New models are emerging, and in the process, are changing the method of operation as well as the processes by which management and the organisation are evaluated. This portfolio presents a small-scale investigation to provide an illumination of the mission and structure of governance for providers of pathway programs.

It takes the form of a case study on the governance of three providers that are extensively involved in the distribution of pathway programs to international students. These providers have a different form of ownership, one is a public university, one is a not-for-profit education organisation, and the other is a publically-listed corporate entity. The results from the study should contribute to the overall body of knowledge on governance in the pathway program sector.

The understandings gleaned from the investigation may also prove useful to the providers that are the focus of this research. The study may also provide useful information for potential students of pathway programs by enabling them to compare the merits of the programs based on quality assurance. The study also provides useful information on the governance of providers of pathway programs for other distributors of education programs. It should be noted that the pathway program sector is in a dynamic process of adapting to on-going change in a globalised commercial environment and this study will add to the body of knowledge being accumulated.

Structure of the Study

This first chapter has provided an analysis of the definition of the concept of governance as it relates to higher education, and explained what pathway programs are and who the providers are. Additionally, it has set out the purpose and significance of the study. The literature review that examines the research to date on the issue of governance in the higher education sector with an emphasis on pathway

programs is presented in Chapter Two. The theoretical framework that includes an examination of the various models of governance in the higher education sector and sets out the model adopted for this study and the conceptual framework is in Chapter Three. The global context that focuses on the impact of globalisation on higher education, including the rise of the international student market, and its implications for governance of providers of pathway programs constitutes Chapter Four. Chapter Five provides salient information about the entity structures used by providers of pathway programs in Australia. The method of investigation for this study including the research framework, the methodological approach, the methods of collection and the ethical considerations are presented in Chapter Six. The results of data collection and individual case findings are the subject of Chapter Seven. Cross-case study analysis is undertaken in Chapter Eight and the conclusions and recommendations for further study are presented in Chapter Nine.

Chapter Two - Literature Review

"To a significant extent universities have been self-governing institutions. They have chosen for themselves a mixed history of medieval authority and modern science ..." (Marginson & Considine, 2000, p. 1).

Introduction

Scholarly interest in the field of governance in the higher education sector has heightened in recent years due to significant changes in the environment for higher education. Institutions now face even greater competing priorities and demands; they are required to respond to a wider range of stakeholders including students, academics, business, industry, government, and the community in general. Foremost of these concerns has been the need for institutions in higher education to become more accountable and more competitive. This has implications for and relevance in any discussion on the issue of governance in contemporary higher education. The response of the universities has been well documented, but this is not the case for the providers of pathway programs.

An examination of the literature reveals a significant gap in research about issues and concerns in governance of providers of pathway programs. The pathway program sector is now a major feature of the higher education landscape in Australia given its function in providing a pathway for international students into university courses. The literature published to date has largely focused on the type and nature of pathway programs and issues of quality assurance in relation to off-shore delivery. There is a paucity of information about the governance of the providers of pathway programs.

This literature review will focus on the overall concept of higher education governance rather than on specific elements such as the composition of governing boards, the role of academic senates, and relationships with government. These elements are all integral parts of the process of governance and contribute to the overall body of knowledge on the field of study, but the emphasis in this study is on the framework. This overall approach is in line with the definition of

governance adopted for this study which sets out to analyse and understand how pathway providers operate. This approach should provide a basis for a fuller understanding of the notions of *mission* and *structure* that are the core elements of this investigation.

Overview

Research on governance in the higher education sector came into prominence in the 1960s when it emerged as an issue. Most of the early research in the field "was focused on structural theories of governance based on experience in the USA by Goodman (1962), Millett (1962), Kerr (1963), Clark (1963) and Stroup (1966)" according to a synthesis of the literature on governance by Kezar and Eckel (2004, p. 376).

The most notable of these studies was Kerr's notion of the "multiversity" (as cited in Kezar & Eckel, 2004, p.376) that provided a structural description of the changes to university organisation as a result of increased government funding for higher education in the United States. The "multiversity" - for which parts could be added or subtracted

with little effect on the whole - was "a mechanism held together by administrative rules and powered by money" (p.376).

The subsequent three decades after this initial period of interest in governance was marked by minimal scholarship. The notable exceptions were studies by Birnbaum (1989) on cybernetics of academic organisation; Schuster and Miller (1989) who emphasised the application of strategic management to university organisations; and Gumport's work in the 1990s that showed bureaucratic dominance over academic management affairs.

The emphasis on the structure of governance in higher education in the United States returned in the late 1990s as a result of public criticism that the sector was not responding quickly enough to external changes in the wider society. A well-known study by Benjamin and Carroll from the RAND corporation in 1998 on the Californian university system reasoned that the traditional form of governance for the system was "wholly ineffective and inefficient because of its

structure" (Kezar & Eckel, 2004, p. 380).

The advent of the adoption of public sector reforms, most notably in the United Kingdom (UK), and research by several authors (Rhoades & Sporn, 2002; Middlehurst, 2004; and Taylor, 2006) revealed the adoption of corporate governance on an increasing scale by the sector. Prior to this trend the major focus in research on governance had been on the relationships between government and the universities. The trend toward a corporate form of governance in higher education was also identified by a number of Australian researchers including Marginson and Considine (2000), Rochford (2001), Meek (2002), Coaldrake, Stedman and Little (2003), Baird (2006), Harman and Treadgold (2007), and more recently, Rytmeister (2009).

This heightened interest in the form and structure of governance in higher education was marked by a raft of literature by Gumport (2000), Salter and Tapper (2000), Shattock (2002), Gayle, Tweaire and White (2003) and Kezar and Eckel (2004). The changes in university governance in Europe, the UK, and USA identified by these studies are characterised

by such factors as less state control, more institutional autonomy (balanced by), greater accountability to stakeholders, strengthening of power of executives, and the impact of stronger market influences.

The literature reveals that the issue of the mission of higher education institutions has not been widely investigated. The studies by Smith (2005) and Pusser and Turner (2004) provide significant insights into the concept and importance of the mission of universities in the American context, while papers by Taylor (2000) and Marginson (2007) offer an insight into the situation in New Zealand and Australia respectively. The main theme to emerge from these studies is the influence of the market on the re-framing of mission statements.

A common feature in the literature that is relevant to this study is the research on convergence of governance structures in higher education. The trend in the USA for convergence in governance between public and private higher education providers has been identified by Pusser and Turner

(2004). An earlier convergence thesis was a series of case studies by Clark (1995, 1998, and 2004) that showed how the 'entrepreneurial model' was adopted and became reflected in corporate forms of governance. The analysis of higher education policy by Sporn (2001) shows strong trends toward convergence around the world. She notes that the trends towards globalisation, competition, marketisation, the growing influence of new public management, and the emphasis on quality and accountability also demonstrate convergence. However, Sporn points out those differences really only begin to emerge in governance at the institutional level. That position will be subject to closer examination in the small-scale investigation being undertaken for this study.

Major Themes in the Literature

This literature review will focus on the major themes to emerge from the research undertaken to date on governance issues as defined this study. These themes are the influence of "New Public Management" (NPM) and the increasing

entrepreneurial approach by higher education institutions - both of these trends have profoundly impacted upon governance over the past fifteen years. These trends are inter-related and are linked to the rise of the neo-liberal ideology of government in the Western world in the 1980s. The net effect of these trends is a seemingly inexorable movement towards convergence in policy and approaches to governance in the higher education sector.

According to the literature, one of the main triggers for changes to the governance of the higher education sector stems from reform processes to public administration from the mid-1980s. NPM, as it became known in Europe and the UK, was aimed at improving the efficiency of the public sector and focused on the quality of services. The university sector was firmly captured in this spate of reforms. "NPM emphasises efficiency, downsizing, decentralization, excellence, and service", according to Rhoades and Sporn (2002, p. 6). Agasisti and Catalano (2006) argue that it also shifted power from professionals such as academics and technicians to managers.

In NPM the orientation is towards the adoption of private sector practices by government-owned and operated organisations, especially those engaged in service-delivery. This is manifested in increased attention to financial control, transfer of power to senior management, greater emphasis on quality assurance, issuance of work contracts, stronger focus on consumer service, less self-regulation for professionals, more entrepreneurialism and new forms of governance through executive boards (Rhoades & Sporn, 2002). As Salter and Tapper (2000) point out, the underlying intention is for the efficient use of public resources to be maximized by a "new class of public service managers" (p. 70).

Middlehurst (2004) maintains that the NPM approach to higher education has remained unchanged in the UK for over twenty years despite changes in government. The extension of this policy now has globalisation as a strong theme. This policy encourages the universities to form partnerships with other institutions, to collaborate with businesses, and to develop innovative forms of delivering education. As such, the

pressure is on institutions from government to be "more flexible in mode and mission in order to compete commercially and globally" (Middlehurst, 2004, p. 10).

The characteristics of NPM have greatly impacted on the organisation of higher education in the Western world; a number of case studies provide evidence of this effect. For example, a study by Taylor (2006) documents the transformation in organisational change by four leading UK universities from the collegial model to a more stream-lined model resembling a corporate model. The key driver for the change as a response to the external environment was the need for the universities to have "enhanced managerial competence" (p. 272).

A study by Mora and Viera (2008) of the organisational and governance structure of 27 higher education institutions drawn from seven countries in Europe found a clear trend towards a corporate model. Mora and Viera found that this was largely a result of social, political and economic demands. The changed approach was seen as an essential part of a transformation in order to make the sector more responsive to

these demands in the context of a changing environment. Of particular note, was that while there was a strong tendency for less state regulation (a significant move given that most university systems in Europe have traditionally been state controlled), the state retained influence over the sector developed through the imposition of "concepts like NPM or network governance ('state supervision')" (p. 7).

A study by Sporn (1999) of six universities in Europe and the USA shows that universities have to be adaptive and respond to the environment in order to make their institutions more flexible and efficient, and hence competitive. This mainly revolves around changes to their organisational form. Sporn's framework for analysis was based on environmental forces such as the economy, the role of the state, information technology, globalisation, and competition) placing pressure on institutions to respond and adapt.

A key factor in the transformation of these adaptive universities according to Sporn (1999) is the need for professionalisation of management to ensure effective

decision-making and successful implementation of strategies. However, Sporn advocates the adoption of shared governance to ensure consensus about activities to respond to environmental demands.

In the Australian context, Marginson and Considine's *The Enterprise University* (2000) noted the strong trend toward a corporate form of governance based on structural changes to the organisation of the university. This was a major feature of all the universities in a case study of 17 higher education institutions over three years. This study included a sample of a range of universities in Australia including the 'Sandstones' (e.g., Adelaide, Sydney), 'Redbricks' (e.g., Monash, UNSW), 'Gumtrees' (e.g., Griffith, Deakin, Flinders), 'Unitechs' (e.g., QUT, UTS), and 'New Universities' (e.g., CQU, ECU) (p. 14).

The substantial shift to a corporate management approach in the context of public sector reform was strongly encouraged by government according to a number of Australian researchers. A driving force for change according to Meek (2002) was the

need for universities to be more accountable for the effective and efficient use of public funding. As Meek states, "Institutions are now placed in a much more highly competitive environment and considerable pressure has been placed on them to strengthen management, to become more entrepreneurial and corporate like" (pp. 266-267).

As Baird (2007) points out the Australian government, like governments elsewhere, became sceptical about university self-governance. This was essentially based on cases of financial mismanagement and a perceived need for a more accountable system of governance. This belief grew out of the benefits of the market paradigm for higher education. This approach facilitated the government increasing competition between institutions for public funds for teaching and research. At the institutional level, as Taylor (2006) shows, the role and position of the formally appointed managers and administrators was strengthened at the expense of the academic staff in institutional governance matters as a result of changes brought about by adherence to NPM principles.

The shift in the Australian context from a shared model of governance to a corporal model was closely observed by Coaldrake, Stedman and Little (2003). The defining feature was stronger executive control. Harman and Treadgold (2007) also identified the shift in Australia away from the self-governance model to a model more closely resembling one used by business corporations.

The drivers for change in higher education at all levels in Australia according to Rytmeister (2009) have been intertwined. The drivers are political ideology, massification, globalisation, and marketisation. Some of the key consequences have been the adoption of corporate forms of management, greater power to executive management, more accountability, and a stronger role for university governing bodies.

The influence of NPM in the USA was not nearly as profound as that in the UK, Europe and Australia. However, as Gumport (2000) notes, the US public colleges and universities underwent a similar reorganisation process from the early

1980s that was also based on external forces. She attributes the pressure for academic restructuring to the influence of management science and its associated ideology for making the US public higher education system more homogenous.

In terms of research on private institutions in higher education in the USA, the focus has usually been based on the differences between non-profit institutions (the State run and funded universities) and for-profit entities (private colleges run on a commercial basis). The non-profit institutions are usually regarded as "bureaucratic, collegial, political, and anarchical" (Berger & Milem, 2000, p. 7). Research on for-profit institutions on the other hand have characterised these organisations as "rational profit maximisers" (Ortmann, 2001, p. 14). Government pressure for the non-profit institutions to be more accountable for their funding is resulting in the non-profits following the for-profits in operational approaches. Pusser and Turner (2004) believe that this trend will lead "to differences in governance structures and processes narrowing rather than widening" (p. 24).

Inextricably linked to the public policy changes that have affected governance in higher education are the sub-themes of quality assurance and accountability. Hand-in-hand with the general trend for governments to give universities more flexibility, the *quid pro quo* has been for higher levels of accountability. The major requirement has been accountability for public funding which has required institutions to fully account for monies spent on all facets of their operations, not just teaching and research. The instruments used for accountability include performance reports by institutions and academic departments, standard evaluation of research and teaching, and periodic external reviews. Other external developments include the rise of accreditation agencies and national advisory boards assessing institutional performance and reporting back to the relevant government ministries (Sporn, 2003).

A significant factor in the growth of accountability in the Australian context was the introduction of National Governance Protocols by the federal government in 2004

(Department of Education, Science and Training [DEST], 2004).

These protocols called for a standard statement of the governing body's responsibilities. They also required the governing boards to assess their own performance: to be able to govern controlled entities; and to report on risk management within the institution. The enabling legislation has been amended to reflect the protocols; the adoption by individual universities was encouraged by financial incentives.

Quality assurance has been one of the strongest reform issues associated with higher education in the past decade. Quality has both an internal and external perspective. Within the institution, quality assurance deals with assessment of performance both for research and for teaching. However, the quality of administration has been largely neglected according to Rhoades and Sporn (2002) as few approaches have been developed to evaluate the performance of the administration, particularly in the UK and Europe.

Externally, quality assurance has entailed accountability and accreditation procedures. As state bureaucracies have been withdrawn from what was a traditional role they have been replaced by new specialist authorities created by government specifically for the purpose. In Australia, the external quality audit of institutions of higher education was carried out by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) from 2002 until 2011. AUQA's purpose and function was externally prescribed standards on providers, but to audit institutions against their own mission and objectives in the context of quality improvement (Baird, 2007).

In a significant development for the regulation of higher education in Australia, AUQA was superseded by a new body called the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) on 30 July 2011. From this date TEQSA assumed the quality assurance functions previously undertaken by AUQA, and then in January 2012 it begun its regulatory function on a national basis and took-over the registration and evaluation of courses and providers from state and territory agencies.

This will result in the imposition of standards based on the new Higher Education Standards Framework (TEQSA, 2011).

The Entrepreneurial University

The notion of the “entrepreneurial university” (Clark, 1996, p. 53) came to prominence as a result of research by Burton Clark who coined the term to apply to universities that were adopting a business-like approach to their activities. Research by Clark over the period 1980-95 shows a major feature of universities that became more entrepreneurial was a “strengthened steering core” (Clark, 1996, p. 427). By this Clark means that the organisational structure of the university is based on a central core for administration of the institution as a whole rather than a decentralised model in which each college or school acted autonomously. Clark’s 1998 study of five universities in five different countries shows that the institutions selected for study were developing what he regarded as entrepreneurial features.

Clark (1998) identified four essential elements of this process: firstly, “an ambitious vision; secondly, a

strengthened steering core; thirdly, sources of discretionary income; and finally, a developmental periphery - a set of organisational programs outside the traditional departments" (p. 427). According to Clark, these elements are the key to "transforming the institutional organisational character to support the move toward an entrepreneurial university" (p.427).

The term "academic capitalism" (Slaughter & Lesley 1997, p. 3) was coined by the authors to describe the response by universities to an entrepreneurial approach to functioning as a result of shifts in funding. In their study of universities in Australia, Canada, the UK and the USA they examined global political and economic changes and national policy changes in order to understand the impact of academic capitalism on faculty and their institutions. Their key finding was that the fundamental nature of academic work changed in response to global and national trends which enhanced competition for scarce resources. The net effect was that universities adopted a more entrepreneurial approach to both teaching and research.

A critical finding for the purposes of this study was that management gained more power and influence in decision-making than faculty members.

The term the "enterprise university" was adopted by Marginson and Considine (2000, p. 3) that built on the work from Clark, and Slaughter and Lesley. Marginson and Considine strongly emphasise the primacy of the marketing paradigm as a reaction to the effects generated by the external environment on the sector. For them the emphasis on the 'market' is particularly evident in the operation of international education activities which is driven by commercial imperatives, that is now a "key element of the enterprise culture" (p. 4).

A dissenting view in relation to the trend in higher education toward entrepreneurialism is set out by Barnett (2005). He uses the metaphor "knowledge travel" (Barnett, 2005, p. 58) to explain the developments in the sector that involve new forms of knowledge production that "...establish new knowledge partners" (p. 60) rather than acknowledge rising

commercialism. Barnett claims that knowledge travel occurs in various modes, "each of which may come into play amid entrepreneurialism" in a "hard or soft" form (p. 61). While entrepreneurialism in the higher education sector does occur in different ways as suggested by Barnett, the reference to market forces suggests acknowledgement regardless of the form ("hard or soft") that the sector is being marketised.

The view that a different organisational structure to the traditional higher education institutional structure is required by entrepreneurial institutions has been postulated by Oblinger, Barone, and Hawkins (2001). They maintain that the entrepreneurial education environment requires a vastly different organisational form and culture. According to the authors, in order to be competitive and successful, a provider requires a governance model with "a level of dynamism and flexibility different from traditional faculty governance models" (p. 77).

Chipman (2002) also takes the view that a different form of organisation is required for universities seeking to become

more entrepreneurial. He argues that the higher education industry in Australia has been going through a process of "vertical disintegration" (p. 4). By this he means the separation of layers of research, curriculum design, course delivery, assessment, and certification; all of which are integrated in a traditional university structure. According to Chipman, the trend for separation of layers provides a conducive environment for university "spin-offs" run on commercial lines and for private for-profit providers to distribute educational product either in a commissioned, customised way or simply "off-the-shelf" (p. 4).

The example cited by Chipman in 2002 was a private-public partnership between Campus Management Services (CMS) and Central Queensland University (CQU) which at the time operated campuses set-up specifically for full fee-paying international students in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and the Gold Coast as well as in Fiji and New Zealand. CQU fully acquired the company operation in 2007 and elected not to change the organisational structure. It remains a private company fully

owned by the university. There are many examples of successful private-public partnerships as well as 'spin-offs'. The collaboration between public universities and private providers is an ever-increasing feature of the landscape.

Mission

The essential characteristic of governance in an education setting according to Smith (2005) is the mission statement: "an effective mission statement ... is the key to institutional success" (p. 5). Smith's survey and analysis of problems in higher education governance in the USA found that whereas public and private non-profit universities and non-profit institutions were at one point very different in their missions and funding, "there has been a substantial convergence in what these institutions do and how they allocate resources" (p. 5). While conceding that there are still significant exceptions in terms of revenue, output, and governance, Smith argues that the differences are more in emphasis than in overall approach as the missions become more aligned to commercial practices.

According to Pusser and Turner (2004) the non-profit colleges and universities in the USA do not have "clear matrices for evaluating what constitute mission-related activities" (p. 15). Consequently, the authors maintain that the institutions do not necessarily know how to measure their success in pursuing outcomes. As Pusser and Turner point out, governance involves not only making decisions about what to produce and how to produce it, but also "evaluating the extent to which institutional outcomes coincide with institutional missions" (p. 15). The over-riding concern of non-profit boards is the "assurance of fidelity to an organisation's stated mission" (Bowen, Nguyen, Turner & Duffy cited in Pusser & Turner, 2004, p. 15). In contrast, for a for-profit board, the over-whelming focus is on the development and implementation of strategies to enhance shareholder value.

There is, however, a high degree of ambiguity in the use of missions by different higher education providers, particularly by public universities. The ambiguity surrounding the concept of the mission is demonstrated by Patterson (2001)

who argues that mission statements provide little more than "idealistic rhetoric" (p. 160) if the provider does not operationalise its mission. This position is based on a comparison between universities and business.

According to Patterson (2001) the business corporation has a clear unity of purpose in its mission - to make a profit. Further, the business corporation has well-defined lines of authority to maintain "a unity of action in order to achieve its unity of purpose" (p. 161). By contrast, the lines of authority in a university are fragmented and diffused, and decision making is more widely dispersed. Therefore, Patterson argues, that the mission of business cannot be directly applied to the university because all such models assume a clear line of authority and set of goals, neither of which she argues exists in the university organisation.

Patterson (2001) acknowledges in New Zealand and elsewhere governments are exerting pressure through policy requirements for universities to clarify their missions. It is suggested that the adoption of specified goals and objectives

will be a mixture of imposed objectives by the government and internally goals identified and developed by the institution. The most likely outcomes of this process, according to Patterson (2001), are statements of mission, goals and objectives will be meaningless. However, where unity is achieved then such statements will provide meaningful operational directives but this, as Patterson points out, may not directly translate into practical management processes.

A noted researcher and commentator on governance in the higher education arena Simon Marginson (2007) notes that the market has become the main determining influence on the mission and structure of the governance of higher education providers. The vast array of radical changes to the sector over the past twenty years include the transfer from public funding to mixed funding; the narrowing of government policy objectives in the sector; the corporatisation and self-management of institutions; and greatly expanded functions, sites, and activities according to Marginson have all impacted significantly on governance. Further, "a stronger set of

accountability requirements and the streamlining of governing bodies and their assumption of a more prudential and supervisory role" (p. 255) has provided an external force on requirements by universities to provide for accountability and to ensure quality assurance compliance.

The key element to emerge from the literature is the convergence toward a corporate approach and the inexorable influence of market forces. While Marginson (2007) laments the loss of "collegiality" (p. 259), Patterson (2001) considers the changes little more than "idealistic rhetoric" (p. 168). The evidence points toward the differences between the organisational structure and the stated mission narrowing rather than widening.

Convergence

The major trend detected from the literature on governance in higher education is a *convergence* toward a corporate approach in both the structure and mission of the institutions in the sector. The research by Pusser and Turner (2004) reveals a high level of convergence by the for-profit

and non-profit institutions in terms of operational methods and resource allocation. This has largely been a result of many institutions in higher education becoming more entrepreneurial and seeking to generate additional funding to support the institution.

The position in the USA is a pointer toward emerging trends elsewhere given its lengthy experience with private for-profit institutions. With the advent of more private providers in countries such as Australia and the UK, the higher education landscape is changing rapidly. While there have traditionally been distinctions between the for-profits and not-for-profits there is strong evidence to support the view that a transformation is taking place. Pusser and Turner (2004) advance three main dimensions to explain this process. Firstly, there has been an increasing convergence of revenue sources with both the for-profits and not-for-profits as both now rely heavily on tuition fees. Secondly, the entry of for-profit providers into a variety of post-secondary areas such as continuing education and online learning has been a factor

in convergence. In some instances these entrepreneurial programs are partnerships between not-for-profit institutions and for-profit corporations. Thirdly, while the constitutional constraints of the governance of not-for-profits make adaption much slower than the for-profits, the linkages between revenue and outcomes show that convergence in governance missions and structures and processes is likely to follow.

A key issue to consider in this trend toward convergence of governance structures between private and public providers is whether the shift toward for-profit behaviour will lead public providers to alter their missions. As noted in this literature review Slaughter and Lesley (1997), Clark (1998), and Marginson and Considine (2000) show that the not-for-profit university has moved significantly in the direction of commercialisation of their products and services. What is not yet apparent is a significant change in terms of an institutional attitude toward the mission that is reflected in their mission statements.

Conclusion

The literature review shows a number of factors impacting on governance in higher education. However, the most influential factors have been New Public Management and the associated emphasis on accountability and quality assurance. Closely associated with these factors are entrepreneurialism and the increasing need for universities to compete on a global basis. An examination of these issues reveals a strong tendency toward convergence of policies and practices in higher education. This trend towards convergence is transforming the mission and structure of governance of institutions of higher education.

As Meek (2002) notes, "market steering of higher education increasingly requires strong corporate style management at the institutional level" (p. 266). The form of steering increasingly being adopted by public providers engaged in the distribution of pathway programs according to Marginson (1999) is "company structures outside the framework of academic decision-making (p. 5). As Marginson points out,

this is the position being adopted by universities for international education, "...where projects and staffing are subject to executive rather than academic control" (p. 5). An examination in the next chapter of the models of governance in the higher education sector will set the scene for the theoretical context of the study.

Chapter Three - Theoretical Framework

"The main role of the governing body is to steer the institution towards its strategic direction"

(Dearing Committee cited in Shattock, 2002, p. 239).

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the various models of governance that are used in higher education and to describe Clark's (1983) typology, the *Triangle of Co-ordination* that provides the basis for an analysis of governance in this study. Firstly, different models of governance in higher education and how they have been shaped is examined and explained. Then I examine the reasons for the trend towards the corporate model of governance. Secondly, the typology selected is explained and analysed. Thirdly, the conceptual framework is set out and the way in which it guides this investigation is explained.

Models of Governance

The literature on models of governance shows that there are five major models: (1) collegial; (2) corporate; (3) shared governance; (4) trustee governance; and (5) amalgamated forms of governance. The focus in this section will be on how these various models work in practice. It will concentrate on the role and structure of the governing body be it a council, board or senate and its relationship to academic boards or senates and to the advantages and disadvantages of each of the models.

The traditional or conventional model of governance for higher education institutions is the collegial style. It is often referred to in the UK as the consensual or academic style of governance. This model of governance is based on the philosophy of self-governance with little or no direct government interference. In the collegial model there is major provision for strong academic involvement in the governing process. This is evident in the decision-making where committees make policy recommendations to a board of governors

or trustees and/or there is significant academic representation on the governing body. The most oft-stated reason for this model is that the academic staff are best equipped to understand the academic goals and challenges of a university and how to achieve them (Shattock, 2002).

The collegial model has been subject to a range of criticisms. Most criticism focuses on the lack of expertise of academic staff in complex management and financial systems that are now essential for running universities in the modern age. Also there is a view that academic staff lack the skill or interest in determining governance policy in relation to issues not directly related to teaching or research (Marginson & Considine, 2000; Trakman, 2008).

From a philosophical perspective the collegial model is closely associated with "academic democracy" (Trakman, 2008). The extreme example of this model is the University of Cambridge where under its statutes, over 3,000 university officers and college fellows are nominally responsible for the governance of the university (University of Cambridge, 2001).

As Trakman points out academic democracies are subject to significant pressure even in the bicameral system where the academic senate and governing board are separate. A concern is that the academic senate will place disproportionately greater stress on the importance of the university's academic mission and "less emphasis on improving its commercial opportunities through partnerships with government, commerce and industry" (Coaldrake, Stedman & Little, 2003, p.3). Nonetheless there is strong support for the bicameral system, particularly in Australia, as according to Harman and Treadgold (2007) the knowledge and expertise of faculty on academic matters is central to the university's mission.

The *corporate* model of governance is based on a business-like approach that emphasises fiscal and managerial responsibility for those charged with the task of governance. It is also grounded in the rationale of corporate efficiency as a reaction to the criticism of universities as being poorly managed and fiscally inefficient; the assumption being that a corporate model can redress these deficiencies.

The major feature of a corporate model is that the board determines policy and strategy with strong input from senior management in the decision making process. The board is primarily composed of members with business and financial expertise. The real power lies with the vice chancellor or president, the senior leadership team of deputy vice chancellors and the finance chiefs who constitute the executive committee (Sporn, 1999; Marginson & Considine, 2000).

The main arguments in support of this model are based on the view that universities should be governed by professional people who are equipped with knowledge and experience in corporate policy and planning, and are able to direct middle management. The extreme point of view in relation to this model is that that the academics should engage in teaching and research and leave the governance to experts (Young, 1998).

Most criticisms of the corporate governance model are centred on the view that it will lead to the "commodification of education by displacing academic distinctiveness in pursuit

of corporate efficiency" (Geiger as cited in Trakman, 2008, pp. 69-70). However, as Trakman points out, it is increasingly acknowledged that universities now have complex budgets and are engaged in a competitive marketplace that requires more rational and flexible decision making. This requires a governance structure that provides for "efficiency as well as accountability" (2008, p. 70).

It should be noted that while universities do not have obligations to shareholders, unlike public corporations, they do have a responsibility to a range of stakeholders such as students, faculty, alumni, corporate partners, government and the public to ensure good governance. In this way the corporate governance of universities is different in both form and style from business corporations (Harman & Treadgold, 2007; Trakman, 2008).

Shared governance occurs when a wide array of stakeholders including students, academics, administrative staff, alumni, corporate partners, government, and the public are all represented on the governing body (Trakman, 2008). The

shared approach prescribes participation of all relevant groups with their different views and ideas in decision making. The main difference from collegial governance is that shared governance involves a wide range of stakeholders and is not limited to academic staff. It is differentiated from the corporate model due to the representative nature of the various stakeholder groups rather than a focus on professional and business interests.

The main problem identified with shared governance is in determining which stakeholders ought to be represented, the manner of their representation, and the extent of their authority. According to Trakman (2008), shared governance can become ineffective when stakeholders falsely assume that they are responsible to the groups that elected or nominated them rather than to the university as a whole.

Despite these deficiencies, many universities, particularly those in the public sector, have adopted a form of shared governance. Most universities in Australia provide for elected members of academic staff, students and alumni on

their boards. However, there tends to be wide divergence amongst institutions in terms of the composition of boards, as well as in the authority accorded to the different stakeholders. However, as Marginson and Considine (2000) note there has been an irreversible trend towards a corporate model of governance amongst universities in Australia which is characterised by reduced numbers of stakeholder representatives on governing bodies and stronger executive power. The effect of this trend has been to dilute the power and purpose of the shared governance model.

This dilution is further exacerbated by the growing move by universities in Australia to establish corporations outside the reach of governing bodies and the principles of shared governance. Company structures are adopted to operationalise such sensitive and lucrative areas as international education and research technologies that are usually subject to commercial-in-confidence proceedings. This trend will become more obvious when I consider developments in governance arrangements by providers of pathway programs in Chapter Five.

The *trustee governance* model involves a board of trustees that acts on behalf of the beneficiaries, that is, the university community. However, unlike models that involve shared governance, trustee governance is not directly concerned with stakeholder representation in governance. As Trakman (2008) points out, the trustee model is structured on a model that is enacted by government legislation that places strong emphasis on fiduciary duty to “exercise the highest levels of diligence in protecting the trust” (pp. 71-72).

Harman and Treadgold (2007) present a case for adoption of the trustee model for university governance in Australia. This approach is based on a rejection of the corporate model to ensure that the “fundamental core business of a university is protected and sustained at all costs” (p. 27). By this the authors mean the academic staff of the university should control both teaching and research quality. They contend that a trustee model would be “a more community-oriented approach for the long-term benefit of the institution” (p. 26).

However, in his study of various forms of university governance Trakman (2008) points out that the trustee model is "vague at best" (p. 72). He states that there are few instances of it serving as an effective form of governance in public universities. He believes that this model does not encompass all of the elements of university governance and that it tends to "work around the edges" (p. 72). The trustee model seems to have particular appeal when there are major concerns in an institution about ethics and professional responsibility.

Amalgam models of university governance include a combination of collegial, corporate, shared and trustee models. As Trakman (2008) points out the amalgam model usually involves a willingness to experiment with different approaches to university governance. This includes providing for extensive consultation on public interest decisions such as equity in admissions or environmental protection. The main benefit held for an amalgam model of governance is that it is able to incorporate the strengths of the different governance

models to suit the specific needs of the university. The major criticism of the model is that it is not necessarily clear what stakeholder group is responsible for leadership of the institution. The provision for extensive consultation on public interest decisions is also considered a detraction as it usually leads to long delays by the governing body in decision making.

Trend towards the Corporate Model of Governance

Shattock (2002) shows that in the UK (except for Oxford and Cambridge) external factors such as the economy and political attitudes have been the major influences on the model of governance most widely adopted in the sector. He notes that the matter of funding for the institution has usually shaped the governance structure. Up until the twentieth century most universities had to generate their own funding and thus had a "supreme governing body" (p. 236).

The advent of increased funding from government in the UK in the 1930s saw the dynamics change in tune with political

attitudes that led to stronger involvement by the academic community. As Shattock (2002) notes this was reinforced by the radical mood of the 1960s. However, the rise of neo-liberal political orthodox views from the mid-1980s saw cuts to funding, pressure for a more market-orientated position, and a push for a corporate system of governance. This shift was supported by a series of reports for government according to Shattock. Foremost amongst these reports in the UK was the Dearing Committee in 1997 which stated that the main role of the governing body was "to steer the institution towards its strategic direction" (Shattock, 2002, p. 239).

This trend is mirrored in the experiences for higher education in Europe, the USA, and Australia in the mid-1980s where economic rationalist considerations and the dominant neo-liberal political views also held sway. In Europe, a study by Mora and Vieira (2008) found a clear trend towards a corporate model of governance from a range of models from state-controlled to shared governance. This was largely a result of social and economic demands. The changed approach

was seen as an essential part of a transformation of the organisational structures of universities to develop a more responsive approach to these demands.

There is also a strong link to changes in economic circumstances precipitating changes in governance models in higher education in the USA in this period. Pusser and Turner (2004) show that this was even the case for the non-profit providers that had by "tradition, charter, and statutory design" (p. 14) been significantly different from for-profit institutions in terms of decision-making. The pressure to generate additional sources of revenue other than government funding led these non-profit providers to begin to adopt the same approach to decision-making as the for-profit providers.

While their relative structures are similar, the role of the respective stakeholders in for-profits and not-for-profits in decision-making has been markedly different, based on the mission in relation to profit. In a for-profit institution the nature of the relationship between faculty, administrators and the governing board is usually dictated by corporate control.

However, in the non-profit institutions the concept of shared governance provides for constituencies such as students, faculty, and alumni to be highly involved in the decision-making processes (Sporn, 1999; Pusser & Turner, 2004).

Diminishing government funding for the sector in the US has brought about the need for non-profit institutions to become more entrepreneurial. Pusser and Turner (2004) suggest that if the non-profit institutions follow the for-profits even more closely in operational approaches then this will lead to less discernible differences in governance structures and processes. In Australia, the approach to governance by universities in the 1980s and 1990s also moved away from the shared governance model to a model more closely resembling that used by business corporations. As Harman and Treadgold (2007) point out, this move largely reflected the neo-liberal economic and new public management views in vogue at that time that "regarded the business or corporate model as superior in terms of assuring greater efficiency and accountability" (p. 13).

According to Baird (2006) the federal government in Australia became concerned about university self-governance because of cases of financial mismanagement and a perceived need for a more accountable system of governance. This was closely aligned to the government's growing belief in the benefits of marketisation in higher education. This view was supported by a conviction that increased competition between institutions for public funds for teaching and research facilitated greater efficiency (Larsen, Maassen & Stensaker 2009). At the institutional level, the role and position of the formally appointed managers and administrators was strengthened at the expense of the academic staff (Taylor, 2006).

However, as Marginson and Considine (2000) point out while universities in Australia have taken on a distinctly corporate character with respect to their governing bodies "this has not been so much drawn from business but from public sector reform" (p. 4). A major consequence of the adoption of a corporate model is the strengthening of executive control

and a mandate to make decisions without reference to committees. As Eckel (2003) points out this is a process consistent with the accepted principles of good corporate management.

The manifestation of these structural changes are the replacement of shared governance mechanisms with less formal ones such as vice-chancellors' advisory committees. As Marginson and Considine (2000) state these types of changes serve to vastly strengthen executive power because the status of the committee is only "advisory" (p. 11). Other factors at work are the declining role and importance of academic senates and the role of budget systems as drivers of institutional performance. The net result according to Marginson and Considine (2000) is "government-inspired, management-driven convergence" (p. 12).

The Triangle of Coordination

Clark's (1983) *Triangle of Co-ordination* typology seeks to explain the different influences or forces on higher education systems. The forces identified by Clark are:

market-based coordination (referred to as the 'Market'), government-induced coordination (the 'State'), and academic coordination ('Academia'). Each system or institution can be located in some place within the triangle depending on how much these forces dominated the system. Figure 1 shows Clark's typology in a graphical form:

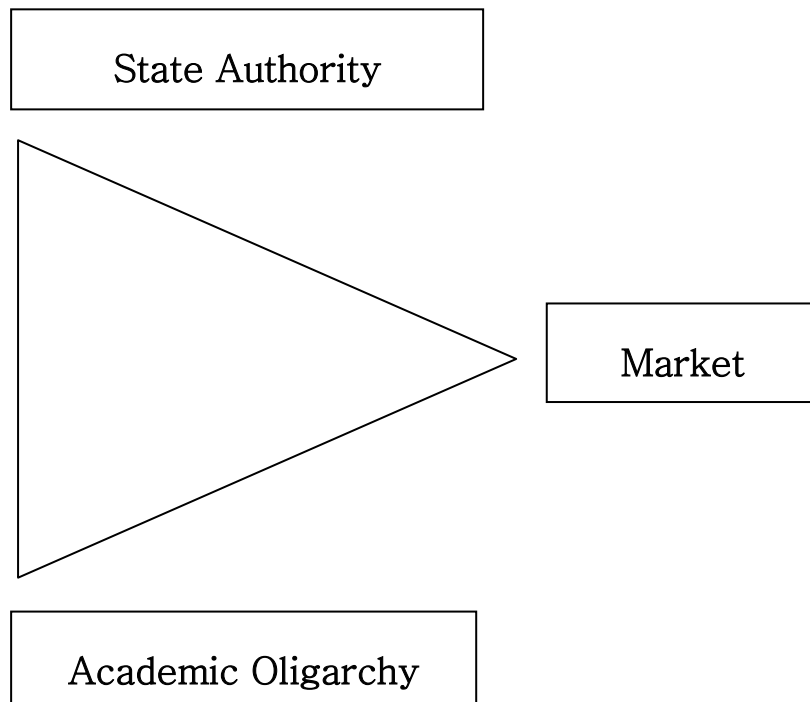


Figure 1:
The Triangle of Coordination

This is a simple way of presenting the respective position of the dominant forces on governance in higher

education. While governance has become a sophisticated interplay of complex relationships involving the dynamics of these different modes of coordination it is nonetheless possible to position a higher education system or institution within the triangle of coordination.

In developing the model, Clark initially identified the machinery of state as the central tool in shaping the markets of higher education. He then turned his analysis to the pathways of integration between the state and market, and then "the main interest groups that had strong hands on the machinery" (p. 136). Clark then reframed the continuum of the state and the market fusion to recognise that under the conditions of weak state or market influence powerful academics could assert significant authority over a governing body. He referred to this occurrence as "academic oligarchy" (p. 138).

Clark (1983) predicted that the influence of the market would grow over time as political and economic factors placed added pressure on governments to have less direct control over

the higher education system. This was in the context of the institutions all competing with each other for prestige, reputation, and resources. This competition is mediated by state authority and market forces that provide inducements or sanctions for particular types of institutional behaviour. The primary state mechanism for shaping the institution's market is the allocation of resources, in the form of funding grants.

Additionally, the state in its role as regulator can impose regulatory constraints on the institution that negatively impinge on its market. At the same time the market can be shaped by the academy leaders as "they endeavour to shape their own missions, garner external resources, and position themselves within prestige hierarchies" (Clark, 1983, p. 138).

At the time of writing Clark (1983) placed Sweden as the country closet to State control and the United States as the country most highly influenced by the market. At the extreme end of the market, Clark stated that the market system is essentially "non-regulated" (p. 138). Britain was cited as an

example of where the academy had the strongest influence through dominance of the Universities Grants Committee which had enormous influence over funding to universities in this period, the 1980s.

The triangle of coordination will be adopted for this study. It can be applied to institutions to determine their position in the typology as indicated by the example below of the universities of Cambridge, California and NSW in Figure 2:

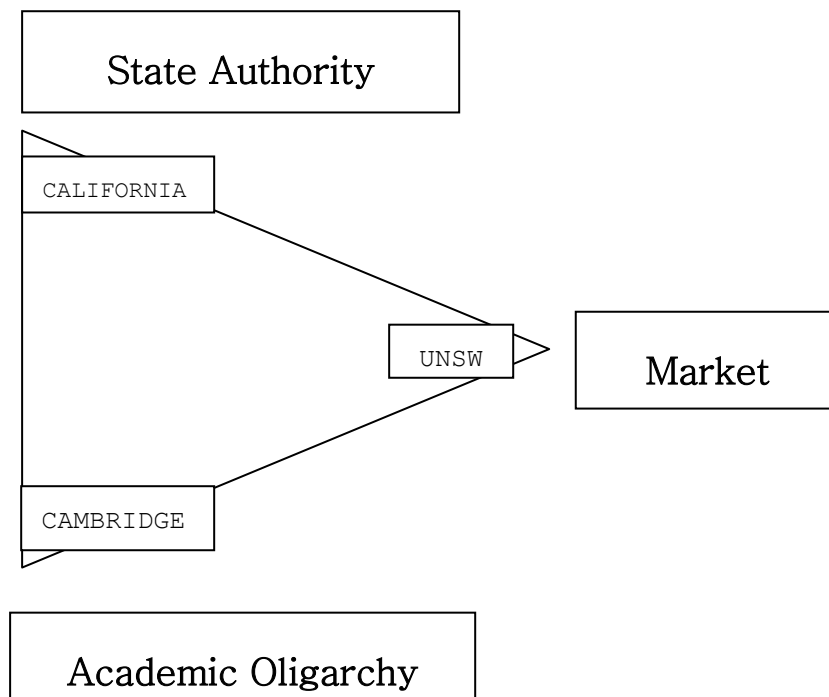


Figure 2

The Triangle of Coordination Applied to Individual Universities

As noted in the section on models of governance the University of Cambridge has a very highly involved collegial governance system that provides representation for over 3,000 dons (as Oxford and Cambridge academics are called) in the process. This is a clear example in Clark's typology of academic oligarchy where academic staff has strong influence over the processes of governance. The key executive and policy making functions at Cambridge are vested in a university council that is accountable to the academic body, Regent House. However, as Fried (2006) shows how it works in practice is that the university council exercises the major executive functions for and behalf of the university.

An example of state dominance is the University of California system which consists of ten campuses with more than 200,000 students, 160,000 faculty and staff. The governance model is a variation of the trustee model. The governing body known as the Board of Regents is responsible for the governance of the university system. The Regents consists of 26 voting members of whom eighteen are appointed

by the Governor of California, the remaining seven are *ex-officio* (set positions assigned by the legislature including the UC president) and one voting position is assigned to a student. The Board also has two non-voting faculty members (Fried, 2006).

Trakman (2008) notes that the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, has moved structurally closer to a corporate model driven by market forces. UNSW governance consists of a chancellor (chairman) and a smaller board of governors directing the governance of the university. The president/vice-chancellor, chief operating officer, and chief financial officer serve the board as the senior management team. Additionally there are three deputy vice chancellors and executive deans who have "significant delegated authority in relation to their areas" (University of New South Wales, 2010).

Due to its robustness, Clark's triangle has been widely applied by scholars in the field of governance in higher education. Pusser (2008) states that Clark's model has proven

to be remarkably resilient over the past twenty-five years.

Given the strength and applicability of Clark's work as one of the most influential models for understanding governance in higher education it has been adopted for this study. It will serve as the basis from which to evaluate the position of the three providers of pathway programs selected for this research. Each of the providers will be examined in relation to the dominant force identified by Clark: the state, the academy, and the market.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for a study sets out the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports research. Miles and Huberman (1994) defined a conceptual framework as a visual or written product that "explains, either graphically or in a narrative form, the main things to be studied - the key factors, concepts or variables - and the presumed relationship between them" (p. 18).

In developing the conceptual framework for this study it should be acknowledged that it is a conception or model that

identifies what I think is going on and why. In this respect it is a tentative theory that encapsulates the ideas and beliefs I hold about what needs to be investigated. It provides the basis for the investigation of the research problem identified in Chapter One and the subsequent research design set out in Chapter Six.

The conceptual framework constructed for this study has been based on two major inputs; namely, my experiential knowledge (technical knowledge, research background, and personal experience) and the literature review including prior related theory and prior related research. These are inextricably linked and when combined together have provided the elements for the construction of the framework.

Clark's *Triangle of Coordination* (1983) provides the core components of the conceptual framework. As already noted in the review of literature there are a number of factors that interact to exercise a profound influence on the governance of providers of pathway university programs in Australia. These major factors are globalisation and marketisation. However,

there are two other key elements, namely, accountability and quality assurance that also have a significant influence on governance. These are largely determined by government to ensure best practice in terms of governance and require strict adherence by providers to ensure compliance. There is inevitable tension between the two forces given the providers' operational imperatives and the external environment. Another major influence is the academy, that is, the academic division of the provider that is responsible for the formulation and delivery of the course of study that enables the credentialling of the pathway qualification. These factors have been put together in a matrix (see Figure 3) based on Clark's model (1983) to graphically illustrate the conceptual framework for this study.

The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of these various factors on the form and mechanism of governance adopted by the providers and account for the reasons for their adoption. The definition of governance for institutions of higher education provided by Maassen (2003) noted in Chapter

One is pertinent to this purpose. Maassen states that,

"...governance is about the frameworks in which universities and colleges manage themselves and about the processes and structures used to achieve the intended outcomes - in other words about *how* higher education institutions operate" (p. 32). In this study, Maassen's definition is applied to *how* providers of pathway programs manage and operate themselves. The inter-play between all the governance elements of providers of pathway programs largely based on Clark's 1983 typology but taking into account the literature and my experiential knowledge is set out in Figure 3:

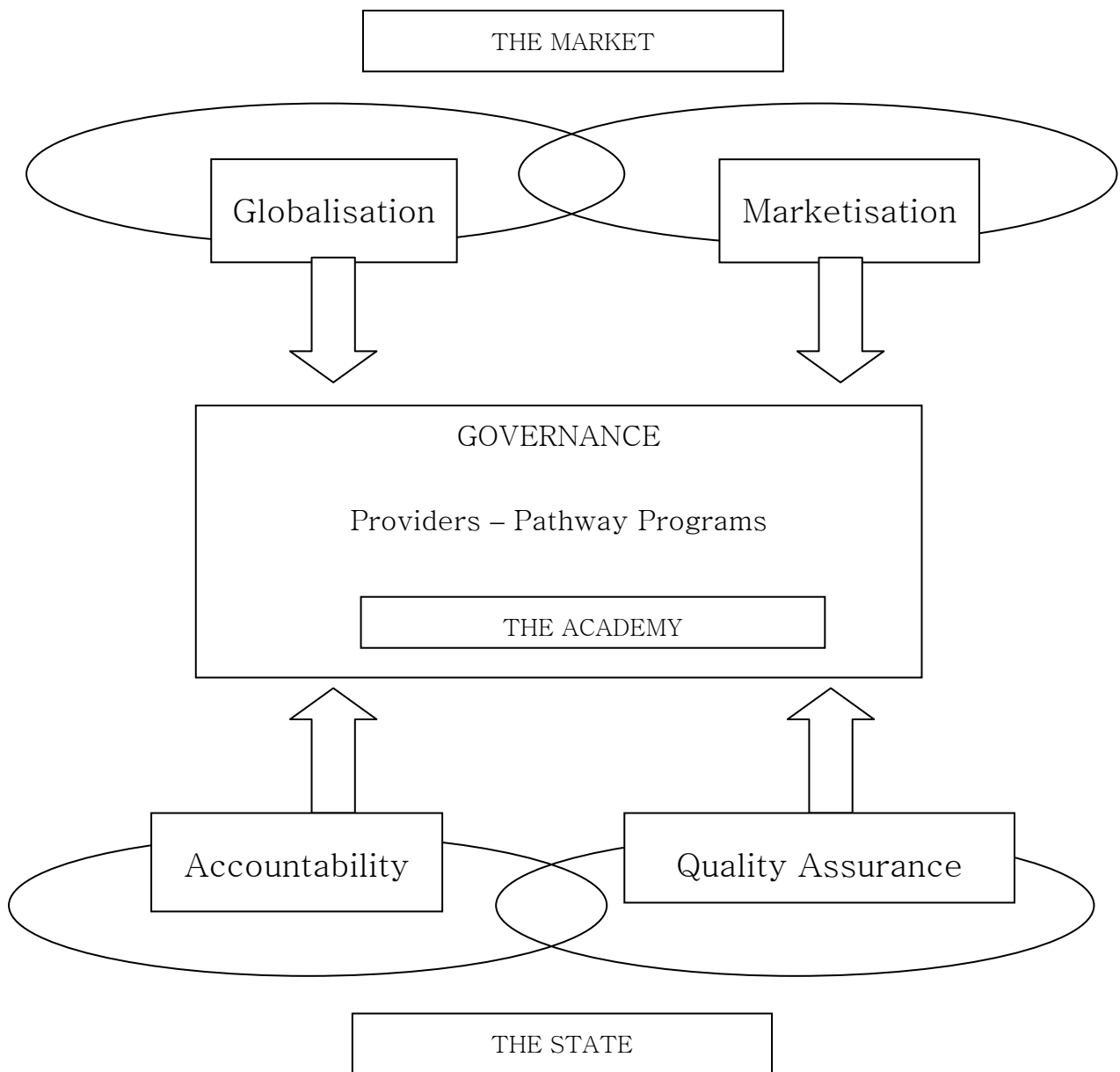


Figure 3:

Conceptual Framework for Governance of Providers of Pathway Programs in Australia

The theoretical position of this study is based on the view that the major influences on the governance of providers at any one time will be determined by the state, the market or the academy. This position is based on Clark's (1983) typology, the *Triangle of Co-ordination* and informed by relevant elements of the literature. For the conceptual framework Figure 3 above shows that globalisation and marketisation variables are driven by the *Market*; the accountability and quality assurance factors are the major influences exerted by government or the *State*; and that within the provider the *Academy* can have an impact on the processes and mechanisms that determine the entity's approach to governance. At any given time, one of these institutions may hold sway over the approach to governance; there is constant tension between each element.

Thus, the form of governance and the mission adopted by a provider of pathway programs is largely determined as a result of dynamic interplay between the elements in this matrix. Figure 3 illustrates the competing tensions. This

study seeks to explain the reasons providers in the sector adopt certain forms of governance and the associated mission. This conceptual framework guides the research which seeks to answer the three research questions postulated for this study.

Conclusion

The shift from a shared governance approach to a corporate model of governance is the outstanding feature of the change in governance in higher education over the past twenty years or so. The analysis in this chapter shows the overwhelming shift toward executive power in decision-making. The adoption of Clark's triangle of coordination as the model for this study provides a strong basis for a determination of what the dominant influence - the state, the market, or the academy - is on governance of providers of pathway programs in the higher education sector in Australia. The conceptual framework extends this analysis to take into account the major elements that impact on the theoretical framework adopted for this study. This then guides the methodological approach to set out in Chapter Six.

Chapter Four - The Global Context

The itinerant scholar is as old as scholarship itself. For centuries scholars have crossed many borders to sit at the feet of learned men of whom they had heard tales from far away. They also travelled to examine ancient relics, artifacts, or manuscripts they thought may contain clues to some unexplored knowledge. Many returned to their homelands to impart their discoveries to others eager to learn. Some remained in their new found land to make a new life for themselves. (Chipman, 2003, p. 1)

Introduction

For centuries the international language of scholarship was Latin. Today's international student learns through English. This situation came about in the second half of the twentieth century. Chipman (1999) claims the modern international student wants a higher education that is not only delivered in English, but at an English language university in an English-speaking society. This is clearly evidenced by the unabated growing demand for places in universities in the major English-speaking countries quantified by Cunningham (2003) and predictions of future

global growth by Bohm, Davis, Meares, and Pearce, (2002), and more recently, by Banks and Kevat (2010).

Today, the international student, the preferred contemporary term for the itinerant scholar, is a multi-billion dollar global business. According to the latest figures from the Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation (OECD), trade in international education in 2009 was a \$45 USD billion industry with approximately 2.5 million students studying in higher education institutions outside their own country (Vincent-Lancrin & Karkkainen, 2009).

In considering the significant effects of globalisation on the higher education landscape in Australia and pathway programs in particular, in this chapter I will examine the rise of international education as part of a global trend in trade. In particular, I will focus on *transnational education* – the component of trade in international education that is conducted off-shore. This is the area that is providing the major growth opportunities for providers of pathway programs.

This will include the various methods of delivery and consideration of its value in commercial terms. The chapter will conclude with an overall assessment of the impact on governance of providers of pathway programs resulting from international education activities. An examination of international education in relation to globalisation will provide valuable insights for this study as it is the arena in which the private providers have emerged and operate.

Globalisation

The context for developments in the sector is *globalisation*; which provides a basis for understanding the dynamics between international education and higher education. In an overall sense, higher education drives and is driven by globalisation. Higher education is the medium for equipping people with the skills to be successful in the knowledge-based global economy. The flow of ideas, students, academics, and funding across international borders together with developments in information communication technology are combining to drastically change the higher education

landscape. Competition between providers of higher education products and services is intensifying under the growing influence of market forces and the emergence of new players. It is in this global context that the growth and development of pathway programs for entry into universities in English-speaking countries is occurring with a consequent impact on the governance mechanisms adopted by the providers.

It is important from the outset to be clear about what is meant by globalisation. For the purposes of this study, globalisation "is the widening, deepening, and speeding-up of world-wide connectedness" (Held, McGrew, Goldbatt & Perraton, 1999, p. 18). As Marginson and van den Wende (2007) point out, higher education has always been more internationally open than most sectors "because its main product, knowledge, has never really been subject to the constraints of international borders" (p. 18). They point out that higher education institutions are subject to the changes around them because of their central role in knowledge creation that is vital to their role and crucial to world economic growth.

It needs to be understood that globalisation can take a number of different forms and meanings. The term *globalisation* as it being applied in this study is in the context of growing inter-dependence and convergence between countries on a geo-economic basis. The underlying factor is the on-going roll-out of a mass market for higher education as part of the overall development of world trade.

As Marginson and van den Wende (2007) state, globalisation in higher education is not a universal phenomenon; it varies according to the type of provider. Further, the extent of globalisation usually depends on the level of engagement of the provider with international activities. What is important to note for the purpose of this study are the authors' comments that the extent of globalisation in higher education varies according to "policy, governance, and management" (Marginson & van den Wende, 2007, p. 20). This "global transformation" of higher education, according to Marginson and van den Wende is leading to homogeneity and convergence based on market paradigms (p. 19).

Globalisation in higher education needs to be placed in the context of its wider environment, that is, the world economy. The nature of the environment in pure economic terms is based on capitalist conditions that provide for international social, economic, and technological exchange (Willetts, 2001). The philosophical basis for globalisation according to Crook (2001) is a neo-liberal ideology that "...allows people to pursue their own goals and they are given the liberty to do so" (p.1). As a result, it is claimed the society as a whole prospers and advances.

Neo-ideology, however, does not advocate international *laisse faire*. As Chipman (2002) points out, the limitations of the market and the need for government intervention ensure social justice and a regulatory framework for business. It is in this real-world environment that many higher education providers have resolved to become actively involved in the global market for the provision of international education products and services.

The key to understanding globalisation in purely economic terms, according to Viotti and Kauppi (1999), is to see it from an historical perspective. In that respect, it is firmly rooted in the advent of capitalism. Rather than concentrate on individual states and national economies, Viotti and Kauppi maintain that to understand globalisation we need to focus on capitalism as an "integrated, historically expanding system that transcends any particular political or geographic boundaries" (p. 352). From that perspective, the higher education sector can be seen as an example of a series of independent entities that together have become a major transnational industry.

English is the language that is front-and-centre of the global knowledge system; "It has become the *lingua franca par excellence* and continues to entrench that dominance in a self-reinforcing process" (Crystal, 2003, p. 13). As already noted in this study most students from non-English countries overwhelmingly want to obtain academic qualifications from English-speaking countries. Conversely, not many students from

English speaking countries want to obtain degrees in other languages from non-English speaking nations. The key factor is the premier position of English as the language of business and trade in the world. In the academic world it is the global language for research and publications; "English has become the international language of higher education as it already is for aviation and information technology" (Chipman, 2003, p. 1).

According to the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report on *Higher Education to 2030* (2009), English is also increasingly becoming the medium of instruction in universities outside of the main English-speaking countries. It is widely used in India, Singapore, Hong Kong, and the Philippines, which are countries with strong historical links to English speaking countries. More recently, Malaysia has allowed English to be introduced into the growing private tertiary education sector. There is growing use of English for programs delivered in China by foreign-based higher education providers, often in partnership

with local institutions and/or entrepreneurs. In Europe, English is used as the medium of instruction at the post-graduate level and for institutions in the Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Sweden and Denmark targeting fee-paying Asian students. The report also notes the spread of English as the medium of instruction or for examinations in smaller European nations (OECD, 2009). The dominance of English in higher education is further evidence of the global trend toward convergence and integration.

Transnational Education

The growing global market for higher education creates market opportunities for international providers, most of which are based in English-speaking countries like Australia, Canada, the UK, the USA, and New Zealand (van der Wende, 2003). A feature of this development is how providers in these countries offer programs in a range of forms in developing countries. This "matching of supply and demand is increasingly taking place across borders, facilitated by use of information

and communication technology" (van der Wende, 2003, p. 194).

The net result is an ever-expanding global market for international higher education. This trend is sometimes described as 'transnational education', 'off-shore education', or 'borderless education'. The term to be used in this study is *transnational education* as this is most often used by the industry in Australia and the UK (Adams, 1998).

There is a range of definitions but most cluster around that provided by the Global Alliance for Transnational Education (GATE):

Transnational education ... denotes any teaching or learning activity in which the students are in a different country (the host country) to that in which the institution providing the education is based (the home country). This situation requires that national boundaries be crossed by information about the education, and by staff and/or educational materials. (Harvey, 2004)

The developments in transnational education are firmly linked to the growing commercial interest by higher education

providers in the recruitment of international students. For the purposes of this study it should be noted that a significant part of this trend are distributed education programs (includes pathway programs) that are regarded by many commentators as the driver of further growth (see for example, Mazzarol, Soutar, & Seng, 2003).

Developments and Growth in Pathway Programs

The increasing level of activity in pathway education beginning in the latter part of the 20th century is an integral part of the overall growth and development of the international education market. The main thrust of commercial activity has usually been on the recruitment of international students, mainly from Asia and the Middle East to the country where the institution is domiciled (McBurnie & Pollock, 2000). However, McBurnie and Pollock point out, there is an increasing focus on delivering in the student's home country.

As noted in this study, numbers have continued to expand rapidly, especially with the emergence of China and India as

mass markets. It has become a major commercial business for providers, hence the entry of private providers seeking a profit. As Marginson (2006) notes, competition between the dominant players, the UK, the USA and Australia, is largely centered on students doing degree courses. International students have to pay full-price tuition, and as a result need to be self-financed and to have attained a certain level of English language proficiency.

Thus, the usual pathway for the international student whose first language is not English was to complete secondary schooling in their home country and then transfer to a country of choice for higher education and undertake an intensive English language program to reach the pre-requisite standard of entry. Such a program of study could take the international student anything from a minimum of six months up to eighteen months largely depending upon the level of English proficiency upon arrival in the host country. Given the costs of living and studying in the host country a trend developed over the last 10-15 years for students to undertake English language

learning or an equivalent qualification in English in the home country and then to transfer to the host country to undertake an undergraduate degree program (Adams, 1998; Fiocco, 2006).

It was largely based on the cost to the student - both for tuition and living - that the opportunity emerged for providers to deliver in the home country. The initial programs offered by Australian institutions were "twinning programs" - whereby a provider offers an Australian qualification with its "twin", an organisation which may be a private provider, a professional or industry association or a university or college (Adams, 1998, p. 8). The main aim was for the student to complete, say the first two years of a program of study in the host country including English language, and then to transfer to the home country to complete the qualification. "Twinning" subsequently took many variations including articulation from a diploma in the host country to a degree in Australia to full completion in the host country (Adams, 1998).

The opportunity to offer programs off-shore in this manner was then seized upon by a number of Australian

providers, both public and private, that extended the model to include to franchising, locally supported distance education programs, moderated programs, and branch campuses. *Franchising arrangements* is when the institution grants a host in another country permission or license to offer the provider institution's program under agreed conditions, e.g. ACT's Global Assessment Certificate. *Locally supported distance education programs* usually involve use of resources in a host country to support students enrolled in distance education programs, e.g., University of Southern Queensland (USQ) contracts a local provider for tutorial and resource support for its students in Fiji. For *moderated programs* an offshore provider teaches its own programs with quality assurance from a university. The university offers advanced standing to graduates of the offshore program, e.g., the University of Tasmania moderates a business course taught in Kuwait. A *branch campus* arrangement is when a fully-fledged campus of the provider institution that offers programs from commencement to graduation is set up in the host country, e.g.

University of Wollongong Dubai. There are numerous hybrids of these models. Many universities are using a range of modes of delivery (increasingly online mechanisms) as part of their transnational education activities (Adams, 1998; McBurnie & Pollock, 2000; Adams, 2007; Naidoo, 2009).

The main markets have been in the Asia-Pacific region, initially in South East Asia, but increasingly in recent years, in North East Asia, particularly China. The demand has now spread to include South Asia (mainly India) and the Middle East. The common feature for all higher education programs is that they are delivered in English and require a certain level of language proficiency for entry. It is possible to begin a pathway program with a lower level of English and upon completion not be required to undertake an external language test such as IELTS or TOEFL (Adams, Burgess & Phillips, 2009).

It has already been noted that Australia and the UK are the market leaders in the provision of transnational education. The USA, which is currently by far the largest host country of international students with more than a quarter of

the market, has traditionally not been a major player in transnational education (Altbach, 2004). However, the American approach has changed largely as a result of the events of 11th September 2001 which greatly reduced student flows from Middle Eastern countries. It exacerbated the need to develop supplementary forms of revenue and to maintain the profile of US higher education internationally. Given that international students were finding it difficult to enter the US to study, Altbach notes that the American higher education providers went to the market.

Examples of transnational education activities include the establishment of a branch of the University of Chicago's Business school in Barcelona, Spain and a branch of the Wharton School of Business from the University of Pennsylvania in Singapore. Branches of American universities have also been set up in China, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Tajikistan, and the UAE (Altbach, 2004). Additionally, two of America's largest and best known educational providers have entered the pathway program field, namely ACT Inc and Kaplan Inc.

The main players in the higher education arena are the US corporate universities like the Apollo Group (owner of the University of Phoenix) and the Laureate Inc that have established higher education programs and services in a variety of offshore locations, principally Europe and South America over the past twenty-five years (Apollo Group, 2010; Laureate Education Inc, 2011).

The principle American player offering pathway programs for university entrance is ACT Inc, formerly known as American College Test that owns and distributes the Global Assessment Certificate (GAC) on a franchised basis. ACT operates a subsidiary company known as ACT Education Solutions Limited (AES) based in Sydney to distribute the programs on a global basis; its major markets are located in the Asia-Pacific region, principally China. It has just over 130 franchisees delivering its pathway programs (ACT Education Solutions, 2011).

ACT Inc is a test developer and provider based in Iowa City, Iowa that is an independent, not-for-profit education

organisation. The organisation delivers over 2½ million university entrance tests each year, about the same number as its major rival, the Scholastic Aptitude Test better known as SAT, which is owned by ETS (Educational Testing Service) based in Princeton, New Jersey. ACT Inc was founded in 1958 and developed the ACT as a college admissions test based on the school curriculum (Lemann, 1999). While it operates in the USA as a not-for-profit organization, it established ACT Education Services (AES) as a for-profit division based in Sydney to operate its pathway programs (ACT Inc, 2006).

More recently, giant US education provider, Kaplan, has directly entered the Australian market in the university preparation field with the purchase of two colleges. In 2007 Kaplan Inc purchased Bradford College from the University of Adelaide, and in 2009 they secured the Murdoch Institute of Technology from the Alexander Education Group in Perth (Kaplan International Colleges, 2010).

Kaplan also provides college pathway and foundation programs in the United Kingdom, through partnerships with the

University of Sheffield, Glasgow University and Nottingham Trent University, and in the U.S. with Northeastern University. In China a joint venture, Kaplan ACE, provides preparation courses for entry into a consortium of U.K. universities at centres throughout China, along with degree programs at its campus in Shanghai. It has recently gained the contract for delivery of vocational education pathway programs in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates (Kaplan Inc, 2011).

Kaplan Inc, which began in the basement of the founder Stanley Kaplan's parents' Brooklyn home as a tutoring business in 1938 is a for-profit subsidiary of The Washington Post Company (Lemann, 1999). In 2010 its total revenue was \$US 2.5 billion. In addition to test preparation and university preparation programs, Kaplan provides higher education programs, professional training courses, and other services for various levels of education (Kaplan Inc, 2011).

The transnational education sector has become extremely competitive with a mix of private and public providers from the other English speaking markets such as Canada, Ireland,

and New Zealand (see for example, Taylor, 2000) entering the market. Another emerging market is the new "hubs" for international education such as Singapore and the UAE. Both have embarked on concerted campaigns to attract international students to study at branch campuses of a range of overseas institutions established in their respective locations. Singapore expects to be host to over 150,000 international students by 2012 (Slattery, 2006). Dubai's Knowledge Village (2011) has twelve branch campuses while Abu Dhabi has targeted more elite universities such as Paris's Sorbonne University and the University of New York (Abu Dhabi Education Council, 2010).

Australian Experience

As Slattery (2006) points out, "Australia is a striking example of a country whose provision of cross-border education is increasingly carried out in the student's home country through program and institutional mobility" (p. 31). Transnational education is a major aspect of Australia's

activities in international higher education. In 2009 the transnational education component of international education for Australia was valued at \$350 million. It accounted for 21% of total international student enrolments for the higher education sector in Australia totalling about 140,000 students studying in various modes including distance, face-to-face, and blended modes (AEI, 2010).

The beginnings of transnational education in Australia was in 1985 when the federal government made the decision to move from an international student program based on government subsidies to an export based private student program. Fiocco (2005) shows how this change in policy became the catalyst for the development of an export industry across all sectors of education. The main focus was on the growth of international students studying on-shore in Australia.

However, as already noted from the mid-1980s a number of Australian institutions moved to offer transnational programs as well as to offer places on-shore in Australia. The first

offshore program offered was by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in 1987 when it ran a course in logistics in Malaysia (Adams, 1998). As Adams points out, most of these programs were operated either totally off-shore or in a combination of offshore and onshore delivery in Australia which "set the scene for a secondary part of the export market that took education to the student" (p. 7).

A further significant effect of market expansion has been the spread of offerings across the globe by Australian higher education providers in various modes. In 2009, the year in which the most recent data are available from Universities Australia, there were almost 900 higher education programs on offer offshore to over 100,000 students in 70 countries throughout the world (Universities Australia, 2010).

The other outstanding feature of this expansion has been the establishment of branch campuses in off-shore locations, mainly in Asia. For example, Monash University has campuses in Malaysia and South Africa, Curtin University has a campus in Malaysia, as does Swinburne, while RMIT has established a

branch campus in Vietnam, James Cook University a campus in Singapore, and Wollongong operates a branch campus in Dubai (Slattery, 2006).

The overtly commercial approach to transnational education by Australian providers usually results in financial benefits as a result of additional income being generated by the tuition fees charged to students. As a result of the decrease in government funding for the higher education sector in Australia the funds obtained from transnational education ventures are critical to the maintenance of institutional budgets (Slattery, 2006; Quinlivan, 2006).

In general, the distribution of pathway programs as part of transnational education is a low financial risk for the provider according to McBurnie and Pollock (2000). Distributed education programs such as articulation programs, moderation programs, twinning, and franchising arrangements do not really expose the provider to more than short-opportunity risks related to the cost of the development of the programs, some investment in the set-up phase, and ancillary activities like

shared marketing. As McBurnie and Pollock point out, the major impact of any failure is likely to be reputational rather than financial.

On the other hand, the development of branch campuses offshore and their related infrastructure can involve substantial capital commitments and reputational risk (Adams, 2007). In the case of the University of New South Wales closure of its Singapore branch campus venture in 2007, Adams claims led to a loss of reputation for that university in the region as well as damage to the Australian brand. The sudden closure of a campus in Dubai by USQ in 2005 also proved to be damaging to the reputation of Australian higher education in the Middle East according to then AEI regional manager Jarrad Hingston (Personal communication, J. Hingston, May 30, 2011).

The export value of international students was the main driver that successfully established the transnational education segment of the market in Australian higher education over the past thirty years. It was initially seen as a means to recruit students from offshore to study at the home campus

in Australia. Subsequent developments relating to demand and restricted capacity in foreign markets created a lucrative business for Australian providers that have become a substantial income earner. Government legislation does not allow Australian universities to subsidise transnational education activities (Dawkins, 1988); this has made it incumbent on the public providers to generate profits from activities.

Globalisation and commercialisation are major forces shaping the distribution of transnational education. The crossing of borders on a commercial basis also involves a range of social and cultural consequences that pose threats to the standards of quality assurance that are set in the country of origin. This has major implications for the governance of providers engaged in transnational educational activities as the governing boards have ultimate responsibility.

Impact on Governance

Marginson and van den Wende (2007) note that while not all higher education providers are necessarily globally focussed they are still subject to the same processes of globalisation as changes go on around them. Further, the policies that produce and support them are being reinvented due to the impact of globalisation. Foremost among those changes is governance and the way that the providers are required to operate. This impact is widespread and is strongly linked to changing views in public policy to accountability and transparency in governance.

In the report, *The Business of Borderless Education*, commissioned by the Federal Department of Education, Cunningham (2003) called for the public higher education sector to more fully consider and understand the implications of globalisation. In relation to transnational education, the report strongly recommended that the sector become more bound by commercial factors than their current methods of operation. The report noted that the private providers were more adaptive

and flexible, mainly because they are not bound by collegial governance, linked research and teaching, or academic autonomy and control. The report concludes that new approaches were needed by tradition-bound Australian universities to respond to globalisation and commercialisation to ensure more effective operating structures and systems.

In terms of the effect of globalisation on governance in the higher education sector there were a series of government reviews conducted to report on developments in both Australia and the UK. In Australia, public universities were subject to a number of government reviews in the 1990s - "most notably, the Hoare Committee Report (1995), and the West Report (1998)" (Rochford (2001, p. 47). Shattock (2006) shows that similar government investigations in the UK in this period also examined the issue of governance in universities and raised concerns about governance that directly resulted in reforms. The main concern generated by these reports related to the ability of the university governance structure to manage themselves effectively in accordance with new expectations

and requirements for institutions and agencies in the public sector (Meek & Wood, 1997).

These reports contributed greatly to the calls for reform of governance of higher education. Rochford (2001) notes that foremost among the calls from these reports were for "ethics" and "transparency" and for governance structures that would "command public confidence" (p. 49). As Tilley (1998) points out, the Hoare Review stressed the need for the governing body of universities to "confine itself to strategic and policy issues in terms of its ultimate responsibility for external accountability" (p. 8).

The major issue identified by the West Report according to Rochford (2001) was "the incompatibility of collegial decision-making with the need for timely responses in a commercial environment" (p.51). Rochford noted from the report that the on-going tension between "managerialism" and "collegiality" is being resolved by a clear trend toward executive decision-making (p. 51).

The changes to the nature and type of governance in higher education in Australia are not solely attributable to government policy. Nonetheless, it is a firm indication of the convergence of public policy directions in a globalised environment for higher education.

Conclusion

This chapter on the global context shows that globalisation has had a significant impact on higher education. The two major influences have been the crossing of borders and the subsequent expansion of the market. Transnational education has been driven by the need to expand market share and the adoption of commercial practices by the providers. The providers of pathway programs have been at the fore-front of transnational education by providing pathways for international students to enter university. Globalisation has had major consequences for governance arrangements for providers, particularly with respect to ensuring a business-like approach to decision-making.

Chapter Five - The Australian Context

"The results (of the survey of universities in Australia) confirmed that in Australia as elsewhere the perception is that corporate style management practices are replacing more traditional methods of decision making"
(Meek, 2002, p.267).

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to closely examine the governance arrangements adopted by providers of pathway programs in Australia. The focus will be on the universities and/or their private partners because these institutions dominate the pathway sector in terms of numbers of students as opposed to the stand-alone private providers. In this chapter the emphasis will be on examining the full range of organisational structures of providers before considering the trend of convergence towards corporate governance. The information and insights presented in this chapter provides a detailed background for the investigation of three selected providers in Chapter Seven.

Recent figures provided by Australian Education International (AEI, 2012) shows that almost two-thirds of international student enrolments in Australian universities in the period 2008-2011 occurred through a combination of pathways such as English language, Foundation or vocational education programs.

Organisational Structures of Providers of Pathway Programs in Australia

The provision of pathway programs by providers based in Australia involves both public and private providers as well as a number of collaborative partnerships. Public providers are defined as those institutions that are largely funded by the government such as universities, state schools and colleges of technical and further education (TAFE's). Private providers refer to colleges and/or programs that are owned and operated by an individual or a company (either privately owned or publically listed).

Collaborative partnerships involve commercial relationships between a public provider (a university) and a private provider to operate a pathway program either on site

at the partner's campus or in another location. For example, Study Group Australia Pty Ltd (SGA) delivers pathway programs for international students seeking entry to the University of Sydney through its wholly owned subsidiary Taylors College at a site near the main campus. Subject to obtaining the entry level score students are guaranteed a place at the University of Sydney. SGA has similar arrangements with Monash University, the University of Western Australia, and Charles Sturt University (Study Group Australia, 2011).

The main aim of public-private provider partnerships is to recruit international students by offering a "package" - conditional offer of entry into the university upon successful completion of the private provider's program of study. From the perspective of the universities, these strategic alliances are crucial to the recruitment of fee paying international students who provide crucial additional revenue for the university. As a result, according to Fiocco (2005), many Australian universities have developed very close financial and academic relationships with private providers.

The development of pathway programs for international students and the emergence of collaborative relationships between private providers and universities is a "significant market-like relationship" (Fiocco, 2005, p. 18). Fiocco shows that through these collaborative partnerships public universities and private colleges have established a strong profile for pathway programs as a means of entry to university.

It should be noted at this point that the two major providers of university preparation programs in Australia based on market share are private providers with collaborative partnerships, namely Navitas Limited and Study Group Australia (SGA). Navitas which delivers pathway programs in a collaborative partnership with ten universities in Australia had over 11,000 students enrolled in 2009 (WA Business News, 2009). SGA distributes its Foundation studies program through Taylor's Colleges in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. There were just over 1000 students registered at the Taylor's Colleges according to its 2009 annual report (Taylors College, 2010).

The form of governance adopted by a university for the delivery of pathway programs varies according to institutional policy. It is largely determined by the organisational structure that has been set up by each institution to manage and administer the programs. The sector is dominated by collaborative partnerships. Navitas and Study Group dominate the sector but there other partnerships between universities and private providers. These include Adelaide University and Murdoch University with Kaplan (Kaplan, 2010), Central Queensland University with ACT Inc (ACT Education Solutions, 2010), Trinity College with the University of Melbourne (Trinity College, University of Melbourne, 2011) and the University of Queensland with International Education Services Pty Ltd (International Education Services, 2010). All of these providers deliver their programs on-campus or at a site nearby. A summary of the entity organisational structures is set out in Table 1:

Table 1

*Organisational Structure for University Preparation
Programs in Australia, 2010*

Collaborative Partnership	Separate Company	International College/Division
Adelaide"	UNSW	ANU
Central Queensland#	UTS	Bond
Curtin*	Western Sydney	Canberra
Deakin*	Wollongong	Charles Darwin
Edith Cowan*		James Cook
Flinders*		Newcastle**
Griffith*		QUT
Macquarie*		RMIT
Melbourne		Southern Queensland
Monash^		Swinburne
Murdoch"		Victoria
Queensland		Tasmania
Sydney^		
South Australia*		
Western Australia^		
Latrobe*		
KEY		
" Kaplan		
# ACT Inc		
^ Study Group		
* Navitas		
** Pending Navitas		

A number of universities have established their own independent colleges or institutes to offer a range of pre-university academic and English-language preparation courses. However, they are not run as separate entities, e.g. QUT International College (QUT, 2010). The organisational structure for QUT shows that the International College comes under the Deputy Vice Chancellor for International and Development along with international student recruitment and alumni. Refer to Figure 5. These colleges are merely used as branding devices and "to differentiate the college from the university, especially in relation to pathway programs" (P.V. Krikstolaitis, personal communication, August 7 2009).

A number of universities still offer preparation programs through the International division which includes an English Language College, e.g. the University of Tasmania (University of Tasmania, 2009). As a result their governance arrangements are based directly on those applying at that particular institution which incorporates pathway programs into the mainstream of university governance.

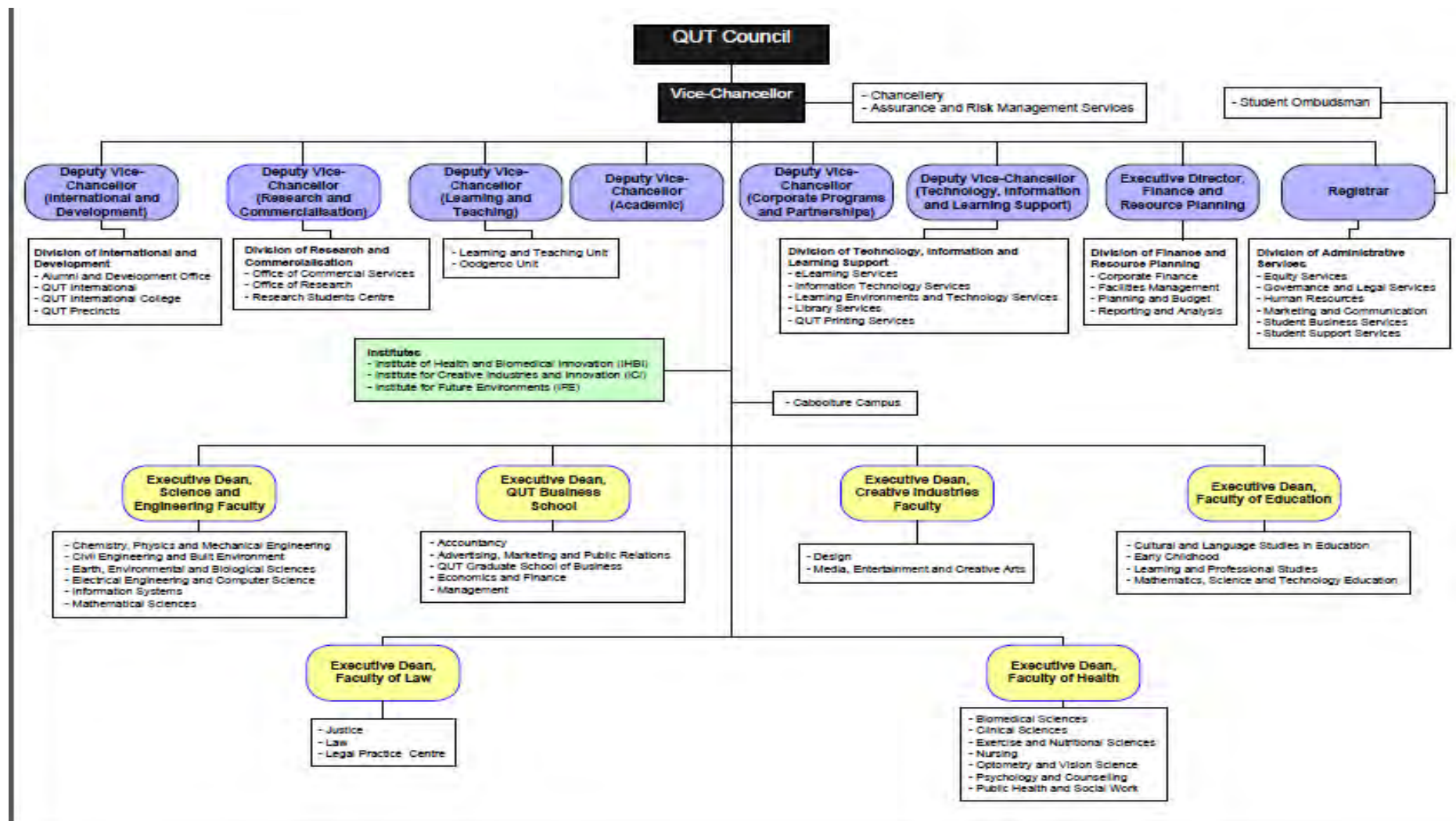


Figure 5: QUT Organisational Structure (QUT, 2011)

The research for this study reveals that there are four universities in Australia that have established separate entities to distribute their pathway programs. All four have forms of governance that are outside the scope of university governance - all are constituted as limited liability companies and operate in accordance with the relevant companies' legislation in their particular jurisdiction. For example, the University of Western Sydney (UWS) established UWS College Pty Ltd in 2006 as a not-for-profit company and retains whole ownership of the College (UWS, 2009).

The University of New South Wales has established UNSW Global Pty Ltd (NSG) to manage its international operations. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the university that was established in 1999 "to support the international initiatives and activities of the university" (NSG Annual report, 2005, p. 3). This company has three core activities: education, corporate, and consultancy. Pathway programs are part of the educational division while international student recruitment offshore operations in the corporate division (UNSW, 2010).

UTS Insearch Limited began operations as a privately owned company in a collaborative partnership with the New South Wales Institute of Technology (NSWIT) in 1984 as an English language provider. The University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), as the institution became known in 1988, acquired the operations in the mid-1990s during a period according to the university's official history "was characterised by the declining per capita Government funding and the consequent need for entrepreneurship and diversification of revenue sources, saw a strong focus on international student recruitment" (University of Technology, Sydney, 2009).

The University of Wollongong (UOW) founded the ITC (originally known as Illawarra Technology Corporation) Group of Companies in 1988 principally to develop research and development opportunities in technology but had its mission broadened to commercialise the international education division to ensure a profitable return to the university. (University of Wollongong, 2009). In addition to operating the

Wollongong College Australia (WCA) on the university campus, ITC run the branch campus in Dubai, film and aviation training, and has responsibility for off-shore delivery of university programs. ITC is also responsible for the recruiting of and marketing for domestic and international students, as well as the admissions process (ITC Group of Companies, 2008).

Structure of Governance of Providers of Pathway Program in Australia

For the public providers (namely the universities) that directly distribute pathway programs, the structure of the governing body is determined by State Government legislation. The responsibility for the policies governing the university is vested in a body named Council/Board/Senate that is made up of persons appointed by government and/or elected by the various stakeholders. The Council is chaired by a member of the body elected as Chancellor. The governing body appoints members to various committees such as Audit & Risk, Finance, Tenders, and Remuneration. Many universities also have Council committees for specific university functions, e.g., Honorary

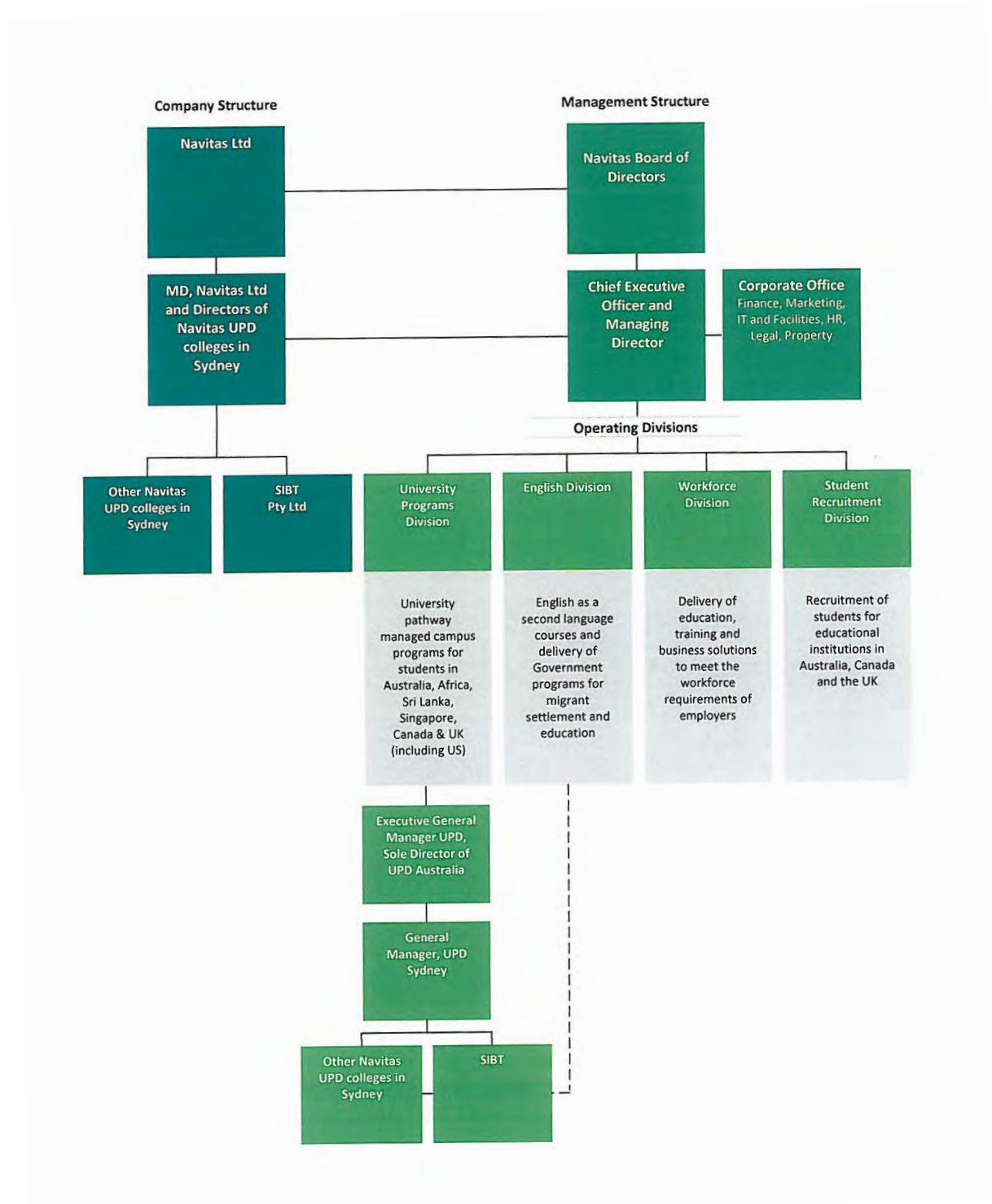
Degrees, Titles, and Tributes (UNE, 2010).

The day-to-day management of universities is the responsibility of the Vice-Chancellor and the senior management team. The position of the Vice-Chancellors has been expanded to align their status in line with Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of large corporations. The number of members on governing bodies has been drastically reduced in recent years and increasingly drawn from business and industry. The number of members from academic circles has been reduced as has those drawn or appointed by government.

For private providers, the government determines the laws of corporate governance. This means that private providers must comply with the relevant company law applying to their type of entity. For example, Navitas Limited it is a public company (owned by those who own shares in the company) is subject to the corporate law of Australia by means of the Corporations Act 2000 (Cth). The organisational chart in Table 3 shows that Navitas Limited has adopted a corporate approach.

Table 3

Organisational Chart for Navitas Limited



(Navitas Ltd, 2011)

In accordance with corporate regulations, Navitas is required to lodge an annual report and financial statements to the ASX and its shareholders and to notify the ASX of any substantial changes to its operations and financial position. The company's affairs are controlled by a Board of Directors elected by the shareholders, and include four external Directors (those not employed in management of the company or who are substantial shareholders) one of whom must be the Chairman. The Board committees are as follows: Audit and Risk, and Nomination and Remuneration. The responsibility for management of the company's operations is undertaken by the Chief Executive Officer and a senior management team that reports to the Board of Directors (Navitas Ltd, 2009).

In the event of a private company delivering pathway programs either on its own or in conjunction with a university it is usually structured as a limited liability company (liability is limited to the assets of the corporation). As such it must operate and function in the legal environment specified by government in its jurisdiction in terms of its

governance. For example, the ITC Group of Companies must lodge an annual report including financial statements under the Corporations Act 2001, but these are not generally available to the public. Additionally, as a university owned entity, it is subject to an audit by the Auditor-General of New South Wales (ITC Group of Companies, 2008).

ITC is structured in many respects in a form similar to a public company; it has a Board of Directors chaired by a non-executive director and seven other non-executive directors mainly drawn from business and education circles. The Vice Chancellor of the University of Wollongong is on the board, but currently there are no other senior academic members of the university serving on the board. Its committees include Audit and Risk, Investment, and Remuneration. Operational management of the company's affairs and activities are undertaken by the CEO and Managing Director and senior management team all of whom are all employed by the ITC Group (ITC Group of Companies, 2008).

The influence of marketisation is very much in operation at this level of provision. In cases where a private provider delivers a pathway program in a collaborative partnership with a university it is subject to commercial arrangements that includes a royalty to use the university's name, and rent and access by its students to facilities such as the library, computer laboratories, and sporting facilities if the operation is on campus. See for example the reference to the "cooperative contractual agreement" between Macquarie University and the Sydney Institute of Business and Technology, a pathway provider owned and operated by Navitas Ltd. (Macquarie University, 2009).

Trend towards Convergence

University governance has adopted the major features of the corporate model. The tangible signs are in the reduction of the size of the membership of the governing boards to make them more like company boards (e.g., the UTS Council now has twenty members as opposed to 32 members in 1988), similar types of committees (e.g., Audit & Risk, Remuneration - see

organisational structures for UNE and Navitas respectively), and Vice Chancellors being regarded like company CEO's (e.g., the position at Monash University is titled Vice Chancellor and President).

The distribution of university pathway programs has seen a commercial approach taken by both private and public providers in order to operate successfully in the highly competitive transnational education environment. It is worthwhile to note Fiocco's (2006) findings that it was the private providers of pathway programs in Australia that saw the opportunity in the 1990's and developed corporate entities to ensure expansion of market share. Driven by government pressure to reform and to operate in a more business-like manner the public providers have also become more like corporate bodies. The public providers have also become more responsive to quality assurance and accountability issues. The distribution of university preparation programs is now big business and the governance mission and structures require investigation to enhance our understanding of the area.

Conclusion

The same sorts of influences that are exerting major changes on higher education generally throughout the Western world are highly evident in the structures for the governance of providers of pathway programs. There is a clear trend towards marketisation in operations which is reflected in the changing organisational forms; however, not all public providers have gone fully commercial. Only four Australian universities have established separate entities to deliver their pathway programs, but sixteen have established collaborative partnerships with private providers while the rest have established international colleges as stand-alone profit centres. While their overall mission remains a traditional university one, the entities set up to operate pathway programs have a for-profit motive as the central mission. The private providers are the market leaders and their missions and structures are firmly rooted in corporate models of governance.

Chapter Six - Methods of Investigation

Triangulation of data sources is a primary strategy that can be used to support the main principle of case study research ...The collection and comparison of this data enhances data quality based on the principles of idea convergence and the confirmation of findings. (Knafl & Breitmayer, as cited in P. Baxter & S. Jack, 2008, p. 556)

Introduction

The literature review conducted for this study strongly suggests a trend toward a corporate model of governance by providers of pathway programs. It has been noted that an increasing number of public providers have adopted a model of governance that is more in accordance with corporate practices rather than with traditional university governance mechanisms.

The key driver of this change is the need for all providers of pathway providers to compete in the international arena for enrolments. This has largely emerged as a result of public higher education institutions around the world being forced to secure alternative sources of revenues as government funding has diminished (Poole & Robertson, 2003).

The literature review shows that the private providers are increasingly adopting corporate models of governance. There also appears to be a trend by the public providers to adapt their organisational structure and mission statement to enable their organisation to compete more effectively in a commercial environment by moving toward a corporate approach.

A small-scale investigation was conducted to explore the following questions:

1. What forms of governance are used by three providers of university entrance pathway programs?
2. For what reasons did providers create governance structures as they have done?
3. What is the relationship between the mission of providers of pathway programs and the governance structures adopted?

This chapter describes the research methodology and approach that formed the method of investigation for this study. This includes a theoretical discussion of the methodology, a description of the methods, an explanation for the choice of

entities selected for the case study, the data collection instruments, the approach to data analysis, consideration of research quality issues, and the ethical considerations.

Research Method

This study is a cross-case study of the governance of three providers of university entrance pathway programs. The issue in this research relates to the mission and organisational structure of providers of pathway programs. This topic is being explored in order to understand the developments in relation to the forms of governance adopted in this sector, and whether there is evidence of a trend toward the corporate model. A cross-case study should provide an insight into the way providers are governed in the context of a competitive, international environment.

The main reason for selecting this research method is because case study is considered an ideal research methodology when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed" (Yin, 2004, p. 23). Yin, a principal developer of this form of methodology defines the case study research method as "an empirical

enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon with its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (p. 23).

Yin (2004) maintains that a case study is suitable when a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control. The changes to the governance structures of providers of pathway programs involve variables occurring within what Yin labels a "contemporary event" (p. 10). The 'contemporary event' in this study is investigating if providers are choosing to adopt a corporate model of governance for the distribution of pathway programs. The 'how' component focuses on the application of the form of governance by the provider and the 'why' probes the influences that have been brought to bear on the adoption of the form of governance.

Case studies are regarded as good examples of qualitative research because they adopt an interpretative approach to data. As Clough and Nutbrown (2002) point out case studies,

"reveal 'things' within their context and consider the subjective factors that arise when people are in the mix" (p. 17). This is the great strength of the case study method according to Bell (2010). As Bell points out, it allows the researcher to concentrate on a "specific instance or situation" and to identify "the various interactive processes at work" (p. 11). Further, these interactive processes may draw out vital information in the data collection and analysis phase that may have remain hidden in a survey. The case study method is designed to bring out the details of a case by the examination of multiple sources of data.

The case study approach is selective and enables research to focus on one or two issues that are fundamental to understanding the system being examined. This method provides an understanding of these issues and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known from previous research. As Tellis (1997) points out case study research emphasises "detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships" (p. 2).

The research involves the examination of multiple sources of data from three separate case studies. The examination of the three providers of pathway programs provided a range of data that when examined systematically revealed relevant information about their respective mission statements and organisational structures that enabled the cross-case study process to provide responses to the research questions posed for this study.

The cross-case study allows us to explore how and why the providers concerned are choosing to take a corporate approach to governance, and how effective this has been in terms of meeting their respective missions. The issues explored are specifically related to the principles of governance and alignment of the business with the entity's overall objectives. These issues constitute what Stake (2000) refers to as the "conceptual structure around which case study is organized to provide the maximum understanding of the case" (p. 443).

Both Stake (2000) and Yin (2004) emphasise the importance

of verifying, analysing, and explaining multiple sources of data; this is referred to as *triangulation*. For Stake this involves a process of using multiple sources to clarify meaning in order to verify "the repeatability of an observation or interpretation" (p. 443). The multiple sources drawn on to triangulate data in this study are the interviews with key participants of the selected entities, analysis of documents such as annual reports, institutional websites, archival information, and relevant government legislation and agency reports. Additionally, contemporary media reports on the entities where relevant, were accessed and analysed.

Research Approach

Purposeful sampling was used for the selection of cases for this study. The cases are selected for their "information-richness, meaningfulness and insights" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 28). This sampling technique provides for flexibility in the selection of information rich cases. According to Patton (1990) the cases chosen should assist the researcher in the process of discovery and generation of insights and

understanding of the evidence to be investigated.

In implementing the purposeful sampling technique the use of replication logic developed by Yin (2003) is undertaken. According to Yin, replication logic view cases as being multiple experiments; not like multiple respondents in a survey that are based on sampling logic. Thus, cases are chosen which predict similar results known as literal replication or contrasting results for predictable reasons, a theoretical replication. For this reason purposeful sampling is deemed to be suitable for making potential generalisations about the results. The benefits of this approach are its flexibility, potential contribution to the triangulation of perspectives, and its ability to meet multiple needs and interests.

The sampling strategies for case selection based on Patton's (1990) purposeful approach included criterion, convenience, intensity, and combined or mixed (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 28). As a result the three entities were purposively selected as they were information-rich,

accessible, large, leading and well-established pathway program providers. As for the number of cases being undertaken, the selection is in accordance within the generally accepted range elaborated in the literature for this type of research. The position is aptly summed up by Patton (1990), "The validity, meaningfulness and insights generated from qualitative enquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observational/analytical capabilities of the researcher than with the sample size" (p. 185).

The process for a cross-case study is set out by Yin (2003). The initial step in designing the study is to develop the theory, and then to select the cases and determine the data collection procedures. He points out that each individual case study consist of a 'whole' study in which convergent evidence is sought regarding the facts and conclusions for the case. The conclusions of each case are then considered to be the information needing replication by other individual cases. The next step in the process is for the individual case

reports and cross-case results to be summarised.

Yin points out that for each individual **case** the report should indicate how and why a particular proposition was demonstrated (or not demonstrated). Across cases, the report should indicate the extent of the replication and if not, the reasons why. The next step is to draw together the cross-case conclusions, and if required, to modify the theoretical position. The final stage is the write-up of the cross-case report.

The study is divided into three phases: design; single-case data collection and analysis; and cross-study analysis based on Yin's approach to case study research (2008, p. 50). In the design phase the first step is to formulate the theory based on Clark's model and the conceptual framework for this study, and then to make case selection and design the data collection process. The next step is the single-case data collection and analysis phase, followed by the final phase, the cross-case analysis which includes a summary of results and conclusions. The research approach is shown in Figure 4:

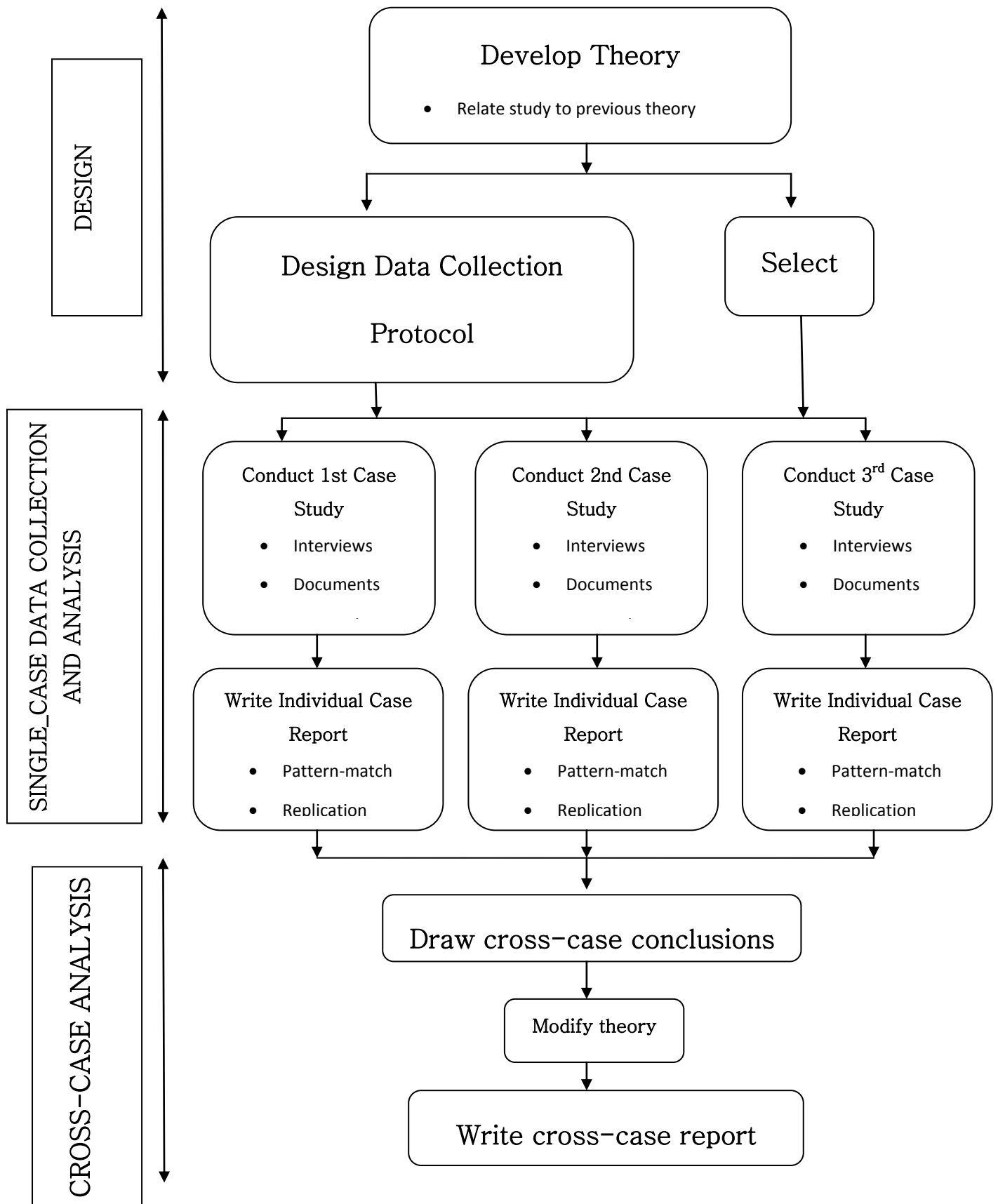


Figure 4:
Method for Collection of Data

Collection of Data

Data were collected from two main sources, interviews and documents. The collection of data using multiple sources of information through employing a variety of techniques is consistent with the cross-case study approach. As Patton (1990) points out, multiple sources of data allow the researcher to validate and cross-check findings.

Interviews are considered to be a primary source of information in case study research. Interviews can provide rich and useful information that otherwise cannot be obtained; this technique provides "the opportunity to describe events and/or activities related to a phenomenon" (Yin, 1994, p. 85). Interviews for case studies can be conducted in an open, unstructured, highly structured or a semi-structured manner. Patton (1990) advocates a semi-structured or "general interview guide approach" (p. 280) as it can potentially capture the richest single source of data. Semi-structured interview questions offer flexibility in the way questions are asked and responded to, compared to more structured

interviews.

The interviews for this study were conducted with key personnel at senior management level at each of the three entities. These personnel were selected on the basis of their involvement with managing the entity at both a policy-making and operational level. In-depth interviews were conducted to examine each participant's perspective on the research questions. The interview questions consisted of eight core questions with some specific questions for each respondent (see Appendix C).

The interviews were conducted on a semi-structured basis. They were structured in as much as each of the participants was asked the same open questions, however, the participants were not discouraged if they wanted to elaborate on the points raised. The interviews began with general questions to discover the participant's own meanings and subjective understandings, and then focussed on specific issues through the use of probe questions. As Yin (2008) points out the advantage of an open-ended questions is that the researcher

"can ask key respondents for the facts of a matter as well as for the participants' opinions about events" (p. 89). This was the approach adopted to interviews with the participants for this study.

Those selected for interview were "the influential, the prominent, and the well-informed people" in their respective organisation (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 83). They were selected for interviews on the basis of their expertise in the areas relevant to the research. In this way rich and highly insightful information was gleaned from the participants.

The interviews lasted between one hour and one and quarter hours. They were scheduled at times and locations most convenient to the participants. This resulted in interviews being conducted in offices, either at the participant's desk or in meeting rooms in the institutions. All the participants agreed to have their respective interview tape recorded. Each was given the opportunity not to be taped as this is an important element of the case study protocols adopted for this study. The interview questions were piloted with a selected

group of informants who were not included in the study sample.

They were requested to comment on the clarity and appropriateness of questions posed. Two of the people contacted responded and the suggestions received, though minor, were incorporated into the interview guide. The set of questions were sent to each participant prior to the interview.

Documents are an important source of case study evidence, and can include financial data, written archives, business plan, media reports, and promotional material. The role of documents in case study research is to augment and corroborate information from other sources such as interviews (Yin, 1994). Used in this way, documents can be an important source of triangulation and verification of data. Additionally, documents have the advantages of being unobtrusive, being able to be viewed repeatedly, and being "broad in coverage in terms of time, events, and settings" (Yin, 1994, p. 82).

However, documents can be difficult to retrieve, and sources of reporting bias if the authors were biased. In

addition, they may be inaccurate, difficult to access, and incomplete, leading to biased selectivity (Yin, 1994).

Documents were used in this study to provide background material about the providers and their international activities, and to corroborate the evidence provided in the case interviews. Documents accessed and analysed for this study included annual reports, financial statements, policy documents, company newsletters and promotional material. Also, available electronically were government agency reports on quality assurance and information about relevant government legislation at both the state and federal level. Additionally, media reports and news items about the sector, particularly in relation to the recruitment of full fee-paying international students in Australia were collected.

All of these various documents provided important information prior to the interview phase as well as serving as a valuable resource for the framing of appropriate probe questions for the interviews. They also provided a reference point for corroborating participant comments, and conversely

determining if institutional rhetoric as conveyed in documents would be corroborated by participants.

As already noted, the key strength of the case study method involves using multiple sources and techniques in the data collection process. It usually involves the researcher determining in advance what evidence to gather and what analysis techniques to use in order to answer the research questions. The principle tool for collection of data for this study was interviews triangulated with documentation analysis, and personal observation and knowledge of the sector through professional involvement over the past twenty years.

The summary of the data collected for this study is set out in Table 4:

Table 4

Summary of Collection of Data

Research Areas	Data	Element
Forms of Governance	Annual reports Entity websites Government legislation Government reports Newspaper reports Journal articles Interviews with key stakeholders	Type of entity Corporate requirements Board composition Board committee system Reporting procedures
Reasons for this Form of Governance	Interviews with key stakeholders Interviews with industry observers Annual reports Entity websites Government reports Newspaper reports Journal articles	Corporatisation Commercialism Globalisation Mode of operation Quality assurance Accountability
Mission Statements	Interviews with key stakeholders Interviews with industry observers Annual reports Entity websites Government reports Newspaper reports Journal articles	Stated mission Underlying mission Quality assurance Accountability

Data Analysis

Data analysis in case study research is not a process that is a separate phase of research following data collection. On the contrary, it is integrally related to the whole enquiry. A major feature of case study research is that data collection and analysis occur as an iterative process. Ensuring 'vigorous interpretation' during data collection is a crucial function in case study research.

According to Patton (1990) data analysis should occur incrementally as data is collected. This informs sampling decisions particularly if replication logic is being followed. For this study while some analysis occurred during data collection, for example, the reflective notes during collection, the time and resource constraints precluded a comprehensive analysis until the completion of the data collection phase. In this study the analysis of single cases preceded cross-case analysis so that the development of a high degree of familiarity with each case could occur. As each case is idiosyncratic, deep familiarity with each case can lead to

"a more realistic conception of the degree to which cross-case generalizations can be made" (Patton, 1990, p. 387).

As Miles and Huberman (1994) emphasise qualitative analysis needs to be documented as process, particularly for the purpose of "auditing any specific analysis" (p.12). They developed a model of data analysis which is widely used by qualitative researchers. According to their model, data analysis is represented as "three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10). These processes occur before, during and after data collection. Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive framework for considering data analysis was used as a basis for data analysis in this study. In this process, data reduction involves simplifying data to make it more manageable and data display is the way in which data are organized. The components in the data analysis interactive framework are graphically represented in Figure 5:

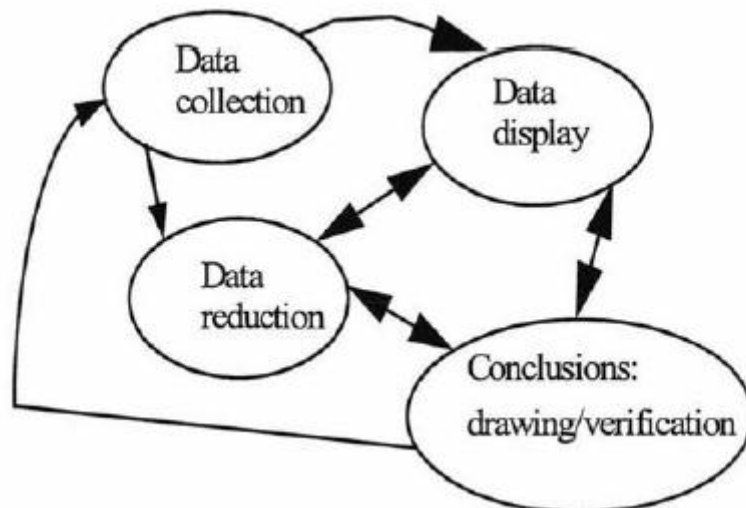


Figure 6: Components of Data Analysis using an Interactive Model (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p,12)

In this study, the three case studies were sequenced in a manner to provide for the ease of data collection and analysis. A period of three months elapsed between the first and second case studies. A period of six months passed between the fieldwork for the third case study and the final fieldwork for the research conducted in this study. Hence, initial clustering, categorization and thematic grouping of data were carried out as the data were being collected and interviews were being transcribed for each case study. I was able to move on from one fieldwork context to the other after completing all the transcriptions and conducting partial analysis whilst continuously undertaking conceptual categorisation and

clustering.

The initial identification of themes was undertaken using the Miles and Huberman approach of finding patterns and developing conceptual themes. This required stepping back and systematically examining and re-examining the data, using a variety of what Miles and Huberman (1994, pp. 245-262) call "tactics for generating meaning." They describe 13 such tactics, including noting patterns and themes, clustering cases, making contrasts and comparisons, partitioning variables, and subsuming particulars in the general. Qualitative analysts typically employ some or all of these, simultaneously and iteratively, in drawing conclusions.

Based on the data analysis interactive framework and the tactical methods for analyzing data the recorded interviews were analysed and details of the interview noted on the written transcript for reference purposes. Once the transcription was complete the document was reviewed, manually annotated and colour-coded to show recurring themes, issues and views in relation to the research questions. Off-screen

coding was done on the entire script and helped to arrange the data in a way that the participants' comments could be used to inform the research questions.

The analysis of the data revealed that the identification of tentative themes that emerged from the initial case study became highly prevalent right from the start in the analysis of the second case study, and subsequently, the third case study. The themes identified were corporatisation, marketisation, globalisation, quality assurance, accountability, type of corporate entity, compliance requirements, board composition, board operation, reporting requirements, corporate mission, and the business model. The identification of themes for the study was assisted by the major themes identified in the literature reviewed. It became apparent that the influence of "New Public Management" and the adoption of private sector practices by public entities along with the increasing entrepreneurial approach by higher education bodies were underlying forces to these themes.

Most of these themes adapted in this study were based on the data that emerged as a result of the analysis, supported by document analysis and the relevant literature reviewed. This provided the basis to form tentative themes to code the data. Other themes were created from the participants' responses in interviews and through the researcher's synthesis of data and identification of meaning. The tentative lists of the themes formed from the interviews with the three participants from the providers selected for this study were manually combined using replication logic. The product of combining the tentative themes provided the thematic framework that served as the list of nodes for the purpose of coding the themes for this study.

Research Quality Issues

The issue of quality in qualitative research is an elusive concept and is subject to much debate and conjecture. The traditional measures of validity and reliability are more readily applied to qualitative research that involves scientific type experiments that produce numbers for data

analysis. Research quality for qualitative research is much more problematic; however, strong cases have been made by qualitative researchers to overcome these issues and to ensure research quality based on a different interpretation of empirical evidence (see for example, Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Thus, it is possible to apply a different set of terms and criteria to ensure quality in qualitative research. Instead of using the terms 'validity' and 'reliability', the terms *credibility and dependability* are preferred. Lincoln and Gruba (1985) argue that for qualitative research, where the production of interpretation is the aim, that the concepts should be creditability, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. For the purposes of this cross-case study research quality is ensured through the application of these criteria.

Credibility refers to the need for evidence and findings to be presented according to good practice in research. For Bryman (2001), creditability is the equivalent of internal validity. Credibility can be achieved by the congruence of

results from the various data collection techniques used in case study research. The two main techniques for achieving credibility are respondent validation and triangulation. For this study the analytical interpretations were sent back to the participant for validation which was returned with some minor adjustments by each of the participants. Triangulation of multiple sources of data created a chain of evidence between the interviews and document analysis that resulted in having the key informants verify the case's interim findings.

Dependability is the criterion used in qualitative research instead of reliability. Case study design requires that the procedures used are well documented and can be repeated with the same results over and over again (Yin, 2004). As already noted the reason for using multiple sources of data is the triangulation of evidence. Triangulation increases the reliability of the data and the process of collecting it. Dependability was ensured in this study by two main means; firstly, by following case study protocol where all the selected entities were subject to the same process and

interview questions, and, secondly, by documentation of the procedures and appropriate record keeping.

Transferability reflects whether or not the findings are generalisable, transferable or applicable beyond the immediate case or cases to other contexts or cases of the research population (this is referred to in quantitative research as external validity). Given that case study research entails the in-depth study of one or a few cases the findings from the research tend to be contextually bound. However, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that transferability of research findings can be achieved through production of "thick descriptions" (p. 298). Such accounts of the context of the study can be transferred to individual cases that can enable others to compare and make judgments. In this situation the onus of transferability is on the reader rather than the researcher. This study has set out to provide as much detail and description as possible in relation to the governance policies and practices in the three case studies.

Confirmability refers to the issue of objectivity in research and whether the personal bias of the researcher has been able to sway the conduct of the research and consequently the findings of the investigation. Triangulation or the use of multiple sources of evidence is used in this study to overcome this problem. In order to build a process of verification into data collection this study uses interviews and document analysis as sources of evidence. This approach accords with the view that the triangulation of evidence is a key component in ensuring the quality of qualitative research.

Ethical Considerations

The procedures for research as prescribed by the Edith Cowan University Human Research Ethics Committee were strictly adhered to throughout this study. In conducting this small scale investigation, ethical considerations were paramount throughout all phases of the study. This included preparations to gather and collect data, in the analysis of the data, as well as in the writing stage. These protocols meant that it was essential to ensure that participation was voluntary; that

the participants gave consent; that the participants were able to withdraw; that their anonymity was preserved; and that the data were only used for the agreed purpose for which it has been collected (Hopkins, 2002).

All participants were made aware of how data would be reported before agreeing to take part in the study. Written approval for their involvement in the study was sought and granted on the basis that their anonymity would be ensured. All participants were invited to participate via correspondence that outlined the objectives of the study, and identified the institution where I was studying. All participants agreed for the interview to be recorded. A coding system was used to distinguish participants by referring to them as Alpha 1, Beta 1 or Delta 1. The numbers following the code when participants are cited refer to the month and year of interview took place, for example, Alpha 1 05/11 refers to an interview with the key executive from Case Alpha in May 2011. Upon completion of the analysis, tapes and transcripts were transferred to a locked cupboard where access was

restricted to the researcher. All material is to be destroyed within the next six months. All relevant information about the collection of data through personal interviews is documented in Appendix C.

Conclusion

The rationale for the case study on three selected providers of pathway programs is to examine their organisational structure and mission statements in relation to governance. The literature review reveals a strong trend towards a corporate approach to governance by the providers. However, it requires a small-scale investigation to more fully determine the correctness of this position. An examination of a cross-section of providers using case study methodology provides an appropriate basis for a deeper investigation. The triangulation of data will enable me to explain why the providers concerned are choosing to take a corporate approach to governance, and how effective this has been in terms of meeting their respective missions. The results of data collection for each case are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven – Findings-Case Studies

"... the validity, meaningfulness and insights generated from qualitative enquiry have more to do with the information richness of the cases selected and the observation / analytical capabilities of the researcher than with the sample size (Patton, 1990, p.185).

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the findings of each of three case studies undertaken for this study. Each case study is identified by a pseudonym based on the Greek alphabet. The first case, Case Alpha is a subsidiary company of a major not-for-profit educational organisation. It is a leading distributor of Foundation and English language programs in the Asia-Pacific region. The second case, Case Beta is a public company listed on the stock exchange. It is a market leader in Australia of the delivery of a full range of pathway programs and is expanding its operations off-shore based on the success of its domestic pathway program model. The third case, Case Delta is a limited liability company owned and operated by a publically-funded university. It

distributes pathway programs in its owner's campuses in Australia and off-shore. The justification for the selection of these cases has been previously outlined in Chapter One and Chapter Six. The selection was based on the desire to sample a range of cases with different ownership structures.

The presentation of findings follows a similar format for each case study largely based around the research questions posed for this study. For each case a profile and brief history is presented followed by a description of the form of governance, then the reasons for the adoption of this form of governance, and finally the relationship between the providers' mission and the governance structures adopted is explored. This chapter thus provides a foundation for the analysis of cross-case data to be explored in Chapter Eight, and for the conclusions in Chapter Nine.

Case Alpha

Profile

Case Alpha was established in 2005 by the owner, an independent not-for-profit education organisation, domiciled in the USA but at the time seeking to expand globally. The owner of Case Alpha is a major test developer and provider. The subsequent growth of test development and expansion of assessment products and services for the schools and university sectors has made the organisation a highly profitable organisation. While it operates in the USA as a not-for-profit organisation it established the proprietary limited company as a for-profit division based in Australia to operate its pathway programs. This was a central plank in the organisation's strategy to expand its offerings globally. According to the organisation's 2008 annual report, "the organisation's stakeholders are the educational institutions that use its programs and services" (p. 51).

Form of Governance

Case Alpha is registered as a proprietary limited company. A proprietary company is a company having share capital with limits to the number of members (not more than fifty), and is prohibited from inviting the public to invest through either shares or debentures. It must use the word "Proprietary" or the abbreviation "Pty" as well as "Limited" or "Ltd" as part of its name (Corporations Act (Cth), 2001, p. 15).

Case Alpha is governed by a small board of three that includes the President/CEO of the parent organisation as chairman, the Chief Financial Officer, and a resident director. The resident director is also the General Manager of the division. There are no sub-committees as day-to-day management is undertaken by the General Manager in line with policy directives from the board.

According to the interview with Alpha 1:

The members of the board are appointed by the Chairman of the parent body who reports to the governing body through the executive committee. He has the right to act in the

best interests of the organisation with selection of board members for the company established for the purpose of distributing our programs. The board has given him the power to act (05/11).

The division of responsibility between management and the governing board is in accordance with statutory requirements.

Even though the General Manager of Case Alpha is a member of the board of the proprietary limited company he is not a member of the board of the governing body. There is a clear division of responsibility between management and governance that accords with the regulations of the Corporations Act (Cth) with respect to the company.

The proprietary limited company reports directly to the chairman of the board of the parent body. The national and international operations of the parent body are governed by a Board of Directors that meets four times per year, "to direct the management of the organisation" (2009 annual report, p. 51). Board members are nominated by the Governance and Nominating Committee of the Board and elected by a vote of the full Board. The Board of the parent body is comprised of 13

members, including the Chief Executive Officer/Chairman of the Board, corporate CEOs, university leaders, government education system heads, and national figures in education and business according to the organisation's website on governance. The CEO/President is also the Chairman of the Board.

A re-defined governance structure, including a new board of directors, was adopted in 2002 replacing the 15-member board of trustees that had governed the organisation since the early 1960s. According to a statement in the 2003 quarterly news publication by the Chairman/CEO this was part of organisation's "evolution from an organisation serving solely college admissions to one addressing a broad range of education and workforce needs" (p. 3).

The matter of board membership was reported in the organisation's same quarterly publication:

The board's composition reflects an evolution in programs and services over the past two decades. The directors are distinguished individuals from both education and business and, as a group, are representative of the span of interests served by our growing array of programs and services (2003, p. 4).

The form of governance for Case Alpha is a corporate one. It was established as a corporate entity for the specific purpose of distributing its pathway program content. The parent body has a traditional board structure for a not-for-profit organisation with provision for stakeholder representation. It is significant to note that nomination to the board is conducted by the Governance and Nominating committee and election is carried out by the full board. There is no provision for direct election to the board by stakeholders. This is an acceptable practice in the USA according to Holmstrom and Kaplan (2003), but it is not considered good practice in Australian corporate circles. Nor is it considered good practice for a Chairman of a large corporation to also be the CEO. As Holmstrom and Kaplan (2003) noted in a paper on US corporate governance, "boards tended to be cozy with and dominated by management, making board oversight weak" (p.5). Alpha 1 declined to comment on whether this was the case for the owner of Case Alpha. However, the interviewee did point out, that it was acceptable practice in

Australia for a small private company to have the Chairman to also be the CEO of the company.

Reasons for Adoption of Form of Governance

The reason for the adoption of a corporate form of governance for Case Alpha is directly related to the nature and purpose of its operation. At the time of the formation of the company to distribute its pathway programs the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of Case Alpha stated in the organisation's quarterly publication, "Our creation of this new international company and its subsidiaries is a bold step aimed at fulfilling our corporate mission by serving students and institutions worldwide" (p. 7).

This position was verified by the interview with the key executive from Case Alpha. It was revealed that because the parent body was a not-for-profit education organisation and that the activities were off-shore that it was decided to establish a separate company run on strictly commercial lines for this purpose. In the interview Alpha 1 stated that:

It would be unacceptable to the Board for the organisation to lose money on an international venture. It (the company) was established to make a profit by expanding the distribution network globally for the programs and services we have on offer (05/11).

It was also revealed in the interview that by establishing a subsidiary company of this nature for the purpose of making a profit that it was imperative that it have a corporate structure. The nature of the reporting for proprietary limited liability companies under government legislation also lent itself to a corporate approach to governance. In the interview Alpha 1 stated:

We needed the company to be flexible and able to make quick and timely decisions and not be bound by a complicated committee system. However, there is a high level of accountability involved and all major decisions are referred to the Chairman (05/11).

The executive interviewed maintained that the corporate model enabled management to make speedy decisions about partnering with offshore schools, colleges and universities without referring the matter to an academic board. "The academics decide on academic matters that affect the academic elements of the programs, and the business development unit

decides on business issues. There is a very clear dividing line on that" (Alpha 1, 05/11).

Neither Case Alpha nor its approved teaching centres are subject to independent quality assurance audit. Case Alpha conducts an annual audit of each of its approved teaching centres but these are not made available in a public domain. In order to obtain some information about quality assurance I interviewed a franchise customer of Case Alpha to obtain feedback on the process:

We underwent a stringent process to become an Approved Teaching Centre. They conduct an annual audit of our teaching and learning processes as well as our admission and marketing procedures. This is a collaborative process and it is effective in ensuring our compliance for quality assurance. We have to adopt any recommendations made in the report (J. Wong, personal communication, 15 June, 2011).

Relationship between Mission and Form of Governance

The stated mission of the parent company of Case Alpha is "Helping people achieve education and workplace success" (Annual report, 2009, p.1). It drives everything the organisation does in terms of its research, programs and services. The expression, "our mission", punctuated the interview with Alpha 1.

Case Alpha's 2007 annual report refers to how the organisation "helps international students" (p.45) prepare for study at English-speaking universities around the world. Further, the report states, "the move into the international arena is in close accord with our mission" (p. 46).

A further illustration of the importance of the mission comes from the 2008 annual report on international activities. It states, "We've undertaken a number of new projects designed to support the needs of education and workforce development around the globe and to ease the barriers to preparation for effective functioning in an ever-changing world (p.44).

According to Alpha 1, the organisation's mission and values are central to the way that they go about their business:

Any decision to partner with another entity is subject to a strict process of due diligence. The organisation's mission and values are important to us. We have high benchmarks for doing business. Integrity is a key component- we won't just do a deal for the sake of it; the franchise has to be sustainable, otherwise there is no value in it for either party (05/11).

The participant further elaborated, "Doing business overseas (outside of Australia or the United States) is fraught with danger - the regulatory environment, the culture, are all very different to the situation in Australia" (05/11).

Alpha 1 went on to say:

It is imperative for us to get it right, that's why we have a standard agreement that specifies the obligations of each party - we have established offices in the countries we do business in that are staffed by bi-lingual people who understand the local culture. The organisation's mission drives and directs us (05/11).

The franchisee interviewed for this study provided a point of view from the other side of the business table. She

told me: "Case Alpha is always telling us about their various education programs and how it is linked to their mission and doing business with us" (J. Wong, personal communication, June 15, 2011). The customer said that trust and a good relationship was vital to the success of the operation. "We have to have confidence in each other to deliver on our promises", she added.

There is clearly alignment between Case Alpha's mission and governance structure and this is demonstrated by the data collected for this study. As Smith (2005) noted in his study of the mission statements of higher education institutions in the United States, that missions have become more commercially orientated. Based on the evidence collected this is the case for Case Alpha.

Case Beta

Profile

Case Beta is a public company in Australia with a market capitalisation of \$1.3 million as at 15 July 2011 (Australian Financial Review, July 16, 2011). It owns and operates a network of pathway colleges in partnership with a number of universities that are situated on university campuses in various global locations with the heaviest concentration in Australia. The company also now distributes university level programs both in Australia and overseas as well as specialist vocational education programs. It also has a strong interest in workforce training and migration settlement services.

The enterprise began in the mid-1990s with the model of a private provider distributing for-profit pathway programs in collaboration with a university on site. Subsequent expansion enabled the organisation to establish a college in each state. According to the history published in the 2005 company report, "prior to listing these colleges operated as a loose federation of colleges across Australia" (p. 2).

In 2004 the principals of the enterprise formed a holding company and purchased the federation of colleges. The company was then successfully bought to the market through an initial public offering on the Australian Stock Exchange. The company has continued to expand and now operates the same model in the UK, Canada, and more recently, the USA. It has also expanded into offering university programs and workforce readiness programs.

Form of Governance

Case Beta is a public company in Australia. A public company is any company other than a proprietary company and is in essence one in which the public owns or may own shares. They have certain controls placed on them by the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX). The listing rules are additional and complementary to the requirements in the Corporations Law and mainly relate to the requirements of issuance of securities (Sothertons, 2010).

According to the company's 2009 annual report, Case Beta is governed by a Board of Directors that meets as required to:

... determine all matters relating to strategic direction, policies, practices, management and operations of the company with the aim of protecting the interests of its shareholders and other stakeholders, including employees, students, partners, and creating value for them (p. 26).

Board members are elected by the shareholders at an appropriately convened annual meeting. The Board is comprised of nine members, including four non-executive directors. The Chairman of the Board is a non-executive director. The Chief Executive Officer is appointed by and reports to the Board, and is a member of the Board. The Board has two committees; the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, and the Audit and Risk Committee, both operate under a charter approved by the Board and are chaired by a non-executive director of the Board. Case Beta's corporate governance is largely based on the ASX's Corporate Governance Council's *Principles of Good Corporate Governance and Best Practice Recommendations* (ASX, 2010).

There is a very clear division of responsibility between management and the governing board that is mandated by statutory requirements for the operation and conduct of a public company. The chairman of the company must be a non-executive director and the two committees have to also be chaired by non-executive directors. This is a distinguishing feature of good governance and is line with the corporate approach to governance. An annual report is distributed to its shareholders and lodged with Australian Securities Commission in accordance with the Commonwealth of Australia Corporations Act 2001.

According to the interview with Beta 1 the company is run within the parameters specified by the Corporations Act:

It has to be. These are the legislative requirements for a company of this type. Otherwise there would be major legal ramifications. The senior management team reports to the CEO, who in turn reports to the Board. There are very clear lines of responsibility, especially in relation to reporting and being accountable (06/11).

The form of governance for Case Beta is also corporate. It was established as a corporate entity for the specific purpose of distributing its pathway programs. After operating a series of independent limited liability companies it decided to consolidate and grow the business by listing the combined assets and leveraging the potential of the business. The expansion into related activities such as student recruitment and workforce program reflects a market-orientated approach.

Reasons for Adoption of Form of Governance

Given that Case Beta is a public company it was legally required to adopt a corporate model of governance. The company's annual reports show it has adopted and adheres to the principles of corporate governance for items such as

"ethical and responsible decision-making, integrity in financial reporting, and remunerating fairly and responsibly" (Annual report, 2009, pp. 26-27). Case Beta is structured like a corporation; it has a board that has a majority of non-executive directors and an independent chairman. The 2010 company annual report states that it "... is committed to a sustainable growth strategy and to maximizing returns to shareholders" (p. 24).

According to a press report, despite entry into various vocational education courses, the university pathway programs division remains the company's biggest flagship in terms of student numbers and revenue generated, providing more than two-thirds of its earnings (Lee, 2011). Whilst concerned with delivering quality outcomes there is a pre-eminent focus on making a profit. Beta 1 stated:

The business listed so that we could take advantage of being able to leverage our investments to borrow funds to expand. It also meant that the overall value of the business would increase as the investment industry took stakes in the company. The true value of the business could be realised (06/11).

Case Beta has created a management system that reports to the board in the same way that a mining or manufacturing company does with clear lines of accountability and decision-making. As Beta 1 indicated:

The organisational chart, the job titles, the position descriptions, and the culture and the behaviour are all modelled on corporations. Case Beta is a corporation, this is how it operates, and I think this is why it has been successful (06/11).

It is worth noting that one of the reasons publically stated by the CEO of Case Beta for the success of the company is "trust": "Universities are about image and reputation, and students are looking for an education that's worth something" (WA Business News, July 2009). This relates to the quality assurance processes undertaken by Case Beta to ensure it "delivers on (those) expectations" according to the report. A company media release put out after an AQUA audit in 2009 on a university where one of its colleges is located stated that the college had been "roundly praised for high quality academic and student outcomes".

Beta 1 indicated the corporate governance requirements provided more stability for the company because stringent procedures are followed in regard to expansion and acquisitions. He stated that, "Decisions in these areas are very much the province of people with business and acquisition experience, as evidenced by the acquisition of the (XYZ) Group" (06/11).

In a paper prepared by two of Case Beta's senior academic leaders it was noted that a key driver for the management of quality assurance was "the stringent nature of the Australian Securities and Investment Commission for a public company" (AUQA, 2010). As a result, each of the pathway colleges had revised its governance structure to reflect the key role of the Board within each as the governing body. This has streamlined and standardised the overall approach to governance by the company to ensure it complies with government regulations. The data collected showed a strong understanding at each level of the need to ensure adherence to the principles of good governance.

A 2007 report by AUQA of a college operated in Australia by Case Beta found that the college operated under clear guidelines from the corporation for its governance. The governance and management processes were found to be connected with a number of parallel processes at the university where the college was located.

Relationship between Mission and Form of Governance

According to the 2010 annual report from Case Beta, the company's mission is to be "passionate about creating opportunities through life-long learning and being a global leader in delivering better learning solutions" (p. 5). The company also makes statements about vision, values, and core business. However, it is the opening statement from the company CEO in his review of operations in the 2010 annual report about core business that is the most revealing, "The company has a strong and assured future, with sound and sustained financial performance, a commitment to quality outcomes and a strategic investment program to roll out its proven business model" (p. 6).

The interview with Beta 1 revealed a different slant on the mission. In the interview he stated:

This company is about maximising shareholder value - both in terms of the share price and dividends - this is what drives and sustains (the company) - as it does for any other type of company of this nature. It is a business that has as its prime objective to make a profit. It does understand that its long term existence in the education sector depends on maintaining its reputation on its capacity to deliver quality outcomes and hence focuses on these so as to ensure it can maintain its relationships with universities, its students and other stakeholders. It cannot afford to enter into areas that compromise quality outcomes as loss of reputation means loss of shareholder value over a sustained period. This value is underpinned by a quality reputation as shareholder investment needs a longer term view. This means, as a listed company, shareholder value remains pivotal in the decisions made by the organisation, both in the short term and long term. This is the *raison d'être* of Case Beta (06/11).

According to the 2010 paper by senior Case Beta academics the pathway college strategic planning process is driven by the mission, vision and values of the company. These factors impact on the process at the company strategic level, the divisional level, and at the college level. Standard formats have been developed for monthly reporting and quarterly budget

forecasts to ensure adherence to the process. An end-of-year report against the college strategic plans is submitted to the executive general manager of the university programs division.

The response of the participant was to point out that while the mission, values and vision were core to the strategic planning process the major aim was to set targets in relation to student enrolments and financial returns. This view is confirmed by looking at the review of operations by the CEO in annual reports where the overwhelming focus is reporting on the financial performance of the company. For example, the opening sentence states, "(Case Beta) delivered significant increases across revenue, EBITDA (earnings-before-interest-taxation-and-depreciation allowances), NPAT (net-profit-after-tax) in FY10 (financial year 2010), maintaining its track record of sustained growth" (Annual report, 2010). This is supported by contemporary media reports of Case Beta which focus on the commercial side of the operation.

Case Delta

Profile

Case Delta was founded in the late 1980s to "commercialise" (according to the group's website) the international education division to ensure a profitable return to the university. The principal activities of Case Delta are the operation of pathway colleges in Australia and off-shore, distribution of vocational education programs, and recruiting and marketing of both domestic and international students to the university.

The university, which is located in a regional area, began as a college of a major metropolitan university in the mid-1960s. It became an independent university in the mid-1970s. The university has a traditional shared governance model, but like so many universities in Australia the executive decision making has been strengthened over the past decade or so. This is demonstrated by the university's organisational chart which assigns major responsibilities to deputy vice chancellors and pro vice chancellors who have been

assigned portfolios. The Council has a small number of committees with delegated authority vested in the Administrative Committee which serves as the executive committee of the Council. It is responsible for the key areas of finance, human resources, and capital works.

Form of Governance

Case Delta is a controlled entity of a university; it was established as limited liability company. The liability of its members is limited to the amount unpaid on the shares held by them. A limited liability company may be incorporated as a private or public company (Corporations Act (Cth), 2001). The 2010 company annual report stated that, "The divisions of (Case Delta) provide a diverse range of services, yet share the same vision. As one entity, (Case Delta) seeks to deliver specialist educational solutions operating in niche markets with tailored outcomes" (p. 3).

The 2009 annual report shows that Board members are appointed by the proprietor, which is the university. The

Board is comprised of eight members, including seven non-executive directors. The Chairman of the Board is a non-executive director. The Chief Executive Officer is appointed by and reports to the Board, and is a member of the Board. The Board has two sub-committees; Investment, Remuneration Audit and Risk, that both operate under a charter approved by the Board. These committees are chaired by a non-executive director of the Board. Case Delta operates under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of Australia Corporations Act 2001.

The governance structure for Case Delta is administered in accordance with Australian conventions for limited liability companies. The university appoints all board directors. The Vice Chancellor of the university is a member of the board as a non-executive director. According to information on the company's website the other five non-executive directors are not employed by the university; only one of the directors is also a member of the University council. The CEO/Managing Director is an executive director on

the board. The Board's three sub-committees; Investment, Remuneration and Audit and Risk are each chaired by a non-executive director. This is standard corporate governance requirements for this type of company in Australia. The financial statements are audited by the Auditor-General in the state of jurisdiction and annual returns lodged with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC).

In the interview with Delta 1 on the form of governance for Case Delta the following was stated:

The university has to ensure that the company established to manage and operate these functions and services for international students is run profitably and run properly. This is critical for a university that is funded by public monies ... (it is) vital to our integrity (05/11).

The form of governance for Case Delta is corporate. It was established as a controlled entity of the university to operate outside the parameters of the university's governance structure and operates in accordance with corporate rules.

Reasons for Adoption of Form of Governance

Case Delta was originally created by the university to take advantage of perceived opportunities in the corporatisation of the technology sector in the early 1980s. It then became what is described in the university's campus news bulletins as "the commercial arm of the university". In addition to providing research and consultancy services the company also offers training and development services including Foundation and English language courses for international students. According to an independent research case study undertaken in 1995 of the university's approach to internationalization:

The University ... was selected as a case study for Organisational Strategy because it exemplifies good practice in a generally centralised approach to the management of international activities which has resulted in a *culture of internationalisation* within the University, a high profile overseas, a broad spread of international projects and an international student population of almost 15% of total enrolments.

This reason for the establishment of a separate company to engage in a range of international activities was confirmed in the interview with Delta 1 who stated:

The corporate approach to the functions and services undertaken by the group (of companies) is carried out to ensure that there is fiduciary responsibility for our involvement in the international sector. As you know, universities are not allowed under Australian law to subsidise international activities. It is a potentially lucrative area and the university right from the start wanted to make sure that it operated efficiently and to the benefit of the university (05/11).

The 1995 case study report shows that from the very beginning that there was "an entrepreneurial approach" shown by the university with "an emphasis on research into new markets, on the formation of *strategic alliances* through institution to institution relationships, and on the appointment of overseas representatives".

The annual reports of the company demonstrate this approach. The review of company activities reveal generation of significant profits that are returned to the university as dividends that support the adoption of a corporate approach.

The quality assurance framework established by the company provides for a clear distinction between academic operations and business activities. According to Delta 1,

Quality Assurance is vital to our integrity and we conduct it as a rigorous process. We have an academic board for the college and university people involved who are not involved in the delivery of our programs. We are also subject to audit by AUQA - this provides external QA (05/11).

An AUQA audit was undertaken of Case Beta's Australian pathway college in 2011 but had not yet been made unavailable to the public when the findings for this study were written. However, the report on the offshore operation from a previous report in 2006 was accessible. The AUQA audit review noted that despite complex governance structure for the off-shore operation it was satisfied that the governance arrangements were sufficient to provide the university with the capability of ensuring that educational activities were consistent with its own. The 2006 report stated that the university has the capability of maintaining effective governance control over the activities of Case Delta, while benefiting from external

governance expertise. However, the report did recommend the strengthening of risk assessment reports to the university.

In terms of accountability the organisational structure for Case Delta's controlled entities are very clearly defined and accord with a corporate model that provides for line reporting and executive management. The entity's board of directors is clearly responsible for policy decisions and management is charged with the task of implementing decisions.

Relationship between Mission and Form of Governance

"We build knowledge capacity of individuals, organisations and countries, profitably and globally" is the mission statement stated in the 2009 company report. Case Delta also has a vision and that is "to be a builder of successful education brands". The values statement refers to 'our brands', 'build capacity', and 'reach globally'. Previously Case Delta had a mission statement that was essentially based on "building our brands"; in a subsequent revision of its mission the company has emphasised knowledge and education in conjunction with business goals.

Case Delta claims in its 2008 annual report to be "one of the most successful businesses owned by a quality Australian university" (p.2). There is also a reference to how the company focuses on service delivery to customers and looks for new opportunities to value-add. These statements together with the vision, stated mission and values statement of the company reflect a highly corporate approach to the way it operates.

In the interview with Delta 1 it was confirmed that the major objective of the company was to operate efficiently as possible and to make a return for the university:

What is distinctive about this overall approach to operating in the international sphere is the integration of the university's academic expertise and the company's commercial experience. It is central to the success of the venture, and gives us, a unique competitive advantage (05/11).

The university's campus news magazine reports regularly on donations to the institution for research, scholarships and other benefits. These reports are punctuated by references to the success of the company in terms of profit-making and the influence of the entity across a broad range of university

functions. Significantly, the institution named was the university and not the controlled entity. This would appear to be in alignment with the university's goal stated on its website: *"Enhanced capacity to take full and timely advantage of business opportunities that will support our Vision and Goals"*.

This was further substantiated by the previous AUQA report on the university that found that Case Delta supports the strategic goal and objectives of the university "by maximising customer satisfaction and profitable growth for the benefit of the University". The AUQA report stated that it does this in a number of ways, including "by providing alternative pathways for students wishing to enter the University".

In relation to accountability the structure and composition of the board "governed by independent board of education and business experts" (Annual report, 2008) provides evidence of a sound relationship between the governance structure and mission adopted. This is evident in the

university's controlled entities organisation chart on the university's website under "Governance". The chart clearly shows the various entities are under the control of the university. The members of the board of the controlled entity operating Case Delta are appointed by the council of the university.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings of the data collected from each of the three cases. It has linked the findings of each case study to the research questions. The findings for each case study provides the basis for the cross-case analysis to be presented in Chapter Eight. Chapter Eight contains a synthesis of the analysis of the data leading to the development of conclusions and recommendations for further research in Chapter Nine.

Chapter Eight - Cross-Case Analysis

Drawing and verifying conclusions requires systematic understanding of the cross case study using a logical chain of evidence and maintaining theoretical coherence by tactics such identifying themes and patterns, establishing plausibility, making metaphors, counting and clustering (Miles & Huberman, 1994 p. 222).

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to compare and contrast the case studies with the aim of analysing themes and issues generated across the multiple cases. The insights arising from this analytical process are then linked to issues identified from the literature review in Chapter Two, the theoretical context in Chapter Three, and the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter Four. The resulting synthesis forms the basis for the research conclusions presented in Chapter Nine.

For consistency this chapter maintains the same system of headings used for the case summaries presented in the last chapter. As noted these are consistent with the research questions as well as key concepts derived from the literature.

Each section commences with a table extrapolated from the data collected in Chapter Seven. That is, each key concept is discussed in relation to a table combining the summary issues for each case study. The tables facilitate cross-study comparison. Themes arising from this analysis are summarised and are linked to the literature and to the theoretical framework established for this study. The themes for this small-scale investigation study have been collected from two main sources of data, interviews and document analysis, which have been triangulated with the literature reviewed for this study.

Forms of Governance

The forms of governance adopted by each entity are summarised in Table 5:

Table 5

Cross-Case Summary of Forms of Governance

Element	Case Alpha	Case Beta	Case Delta
<i>Type of entity</i>	Propriety limited liability company	Publically listed company	Limited liability company
<i>Corporate requirements</i>	Complies with ASIC 1 requirements	Complies with ASX requirements	Complies with ASIC Requirements
<i>Board composition</i>	Board of 3 - all employees	Board of 9 - includes CEO - 4 independent directors	Board of 8 - includes CEO - 7 independent directors
<i>Board committee system</i>	Annual meeting - no committee structure	Meets regularly to set policy and review operations and performance - 3 sub-committees	Board meets at least 7 times per year to set policy and review operations and performance - 3 sub-committees
<i>Reporting procedures</i>	GM reports to CEO - not to Board	CEO reports directly to board	CEO reports directly to board

The approach by all three providers to the form of governance for their operation of pathway programs is corporate. Even though Case Alpha and Case Delta have traditional governance structure for their respective parent bodies both have chosen to establish specific entities that have a corporate structure. This reflects the trend identified in Table 1 whereby public education institutions are increasingly adopting corporate structures to operate their pathway programs for international students. This trend has now been evident in the literature for more than a decade with a number of researchers such as Chipman (1999) and Marginson (1999) who provide evidence of education organisations establishing separate entities to operate commercial ventures.

Even though each of the providers has a different organisational form based on the nature and type of entity, it is clear from the data that each has a corporate structure. This is verified by the registration with the relevant corporate regulatory authority and the compliance with corporate regulations for the respective jurisdiction. The

similarities across all three entities in this respect firmly establish the corporate approach to governance.

The most significant difference in terms of governance between the entities is in relation to board composition, the board committee system, and board reporting procedures. Case Beta and Case Delta adhere to the ASX's *Principles of Good Corporate Governance* (2009). Both have established committee systems and reporting procedures that are in accord with good corporate governance. This is exemplified by the appointment of non-executive directors as chairman of the board and/or committees. While Case Alpha does not have any non-executive directors involved in its governance nor regular meetings – as a proprietary limited company this arrangement is compliant with regulations.

Reasons for Forms of Governance

The reasons for the forms of governance adopted by each entity are summarised in Table 6:

Table 6

Cross-Case Summary of Reasons for Form of Governance

Element	Case Alpha	Case Beta	Case Delta
<i>Corporatisation</i>	Company formed specifically to distribute pathway programs	Company listed on stock exchange to strengthen corporatisation	Private limited liability company formed to operate international activities
<i>Commercialism</i>	Profit driven - aim to build market share	Commercial focus - aim to maximise value for shareholders	Emphasis on generating a profit to return as a dividend to owner
<i>Globalisation</i>	Strong desire to be a global player - mostly in Asia and Pacific	Strong global presence - mostly in English speaking markets	Operates an off-shore campus and delivers programs in Asia, Europe and the Middle East
<i>Mode of operation</i>	Franchise model	Operates own college network	Direct delivery of own programs and services
<i>Quality assurance</i>	Well developed internal processes	Subject to external audit	Subject to external audit
<i>Accountability</i>	Management responsible to Board via CEO	Board is responsible for the entity	Board is responsible for the entity

The overwhelming reason gleaned from the data for the adoption of a corporate model was the desire by each provider to have a commercial approach to the activity. In the case of Case Alpha there was a conscious decision to establish a new entity with the specific brief to distribute pathway programs internationally on a commercial basis. This was an important part of Case Alpha's corporate strategic plan to become a global player in transnational education. This approach was very similar to the other cases. Case Beta wanted to strengthen the corporatisation of its company by creating a stronger vehicle for growth of its business - that involved extending its business model off-shore to ensure growth and to provide a pipeline for its move into delivery of university programs. For Case Delta there was a view from the proprietor (the university) that an overtly corporate approach would ensure that it operated in an efficient and profitable manner to ensure a return on investment to the university. All providers stressed the need for corporate governance to ensure efficient operation in the market-place.

The reasons the providers adopted these organisational forms accords with the evidence from the literature review. As Marginson's (1999) research shows, public providers in the pathway sector are adopting "company structures outside the framework of academic decision-making" (p.5). This is the position of the cases in this study. A key aspect of Marginson's research shows that "projects and staffing are [now] subject to executive rather than academic control" (p.5). This is also a major finding from the cross-case analysis. This view is consistent with Chipman's (1999) research that shows that commercial "spin-offs" will become a feature of the "disintegrated university" (p. 4).

All of the providers own their product but each has chosen a different mode of operation. Case Alpha has developed a franchise model that sees it issue licences to "Approved Teaching Centres" in return for fee payments on a per capita basis. Case Beta distributes its pathway programs through its global network of colleges, while Case Delta has a mixed mode for distribution that consists of distribution through its own

university campuses and partnership agreements with other providers, especially for English language programs. In the collection of data it became very clear that the purpose of delivery regardless of mode was to make a profit.

"Quality outcomes" is a recurring theme in the cross-case analysis. All the participants interviewed and the documents analysed strongly emphasised the quality assurance credentials claimed by the providers. Case Beta and Case Delta are both subject to external audit by AUQA in Australia as well as having established stringent internal procedures. While Case Alpha's franchise model is not subject to external audit by AUQA (although its customers in Australia are), it has developed a robust quality assurance process that provide for due diligence and on-going auditing of its franchises. The reports are channelled through the entity to the parent body.

As noted in the literature review the quality assurance element is essential to the credibility of a pathway provider, particularly if operating off-shore. The application of a rigorous and transparent quality assurance process by a

provider is crucial to acceptance by the market. Baird (2007), a senior auditor at AUQA, claims that quality audit findings have become marketing tools for many providers. It is strongly linked to institutional reputation and for this reason providers have ensured quality assurance compliance by adopting an accountable form of governance.

In terms of accountability, the data showed that by adopting a corporate structure each of the cases had to put in place strong accountability measures. The corporate structure of both Case Beta and Case Delta require adherence to strict corporate regulations that states that the board is responsible for the overall operation of the entity. In the case of Alpha, the executive in charge of the entity is accountable to the CEO of the organisation who reports directly to the board. The accountability process for Case Beta and Case Delta is transparent; this is not necessarily the case for Case Alpha. Although, it is not illegal or unethical, it became clear during data collection that the preference of the CEO/Chairman of the parent body was for it

be structured in this way. This is not considered good governance practice in Australia where for a public company or organisation the Chairman is usually an independent director elected by the board.

The key driver for the adoption of a corporate form of governance by the providers was to structure an entity designed to make a profit. The major feature of this form of governance is the clear line of responsibility; management is responsible to the board for the operation of the entity and the board is responsible to the proprietors. The corporate structure was also considered to be the most appropriate structure to undertake expansion on a global basis. This was because, regardless of the mode of delivery, the entities entered into this activity to make a profit and this was the focus for management.

Relationship between Mission and Governance Structure

The summary of the data collected about the relationship of the mission and structure is summarised in Table 7:

Table 7

Cross-Case Summary of Relationship between Mission & Governance Structure

Element	Case Alpha	Case Beta	Case Delta
<i>Stated mission</i>	Promote opportunities for life-long learning	Emphasis on quality educational outcomes	Build knowledge capacity - profitably and globally
<i>Underlying mission</i>	Entity has to be commercial - but activities are related to the mission	To maximise shareholder returns by generating profits	Generate profits for the university
<i>Quality assurance</i>	Central to stated mission - emphasis on quality outcomes	Processes support the mission of quality educational outcomes	Integral to the mission
<i>Accountability</i>	Management responsible for adhering to mission and building the business	Business processes driven by mission	Strong link to governance through academic expertise and business experience

The literature review found a convergence toward the corporate model of governance in terms of structure and mission when there is a clear focus on generating a profit. Marginson (2007) claims that the market has become the determining influence on the relationship between the mission and structure of the governance in the higher education sector. This view is supported by the data for this cross-case study.

Case Alpha uses the same mission statement as the parent body. However, while the entity formed to distribute pathway programs has a strong commercial focus the activities are linked to the mission and provide the *raison d'être* for the operation. The documents analysed and the interview with the company executive all show clear alignment between the mission and the structure in relation to governance of Case Alpha. Case Beta has a stated mission relating to education it is clear that the main purpose is to maximise shareholder value. The statements about vision, mission, values and core business all relate to educational outcomes, however, the annual

reports all start by highlighting the bottom line.

Meanwhile, there is clear alignment between the stated mission and the underlying mission for Case Delta; that is, to build the business and to generate funds for the proprietor. As noted in the section on the mission in Chapter Two, the for-profit institutions have a clear focus on making a profit. This is borne out in the cross-case analysis that shows there is not necessarily alignment between the stated mission and underlying mission. This is linked to the reasons for adoption of the form of governance; providers have adopted a structure for organisational factors and then drawn up the mission.

The data show that quality assurance is considered an important facet of the relationship between the mission and the structure for all the cases in this study. The term, *quality*, was omnipresent in the interviews with all the participants, who were at pains to emphasise the importance of quality assurance and their success at compliance. While both Case Beta and Case Delta were subject to external audit by AUQA, this was not so for Case Alpha. However, Case Alpha's

customers in Australia are subject to this form of audit.

The data collected indicated that each entity also placed strong emphasis on robust internal quality assurance. For Case Alpha quality assurance was "central" to the mission according to Alpha 1 (05/11); for Case Beta "the QA processes ensure quality educational outcomes" (06/11); while for Case Delta it was "integral" to the mission (05/11).

A strong set of accountability measures was listed as a defining feature of the governance of corporate universities by Marginson (2007). The data collected and analysed for this study also supports this view. The interviews, in particular, all drew out responses that strongly emphasised the responsibility of the governing board to ensure accountability of management to the board, and hence the mission of the entity.

For Case Alpha it was very clear that management were accountable to the Board through the CEO to meet the organisation's mission as well as to ensure profitability of the entity. In the case of Beta, the business processes drive

the mission with management directly accountable to the board. While for Case Delta the board's expertise in business matters is designed to ensure management are accountable for the mission. This link between business acumen and academic expertise is hailed by Case Delta as underpinning the success of its venture.

Conclusion

This chapter has compared and contrasted the data collected for the cases in relation to the research questions to show the findings from key themes derived from the conceptual framework for this study. Both individual and cross-case issues have been considered and discussed within this chapter in this context. The study's conclusions can now be presented, the implications for policy and practice considered, and opportunities for further research identified.

Chapter Nine - Conclusions

"Grace is given of God, but knowledge is born in the market." (Arthur Hugh Clough as cited in R. Gollin, 1967).

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the conclusions as well as the implications and limitations of the study. It also gives consideration to the theoretical context and conceptual framework presented in Chapters Three and Five respectively. The analysis for this small-scale investigation has been drawn from three key sets of data, interviews and document analysis. The chapter firstly considers the findings of the case and cross-case analysis in Chapters Seven and Eight in relation to the research questions for this study. The results of the analytical process form the basis for the presentation of each of the cases in relation to the model for this study, *Clark's Triangle of Coordination*. This is followed by a discussion of the implications for further research. The

conclusion contains comments about my observations and predictions for the future.

Conclusions for Each Research Question

Research Question 1: What forms of governance are used by three providers of university entrance pathway programs?

This investigation reveals that the form of governance used by the three providers is the corporate model. It is significant to note that while the ownership structures are different, each of the cases has chosen to establish a corporatised entity to distribute its pathway programs. Each of the corporate entities is different: a propriety limited company, a limited liability company, and a listed public company. The corporate compliance requirements ensure that the manner and way in which each entity operates is corporate. This corporate approach is reflected in the requirements for governance such as board composition, board committee system and financial reporting procedures.

The literary evidence in Chapters Two and Three shows that two of the major elements in the external environment,

globalisation and commercialisation, have significantly impacted on governance in higher education. Further, the ideological push for corporate management policies and practices that stemmed from New Public Management reforms also had a material impact on governance in the sector.

Accountability has been a central component of this process.

Closely linked is quality assurance that has become increasingly emphasised and held up as ensuring the adherence of higher education providers to external audits by government agencies.

Sporn (1999) shows that the universities that adapt and respond to the environment to make their institution more flexible and efficient have changed their organisational form to make it more corporate, particularly at the management level. Further in the review of literature, a number of researchers including Marginson and Considine (2000), Meek (2002), Coaldrake, Stedman and Little (2003), and Harman and Treadgold (2007) all identified a shift in university governance in Australia from the shared governance model to a

corporate model. The defining features were fewer board members and stronger executive control. According to Meek (2002) this is a result of the environmental pressures on higher education institutions "to strengthen management, to become more entrepreneurial and corporate like" (pp. 266-267).

The findings of the cross-case study support the thesis that there is a convergence toward a corporate approach in the organisational structure in the governance of providers of pathway programs. This approach is consistent with Clark's (1998) notion of a "strengthened steering core" guiding entrepreneurial activities within an overall structure. As Pusser and Turner (2004) show the differences in overall governance between the for-profit providers and not-for-profit providers in the US is narrowing and this shows convergence. The pathway sector is a manifestation of this trend.

Research Question 2: For what reasons did providers create governance structures as they have done?

The data show that each of the cases established a separate entity for the specific purpose of distributing their respective pathway programs. And the overwhelming reason for the creation was to operate the entity in an efficient manner so that it generates a profit. Regardless of whether that profit was to maximise shareholder returns, build market share, or to return a dividend to the university, the reason was clearly market-driven and, hence the need for an efficient mechanism to achieve that outcome. The findings also showed that regardless of the mode of operation the main aim was to ensure a commercial approach to operations. There was a very clear focus by all three entities on achieving quality outcomes to strengthen market position. Government corporate regulations ensure compliance by the entities to accountability requirements, especially given the legal sanctions. Each of the entities also fully emphasised the integrity of academic processes and undertook external accreditation.

The research confirmed strong evidence of the movement toward corporate vehicles being established to operate outside of conventional higher education practice to distribute pathway programs. The result is a governance structure based on business models to enable the respective entities to compete in a highly competitive global environment.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between the mission of providers of pathway programs and the governance structures adopted?

The findings reveal ambiguity between the stated mission of the respective cases and the underlying mission. All three cases openly state an educationally-orientated mission but the data reveals that the underlying mission is to return a profit from operational activities. Each of the participants interviewed for this study proclaimed a link between the mission and operational processes, particularly in quality assurance and accountability. Each emphasised the strong link between the mission and quality outcomes. The connection

between the mission and structure was less apparent because the major focus was on securing monetary returns from operations. Even the core business statement from Case Beta does not explicitly state the real purpose of the company's business. Most publically-listed companies have a mission statement that encapsulates the true purpose of the business, for example, Macarthur Coal Ltd - "To grow total shareholder value ..." (Macarthur Coal, 2010, p.1). Case Beta most closely approximates a typical corporate mission statement with references to "profitability" and "globally" while Case Alpha simply adopts the mission statement of the parent body.

The ambiguity between the mission and structure of providers in higher education was raised in the literature. Patterson (2001) argues that mission statements provide little more than "idealistic rhetoric" (p. 160). Based on a comparison between universities and business, Patterson argues that the business corporation has a clear unity of purpose in its mission - to make a profit. Further, Patterson argues that the business corporation has well-defined lines of authority

to maintain "a unity of action in order to achieve its unity of purpose" (p. 161). By contrast, the line of authority in a university is fragmented and diffused, and "decision making is more widely dispersed" (p. 162).

The research for this study demonstrates that the purpose and structure of the cases analysed has a clear objective, that is, to make a profit, but that is not necessarily reflected in the stated mission statement. However, all behaviour points toward commercialisation of their products and services as an integral part of the mission - be it promoting life-long learning or building knowledge.

The example of Case Delta is an example of a public university moving toward a corporate approach in relation to its structure and mission. While there is clear convergence in terms of the structural elements of governance by providers of pathway providers this is not as readily discernible in relation to the mission. However, as the data showed the underlying mission of the cases analysed was overtly commercial in focus and behaviour.

Application of Theoretical Model to this Case Study

The collection and analysis of the data for the three research questions reveals a convergence toward a corporate model of governance driven by the market paradigm. This “global transformation” of higher education, according to Marginson and van den Wende (2007) is leading to homogeneity and convergence based on competition between providers in the market-place (p. 19). The growth and development of the distributed pathway programs is an integral part of the international educational market. Pathway providers based in Australia are at the forefront of this aspect of transnational education. The role of pathway providers in the market-place has become integral to this process of marketisation as they provide pathways to fee-paying places in universities.

In terms of the application of Clark’s (1983) model of *Triangle of Coordination*, each case can be positioned at the market end of the spectrum. This actually accords with Clark’s prediction that higher education systems would ultimately be driven by market forces. The influence of the State in shaping

the higher education system generally is not in dispute, particularly in relation to policy setting; however, its policies have been designed to encourage entrepreneurialism and this has pushed providers to the market.

The influence of the 'Academy' has waned considerably in higher education. This was as noted in the literature review and backed-up by evidence collected for this study. There is a clear emphasis on managerialism and this has diminished the power and influence of academics. This study has shown that the State's role is mostly supervisory and that the Academy's role is largely restricted to instruction. The major element shaping the system is the Market as each of the providers in this study is structured to generate profits and can be placed at this end of the spectrum. Refer to Figure 6:

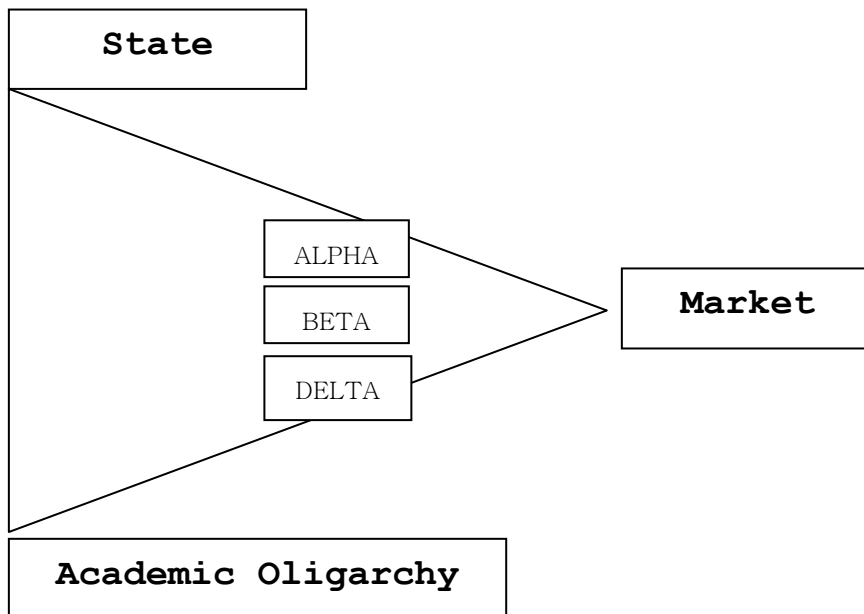


Figure 6:
Application of the Triangle of Coordination

Limitations

The findings of this study have several limitations. This is a small-scale investigation that has been limited in scope and depth to a cross-case study of three providers. This represents only 10% of the higher education institutions actively engaged in the distribution of pathway programs. Additionally, the TAFE, schools and private sector are involved in the pathway sector but as noted the sector is dominated by the universities in terms of size and scale. The study was also limited on the issue of the mission and structure of the governance of a small sample of providers.

Further, the focus on pathway programs providers limits the findings to this sector to the higher education context. As the nature and type of operation of the providers selected for the case study differ in terms of their size and make-up the findings are not strictly comparable. Despite these limitations, a number of analytical, procedural and ethical steps (as outlined in Chapter Six) have been undertaken to reinforce the rigour, integrity and quality of the study.

Implications for Further Research

A number of areas for future research arise from this study. In particular, the trend toward a corporate model of governance in the higher education sector needs more comprehensive research. Investigation into the governance of higher education institutions in Australia has been subject to some research but more needs to be done to examine the structure and processes of governance to more fully determine the advance of corporatisation. This would deepen our understanding of the trend toward corporate governance in the sector.

Another potentially valuable area for further research would be to investigate other areas that have been established by universities on a commercial basis such as technological, medical, and management consultancy entities. A comparison with the governance structures developed by higher education for distribution of pathway programs might provide some valuable insights. Again, there is the opportunity to extend our knowledge and understanding of the approach to governance.

The issue of quality assurance in higher education off-shore has been subject to various studies that provided some assistance to this study. A more focused study of the value and importance of quality assurance for providers of pathway programs operating on a global basis would complement this study. The role of external audit agencies in this process opens up a number of interesting possibilities.

A further area for potential study is the relationship between private providers of pathway programs and their partnerships with public universities. As noted in this study, collaborative partnerships dominate the pathway sector in

Australia with one major player leading the way and a couple of other international corporate providers gaining greater market share. Further research into what constitutes best practice in collaborations is extremely important and worthy of study in its own right.

Concluding Comments

As noted in the introduction to this chapter Meek (2002) suggests "market steering of higher education increasingly requires strong corporate style management at the institutional level" (p. 266). For the providers of pathway programs selected for this study, this involved establishing a separate entity in a corporate organisational form. This approach enabled the providers to act outside the constraints of traditional university governance and to place control and authority with management. These developments are in line with the evolution of "academic capitalism" identified by Slaughter and Leslie (1997) that is becoming increasingly prevalent in the context of a competitive global higher education environment.

Looking to the future, the trend identified by Chipman (1999) for higher education providers to develop commercial "spin-offs" and/or or to distribute "off-the-shelf" products to other providers is likely to become a stronger feature of the higher education landscape. This aligns with noted international educator, Peter Scott's prediction that, "Universities are likely to become hybrid public-private institutions in which fairly traditional forms of teaching co-exist with much more entrepreneurial forms" (Scott, 2005, p. 7)

The mission and structure of the governance of hybrid form is almost certainly going to be in a corporate shape. This small-scale investigation has provided an insight into this dynamic. Further research is required but this study has unearthed the inexplicable movement toward convergence in the higher education sector for providers of pathway programs.

Appendix A

Letter to Research Participants

<Date>

PARTICIPATION IN AN ECU RESEARCH PROJECT

Dear <Name of Interviewee>,

I am seeking your participation in a study exploring “The Governance of Providers of Pathway Programs to University”. This research project is being undertaken as part of the requirements of a Doctorate of Education at Edith Cowan University.

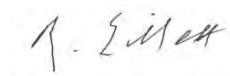
As an established provider of pathway programs I am inviting you to be involved in this study. This research will contribute to a better understanding of the structure and mission of the governance of providers of pathway programs based in Australia but operating on a global basis. If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to undertake an interview. The interview questions will be available in advance. It will take 45-60 minutes to complete.

Please contact me if you have any questions or require further information about this research project. My phone number is +971 2 635 3191 and my email address is r.gillett@ecu.edu.au . You may also contact my supervisors, Associate Professor Glenda Campbell-Evans on 08 6304 2500, email g.campbell_evans@ecu.edu.au or Dr Jan Gray on 08 9370 6320, email jan.gray@ecu.edu.au . If you have any concerns or complaints about the research project and wish to talk to an independent person, you may contact:

Research Ethics Officer
Edith Cowan University
270 Joondalup Drive
JOONDALUP WA 6027
Phone: (08) 6304 2170
Email: research.ethics@ecu.edu.au.

Your participation, or otherwise, in this project will not affect your employment. You will not be asked to do anything typically regarded as uncomfortable. The information received will be used for the Portfolio unit; it will not identify you and will be kept confidential. I would be pleased to provide the results of the survey on request. Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time with no consequence. If you are happy to participate please sign and return the included informed consent form.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Gillett', written in a cursive style.

Rodney Gillett

Appendix B

Consent Form for Participants

CONSENT FORM TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARTICIPANT

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM

I _____ (Participant) acknowledge that I have read the attached information and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I hereby give my consent for Rodney Gillett, a student in the Doctor of Education program to interview me for his research project.

I acknowledge that the project has the approval of the Edith Cowan University Ethics Committee.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Name of Educational Organisation: _____

Position : _____

Appendix C

Interview Question Guide

1. What is the main purpose of your organisation?
2. What is the stated mission of your organisation? Does this accord with how it operates in practice?
3. How is the organisation constituted? Who is it ultimately responsible to?
4. What is the form of governance for your organisation? How are board members elected/appointed?
5. Who are the major stakeholders (if any)? Are they an electoral group? What influence do they have on decision-making?
6. How is the management structured? Is there a clear division of responsibility between management and the governing board? Is the GM/CEO a member of the board? Or is it just a reporting function?
7. Why has the organisation adopted the form of governance that it has?
8. What effect has the mission statement had on the form of governance adopted for the organisation? Or has the form of governance driven the mission statement adopted?

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