academic's support kit

Rebecca **Boden**

Jane **Kenway**

Debbie **Epstein**

building your academic career

The Academic's Support Kit

Building your Academic Career
Rebecca Boden, Debbie Epstein and Jane Kenway

Getting Started on Research
Rebecca Boden, Jane Kenway and Debbie Epstein

Writing for Publication
Debbie Epstein, Jane Kenway and Rebecca Boden

Teaching and Supervision
Debbie Epstein, Rebecca Boden and Jane Kenway

Winning and Managing Research Funding
Jane Kenway, Rebecca Boden and Debbie Epstein

Building Networks
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R.B.
D.E.
J.K.

Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*

Before you really get into this book, you might like to know a bit more about the authors.

Rebecca Boden, from England, is professor of accounting at the University of the West of England. She did her PhD in politics immediately after graduating from her first degree (which was in history and politics). She worked as a contract researcher in a university before the shortage of academic jobs in 1980s Britain forced her into the civil service as a tax inspector. She subsequently launched herself on to the unsuspecting world of business schools as an accounting academic.

Debbie Epstein, a South African, is a professor in the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University. She did her first degree in history and then worked briefly as a research assistant on the philosopher Jeremy Bentham's papers. Unable to read his handwriting, she went on to teach children in a variety of schools for seventeen years. She returned to university to start her PhD in her forties and has been an academic ever since.

Jane Kenway, an Australian, is professor of education at Monash University with particular responsibility for developing the field of global cultural studies in education. She was a schoolteacher and outrageous hedonist before she became an academic. But since becoming an academic she has also become a workaholic, which has done wonders for her social life, because, fortunately, all her friends are similarly inclined. Nonetheless she is interested in helping next-generation academics to be differently pleasured with regard to their work and their lives.

As you can see, we have all had chequered careers which are far from the stereotype of the lifelong academic but that are actually fairly typical. What we have all had to do is to retread ourselves, acquire new skills and learn to cope in very different environments. In our current jobs we all spend a lot of time helping and supporting people who are learning to be or developing themselves as academics. Being an accountant, Rebecca felt that there had to be a much more efficient way

of helping people to get the support they need than one-to-one conversations. This book and the other five in the *Academic's Support Kit* are for all these people, and for their mentors and advisers.

We have tried to write in an accessible and friendly style. The books contain the kind of advice that we have frequently proffered our research students and colleagues, often over a cup of coffee or a meal. We suggest that you consume their contents in a similar ambience: read the whole thing through in a relaxed way first and then dip into it where and when you feel the need.

Throughout the *ASK* books we tell the stories of anonymised individuals drawn from real life to illustrate how the particular points we are making might be experienced. While you may not see a precise picture of yourself, we hope that you will be able to identify things that you have in common with one or more of our characters to help you see how you might use the book.

Pragmatic principles/principled pragmatism

In writing these books, as in all our other work, we share a number of common perceptions and beliefs.

1. Globally, universities are reliant on public funding. Downward pressure on public expenditure means that universities' financial resources are tightly squeezed. Consequently mantras such as 'budgeting', 'cost cutting', 'accountability' and 'performance indicators' have become ubiquitous, powerful drivers of institutional behaviour and academic work.
2. As a result, universities are run as corporate enterprises selling education and research knowledge. They need 'management', which is essential to running a complex organisation such as a university, as distinct from 'managerialism' – the attempted application of 'scientific management techniques' borrowed from, though often discarded by, industry and commerce. What marks managerialism out from good management is the belief that there is a one-size-fits-all suite of management solutions that can be applied to any organisation. This can lead to a situation in which research and teaching, the *raison d'etre* of universities, take second place to managerialist fads, initiatives, strategic plans, performance

indicators and so on. Thus the management tail may wag the university dog, with the imperatives of managerialism conflicting with those of academics, who usually just want to research and teach well.

3. Increasingly, universities are divided into two cultures with conflicting sets of values. On the one hand there are managerialist doctrines; on the other are more traditional notions of education, scholarship and research. But these two cultures do not map neatly on to the two job groups of 'managers' and 'academics'. Many managers in universities hold educational and scholarly values dear and fight for them in and beyond their institutions. By the same token, some academics are thoroughly and unreservedly managerialist in their approach.
4. A bit like McDonald's, higher education is a global business. Like McDonald's branches, individual universities seem independent, but are surprisingly uniform in their structures, employment practices and management strategies. Academics are part of a globalised labour force and may move from country to (better paying) country.
5. Academics' intellectual recognition comes from their academic peers rather than their employing institutions. They are part of wider national and international peer networks distinct from their employing institutions and may have academic colleagues across continents as well as nearer home. The combination of the homogeneity of higher education and academics' own networks make it possible for them to develop local identities and survival strategies based on global alliances. The very fact of this globalisation makes it possible for us to write a *Kit* that is relevant to being an academic in many different countries, despite important local variations.
6. In order to thrive in a tough environment academics need a range of skills. Very often acquiring them is left to chance, made deliberately difficult or the subject of managerialist ideology. In this *Kit* our aim is to talk straight. We want to speak clearly about what some people just 'know', but others struggle to find out. Academia is a game with unwritten and written rules. We aim to write down the unwritten rules in order to help level an uneven playing field. The slope of the playing field favours 'developed' countries and, within these, more experienced academics in more prestigious institutions. Unsurprisingly, women and some ethnic groups often suffer marginalisation.

7. Most of the skills that academics need are common across social sciences and humanities. This reflects the standardisation of working practices that has accompanied the increasing managerialisation of universities, but also the growing (and welcome) tendency to work across old disciplinary divides. The *Academic's Support Kit* is meant for social scientists, those in the humanities and those in more applied or vocational fields such as education, health sciences, accounting, business and management.
8. We are all too aware that most academics have a constant feeling of either drowning in work or running ahead of a fire or both. Indeed, we often share these feelings. Nevertheless, we think that there *are* ways of being an academic that are potentially less stressful and more personally rewarding. Academics need to find ways of playing the game in ethical and professional ways and winning. We do not advise you to accept unreasonable demands supinely. Instead, we are looking for strategies that help people retain their integrity, the ability to produce knowledge and teach well.
9. University management teams are often concerned to avoid risk. This may lead to them taking over the whole notion of 'ethical behaviour' in teaching and research and subjecting it to their own rules, which are more to do with their worries than good professional academic practice. In writing these books, we have tried to emphasise that there are richer ethical and professional ways of being in the academic world: ways of being a public intellectual, accepting your responsibilities and applying those with colleagues, students and the wider community.

And finally …

We like the way that Colin Bundy, Principal of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and previously Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, so pithily describes the differences and similarities between universities in such very different parts of the world. Interviewed for the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (27 January 2004) by John Crace, he explains:

> The difference is one of nuance. In South Africa, universities had become too much of an ivory tower and needed a reintroduction to the pressures

> of the real world. In the UK, we have perhaps gone too far down the line of seeing universities as pit-stops for national economies. It's partly a response to thirty years of underfunding: universities have had to adopt the neo-utilitarian line of asserting their usefulness to justify more money. But we run the risk of losing sight of some of our other important functions. We should not just be a mirror to society, but a critical lens: we have a far more important role to play in democracy and the body politic than merely turning out graduates for the job market.

Our hope is that the *Academic's Support Kit* will help its readers develop the kind of approach exemplified by Bundy – playing in the real world but always in a principled manner.

Books in the *Academic's Support Kit*

The *Kit* comprises six books. There is no strict order in which they should be read, but this one is probably as good as any – except that you might read *Building your Academic Career* both first and last.

Building your Academic Career encourages you to take a proactive approach to getting what you want out of academic work whilst being a good colleague. We discuss the advantages and disadvantages of such a career, the routes in and the various elements that shape current academic working lives. In the second half of the book we deal in considerable detail with how to write a really good CV (résumé) and how best to approach securing an academic job or promotion.

Getting Started on Research is for people in the earlier stages of development as a researcher. In contrast to the many books available on techniques of data collection and analysis, this volume deals with the many other practical considerations around actually doing research – such as good ways to frame research questions, how to plan research projects effectively and how to undertake the various necessary tasks.

Writing for Publication deals with a number of generic issues around academic writing (including intellectual property rights) and then considers writing refereed journal articles, books and book chapters in detail as well as other, less common, forms of publication for academics. The aim is to demystify the process and to help you to become a confident, competent, successful and published writer.

Teaching and Supervision looks at issues you may face both in teaching undergraduates and in the supervision of graduate research students. This book is not a pedagogical instruction manual – there are plenty of those around, good and bad. Rather, the focus is on presenting explanations and possible strategies designed to make your teaching and supervision work less burdensome, more rewarding (for you and your students) and manageable.

Winning and Managing Research Funding explains how generic university research funding mechanisms work so that you will be better equipped to navigate your way through the financial maze associated with various funding sources. The pressure to win funding to do research is felt by nearly all academics worldwide. This book details strategies that you might adopt to get your research projects funded. It also explains how to manage your research projects once they are funded.

Building Networks addresses perhaps the most slippery of topics, but also one of the most fundamental. Despite the frequent isolation of academic work, it is done in the context of complex, multi-layered global, national, regional and local teaching or research networks. Having good networks is key to achieving what you want in academia. This book describes the kinds of networks that you might build across a range of settings, talks about the pros and cons and gives practical guidance on networking activities.

1 Who should Use this Book and How?

In our cumulative forty-five years of experience of working in higher education, the thing that strikes us above everything else is the rapid pace and direction of change in what constitutes an 'academic career'. If we were writing this book twenty years ago, it would have been a much simpler task: there were standard entry routes into the profession; standard expectations of qualifications and achievements; and a readily identifiable and largely homogeneous career trajectory. Nothing could be further from the truth now.

Environment is a key determining factor here. When C.P. Snow, an Oxford don, wrote his novel, *The Masters*, and other books about life at Oxbridge (that is, Oxford and Cambridge) colleges, he described a world shaped by a very traditional notion of collegiality, hierarchy and politics. In his university world, the fellows of the college and the values that bound them together *were* the university. There was no notion here that an academic was an employee of an institution. Rather, the college facilitated the individual's work. Similarly, David Lodge's novels such as *Changing Places* and *Small World* and Malcolm Bradbury's *The History Man* described academic life as characterised by self-governance of an organisation, nevertheless riven by petty disputes, politicking, sexual entanglements and backstabbing of various kinds.

In contrast, when Andrew Davies wrote *A Very Peculiar Practice* some years later, his imagined university was a corporate entity with managed hierarchies supplanting professional ones. While similar politicking, jealousies and disputes were depicted, nevertheless the world was a very different place. In this context, academics were employees and universities were corporations in a globalised knowledge economy.

Obviously, such works of fiction present a stereotyped view of the worst of universities of their time. However, we feel that they reasonably accurately reflect the nature of universities and how they have changed over time. The university of *Peculiar Practice* is all too familiar.

The changing nature of universities has inevitably had an impact on academic careers and individual academic identities. The changing nature of university work environments, across the globe, means that academic careers are no longer the homogeneous, stable and entirely predictable creatures that they were twenty or thirty years ago. For an individual, negotiating this minefield can be fraught with difficulties – especially when, like in *Alice in Wonderland,* the lie of the land can change almost without warning.

This book is intended to help all academics negotiate this dynamic environment to their best advantage. If this is the first book in the *Academic's Support Kit* that you are reading, then you might find it useful to read 'Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*' before you begin. If you are reading all the books in the kit, it is probably best to read this book either first or last. You may want to read it first in order to get an overview of what an academic career entails. On the other hand, you may find it useful to turn or return to this book after you have read the others in the *Academic's Support Kit* as a way of pulling all the threads together and helping you develop a strategy for your future career.

This book will be especially useful for you if you are one of the following people:

- You may be about to begin or be at the beginning of your career in the academic world, perhaps as a postgraduate student or a newly appointed academic. You may have previously been in a different professional career such as school teaching, accountancy, the law or business.
- Because you work in a dynamic institutional environment, you may be subject to increasing pressure to develop a different academic profile and persona. For example, you may be a long-standing, senior contract researcher who wants the more secure employment that comes from having a teaching role as well as a research one. Equally, you might be someone who has done a lot of teaching but not much, if any, research. Alternatively, you might be someone who has been 'treading water' in your job and have decided to 'retread' yourself in order to get a new job at a different institution or a promotion. Finally, you may be quite dissatisfied with your lot in the world of work and have decided to take a proactive approach to making some changes.
- You might be the mentor, friend or colleague of someone in one of the above positions.

This book is about how you develop, represent and market your academic identity. Because academic work is very personalised, highly individualised and often atomised, you need to pay careful attention to how you develop and package yourself as an academic.

We've noticed that people often talk about 'being an academic' rather than being employed as one. Many people still see being an academic as a vocation and an identity rather than simply as a job. This means that work is not framed by a nine-to-five mentality and embodies a certain sense of purpose beyond earning a salary. The personal satisfaction from working in this way is often seen as compensating for the often poor material rewards that academics receive. In contradistinction, it's all too easy to let work dominate or colonise every aspect of your life to the detriment of health, well-being, family, relationships and so on.

You may want to:

- Think about where you are going in your working life.
- Reassess your career.
- Find out the best ways of presenting yourself and your achievements in order to get a job or a promotion.
- Know what the secrets of getting those plum jobs are and how to make the system work for you.
- Understand what's important in building an academic career and what isn't, so that you can be proactive in developing the aspects of your work that matter most in the career context.

The incentives to think proactively about academic careers are quite strong. Academics now work in a largely globalised labour market and this creates many more and varied opportunities than were available even a few years ago. It is also much easier to move between academia and jobs outside universities – and back again. Contemporary performance cultures mean that, for those who can demonstrate 'performance', there are plenty of opportunities available. Old disciplinary boundaries are breaking down, making it easier for individuals to transfer between disciplines as their interests and focus shifts. Moving to a new position or disciplinary area may give you better resources, treatment, promotion possibilities, access to a critical mass of people in your area and support for research. You may also be able to secure a place in a stronger research culture and intellectual environment in a university with more institutional prestige. Finally, you may acquire a nicer and better set of work colleagues. It is important to remember that a globalised academic

labour market can give you as an individual a great deal of power and advantage as long as you can demonstrate that you have the right sorts of things to bring to the party.

There are also some more negative reasons why people may want a new or different job. Generally, academic positions the world over are less secure than they were and tenure (a job for life) is rapidly disappearing. This means that you as an individual must make sure that you are constantly marketable as an academic employee. Unfortunately, many universities and/or departments within them are marred by cultures of bullying and intimidation and constrained by poor resources, recognition and support. Such characteristics can generate quite strong desires to get out and go elsewhere.

Hopefully, you are quite happy with where you are, but nevertheless you will need to continue to develop your career in order to ensure that you stay happy.

First, we'd like to introduce some people who might be in the kind of position in which they would find this book particularly useful.

Graínne became an academic after a successful career in advertising. She has been working at a university for about ten years and has just completed her PhD and is embarking on her publishing career. She is under pressure to become head of her department, but she is anxious to move to another university in her partner's home country. He is also an academic. She is unsure about how to prioritise her work activities so as to maximise her chances of achieving what she wants.

Salma was a nurse who started work at her current institution to teach in her area of professional expertise about ten years ago. Since then the university has made research activity a compulsory element in every academic's contract. At the same time it is running down the teaching in her specialist area. Salma is happy at her university and doesn't want to have to move. She also really likes teaching and thinks she might like research, but is unsure about how to make herself valuable to the institution.

Inderjit is a very well qualified individual with an excellent publication record. Unfortunately, his main disciplinary area, science policy studies, is in recession and there are no jobs available to him. Because he was without an academic job he took a post as a research assistant on a professor's project in a related disciplinary area but in a business school. Whilst working in this post he used his staff privileges to study for a Masters in business strategy and was then successful in getting a permanent established post in strategic management studies.

Lucy got a first-class degree and progressed immediately to do a PhD in the same subject area and university. Following her PhD she worked as a contract researcher at the same institution and for a large charitable organisation outside higher education. She then obtained a temporary teaching job back at her *alma mater* and has recently been made a permanent employee there. She is still very young and needs to think about how to shape her future career prospects.

2 Why have an Academic Career?

In this chapter, we introduce the concept of the academic career as a professional one and discuss some of the pros and cons of this sort of work.

The professional academic

An academic career is generally regarded as being a *professional* one, and therefore traditionally associated with self-regulation, expert knowledges (often mystified), high barriers to entry associated with demonstrable competence and a widely espoused emphasis on service in contrast to profitability. Thus professional work is frequently still seen as having a substantial vocational element – it is work that individuals undertake as part of their life and is a core part of their identities. Typical professions are medicine, the law and accountancy. Of course, a critical and perhaps not altogether cynical perspective on professionalism is that it enables certain groups to become powerful, influential and profitable whilst firmly established on the moral high ground.

In the majority of economies globally, during the past twenty or thirty years, the traditional notions of professionalism have been steadily undermined. Two forces have been at work here. First, neo-liberal governments and supranational organisations such as the World Bank have sought to expose professional groups to increased market pressures, creating a market for services of the same type as for cars or carrots. Expert knowledge has become a manageable commodity. This has benefited governments by cutting their own costs and stimulating the private sector. Second, market forces themselves have undermined professionalism by opening up previously restricted practices and by 'packaging' services as consumer goods. As such,

professional services have become big business. These pressures have eroded the power and prestige of individual practitioners, and professional work now embodies explicit imperatives to be efficient, effective and economic – to either cost as little as possible or to maximise profitability. Simultaneously, self-regulation has been undermined and replaced with cultures of audit and performativity that are externally regulated.

For all kinds of professions, regulation has increased and autonomy and possibly work satisfaction have been reduced in recent years. Being an academic is no exception to this trend and some of what follows will reflect this.

The pros and cons of being an academic

Here are some of the reasons why people might or might not enjoy working as an academic in a contemporary university.

Academics are creative

Being involved in the creation of new knowledge through academic research is, for many people, an immensely pleasurable, stimulating and rewarding activity that can give a real sense of achievement and self-worth. Additionally, academic knowledge and expertise can and do have a significant beneficial impact on real people and their lives.

Academics are paid to do what they love

Many people become academics through sheer love of their subject and excitement at being paid to study, research and teach something they thoroughly enjoy. For most academics, this is by far the most important reason for doing the job, because it is a huge privilege to be paid to do what you love doing. Academics, a bit like nurses and the clergy, are said to have a 'vocation' for their work. The down side of having a vocation is that it may legitimise low pay and poor conditions of labour. Indeed, the more ruthless managerialist universities have realised that

most academics will do their work despite horrendous work pressures and poor working conditions.

One problem here is that the bits of the academic life that most of us enjoy are the research and contact with students. As universities ratchet up their demands in terms of 'productivity' and 'profitability', gaining research grants, filling in forms, meeting performance indicators and so on, those enjoyable, vocational aspects of our work are increasingly squashed so that we end up doing them (especially research), if at all, in our 'own time', but to the benefit of our employers. The impact of this can be very gendered, as those with the least 'own time' are likely to be women with caring and other domestic responsibilities greater than those of men. Not only that, it is the enjoyable but sadly marginalised activities which can and do lead to success in career terms.

Academics have a relatively high degree of autonomy in their work

Whilst academics have less autonomy in teaching and research than they once did, this is still a significantly attractive aspect of the job. Most of us are more or less free to follow our noses, doing research that is interesting to us. While teaching is more overtly controlled than research through mechanisms such as 'quality assurance', the truth is that most of us are able to teach pretty much what and how we wish to. The reality of universities is that it is impossible to exercise constant surveillance in the lecture room and, in any case, managing academics is famously akin to herding cats.

Almost any kind of non-academic job – such as being a schoolteacher, civil servant, accountant or police officer – means having to be at your designated workplace at regular times, undertaking work which has been given you. These conditions are still a far cry from those enjoyed by academics, who, to a significant extent, arrange their own work and the times and places at which they do it.

This kind of autonomy isn't for you if you like to work in an environment structured by somebody else or who finds the responsibility of deciding what to do and when overwhelming. Not everyone has the self-motivation or discipline to be able to work well without external structures and direction. Whilst academic work does offer some opportunities to work collaboratively with others, in the main it is still largely a solitary occupation.

Flexibility of working practices

One outcome of the autonomy enjoyed by academics is that their work patterns can be very flexible. This enables you to define the shape of your working week, within limits, and the pattern of your work across the year (or even over several years). Provided that you 'produce the goods' in terms of teaching and research output, it is unlikely that your university will seek to insist on particular times and places of work. Some institutions have tried to do this, usually with spectacularly unsuccessful results – insisting that academics work in their offices between set hours usually leads to the death of the creativity, enthusiasm and motivation necessary to doing successful research and teaching. As well as creating the right environment for good academic work, such flexibility can be very appealing to those with complicated domestic lives or people who struggle in more structured environments.

However, be warned, the flip side of flexibility is a long hours culture and a lack of good boundaries between work and the rest of life. Flexibility often leads to self-exploitation, and universities often play on this. For example, research indicates that most UK academics work well in excess of the legal maximum working week in the European Union. Because most of this work is self-controlled and is usually done at home, this exploitation goes unmarked. For those with poor boundaries, or who are susceptible to employer pressures and imperatives, the down side of flexibility can be very long hours, workaholic tendencies and severe detrimental effects on their work–life balance.

Academic freedom

Academic freedom is highly prized internationally. Obviously this privilege is attenuated by the real-life stuff that goes on in any work place, and those who do place their trust in the right to academic freedom can and do come unstuck. Nevertheless, in principle at least, the right of academics to speak freely and critically is widely regarded as the hallmark of a good university system. For instance, in the UK, prior to 1988, academics could not be made redundant from their posts once they had tenure. In abolishing this privilege, for financial reasons, the government of the day was forced to enshrine the principle of academic freedom in law. This makes UK academics the only employee group in the country with a legally safeguarded right to speak their minds – provided that they

do it in an academically rigorous way. It's important to be aware of the consequences of lack of academic freedom.

In the 1920s and 1930s in the Soviet Union the leader, Stalin, exercised rigid control over what constituted acceptable Soviet science. This meant that scientific 'truth' was at the mercy of Communist Party cronyism. The stifling of scientific debate enabled Lysenko, a plant scientist with bizarre and unsustainable theories, to dominate agricultural policies and practices on the collective farms. As a result, many Soviet citizens went hungry.

If you're the sort of person who revels in robust debate, strenuous discussion, the challenging of orthodoxies and rigorous questioning of 'truth claims', then you are likely to enjoy being an academic and thrive in that environment. Conversely, if you are a person with very fixed belief systems in your area of interest, who hates to be questioned, then you are likely to find the academic environment quite problematic.

Academics have a global sense of community

In most jobs, people's estimation of their own worth is usually derived from their bosses further up the food chain within their work organisation. In our experience of life outside universities, this can make working life very stressful and engender a real sense of vulnerability and conformity. For academics, the fact that they have a worldwide epistemic community of peers and friends means that they do not depend for their strokes on bosses, managers or administrators within their own institutions. While, obviously, people in positions of power and authority can and do both wield big sticks and offer large carrots, we always have an alternative – and usually more highly valued – source of recognition and affirmation. A middle manager once ruefully told an unsympathetic Rebecca that this alternative source of recognition made academics impossible to manage.

Travelling the world and meeting people

In David Lodge's novel *Small World* his hero, Persse, is able to use his academic position to secure funding for and travel to conferences and projects in far-flung places across the globe, in pursuit of the object of his love, a woman. Whilst a slight exaggeration, it is, indeed, the case that academics who are minded to travel and who are relatively free of domestic responsibilities are usually able to go to conferences, seminars or more extensive academic visits in a range of interesting (and sometimes less interesting) places. Once there, good networkers will quickly establish a circle of useful colleagues and nice friends and acquaintances (see *Building Networks*).

The creation and dissemination of knowledge is a global activity and one that is still highly reliant upon direct personal contact. One of us once had a head of department who, entirely erroneously, thought that it was sufficient for just one member of department to attend any particular conference as they could then bring back the papers.

Most people see the ability to travel and make friends across the world as a very attractive part of the job as well as an essential one. However, some people are more parochial in their outlook and/or experience practical impediments such as acute shyness, fear of air travel, or child or other caring responsibilities. Given the importance of this sort of activity as part of your work, you really need to find effective solutions or find another career.

If you are physically disabled such that travel presents significant difficulties then you need to be both creative in finding solutions and also to enlist the support of your institution on the grounds that you have an equal right to develop your career in exactly the same way as your colleagues. Similarly, it is appropriate to make demands on conference organisers to ensure that disabled access constitutes part of their planning.

In sum, this is an important and usually enjoyable aspect of academic work. Remember, too, that many of the things that make travel difficult are transient and life does change. Things that seem impossible now, will become easier in the future and vice versa.

An apple for Teacher

There is a great deal of pleasure to be obtained from successful teaching and the buzz that one can get from this activity has little to rival it.

There is an unfortunate tendency among some academics to be jaded and cynical about these personal rewards. To some extent, we can understand how people come to feel like this: increasing student numbers and work loads, commercial pressures and managerialist regimes of performance measurement all take the gilt off the teaching gingerbread.

If you really find engaging with other people in order to help them difficult and unattractive then this aspect of the job won't appeal to you and you are unlikely to do it well.

Watching daytime TV

Whilst all three of us know a lot of really nice university administrators and managers, we have also all met some who seem to think that when academics aren't in front of a class of students they must be at home watching daytime television. Good academic work, whatever the discipline, must always have a large creative element. It is also frequently a solitary activity and one not amenable to the usual labour process controls. Like many forms of creativity, the hard work involved is often invisible.

This is how one senior woman academic characterised the academic labour process in a study of women's involvement in research:

> I am not sure that the people who are at the real top of the university really understand how difficult it is to do all the things that we have to do. All the activities, plus try to keep a reasonable research record, it is a very difficult task. I am not sure that there is fully … I think some people do appreciate that, but I am not sure whether it is fully appreciated. It's almost as though sometimes one or two people might say – sitting at home, writing articles, books, is an easy thing to do. You could be sitting at home in front of a computer, but you might be sitting at home in front of a computer for hours and finding it really difficult. (Anna, Senior Academic)

(From Boden, R., Fletcher, C., Kent, J. and Tinson, J. (2004) Women in Research: Researching Women: an Institutional Case Study of Women, research and higher education, Bristol: University of the West of England)

The realities of creative academic work so well described by 'Anna' are frequently not appreciated or understood either by non-academics more widely or by some administrators within universities who have never done academic work.

3 Shaping up: Academic Anatomies

In this chapter, we start off by talking about the shaping of academic identities. We then go on to discuss the institutional and wider political economy contexts of academic careers. This is followed by sections in which we describe the various starting points from which people embark on academic careers and the main aspects of work that you need to think about in building your own career.

Academic identities

Despite the relative homogeneity of universities globally, academics and their careers are remarkably heterogeneous. To some extent, and within the constraints of your abilities and the opportunities open to you, you have the possibility of shaping your own academic identity in the manner that suits you best. One of the biggest and longest-running debates in social sciences concerns the relationship between social structures and individual agency. To paraphrase from Marx (who applied the idea to men and the making of history), academics make themselves but in conditions not of their own choosing.

Unlike many other professional jobs, where you will have particular responsibilities, duties and expectations placed upon you, an academic's job is often marked by a distinct lack of specificity from the outset. The job specifications for most academic jobs, and certainly for those at the more junior levels, are really quite woolly and tend to say that the appointed person will be expected to teach, research and carry out any other duties as specified by their head of department (or other such person). Quite often, these days, there is a fourth area of expectation – that of earning consultancy fees or contributing to a professional practitioner community or policy arena.

This ability to construct your own 'portfolio' career has both advantages and disadvantages. Let's deal with the advantages first – noting that the

very vagueness of most academic jobs opens up an exciting vista of opportunities for those who have the wherewithal, determination and personality traits to take advantage of them.

- In Chapter 2 we talked about the importance of relative autonomy as a key feature of academic life. One reason why autonomy survives is that job specifications tend to be minimal and academics are subject to comparatively little day-to-day direction in their work. In turn, this vagueness about the actual detailed content of the job usually leads to a significant amount of academic freedom in the choice of, for instance, research topics and strategies and even how and what to teach.
- Academic jobs tend to be specified in terms of outputs rather than how, when and where tasks will be performed. This creates the freedom to largely define your own working conditions. If you prefer to walk your dog all day and then work all night, this is broadly possible as long as you turn up for your classes and meetings on time.
- Within limits, you can create the life that you want. If you like being involved in the hurly-burly of work organisations then you can choose to do that. Alternatively, you can keep well away from most things and exist in the interstices of your university. You can even move back and forth between these two states over time. You can create the personal space necessary for good, creative work. At the same time, you can create space for your home life when and where you need it – for instance, you might need a period of gentle paddling along with your career because you have to care for a sick parent.
- As we said earlier, your sense of recognition is more likely to come from your peer epistemic community than from pleasing your 'managers'. This gives you significant control over the definition of your own criteria for success, making it easier, when you decide that you want to move on in career terms, to get the kind of profile that you need for that new job.

We'll turn, now, to the disadvantages of the ability to construct your own portfolio career.

- People who receive no, or inadequate, career mentoring and who are relatively inexperienced may find it difficult, or indeed daunting, to make major decisions about the direction of their career and the

relative priorities to be attached to different activities. You may know what you want to do but be totally unable to work out how to get there.

- People who do not have a very determined sense of career direction or who are otherwise susceptible to bullying behaviours may find themselves pushed in directions that they neither enjoy nor want to pursue.
- Research indicates that women are liable to come under greater pressure than men do to devote time and energy to teaching, pastoral care of students and administration at the expense of their research.
- The system favours those with an entrepreneurial bent, prepared to elbow others out of the way as they advance up the greasy pole of the career ladder, sabotaging the ladder as they go. Whilst some people may think that competition is an effective way of enhancing staff performance, such systems tend to leave human victims in their wake and fail to maximise the potential of the entire work force, as the following story illustrates.

> Mick was the dean of a large law faculty in the 1980s. Within the faculty, he distinguished between the (mostly male) researchers who had time, space and support to do their own research and the (mostly female) 'grunts', as he referred to them, who did all the teaching, administration, pastoral care and even his personal errands, like picking up his lunch and his dry-cleaning. Neither the researchers nor the so-called 'grunts' were happy in this context and he left a destructive legacy. Those who remain fall into three groups of walking wounded. First are those who, however much potential they once had, will now never become researchers and successful academics. Second, there are those who are young enough, given sufficient support, to become researchers but have a huge burden of poor self-confidence to overcome. And third, those who fought against his tyranny and have become researchers but only by being totally selfish and defending their own territory at all costs.

- It's a system that favours people who have time, energy and networking skills. Because expectations and job specifications are

vague, the criteria for success are based on competition rather than an absolute standard. This norm referencing can lead to a constant ratcheting up of minimum expectations and the work rate.

Many universities now have systems for allocating work points that are specifically designed to lead to constant expansion of expected work. At the University of Fordism, the expected 'productivity' in terms of work outputs of academic staff is defined by the average of all staff outputs from the preceding year. Because the university encourages competition between staff, each faculty member strives to exceed the average from the previous year. There is also a penalty for those academics who fail to reach the average. The net result is an inexorable rise year on year of the average staff work loads and expectations to the point at which several members of staff have become ill and taken time off work for stress-related illness.

- It can be difficult to enjoy a sense of achievement when there are so few external criterion-referenced goals outside of completing a PhD. Enough is never enough and there's always something more to do that you haven't yet done. You are only as good as your last paper/book (and maybe that wasn't good enough).

The moral of this tale is that it is possible, even now, to become an agent of your own academic destiny rather than resembling the flotsam and jetsam on the changing tides of higher education. This can be achieved by hard work and having a real sense of purpose. We think that, in order to do so, you need to:

- Get the best advice possible and use it. This will often mean cultivating good friends and mentors who are more knowledgeable and experienced than you.
- Retain a clear sense of who you are and what you want to achieve as an academic. Ensure that you feel morally comfortable with your goals and targets.
- Decide what ditches you are prepared to die in and walk away from all the others if they are going to divert you from your overall goals.

- Build up a good network of professional friends. Don't be self-centred or needy in this – if you invest time and energy in helping others they are very likely to pay you back many fold.
- Pay careful attention to your personal reputation and profile at all times. It may sound pompous, but we think that a sense of satisfaction is all the sweeter if you know that you have achieved your goals whilst being a good colleague and friend.

Career contexts

Throughout this series of books, we emphasise the strong similarities between higher education systems globally. However, national systems are marked by significant institutional diversity and also, increasingly, substantial change. It is therefore important that you correctly identify and understand the sort of system and institution that you work in and also have a keen eye as to how things are changing.

Until about twenty or thirty years ago, the image and indeed reality of universities almost everywhere was of largely independent institutions of a select or indeed elitist nature where knowledge was pursued for its own sake. Some of the knowledge produced had 'useful' commercial or other applications and university-educated people did fill valuable positions (such as being doctors), but this wasn't the *raison d'être* of the universities. University systems were paralleled in industrial economies by institutions that provided vocational education for people such as nurses, teachers and engineers. Access to universities across the world tended to be predicated on various combinations of social class, wealth, gender or ethnicity.

More recently, the interrelated phenomena of globalisation, increasing international economic competition and the notion of the 'knowledge economy' have created new demands on higher education. Thus, the production of a sizeable university-educated work force is seen as a prerequisite for effective global economic competitivity. And in the new so-called knowledge economies, the knowledge produced by universities is recast as a prized commodity. Governments now regard higher education as an important policy domain. Pressure has been exerted both to substantially expand student numbers (often within the same resources) and to shape research agendas to suit perceived socio-economic needs.

In pursuit of these objectives, higher education has been restructured in a number of countries. For instance, in Australia, the UK and New Zealand, government policy aimed at the massification of higher education has led to the translation of more vocationally oriented teaching institutions into universities. This structural change has placed an imperative on these new universities to develop their research profile as well as to maintain their teaching provision. In developing economies, the restructuring has been more complicated. For example, in South Africa the history of *apartheid* meant that institutions offering post-school education to those who were not white were severely disadvantaged in a whole range of ways. They had only poor access to money or other resources, including staff qualified to do research. Since the end of *apartheid* in 1994, the government has attempted to transform these 'historically disadvantaged universities' into institutions more like the high-status, previously white, ones and, in some cases, has amalgamated them with their more prestigious counterparts. Thus, there has been a concerted effort to improve the teaching and research capacity for the general population, necessitating wide-ranging structural change.

Structural change hasn't just been in terms of creating or merging universities and expanding their size. Less visible, but nonetheless important, changes have occurred in funding mechanisms. These have a number of aspects. Globally, government-funded higher education has been financially squeezed as business considerations of economic efficiency, profitability, throughput and generally getting 'more bang for your bucks' have taken hold. What's more, funding for research has increasingly been shifted from systems of block grants or core funding to specific short-term contracts awarded on a competitive basis. Thus few research outfits now get big slabs of long-term government money to use at their discretion. Rather, they have to find 'customers' for their research work and get them to 'buy' the research work that will be done. Those in science and technology disciplines have long argued that this restructuring has shifted the emphasis from the creation of fundamental knowledge to work that has much shorter-term applications. We think that the same trends are discernible in the social sciences, arts and humanities.

All these structural and cultural changes in university systems have engendered a great deal of heterogeneity within national systems. Thus the UK, despite a myth of homogeneity, has a range of institutions, from those which scarcely do any research and which concentrate on

teaching large numbers of undergraduates with low entry qualifications to the likes of Oxford and Cambridge which retain their international reputation for excellent research and producing very well qualified graduates.

Similar patterns to this exist in many other countries. As an academic developing your career, you need to understand your local context and the exogenous pressures that shape your own environment. You won't be able to change these, but understanding them should help you to manage them better to your own advantage whilst holding true to what you think is valuable and of interest.

Paths into academia

There are a number of entry routes into an academic career. The route you take has an impact on your likely strengths and weaknesses, probably your initial interests and how you are positioned *vis-à-vis* teaching and research.

Academics have three main types of backgrounds and we discuss each in turn.

The traditional route

Most typically, such people do well in their first degree, taken straight from school, and proceed more or less directly to a higher research degree, perhaps taking a masters degree along the way. Their research degree acts as a form of apprenticeship for their subsequent career as academics.

> Ruth went to a prestigious university and got a first-class degree in history. She got a scholarship from her university to proceed directly to a doctorate, which she completed within three years. Her first academic post proved to be unsatisfactory, so she switched to a job teaching languages (she is a good linguist) at another institution whilst continuing to research and publish in history. After a short while, she obtained a coveted lectureship in history at a reputable university, where she has since been steadily promoted.

The professional route

As universities become more entwined with business and public services and are required to offer more vocationally oriented degrees, the crossover between academic and professional jobs is likely to increase. People entering academic careers via this route are usually hired for their professional knowledge and expertise. Their motivations may be many and varied. Some, particularly women, may feel that an academic career would fit in with their domestic responsibilities better. Others may wish to pass on their skills. They may be in professions where most work is freelance and they would welcome a regular salary, free from the pressures involved in that lifestyle. Some may just have reached a point where they want a change of direction or stimulus.

Thabi was a successful freelance journalist, who became involved in offering media training courses for academics at a local university. She decided that she would like to put her journalistic skills to use in teaching journalism and felt confident that the research she did as an investigative journalist would enable her to participate in academic research too. A job at the university would relieve her of the intense pressure of working as a freelancer.

The teaching route

Those who come into academic work purely as teachers, and without a strong professional background, are likely to have been employed in universities without a strong research record. They may have a good first degree or a master's degree in a particular subject area and have obtained a job teaching at first or second-year undergraduate level. Such people have a very difficult mountain to climb if they are to become academics in the full sense, doing research and working in a professional capacity as well as teaching not only at undergraduate but also at postgraduate level. These people are often at the bottom of the heap in terms of status and income among university teaching staff, and will not necessarily have any security of employment (although this is changing in European countries as a result of EU employment law). Given the interest of

universities in making sure that all their staff are able to contribute fully to the academic life of the institution, more systematic care is now given to the recruitment and support of people from this group.

> Giselle had done a variety of non-professional jobs, including running her own business, before going to university as a mature student. After graduation, she was unsure what to do next and accepted an invitation to do some part-time teaching as a casual employee at her university. By the time term started, she had been enlisted to lead a course at a college affiliated to the university in addition to her casual tutorial teaching. Some five years passed and Giselle acquired a substantial amount of teaching experience but remained a low-paid and marginalised member of the university staff.

Of course, these are 'ideal types' and many people are hybrids of two or more routes into the academy. A very common hybrid is for successful professionals to decide to develop themselves and their understandings of their own professions by undertaking a research degree. Sometimes, these people end up changing profession and becoming an academic in their working lives.

Whatever sort of route you have followed to become an academic, you are likely to have a distinct combination of skills and experience in the four main areas of academic work:

(**1**) Research.
(**2**) Teaching.
(**3**) Consultancy/professional practice.
(**4**) Administration.

In the section that follows this one, we deal with these four aspects in some detail. In the meantime, we set out, in Table 1, what are likely to be different people's strengths and weaknesses in these four areas, contingent on their entry route. You may find it a helpful exercise to write out for yourself what your relative strengths and weaknesses in each of these areas are. This can be an important exercise in helping you decide what is achievable and the work that you need to do.

TABLE 1 Likely skills and competences of different types of new academics

Entry mode	Research	Teaching	Consultancy/ Professional practice	Administration
Traditional	You will have been well trained in research as a consequence of doing a higher research degree. You may have worked for a while as a research assistant or had some kind of postdoctoral research fellowship. The chances are that it is research that attracted you into the profession in the first place	If you've had a good induction to academia as a research student, you will have been given carefully supervised and limited teaching opportunities. However, your experience and training are likely to be quite limited. You are likely to find your early years as a teacher very challenging and time-consuming as you acquire experience and are able to bank your teaching materials	You are unlikely to have any significant work experience in a professional capacity. This can be quite a handicap, as you will not have the networks, insider knowledge or professional experience necessary for developing consultancy work. However, if you research in a practical or policy area, such connections may well develop over a period	You are very unlikely to have any extensive experience of undertaking complex administrative tasks beyond the administration of your own research project. You will be familiar with what is done in a university, for instance the setting of exams and their marking, but you are unlikely to understand the minutiae of how they happen and all the tasks involved in making them happen
Professional	You may be from a profession that includes elements of practitioner research as part of its professional practice, for instance medicine or teaching in schools. However, this is likely	You will probably have been employed because you have the relevant professional, technical, applied knowledge and skills for training the next generation of professionals in your field (for example nursing,	By virtue of where you have come from, you are likely to have extensive professional networks, knowledge and standing. This will stand you in good stead in gaining the kind of consultancy work that many universities	You are likely to have had quite significant experience of administration and have well-developed skills in this regard. You may have run complex organisations or projects in your professional career. Running universities may well be a cakewalk for

(Continued)

TABLE 1 *(Continued)*

Entry mode	Research	Teaching	Consultancy/ Professional practice	Administration
	to be more practically and vocationally oriented, unlike academic research, which is more theoretically informed. Nevertheless, if you have this kind of background, you will not be starting academic research as a complete novice and will have some of the necessary skills and experience. You will almost certainly need to retread yourself as an academic researcher and may find this quite a daunting prospect	teaching, social work, business, chartered surveying or architecture). However, teaching undergraduate and postgraduate students in the context of a university can be quite a different undertaking. You will need to adapt both your knowledge and your teaching approaches to fit this new context	now want and the capacity and opportunity to contribute to the development of your professional area. For instance, you may sit on committees at a national level in your professional organisation	you but, sadly, universities are poorly equipped to recognise and use this significant staff resource. Hence you may become frustrated by the predominance of often less experienced professional administrators in all the positions of influence, authority and power. This won't bother you if one of the reasons you left your profession was to escape from such work
Teacher	If you are in this category then you probably entered higher education at a	Your primary experience will have been of teaching, probably at undergraduate level. The	You are unlikely to have significant professional experience or to be in a position to gain the	Because of your extensive involvement in teaching, you are likely to have been called upon to undertake

(Continued)

TABLE 1 *(Continued)*

Entry mode	Research	Teaching	Consultancy/ Professional practice	Administration
	time or in an institution where research was not a significant activity. You are unlikely to have ever engaged in higher-level research and may therefore not have any meaningful skills, experience or indeed understanding in this area. You are likely to be coming under increasing pressure from your university to start doing research or a research degree. You may view the prospect with enthusiasm, albeit finding it somewhat daunting. Alternatively, it might feel like a nightmare	quality of your teaching may be adversely affected by your lack of research experience unless you are one of the few who have assiduously maintained high levels of scholarship – that is, reading, absorbing and understanding other people's research work and ensuring that you constantly keep up to date with developing knowledge in your area	necessary professional standing in order to be able to do consultancy, professional advice work or whatever	significant administrative loads related to that teaching. You may or may not have an aptitude for it, but it goes with the teaching-only territory

The main elements of academic work

Universities do have to produce things and this involves, whatever type of institution they are, the organisation of the academic labour within them. Labour process theory has identified two major types of productive organisation: craft working and factory-based industrial working. In craft production systems everyone involved in the work process is skilled, to a greater or lesser degree, in every aspect of the work. In factory-based industrial working, in contrast, the production cycle is broken down into single simple stages and workers are responsible only for one stage of the process. In contrast to craft workers, factory workers need far fewer skills, command lower wages and are deemed more 'efficient' because they don't shift from task to task. Both these types of organisation are in evidence in higher education globally.

In the more traditional university the way in which work is done is more akin to craft production. Unfortunately, the increasing development of the corporate university has started a trend away from collegial craft-working knowledge production and dissemination towards more factory-like (often called Taylorised) processes.

Because it's easier to think about the labour process in car factories than in universities, we want you to imagine two different kinds of university, which we will call *Rolles University* and *Modeltee University* respectively.

Rolles University is a highly prestigious institution with a sound capital base, plenty of shareholder support and solid, if small, sales at the luxury end of the market. Such sales rely heavily on past reputation, and the organisation avoids any direct evaluation of current performance on the grounds that this would interfere with academic freedom. This university prides itself on producing a superlative product, whether it is research or graduates. The institution runs on traditional craft worker lines. All academic 'colleagues' must be at least fully competent in all aspects of the university's activities. That is, they must be able to research, teach and organise as well as engage in some sort of consultancy or work

in support of their profession. They are expected to excel at one or more of these aspects of work but, in terms of being promoted, research is the most important criterion. Within Rolles University, there are some non-academic colleagues with administrative roles, who work in support of the academics. In this context, the university is less the employer of the academics and more the facilitator of their work. This form of craft production generally engenders a fairly healthy collegiate spirit – people tend to feel that they 'belong' and that everyone has a fairly equal work load. Because people see things all the way through from start to finish, they take pride in the job and develop a sense of loyalty, even affection, for their university. This system is made easier to implement by the fact that Rolles has a homogeneous staff as a result of its 'guild' nature – the colleagues usually recruit only people like themselves, especially to the more secure and senior positions, and the gatekeeping function is very vigorously exercised.

However, storm clouds loom on the horizon. Rolles University is now subject to increasing competitive pressures from ostensibly more efficient producers, who claim to make the same product but cheaper, better and faster. As with cars, performance and price are key criteria and Rolles is starting to look like poor value for money. What's more, the craft production process allows individual colleagues to produce idiosyncratic products, preventing the university from further developing a solid brand reputation in the market. The consequent pressure to reduce costs and standardise their output is starting to take its toll on the workers.

Modeltee University has only recently moved into the university sector. Having previously made bicycles, it is now attempting to make cars, so to speak. However, it perceives itself as having a strong management team, who are convinced that management is a profession in itself and a set of tools that can be successfully applied ubiquitously. Their management training has taught them to think of the university as a single, corporate venture, rather than a collection of craft worker individuals. As such, they prioritise the cost and perceived quality of the finished product over and above its method of production. Thus they have decided to Taylorise academic work, allocating individual tasks to suitable 'employees', with ruthless efficiency. Those who are good at research are tasked with research.

The better teachers are responsible for the conception and development of courses, whilst barely skilled blue-collar workers are drafted in as casual teachers to 'deliver' the material to students. Any form of management or administration task of any significance is allocated to the managerial class, as it is important to maintain strict discipline and control over the labour process if efficiency is to be maximised. The employees easily become alienated and demotivated in such deskilling labour processes. It is therefore essential to maintain strict discipline over them by obliging them to demonstrate full competence in all aspects of academic work, as if they were craft workers at Rolles University. In reality, the organisation of the production process is such that it is virtually impossible to achieve this. The net result is that it is hard for academic employees to get promotion, and this keeps costs refreshingly low. In contrast, the managers at Modeltee University only have to do management work and their success in this is measured by criteria that they themselves select. Progression (as it is seen) to the management class is via a competitive process involving psychometric testing and a demonstrable commitment to Modeltee's corporate mission and vision. This mode of production has enabled Modeltee University to make rapid inroads in the market, effectively undercutting universities such as Rolles.

However, storm clouds are gathering on the horizon. Established universities such as Rolles are using their dominant market position to raise entry barriers to parvenu competitors. One way of doing this is to get the government, virtually all of whom went to a university like Rolles, to change the rules of the market. The work force is becoming increasingly disenchanted with its lot. Additionally, as conditions get worse, the university is finding it harder and harder to recruit credible employees. Finally, Modeltee has underestimated the sophistication of its customers, who are quickly coming to realise that cheapest does not mean best when it comes to universities.

Whilst these two representations are parodies, most universities encompass elements of both Rolles and Modeltee to varying degrees. Furthermore, within any one university, some departments and faculties

may run like Rolles while others closely resemble Modeltee. Whichever kind of university, faculty, school or department you are in, you will occupy some designated position. With that position will come a range of expectations about the extent to which you will engage in teaching, research, administration and consultancy/professional practice. This will also vary between disciplines.

Even though you will have a place in the structure of academic production, there are many different ways of being an academic. These will be framed by the place you work, the discipline you are in and the specificities of particular posts. You have to try and match these with your own interests, talents, personal circumstances and motivations at any particular point in your life.

Be aware that some mixes of academic activities, when pursued for a long time, open up future career horizons, whilst others tend to close them down. Just remember to keep a weather eye open as to the longer-term consequences of the choices you are making now, as Marsha, in the following story, found.

Marsha had started her research career working for a major charity and had gone on from there to do contract research in a university research unit. At the same time as working as the researcher with short-term contracts on a series of other people's projects, she worked on her PhD part-time. Once she had her PhD, she started applying for permanent posts within the university sector. Although she had a good publication record and a PhD and did get interviews, she kept losing out to other people who had more teaching experience, but often less research experience. She made strenuous efforts, within her own institution, to build up her teaching experience and got herself certified by her country's professional institute for teachers in higher education. With this experience and paper qualification under her belt, she succeeded in getting a mainstream permanent academic post at another university.

We'll now look at each of the four aspects of academic work in turn.

Research

If we understand universities to be places for the creation, critique and dissemination of knowledge, then it follows that research lies at the heart of the academic endeavour – and you can't be a core part of such a mission if you don't undertake it yourself. If you haven't already done so and you don't know how to do research, then you will find it useful to read *Getting Started on Research* before reading this section. There we deal with what academic research means and with the nuts and bolts of developing as an individual researcher. Here we are more concerned with helping you understand the career implications of the research choices you make.

Research is often thought of as an individual activity, particularly in the arts, humanities and social sciences, where the work isn't dependent on having access to expensive and often large-scale laboratory equipment. However, the opportunity and ability to do research are tied to the socio-economic conditions in different countries and the histories of the institutions in which one might work. It is, therefore, hardly surprising that across the world, universities vary considerably in their commitment to research as an activity. This will impact on you as an individual because your own opportunities and support for research will often depend on the kind of institution in which you work. You may be personally very committed and motivated to research but the presence or absence of a supportive infrastructure including things like study leave, money for conference attendance, regular research seminars, a positive attitude towards research, support in developing proposals, and so on, can have a crucial impact on what you do, when and why.

Below we offer a series of handy hints for budding researchers, which are developed in considerably more detail in *Getting Started on Research*.

Handy hints for budding researchers

- In developing the research aspects of your career, you need to make a real name for yourself in a particular area or areas. This is what will distinguish you and make you well known, respected and regarded. This means that you have to stake a claim on your own

territory that will be yours to pan for gold in. You must develop your own distinctive area(s) of research, making sure that the different aspects of your work hang together in a way that you can justify (to yourself and others) as a coherent personal intellectual project. It will do you no good in career terms if your work is a disparate ragbag of bits that looks incoherent and has nothing distinctive about it. Don't just follow trends in research, help to set them if you can.

- The research process constitutes a number of different sorts of work activity. It may include: developing your own projects; getting funding; data collection and analysis; managing resources; writing; disseminating; and networking. In order to demonstrate that you are a competent researcher, you will need to be at least proficient in all aspects of research work. You must be proactive in identifying aspects of the research process where you need to gain experience, expertise and a reputation and taking the appropriate action. You will find help with what to do about these various aspects in *Getting Started on Research, Winning and Managing Research Funding* and *Writing for Publication.*
- You need to be proactive and strategic in picking people to work with. Working with more senior and famous colleagues can help to boost your own reputation and get your name known quickly. However, it is treacherously easy, when you are relatively inexperienced, to be pushed or seduced into working on projects that really don't interest you, if people head them up whom you admire or wish to be associated with. You also need to be wary of being known only as a famous person's '*et al.*' – don't be a lifelong sidekick. Second, if you work with people from other disciplines, they can widen your experience and research expertise (and you theirs) and you can develop your reputation across a number of disciplines. Third, successful research collaborations can be fruitful in developing the general networks to which you belong and in opening up particular opportunities for interesting research or even jobs in the future.
- Your name on things is an important part of building your research reputation and career. Make sure that you get appropriate recognition for research outputs such as books, chapters, journal articles, reports, videos, etc. We give further advice on authorship in *Writing for Publication*. Similarly, when you conceive of and design a project, you need to ensure that you get the credit for it

and are named as the principal researcher or, at the very least, as an equal co-researcher. If funding bids are being submitted and it really is your project, then make sure that the documentation reflects this.

- Make sure that your publishing supports the development of your profile. When you publish, think about the audience you want to speak to and choose journals that both suit your work and are read by people who have an interest and influence in your chosen field. You need to be and look credible within your chosen field, and this means making strategic choices. When you work in a cross-disciplinary team, you need to ensure that every member of the team is able to gain publication in places appropriate to her/his field.
- While you are likely to have some projects over a career to which you are more committed than others, getting yourself involved in research that you don't find interesting is a recipe for disaster. At the same time, you will need to be adaptive, finding ways to fit your interests to what can be supported and, if necessary, funded. As you develop an established reputation for research and become more senior, you may also wish to support less experienced colleagues by participating in their projects at their request. Whatever your position, you need to be aware of the research environment and the demands of your own government, region and university.
- And finally, if you want advancement in your career, make sure that your research works for you in terms of developing your profile and establishing the necessary networks of contacts that will be essential in getting promoted or getting a new job. This includes going to the right conferences, schmoozing (but not sucking up to) the right people, joining the right project teams and publishing in the right places. Don't overdo it, or you will get up everybody's nose. More help can be found in *Building Networks*.

Teaching

The overwhelming majority of universities earn their bread-and-butter income by teaching students and this is, therefore, a core work activity for most academics. Despite its often compulsory nature, the good news is that teaching work is frequently enjoyable and something from which you can derive a great deal of personal satisfaction.

As universities become increasingly commodified and students are asked to pay increasing amounts for their own education, so teaching has come to be seen as a commercial transaction in which consumers (students) buy knowledge from producers – or maybe retailers (teachers). This recasts traditional pedagogical relationships as one of service providers and consumers. Our own feeling is that the student/consumer is not empowered by this process and that the best teaching and learning come when the relationship is based on mutual respect and trust rather than evaluations of 'value for money' and 'service quality'. This recasting of pedagogy as a straightforward commercial exchange (fees for knowledge) fails to recognise the importance of challenging students, making them work hard and the transformative effects of good education. If the 'customer is always right', and what the student/customer wants is merely to pass exams, then they will not learn much of value, but only how to pass exams. Managerialist universities like Modeltee, however, want academics to treat students/customers as if they were always right, ensuring that they pass exams however little work they do, in order to keep them happy. If you, as an academic, cave in to such pressures, then you will not only be selling the students short but will also become a disillusioned and bitter teacher, unable to enjoy the processes of creating and sharing knowledge with students. In our experience, even students who ask, 'What do I need to know to pass the exam?' can be successfully challenged and become engaged and enthusiastic learners.

Because teaching is so central to the finances and missions of universities, it tends to be the most closely directed aspect of our work. At the most basic level, for instance, our students have to pass assessments that are formally governed by university regulations. This control may encourage some academics to abrogate their sense of professionalism, potentially inducing a passive conformity that can in turn lead to resentment and loathing of teaching itself and, even worse, of students. The one thing we would seek to impress on you about teaching is that it doesn't have to be like that. If you can develop a positive approach to teaching, where you feel able, equipped and confident to deploy your professional skills in tackling the work, then you will enjoy it more and the students will gain more from you. If you have to be involved in teaching, don't start out with the idea that it is simply unavoidable drudgery. Rather, approach it as something that both you and the students can really enjoy and learn from.

Handy hints for your teaching career

1. *Be prepared – but not too prepared.* A general rule is that each hour of class contact is really three hours of work for the teacher. You can't teach well unless you are well prepared. However, people who are inexperienced or unconfident tend to go overboard on preparation. If you are in the very early stages of a teaching career or developing new teaching you will find the going much tougher than your more experienced colleagues. What you need to do is to develop a bank of routines, resources, activities and material that you can quickly and efficiently draw on whatever you are called on to teach. Always remember that, especially with undergraduate teaching, it is highly unlikely that anyone in the class knows more than you. If you get asked about something you don't know about you can suggest that the whole class (including you) finds out about it before you next meet. You are a learning facilitator, not the fount of all knowledge and you shouldn't be ashamed to say so.
2. *Keep your boundaries.* Whilst you shouldn't approach teaching as an unavoidable chore, neither should you let it take over your working life to the exclusion of all the other stuff that you should be doing. This can all too easily happen: teaching is often formally timetabled and therefore becomes the clock by which all life is regulated. Moreover, because it is more tangible and defined as a process than research it can look like a safe haven where you want to shelter away from all the other things that seem more onerous. Students can be very demanding and 'needy'. Whilst they may need your help, you shouldn't let them dictate what form it takes. For instance, if they have missed a class because of a hangover and come to see you for a personal tutorial to catch up, it is better for both of you to send them away with a reading list than to devote your precious time to compensating for their shortcomings. You can do very practical things to keep good boundaries: for instance, make sure that students make appointments in advance to see you and specify how much time you will give them. This will ensure that they come and see you only when they really need to and that they prepare themselves properly to make best use of their slot. If you might be tempted to let students gobble up your time or find it socially difficult to get them out of your office then it might be best to hardwire-in time constraints – such as having another student waiting in the corridor or a meeting to go to. We wish we could be

like the Queen of England, who reputedly ends personal audiences by tinkling a small bell on a shelf under the table, summoning someone to take the visitor away!

Being a teacher often involves some aspects of pastoral care. However, you should recognise your limitations in terms of time and skills. If students need a doctor or a therapist, suggest they go to one. Most universities have such services available. You can't add parent/counsellor/doctor/financial adviser to your list of jobs.

3. *Develop a portfolio of teaching experience*. Inevitably, when you are new to teaching, you will be asked to undertake relatively straightforward teaching tasks. As time passes, you must make sure that you accumulate experience of different levels of teaching such that you can demonstrate your competence across the range from undergraduate to taught postgraduate to research supervision. Don't over-stretch yourself and don't be afraid to drop some activities as you undertake increasingly sophisticated teaching tasks.
4. *Make your mark*. It's good to get involved in teaching innovations but don't get involved in every new fad and fancy. Appropriate amounts of such work will give you a better return in terms of job satisfaction and will provide rich material for your CV or résumé.
5. *Maintain your interest*. Like any regular meal, most degree programmes (especially at undergraduate level) include the staple core elements (mashed potato or Sociology I) and some choices to suit individual tastes (stewed rabbit or the Sociology of Sexuality). In cooking and teaching it's only fair that everyone mashes some potatoes from time to time as well as getting an opportunity to strut their stuff on the fancy things that they enjoy. You will have to teach on core courses of some kind, but don't let your department or school dump these on you in the long term or as your only teaching. You can enjoy the challenge of teaching core courses, but you will also want to blend aspects of your own specialist research interests into what you teach, giving the students the benefit of your specialist expertise. In addition, teaching a specialist course in an area relatively new to you can be a great way of further developing your own research expertise.
6. *Get a good enough reputation*. In career terms you need to be known as at least a competent and conscientious teacher. As long as you know your stuff reasonably well, prepare adequately, respect your students by turning up on time and doing what you promise to and conform to the bureaucratic requirements placed on

teachers (such as marking exams on time), then it is quite hard to get a bad reputation. It follows that if you have an outstanding aptitude for teaching and/or it is something that you want and are able to devote a lot of energy to, then you can become a really good teacher. In our experience however, superlative researchers and good-enough teachers are invariably promoted over superlative teachers and good-enough researchers.

7. *Be up to scratch*. Most universities now implement some sort of regime of student evaluation questionnaires – evaluation of you by your students, that is. Sometimes these are just lip service to 'customer satisfaction' but in a number of countries they are of increasing importance. In the USA for instance, such questionnaires may be used to determine salary levels. In the UK, the government plans to make student evaluations of individual courses available nationally on-line to 'facilitate student [whoops, customer] choice'. It may therefore be the case that you have to take such evaluations very seriously if your career is to develop. You can't do a lot about such systems, especially if they are beyond your control, except be a good teacher. Additionally, you could collect your own feedback using more pertinent questions and methods of engaging with students' opinions.

   Some universities also have formal schemes for peer-led or management evaluations of the 'quality' of your teaching. This might typically involve someone sitting and watching you do a lecture once a year. We are sceptical of the value of many such schemes. If you are subject to them, then you need to find a way of performing well whilst minimising how much time and effort you put into the process.

8. *Ticket to teach*. It has been traditionally assumed that, if you get an academic job, you can teach. This is not necessarily the case, and most academics find the process of learning how to teach quite difficult. If you are in an institution where there is no formal support in teaching you how to teach, then you need to seek out experienced colleagues who can help you. In some systems university teachers are increasingly obliged to undertake formal teacher training, perhaps leading to a qualification. It is by no means the case that such formal courses are always better than the more traditional forms of informal support, but they do look good to external validation bodies. If your formal support isn't good, then you will still have to find your own help. Whatever, if your

system really requires you to have a formal qualification then you will need to just get on and do it.

9. *Getting a manageable work load.* If you are relatively junior, you may feel, or indeed be, overburdened with teaching duties. If at all possible, you should find ways of keeping your teaching duties under control. Whilst individual schools or departments are increasingly less able to limit total student numbers, you can make collective decisions on matters such as student contact hours. Additionally, you and your colleagues should always seek to ensure that work is equitably (which isn't the same as equally) distributed.

Consultancy and professional practice

Academics have always played their parts in public affairs and, as appropriate, in offering advice to governments, working with and for industries, taking part in relevant professional activities and so on. This is a traditional part of the job and can be invaluable in helping you build networks, providing you with access to research sites, allowing you to use your expertise to disseminate your work widely and even to influence how things are done in practical settings. However, with the corporatisation and marketisation of universities, academics are increasingly expected to actively seek this work out. In the UK, it has become known as the 'Third Mission' of universities (the first two being research, that is knowledge creation, and teaching, that is knowledge transmission).

There are a number of problems in this for academics. First, it may be that the knowledge you want to produce and disseminate does not fit neatly into narrowly profitable objectives. Second, even where what you want to do is 'useful' to people in the outside world, they often don't want to pay for your work. After all, they have already paid their taxes and why should they pay again for your labour?

If you are a full-time employee of a university, then it will have to pay for your labour whether you are doing consultancy work or not. This means that the marginal cost to the university of your time being spent on consultancy or professional practice is confined to any cost associated with replacing your teaching. Anything earned by you for the university over and above that is a welcome surplus to an often cash-strapped institution. Additionally, some universities want you to bring in this extra money as well as carrying a full teaching and research load.

That way the university gets the kudos of having its employees performing consultative and professional services and the real cost is born by the academics who must do the extra work.

Because competition for such work can be quite brisk, and because the contracting organisation usually feels that public universities should do the work for next to nothing, the costings of such contracts often underestimate the amount of work really involved – as Bruce's story below shows.

> Bruce is a career contract researcher in a unit where the staff have not only to cover their own salaries with the research contracts they win, but also to make a net financial contribution to the central university. There is plenty of work available to tender for, but also plenty of other universities vying to do it. This means that price is a key consideration in winning funding. Salaries are fixed by national agreement, so the only way to bring the cost of a contract down is to underestimate the number of person days the work will take to do. Typically, on a job which takes, say, twenty-five days, the unit will bid for just twenty days of Bruce's time. This means that every month, Bruce has to do twenty-five days' work in just twenty working days. Consequently, he works late and at weekends even though he has a young family. He also has no time to turn the consultancy reports that he produces into peer-reviewed academic papers and this means that he cannot build up the research record and profile that he needs to move on in his career and that he deserves in the light of the work that he does.

In sum, you need to use your opportunities for consultative and professional work well, without allowing them to use you and take away from your research and teaching activities. Such matters are dealt with in detail in *Winning and Managing Research Funding*.

Handy hints for consultancy and professional practice

1. *Use consultancy for your research*. Consultancy and work in a professional capacity can be good for your research in certain disciplines and fields of study. If chosen well, such work can give

you access to information, informants and research locations that might otherwise be hard for you to find. It can also help you build your profile within and beyond the academic world. On the other hand, these activities can become a time-consuming distraction that prevents you from paying proper attention to the main parts of your job – research and teaching. So be selective.

2. *Choose well*. Doing extensive consultancy/professional work can act as a kind of sink down which you pour endless amounts of work but all that happens is that it disappears into a black hole and can therefore often do little to enhance your academic reputation. For instance, in much of this work the intellectual property rights (see *Writing for Publication*) over the research belong to the contracting organisation. This may mean that you are prevented from publishing your work in journals or books or even presenting it at conferences. Equally, the extensive and sterling (usually unpaid) work that you do serving on all kinds of professional committees may count for little or nothing in job and promotion applications if your research record has suffered as a result. Again, be selective in what you do, when and why. Choose those pieces of work that are both manageable and useful to you for your own purposes.
3. *Take control*. If you have come into the academy from a profession, you may well want to continue to contribute to it through consultancy and professional work. This is entirely laudable. However, you now have a different career in which this kind of work can properly form only a relatively minor part of your whole working life. So you need to keep things in perspective and keep control over the amount that you do.
4. *Develop 'user group' networks*. If you are applying for research funding, it is often the case that the funders require references from 'user groups' – that is, people in the public, private or voluntary sectors who may well want to make use of your findings in their work. You will, undoubtedly, meet such people in your consultancy and professional work and will be able to utilise these networks in your funding applications.
5. *Making a wider contribution*. Doing consultancy can be an important way of making a contribution to the wider society and of disseminating your research beyond the academy. In deciding which consultancies to accept or seek, you need to think about what its overall contribution will be, both to your own work and to the community more generally.

Administration

'Administration' is a vague and amorphous term and requires some definition. Academic work has always involved a certain amount of basic organisational stuff for students (such as registering them or compiling lists of examination results) and for research (such as hiring research staff or administering research budgets). There has also always been a certain amount of work to be done around forward planning for teaching and research, critically self-evaluating the university's activities, ensuring staff continuity, proper budgeting, governance and accountability. Contributing to such work is part and parcel of being a good university citizen.

Such organisational work used to be called administration and was usually the domain of academics supported by career administrators, many of whom were really excellent at their jobs. The proper and efficient execution of such work is vital to the function of the university.

However, with the corporatisation of universities came the conviction that universities could be made more efficient and businesslike if they were 'better organised'. This engendered a process whereby straightforward administrative, organisational tasks were reified and then deified as 'management procedures'. This inevitably involved them becoming much more complicated in order to justify their new, enhanced status. This new management work necessitated an increase in the number of administrators to do the extra work and the creation of a cadre of managers specially qualified to manage the whole process. In order to pay for this new management work, resources for academic work were reduced. Academics were persuaded of the merits of this on the basis that their jobs would be much easier if professionals did all the administration for them.

In fact, what has happened in many instances is that management procedures consist of demanding and requiring academics to respond to management requests. For instance, as part of good professional practice, conscientious academics have always sought the views of their students on the courses that they had taught. This work would be done with the support of their secretaries. Now, at many institutions such 'quality assurance' work has become a management responsibility and the academics have lost their secretarial support because the resources were needed to appoint a Quality Assurance Manager. The Quality Assurance Manager now issues instructions to academics about how to

conduct student evaluations and demands reports from them. Thus academics are responsible for more work than they did before, but have no secretarial support to assist them. However, they can at least be assured that they are now better managed and quality assured.

In sum, then, straightforward administrative work has now been largely taken away from academics, made more complex and turned into 'management'. What's more, academics have a net workload gain because they now have to respond to management demands. Once the management machine has been created, it has to keep doing things in order to justify its existence. Accountants should consider the costs of all this: the cost of managers' salaries and the opportunity costs of academics' time. If you think that we're over-egging the pudding here, consider the following, absolutely true, story.

In 1993 Dimitrios, a lecturer at Rolles University, wanted to go on study leave from his department. He chatted to his head of department in the corridor, who agreed that he had worked for long enough to warrant it and that the department could cope during his absence. The head of department wrote to the university registrar, who, as a matter of formality, sent a standard letter out to the head of department and Dimitrios, agreeing to the leave.

By 2003 Dimitrios (partly as a result of a very successful study leave) was a professor at Modeltee University. The dean sent out a four-page letter and form that he had composed asking people if they wished to apply for study leave. Dimitrios spent a very full day writing his application and submitting it to the research manager by the designated date. A committee consisting of the dean and two other professors were then sent all the applications and subsequently met to discuss them. This stage of the process took about a day's work for each of these three people. The dean then wrote to the successful candidates, including Dimitrios, informing them that their request had been granted and composed a lengthy annual 'Research Review' report for circulation to the university authorities and all staff in the faculty in which the process by which the study leave had been decided was described and the results were announced. Many of the hundred or so staff spent time wading through this lengthy report because they wanted to know who had got study leave.

A few weeks before Dimitrios's study leave was due to start, the assistant dean sent around an email to everyone setting out, at some length, the procedures to be followed and the forms to be filled in if a staff member wanted to be absent from the university during term time. The same manager then sent Dimitrios's head of school a blank form for those requesting permission to be absent during term time, asking her to ensure that Dimitrios completed it, that she countersign it and that it then be returned to the assistant dean for him to countersign also. Dimitrios's head of department forwarded this to him in a spirit of despondent exasperation. Dimitrios completed the form, explaining ironically in the section that asked for an explanation of why he wanted the dean's permission to be absent during term time that he wished to take up the faculty's offer of study leave. That is, he wished to request permission to go on the study leave that the dean had given him permission to go on. As a final act of defiance, he asked for a copy of the form as counter-signed by the assistant dean to be returned to him 'for his files'. He then passed the form to his head of department, who in turn signed it and passed it to the assistant dean for signature. He signed it and a secretary took a copy of it to send to Dimitrios and placed the original in his staff file.

Just two weeks before the start of his study leave Dimitrios received a second, three-part carbonated form for him to sign. This was a university form that needed to be completed by a member of staff going on study leave, countersigned by the dean and then finally signed by the deputy vice-chancellor. Dimitrios completed this form and sent it to the dean's secretary, who presented it to the dean. He countersigned it and the secretary sent it to the deputy vice-chancellor's secretary. She put it in his folder for signature, and eventually he signed it and sent it back to her. She separated the three parts, put one copy on the deputy vice-chancellor's file, sent one to the dean and sent the third copy to Dimitrios, who, by this time, was abroad on study leave.

You may like to spend a few minutes thinking about how much money Modeltee spent going through this farce and to what, if any, benefit. The cost of replacing Dimitrios's teaching (the only real cost) was about 8 per cent of the annual cost of employing him.

Whilst there is real and important work to be done around the administration of teaching and research, you must be able to correctly identify the management 'froth' of a lot of these tasks. For instance, it is crucial that examination results are accurately and promptly reported back to the university and such work must always be approached by academics with diligence and professional standards. In contrast, if you are asked to produce a three-page critical self-evaluation of your course at the same time, in which you must reflect on your own shortcomings, so that this document can be filed in the right box, on the right shelf and then forgotten, you can afford either not to do it or, if forced to, to do it with the diligence that it deserves. If you spend your time responding endlessly to management demands that were created only to justify the existence of management in the first place, you will never have the time and energy for a proper academic career.

That said, here are some handy hints for keeping the Management Hydra under control.

Handy hints for reluctant administrators

1. *Take on manageable tasks*. You do need to be able to demonstrate that you are capable of competently contributing to the administration work of your university at an appropriate level. You should take on administrative tasks that are manageable, that you genuinely think need doing and that look good on your CV – for example, convening a course or acting as examinations officer. It looks even better on your CV if you can get this job called 'Director' of something or other (but not the stationery cupboard).
2. *Choose jobs that allow autonomy*. Try to find tasks that are discrete and allow you a reasonable degree of autonomy. In particular, you don't want to be doing a job where you end up constantly referring and deferring to someone in the central administration of your university. Being responsible for teaching 'quality' compliance is an example of a particularly onerous task with no autonomy, no need to understand what quality in teaching is, constant deference to external bodies and management systems, little or no reward, constant flak from your colleagues, who hate it, and no real point. If you have to be on a committee, it's better if you can chair it (provided you have learnt how to minimise the time

spent in meetings and the work that you and other people carry away from them).

3. *Look after your administrative profile*. Make sure that you develop your administrative profile in the same way as you do your teaching. You'll need to be able to demonstrate that you can do a range of tasks, for instance chairing committees, managing budgets and so on. If necessary, discuss with your head of department what it is you need to do (or learn to do) and how you may gain that particular experience.
4. *Don't be the token minority all the time*. If you are in some kind of 'minority' category (for example, have a disability, or are a woman, or are from an ethnic minority) then there is a tendency for universities to call on you often where representation of your minority is required. If you are a senior woman, it is likely that you will, for example, be asked to serve on huge numbers of appointment panels because equal opportunities policies usually specify that all such panels must include at least one woman and there are relatively few women in senior posts in universities. While it is certainly important that women are on appointment panels, it's not your personal responsibility to make up for the shortcomings of previous appointments policies at the expense of your own career development. You need to decide in advance how much of such work it is reasonable for you to do and stick to that.

Balancing acts

We've outlined the four main types of activity which you may undertake in varying proportions during your career. The pressures on academics can be such that it feels that you are being asked to do 'a lot of this, more of that, all of the other, and do it by tomorrow, today and yesterday'. You need to get the balance between these activities right for you, and this will involve careful negotiation over your workload mix with your university. Some universities have ideal proportions – say 40 per cent teaching, 40 per cent research and consultancy, 20 per cent administration. Yet others attempt to precisely demarcate the hours over the year to be devoted to particular tasks. These detailed systems are often a fool's errand because of the ill defined nature of much of

the work to be done. However, you can use them to your advantage. For instance, if you are asked to do some administrative work that is not genuinely important, you could apologetically explain that, whilst you are keen to do the work, you have already exceeded your designated admin working hours and unfortunately have no time to do it. If you are asked to take on something new, the bargain must include dropping an equivalent quantity of work. For example, if you are going to take on a new master's course, you may need to drop some undergraduate teaching.

Ultimately, it is crucial to get the balance right for you, which means a mix of work that will let you achieve your career aims.

Reputation matters

You have to think of yourself and your career as a package; the wrapping on the package is your reputation. It is easier for people to see the package than to see the person inside. You need to pay serious attention to building your reputation in all aspects of your work and to be conscious of the fact that the global university community is, in fact, a very small village.

Infamy! Infamy! They've all got it in for me! Handy hints on keeping a good reputation

1. *Look after your all-round reputation*. The most important aspect of your reputation is the name you make for yourself as a researcher, as a teacher and as a good colleague. You must safeguard your reputation in all aspects of your particular workload mix. Don't get known, for example, as someone who produces brilliant research publications at the expense of woefully neglecting students' needs.
2. *Don't use academic critique to express personal malice*. Sometimes people express personal antipathies as academic critique. Don't do this yourself and learn to recognise such behaviour for what it is when you are on the receiving end.
3. *Be careful about gossip*. Be sensitive to the personal networks around you. We all enjoy a good gossip or a spot of bitching. Be careful who you do it with and never, ever, *ever* do it in writing or on email.

4. *Be a good colleague*. It's always best to be the best possible colleague that you can, even if you sometimes have to do it with gritted teeth. News about how you treat your colleagues travels, and lack of consideration for them will rebound on you. Be forgiving and gracious and always be ready to apologise if necessary to repair damaged solidarities.
5. *Don't mix sex and work*. Mixing sex and work is fraught with danger. Needless to say, the last thing you need is a reputation for sleeping with students, your colleagues' partners or people you manage at work.
6. *Don't be inappropriately sexual*. And finally, a note on sexuality at work – that is, the ways in which all of us may use our bodies, our seductiveness (wherever that comes from), our appearance and clothing and our sexiness in our work relations. Especially for academics, intellects and ideas can be incredibly sexy and seductive – which is nice. What is not nice is using this sort of sexuality as a means of getting your own way, feathering your own nest or doing colleagues over. So don't dress to kill (whether you're male or female), flirt or otherwise be inappropriately sexual at work. You may think it will get you places, but it will also undermine your reputation as an academic who should be taken seriously.

4 Presenting Yourself: *Vita* Statistics

In this chapter we deal exclusively with your *curriculum vitae* or, if you prefer, your résumé (these are the same thing).

Why is it so important?

We're going to devote a whole chapter to CVs (as we shall call them) because this is the single most important document that you will ever compile relating to your career development. You need to approach the compilation and maintenance of a CV as an on-going, career-long task.

If you haven't already got one in a good state you need to make a start now. Do not underestimate the amount of time and effort that this work will take. Remember that your CV needs to be accurate and truthful. A prospective employer may need to verify your statements regarding, for example, work permit status, qualifications and may need to take a criminal record check (especially if the job involves working with children). False statements made in job applications may invalidate any subsequent appointment. Don't risk it. Having said that, our aim here is to help you present yourself in the best possible way.

CV FAQs

What is a CV?

Curriculum vitae is a Latin term that means, literally, 'the course of a life'. In practice, it is a document that sets out a whole host of your personal details, experience and achievements as they relate to your working life. Your full CV should be a well set out, up-to-date, thoroughly accurate

and exhaustive data bank of all of these details, although you may well shape slightly different versions of your CV for different purposes.

Why do I need one?

You need a good CV when applying for jobs, seeking promotion and trying to get research funding. In addition, you will need to draw information from your CV for things such as when you're asked to be an external examiner for a course or a research thesis; for audits of teaching and research activity; if your faculty or department has to be validated by an external professional body – in short, any circumstances in which somebody needs to judge your individual professional competence or that of you and your colleagues collectively.

Compiling your CV also provides you with a crucially important opportunity to reflect on and plan further developments in your career. What's more, for those moments of self-doubt about just how good you are, a well set out CV that demonstrates real achievements can be very reassuring (and contrariwise, it might make you buck your ideas up and get on with things).

When reflecting on your CV and how you need to develop it, think about whether it is what Rebecca's PhD supervisor called a 'staying' or a 'leaving' CV. A 'staying CV' is that of the good university citizen, including plenty of committee work and administration, pastoral care of students, a heavy teaching load as well as a credible research record. A 'leaving CV' will reflect the interests of a prospective new employer and will probably highlight research achievements, while still showing that you are generally competent and willing across the range of duties undertaken by academics. You should never place yourself in the position where your CV won't allow you to leave.

We introduced Graínne in Chapter 1. Her university would very much like her to become head of department, a job that she could undoubtedly do extremely well. It would not only bring an attractive financial stipend with it, but would also allow her to make a real contribution to the well-being of her colleagues and students by improving significantly the management of her department. But Graínne has recently completed her PhD and has just begun to build up

her publications record. She would like to move to another university, possibly in another country; her field is highly competitive in research terms and she would not get the kind of job she wants without a substantially better list of publications. She has therefore decided to turn down the opportunity to be head of department and concentrate on lengthening her list of publications.

Graínne is planning well ahead. However, planning to move is not the only reason why you need a leaving CV. Always remember that your current circumstances may change rapidly and without much warning – you might get an obnoxious new dean who makes your life a misery, or you might be made redundant. Never, ever thoroughly nail your colours to a single university mast – the ship might sink at any moment. Also remember that you don't necessarily know when your perfect, dream job is going to come up. If you have a staying CV when it does, then you won't be in the best possible position to grab it.

When do I need to do it?

It follows from what we've said above that, because a CV is an important career planning tool and you may need one in a hurry when that perfect job comes up, it is never too early to put your CV together. Don't be put off starting because you have comparatively little to put in it. Starting now will encourage good work practices, help you establish a good basic framework and ensure that all your on-going work activities are recorded and not forgotten.

How do I get and keep my CV in good shape?

Preparing and maintaining your CV has to be a collaborative, interactive and iterative process. You need to enlist the help of your friends, family, mentors and more experienced colleagues because it is a rare gift to be able to see ourselves as others see us.

Later in this chapter we set out what we think is a pretty good CV pro-forma that you might like to use as the basic framework for your own. Using a framework helps to structure your recollections and thinking. Most people find constructing a CV using this type of framework quite an affirming experience – they start off thinking

they've achieved very little or nothing but as they start to fill in the boxes they find that they've actually done quite a lot.

You should show your draft CV to people who know you and/or who know what an academic CV should look like and ask for feedback. Typically, they will remind you of things you've done or skills you have demonstrated that you have overlooked or underplayed. They will also help you with layout, prioritisation and emphasis. This can be a fairly lengthy iterative process. Once you have done this basic spadework, keeping your CV up to date should be relatively easy and a far less time-consuming task.

You must update your CV regularly, and little and often is best. Some people pop things into their CVs as soon as they occur – for example, a paper accepted for publication. Others keep a running note, perhaps in the back of their diary or a list on their notice board, of things to add. Yet others update it with great regularity on the same day each month and set up their computer to prompt them to do this. You need to adopt a system that works for you. Whatever your system, you must:

- Have a system whereby details that need to be included on your CV do not get lost or forgotten – something that can happen all too often.
- Regularly revise your CV to reflect major new developments in your work. For instance, you might move into a distinctly new theoretical area.
- Revise your CV for current accuracy. For instance, you might have put down a project that you were seeking funding for and it has not come to fruition or has petered out. Equally, you might have a book or a paper down as 'forthcoming' for which you now have the full publication details.

Your CV should look like a bone-china display cabinet – the best pieces should always be highlighted, your collection should be as complete as possible, and everything should be clean and shiny.

How long should it be?

As we have said above, you will compile different CVs for different purposes. What we're going to talk about here is your 'full CV', the data bank from which you might compile shorter CVs for things like research funding applications or adapt for particular job/promotion applications.

There are many employment or re-employment agencies in many countries whose consultants specialise in helping people prepare their CVs. Their advice, and that given generally to people in non-academic public sector or commercial jobs, is that a CV should be exactly two pages long and should be accompanied by a very brief covering letter. This is the antithesis of an academic CV, which is a species all of its own. It is absolutely imperative that you understand this and resist all pressure to make your full CV the more common two-page summary. This is one of the most important things we have to tell you about academic CVs.

Why should academic CVs be different from other CVs?

There are two key differences between academic and non-academic CVs. One is that academic CVs tend to be quite a bit longer than those of non-academics, and they get longer as a person's career develops. Between twenty and thirty pages would not be unusual for a well established professor, although someone in a much more junior post might quite rightly be expected to have only three or four pages. A second, and perhaps more fundamental, difference is that non-academics, especially when they are seeking middle management positions, are frequently encouraged to make largely unverifiable assertions about their qualities and skills rather than to list verifiable achievements. Here is an example of what we mean, taken from a website offering advice on putting together non-academic CVs.

> Rather than launch into a profile or a long list of achievements, try something like this (for an office manager):
>
> High volume and high quality process: deadlines always met; systems constantly improved; burdens lifted from senior management; expert at delivering a combination of certainty and positive client image in a multi-functional role covering admin, account tracking, document production and customer enquiries.
>
> - Skilled and loyal team developed.
> - Contribution to new IS development strategy.
> - Effective use of global project management network.
> - Diary, logistics and contacts for international expert teams.
>
> (www.workthing.com/servlet/quiz?action = answers, accessed on 27 May 2002)

In contrast, academic CVs should never make vague or unsubstantiated assertions, for two reasons. First, it is an inherent part of academic life and training that we look for the verification of truth claims. Proving or justifying what we have said is part of our culture. All the claims we seek to make in our research and teaching work need to be backed up by some sort of evidence. Second, much of our work and what we achieve is done via substantial public events, for instance the winning of a research grant, the publication of papers, conference presentations and so on.

Consequently, you will not be able to include some of the work you do in your CV. For example, time spent supporting students and colleagues emotionally may constitute an important part of your working life, but is not verifiable and cannot be put into your CV. This is one reason why people who do a lot of this kind of work (most but not exclusively women) often end up with less impressive CVs. Be aware of what is and what isn't CV-able work and draw appropriate boundaries, looking after your own best interests as well as the well-being of others.

My institution insists on its own standard CV format. Why can't I just use this for all purposes?

Many institutions feel they need to keep standardised CV-type information on their academic employees. There are legitimate reasons why they might need such information in a standardised form, for example, external research or teaching audits or validation of professional qualifications. It is vitally important to realise that the university decides what information it needs and in what format purely for its own interests. This does not necessarily mean that its requirements are unhelpful, but you can't assume that the university's interests and needs are synonymous with your own. If your university does insist on holding a CV on you in a certain format, it can be very tempting, to save yourself time, to think that it will do for all purposes. This is a false economy. If you need to save time, it would be better to keep your full CV in the best format you can and let university administrators select the information they need on you from it. If you need to submit a CV in a standard university format for promotion, it won't be too much work to pull out the relevant details from your full CV and assemble them in the required form.

A framework for CV content

In this section, we set out what we have found to be a good, clear and comprehensive framework for an academic CV. We are going to take you through each of the headings in turn and explain what should appear under that heading and why. If you haven't already prepared a CV, or yours is not in particularly good order, you might well find it useful to read this section through once and then go back whilst sitting at your computer and start to construct your own CV using each of the headings we give.

In this section, we have tried to include all the many different kinds of work that academics do, and this may make it seem quite daunting reading. However, you do not need to achieve excellence in, or even include, every area – you can have a very strong CV that doesn't. You should not include any headings in your draft CV for which you have no content. For example, if you haven't yet published any books then having an empty section for books or monographs merely draws attention to the fact. However, where you do come to a heading under which you have no, or very little, content, you might give some thought to whether and, if so, how and when to develop this aspect of your work. For instance, if you are not on any journal editorial board, don't put this heading in your CV, but do give some thought to whether and how you might get such a position to include in future.

Our CV format has six principal sections and you should start each principal section on a new page:

(**1**) Personal details.
(**2**) Research and academic/professional standing.
(**3**) Consultancy and public work in a professional capacity.
(**4**) Teaching and examining.
(**5**) Leadership and administration.
(**6**) Referees.

We've defined a CV as 'the course of a life', but each section of your life – such as jobs, publications, etc. – should be narrated in reverse chronological order. Don't take any notice of people who tell you to put the oldest things you've done first and work up to the present. It's easier and kinder to the reader, who, at least in the first instance, will want to know about the current rather than the historical you. Prospective

employers often ask for things to be listed in chronological order – remember that reverse chronology is still chronological.

Personal details

This section should include the sort of basic personal details that you would find on most people's CVs, whether they are academics or not. The information should be given under suitable subheadings.

Name

Use the name by which you are commonly known, in particular the name by which you are known in any publications. If you changed your family name as a result of marriage, divorce or any other reason then you should put your previous names in brackets after your current usage. Conventions for stating your family and given names vary between countries and between cultures. For instance, in anglophone countries given names precede the family name. If your names don't follow the standard format in the country where people will be reading your CV then you need to clarify which are your given names and which is your family name. If your name is difficult to pronounce in the language of your CV or is written using a different form of script (say you are Japanese, Russian or Greek writing a CV in English or vice versa), then it would be kind to readers to adopt a spelling that aids pronunciation or to give them some other indication of how to pronounce your name. Quite often people adopt names that are significantly different from their given names when moving from one language system to another. You should not feel obliged to alter your identity in this way. You want to make it relatively easy for people to use your real name but they should make an effort to do so.

Date of birth

This may be a prickly point. Selection committees always like to know how old the candidate is, as it helps them to judge the achievements of the candidate. There is little point in leaving your age off – the fact is that readers will be able to make a pretty accurate estimation of your age if you have sent them a complete CV.

Contact details

Prospective employers need to be able to get in touch with you in order to call you for interview or to let you know that you have (hopefully) got the job. You should include your regular postal address, telephone (work, home and mobile) numbers, fax number (if you have a confidential machine at home or at work) and email address.

Nationality and/or work permit status

If you are using a CV to apply for a job, a prospective employer will need to know whether or not you will need a work permit to take up the post. If you are anything other than a citizen of the country where you are applying for the job, with a name that sounds as if it belongs to the dominant ethnic group, you need to make some fine judgements about how you express this. Generally, if you are a citizen of the country in which you wish to work, it is best to give your citizenship.

Education and qualifications

Give your educational record since leaving school here. If you think that there is some aspect of your schooling that has had a particular impact on the direction and rate of your achievements, you may decide to include it. For instance, you might have been to a school for the Deaf or had your education interrupted by war or other life events. In such cases, this may be information that is important in the interpretation of your CV. Only you can decide whether such is the case or not.

Set out your further and higher education in reverse chronological order, giving the details of the institutions you attended, dates, qualifications you obtained and titles of any dissertations or theses written for research degrees. We had a discussion about whether you should include the classification of your first degree and decided that you should put it in. If your classification was good, that's fine. Equally, if your classification was poor but you are now an academic of some sort, then the chances are that your subsequent achievements more than compensate for it. If you don't put your degree classification in, then everyone will assume that it's poor and also that you've got something to be ashamed of. For the record, Jane got a first, Rebecca got an upper second and Debbie is very proud of her

lower second. If the system by which your degree was classified will not be familiar to people reading your CV, then you need to offer a few words of explanation. There may be some standard conversion formula that you are familiar with for your system.

You also need to include any additional qualifications gained, for instance professional examinations that you have passed, or advanced, high-level training in, say, software design or use. Don't include your 25 m swimming certificate or your silver medal for tap-dancing (unless you're going to be a lecturer in synchronised swimming). Keep it relevant.

Awards and distinctions

Include here any details of prizes, scholarships (including those to undertake doctoral work), fellowships to fund study leave or other special awards such as from your professional association. Don't put your school prizes in, but do include things like awards for the best paper at a major international conference (honest, they do exist in some disciplines) or the best new book or recent doctoral thesis in a discipline.

Employment

Begin with your current employment (if any) and then list previous ones, always in reverse chronological order, of course. For each substantive post you've held, whether in academia or elsewhere, give dates, employer, the post held and – where it isn't immediately obvious – a brief description of what the job was about. If you've been promoted within the same organisation, treat each promotion as a separate employment or sub-employment, thus emphasising the fact that you've been good enough to get promoted.

Many people do not have an unbroken record of professional employment since they left school or university. They may have had career breaks to care for children or other relatives; they may have been unemployed; they may have been doing casual or other low-status jobs because they needed the money; they may have had periods of ill health which prevented them from working; they may have been in prison, working as a prostitute, a professional gambler or doing a whole host of other activities that they would really rather forget about. Problematically, a CV really needs to show a complete life picture. It is generally better to

be straightforwardly open and honest about what you've been doing. This helps in the interpretation of your CV and explains an apparent lack of productivity in particular periods or overall. You need to find the most sensitive and appropriate way of giving this information. Short periods of this sort of work or activity can usually be glossed over so that they don't look like gaps on your CV. For example, if you spent three months working in a petrol station or as a bike courier following your doctorate and before you got your first academic job, nobody is really going to notice or care much and you don't have to put it in. On the other hand, if you have spent five years in jail, the gap will be readily apparent and you need to deal with it. You are likely to be asked about any unexplained career breaks in interview in any case, and it can be much less embarrassing to deal with such queries through your CV.

Membership of professional bodies

List here the academic and non-academic professional bodies of which you are a member. Include bodies that require verification of competence and those to which you simply pay an annual membership fee. If you are on the executive or other committees of any of these organisations then you should mention it here briefly. Where an organisation requires you to pass some kind of entry test, you should include that in your 'education and qualifications' section.

Xavier's university required him to undertake training for teaching in higher education. This gave him a postgraduate certificate in higher education, which also entitled him to join the Institute of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. The ILT was a government-promoted body designed to 'professionalise' teaching in higher education. Xavier's university automatically processed his membership and paid his first year's subscription once he had passed his course. Xavier was aware that most UK university employers were placing increasing emphasis on ILT membership for less experienced academics. However, he was opposed in principle to the ILT and its mission and certainly did not want to continue to pay the sizeable annual membership fee. Therefore, when his first year's subscription ran out, he simply did not renew it. On his CV, under 'qualifications', he included '2002 – PGCHE and membership of the ILT'.

Competence in foreign languages

List all languages that you speak or read other than your first language, indicating your level of competence. This information may be of importance for a number of reasons. For instance, it may affect your ability to undertake research or your language competence may be useful in seeking to recruit students to the university from other countries and cultures.

What not to include in personal details

We think that there are some personal details that really don't belong on a CV but which, surprisingly, some, often quite senior, people persist in including. Your employer does not need to know and has no legitimate interest in knowing your marital status or the number of children you've parented. Often it's senior men who include this sort of information, usually putting something like 'married for twenty five years to wife, Susan, four sons'. Whilst they may be right to be proud of their family life, statements like this read to us as unsavoury assertions of heterosexuality, a certain sort of masculinity and righteous virility. It may be offensive to some people on your interview panel and may well lead them to argue strenuously against your shortlisting. Conversely, systems that pressurise people into including this kind of information may well militate against women – spouses and children may be seen as status symbols for men but as potential distractions from work for women. You should resist all pressures to include information of this sort either in your CV or on an application form. Leaving it out will make absolutely no difference to your job opportunities, but including it may well prejudice people against you.

Other things not to include in your CV are hobbies (this always looks pathetic and immature and is not relevant to your application) and your current salary – your CV may end up being more widely circulated than you anticipated and you might not want this private stuff to be known by all and sundry. Additionally, there may be a tactical advantage in keeping this information private for as long as possible.

Research and academic standing

This section of your CV is particularly important when seeking jobs or promotion, as well as when demonstrating your suitability for research

funding. The various subsections can be arranged in an appropriate order for your particular discipline and the demands of the university system in your particular part of the world.

Publications

We have arranged these in what we think is a fairly commonly held view of the order of importance, from the highest to the lowest status. However, this may well vary according to your own disciplinary area and your country. If your research work is subject to some form of external evaluation or audit exercise, for instance, then the presentation order of your publications should reflect the criteria of such exercises, starting with the most highly valued form.

In the examples below we have adopted a particular layout that highlights dates of publication. The advantage of laying out your publications in this way, with a hanging indent and the date on the left, is that it enables the reader quickly to gain an impression of your publication rates and patterns. If a publication is with the publishers and they have agreed to publish it, you should put 'in press' where you would ordinarily put the date. If a publication has been accepted in principle, for instance you have a contract for a book which is in progress or an article has been accepted by a journal subject only to minor revisions, then you should insert 'forthcoming' where you would usually put the date.

Research books

These are what we call 'research monographs' in *Writing for Publication*. They are books, by one or more authors, which deal substantively with a particular area or issue that has been researched. The information that you need to include is: date of publication, the title and subtitle of the book, the name(s) of the authors, the place of publication and the publisher, the number of pages and the ISBN. These last two items are not strictly necessary, but since you generally need them in research audits of various kinds you might as well give them here, as it saves you looking them up every time you are asked for the information. The other advantage is that an ISBN shows that this is

a 'proper' publication and not some in-house report in a fancy cover. The whole thing put together should look something like this:

Forthcoming: *It's So Big: A Cultural Geography of Gozo*. Standard, B., Dogstein, D. and Lush, S. Malmesbury: KNine Publications. 144 pages. ISBN 0-9999-9999-0.

2002: *Space, Time and Place in Gozitan Culture*. Dogstein, D. and Jones, F. Swindon: Roundabout Press. 189 pages. ISBN 0-0000-9999-0.

Refereed journal articles

These are papers published in academic journals that have been subject to the usual academic refereeing process. We explain this process in some detail in *Writing for Publication*. Include: date, title of paper, author(s), journal title, volume, part and page numbers, ISSN. Again, the last item is not strictly necessary, but as with books, it is useful to put it in. Here is an example of how it might look on the page.

In press: 'Pet civilisations: urbanisation and pet ownership in the southern Mediterranean'. Dogstein, D. *Animal Geographies*. 16 (4): 22–36. ISSN 1234–1234.

Edited books

List any edited collections where you have been one of the editors. The format for the citations should be as for research books, except that you should insert the words, 'edited by' preceding the editors' names.

Book chapters

This section is for chapters you have written in books edited by either yourself or others. Include: date of publication, chapter title, name of chapter authors, book title, name(s) of editor(s), place of publication, publisher, page numbers and ISBN. The entry might look something like this.

1999: 'Raining cats and dogs: the over-wintering habits of transhumant pastoralists in the Mediterranean'. Dogstein, D. in *Animals and Human Geographies in the Mediterranean*. Edited by Watson, M. and Cooper, C. Garsdon: Limestone Press. Pages 12–43. ISBN 0-1111-2222-0.

Reports

When you do research for government or other outside agencies you usually have to produce some sort of report. Quite often it will be published on the web and/or in hard copy. Such reports are an important reflection of your academic work in both research and consultancy. Include: date, title, names of authors, details of who the report was commissioned by and who published it, plus any identifying reference numbers. The entry might look something like this:

2001: 'Animal Husbandry on Comino'. Dogstein, D. Special report commissioned by the Comino Farming Commission. Research report No. 427. Mgarr: Comino Farming Commission. 27 pages.

Other books

This is a difficult category to define, and strictly not all the books that might get listed here are research output. The sorts of things to include are: student textbooks written for the purpose (that is, not research monographs that have been adopted as if they were textbooks), professional guides, popular books about your work (that is, books like Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time*) and so on. As we explain in *Writing for Publication*, this is not a category that you should seek to fill with any urgency. It attracts little academic kudos, even if the books are very useful and sell well. Books like this should be cited in the same way as research books.

Articles in professional journals

In some, but not all, disciplines, you will be expected to disseminate your research to non-academic users. List such publications here, giving the same details as for academic journal papers.

University working papers and published conference proceedings

Some university departments publish staff and graduate student work in their own working paper series or in-house journals. Sometimes these are internally reviewed, but this process and the level of competition will be less rigorous than for a journal.

Some conferences 'publish' conference proceedings in the sense of making the papers from the conference widely available, usually via the web. We're not talking, here, about conference papers which have subsequently been accepted for a special issue of an academic journal or as a chapter in an edited book collection. It is also important to understand the distinction between published conference proceedings in the arts, social sciences and humanities and in science subjects such as physics, chemistry and information technology. In these latter disciplines, the publication of conference proceedings is a very rigorous peer-reviewed process akin to getting a paper into a refereed journal. In the social sciences, arts and humanities published conference proceedings are almost never refereed in this way and therefore carry little status as 'publications' even if you had to submit an abstract or paper for some kind of review prior to acceptance for the conference. Accordingly, this is a section that you may well drop as you become more senior. However, when you are at the beginning of your career, this can be a useful way of indicating that you are productive and actively engaged in academic debates.

If you have a working paper to put into this section you need to include: date, title, authors, the series and any reference numbers and the number of pages. On the printed page it might look like this:

> 1998: 'Transhumant pastoralists and their animals in the south Mediterranean'. Dogstein, D. and Buster, T. Baskerville Working Papers, No. 1998/4. University of Malmesbury. 36 pages.

If you have a paper published as part of conference proceedings you need to include the usual information plus the actual dates of the conference and where it took place. Thus, it might look like this:

> 1998: 'Pastoralists and their working animals in the south Mediterranean'. Dogstein, D. Fourth International Convention on Pastoralism. Xaghra ville: University of Xaghra. 4–6 December. Can be accessed at www.xaghra.ed.go/pastoralism/dogstein.html.

Reviews of single books

Early in your academic career you may be asked to review books for a journal. As with conference proceedings and working papers, reviews will not count for much as your career continues, but in the early days it shows that you have engaged with your disciplinary field and that more senior people take your opinion seriously and trust you to undertake these important, albeit small, tasks. Reviewing such books can also be a useful and free way to build your library, as you get to keep the copies. Reviews of single books are not refereed.

Include: the date of the publication of your review, the title and author of the book(s), journal name, volume and issue number and page number(s). Consequently, your entry will look like this:

> 1998: Review of *The Good Shepherd: masculinities and animal husbandry in Scotland* by McBiff, B. (1996). *Animal Geographies*. 10(2): 141.

Work in progress for publication

At any point in time, you are likely to have a variety of pieces of writing that you are developing but for which you do not yet have a publisher or journal. It's important to list this work in your CV, as it gives the reader an idea of what is 'on the stocks' – work that should be coming to fruition over the next two or three years. This will give an indication of how busy you are and the sorts of directions you are moving in. However, it's important not to exaggerate.

The order in which you list these various on-going pieces of writing should be the same as that for actual publications. In other words, start with the ones that are most prestigious. It might be worthwhile giving a short abstract of items in this section and an indication both of when you expect to complete the work and of where you hope to publish it.

Books would be included in this section rather than as 'forthcoming' only if you have yet to secure a contract for publication. Book chapters would be here rather than as 'forthcoming' further up your CV only if the editor has asked you to do it but has not yet gained a contract for the book. Journal papers belong here if they are planned but not yet written, in draft but not yet submitted, have been returned to you for

major revisions or have been rejected and you are completely reworking them for submission to another journal.

The details you need to give are the working title, the authors and the proposed place of publication, together with a short abstract. The entry might look like this:

> 'Of dogs and men: masculinities and pastoralism in the southern Mediterranean'. For submission to *The Journal of South Mediterranean Studies*.
>
> This paper draws on a substantive part of my completed PhD thesis. It examines the ways in which male transhumant pastoralists in the southern Mediterranean relate to their domestic working dogs. I argue that the interspecies cultural geographies of men and dogs constitute a significant element in the construction of southern Mediterranean masculinities.
>
> Due for submission during summer 2004.

Current and proposed research projects

A research project is any discrete piece of work on which you are, or intend to be, engaged. It might be as small as a single paper or as large as you being a member of a multi-member, multi-disciplinary international team with a very substantial amount of funding. The project might be one on which you have been employed as a contract researcher. As with publications, list the most recent (or indeed the proposed) first. If you have quite a few projects, you might find it helpful to divide them between externally funded and unfunded ones, putting the funded projects first for emphasis.

Including current and proposed research projects in the your CV gives the reader a clear indication that you are actively engaged in developing your research agendas and personal intellectual project. But be careful about looking like an unrealistic dreamer – even if you have dozens of brilliant ideas and proposed projects, don't relate them all here or you will just look like someone with pipe dreams who is unlikely to deliver. It is much better if what you do here is map out your current work and a reasonable amount of future work, all of which looks achievable (with hard work) within a reasonable time scale.

The details you give here should include:

- The project title.
- A brief précis of what the project is/will be about (not more than 150 words).
- Who is or will be working on it and your own specific role.
- Who is or might fund it and if so, how much money is involved (if you have an idea at this stage).
- The time scale.
- The expected outputs.

Completed research projects

This section is the archive of the one above on current and proposed projects. Include the same information, but obviously you will be able to speak with more certainty about the details (especially outputs, cross-referencing these to the details elsewhere in your CV) and should also give an indication as to any impact the project has had. Again, if you have a substantial number of projects, you may find it useful to distinguish between externally funded and unfunded ones, putting the funded ones first for emphasis.

Journal editing

Academics are involved in a number of capacities in the editing of journals. These include:

- Being one of the main editors of a journal.
- Being the book review editor.
- Being on the editorial board or collective.
- Acting as guest editor on a special issue.
- Refereeing papers submitted to the journal.

Include the full details of any editorial work that you have been or are involved with. Give details of the journal, the capacity in which you have acted and when. If you have acted as guest editor of a special issue of a journal then you need to give all the usual bibliographic details.

Organise this material in appropriate sections – generally by the five main types of work undertaken, listed above. You yourself need to judge the order in which these sections come – for instance we would place being guest editor of a special issue of an internationally prestigious journal well above being one of the editors of your faculty's in-house journal. This sort of ranking should also make you reflect on where it is sensible to put your time and effort in building up your career profile.

Book series

When you have an established reputation, you may become the editor of a series of research monographs in your field. Your responsibilities would include seeking out potential authors and titles, reading and commenting on proposals and liaison with the publisher over the shape of the eventual list. If you are lucky enough to hold one of these positions, you should give the names of any co-editors of the series, the name of the series and its publisher, together with full bibliographic details of books already published and commissioned.

Academic collaborations

One of the things your CV needs to demonstrate is that you are an active member of a wider academic community beyond your own university. Contacts have extra kudos if they are with colleagues in other countries. These links might be one-off or on-going and are marked by activities such as:

- Working with colleagues at other institutions on research projects, organising conferences, editing books or special issues of journals and so on.
- Visiting positions in other universities. You might have spent a period of study leave at another institution or been there as an invited special guest.
- Holding an on-going honorary position at another university such as 'Visiting Professor' or 'Visiting Fellow'. These positions cost the awarding institutions almost nothing but can look very good on your CV and enhance their institutional profile. They can also afford

you quite useful privileges such as access to libraries. If you are working with someone at another institution and feel that such a position might help you, you should explore the possibilities with your friends – and, of course, remember to return the favour.

You need to include details of each collaboration. State: the individuals and organisations involved, the nature of the links, their status (funded or unfunded, one-off or on-going) and cross-reference any tangible outputs such as publications, conferences and so on.

Research training undertaken or given

As part of your development as a researcher, you are increasingly likely to have undertaken some sort of formal training in how to do research. In some countries, this may even have amounted to a formal qualification. In other instances you may, for example, have been on a two-day training course in using SPSS, archiving techniques or textual analysis. Quite often such courses are run in-house by universities but they are also often available through disciplinary associations, funding bodies and so on. Many professional/disciplinary associations run doctoral colloquia for research students, often associated with their annual conference. All this counts as research training and should be detailed here as evidence in support of your claim to be a competent researcher.

As your career progresses, you may well shift to becoming the provider of such training for staff and doctoral students. Some people (and some institutions) become quite well known for this sort of work. If you do this kind of work, you should put all the details here on your CV. It demonstrates that you have acknowledged expertise in this area. By the time you reach this point you won't need to include research training undertaken.

Periods of study leave obtained

Most academics have some periods of study leave during their working lives. These are periods when you are relieved of your usual teaching and administrative duties (though not, usually, of your doctoral supervision work) in order to pursue your research work unfettered. You should

record any periods of study leave here, and, if they were funded by an external body, state by whom. Give the dates, a brief description of what you worked on and, if appropriate, cross-reference any outcomes.

Seminar and conference organisation

Being involved in organising seminars, conferences, colloquia, panels or symposia for other people's conferences is something that you can and should become involved in from the start of your academic career. This is a good way of networking and getting to know people in your field (see *Building Networks*); it shows that you are an engaged academic; it demonstrates your organisation skills; and it may well provide you with the opportunity to help edit a special issue of a journal or an edited book. In your CV, you should merely list the date of the conference, its name, where and when it took place and what your role was. If there were substantive outputs such as an edited collection with which you were involved then cross-reference this to the relevant details in your CV.

Papers given

This can encompass a broad range of events:

- Regular conference papers.
- Conferences where you are an invited keynote speaker (common in some disciplines but not others).
- Staff research seminars given at your own and other people's universities.
- Participation in workshops, colloquia and seminar series, which are often by invitation only.
- Guest lectures about your research.

You need to specify the date, paper title, author(s), event/conference name, place where it happened, capacity in which you were there (that is, were you an invited or keynote speaker or one of the regular paper presenters, a colloquium panel member, etc.), and the actual dates when it took place. Some people distinguish between international and national conferences, but this is quite a hard distinction to draw. Is it international

if it's not in your own country or if it is in your own country but people from abroad have travelled to come to the conference? What's more, in some disciplines there may not be much cross-national academic traffic in this way, whereas in others it may be the norm. We think that it's better, on the whole, to allow readers of your CV to make their own judgements about the prestige or otherwise of the event. Once your list starts to get quite long, subdivide it along the following lines:

- Keynote addresses at conferences.
- Invited talks at seminars, workshops, staff research seminars, colloquia and so on.
- Guest lectures.
- Papers given that you have submitted to a conference, workshop or whatever.

Other conferences attended

Particularly early on in your career, you might go to quite a few conferences, doctoral colloquia, etc., where you don't give a paper but you should, of course, have been an active participant all the same. These should appear in your CV at this stage because it shows that you have been learning the ropes about how such things work. As you have more papers that you have given to put on your CV, it's probably best not to clutter up your résumé with what, by this stage, won't give you any added value in job and other applications.

Consultancy and public work in a professional capacity

This is a very disparate area of activity that will vary enormously from discipline to discipline, university to university and country to country. The types of work include:

Acting as a consultant, paid or unpaid, in the private, public or voluntary sectors

Work here may range from undertaking a piece of paid consultancy for a local firm to doing what is essentially commissioned research for a

government department or major charity. This type of work may overlap quite heavily with research activity, and, indeed, you may have undertaken the work in order to get access to particular data or resources. It might also include acting as an adviser or expert evaluator for research funding bodies in your own or another country. In short, it's any paid or unpaid work where you are valued by a body outside your institution or academic discipline as an expert. It is, then, a designator of the wider esteem in which you are held. Make sure that you cross-reference these activities to any reports and so on that may have been produced as a result and that you have listed with your publications.

Serving on bodies that support your profession

This work involves being a member of or chairing committees or other bodies that in some way sustain an area of professional practice. For instance, you might be a nursing academic who is a member of the general nursing council or professional body for your country. Such appointments might be one-off or on-going. This type of work, especially if you are in a discipline that has a vocational/professional orientation, signals the recognition of your expertise in circles beyond the confines of your academic discipline and also demonstrates your university's commitment to contributing to the wider community.

Serving on local, regional, state or national committees

Such service involves being a member of either a one-off committee (such as a government committee of inquiry) or of a more enduring organisation (such as a national commission that regulates corporate monopolies and mergers, broadcasting or the arts). You should include this work only if your membership is predicated on your academic expertise. Listing it here reflects your wider standing and the fact that you act as a 'good citizen'. University authorities generally welcome staff undertaking such work, as it reflects well on the institution too. Make sure that you detail any publications such as reports that arose as a result of the committee's work.

Professional service

This is work where you perform a professional service for a non-academic organisation. You might or might not be paid for it. For instance, you may have a fractional appointment as a law professor but also work as a lawyer, the two complementing each other well. If you have such a fractional appointment, you will need to be able to demonstrate in your academic CV that you have the requisite skills, experience and standing in professional work and you will probably need a separate CV for your professional work.

For most people however, work in this category will be much more minimal. For instance, a law lecturer may help out at a community advice centre. It's often worth putting this stuff in, as it does make you look more rounded as a professional and prospective employers might like to see that you are capable of engaging usefully with non-academic organisations, from which you may learn a lot.

Acting as a trainer and educator

In some instances, you might provide training or other guidance or help in an area of your expertise to a non-university body. For instance, you might be a finance expert who gives master classes to major banks or an education academic who helps to provide continuing professional development to schoolteachers. Such work is evidence of the 'usefulness' of your expertise and also of your engagement with wider communities.

Contributing from your own expertise to public debates

Sometimes debates arise in the public arena to which you may contribute from your position as an academic – or you might even stimulate such debates. For instance, there has been widespread global debate about new reproductive technologies. Academics from a wide variety of disciplines have publicly contributed to such debates – moral philosophers, sociologists, medical scientists, demographers and so on. Such work can aid informed debate, can enhance the reputation of academic work as a whole and can help build individual reputations. Putting it on your CV

demonstrates that you are a good academic citizen and also have intellectual credibility with the wider public. Give details of media appearances, pieces written for the popular press and significant instances in which your work has been discussed – for instance your work might be referred to in the leader of a reputable newspaper.

Popularising your discipline or subject

Some academic disciplines seem to lend themselves to popularisation. For instance, there is a huge appetite in some countries for TV and radio programmes on history, making some historians media celebrities. What's popular changes with the wind. If you get the opportunity to do this kind of stuff, think carefully about the impact it may have on your academic career. If you are still building your reputation, be aware that such work can be very time-consuming and may not bring you many friends.

Popularisation isn't just about entertainment, making money or becoming a celebrity. You can enhance the reputation of your discipline (and many of them need it), aid public education and may well help to attract more people to study your subject. As such, it's well worth putting this work on your CV.

For each of these categories of work, give concise details of what you have done and for whom and highlight any tangible outcomes. If the outcome is in the form of a publication, give the usual bibliographic details.

Teaching and examining

Detail your teaching and examining within higher education here. This part of your CV is usually of interest only to prospective employers and promotion panels. Unless you are applying for a research-only job, you must demonstrate that you can pull your weight in teaching. If applying for promotion in a regular academic job, you must show that you are at least competent in this area. Additionally, if you are being appointed as an examiner of some sort at another institution, it will need some of these details.

The more senior you get, the less interested appointment panels are likely to be in your teaching profile – they generally assume that you are at least 'good enough'. Conversely, if you are at the very beginning of

an academic career, your teaching experience or potential can be of great interest. If you are a research student contemplating an academic career or a researcher who's never done any teaching, it is vital that you get at least some teaching experience so that you can put it on your CV. Even if the experience is minimal, stress what you have done. Having given one or two lectures to large groups is much better than never having done it at all. It follows that if you can't get sufficient teaching experience where you are a research student then you should try to find some casual teaching elsewhere.

There is a range of information that you need to convey:

- Exactly what you have taught.
- The levels you've taught at.
- The degree of responsibility that you have held (for instance, being in charge of a course).
- The range of teaching techniques that you have used.
- Any major teaching innovations you have been responsible for – such as setting up a new degree programme or developing distance-learning material.
- Your role as an examiner apart from examining on courses that you have taught. For instance, you should include acting as either the internal or external examiner for research dissertations or theses and instances where you are asked by another institution to externally moderate their assessment of students.

Bear in mind that the terminology applied to units of teaching can be extremely confusing and vary endlessly. We are going to use the term 'course' for a discrete chunk of teaching but in your country or university it might be called a 'module', a 'unit', a 'credit', a 'program' or some other term. Also, what we are calling a 'course' might be used to denote a whole degree programme. All you can do is to ensure that the meaning of whatever terms you use is clear from your CV, that you use such terms consistently and that you adopt the most prevalent terminology for the country where your CV is going to be read. Similarly, what we call 'supervisors' of postgraduate research students are commonly known as 'advisors' in the USA.

There are a number of ways of organising this material and you will have to work out which is best for you. One fairly standard way is to give the information for each institution that you have worked at. If you have supervised a lot of doctoral students and they have moved with

you from one institution to another, or you have continued to supervise them after you have changed jobs, then you might like to put these in a separate category all of their own. This is how we've suggested doing it below.

Supervision of postgraduate research students

This work really shades into your research work (or certainly should – see *Teaching and Supervision*). Research students are those working for postgraduate research degrees and students who do research dissertations as part of their taught masters degrees.

For students on postgraduate research degrees, it is a good idea to list comprehensive details of:

- Who they are.
- The title of their thesis or dissertation.
- When they started/finished.
- How they were funded.
- Whether they were full-time, part-time, located at the university or distance students.
- If they've finished, what the outcome was.
- Any other information you feel might be useful, for example when a student's funding has been tied to a major project or if you have been particularly successful in helping students to obtain funding.

If you have (had) a lot of students, it might be clearer to set it out in the form of a table. If you have (had) only a few, it's probably OK just to have two or three lines on each.

With regard to the supervision of master's dissertations, we think it's sufficient to give an indication of the years in which you've done it and the numbers involved.

Teaching work at [your current institution] from [starting date] to present

For each level at which you've taught (doctoral, master's, undergraduate, professionals and so on) give the years in which you've taught the

courses, titles, areas for which you were responsible and any other relevant information such as particularly innovative teaching approaches or course design, or published materials from the course. If this was a major core course with big student numbers, then say so, because appointments panels will often be looking for people who can be trusted with such responsibilities.

Teaching work at [your previous institution(s)] from [starting date] to [leaving date]

Set out exactly the same details as for your current institutions, using separate subheadings for each institution.

Examining

If you have been involved in the examination of research degrees, then you should list the year and the institutions. If you work in a cross-disciplinary way, you may find that you are asked to examine theses or dissertations in areas where the research topic is close to yours but the student is located in another discipline. In such instances, it can be good to give the broad disciplinary area of the student, as this helps to signal the strength of your cross-disciplinary appeal. If you are in the sort of system where other universities ask you to moderate their assessment standards and processes, then state here details of dates, institutions and courses or degree programmes that you were responsible for.

Leadership and administration within higher education

This used to be the least important part of your CV, unless you were going for a senior academic and/or management position. Sadly, we suspect that in some institutions this section is beginning to gain a new importance. It is part of the reification and deification of management, of which we have spoken previously. This means that you need to pay careful attention to maximising the impact you make on paper in this section without unbalancing your actual work practices. At the same time, whilst it's easy to accumulate fancy-sounding job titles, you also need a few choice instances where you are able to highlight, 'I did [this job] and achieved these [three] things …'

Group these tasks by institution, using the name of the university as a subheading. The information needed includes:

- Dates from and to which you had a particular role.
- The title of the role (dean, director, course leader or whatever).
- A (very) brief description of the responsibilities involved in the role, unless this is obvious from the title.
- If appropriate, a summary of your achievements in the role.

Referees

You will not need to give referees for all uses to which your CV is put. However, you will need them for job applications and for promotion purposes. In the next chapter we talk at greater length about the choice of referees, which must be made carefully and appropriately. For the moment, it is sufficient to say that you will need to give their:

- Title.
- Name.
- Contact address, telephone and fax numbers and email address.
- The capacity in which they know you.

And finally, a word on presentation

No-one will take you seriously if you do not take yourself seriously enough to take care over the presentation of your CV. This is, after all, the first presentation of yourself to people who may or may not offer you a job, promote you, give you a research grant and so on. The importance of good presentation may seem entirely obvious but it is surprising how many CVs are poorly presented, confusing and difficult to read. So, a few don'ts followed by a few do's.

DON'T

- Don't handwrite your CV under any circumstances.
- Don't put your photograph on it, however gorgeous you may be.
- Don't go over the top with artistic designs, fancy paper and so on.

- Don't use coloured paper or ink – if for no other reason than that your CV may need to be photocopied.
- Don't use difficult-to-read or very small fonts.
- Don't cram everything together in an effort to minimise the number of pages, or do the opposite.
- Don't omit close proof reading in order to eradicate spelling, grammar or other errors.

DO

- Do lay your CV out in as clear a way as you possibly can so that it is easy on the reader's eye; if necessary, get a friend who is a graphic designer or of an artistic leaning to advise you on the aesthetics.
- Do check your CV before sending it off to make sure that the pagination works and that you haven't left any hanging headings. Remember that this sort of thing can change in printing, so just checking on screen will not be sufficient.
- If you are emailing your CV to another country where the standard paper size is different (for instance from the USA to the UK), bear this in mind when you are setting up the document.
- Do ensure that you have numbered the pages.
- Do print only on one side of the page if you are sending hard copy.
- Do leave wide margins so that people can make notes as they read.
- Do be consistent in fonts, font sizes, spellings, terminology and so on.
- Do get a critical friend, who knows you and your work well, to check it over for any errors, omissions or important last minute style points.

5 Getting a Job, Getting Promoted

This chapter has two principal themes: getting an academic appointment and moving up the career ladder. We set out some practical steps that you can take to help you negotiate what can be a difficult and fraught process.

The appointments system we describe is fairly generic for most anglophone countries. The USA differs in some key regards and we include a special section briefly summarising that system later on. We also include a section on processes surrounding tenure in the US. That said, US readers will still benefit from reading the whole chapter.

Be prepared

You need to be ever prepared for job and promotion applications. This is why we went into such detail on the subject of CVs and urged you to use your CV as a tool for shaping yourself up for successful job applications. In addition, you need to pay careful attention to your networks and your public reputation if you are to be successful in the job field. For instance, many senior academics sitting on appointments panels may have made a point of watching you perform at conferences or you may have caught their eye through a performance at conferences.

Desperately seeking a (first) academic job

A number of sources of information are available for locating suitable posts to apply for.

- *Paths into academia*. People seek their first academic job from a variety of spaces and places. If you are a research student you should have access to job-finding networks via your supervisor, other mentors and department. If you enter via the professional or teaching routes, you may have established networks, or an institution seeking to employ you may proactively approach you.
- *Press advertisements*. In most countries, dedicated advertising media exist for academic jobs, usually through whatever the local equivalent of the higher education press is. Sometimes it is a supplement in a daily paper. In addition, there are often email networks on which vacant positions are advertised. Especially if you are seeking a job in another country, you will need to be dedicated to accessing the media and the electronic notifications if you want to locate posts. Most universities also have a page on their own websites advertising vacant posts. These are very useful if you know where you want to work. Some parts of the media offer email alerts for jobs and if you are serious about your job hunting you should sign up for these services. Also, ask your friends and mentors to keep an eye open for jobs that might suit you. Given the commitment of most universities to equal opportunities, and therefore widespread advertisement of most jobs, you have few excuses for missing suitable posts as they come up.
- *Personal contacts*. Some job opportunities come about only as a result of your networks of personal contacts and you need to be proactive in letting such people know that you are seriously in the job market. In some fields where it is difficult to find suitable candidates, jobs may not be filled on advertisement and may lie dormant until a suitable potential appointee comes to the attention of the department. Proactive universities, especially when it comes to research, may be willing to create posts in order to attract someone whom they really want. Whilst this is much more likely if you are more established and better known, it can happen if you are particularly outstanding or in a real shortage area. You have to make such opportunities happen by careful networking. For instance, you might engineer yourself an invitation to your target department to do a seminar, or talk diplomatically to a senior member of the department about the possibilities. Do not come over as pushy, aggressive or needy. If you are doing a research degree, ask your supervisors and mentors to spread the good word about you and your work.

Even in a situation in which jobs are openly and widely advertised, you will be in a much stronger position if you have proactively used your networks, have a solid reputation and are known to the people who will make the appointment.

Applying yourself

Once you have found a post you want to apply for, you have to engage with some sort of formal process. First off, you need to get hold of the full job specification. This should set out the range of duties, the sort of interests, qualifications and experience the institution is looking for and, often, but not always, a reasonably detailed person specification. The latter document will set out the essential and the desirable characteristics required of the ideal candidate.

Employers are sometimes excessively optimistic about the calibre of person that they are likely to attract and pitch such specifications accordingly. When you read such documentation you have to do so with a realistic estimation of the sort of person who is actually likely to fill the post and whether you fit the bill. Research has shown that, when men read job details, they tend to convince themselves more easily that they meet all (or enough) of the 'essential' requirements and, indeed, most of the 'desirable' ones – than women do. Particularly if you are female, you should bear this in mind and talk yourself up (in your own mind and in your application) rather than down. Usually appointment panels will take the best person available on that day, provided they meet minimum standards, rather than not appoint and try again another day because their wildest dreams have not been satisfied. You may well be that best person on the day. But don't get a reputation for applying for jobs where you have about the same chance of getting it as a snowball in hell.

Once you have convinced yourself that you are a credible candidate for the job and that you want it, you need to go about the serious business of drafting and crafting your written application. In writing the documents that will constitute this application, you need to make constant tacit reference to the job details and any person specification. Don't say, 'In your specification, you said you were looking for a person who can do *x* and I can do it.' Do say, 'I am very competent in *x*,' and then demonstrate it with verifiable evidence.

In any job specification, the institution will say what documentation it requires, how many copies and so on. In what follows, we go through what is a fairly standard bundle of requirements.

The application form

Some institutions persist in using standard application forms, often accompanied by dire warnings that failure to fill the form in will result in your not being considered for the post. All too often, these forms are designed in a generic way, to cover all posts from the catering manager to the deputy vice-chancellor. Whilst they almost never ask for more information than is on a good academic CV, they usually fail to provide nearly enough space for important things such as publications, or completely omit other important subjects.

Our advice is to fill out your name on these forms and then write in large letters 'Please see attached CV for all further details' in each section, possibly giving the relevant page numbers of your CV. If you don't do this, and try to complete the form, the chances are it will look like a bodged dog's breakfast and you won't look very professional. Any academic worth their salt will turn to a well crafted CV with a sigh of relief and in preference to one of these usually very poorly designed forms. If you submit the form in the manner we've suggested, you will have paid lip service to the bureaucracy but not allowed that to hinder your self-presentation.

Those institutions that still use forms commonly have them downloadable on their websites. This enables you to fill them in electronically (and therefore not hand-write them).

Accompanying any application form there may well be a separate or detachable equal opportunities monitoring form. Personnel officers should not forward these forms to anyone who is making a decision about your candidacy for the job. However, institutions like to, or are obliged to, collect such information for their own statistical purposes. These forms can cause irritation or offence to those who either object to being categorised or who don't fall neatly into the categories offered. Fill them in if you feel happy about it, but it's not compulsory.

Your CV

We dealt extensively with your full CV in Chapter 4. Once you have decided on the job you wish to apply for, you may well need to 'tweak'

your final CV to make sure that it properly and directly addresses the job details and person specification. You may need to cross-reference items in your CV with your supporting statement or letter of application (see below). In that case, ensure that these items are easy to locate.

Covering letters and supporting statements

Some employers will ask you to make a 'supporting statement' in your application whilst others will ask for a 'covering letter'. Yet others don't specify anything. Traditions vary between countries. We can't overestimate the importance of either a strong covering letter to accompany your application or a supporting statement. You must provide this, even if you are not directly asked for it.

In this statement or letter you shouldn't repeat what is on your CV. Rather you should weave a story around what you have and what the institution is looking for in order to oblige the reader to see you as a successful person in the job. It is essential that you respond directly to the selection criteria, job description and any person specification. You will also need to consider what the institution is like so that you can present yourself as a credible employee who will 'fit in'. It can be useful to divide your statement or letter by subheadings, either related to the person specification and the job description or, if that doesn't work, under the generic categories of research, teaching, work in a professional capacity (if relevant) and administration that will mirror the structure of your CV. You might choose to pick up on the institutional language or that used in the job details as a means of engaging the very particular audience that will read your letter.

This piece of writing needs to be cogent and precise. Take the time to find self-contained examples and/or statements of fact that concretely demonstrate your suitability for the post. As with your CV, you shouldn't make things up that can't be substantiated. However, you will need to present yourself in the best possible light – after all, this is an important part of your sales pitch for the job. Don't try to say everything; rather, draw the reader in and make yourself look alluring enough to secure an interview. Whilst being confident and assertive, you must avoid being boastful or exaggerating your accomplishments. Be aware of any cultural differences between you and the institution that you are applying to. For instance, what is appropriate respect and modesty in one culture can come over as cringing self-abasement in another – and vice versa.

Depending on the seniority of the job and the depth of detail of the institution's selection criteria and person specification, your letter or supporting statement should generally not be less than two sides of A4 or letter-size paper and not more than three to four sides. When it comes to very senior appointments people may submit extensive research and indeed business plans.

As with CVs, you need to take care with your use of language and presentation on the page. Use a sensible-size font that is also easy on the eye but looks crisp and professional Don't use coloured paper or ink because the pages will be photocopied. The only handwriting permissible is your signature at the bottom of the letter. Use the 'spill chick' (*sic*) function on your word processor and above all make sure that this part of your application reads well.

Referees

You will be required to name referees who can comment on your suitability for the post. The job details will specify the number of referees and may impose special conditions, such as a reference from your current employer. The choice of referees is a serious business and may make or break your application. The panel's perceptions of the quality of your referees may influence their shortlisting decisions if you are a borderline for selection for interview. The status of your referees and what they say about you can be very influential at the interview stage, especially if it is a close call between you and someone else. An ambivalent reference can be used by a panel member to argue against you if they prefer someone else.

So what should you take into account in choosing your referees?

- Choose people who are likely to have some status with the selection panel – for instance because they know them by reputation or because they are in very senior jobs.
- If at all possible, include at least one reputable referee from another country. This will demonstrate your international standing.
- Choose people who know your work well, as they will be able to comment in authoritative detail on its quality.
- Use someone who is close to you but not too close – for instance, not a collaborator who is also known as your closest friend, lover or spouse. If you are Laurel, don't use Hardy. If you do, the reference will not be taken as seriously as it may deserve.

- Don't use people who are junior to you, or junior in relation to the job for which you are applying. Ideally, your referees should have done this type of job themselves and thus be credible commentators on your suitability.
- Generally, you should avoid using non-academic referees. Academia is a system largely predicated on peer review and collegiality, so your peers are the only people who can adequately comment on your academic capabilities, contribution and credentials. You might, exceptionally, use a non-academic referee alongside your academic ones, if applying for a job that emphasises your potential to undertake consultancy, build links with industry or deploy practitioner expertise.
- If you are a research student applying for your first job, it would be very unusual not to have your supervisor as one of your referees. Failure to do so might raise doubts in the selectors' minds. If your relationship with your supervisor is problematic, seek a resolution with them or your institution on this point at least so that you have someone suitable to name. If you have been independently examined for your research degree and your examiners were positive about your work then you might like to ask them to be referees.
- Do not fall into the trap of thinking that you have to name your head of department or dean (that is, the person to whom you are directly and immediately accountable) as a referee. You may have a problematic relationship with such a person, they may be junior to you or to the post that you are applying for. They may well have a vested interest in stopping you from leaving.
- Before finally selecting your referees, you should politely and discreetly sound them out as to whether or not they will be able to give you a positive reference. Don't use them if you are in any doubt.

Roy was a junior member of faculty in a school of social policy at a teaching-oriented university. He had a PhD and a very successful research track record as well as being an accomplished teacher who carried a large teaching load. A plum job came up at another university in the same city that would have been perfect for him. He applied and named his head of department as a referee, erroneously believing this to be essential. His head of department was on the same grade as he was but had neither a PhD nor a research record of any sort.

When his head of department received the request for a reference, she went to Roy and said that she did not feel comfortable giving him a reference because she had 'doubts' about his capacity for the job. Roy knew that his boss wasn't really in a position to judge, but by that point could do little about the situation. In the end, after many uncomfortable discussions, the head of department gave him what could be regarded as, at best, a rather ambivalent reference. Roy was interviewed but did not get the job that he was in all probability well qualified for.

When you have selected your referees, before you send your application off, always ask their permission to name them. Let them have a copy of your complete draft application and the job details so that everyone is singing from the same hymn sheet when they are talking about you. Even if they have given you blanket permission to name them for any job that you apply for, it is still courteous to let them know about particular applications and send them the relevant materials. You need to check that they will be available to respond to the employer's requests for a reference in a timely manner. It can be a good idea to indicate to your referees which aspects of your work you would like them to emphasise in their reference.

Regular and trusted referees are likely to have a sense of whether it is the right job for you and you can use them as a sounding board in this and other regards. They may give you useful feedback about the quality of your written application.

Remember that writing good references takes time and care, so be grateful and make life easy for them by sending them stuff by email so that they can cut-and-paste if they want to. Some referees may ask you for some basic text to work from – it can be quite hard to be positive about yourself but that is a bullet you have to write. It is always courteous to let your referees know the outcome of any application that you have made.

Wrapping it up

When you have completed your forms, polished your CV, written your supporting statement or detailed letter that addresses the job criteria and secured good referees then you are ready to wrap up this stage of the process.

If you have written a supporting statement rather than a letter, you must also draft a very brief covering letter explaining that you wish to apply for the post and listing the enclosures. If, instead, you have written a detailed letter, you need to make sure that this basic stuff is included there. You can do so by opening your letter of application with words such as as: 'I would like to apply for the post of Lecturer in Archery at the University of Sherwood and enclose my CV and completed application forms. I would like to take the opportunity in this letter of explaining why I am particularly suited to this post.'

Do not include any unrequested material, especially photocopies of degree certificates, open testimonials or student evaluations of your teaching. Make sure that you send off the requisite number of copies and that you meet the deadline. Many institutions will now accept applications by email and such routes can buy you extra time. However, be aware that your carefully laid out documentation may suffer in electronic transmission, so send everything as one PDF file to avoid documents being overlooked and to preserve the formatting. If you send your application by regular mail or courier ensure that the delivery is recorded. If posting your application to another country, check out any vagaries in its postal system – you are safer using a reputable international courier service.

Do make sure that your completed application is as good as possible: people on selection committees will not believe that you can do the job properly if you can't put together a persuasive and well presented application. Sloppy applications imply sloppy people.

Once you've submitted your application all you can do is wait. University procedures vary by institution and between countries. Generally what happens is that applications are collected by the institution's personnel department and then passed to the chair of a shortlisting panel. All applications will then be considered by the people responsible for the shortlisting, usually against the published job criteria if good equal opportunities practices are being followed. Those people selected for interview will then be contacted either by letter or email. Unfortunately, few institutions bother writing to the people who are unsuccessful at the shortlisting stage. If the closing date has passed some time ago and you have heard nothing then it is probably safe to assume that you have not been shortlisted. However, don't get downhearted too soon – sometimes the work of shortlisting takes an unfathomably long time. If you are chewing your fingernails you can always ring the personnel department and ask what is going on.

So now you've been shortlisted

The invitation to your interview should set out the details of the actual process and perhaps even who will be on the interview panel. You will be asked to confirm whether or not you will be attending the interview. If you have any special requirements that pertain to your visit, for instance of a dietary, travel or physical access nature, you need to make sure that the institution knows about them. If the date is a bad one for you because of an arranged holiday, another job interview or for religious reasons and you really can't make it, then you can try asking to be interviewed at another date. Depending on how eager they are to interview you, and other constraints, you may or may not be successful in getting a more suitable date. In the main, it's best to attend when requested if at all possible.

If you haven't yet started to publish, then, at this stage, you may be asked to submit some pieces of unpublished writing (such as a draft of your entire thesis or chapters from it). This material may be used as the basis of questioning in the interview or may simply be requested to reassure the institution that you are as far along as you have claimed to be.

Checking things out

You will have done your homework on the university before applying for the job. An invitation to interview will give you further opportunities to check out the institution and department in more depth. It is best, if at all possible, to do this well before the date of the actual interview. You should have time when you visit for your interview to do further research – but do not let this distract you from the serious business of the interview itself. If you are concerned that you haven't or won't have sufficient opportunity to find out about the university, you should phone the head of department and work out a way of doing so. Remember that you have to choose them (almost) as much as they have to choose you, and you need to have a feel for the place where you are hoping to work for the next few years. There are a number of things you should investigate.

- If you know who will be on the interview panel, find out what their interests and reputations are. This will help you plan how you will field their questions.
- Try to pick up the atmospherics on campus. Does it feel like people are reasonably happy there or do most people seem oppressed and

miserable? Are your prospective colleagues friendly and welcoming, or are you likely to find them difficult and stand-offish?

- Visit the library to see if they take the journals you want in either paper or electronic form, and have a sufficient stock of publications in your areas of interest. If they haven't and are making this appointment to build up a new area of work, you need to ask what the prospects are of improving the situation.
- Ask to see some typical staff office accommodation or, perhaps, even the office designated for the post holder. Think very carefully about places that ask you to share an office or want to give you one that is poorly located or very, very small.
- Find out about the general levels of financial and other support for research. For instance, is there a reasonable amount of money available for going to conferences?
- Ask people at the level you would be appointed to about their teaching and administration loads. You are more likely to get an honest answer from them than from their bosses. You can also ask the same people about any onerous local work conditions, such as a requirement to spend a certain amount of time on campus.
- Does the campus feel pleasant and a personally safe space in which to spend your time? This may be particularly important if you feel vulnerable or are in the habit of working late at night or at weekends in your office. Are the facilities for eating and socialising with your colleagues good, or at least reasonable?
- If you are physically disabled, what is the access like? Will you be able to move around the campus and use the facilities?
- Unless you are going to move house anyway, check out how easy it is for you to get there from your current home. If you do have to move, then you will need to look at house prices or rent levels for suitable accommodation. Is the housing in the vicinity affordable or desirable for you?

Social niceties

The interview process may include some organised 'informal' opportunities to meet prospective colleagues or the panel. This may vary from a buffet lunch with other members of staff to a formal bib-and-tucker dinner with the interview panel and other candidates. The usual rules apply here. Don't get drunk, spill your food, be offensive or disgrace yourself in any other way. Remember that, despite

their helpfulness and informality, such occasions afford an opportunity to observe you and will be used as such.

Think very carefully about your dress and grooming for the interview. You can't go to an interview in jeans and a T-shirt (however well branded). Interview panel members usually dress smartly for the occasion, as a mark of respect for the candidates, and you should dress to reflect the seriousness of the process. That said, make sure that you are not too flashy in your clothing, feel comfortable in what you are wearing and look natural. Highly sexualised clothing has no place in an interview situation. If you sweat a lot, it's advisable not to wear a colour that will show it – white shirts and blouses are generally best. If you are menopausal and have hot flushes (flashes), make sure you are not wearing clothes in which you will feel hot. Be too cold rather than too hot. Do make sure that your general grooming, including hair and nails, is good. Unless it's part of your ethnic traditions and identity, if you sport facial piercings or wear a lot of earrings, then take sensible advice about how this is likely to be perceived. You may have to tone it down a bit for the day.

Presenting yourself

Most institutions will ask you to make a brief presentation to your prospective colleagues, and sometimes members of the selection panel, as part of the interview process. You may be asked to give a presentation on your research or be given a specific topic such as 'What will your contribution to the teaching and research of this department be?' Yes, such questions are usually that vague and uninspiring. Although this is ostensibly a less formal part of the process, don't underestimate its importance.

- These events are designed to enable a wider group of colleagues to form a judgement about the shortlisted candidates and have some input into the selection process. There will be a mechanism for your audience to give feedback to the interview panel about your presentation.
- If you don't perform well, but you get the job anyway, those who were present may harbour suspicions that there was something defective or corrupt in your appointment. It may take a considerable time and hard work to outlive a poor reputation gained at this stage.

- This is another part of the process of letting you gauge what kind of place it is. If you are asked a series of really ridiculous, dumb questions about your research, or the people seem to have absolutely no interest in anything you say, you have to think hard about whether you really want to work in that place.

These events are nearly always (and certainly should be) run on a very tight schedule and you absolutely must stick to the time you have been given for your presentation. You should be told beforehand how long you should speak for and should also allow adequate time for questions. This means that in preparing your presentation you must rehearse, rehearse, rehearse, with a stopwatch, and get your timing perfect.

Rehearse in front of your critical friends and/or family. Get your rehearsal audience to ask you questions as well and to give you feedback on how to improve your performance. Such rehearsals will make the real thing feel a lot more familiar and comfortable and you will feel confident that you know what you are doing. On the other hand, don't overdo it such that it comes across as stale on the day.

We have serious reservations about the use of PowerPoint in most disciplines, although we understand and appreciate that in some fields it is both the norm and necessary because of the nature of the material used. Our advice is not to use PowerPoint unless it is expected and/or absolutely necessary. The technology is notoriously unreliable, and setting it up, using it and coping with failures can seriously erode the short time you have available to make an impact. If you need visual aids, overhead projector transparencies are quite adequate for most purposes, safer and more flexible. Our major concern with PowerPoint is that all too often the technology dominates the person who is presenting, and this event is all about making you shine.

Michel was called for interview for a job in an information technology-related specialism. Like the other candidates, and quite appropriately, he turned up with a PowerPoint presentation on his own laptop but had failed to check in advance whether it was compatible with the projector, which it wasn't. Consequently it took an inordinate amount of time for the technician to transfer his presentation to a disk and then to a departmental laptop. The presentation still failed to run and it later transpired that Michel's file had introduced a virus on to the

department's machine. Not only that, Michel had brought no back-up hard copy hand-outs or OHP transparencies, so in order to see the presentation the panel had to crowd around his small laptop. All this contributed to Michel's failure to get the job.

You might want to give the audience relevant written material, such as a brief hand-out outlining your research plans or proposed new courses. Keep these very brief and very clear, but they can be a good way of maximising your impact and the audience's recollection of you and what you said at the end of what may have been a long, boring and gruelling day.

Obviously, you will do what's asked of you in your presentation in terms of content. If you've been invited to talk about some aspect of your research, make sure that you've picked something that is likely to be of interest, is pertinent to the job you are applying for and is good. If you have been set a question, make sure you respond to it, whilst taking the opportunity to get your message over. The questions are usually so vague that they are almost a licence to say what you want within very broad parameters. Jane always says that, whatever else you do, you should have a 'killer beginning' and a 'killer ending' for your presentation. These will be the bits people remember best.

Whilst the content is important, how you come across as an individual is almost as important. You need to be very positive, enthusiastic about the place, and the audience needs to feel good about itself by the time you finish. Laughter is an amazing tonic in such situations, which are often not easy for anyone. If you can engage your audience and make them feel that they would love to have you around as a colleague, they are much more likely to give positive feedback about you to the interview panel. The converse is obviously also true.

You will be asked to leave time at the end of your presentation for questions from your audience. Respond positively and enthusiastically to what they say. This is especially important if you feel that their questions are stupid; you must nevertheless answer them in a way that is not hostile, but takes them seriously whilst not being sycophantic or patronising.

The interview itself

The formal interview itself is the main act of the selection process. That said, a killer interview by no means guarantees you the job because

there are always a multiplicity of other things in play – the internal politics, how your expertise 'fits' in the department and the quality of the competition (some of whom will also have done a perfect interview).

Here are some very straightforward points about interviews. To most of you it will seem very obvious, but it never ceases to surprise us, as members of interview panels, how often people get these things wrong.

- If you are inexperienced, get some mentors, friends or colleagues who have conducted interviews for this kind of job to give you a trial run. This will let you plan strategies and also make the real thing feel a bit more familiar.
- For the interview itself, ensure that you arrive on time, allowing for mishaps such as late trains, not being able to find the right building or room, or needing an emergency visit to the toilet (bathroom). If, despite your best endeavours and plans, you are still delayed, you need to move heaven and earth to let people know what's happened as soon as possible – it may be possible for them to reschedule interviews at the last minute. If you have a long way to travel, do so at least the day before (or even earlier if jet lag might be an issue).
- If the panel is running late, someone will probably come and let you know. At this point you should ask how late and what time your interview will be. If it's quite a while, you may want to have a little walk, go to the toilet or go for a cup of coffee. But whatever you do, ensure that you get back to the interview room five to ten minutes before the agreed time.
- If at all possible, leave your coat, large bags, hat, umbrella, laptop, suitcase and anything else that makes you look like an itinerant outside the room. Usually, institutions will have a safe place for you to leave things in. If they don't offer this, then ask. You don't want your arrival in the interview room to be marked by several minutes of you divesting yourself of all these accoutrements, and the reverse at the end.
- Take something distracting with you to read while you are waiting for the interview. You will be nervous anyway, and you do need the adrenalin that this produces to give you a bit of an edge. On the other hand, you don't want to have worked yourself up into a hyperactive, hyperventilating nervous frenzy that prevents you from performing well.
- Turn your mobile (cell) phone off before the interview, but remember to turn it on again afterwards because they might be trying to call you to offer you the job.

- Think about what to take with you into the interview. You may want a small notebook and pen to jot down points if people ask complicated questions. On the other hand, don't take in huge files, copies of books, articles, theses or certificates and suchlike. The essence of an interview is social interaction and you need to demonstrate your ability to think on your feet (so to speak) without a lot of clutter or props.
- It is an inconsiderate interview panel that does not ensure there is a glass of still water in front of you. Stick to still water – the fizzy stuff may make you burp. It looks rather gauche to pull your own bottle out of your bag, and worse still to drink from the bottle. Avoid accepting cups of tea or coffee, because they are diuretic, more complicated to drink and make you look foolish if you spill them.

There are basically two sorts of interview panels: good ones and bad ones. Good interview panels arrange everything and have a style that is designed to help you show your best side by putting you at your ease (in so far as that is possible), being respectful towards you, taking you seriously and treating all candidates equally. Bad interview panels are aggressive, hostile, carry out interviews in such a way as to try to catch you out and almost act as if you're inconveniencing them by being there. We think that the style of interview can tell you a lot about whether the place will be a good one to work in. If they can't even be considerate and polite when you've travelled and taken time off work to come and see them, your chances of them giving you good employment conditions are pretty remote. That said, there are some places, usually with very high prestige, which regard the interview as a kind of trial by ordeal and if you make it over the hot coals then you belong and may well enjoy very convivial working conditions.

Unfortunately, until you go in, you are unlikely to have a very reliable indication of what sort of interview it is going to be. Furniture arrangement and body language may be your first clues. You've got to adapt to and deal with whatever situation you find. If you have prepared well, this will be easier. We don't know anybody who performs better in a hostile interview than in a facilitative one, but some people cope better with adversity, hostility or aggression. If you do have a bad experience, you have to nurse your wounds and put it behind you. However, if you find the physical environment really difficult – you might have the sun straight in your eyes or might not be able to hear people because your hearing is impaired – then don't be afraid to ask for things to be adjusted.

The number of people on the interview panel will vary according to the practice at the institution and with the level of seniority of the post. Most panels will consist of:

- A chair, who will normally be a senior academic – for example, the vice-chancellor, a deputy or pro-vice-chancellor, a dean or a senior professor. If someone like this does not chair the panel, it may indicate that the university does not take its human resource strategy seriously, that the post is not regarded as important or that the department is sidelined. The chair's responsibility is to oversee and manage the whole process, ensuring that appropriate processes are used, especially with regard to equal opportunities, and that the final decision is consistent with institutional requirements and strategies. This person may well know very little about your particular disciplinary area.
- The head of department and one or more other prospective departmental colleagues. Their task will be to evaluate your potential contribution to the teaching, research and administration (as appropriate) of their department. They will also be making judgements about whether you will be a good colleague and someone they want to work with.
- At least one other person external to the department, who may be from a different department, faculty or even institution. Generally, for regular lecturing jobs, this person is there to make sure that there is fair play and to be a disinterested third party who can proffer advice if it is needed, especially if the panel is divided or in a stalemate situation.
- If the post is relatively senior (and in some specialist instances), it is likely that there will be an external person from another institution, who will be an expert in the field. Their responsibility will be to test and express an opinion on your expertise and standing in the area.
- In some institutions there will be a member of staff from the personnel/human resources department present. However, they will not be a formal part of the committee, even if they sit in the room. They are there to guide the chair on the nuts and bolts of things such as salaries and grades and generally act in a support capacity to the committee and the candidates.

When you come into the room, you will be shown where to sit and the chair will introduce you to the panel. You need to try to make a mental

note of who is who and at least what their roles are, even if you can't remember their names. Your homework on departmental and the panel members may help you to recognise their faces.

The chair will ask you the opening question and, in good interviews at least, this is designed to put everyone at their ease. The most common opening questions are some version of 'Can you tell us a bit about yourself and why you would like this job?' Come prepared with some sort of spiel to draw on in response – you don't want to look like a silent, gaping fish. Such questions sound easy and are meant to be relaxing, but can be quite hard to reply to off the cuff. In responding, don't launch into a long speech. Rather, use this opportunity to make the panel feel that it is going to be a natural two-way conversation. Even though you are the interviewee, you can usually help to set the tone of the situation.

Following this, the chair will invite successive members of the panel to ask you questions. Best equal opportunities practice, which may not always be followed, suggests that all candidates should be asked questions about the same things. If the same generic question is asked of all candidates, it needs to be very carefully phrased. Otherwise the specific wording should be tailored to each individual candidate. Below we give some nice and not so nice examples of generic questions that we've been asked.

- *In the corner of my study at home, like most academics, I have a big pile of accumulated stuff that I've promised myself I will get back to one day, when I have time. What's in your pile? What would you want to get back to first? And why?* We think this is a really nice question because it's very friendly and engaging and invites you to be enthusiastic and strut your stuff by showing that you are full of ideas and have lots of potential. It's also open-ended.
- *If you were given complete freedom to put on any course you liked, what would it be? How would you teach it? And why?* This is a good question because it may well make you think on your feet and checks out how innovative and creative your approach to teaching is. It gives you the opportunity to say how your teaching might fit the department and the job while remaining open-ended. Such a question can give you the opportunity to enthral the panel with the idea of your working at the institution.

- *Of course, like everywhere else, we expect all our staff to contribute to the 'housework' by taking on some administrative responsibilities. Can you tell us about an administrative task you've done and what you think you achieved in it?* This is a good question because it opens up the opportunity for you to show that you can do tedious administrative tasks and that you've not just paid lip service to doing them but have achieved something tangible and worth while. If what you've done to date is very limited because you are at the beginning of your academic career, you need to work around questions like this by talking about what you have done (or even did in a previous career) and explaining how you learnt to do the job and met its challenges.

On the other hand:

- *How will your research change the paradigm?* This is a truly terrible question because there is no way of judging how anyone's research will change the paradigm in advance, or even more than a decade or so after they have done, and you have to be extraordinarily arrogant or have an inordinate amount of self-belief to even begin to imagine that your research will have that kind of impact. Such questions are more likely to make candidates feel very small and inadequate. If you get a question like this, your best bet is to turn it round and talk about the sort of impact you hope your work will make, or what you are proud of in your research to date without claiming it will 'change the paradigm'.
- *What would you teach if you came here?* This question has two hidden dangers. First, you may be tempted to play 'guess what's in the interviewer's mind' and try to come up with an answer that is 'correct' on the basis of what is likely to be very inadequate information. The second danger is that you will opt for the weak response, 'Er, I guess I'll teach whatever you want me to.' Alternatively, you can just repeat the job specification back to them, which doesn't contribute to the information value of the interview. If you get a question like this, try to use it in a way that demonstrates your interests, your expertise and your awareness of the needs/constraints of the department. You might begin by saying something like 'What this department's really renowned for is its expertise in teaching archery. Of course, I have a lot of

experience in that area and I enjoy it. Additionally, I've been developing a course on crossbows and would welcome the opportunity to add it to your teaching portfolio.

- *Are you willing to undertake administrative work if you come here?* There are really only two answers to this question, 'Yes' or 'No'. If you answer 'No' you show yourself up as unwilling. If you answer 'Yes' you will be obligated to qualify your answer in some way, and that may be difficult to do gracefully. If you are asked such a question, a good response would be 'Of course, doing this sort of work is part and parcel of this type of post. I'm quite happy to pull my weight, but naturally what I do would have to be matched to my experience and in balance with the other things that you will want from me.'

Whatever sort of questions you get, you obviously need to be very careful in your responses.

- You need to take every question and your answer to it seriously, even if it seems really stupid.
- If you're not clear what you are being asked, request that the question is repeated or clarified. Alternatively, you could rephrase the question, checking that you have it right. It might be useful to say 'Thank you for that question. Let me unpack it …' or 'Let me make sure I've got you right on what you're saying,' 'There's a range of ways to respond to that question, including *x*, *y*, *z*, but I'm just going to speak on the first two. Is that all right?'
- If the question is complex it's perfectly okay to buy some thinking time by saying something like 'Hmmm, that's a good question. Let me think …' rather than rushing into a garbled and grabbled response.
- In your response it's best to maintain eye contact with the questioner, but also to intermittently include the other members of the panel. Don't just respond to the chair or the most attractive person sitting in front of you.
- Try to be as engaging and interesting as possible, creating a warm, friendly glow around the room, such that you leave the panel feeling that they have enjoyed meeting you. So it's important to smile, to make eye contact and to be generally warm and approachable in

your demeanour. If you are very nervous this may be hard to do, but an interview is a kind of performance in which you need to walk the walk and talk the talk.

- Respond to each question with specifics rather than generalities. Try to work in concrete examples of things you have done or are working on. This gives substance to your claims, whether they are about teaching, research or administration. As with the opening question, avoid rambling on interminably.

Very occasionally, the general tenor of the questioning will be such that you realise that you are faced with personal antipathy and that either you are not going to get the job or even if it were offered to you, you wouldn't want it. We are not talking here about a rogue poor interviewer who may just lack social skills and be rude and abusive by nature, or a 'tough' interview. Rather we mean sustained obnoxious and personal hostility. If you ever encounter it, you'll know what we are talking about. In such circumstances, you can't make things better for yourself but you can make things worse and make yourself feel worse by failing to act with dignity. Consider Polly's story.

Polly went for an interview for a senior post at another institution, having been headhunted by recruitment consultants. She was ambivalent about whether she really wanted the job and had a number of doubts in her mind about the university – the whole process seemed somewhat shambolic and they were unclear about exactly what the job was and what sort of person they wanted.

She was made to wait in a general student waiting area, no refreshments were offered and there was nowhere safe for her to leave her bag and coat while she was being interviewed. Although the panel was running very late, no-one told her exactly how long she would be kept waiting. When she finally got into the room she felt very unenthusiastic about the job.

The first substantive question, from an external panel member, was prefaced with the remark 'You may find this question quite robust.' He proceeded to make a long series of wholly inaccurate statements about Polly's record of publication, derogatory comments about the quality of her current institution and her work in progress and openly questioned her competence. When he had finished his

offensive diatribe, Polly, having decided not to get up and walk out there and then, gathered herself together, caught the eye of the other interviewers and said, almost in a stage aside, 'Not so much robust as pugnacious.' She then proceeded to demolish his statements at length. She knew she hadn't got the job at that point, but cared only that she did not allow herself to be humiliated by such people.

At the end of the interview you will usually be offered the opportunity to ask a question or contribute further information that may not have come out in the interview. Don't produce a long list of written questions at this point, it looks awful and destroys any kind of rapport that you may have built up with the panel. If you had plenty of opportunities to check things out before the interview and have no further queries it is best to say something like 'Everybody's been really helpful and hospitable, and all my questions have been answered, so I don't think there is anything else at present – but thanks for the opportunity.' Doing this is better than asking a banal question. An alternative strategy is to have a question prepared (to which you already know the answer) that leaves a favourable impression. For instance, you might ask, 'I'm currently working up a research grant application on *x*. Would the department be happy for me to pursue it and what support would you be able to give me?' Alternatively, you might want to use the opportunity to mention any key things that you didn't get a chance to say in the interview. Don't ask, 'I've heard that this department isn't very viable, is that true?' Don't ever use this opportunity for questions to start haggling over details such as study leave, salary, job grades and so on. You might take the opportunity to briefly clarify or augment an answer that you've already given.

Finally, you may be asked whether you will accept the job if it is offered. Always say 'yes' convincingly. At the end of the interview, the chair will usually check that they have the correct contact details for you should they decide to offer you the job. You will probably be given some indication about when they will be making a decision. If not, it's okay to ask.

Clinching the deal

If you are offered the job it is likely to be by phone in the first instance. Never, ever accept a job immediately. Rather, just thank them, indicate

that you are very interested (if you are) and ask when you will be sent the formal offer with details of the salary and conditions. You should also explain that you need to speak to your mentors and family about the job.

When you receive the offer, gauge whether and by how much you can bargain them up. Remember that, in terms of salary and other conditions, you are unlikely to be in such a strong position again. They are now the ones who want and need you. This sort of haggling comes more naturally to some people than others and women tend to especially hate it – to their detriment.

In haggling, you need to sort out matters such as:

- Salary.
- Job grade.
- Periods of study leave.
- Office facilities and size.
- Computing equipment and support.
- Your starting date.
- A reduced work load if you are trying to finish your PhD or a book.
- A suitable entry strategy – what and how much you will be teaching when you arrive, what administrative task you will do, whether you will be bringing doctoral students with you and so on.

If you are not offered the job, you may want to contact the institution to ask for feedback. Often this isn't very useful – especially if there has been lots of institutional politics involved. But sometimes you may get really helpful advice about how to improve your future performance.

Back in the USA Part 1: Getting that job

While much of what we have said is relevant to academics in the USA, there are some respects in which processes differ there. In particular, things are very different for research students looking for their first academic post. In this section we explain briefly what happens for US appointments at this level.

- The university where you are doing your research degree will keep a 'placement file' on you. This file will contain references from your advisers and other people you've worked with. You may elect

whether your references are confidential or open – but they carry more weight if they are confidential (that is, you don't see them).

- First appointment jobs at US colleges and universities are advertised in the early fall (probably September) through the 'professional' (i.e. academic) association of your discipline, such as the Modern Languages Association.
- By the closing deadline, you have to submit a letter of application and a CV to your target universities.
- A 'search committee' from the department is in charge of drafting the advertisement, collating the applications and selecting the initial shortlist. They will also send for your placement file.
- About fifteen people will be interviewed at the association's annual conference by two or three members of the search committee. These interviews take place in the conference hotels and last about half an hour. They will normally be about your research.
- From these preliminary interviews, three or four candidates will be invited to visit the campus – with all expenses paid. You will spend two or three days at the campus, during which time you will have a tour of the neighbourhood, informal meals and meetings with members of the department and make a presentation to the department. You will also be formally interviewed by the full search committee, who will be joined by colleagues from other departments. You will have a private meeting with the head of department to inform you about salary levels and fringe benefits, but this is not the place for negotiation. In some teaching-oriented schools, you may be asked to teach a 'demonstration class' to students. This can be very daunting and difficult, as you don't know the students or context, but you just have to do the best you can.
- If you are successful, you will be offered the job within about a week of your campus visit. At this point, you will be able to negotiate about issues such as salary and work load.
- The usual starting date for new appointments is the following September.

Promoting yourself, getting promoted

Promotion brings with it a higher salary and more status and recognition. If you want to get promoted, you have to familiarise

yourself with your local conditions very early on in the process and plan your campaign accordingly. Because the job descriptions for academics are so vague, it can be really hard to know what the expected standards are. This lack of specificity is also, unfortunately, sometimes used as an inappropriate means of punishing or rewarding certain people.

Within the requirements of your own institution's systems and processes, you need to assemble your application for promotion with the same care, cunning, networking and precision that you would attach to applying for a job elsewhere. Depending on your own institution's requirements, this can be very time-consuming. For some reason, universities often fail to put a money value on how much their own procedures cost them. In particular, you will need to present your CV, and it needs to be shaped to meet the criteria applicable. We dealt with CVs extensively in Chapter 4. You will also need to propose referees, and we dealt with this subject earlier in this chapter.

There are usually fixed cycles for promotions and these can often take an inordinate amount of time. Once your application is in, you just have to get on with your work as usual. However, if the process takes a long time and your CV changes in important ways during this period – for instance, you have a paper accepted in a prestigious journal or get your doctorate – you should write to the secretary to the promotions committee giving the additional details and requesting confirmation that they will be put before the committee.

The only time when you might buck the trend of cumbersome and lengthy procedures is if you are offered a promoted or better-paid post at another institution. If you would rather stay put, you can use this job offer as a bargaining chip to quickly get a promotion or a pay rise. This is by no means guaranteed, however, and universities often get into a situation in which they allow extremely valuable people to walk – but it's worth a try.

Given the resource constraints of most universities, the number of people who can be promoted at any one time may be significantly less than the number of people who actually merit it. This can be particularly frustrating if you are consistently deemed promotable but fall just short of this resource-determined threshold. You need to remember two things.

- Very few universities have formal processes in place to regularly review staff progress specifically in order to determine whether or not a person should be promoted. This means that you have to be proactive if you wish to pursue promotion.
- In most institutions it is significantly more difficult to advance a grade internally than it is to get a promoted post elsewhere. This is,

at least in part, because while evaluations of external applicants involve their entire CVs, internal applicants are assessed on the progress they have made since their last promotion. This can be particularly problematic if you are already over-qualified by the time you are applying for promotion – you will have a lot further to travel to your next promotion because of the benchmark that has been set.

If you don't get promoted, you should ask for detailed feedback about the reasons. Get this in writing from someone in authority if at all possible. If the feedback was verbal, then write, politely setting out what you understand them to have said and asking for their confirmation that you have got it right. Don't make any such letter confrontational or angry, however upset you are. You will be applying for promotion again and you don't want people in authority to think that you are an awkward customer.

Once you have got your feedback in writing, you need to identify specifically what it is you need to do to meet the shortcomings identified by the promotions committee. If necessary, go to see your head of department or dean and ask for the kind of work that you need to get on your CV. Once you feel that you have adequately met the criticisms of the promotions committee, apply again, subtly highlighting the changes you have made in your profile. If you approach promotion in this way, you will make it very difficult for the committee to reject you a second time. We can't guarantee success using this method, but it's the best non-adversarial one that we've come across.

Back in the USA Part 2: Getting tenure

It is generally the aim of early career academics in the US to get a tenured (that is, a permanent) post in a university. Although everyone who teaches in a university is given the courtesy title of 'professor', the career structure begins with temporary appointment to an adjunct (or sometimes assistant professor) position. This may be full or part-time and it may be on a fixed-term contract or on a contract known as 'tenure track'. The tenure-track posts are the most sought after, as they offer some promise of permanence in the future. The scale goes up from adjunct to assistant professor (which is the equivalent of a lecturer in the UK, Australia and South Africa), then to associate professor (like the UK senior lecturer or reader; Australia and South Africa use the same

term) and finally to full professor (the equivalent of professor elsewhere). However, some people who, perhaps, have a parallel career in, say, the law continue to hold an adjunct post at a university where they teach part-time throughout their career.

The early temporary positions are usually for three years at a time. At the end of the first three years of a tenure-track position, a senior member of faculty or, possibly, a committee will review your work. This review will consider your teaching, possibly including some observation of your classes, and of your research publications. On the basis of this review you will be given advice about how you are getting on and what you need to do in the next three years. Generally, this will lead to another three-year contract, although sometimes it does not happen – generally if your work is very unsatisfactory or if the university is in the process of making budgetary cuts.

Your position will come up for tenure during the sixth year of your employment and this will be considered by a series of tenure committees at different levels: departmental, college/faculty/school and university. You will need to submit supporting documentation for consideration by these committees, including:

- A full résumé (CV).
- A supporting statement making your case for tenure.
- A list of external referees for your work (though sometimes you may not be asked for this as the department will make its own recommendations concerning outside expert advice).
- Samples of your work as a researcher and, possibly, as a teacher.

If your application is successful at departmental and faculty level, consideration by the university committee is generally simply a matter of rubber-stamping the recommendation to give you tenure. If you are successful in gaining tenure, you have a good chance of being promoted to associate professor at the same time.

If your application for tenure is turned down, the university will usually give you a 'terminal appointment' for one year, which will not be renewed but will give you time to look for another job.

The advice we have given in this chapter about getting promotion in other countries applies equally to gaining tenure and promotion in the US – the differences are not as great as they appear on the surface.

6 Balancing Acts: between Work and Life

In this chapter we try to convince you to have a life outside work. This is one instance in which we are not writing from the basis of our own personal expertise and experience. All three of us are hopeless workaholics with a poor work–life balance. However, as Jane said in introducing herself at the beginning of the book, we would like to help the next generation of academics to be differently pleasured. So do as we say, not as we do.

What do we mean, 'work–life balance'?

This much used phrase is a euphemism for something much more simple and straightforward: how much time you spend working or not working and how the quality of your non-working time is affected by your work practices.

People with a poor work–life balance (that is, people who work too hard and for too long) end up with broken relationships, disrupted family lives, physical and mental health problems and poor quality of life. No job is worth this. Research in the UK and elsewhere indicates that academics are much more likely to become seriously ill with workplace stress than a whole range of supposedly more stressful professional occupations. We are sure that this pattern would be replicated in many, if not all, countries in the world. The same group of workers are also renowned for the punishing length of their working week.

Don't think you are immune from all this. Take positive steps now to redress the balance in your life and keep it that way.

Why do academics work too long?

Academic work has a number of inherent characteristics that produce a tendency to excessive and prolonged periods of intensive labour. First,

the work itself and the standard that is expected are generally very poorly defined. When combined with a culture of competitive critique, this means that enough is never enough. Second, much academic work is subject to what Jane has called 'discourses of derision' in another context. That is, especially outside the 'hard' sciences, academic work can all too often be seen as of little or no value in a system where increasing emphasis is placed on the production of 'useful' knowledge. This derision often finds fertile ground among academics themselves, who either suffer from low self-esteem combined with compulsive over-achievement, or find it hard to see why anyone should pay them a salary to pursue the things they're interested in (or both). Third, academic work is frequently invisible, and tangible outputs such as publications give little indication of the actual value of the labour taken to produce them. Together, these characteristics serve to create a view of academic work, frequently internalised by academics themselves, that casts it as self-indulgent, useless and marked by long periods of time-wasting inactivity.

This poor understanding and perception of much academic work means that there is very little defence against pressure to do more and more and more and to do it better and quicker. When people protest or fall ill, the institutional response is all too frequently to place the problem firmly at the door of the individual. Thus people who cannot cope are deemed to be poor self-managers or time managers. University systems are marked by an abject lack of reflexivity in this regard.

Discourses of time management

We have already indicated the first discourse of time management and the one most often deployed against academics and, unfortunately, inhabited by them. This is the discourse of wasted time, poor self-organisation and lack of professionalism. In this discourse, academics are useless wastrels who simply don't know what a hard day's work is and spend way too much time doing nothing or watching daytime television. If you are not managing to keep up with your work, then it's entirely down to you and your inadequacies.

The second discourse of time management, and one that we would like to promote and inhabit, is one in which time is recognised as being

in short supply but in which we can take a certain degree of control and do something to ameliorate things.

There is a really fine line between these two discourses and it's treacherously easy to slip from one into the other in the twinkling of an eye. There is also a fine line between occupying the second discourse in a positive way and it being a way of not participating or being a good colleague. If you slip into the latter position, the second discourse can easily become an expression of bitter, negative sentiments and resentments. You need to understand that care and regard for yourself is not necessarily negative selfishness. Most people struggle with these balances and virtually none of us gets them right all the time.

We offer below some final handy hints (to ourselves as well as to you) on having a good work–life balance and staying sane. It is our New Year's Resolution to follow all of them, and, if we don't manage it, not to criticise ourselves too much for our failures.

Handy hints for maintaining a good work–life balance

1. Build work-free space and activities into your daily routines. These can range from going for a nice walk with your dog, having dinner with your partner, going to the gym or the swimming pool, spending time in your garden, reading a newspaper or a novel, playing computer games or whatever pleases and relaxes you. Don't ever be guilt-tripped into thinking that you can do such things only as rewards or treats for having done your work.
2. Place strict limits on your periods of work. You may have to relax them from time to time in order to meet important deadlines, but in the main you should keep to them and take time off in lieu if you break them. Always try to have at least one work-free day during a normal working week and preferably two. Remember, even God rested on the seventh day.
3. Most academics do at least some of their work at home. Whilst this can be quite nice it can also make it quite difficult to switch off from work activities. If you have the space, make sure that your work-at-home activities are confined to a comfortable and discrete space. About the last thing you need is your computer winking at you as

you try to sleep, eat your dinner or watch television. If you can't afford this luxury then at least try to put your work away, cover your computer up and get on with the rest of your life at the end of your working day/week.

4. Try to organise your working time so that you can use it as efficiently as possible. For instance, make time for complex, demanding tasks in joined-up chunks rather than odd little bits. That way, you have more chance of achieving something and feeling able to have your day(s) of rest.
5. Given the impossibility of academic work-loads and your new resolve to have a good work–life balance, there will inevitably be things at work that you will simply not have time to do. You should be the person who decides what you are going to do and what you are going to leave undone. Your decision should be based solely on your professional judgement about what you need to do to be a good researcher and a good teacher. If you have to make the choice between completing an important research paper or filling in a form that will simply be filed and forgotten, it is obvious to us, and hopefully to you, which choice you should make.
6. When you are working, don't work so hard that you are left too exhausted and depleted to enjoy your non-working time. In the same vein, make sure that your working space (at home and in your office) is safe. Do not put up with non-ergonomic furniture that is likely to compromise your health in any way. It's no good having a good work–life balance if work has left you too unwell to enjoy the rest of your life.
7. Use at least some of your non-working time in a productive, enjoyable and creative way to look after yourself and your health. For instance, being an academic can be a very sedentary occupation, so getting a moderate amount of exercise can be an important and profitable way of spending your leisure time. But don't let this become a punishment either. If you are someone who needs time just to veg out, then take it.
8. We think that getting away from everything from time to time is a wonderful therapy. Do take proper holidays, even if it's just visiting friends and family rather than more expensive trips. Do not take your work with you. If necessary, get someone else to check your suitcase before you leave, if you are completely untrustworthy in

that regard. A complete break, even if it is short, is likely to be much more therapeutic than simply slacking off for a few days.

9. You need to enlist the support of your friends, family and partner in achieving a good work–life balance. Debbie often initially resents it when her partner insists that she has a day off from work. By the end of the day, however, she is grateful for this stiffening of her resolve. It's often the case that academics have other academics as partners and/or friends – after all, who else would put up with you? In one sense this can be quite helpful, as you have people around you who understand precisely what the pressures of your job are. In another sense, it can be quite problematic if you collude together to maintain a poor work–life balance. Whoever or whatever your friends/family are, you need to resolve how you will manage this issue.

And finally …

This book has been about the various elements of an academic career, how you get the right mix of activities for you, get the jobs you want and how you can balance your work with the rest of life. Throughout, we have emphasised that, although you are part of a massive globalised system, you do have agency over your life and work and can make real choices.

Anne Gold, an academic at the University of London, has devised an exercise for academics designed to help them balance all the aspects of their work and the rest of their life. We think it might be good for you to do an adapted version of her exercise on your own or with friends. You'll need a very large sheet of paper (flip-chart paper is good) and some coloured pens.

Draw a series of buckets. Four of them should be labelled 'research', 'teaching', 'administration' and 'consultancy and practitioner work' in turn. These are your work buckets. In addition, draw the other buckets that best represent your desired life outside work. These might be labelled 'family responsibilities', 'leisure', 'friends', 'relationships', 'health', 'personal and household care and management' and so on. You decide.

In each of the buckets, draw a contents level indicating how full it is – anything from empty to overflowing. Then sit and think about whether you're happy with this distribution and what redistributions are both

desirable to, and achievable for you. Address each bucket in turn, consider whether its contents are appropriate and think about strategies for emptying it or filling it up. That is, how are you going to redistribute your energies and efforts? It may be that the total volume of stuff in your buckets is too great. If so, draw one final extra-large bucket to put your unwanted surplus in. Label it the 'phucket bucket'.

Further Reading

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (1998) *The Academic Career Handbook*, Buckingham: Open University Press. This book argues that teaching, researching, writing, networking and managing are the five key activities of the academic. Like *Moving on in your Career* this book bases its suggestions on current trends in academia towards highly competitive contract work. Although the authors state that this is a book primarily for a UK readership, the advice and research on networks are applicable across a range of contexts. This is a well researched book with extensive annotated bibliographies on academic careers and related areas. It is rather let down by the production, with a difficult-to-read style of print and unattractive layout, but is worth persisting with despite this disadvantage.

Frost, P.J. (ed.) (1996) *Rhythms of Academic Life*, Thousand Oaks CA: Sage. Peter Frost is a well known Northern American academic in the field of organisational studies. In this rather large volume he has collated the self-narrated life stories of a large number of academics. The contributors come from a fairly narrow range of disciplines, principally in the management sciences. That said, the real voices expressed here can make fascinating reading – this is the ultimate book of vignettes. If you are looking for a simple 'how to' book, this is not for you. Nor will you necessarily find upbeat narratives about how wonderful things are. You may have too much grief in your own career already …

Goldsmith, J.A., Komlos, A. and Schine Gold, P. (2001) *The Chicago Guide to your Academic Career,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. With the imprimatur of a prestigious US university, this ambitious book is the US equivalent of Blaxter et al. It attempts to be very broad-spectrum in its reader appeal. The authors adopt the genre of a written 'conversation' between them: they pose themselves a series of questions then provide their own answers. This can make tedious reading and perhaps the format is a little 'lazy'. This single volume aims to cover almost everything from starting a research career as a student to getting a first job, managing teaching and research and dealing with a whole load of personal issues, such as a dual-career marriages. (The distances between universities in

north America mean that it can be quite common to offer jobs to partners.) Some reviewers disliked certain aspects of the way in which gender issues are dealt with – sometimes almost as an afterthought.

Lai, L. and Graham, B. (2000) *Moving on in your Career*, London: RoutledgeFalmer. *Moving on in your Career* argues that in the context of the ever-growing number of contract research staff compared with a diminishing number of permanent staff, early career researchers need to be flexible in their career plans and pay close attention to networking. The book shows researchers what is required to advance their career in academic research or lecturing and gives advice on taking alternative career paths. The book is aimed both at early career researchers and at postgraduate students. It also provides practical exercises and ideas to enhance essential job-search and self-presentation skills. The book uses engaging first-person narratives about academic life that emphasise the need to increase the researchers' visibility through collaboration, volunteering and conference attendance. All these activities can be thought of as forms of networking essential to career advancement in a competitive environment.

Sadler, D.R. (1999) *Managing your Academic Career: Strategies for Success*, St Leonards NSW: Allen & Unwin. This book aims to assist early career academics to plan and manage the main tasks of academic life. The book is written in the form of letters to hypothetical early-career academics, and as such locates its advice in the personal experience of the author, rather than an assessment of scholarly work done in this area. The book covers a broad range of strategies for early-career academics, including time management, confronting bias, choosing referees, teaching and publishing. Establishing a personal academic network, through, for example, conference attendance, the academic is forced to articulate their work over a range of contexts, and this process can be highly valuable for the researcher.

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Much of the material in the *Kit* was 'road-tested' in sessions for our postgraduate students, colleagues and others. Many other people kindly gave their time to read and comment on drafts. We are very grateful to these human guinea pigs for their hard work and can assure our readers that, as far as we are aware, none of them was harmed in the experiment.

Chris Staff of the University of Malta devised the title the *Academic's Support Kit*, and he and Brenda Murphy provided glorious Mediterranean conditions in which to write. Malmesbury, Morwell and Gozo were splendid writing localities, although Dox 'added value' at Malmesbury with his soothing yet sonorous snoring.

We are grateful to our universities – Cardiff, Monash, South Australia and the West of England – for the material support and encouragement they gave the project.

Many people in many different universities around the world inspired the books and unwittingly provided the material for our vignettes. They are too many to mention by name and besides we have had to tell their stories under other names. We are deeply indebted to our colleagues, ex-colleagues, friends, enemies, students and past students, old lovers, past and present combatants and allies and all the managers that we have ever worked with for being such a rich source of illustration and inspiration!

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Finally, as ever, our greatest thanks go to our nearest and dearest, without whose tolerance, love and hard work these books would not be in your hands today.

R.B.
J.K.
D.E.

Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*

Before you really get into this book, you might like to know a bit more about the authors.

Rebecca Boden, from England, is professor of accounting at the University of the West of England. She did her PhD in politics immediately after graduating from her first degree (which was in history and politics). She worked as a contract researcher in a university before the shortage of academic jobs in 1980s Britain forced her into the civil service as a tax inspector. She subsequently launched herself on to the unsuspecting world of business schools as an accounting academic.

Debbie Epstein, a South African, is a professor in the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University. She did her first degree in history and then worked briefly as a research assistant on the philosopher Jeremy Bentham's papers. Unable to read his handwriting, she went on to teach children in a variety of schools for seventeen years. She returned to university to start her PhD in her forties and has been an academic ever since.

Jane Kenway, an Australian, is professor of education at Monash University with particular responsibility for developing the field of global cultural studies in education. She was a schoolteacher and outrageous hedonist before she became an academic. But since becoming an academic she has also become a workaholic, which has done wonders for her social life, because, fortunately, all her friends are similarly inclined. Nonetheless she is interested in helping next-generation academics to be differently pleasured with regard to their work and their lives.

As you can see, we have all had chequered careers which are far from the stereotype of the lifelong academic but that are actually fairly typical. What we have all had to do is to retread ourselves, acquire new skills and learn to cope in very different environments. In our current jobs we all spend a lot of time helping and supporting people who are learning to be or developing themselves as academics. Being an accountant, Rebecca felt that there had to be a much more efficient way of helping

people to get the support they need than one-to-one conversations. This book and the other five in the *Academic's Support Kit* are for all these people, and for their mentors and advisers.

We have tried to write in an accessible and friendly style. The books contain the kind of advice that we have frequently proffered our research students and colleagues, often over a cup of coffee or a meal. We suggest that you consume their contents in a similar ambience: read the whole thing through in a relaxed way first and then dip into it where and when you feel the need.

Throughout the *ASK* books we tell the stories of anonymised individuals drawn from real life to illustrate how the particular points we are making might be experienced. While you may not see a precise picture of yourself, we hope that you will be able to identify things that you have in common with one or more of our characters to help you see how you might use the book.

Pragmatic principles/principled pragmatism

In writing these books, as in all our other work, we share a number of common perceptions and beliefs.

1. Globally, universities are reliant on public funding. Downward pressure on public expenditure means that universities' financial resources are tightly squeezed. Consequently mantras such as 'budgeting', 'cost cutting', 'accountability' and 'performance indicators' have become ubiquitous, powerful drivers of institutional behaviour and academic work.
2. As a result, universities are run as corporate enterprises selling education and research knowledge. They need 'management', which is essential to running a complex organisation such as a university, as distinct from 'managerialism' – the attempted application of 'scientific management techniques' borrowed from, though often discarded by, industry and commerce. What marks managerialism out from good management is the belief that there is a one-size-fits-all suite of management solutions that can be applied to any organisation. This can lead to a situation in which research and teaching, the *raison d'etre* of universities, take second place to managerialist fads, initiatives, strategic plans, performance

indicators and so on. Thus the management tail may wag the university dog, with the imperatives of managerialism conflicting with those of academics, who usually just want to research and teach well.

3. Increasingly, universities are divided into two cultures with conflicting sets of values. On the one hand there are managerialist doctrines; on the other are more traditional notions of education, scholarship and research. But these two cultures do not map neatly on to the two job groups of 'managers' and 'academics'. Many managers in universities hold educational and scholarly values dear and fight for them in and beyond their institutions. By the same token, some academics are thoroughly and unreservedly managerialist in their approach.
4. A bit like McDonald's, higher education is a global business. Like McDonald's branches, individual universities seem independent, but are surprisingly uniform in their structures, employment practices and management strategies. Academics are part of a globalised labour force and may move from country to (better paying) country.
5. Academics' intellectual recognition comes from their academic peers rather than their employing institutions. They are part of wider national and international peer networks distinct from their employing institutions and may have academic colleagues across continents as well as nearer home. The combination of the homogeneity of higher education and academics' own networks make it possible for them to develop local identities and survival strategies based on global alliances. The very fact of this globalisation makes it possible for us to write a *Kit* that is relevant to being an academic in many different countries, despite important local variations.
6. In order to thrive in a tough environment academics need a range of skills. Very often acquiring them is left to chance, made deliberately difficult or the subject of managerialist ideology. In this *Kit* our aim is to talk straight. We want to speak clearly about what some people just 'know', but others struggle to find out. Academia is a game with unwritten and written rules. We aim to write down the unwritten rules in order to help level an uneven playing field. The slope of the playing field favours 'developed' countries and, within these, more experienced academics in more prestigious institutions. Unsurprisingly, women and some ethnic groups often suffer marginalisation.

7. Most of the skills that academics need are common across social sciences and humanities. This reflects the standardisation of working practices that has accompanied the increasing managerialisation of universities, but also the growing (and welcome) tendency to work across old disciplinary divides. The *Academic's Support Kit* is meant for social scientists, those in the humanities and those in more applied or vocational fields such as education, health sciences, accounting, business and management.
8. We are all too aware that most academics have a constant feeling of either drowning in work or running ahead of a fire or both. Indeed, we often share these feelings. Nevertheless, we think that there *are* ways of being an academic that are potentially less stressful and more personally rewarding. Academics need to find ways of playing the game in ethical and professional ways and winning. We do not advise you to accept unreasonable demands supinely. Instead, we are looking for strategies that help people retain their integrity, the ability to produce knowledge and teach well.
9. University management teams are often concerned to avoid risk. This may lead to them taking over the whole notion of 'ethical behaviour' in teaching and research and subjecting it to their own rules, which are more to do with their worries than good professional academic practice. In writing these books, we have tried to emphasise that there are richer ethical and professional ways of being in the academic world: ways of being a public intellectual, accepting your responsibilities and applying those with colleagues, students and the wider community.

And finally …

We like the way that Colin Bundy, Principal of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and previously Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, so pithily describes the differences and similarities between universities in such very different parts of the world. Interviewed for the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (27 January 2004) by John Crace, he explains:

> The difference is one of nuance. In South Africa, universities had become too much of an ivory tower and needed a reintroduction to the pressures

> of the real world. In the UK, we have perhaps gone too far down the line of seeing universities as pit-stops for national economies. It's partly a response to thirty years of underfunding: universities have had to adopt the neo-utilitarian line of asserting their usefulness to justify more money. But we run the risk of losing sight of some of our other important functions. We should not just be a mirror to society, but a critical lens: we have a far more important role to play in democracy and the body politic than merely turning out graduates for the job market.

Our hope is that the *Academic's Support Kit* will help its readers develop the kind of approach exemplified by Bundy – playing in the real world but always in a principled manner.

Books in the *Academic's Support Kit*

The *Kit* comprises six books. There is no strict order in which they should be read, but this one is probably as good as any – except that you might read *Building your Academic Career* both first and last.

Building your Academic Career encourages you to take a proactive approach to getting what you want out of academic work whilst being a good colleague. We discuss the advantages and disadvantages of such a career, the routes in and the various elements that shape current academic working lives. In the second half of the book we deal in considerable detail with how to write a really good CV (résumé) and how best to approach securing an academic job or promotion.

Getting Started on Research is for people in the earlier stages of development as a researcher. In contrast to the many books available on techniques of data collection and analysis, this volume deals with the many other practical considerations around actually doing research – such as good ways to frame research questions, how to plan research projects effectively and how to undertake the various necessary tasks.

Writing for Publication deals with a number of generic issues around academic writing (including intellectual property rights) and then considers writing refereed journal articles, books and book chapters in detail as well as other, less common, forms of publication for academics. The aim is to demystify the process and to help you to become a confident, competent, successful and published writer.

Teaching and Supervision looks at issues you may face both in teaching undergraduates and in the supervision of graduate research students. This book is not a pedagogical instruction manual – there are plenty of those around, good and bad. Rather, the focus is on presenting explanations and possible strategies designed to make your teaching and supervision work less burdensome, more rewarding (for you and your students) and manageable.

Winning and Managing Research Funding explains how generic university research funding mechanisms work so that you will be better equipped to navigate your way through the financial maze associated with various funding sources. The pressure to win funding to do research is felt by nearly all academics worldwide. This book details strategies that you might adopt to get your research projects funded. It also explains how to manage your research projects once they are funded.

Building Networks addresses perhaps the most slippery of topics, but also one of the most fundamental. Despite the frequent isolation of academic work, it is done in the context of complex, multi-layered global, national, regional and local teaching or research networks. Having good networks is key to achieving what you want in academia. This book describes the kinds of networks that you might build across a range of settings, talks about the pros and cons and gives practical guidance on networking activities.

1 Who should Use this Book and How?

The purpose of this book is to help you know enough about the research process to get you going and to establish a research career. If this is the first book in the *Academic's Support Kit* that you are reading, then you may find it useful to read 'Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*' before you read any further.

This book will be especially useful for you if you are in any of the following categories. Someone who:

- Is a research student of some sort.
- Has had an academic job for a while but who has not yet managed to get going on research.
- Is in their first academic job (with or without a research degree).
- Has made a career change and has recently become an academic.
- Is a casual (sessionally or hourly paid) teacher in a university who would like to develop an academic career in the fuller sense.
- Has already done some research but who is not entirely confident that they have got the hang of things yet.
- Is a more experienced academic who is mentoring someone in one or more of these categories.

This book is not meant for contract researchers, who will, inevitably, be working to someone else's agenda, though they may also be wanting to do their own work and would find the book useful for that purpose.

You may:

- Want to develop a successful academic career as a researcher or a teacher-researcher.
- Feel and/or actually be under tremendous institutional pressures to develop a research profile.
- Be someone who is genuinely inquisitive, self-driven, and who really wants to do research for its own sake.

Whatever, you are likely to be ready to go but may not be confident about how to set about it. Many good academics are compulsive over-achievers who nonetheless feel surprisingly insecure and ambivalent about their own achievements. Anxiety about research is therefore an extremely common phenomenon. We have lost count of the number of highly successful academics who constantly feel as if someone is going to 'find them out' for being 'inadequate'. This book should help you to acquire some good basic knowledge and to cope better with these common feelings of inadequacy.

In many disciplines it is common for people to become academics as a second career after time spent working in a profession of one kind or another. In others, it is more likely that you will have progressed directly, or with a very short break, from undergraduate studies to a postgraduate degree and then an academic job. Whatever your background, you may be surprised to find that you already have many of the skills and personal attributes that you need to become a successful researcher. If you have become an academic after a period as a professional, many of the skills and competences that you have had to develop and deploy in your everyday working life will be incredibly important and useful. If you are a continuing student, with no professional work experience, you will have recent and relevant study/research skills.

Some of the relevant skills for successful research that you might already have acquired in whole or in part are:

- Curiosity and an enquiring mind.
- The ability to read, digest, summarise and synthesise complex material.
- The capacity to work with others to achieve your goals.
- The competence to grapple with complex technical issues and techniques.
- Enthusiasm for seeking out new challenges without feeling (too) intimidated.
- The ability to organise yourself and manage your own work.
- Good problem-solving, observational and communication skills.

In any case, successfully developing your research will require some strong personal motivational forces. These can include:

- Working on something that can sustain your interest over a long period.

- Doing research on something about which you feel passionately.
- Feeling that your research work can really make a difference in whatever way is important to you.

If you can't identify any of these forces, or any like them, then think again about what you want to research or indeed whether you *really* want to do research. For many academics, research is *the* thing that really makes their job worthwhile. Conversely, doing research that you do not enjoy can make you extremely miserable.

Finally, we'd like to introduce you to some people who are in the kind of position we think would lead them to find this book useful.

Sasha's first career was as a senior nurse and she had been very successful in her work. She had enjoyed her part-time masters degree, for which she had received a distinction. Consequently, when she was approached to apply for a post in health sciences at the university where she had done her masters, she leapt at the chance to become an academic. Soon after her appointment, the government audited research activity and she was not deemed to be acceptably research-active. At that point, this was not a particular problem as she was such a new academic. Over the next few years she found that she had little time and less support to become research-active. In her department there was a clear line drawn between the higher-status researchers and the lower-status vocational teachers. Although she kept trying to do research, she gradually gave up hope that she would ever be able to achieve the standard required. As you can imagine, by this time her confidence was shattered.

John had worked successfully as a lawyer for a number of years before his wife died, leaving him with sole care of his young children. He took on a teaching post at a local university because it enabled him to combine working with his childcare commitments. He joined a department with quite strict divisions between those who taught and those who did research. The then head of department told him that he should concentrate on teaching and 'not bother his head with

research'. He did as instructed and, for ten years, was an exemplary teacher. The policy of the university then changed and John came under increasing implied and overt pressure to become research-active. However, he had so completely excluded himself and been excluded from the research culture that he simply didn't know where to begin. His sense of personal well-being and happiness at work were severely disrupted.

Mukesh had been a teacher of French in a university for a few years when the head of department gave him a project and forcefully suggested that he should do a PhD in the area. At the same time, he advised Mukesh never to do research in anything you were not interested in because you would never finish it. Mukesh did indeed complete his PhD, but the exercise left him with little passion for or real skill in research. This, combined with the arrival of two children in swift succession, meant that he failed to pursue a research career after completing his PhD. As the higher education climate changed, Mukesh found himself under increasing pressure to commence research again, but found it psychologically difficult because of his previous experience.

2 Getting Going: Developing Research Ideas

In this chapter we discuss the question of what academic research is and how to begin to establish your own identity as a researcher. In particular, we look at the thorny question of what you can research and how you can choose, formulate and move on from your research questions.

What do you mean, 'research'?

All kinds of people do 'research', either in their private lives or as part of their work. Journalists, police officers, teachers, travellers and tour guides all need to find things out. For instance, the tourist or the tour guide may want to find out about a local church. They might ask local people, the priest, or consult history books, travel guides, parish records, the internet or simply go and look around the church itself. What they probably want is some interesting factual information to be entertained by or to entertain with. This is all research in the general sense, but it is not academic research.

An academic researching the same church would have very different objectives, depending on their own disciplinary perspectives. For example, an ecclesiastical historian might be interested in the role of this particular church in the history of Catholicism in the region, or its role in sustaining religious beliefs and observances in a local area. A sociologist might be interested in the social functions of the church, or its role and power in local culture and everyday life. An economist might be interested in the system of local tithes that sustain church finances and in how it impacts on the local economy. An education academic might want to explore the role of the church in local schooling and the curriculum and churches as pedagogic agents. An English scholar might be interested in the ways in which local churches, congregants and

priests feature in the literature of the area, while an art historian might want to study the artworks in the church or the role of Church patronage of artists in developing particular genres or tastes. What all these academic researchers are seeking is much more than the factual information sought by the tourist or the tour guide. The academics want some deeper understanding or knowledge of social, economic, political, cultural or aesthetic life. Their interests are broad and deep and tackle fundamental questions.

So the type of research that we're talking about is done in order to gain deeper understandings or knowledge, rather than just to acquire information or facts, unlike Charles in the following vignette.

> Charles was a non-research-active teacher at a university. He had to go and see his Director of Research for an interview. She asked him for an explanation as to why he wasn't doing research. He protested that he was doing research. He explained that he ran a business consultancy business in his 'spare' time and that this frequently involved him making quite complex research investigations in order to solve his clients' individual business problems. The Director of Research explained, patiently but through gritted teeth, that such research was not academic research because it only provided individual answers rather than more comprehensive explanations.

In order to get to grips with what research in your own academic field means, you should aim to participate as much as possible in the research culture of your department, university or wider academic community. Read your colleagues' work, go to research seminars in your department and others, go and talk to people whom you know to be active researchers and read widely. In this way, you will begin to get a feel not only for what is going on, but also for what is interesting in your area and for what it means to be a researcher.

What *can* I research then?

Almost any social, political, cultural, economic or aesthetic phenomenon, issue or problem can be the subject of academic research

in the wider social sciences and humanities. The key thing is not what it's about, but the way that you approach the issue. If you are looking for a subject for your research the best thing to do is to develop a real sense of curiosity about how the world around you works or let yourself be open to ideas, objects, experiences or events (current or historical).

Sometimes you might read something or hear something that you disagree with so profoundly that you decide to research the area yourself. At other times, you might hear or read something that sparks your interest and catches your imagination. One of Rebecca's colleagues recently railed to her about students who came to see him asking, 'What should we research?' He had been in the supermarket that morning and noticed that a cleaning product called 'Jif' had been renamed 'Cif' as part of a global rebranding exercise. He argued that something as simple as this brand name change could be used as the starting point of research on all aspects of globalisation, including global capitalism, branding and marketing.

Some people will have an area of technical or professional expertise that they can build on to develop their research interests. But your initial interest in something is likely to result in a research project that is sustained by your own curiosity and passion for it. Once you have identified a broad area, think about how you can use your technical or disciplinary knowledge to focus on this subject to develop real understandings.

An important part of the process of developing your research topics and ideas is your reading of the available literature. Starting to dip into it at this stage should provoke your interest and curiosity, help you formulate your ideas further and start to engage you in argument in your area.

Vivienne was registered for a PhD in history at an Ivy League university in the USA. Her original proposal was to do with the historical development of ethnic identities in the American south. Her reading in her first year showed her that she was much more interested in the literatures of women's history and the history of slavery than in that of the history of the south. Sparked by her interest in these topics, she changed her research proposal completely and did her thesis on the gendered history of slavery.

It sounds straightforward: find something in your everyday world that catches your interest and then ask big and deep questions about it. However, in our experience the single most difficult task for any new researcher is to move from a general curiosity or even a specific interest in something to being able to frame it as a subject for academic research.

The best question to ask yourself to ensure that you have made this shift is 'If I do this investigation and somebody then asks me, "So what?" will I be able to give a credible answer?' That is, will the answers you reach be of interest beyond the information you have collected itself and to anyone other than yourself? You must be able to frame your subject in such a way that you move from description to explaining what the data you have found means. In other words, you must be able to *theorise* your subject.

Roger started his research on a particular UK factory at the University of Ambridge. His supervisor, an economic historian, had persuaded him to collect reams of facts and figures about output, finances and markets, etc. Roger did not enjoy this research and had little passion for how the subject was developing. He then moved to another university, where a new supervisor persuaded him to use theories of how social and cultural capital are formed to examine the socio-economic and cultural impacts on community formation of the development of the particular factory. Suddenly, the minutiae of the money value extracted from the business by the owners and how it was spent extravagantly in fancy London stores became a way of explaining how social classes sought to distinguish themselves and ensure their social positions.

How do I define what I'm going to research?

We can think about people's research as nested, as shown in Figure 1. There are three principal levels:

- *Personal intellectual projects*. These are the overarching themes and areas that you really want to know about and will spend years,

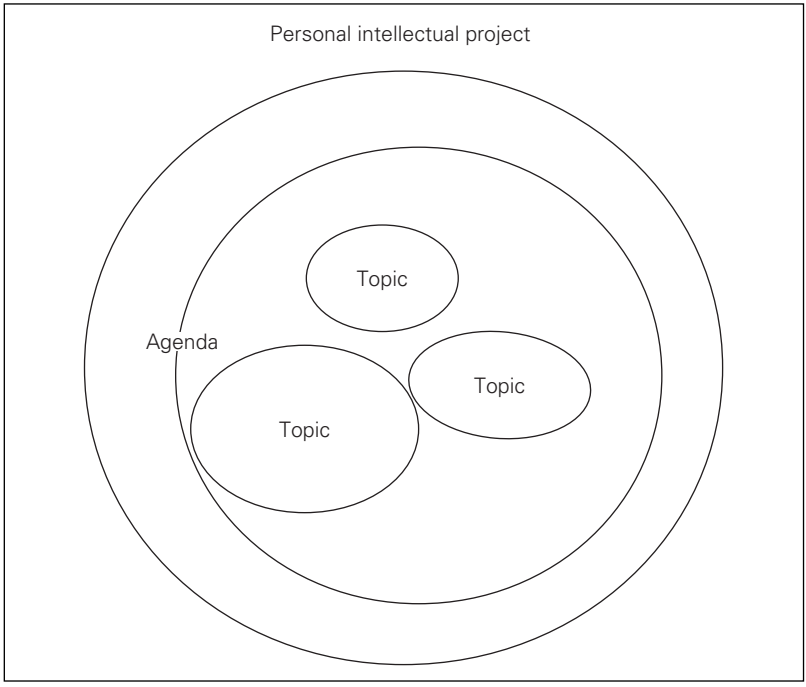


FIGURE 1 Nesting your research

possibly your whole career, developing. For instance, Sigmund Freud was interested in the workings of the subconscious and the influence of early experience on later emotional and psychological development. Of course, few academics will ever have the status and long-term impact of Freud. Nonetheless, having their own personal intellectual project will substantially enhance their work.

- *Research agendas*. These encapsulate clusters of research topics that hang together in the here and now. One of Freud's agendas was to understand the particular dynamics that contribute to the formation of adult sexuality.
- *Research topics*. These are specific, individual foci that should fit within your broader research agenda and personal intellectual project. Within his agenda on the formation of sexuality, Freud investigated such topics as hysteria, melancholia and dreams through his clinical practice. Individual research projects are formulated to investigate one or more specific research topics.

You can't do good research unless and until you identify your research topic. People with an established research identity tend also to have personal intellectual projects and research agendas and choose research topics within them. The level of abstraction and theorisation tends to increase as you move from individual topics towards your personal intellectual project. This is to be expected as you begin to get a more comprehensive grasp of the whole area. You can expect an iterative relationship between these three levels as work at each impacts on your thinking, the research you do and the direction you want to go in next.

Researchers tend to start with a topic and the whole enterprise subsequently grows into an agenda and a personal intellectual project. If you start in this way, you will need to have some kind of feel for or notion of what the bigger picture is and how your personal intellectual project might eventually develop. This is part of ensuring that the work you start on has a long shelf life and is capable of sustaining not only your interest but the interest of others. It needs to be capable of a greater level of theorisation and abstraction than you may start with. Ideally, it will also be capable of becoming a field which is demonstrably 'yours' or in which you are a major researcher.

Miguel became fascinated with the governance structures of his own university and started to investigate them systematically. After discussing this with his mentor, he realised that there was a wider research agenda here: what his university did reflected the state of higher education in the country generally. A whole stream of related topics concerning higher education suggested themselves. This research agenda soon grew into a personal intellectual project to investigate notions of governance in the not-for-profit sector inhabited by universities.

On a career note, if you really want to make a name for yourself, try to identify topics, agendas and personal intellectual projects that you can make very much your own territory. Conversely, never believe that the fact that there is no research in a particular area is sufficient justification for you to do it.

Madhur, a well established researcher with an international reputation, was told by a group of feminist doctoral students that they felt exposed because their research topics were risky, endangering their chances of getting academic jobs in the future. They asked Madhur how she felt about the fact that her research was in a very contentious area. Madhur said that when she had started her work in this area, just after her PhD, she had a strong sense that it would be politically important and valuable as a contribution to theory. The fact that she was one of only very few people who were doing research in her area meant that her first book was one of the first two or three such books in the world. Strategies that felt risky could also therefore bring high rewards. She might have ended up being unable to get a job, but she was confident when she started that what she was beginning to work on was worthwhile. On the other hand, working a well-trodden field carried different consequences. Had she continued with her doctoral research area, the work might have been just as good, but she would have been one of many people doing good stuff in her field and therefore may have had a lower profile.

There are a number of issues to bear in mind here.

- First, whilst being innovative and imaginative are all well and good, it doesn't excuse you from the necessity of making sure that what you are doing passes the 'so what?' test and can make a sustained and valuable contribution.
- Second, breaking new ground can appear and feel risky, even foolhardy, but if you have done your homework in defining your research topic, this is not necessarily the case.
- Third, keeping to the mainstream and going over fields that have already been well ploughed may appear less risky, but in fact carry the danger of never getting the recognition you may deserve as you struggle to compete with many others in the same area.

What should I read?

There is a whole range of different sorts of literature that you will need to read as a researcher. We define these as follows:

- *Research literature*. This is the body of academic work produced by researchers working within or affiliated to academic institutions. Such work will normally be published in academic, refereed journals and books published by recognised academic publishers. If you look at *Writing for Publication* you will find a more detailed description of what constitutes 'academic literature'. In brief, the crucial test is whether the publication has been refereed by other academics – this is called 'peer review'.
- *The 'grey' literature*. This term is often used to describe research reports published by and/or for policy-oriented organisations such as governments, supranational organisations such as the World Bank or the OECD, non-governmental organisations, trade unions and so on.
- *Professional literature*. Professional bodies worldwide usually produce publications, above and beyond their newsletters, which aim to facilitate detailed discussion of professional practice between practitioners. Sometimes academics use these journals to disseminate research findings to practitioners. You should bear in mind that such articles will be written in a style different from their more usual academic publications and will usually refer to the latter.
- *Other publications*. These include newspapers, newsletters of organisations, popular books and magazines, and so on.

A problem that researchers frequently encounter is how to identify the research literatures relevant to their project and which to exclude. There are two sorts of difficulties people find.

First, they think they have to read absolutely everything that might possibly have a bearing on their research. This is because they do not yet have a strong sense of belonging to a particular community of scholars with whom they are, in their thinking at least, in conversation. Whilst reading widely is good, there does come a point at which you have to put some boundaries in place and get on with your own work rather than endlessly seek to keep up with the plethora of other people's work. Often people have a primary affiliation to a particular field of study and most of their reading will be in that discipline or in a particular inter-disciplinary space. By and large, having such identifications will eventually help you put some boundaries around the literature you decide to use. If you are a novice researcher, it's a good idea to take advice from your doctoral supervisor or a research mentor on where to start and stop reading.

Second, people think that there is 'nothing to read' in their field because they are looking too specifically. As Keiko's story demonstrates, there will always be something relevant, though it may not be on your specific topic.

> Keiko was an architect who had taught the technical aspects of building design for many years. She started her PhD looking at the role of architecture in the construction of 'disability' and particularly the impact of building design on people with short-term memory loss. She went to her supervisor and complained that there was no literature relevant to her interests because no-one had ever written anything about such issues. Her supervisor despatched her to the library to read the extensive sociological and cultural studies literature on disability. Engaging with this sophisticated literature assisted her in developing the theoretical and conceptual basis of her thesis.

You shouldn't cling desperately to your own narrow subject area. Explore other literatures and take some risks in spreading your net wider. This will usually enrich your study conceptually. What you are looking for are areas of literature that help you to think deeply and imaginatively about your own topic.

Eventually you will be able to locate yourself and your personal intellectual project in a particular area of literature and this will become what people call your 'epistemic community' (more on epistemology later). Once you know what this space is, you should know:

- Who the key thinkers are currently and have been over time.
- What the central debates in the area are, both historically and contemporaneously.
- The difference between various research methodologies.
- How to distinguish between key innovative thinkers and those who have made use of and developed their work in more specific ways. This will allow you to be more discerning in your reading.
- Who is at the cutting edge in your areas, and you should be able to distinguish between short-term fads and more lasting influences.

In other words, you need to know your way around your intellectual home and be able to rearrange the furniture in ways that please you.

Here are some good ways to start identifying and locating your literatures:

- Try an electronic key-word search of on-line databases. When you do this you need to be thoughtful and selective about your words.
- When you get your search results, work out what it is immediately possible to exclude. You will be able to decide this on the basis of your disciplinary affinities and your reading of the abstracts.
- Take note of which authors and journals come up frequently in the search results.
- Follow up on authors and texts that appear with regularity in the bibliographies, seem important, particularly interesting or contentious. This is called 'chaining' and will help you to map the field.
- Talk to other people in similar and related fields and find out which authors they find particularly useful.
- Go to the library (yes, actually go) and browse along the shelves next to the books you know you are interested in. Stephen Kemmis, a well known Australian academic, calls this 'grazing in the groves of academe'.
- Go to the current issues of journals in your disciplinary area. You can sign up to such electronic journal alerts as SARA and EMERALD, which belong to the big publishing houses and will automatically notify you by email of the contents pages of the latest issues of your selected journals.

Having done all this, you will clearly need to be highly selective in your eventual choices and develop the capacity to synthesise the literature you use. One useful way to think about the sorts of things you do as you immerse yourself in the research literature comes from a well known taxonomy developed by Bloom, as illustrated in Table 1. In our experience, many novice researchers stop at stage two from Bloom's taxonomy: understanding.

Another possible approach to sorting out the literature is to ask yourself (and make notes on) the following questions as you read.

- Who is talking?
- What standpoints or personal histories are they bringing with them?
- Whom are they talking for and to?
- Who benefits (i.e. in whose interests do they speak)?
- What is the impact of what they say?

TABLE 1 Bloom's taxonomy of reading

Knowledge	Know who the characters are and recognise their voices
Understanding	Comprehend what people are saying
Analysis	Think critically about what they are saying
Evaluation	Apply your judgement about the merit or otherwise of what is being said
Synthesis	Pull together those parts of the literature useful for your own work (that is, be very selective) and map this literature in ways that will help you think through your own work

Bertram, B.S., Messia, B.B. and Krathwohl, D.R. (1964) *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* (two vols: 'The Affective Domain' and 'The Cognitive Domain'), New York: David McKay.

How big should a project be?

In our experience, most people who want to get started on research try to bite off more than they can chew in picking a research topic. They don't yet know what their personal intellectual project will become, as this is something that usually grows with time. However, they may have a research agenda, which they confuse with an immediately researchable topic. Supervisors and mentors, therefore, frequently spend a good deal of time and effort in persuading and helping people to define their topics more closely and focus on something achievable in a known and limited time span. Don't be worried or concerned if your resulting research topic appears too narrow. If you have worked things through and thought about the bigger picture, you should have a reasonable degree of confidence about how your topic fits into wider contexts, as Thabo's experience shows.

Thabo arrived to meet his prospective PhD supervisor wanting to do 'something about post-colonialism and literature'. After discussion, he developed a research proposal that was near enough to being do-able for him to be accepted on to the PhD programme, but he still needed to define more closely precisely what it was that he would do. In the event, his topic was about how Southern African post-colonial writers had, so far, responded to the AIDS pandemic.

People often want to know how big their project should be. This is a bit like asking 'How long is a piece of string?' and you won't actually know the precise answer straight away. However, in certain situations, you will be given a specific external constraint. For example a doctoral student will have a maximum and minimum period of time during which she will be expected to produce a thesis with a prescribed maximum word length. Apart from such situations, you will generally be much freer to define the parameters of your project yourself or sometimes in conjunction with collaborators or a mentor.

The question then becomes 'How do I decide how big to make this project?' Think very carefully about the practical constraints under which you have to work. They include time, money, skills and access to sources of data and help and advice. For instance, it is no good deciding that you want to do research on a literary manuscript held in a private collection in another country if you have a heavy teaching load, no funds for travel and cannot be sure that the owners of the manuscript will allow you access to it. If you are a totally novice researcher and are unsure about whether you will like, or be any good at, research you may want to deliberately pick a very small and contained first project. Getting something successful under your belt can be a major confidence booster. Some people get this by doing a dissertation on a masters degree course, but not all.

Where are the pitfalls?

Mind the gap. When you think about your research topic or agenda, it is tempting to start off by looking for 'gaps' in the research literature. This is a real chimera. It makes us think of the image of a British dry-stone wall; these are built from unevenly sized rocks, carefully fitted together without mortar and so riddled with tiny gaps. These walls last for many years but need maintenance, and parts have to be rebuilt from time to time. In our image the wall is the metaphorical body of research and researchers are anxiously examining it in microscopic detail to find the tiny gaps so that they can quickly plug them. It does not occur to them that the holes may have been left to allow for drainage, or because it simply isn't worth filling them in. And, of course, at the same time as they are looking for holes to plug there may be another bit of the wall crying out for attention. Rather than look for holes and gaps in existing knowledge, you need to think about what's really engaging your interest

and what's really worth doing. Doing it may involve rebuilding bits of the wall, or even laying the foundations of a new one.

Avoid the totally parochial and truly trivial. It may sound contradictory for us to say, at this point, that you should avoid doing parochial research. After all, we have been pressing you to look to the world around you for your research ideas. What we mean, here, is that you need to avoid doing research that is of interest only to you and your immediate colleagues and which is not capable of broader theorisation and conceptualisation. Every year academia presents to itself awards for improbable research. Some of it is quite valuable: other stuff just shouldn't have been done. We think it best to avoid this type of publicity for your research. Here are details of the 2002 winners.

The 2002 IgNobel Prize Winners

Biology

Norma E. Bubier, Charles G.M. Paxton, Phil Bowers, and D. Charles Deeming of the United Kingdom, for their report 'Courtship Behaviour of Ostriches towards Humans under Farming Conditions in Britain.' [REFERENCE: 'Courtship Behaviour of Ostriches (Struthio camelus) Towards Humans Under Farming Conditions in Britain,' Norma E. Bubier, Charles G.M. Paxton, P. Bowers, D.C. Deeming, *British Poultry Science*, vol. 39, no. 4, September 1998, pp. 477–481.]

Physics

Arnd Leike of the University of Munich, for demonstrating that beer froth obeys the mathematical Law of Exponential Decay. [REFERENCE: 'Demonstration of the Exponential Decay Law Using Beer Froth,' Arnd Leike, *European Journal of Physics*, vol. 23, January 2002, pp. 21–26.]

Interdisciplinary research

Karl Kruszelnicki of the University of Sydney, for performing a comprehensive survey of human belly button lint – who gets it, when, what color, and how much.

Chemistry

Theodore Gray of Wolfram Research, in Champaign, Illinois, for gathering many elements of the periodic table, and assembling them into the form of a four-legged periodic table table.

Mathematics

K.P. Sreekumar and the late G. Nirmalan of Kerala Agricultural University, India, for their analytical report 'Estimation of the Total Surface Area in Indian Elephants.' [Reference: 'Estimation of the Total Surface Area in Indian Elephants (Elephas maximus indicus),' K.P. Sreekumar and G. Nirmalan, *Veterinary Research Communications*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1990, pp. 5–17.]

Literature

Vicki L. Silvers of the University of Nevada-Reno and David S. Kreiner of Central Missouri State University, for their colorful report 'The Effects of Pre-existing Inappropriate Highlighting on Reading Comprehension.' [Published in: *Reading Research and Instruction*, vol. 36, no. 3, 1997, pp. 217–23.]

Peace

Keita Sato, President of Takara Co., Dr Matsumi Suzuki, President of Japan Acoustic Lab, and Dr Norio Kogure, Executive Director, Kogure Veterinary Hospital, for promoting peace and harmony between the species by inventing Bow-lingual, a computer-based automatic dog-to-human language translation device.

Hygiene

Eduardo Segura, of Lavakan de Aste, in Tarragona, Spain, for inventing a washing machine for cats and dogs.

Economics

The executives, corporate directors, and auditors of Enron, Lernaut & Hauspie [Belgium], Adelphia, Bank of Commerce and Credit International [Pakistan], Cendant, CMS Energy, Duke Energy, Dynegy, Gazprom [Russia], Global Crossing, HIH Insurance [Australia], Informix, Kmart, Maxwell Communications [UK], McKessonHBOC, Merrill Lynch, Merck, Peregrine Systems, Qwest Communications, Reliant Resources, Rent-Way, Rite Aid, Sunbeam, Tyco, Waste Management, WorldCom, Xerox, and Arthur Andersen, for adapting the mathematical concept of imaginary numbers for use in the business world. [NOTE: all companies are US-based unless otherwise noted.]

Medicine

Chris McManus of University College London, for his excruciatingly balanced report, 'Scrotal Asymmetry in Man and in Ancient Sculpture.' [PUBLISHED IN: *Nature*, vol. 259, February 5, 1976, p. 426.]

Source: http://www.improb.com/ig/ig-top.html

A little bit of exercise ...

We think that at this point in the book it is probably a good time for you to do some retail therapy. Most serious academics like good stationery. Go to a good stationery store and buy yourself one or two large-format hardback notebooks. These may have lined, squared or plain paper, as you prefer, but must be of good quality. We will return to the question of these notebooks later. You will also need some nice pens that you enjoy using. (We like to have fibre-tip pens in as many different hues as possible as this suits our note-taking styles.) Once you have your notebooks, you might like to write yourself some notes in response to the following queries:

- What are my motivations for doing research at all? Are they positive and will they sustain me in the enterprise?

- Where do my research ideas come from? Are they things that I genuinely find fascinating and absorbing and that will sustain me through all the hard work? Are they subjects that will get me out of bed in the morning (or even in the middle of the night if I wake up with a good idea)?
- Is my proposed research idea capable of passing the 'So what?' test? Can it lead to theorisation? Is it part of a big picture? Can I begin to see where agendas and personal intellectual projects will develop?
- Is my topic sufficiently focused, given all the constraints under which I must work?
- Above all, is this a topic that I can really get passionate and enthusiastic about?

If you can do this exercise and write more or less positive answers, then you are taking the first steps towards good reflexive practice as an academic researcher. Indeed, these sorts of notes can eventually end up as the starting point of formal research proposals, which we discuss in detail below.

Framing research questions

Having successfully identified your research topic, the next step is to develop a set of specific questions that your research project will set out to answer. The one golden rule is that you must have at least one research question and possibly more.

But why do I have to have research questions?

In the previous section we talked about finding and defining your research topic. This will have enabled you to understand and explain what you are interested in and why it's worth looking at. Going a step further, and defining one or more research questions within that topic, enables you to say exactly what you are looking for as well as why you are looking at it. Having a question focuses our analysis and forces us to have an argument that runs through our work. This is important because it protects us from the temptation of indulging in pure description without trying to achieve the deeper understanding reached by theorising what we are doing. Figure 2 shows the part that research questions can play in a virtuous cycle of knowledge creation.

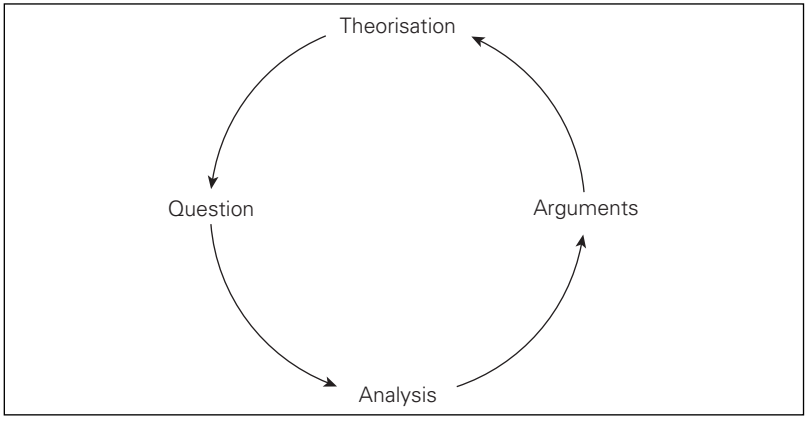


FIGURE 2 The circuit of question, theory and argument production

Other reasons why we start with research questions are that developing them makes us delimit what we are going to do and become very focused in our research. This may sound pedantic, but a research project that is never finished or that spreads out uncontrollably in every direction is really of no use to anybody.

It is also kinder to readers, users and/or beneficiaries of your research to start with specific questions. That way they can see what you have attempted to do and how far you have got in achieving it.

Finally, having clearly set out questions avoids the perils of the pugilistic, or even friendly or well intentioned, questioner at conferences or vivas who takes great delight in asking why you haven't looked at *x* or whatever their particular hobby horse is. If you have well worked out questions, you will always be able to respond to such questioners by saying, 'My questions were [such and such], and what you suggest is/may be extremely interesting but was not the focus of this project.' In summary, one of the purposes that research questions serve is an authoritative defining statement about what the research focus actually is.

But don't you have to have hypotheses?

Some people, especially in the social sciences and some aspects of the humanities, may be encouraged to frame their research questions as formal 'hypotheses'. Even if you've never heard of the idea of a hypothesis in research, you should read this section because it will help you to understand what follows.

The notion of a 'hypothesis' comes from the natural sciences. The classical scientific method of research, as described by Karl Popper in his book *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* published in 1934, commences with the development of hypotheses. A hypothesis is a formal statement, usually grounded in observation – for example 'living creatures can fly only if they have feathers'. Using the scientific method, the objective is to test such hypotheses. By their nature, they cannot be proven because there always might be other effects that explain a phenomenon. But whilst hypotheses cannot ever be proven with absolute certainty, they can be disproved. For instance, to use the example above, the scientist might discover flying insects (which of course don't have feathers). This process of disproving hypotheses is known as 'falsification'. All hypotheses must be falsifiable; that is, capable of being tested. Just one example that disproves a hypothesis destroys it. This type of research is known 'deductive' and in the social sciences the tag most often attached to it is 'positivist'.

Early social scientists sought to present sociology and psychology as 'scientific' in the same sense as physics or chemistry. This was partly because of the higher status given to knowledge produced as part of a 'scientific' process, which led to what one might term 'physics envy'. The equivalent in literary studies was the notion that every text (especially classical ones) has a fixed meaning, and the task of the researcher was to find out what the meaning 'really' was. In legal studies, the equivalent is what's known as 'black-letter law': the detailed study of what legislation says rather than looking at law as a social, economic or political phenomenon. There are many other such examples in all branches of humanities and social sciences.

In all these areas, these approaches are underpinned by a belief that the 'truth is out there' and there is an objective answer that can be discovered by research. Yet, even in the natural sciences, this classical approach to knowledge building is being questioned and problematised. Despite this, it can sometimes feel uncomfortable for new researchers to accept and give voice to the idea that knowledge can only ever be partial and is always subjective.

Examples of (loosely worded) hypotheses in social sciences might be:

- Stock markets efficiently process information from company annual reports such that the resulting stock prices accurately reflect the real market value of the companies.

- Boys achieve higher marks in school tests when they are taught to read by male teachers.
- Capital punishment reduces the murder rate.

It is likely that a number of our readers will work within this tradition and find it to be a productive approach. We think that there are a number of problems with such positivist approaches.

- The process isn't as objective as you may think at first. The very selection and formulation of hypotheses imply a subjective view of the world. Few researchers would formulate a hypothesis and then spend a lot of time and effort testing it if they did not have a good subjective hunch that the answer would be interesting.
- People don't usually formulate hypotheses that they expect to be easily falsifiable. Formulating a hypothesis implies that you think it is likely to be 'true' and creates that impression among others, including the people you are researching (if you tell them what your hypothesis is) in ways that may well affect the outcomes of the research.
- Starting from hypotheses tends to lead to answers to questions about 'what' but not about 'why' something is as it is.
- Because the investigation of hypotheses is reliant on the investigation of observable phenomena, we can only explore that which we can see. This creates problems when the phenomenon or process you want to investigate is not directly observable. If, for example, you formulated a hypothesis that women do the bulk of child care because they want to, you would not be able to observe the operation of gendered power or unconscious motivations that might explain why they express such a desire.
- Because hypotheses must be falsifiable (that is, you can test them), they will always be rather simplistic. Complex social processes are not the subject of simple hypotheses and cannot be captured in this way.

Despite these reservations, which you will find amply expressed elsewhere in the research literature, this type of positivist research is still carried out in certain areas of the social sciences and humanities. You may find that the dominant way of doing things in your disciplinary area or university department is positivist. Remember that, as long as you do your work well, you do have the option of breaking away from

such practices or of sticking with them. If you feel that such methods of investigation are the best for what you want to do, then be aware of the pitfalls and problems outlined above.

So what is a good research question?

We have already argued that you need research questions to frame and guide your research. So this section is really about what constitutes a good research question. It is, unfortunately, much easier to come up with poor or problematic questions than with good ones. The characteristics of good research questions are as follows.

- They don't invite true/false testing in the way that a hypothesis would.
- They don't have the answer contained or implied within them.
- They don't invite 'yes' or 'no' answers. Instead, the answers are likely to be complex and richly nuanced.
- They do facilitate a closely focused investigation, helping to keep the researcher on track. That is, they are not so broad that they allow the researcher to wander all over the place looking for answers.
- They are questions that are answerable through investigation and do not rely on belief or faith. For instance, 'Does God exist?' is not answerable other than through belief or faith. It is not, therefore, a research question, even for theologians (who may well do research into what drives religious belief, or the historical nature of particular holy texts).
- For relatively inexperienced or novice researchers, having a research question framed in such a way that it has a question mark at the end can be a wonderful way of ensuring that your question is really tightly formulated and focused.
- Research questions should be brief.
- Research questions should be able to be coherently grouped within a project, such that you have one or two principal questions with, perhaps, a *few* subsidiary sub-questions for each main one. Save surplus questions for future projects or you may find yourself trying to find out the answer to life, the universe and everything.
- Good research questions are the result of a rigorous process of developing and refining one's ideas.
- They have a demonstrable relationship with the existing literature in the area. This means that you will have had to begin to read the

literature more closely in order to develop a good feel for the shape of debates in your area and are reasonably confident that your answers will make some new contribution to knowledge.
- Good research questions lead to projects that are achievable within the time and other constraints under which you must work.
- Good research questions are amenable to constant revisiting and adjustment where necessary as the research progresses.
- In any research, you will have to be selective about what you look at. Good research questions will make transparent, to yourself and others, the basis of your selection.

In sum, good research questions are do-able and answerable. They focus the mind, the enquiry and the product. The consequence of not having good research questions to start with are evident in Douglas Adams's writing.

In the late Douglas Adams's excellent 'trilogy with four books' (*The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, Life, the Universe and Everything, The Restaurant at the End of the Universe and Goodbye* and *Thanks for all the Fish*) a central theme was that the world had been created as a giant experiment by mice in order to determine the answer to 'life, the universe and everything'. In the first volume the answer emerged as '42'. This prompted a mere Earthling, and part of the experiment, 'Dent, Arthur Dent', to ask what the question was. The whole of the next book was the search for the question, which turned out to be 'What do you get if you multiply six by nine?'

Apart from having written a very amusing comment on many aspects of life in late modernity, Douglas Adams illustrates beautifully the need to start with good, answerable questions. Because the question of 'life, the universe and everything' is unanswerable, the solution found doesn't make sense and turns out to be the answer to quite another question.

A very important reason for ensuring that you have good research questions to start with is that otherwise the whole process of research can become unmanageable. If you are trying to answer the riddle of

TABLE 2 Research questions and hypotheses

Hypotheses	Principal research questions	Subsidiary research questions
Stock markets efficiently process information from company annual reports such that the resulting stock prices accurately reflect the real market value of the companies.	How do stock markets process the information they receive from company annual reports? By what means, and to what extent, does such information processing impact on share prices?	What are the regulations, processes and structures that shape the way information is processed? Do stock markets actively promote the belief that share prices accurately reflect the real market value of the companies listed? If they do, by what means?
Boys achieve higher marks in school tests when they are taught to read by a male teacher.	Is there a relationship between boys' measured achievement in reading and the gender of their teacher? If so, how can it be explained?	How do boys in classes with similar demographic characteristics taught by women and men differ in scores on a standard reading test at the end of their first year of compulsory schooling? Is there a difference in the way boys construct their identities at this age when taught by men and by women? What are the implications for boys' school-based reading achievement?
Capital punishment reduces the murder rate.	Is there a demonstrable relationship, and if so what, between perceptions of punishment and murder rates?	What are the different motivations that murderers have or express? In cases of premeditated murder, do the murderers say that they actively considered the likely punishment and what effect, if any, did this have on their actions? Is there a perceptible difference between murder rates in comparable countries/states and how can we account for them?

'life, the universe and everything', you have no basis for deciding what to do or how to set about doing it. In the vignette below we see the panic that can set in if there is no good research question in place (or if the researcher doesn't focus on the research question).

Giacoma advised one of her students who had just started some fieldwork where they were observing children in a classroom. The student was beginning to panic because she was totally unable to make a note of all that happened in the class and was worried that this would compromise her research. Giacoma pointed out that you are not expected to make a note of every single thing that happens. A bird flying past a window will not appear in your field notes, for example, unless it causes some kind of major disruption relevant to your research. What you note is dependent on what your question is.

In Table 2, we have taken the examples of hypotheses we gave you earlier and recast the research questions in the same areas, so that you can see the significant differences between the two approaches.

How do I write my research questions then?

Before you frame your questions, you must have your topic clear in your mind. At this point, it is useful to write about what really engages your interest and why. Writing in this way often helps people to clarify their questions. This happened to Alexandre.

Alexandre was exploring the dualistic nature of the working lives of dentists working in small country practices, who have to be both dental professionals and business people who make a profit. He had been working for some time on this doctoral research but had never clearly articulated what his research questions were. As a practising dentist himself, working in a small practice, he had a very personal and intuitive sense of what the important research issues were. However, this was not sufficient to enable him to make sense of his

considerable data and shape it into a thesis likely to be awarded a doctorate. He was really struggling with writing the thesis and did not know which way to turn. A new supervisor asked him what his research questions were and he was unable to state them clearly, even though he was nearly at the end of his maximum registration period. After a stiff drink and much cursing (*sotto voce*), the new supervisor made Alexandre write a diary of his day at the office. Together they analysed the activities he had undertaken and used this as a means of explicating the key questions that had implicitly driven Alexandre's fieldwork. Once he had done this, Alexandre was able to formulate clear questions and to begin the real work of writing his thesis. His key question was 'How do small dental practices deal with the dual imperatives of making money from a business and simultaneously acting in a professional capacity for their clients?' An added benefit of this exercise was that his diary, the analysis of it, and the writing he had done on the questions, formed a strong, engaging and convincing introductory chapter for his thesis. Alexandre achieved his PhD with flying colours, but he would have saved himself much time and anxiety had he undertaken a similar exercise at the very beginning of his work.

In parallel with clarifying what exactly is engaging your interest, a good step is to visualise what you want to know about your topic and what you or others want to do with that knowledge or what impact you want it to have. You may want to do one or more of the following things:

- Satisfy your own intellectual curiosity.
- Make an intervention in or contribution to intellectual and theoretical debates.
- Influence policy makers.
- Raise others' consciousness around particular issues.
- Get your PhD in the shortest possible time.
- Get issues on to agendas.
- Meet publication targets that have been imposed on you.

You need to think about what you want the finished product to look like and do, as this will be largely determined by the nature of the

questions you ask. As Rebecca's old boss used to say, 'Never ask a question if you don't know what you are going to do with the answer.' That is, there is an important and synergistic link between questions and final products.

Once your questions begin to take some sort of shape in your head, it is time to return to your hardback notebook and your word processor and write an exercise that Jane Miller, a well known British academic, has called 'the autobiography of the question'. She suggests to students that they tell the story of how they became interested in the research question that they plan to address. Once they have written this story, they can move on from their own interest in the question to thinking about wider contexts and where their question sits in relation to the existing literature in the field.

This is something that we get all our students to do when they are starting a research project. The beauty of the exercise is that it forces you to do many of the things we have been urging on you up to now:

- It makes you think about where you are coming from on the topic and why it is interesting or important to you.
- It makes you think about the origins of the question.
- It encourages you to articulate the 'so what?'-ness of the question.
- But, most important, it forces you to have a question (or two).

A really good suggestion that we've heard is to write your research questions on a nice piece of coloured card and pin it above your work space so that it is clearly visible. This should have the advantages of directly and immediately reminding you what your question is and of encouraging you to keep it short enough to fit on the card.

3 The Research Process

If you've started to formulate research questions, you have gone a good way towards beginning a research project. The next stage is to write a plan of your intended work to act as a guide and to make sure that you think through the major issues before you begin. In this chapter we will guide you through the process of writing research plans, or proposals, stage by stage. At each stage, we detail what you need to think about.

What is a research proposal?

Once you know what you want do your research about and have formulated some research questions, you need to think about how you will actually carry out the research. Doing a research project always involves several different activities and sorts of thinking, some sequential, some running in parallel and some iterative.

Because research is a complex process, it's always a good idea to write yourself a good plan of where you are going and what you are going to do along the way. In this way, you will have a kind of route map to guide you as you travel the research path. However, this path is a little like the roads in *Alice through the Looking Glass*: it sometimes changes direction when you are not looking. So it's important to remember that you can't rely on the map completely. You must keep revisiting it and adjusting it to your changing needs and directions.

These route maps are usually called research proposals. There are some situations in which you may well be required to write a research proposal. For example:

- If you want a place on a research degree programme.
- If you want a bursary to do a research degree.
- In some universities it will form part of a progression exam on a research degree programme.

- If you are looking for funding for your research, however small, from your own university or some external funding body.
- In some cases, especially when the research is in collaboration with or investigating an external body, that body will need to see the proposal in order to decide whether or not to give you access and assistance to do your research.
- If you want your employer to give you time to do the research; for example, you may want a reduced teaching load or a sabbatical or paid time off from a non-university job to allow you to do the research.
- You may need to get formal approval from your university that your proposed research conforms to certain ethical guidelines. In order to gain this approval, you will need to present a proposal.

In any case, even if you are not required to write a research proposal, it's a really good idea to do one for your own benefit. Writing a research proposal will:

- Help you to be sure that you have a viable research project.
- Provide a clear 'route map' for the research.
- Enable you to identify any possible problems and issues with the proposed project.
- Assist you in choosing an appropriate supervisor or mentor who knows the area in which you are interested. (More on choosing mentors later.)
- Help your mentor or supervisor support you, as they will know what it is you are trying to do.
- Give a project a momentum of its own, almost a material form.
- Give you a reference point to monitor your progress as the project develops. This can give you a lot of confidence and a big boost to your morale.

Writing research proposals

What we will do now is take you through the generic stages and sections of a research proposal. Whatever your discipline or research area, you will need to give consideration to the matters we are about to describe. However, the language you use to address these may differ according to your disciplinary home, as will the relative weightings you give to the various aspects. Also, your proposal will need to be tailored

to the specific expectations of its various audiences, such as research funding bodies, PhD committees and so on. This is discussed further in *Winning and Managing Research Funding*. For your own purposes, your research proposal is likely to include a section on each of the following areas:

- Background and rationale: the 'so what?' -ness of the research topic.
- Research questions: what, precisely, are you trying to find out?
- Available literature: the public story so far.
- Theoretical frameworks: the e-word and the o-word.
- Methods: your investigative and analytical techniques.
- Ethical considerations: will your research do harm?
- Time scales: establishing phases and deadlines.
- Dissemination: getting it out and about.

Writing your proposal will be an iterative process, especially in relation to your reading and framing of questions, but remember that, like a lot of academic writing, proposals tend to read best if they are presented in a linear way. The order in which we have outlined the sections is not the only logical order possible and you will have to decide what works for your proposal, always remembering that what you present must be clear, coherent and cogent. Remember, also, that in an actual research process the various stages of research run concurrently, iteratively and sequentially.

Background and rationale: the 'so what?' -ness of the research topic

Now is the time to go back to your hardback notebook, as the notes that you made on your research topic and the 'so what?' -ness of it are about to come into their own.

This section needs to explain the background, issues and the 'so what?' -ness of your proposed research. As we explained before, the best research issues usually start because someone has been curious about the world immediately around them or has had their interest stimulated by something they have seen, heard or read. You might care to start with your own experiences, describing how it is that you came to be interested in the subject – a brief 'autobiography of the question'.

The importance or 'so what?' -ness of the proposed research will lie in the contribution you think it can make to knowledge, to intellectual and theoretical debates, to policy and practice in particular areas – in sum, to our understanding of the world. You need to use this section to convince the readers of the proposal (and yourself) that your project is worth the time and trouble.

Research questions: what, precisely, are you trying to find out?

It is essential to formulate your research questions very clearly and explicitly in your proposal. If you have more than one principal question, you may want to number them. If you have subsidiary questions, they should come immediately after the principal question they relate to. It is necessary to have an answerable question that is clear and sufficiently well defined/focused for you to do the research implied within an appropriate time-frame and the available resources.

If you work in an area in which you are required to put your questions in the form of formal hypotheses, these need to be very clearly stated and numbered. The usual convention is to number them as H_1, H_2, H_3 and so on.

Available literature: the public story so far

In developing your research topic and questions you will already have engaged with the literature sufficiently to be able to give a good account of what is known about the answers to your questions and which theories and concepts you expect to find particularly useful. The proposal itself will contain only a relatively short section on the existing literature, but what you write there will need to demonstrate that you know what you are doing and have a good idea of what has been done before.

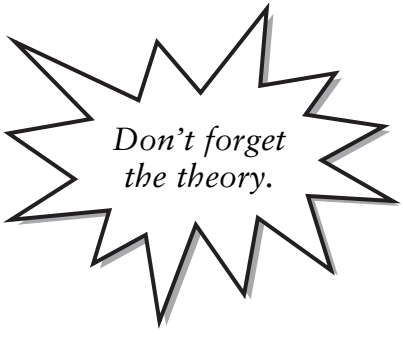
To reiterate, this is *not* the same as reviewing the literature to find a gap, which, as we explained above, is a bit of a trap for unwary researchers. You will already have a fairly clear idea of what sort of thing you want to look at and therefore your visit to the literature isn't to find a topic. Rather, the proposal needs to make two points clear on the subject of literature.

- First, you need to talk about the work of others that provides empirical data and/or creative insights that contribute to answering your questions. This will demonstrate that you have refined your questions, and that the answers you eventually produce are likely be a real contribution to knowledge. You will be able to show what further evidence you need to collect to answer your research questions more fully.
- Second, reference to the literature will enable you to pinpoint those theories and concepts useful to you in trying to make sense of your own research.

Most important, you must make a convincing case as to why your research would create valuable and useful knowledge that builds upon or challenges existing work in the field.

Theoretical frameworks: the e-word and the o-word

One of the problems we frequently see in research proposals is the absence of any explicit theoretical framework. Research without a theoretical framework is description and does not qualify as academic research or as a contribution to knowledge. We cannot say it too often or too loudly.



One of the biggest reasons why people avoid talking or writing about theory is that they feel excluded by the language which people use. In particular, it may take a long time to be confident in the use of commonly used words in academic writing (but not in the rest of the world) such as 'epistemology' and 'ontology'.

Debbie, Rebecca and Jane all admit, to each other and now to you, that when they were novice researchers they had to return to the

dictionary many times to clarify their understanding of 'epistemology' and 'ontology'. Here is our best attempt to explain them in readily understandable ways.

Epistemology

Here's one of the many dictionary definitions that we find useful:

> 'The philosophical theory of knowledge, which seeks to define it, distinguish its principal varieties, identify its sources, and establish its limits'
>
> (from *The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*)

What this means to us is that epistemology is a theoretical framework for making sense of how the world works or some aspect of how the world works. It's about what counts as knowledge in your world view. For example, all three of us are feminists and we see feminism as an epistemology. What this means, in practice, is that the lens through which we view the world is shaped by certain understandings about gender, power and the position of women. So an epistemology may be defined as a particular sort of lens that allows you to make sense of some aspect of the world around you in a particular way. Different lenses (different epistemologies) will obviously give different views. No epistemology can give you a total view of the world, because they only allow you to see from particular perspectives. So it's useful to have a whole range of epistemologies available. Foucault conceptualised this as a theory toolbox.

Everybody, in daily life, no matter what they do, makes sense of the world according to their understandings and theories about it. These may take the form of religious beliefs or common sense or cultural values or social norms and they may not be explicit or apparent even to the person themselves. What distinguishes academic research epistemologies from these everyday epistemologies is that they are expected to be explicit, rigorously defined and robust. That is why we call them theories. You cannot make sense of your data without an epistemology/theory.

Ontology

If 'epistemology' is about what counts as knowledge, 'ontology' is concerned with the nature of the knower. It is about how our place in the world, identity and embodied experiences impact on the way in which we see the world and, consequentially, the epistemologies that we find meaningful and useful. It follows that our ontological perspective will have a significant impact on which epistemologies we are drawn to and how we use them. We've noticed that the early authors in new fields of enquiry such as gender, race, sexuality and disability are often ontologically steeped in the issues they are investigating: they are women, ethnic minority people, lesbian or gay people, or people with mental or physical impairments.

In your 'autobiography of the question' you will have begun, either implicitly or possibly explicitly, to make connections between your own ontology and epistemology.

We do not believe that any knowledge is 'objective' or that researchers can take a god-like stance as knowers. It is therefore important to be clear, up-front and honest about your ontology and epistemology in your research. This will enable your readers to understand where you are coming from and to make a judgement on the quality of your work based on that understanding. Saying who you are and where you are coming from will not stop people who genuinely believe in the possibility of 'objective truth' from criticising you for being partial and subjective. But at least, in contrast to them, you will have been honest about your subjectivity and partiality. And remember, subjectivity is not and should never be synonymous with lack of rigour. Being clear about your frameworks is part of that rigour.

You should therefore use your proposal to clarify what theoretical resources you will be drawing on and why. There should, therefore, be clear linkages between this discussion and your discussion of the literature. In particular, you need to explain the relevance and usefulness of your theoretical framework to your proposed project. You need to give particular consideration, at this point, to the issues that

loom large within your chosen theoretical framework and how they will affect the research process.

Methodology and methods: your investigative and analytical techniques

Definitions of methodology differ confusingly and vary greatly between disciplines. However, a reasonable definition is that it is the package of epistemology, ontology and method that shapes and informs your research project. People in different disciplines have different methodological approaches:

Methods are the ways in which you go about collecting, locating or creating the material you are going to analyse and the associated practical techniques. For example:

- A cultural theorist might use auto/biography, stories and myths, novels, poetry and plays, visual images, films and television programmes, newspapers and so on.
- People in the creative arts often produce a work of art, a play or an exhibition and write an exegesis of it.
- An art historian might use both cultural artefacts and archival material about the people who created and consumed them.
- An economist might garner government statistical data and use this to construct a model to generate research results.
- A sociologist might go out and interview people, participate in some aspect of their lives or distribute survey questionnaires.

It's difficult to find a collective name for all the different kinds of material mentioned here. In the social sciences, it tends to be called 'data' and, for convenience, we will use this term. But remember that we are using the term inclusively.

Finally, there are research traditions that don't rely on data, even as broadly defined. These are the types of research – such as pure mathematics, logic and some branches of philosophy and theology – which are purely conceptual and directed at the resolution of abstract problems.

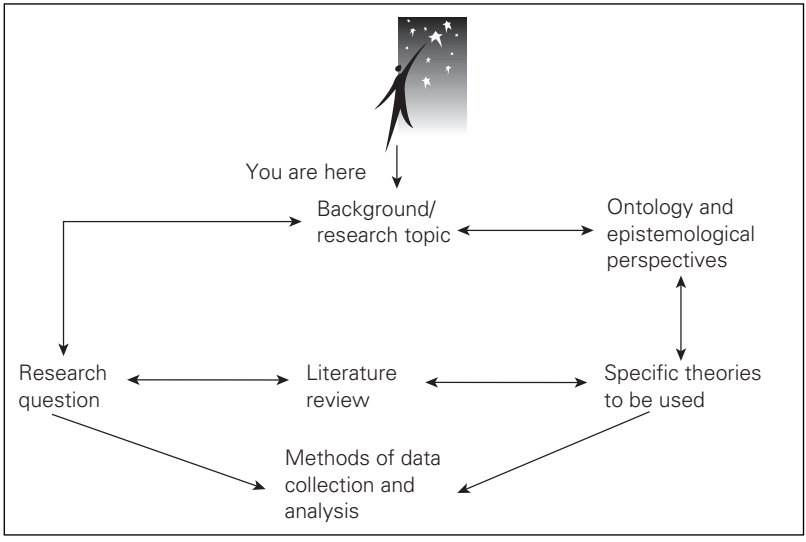


FIGURE 3 Processes and linkages in research proposals

We've already explained that the proposal mirrors the research process itself and therefore, like research, your proposal must represent a coherent and integrated process. The questions you are seeking to address, together with your epistemological perspectives, will inform the methods you choose. The methods you decide to use should enable you collect and analyse the data that you need in order to answer your questions using your chosen epistemological perspectives. Figure 3 gives a visual image of the kinds of processes and linkages discussed so far that should be explicit in your proposal.

To summarise, this section of a research proposal should consist of a detailed description and justification of how you will actually go about collecting and analysing your data. That is, what data will you collect, how will you collect it and how will it be analysed? You need to justify why these are the best methods for your question(s).

Use your imagination in solving the problem of how to collect the data that you need. People often resort to what seems like the simplest, easiest and even the most 'objective' method of data collection. This is not necessarily the best method for answering the questions you are trying to ask. Methods such as questionnaires, for example, may evoke feelings of fatigue and *ennui* among the target recipients, especially if those recipients have no empathy with, or particular interest in, what you are researching. On the other hand, where people feel strongly

about an issue a questionnaire may be a very good source of data. At Rebecca's university, for example, a long and detailed questionnaire survey to all staff about the research culture in the institution produced a very healthy and very rapid response rate. Rebecca attributes this to the fact that staff were either antithetical to research or deeply committed to it. Either way, everyone was very keen to have their say.

Helen and James demonstrated admirable ingenuity and imagination in designing their data collection methods.

Helen, a marketing academic, was researching people's food shopping and consumption habits. She needed to know what they bought and how they used it. Rather than simply send out a questionnaire or carry out an interview based on memory, she asked her respondents to write a list of the foodstuffs in their fridges and cupboards. She used the list as the basis of a guided discussion with the respondents.

James was doing research in cultural studies/sociology on how children form their identities, including how they see 'home' and the part it plays in who they think they are. As a starting point, he gave the children a disposable camera and asked them to take photographs of 'home' (that is, whatever 'home' meant to them). When he had developed the photographs (including several of front doors and pets) he used them to discuss with the children why those particular images meant 'home' to them.

Practical matters such as whether or not you will get physical access to the data you need or whether you have the practical skills you need to access it are real considerations in research design. Will you have enough time to collect the data required? Will your data collection requirements stretch the goodwill of those on whom you depend for access?

In 1945 the border between Germany and Poland was redrawn and some formerly German territory became part of Poland. As a result, many of the regional government records relating to the formerly German territories passed into Polish archives and were often catalogued in Polish. Cathy

was a fluent German-speaker but her Polish was non-existent. Access to these crucial records was therefore dependent not only on obtaining funding for research trips to Poland, but also on learning enough Polish to interrogate the catalogues and negotiate with Polish archivists.

In this section, it is absolutely essential to describe not only how you will collect your data but also how you will analyse it. Data analysis is often scantily done or left out completely. This seriously weakens many proposals.

Data analysis needs two things: first, an appropriate theoretical lens through which to view and make sense of the material collected; second, appropriate tools and techniques to organise, categorise, sift and manage it. You will need to refer back to your theoretical framework and your research questions to be absolutely sure that you explain how you will use and address them in your analysis of your data.

Explain what skills you will need and whether you have them or how you will acquire them. Think about the particular software or other tools available (see later in this book), and how you will acquire the skills to use them. It's a good idea to visualise yourself sitting down with your carefully collected data and asking 'What do I do now? How do I make sense of all of this?'

Ethical considerations: will your research do harm?

Later in this book we will give detailed consideration to ethical practice in research. For the proposal, you will need to ensure that your reader is confident that you have thought carefully about the ethical dimensions of your proposed research and, where appropriate, that you intend to comply with all relevant ethical guidelines and procedures. Sometimes research may have no obvious ethical issues attached to it. However, we think that research completely devoid of any ethical considerations or consequences whatsoever is a virtual impossibility.

Time scales: establishing phases and deadlines

It is important to map out a reasonable schedule of your work so that you can monitor your progress and manage your project effectively. If your project is externally funded, bear in mind that your funders may also ask for a time schedule and even ask you to report against it. Start

with your intended finishing date and do not underestimate the amount of time that it takes to polish your draft writing into a finished product.

In Table 3, we show the timeline of a real project involving a number of researchers. On this project the researchers had to juggle a number of conflicting time constraints. These included the time scale that the organisation under investigation imposed, the need to use research assistants and also the proposers' own busy schedules. Note that many of the activities are concurrent.

Making an impact: getting it out and about

You need to make a clear statement in your proposal about how you intend your work to have an impact. We deal with this issue in much more detail in *Building Networks*. Making an impact may involve three different sorts of dissemination of your research output.

To other academics

A key indicator of the worth of much research is whether it is publishable in refereed academic journals, as an academic book or as a chapter in an academic book. You may like to give some consideration at this stage to what sorts of things may be publishable and where you would like them to appear.

Also think about which conferences you may wish to give papers at. This may involve conferences that will give you high academic visibility, which can help with your career prospects, but just as important is to find smaller conferences where you can have a good and detailed discussion about your work and get constructive feedback that will help you improve your papers and other writing. If you are seeking funding for your project, you may be able to ask for money to go to these conferences as part of the research funds.

This kind of dissemination is especially important if you wish to pursue a career as an academic in a university.

To relevant non-academic users and beneficiaries of your research

These may include people who were involved in the research process as gatekeepers and/or respondents, possibly the people who funded your

TABLE 3 Women's participation in research activities

Date	Task	Responsibilities
2002 May	Advertise researcher posts internally Submission of proposal and consent procedures to university ethics committee	PMG
25 June	Interviews for researcher posts	
1 September	Project starts	RA
September–December	Initial literature review (reading of the literature continues throughout the project)	RA
September–December	Analysis of secondary data on women in science	RA
September–October	Design of research instruments	RA, PMG
October	Advisory group meeting to advise on research design and access	
End October	Submission of survey questionnaire and interview schedule to ethics committee	RA, PMG
November	Distribution of survey questionnaire	RA
December–Early January 2003	Survey data entry	Casual employee(s)
December–January 2003	Interview recruitment	RA
January	Survey data analysis	RA, PMG
February–June	Interviews	RA
May–July	Interview data analysis	RA, PMG
July–September	Preparation of report	RA, PMG
September	Draft report to advisory group	PMG
October	Dissemination of report Seminar to present findings	RA, PMG
2003–4	Conference attendance Preparation/submission of papers for publication	RA, PMG

PMG Project Management Group. *RA* Research Associate.

research and, indeed, anyone else or any other groups who might find your work of use or interest.

The form of such dissemination may include a workshop for policy users, articles in appropriate professional journals or newspapers, a popular book, magazine articles or public lectures. For instance, if you were conducting research into children and young people, you might want to hold a special conference for such groups of people and include it in the costings and dissemination strategy.

Through the popular media

This means of dissemination can reach wider audiences and, if well done, can be effective and very beneficial to your personal research profile and that of your university. However, media exposure is fraught with dangers and we would strongly advise you to seek professional help, support and training in how to deal with journalists. Your institution's press office should be able to help in this regard. A good way of attracting media attention is by producing good press releases. Again, your institution's press office, if there is one, should be able to guide you in this. If you anticipate that your research will attract media interest, make sure that there are plans for dealing with it in your proposal, especially if that interest is likely to be hostile.

And finally ...

When you have done all this and have a complete draft research proposal, get other people, your peers as well as those more experienced than you, to read it and comment. This will help you to revise the proposal before you proceed further. That way, you will ensure that you start off on a firm footing.

4 Doing your Project

This is a very practical chapter. In it we include practical advice and handy hints, tools of the trade, writing, coping with uncertainty and dealing with problems.

Now that my proposal is done, what next?

If you've prepared a good proposal, you've already started your research project. This planning phase is a bit like planning a big vacation trip abroad. So what have you done so far?

- You've identified where you want to go – or rather, you have a topic.
- You've started to familiarise yourself with the place you are going to by reading the tour guides and novels about the area – in other words, you've started to engage with the literature.
- You've decided precisely where you're going to stay and why – that is, you have framed your research questions.
- You've packed your bags with everything that you think you might need at this point – just like your suitcase, your theory toolbox is full of useful stuff for making sense of your work.
- You've decided what you are going to do when you are there – that is, what data you need and how you will collect and analyse it.
- You've thought about your impact as a tourist on the environment you're visiting – in other words, what the ethical dimensions of your research are and how you will deal with them.
- You have your dates for your holiday and all your bookings are made for going away and returning – in other words, you've established a sensible schedule for getting all the work done.

A bit like being very well planned for your holidays, having a good proposal makes you feel confident and relaxed and lets you enjoy

yourself more, but plans don't have to be rigidly kept to if there are good reasons for changing them. If you arrive at your hotel and you don't like it, it's better to find one you do like than to have a miserable time. Or you might go on holiday and find that there's a much more interesting place to stay than the one you had planned, possibly one with fewer tourists and more surprises. Inexperienced tourists are more likely to have to adapt their plans as they go along; they don't know the good places or the perils of distant locations. In the same way, less experienced researchers should expect to have to modify and adapt their plans as they gain knowledge, experience and confidence in their areas.

What all this means is that you will need to return at regular intervals to your research proposal in order to think about whether you are still on track and whether you need to adapt your plans in the light of what you have done so far, the knowledge you have gained, the additional reading you've done and other events. A very short project, such as a masters dissertation, may not need you to do this. There is a direct correlation between the length and size of a project and the extent to which the proposal will need to be adapted during the course of the research.

Practical points for budding researchers

Research journals

We usually call our hardback notebooks research journals. Other people call them research diaries or research notebooks. What you call them is your own business. The important thing is to have them and to use them sensibly. They are the single most important tool of your research career.

Many academics seem to be obsessed with using the latest technology. Students often ask if they can keep their research journals on their computers. We don't think this is a good idea. The whole point about the hardback notebook is that you can: take it to fieldwork sites and into libraries and archives; take it on the bus or train; keep it by the side of your bed; leaf through it in the bath; take it on holiday; staple things into it; easily draw pictures or diagrams; and easily show it to your mentors or supervisors.

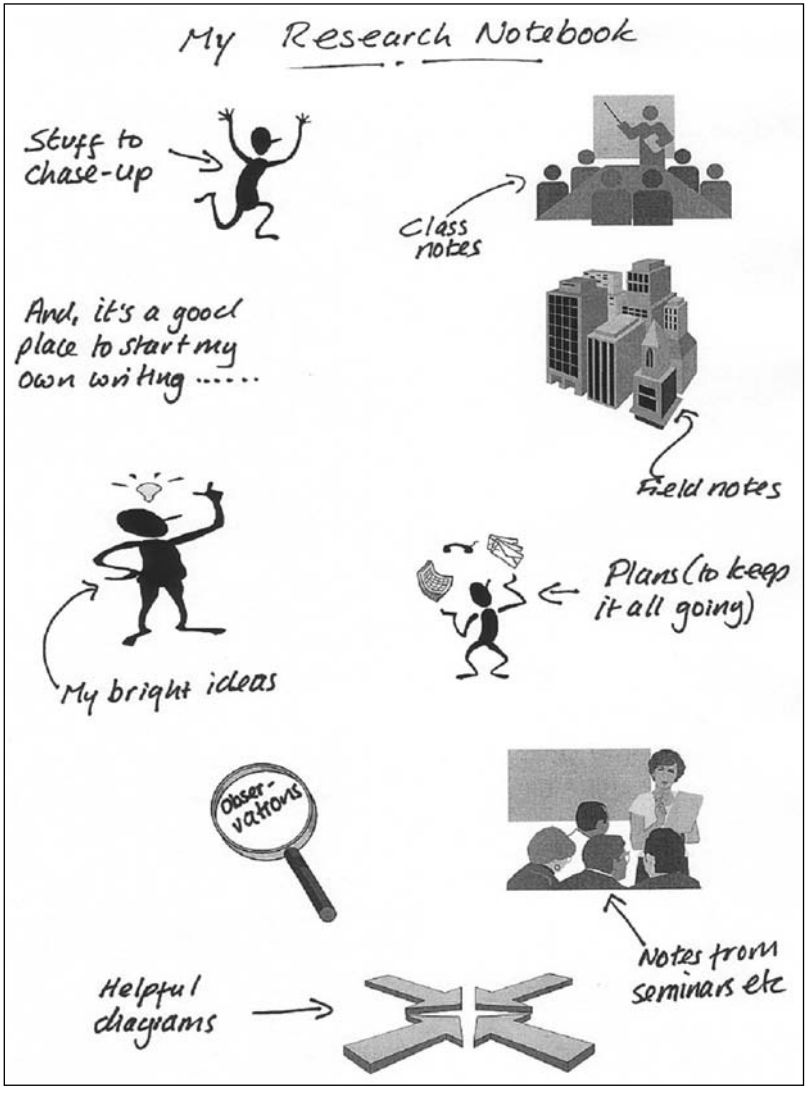


FIGURE 4 What to write in your research journal

People also often ask us what they should write in their research journal. Our answer is that, like any diary or journal, it's personal to you and should contain what you find useful. Figure 4 is a picture of the sorts of things that we keep in our research journals and the vignette below illustrates one way of using them.

When Miranda was doing her PhD she started her first research journal in a big red hardback book. She took it into the school where she was collecting her data and the children very quickly took to calling it 'your big red book'. Even when she had filled up her first notebook and gone on to the second, which was not red, the children continued to refer to it as 'your big red book'. She used the journal to make notes of her observations in the playground and classrooms, to write down snippets of conversation that she overheard and to draw maps of how the children were using the space, and diagrams of how she was thinking. The children regularly used to ask her to show them what she had written about them, which she did. As they got to know her better, and became more confident with her, they would ask if they could write or draw in her book from time to time. The notebook thus contained children's writing and drawing as well as Miranda's.

Look after yourself

Research is hard work. Don't make it harder by failing to take good care of your mental and physical well-being. Sleep, rest and relaxation are not unwarranted time-out from research but essential ways of keeping yourself going. Obsessive overwork is bad not only for you but also for your colleagues and your family. And it doesn't necessarily lead to the best research.

It may sound obvious, but don't put yourself in dangerous situations if you can possibly avoid it. Build in safety routes and mechanisms to protect yourself. If you are going to do fieldwork, make sure that somebody knows where you are going and when you should be coming back. In this day and age of mobile phones, it's a very good idea to carry one at all times and keep it on, with the ringer set on silent so that it doesn't disturb your research. Don't be neglectful of little things that can become big problems. It's okay to make decisions based on personal safety considerations about what research you will and won't do.

Trupti was a young South African Indian researcher. She was doing an ethnographic study of several different kinds of school in post-apartheid South Africa. Because of the high level of violence in certain

parts of the country and in particular schools, she and her supervisor discussed in detail where she should go, and she avoided going to schools (and types of schools) where she might be in danger of being raped or suffering other serious violence. Even though this meant that she did not explore every possible type of school, she completed an excellent PhD that made a significant contribution to knowledge.

On a much lighter note, it's crucially important to build in treats for yourself to ensure that sometimes you do things just because they're nice for you. Treats can be as big or little as seems appropriate. They might include: eating more chocolate than is good for you, taking the dog for a walk; stopping work to watch a soap on TV, going on holiday, going to the theatre, reading a trashy novel, chatting to friends on the phone or cooking a nice meal. Choose your own poison, but we would avoid making tobacco, alcohol or other drugs your principal rewards or coping strategies.

File it!

It's important to develop a good hard copy and computer filing system for your research project because it helps you to:

- Keep track of all of the materials relating to your research project.
- Keep valuable things safe.
- Establish a complete history or audit trail of your project that complements your research notebooks.
- Work efficiently and find things that you need when you need them.
- Know what materials you have.
- Manage the project.
- Develop a personal archive of research materials that you and your research collaborators and students may use in the future.

The types of materials you may accumulate include:

- Photocopies of papers.
- Newspaper cuttings.

- Your project proposal.
- Old notebooks.
- Letters and other correspondence.
- Drafts of pieces of writing. Old drafts can be very useful if you lose all your electronic copies of work – at least you can scan in an older version to help you recover from the loss.
- Drafts with comments written on them by others. You will find most people unwilling to repeat the exercise if you carelessly lose their notes.
- Official forms.
- Details of monies spent or expenses claimed. University accounts systems, worldwide, are inherently fallible – so keep your own records.
- Books, pamphlets, reports, etc.
- Photographs.
- Audio and video-tapes or mini-disks.
- CDs, computer diskettes or memory sticks with back-ups of electronic material. Such back-ups of current work should be made at least once a day when you are writing intensively and at least once a week at other times.

You will acquire a lot of things that really need to be kept safe. This means not just filing them carefully but also protecting them from the extremes of temperature and the ravages of children and family pets. If something like copies of computer files are irreplaceable then keep copies in different locations.

Eiko, a student at Kobe in Japan, was finalising her masters dissertation at the very moment when the massive and destructive earthquake of 1995 occurred. As the earthquake developed momentum, she quickly saved her dissertation on a diskette and ran out into the street clutching it to her chest. It was her only copy.

You have to devise your own system for keeping these materials in an accessible and methodical way appropriate to your project and way of working. Possible methods include:

- A series of box files.
- Putting things in plastic pockets (we like plastic pockets a lot) and filing them in lever-arch files.
- Plastic crates.
- A special place on your bookshelves.
- A drawer(s) in a filing cabinet.

Don't wait until things get in a mess and you have a huge and dispiriting pile of what looks like rubbish in the middle of your office floor. Neither should your computer desktop be in chaos – you also need to develop systems for electronic filing and labelling. It might be a good idea to set a regular time, maybe when you know that your mental energy tends to be quite low, to do your filing. On the other hand, don't run away with the notion that endless hours spent devising ever more sophisticated filing systems constitute research work.

Work avoidance and security zones

Work avoidance is something that everybody does and everybody beats themselves up about. If anyone tells you that they don't do it, then they are lying, probably to undermine your confidence. Take no notice.

Reasonable amounts of 'work avoidance' activity are perfectly normal and acceptable, even desirable. We will come back to this later. So don't

worry if, when you get stuck doing a piece of writing, or when you mean to make a start early in the morning on something difficult, you end up making yourself endless cups of coffee, reading the newspaper, cleaning the house, doing the crossword or taking the dog for an extra-long walk. You probably need this time and space to get yourself and your brain into gear. Remember that good research is, at least in part, a creative process and most people can't be creative 'to order'.

Avoidance becomes a problem only when these activities squeeze out time for work and you end up not doing it at all or being so late that you miss important, immovable deadlines.

Some activities that look like work avoidance are actually important ways of giving ourselves a comfort and security zone that enables us to work. As the following vignettes demonstrate, particular rituals may be an important part of the working day, especially when what you are doing is done on your own and is difficult and/or intensive and intimidating, as the stories below show.

Ng is a social psychologist who also trains other academics in the use of software for data handling and analysis. Despite his advanced computing skills, he confesses that he cannot start a piece of academic writing unless he is sitting at his desk in his comfortable study, wearing his 'white writing shirt' and using his 'nice fountain pen'.

Helen, now sadly dead, made her own bread. When asked how she found the time to do it, she said, 'Whenever I've got a really busy day at home, working on my research, I make a loaf of bread.' She explained that the various physical activities, which need to be done at different times throughout the day, of mixing and kneading the dough were important ways of pacing herself and giving herself a bit of a break and a structure. She also said that the sensual pleasure of the smell and taste of the freshly baked bread were a major treat at the end of her day's work.

Time and motion

It's important to think about how you will organise, protect and use your research time. Very few people are in the fortunate position of

being genuinely full-time researchers. Even full-time doctoral students usually have to do some teaching or other paid work and full-time contract researchers often get dragged into administrative work in their organisations.

If you are a university teacher or part-time research student, your research time is likely to be quite constrained and very precious. It is treacherously easy for your research to become the part of your work that slips off the edge of your over-full in-tray – destined to disappear into oblivion. You need, therefore, to think and act proactively about strategies for ensuring that your precious time is ring-fenced, safeguarded and used well.

Diana Leonard, a well known British academic, uses a modified version of Parkinson's Law to explain what happens to research time. She says that there are four different kinds of work that research students and academics have to do:

urgent and trivial,	non-urgent and trivial
urgent and important	non-urgent and important

She maintains that the urgent and trivial invariably drives out the non-urgent but important. Of course, research work is usually non-urgent but important. The trick is to forget about the trivial, whether urgent or not, and concentrate on the important.

The best sort of research time is that which is 'joined up'. That is, it comes in significant chunks, where you can really bury yourself in what you are doing without the interruption of teaching, other work, family, meetings, etc. Never underestimate the amount of time it takes to get back into a project that you have had to put on one side, even for a few days. You will not work effectively if you try to do your

research in the 'odd hour' here and there. It just won't work like that. If you teach, you must try to ensure that your teaching timetable is compacted into the smallest possible space so that you have consecutive, whole days to spend on your research.

Another good way of protecting time is to spend your research time away from places where you will be interrupted. For many academics, this means staying at home, though if you have young children or other responsibilities it may not. It may mean, if you really need some headspace, renting a cottage on a remote island away from the phone, your family and the email. Less expensively, it may mean having a study at home well away from the other inhabitants of the house.

Margaret is a political scientist. She was desperately trying to finish her first book, but had a time-devouring family. She resolved this situation, on her limited budget, by buying a kit garden shed and erecting it in the backyard. She fitted it out so that it was homely and spent her research time in there.

For most busy academics the real time-vulture is pointless bureaucracy that seems to engulf us at an ever-increasing rate. People in more junior posts and those on marginalised forms of employment contracts (fixed-term or untenured) are in a difficult position here, as they may feel obliged or even coerced into doing this sort of work. There are two strategies that you can employ to help you. First, you can do what you have to do but don't get sucked into it and never believe that it is truly important. The second is with care and good grace, to 'just say no'. That is, don't go to meetings unless you really need to be there. Give your apologies and explain that you are (1) in an archive, (2) conducting an interview, (3) giving a research presentation at another university, (4) trying desperately to finish a book/chapter/paper that will attract prestige to your institution/department, (5) ill or (6, a favourite among some) 'at another meeting'. If you are an academic and you are giving your students a good deal and doing your research well, then you justify your salary without getting bogged down in what is usually bureaucracy invented by people who can neither teach nor research well but who are trying to justify their salaries. Have confidence on this.

Fiona is a busy Australian academic and successful researcher. Her university funded her to go to an overseas conference to deliver a research paper. On her return she was pestered with a series of increasingly imperative demands from her 'line manager' to submit a report on the conference. In fact she was busy running a research centre and writing her next paper. Eventually she relented and wrote her report. It read, in its Caesarean entirety,' I went, I delivered, I returned.' The report was accepted and filed, in the right folder, in the right file and on the right shelf, where no-one ever looked at it again. We think Fiona got the balance just right.

In describing how to write a research proposal we urged you to include a time schedule for the completion of the research project. The reason was that it is very useful to have deadlines and to try to stick to them. Schedules help you to manage your time.

Try to define your schedules by setting regular milestones for achievement – small packages of work that together, and cumulatively, constitute the whole project. This not only boosts your morale as you can tick them off, but also gives you a sense of climbing a series of small hillocks rather than scaling Mount Everest in one go. Milestones also help your mentors to gain a sense of what progress you are making with the work.

In setting yourself a timetable, particularly for writing, you should always estimate how long you think something will take and then build in a comfortable margin for the inevitable slippages that occur.

When writing something specific, set yourself a daily timetable. If you finish your allotted work early, take the rest of the day off and go and treat yourself.

Don't mess about

Doing any research requires the tolerance, co-operation and assistance of other people. Such people include: mentors and supervisors; research respondents; your employer; your family; your research collaborators; other students if you are on a course; librarians and archivists; publishers; funders; etc.

Conducting research is inherently problematic in that it's not always possible to do what you've said you will do, or to stick to the

schedules and deadlines that you set yourself or that others have imposed on you. Sometimes failure to keep to your commitments and delays is really unavoidable. You may have to work around such issues as serious illness, bereavement, having to cover for a colleague at work or unexpected problems with the planned research.

Despite these facts of life, it is incumbent upon you, as the researcher, to make every reasonable effort to do what you say you will do in an efficient and timely way. For example, if you agree to meet someone whom you are going to interview and you have agreed a time, a place and the length of the meeting, you should honour that agreement.

If you can't keep to your commitments you must, at the earliest opportunity, explain the problems to those affected and develop a strategy for rectifying them. Most people are very understanding if you keep them informed of what's happening. This kind of honesty will help you develop good relations with all those people who are essential to your research.

Take note(s)

You need to take notes on your reading, and some people like to keep these separate from their research journals. You will use the notes for many projects and for many years to come. You don't want to have to try desperately to remember which project you were doing when you read a particular article or book in order to find your notes. Try to develop a system that suits you.

Tools of the trade

So far, our discussion of research equipment has been quite low-tech and confined to the joys of nice stationery. It's time to get technical. We take it as axiomatic that researchers will be able to use popular word-processing packages. By the way, it is well worth getting yourself a typing tutor program and spending the time learning to touch-type. This may slow you down for a while if you are a fast two-finger typist but will bring its rewards in the medium and long term. There are other standard software tools, such as Excel and PowerPoint, which it may be well worth learning to use.

In addition to these standard tools, there exist a number of software packages designed for, and some designed by, academics. These fall into two broad camps: those that help us organise our research materials and those that are analytical tools.

We find that you really learn how to use a software package only when you need to use it. Software training courses that are unconnected with reasonably immediate use get consigned to your mental dustbin unless they are of the brief 'taster' sort designed to show you the capabilities of the software and give you enough confidence to get going on your own.

Bibliographic databases

The one software device that we regard as absolutely essential for all researchers, no matter what their topic, and regardless of their discipline, is a bibliographic database program. There are many different software packages that do this job, the most common of which are EndNote, Reference Manager and ProCite (all pretty similar). What can you do with a bibliographic database?

- You can input the complete bibliographic details of anything that you may wish to use or cite in your work. This includes: books, journal articles, websites, book chapters, manuscripts and other archival material, statutes, films, newspaper articles, television programmes, maps, theses, scores, letters, works of art and many more. The program will have a pre-set way of recording most of these and it will also be possible to customise your recording method and the type of thing you record according to your needs or the conventions in your discipline.
- You can make notes on the individual database records. This can vary from key words and short abstracts to extensive and detailed note taking.
- You can use the database, once you have compiled it, to search for material that you have recorded by author, subject, title, key words, medium and so on. You can then generate specific bibliographies for your own use or for others.
- Best of all, these packages have dynamic links with many word-processing programs. This means that you can insert citations as you write, using a special command. When you have finished your work, another command results in the automatic generation of a list of references at the end of your document. Using this facility is likely to save you hours of heartache and hard work at the end of a major project. We think it is like magic.

These programs also have the facility to allow you to choose the style of the referencing to suit the journal or publisher or university regulations that you have to comply with; they also have many built-in reference styles as well as the facility to add your own. It is worth checking, however, how suitable the particular program is for your discipline, as some of them are more oriented towards scientific disciplines.

- If you are working collaboratively, you can store the database on a networked system so that all the researchers in your team have common access to it.
- The Internet access functions of these databases allow you to access and download publications databases and also to launch URLs from your own database.

These software packages are extremely powerful tools, with many different functions. You may only use a few of them – but those few will be a lifeline.

It is likely that your university will have site licences for one or more of these packages. If it hasn't, you should lobby hard for one to be adopted and for the kind of licence to be bought that allows members of the university to put it on to their machine at home. Stress to your administrators that most academics do most of their academic writing at home and therefore a licence that allows people to use the program only at work is virtually useless. Because most of these databases are very similar, you don't need to worry if you move to a new job where they have a licence for a different program. You are likely to be able to import your library from your old program to your new one quite easily.

Carmen was doing her PhD in Spanish literature and had to use archives in several different countries. She put EndNote on her laptop and took it to the archives. She used EndNote not only for bibliographic purposes, but also to make notes on each manuscript that she examined as she was doing it. This database was crucially useful both in her analysis of the data and in writing and referencing her thesis.

Data handling and analysis packages

There are a number of sophisticated software packages written specifically to assist researchers with data handling and analysis. Some of them are for qualitative material and some for quantitative. Some of the qualitative packages allow the use of 'mixed methods'. That is, they will handle both qualitative and quantitative data.

Why do you need help handling data? If you have qualitative data, then it is likely that you have reams and reams of transcripts or notes or documents. The sheer physical difficulty of searching through these to identify themes pertinent to your analysis, or of finding particular passages or quotes, or of simply keeping track of what you have got and where, cannot be underestimated. Traditionally this task was undertaken manually. Rebecca is used to using coloured pens on the back of old rolls of wallpaper. Debbie also likes coloured pens, with different colours for each theme on the left-hand side of her text, and writes comments on the right-hand side. She also does things like cutting up paper and putting it in different places. Jane uses text highlighting on her computer screen. We know of people who cut up their interview transcripts and peg bits that they might want to quote on a washing line strung across their office.

Software packages promise some help in handling data. The best known qualitative data handling package on the market so far is NVivo, which is a close cousin of NUD*IST. It is said that NUD*IST and NVivo were developed by an Australian sociologist and her partner when she became frustrated at the sheer difficulty of analysing a very large quantity of qualitative interview data – particularly when her young child disrupted all her carefully arranged piles of cut-up interview transcripts.

Software data handling packages allow you to do two principal things. First, you can input any written or visual material in an electronic format. You can catalogue this, code it and search it. Second, within the program you can establish the themes through which you are analysing your data. Using these, you can then search your inputted data for material relevant to that particular theme or themes. Data handling packages do not analyse your data for you, but can take the tedium and risk out of more manual methods of data analysis. Saying you will use NVivo, or any similar package, in a research proposal is not synonymous with explaining how you will analyse the data.

Perhaps the reasons why people need software to help them with analysing quantitative data are more obvious. No-one really wants to sit and crunch through vast numbers of calculations, only to find that the answer wasn't that useful after all. Software packages for quantitative analysis have been around for a good time and there are many of them. The most common ones are SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists) and Microdata. There are many training courses and written training materials available to help people become acquainted with these packages.

Web tools and skills

Another essential skill is the ability to work effectively on the Internet. You need to be confident searching the Web, at the very least, and should experiment with different search engines to find one that suits your needs best. The Web can be a useful source of secondary data, literature and information crucial to your research. It is also a great way of searching libraries and you must be able to use the electronic databases to be found there. You will need a password for some of these, which can be obtained via your own university library. In addition, most major journal publishers now make articles in their journals available electronically, and there are some journals available only on-line. In order to access journal articles you, or your library, may well need to have a print and/or electronic subscription to that journal.

Some people are now making the Internet a major data-gathering tool. For example, you could:

- Set up a Web-based conference for your respondents to talk together.
- Ask respondents to send you email diaries and maintain a correspondence with them.
- Analyse conversations in Internet chat rooms.
- Read newspaper articles from around the world on a particular event.

If you do not feel confident using Web-based resources, do go and get help. Everybody had to learn some time. Librarians are often an excellent source of support and assistance in using the Internet in a whole variety of ways.

Writing, not writing up

We offer you plenty of advice about writing styles, practices and publication in *Writing for Publication*. But it is worth making a few points here, if only to impress on you the real importance of starting to develop good writing habits and skills early in your research career.

Writing is often something that inexperienced researchers (and sometimes more experienced ones too) feel very anxious about. Having other people read your work can make you feel exposed and vulnerable. This fear can often make people put off writing for as long as possible. Often inexperienced researchers feel that, a bit like having all their ducks in a row before they shoot, they have to have accumulated every scrap of evidence, read every book and conceived of every idea before they put pen to paper or finger to keyboard. This is dangerous for two reasons.

First, there are remarkably few people who naturally write fluently, clearly and elegantly. Writing, like bricklaying or plastering, is an apparently prosaic skill that can actually be developed only by frequent and regular practice. The more writing you do, and the more constructive criticism you take note of, the better your writing will become. It is no good being precious or defensive about it. If you show your writing, as you should, to your supervisor, mentor and peers, you should expect to have it returned to you, especially in the early stages, covered in comments and suggestions. The only time when you are entitled to get upset about this is if they use a red pen (any other colour is fine) or if the comments are rude, unhelpful or both.

Second, in the social sciences and humanities especially, writing is an integral part of the research process. Even in laboratory-based scientific research, the process of articulating the work in its final written form is often a rewriting of the researcher's laboratory notebooks. Writing is the means by which you achieve real unity with your data, sort out your ideas, articulate your thoughts, decide where you've gone wrong, discover the holes in your theory, work out what you really think and so on.

We share Karen Locke and Karen Golden-Biddle's (see Further Reading for details) serious pet hate for the notion of someone completing their research and then sitting down to 'write it up'. The image that this phrase calls to mind is of an athlete deciding to run a marathon but to delay breathing until they pass the finishing line.

Your first attempts at writing will probably be schematic and eventually subject to substantial change. No-one can produce brilliant first drafts, and you should not be expected to do so either. One of Rebecca's students told her that he had been surprised when he looked at the log of his MBA dissertation file: he had redrafted the entire document thirty-seven times. His MBA dissertation was awarded a distinction – the highest possible mark. Most people don't redraft quite as often as that, but all successful academics redraft many, many times. The longer the piece of work the more redrafting will take place.

It's never too soon to start writing. Having stuff on paper gives you a real and justified sense of making progress. It develops your essential writing skills. It makes the task of completing your final written work far less onerous and daunting. It means you have something to show for your hours of work, and that can be important if you are accountable for your time. If you need to talk about your work with others, you have something to give them that will form the concrete basis for a discussion.

Ultimately you need to become your own most effective critic so that you are not dependent on supervisors, mentors or other critical friends. This doesn't mean you stop using them, but it does mean that you will be able to present them with a good-quality draft. This will avoid imposing on busy people's time and goodwill and will help them to give you better advice.

When is enough 'enough'?

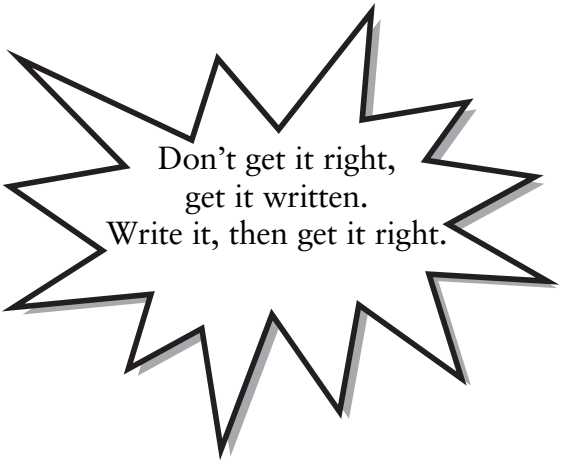
There are two problems here: those people who are over-confident with no good reason and those who are under-confident with no good reason.

Over-confident researchers stop thinking and rush to publish before they have anything of interest to say. They are often very unreflexive about their research projects and their work tends to be un- or under-theorised. If you are reading this book it is not at all likely that you are in this category, but you do need to be able to recognise such people, particularly when they try to undermine you and your confidence. They are usually wearing the Emperor's New Clothes.

Conversely, we've talked previously about how some academics suffer from compulsive over-achievement combined with lack of confidence. The fear of being exposed as an academic fraud or interloper is often particularly intense among inexperienced researchers. But

even established researchers may continue to feel that way in certain circumstances. These common feelings, especially (but not only) among women, can make finishing a project quite difficult. It takes a long time and a lot of experience to get over such feelings, and they may well continue to lurk under the surface. They tend to inhibit us from feeling that we have 'done enough' on a project and, at their worst, can lead to a kind of paralysis.

We can only advise you that many people feel the same. You need to develop a realistic assessment of the quality of your own work and trust the judgement of those who are helping you. If you have good sources of advice (and we'll be talking about how to access this in the next section) you should believe them if they say that you have done enough. Remember that no piece of work is ever perfect and the best is the enemy of the good. Seeking perfection is a fool's errand. Our mottoes are:



There's a second feeling that stops us from stopping. This is where we continue to see interesting and unexplored corners in our research topic. We think that we have to keep going to cover every base and every theoretical eventuality. This is an inability to recognise when a research project has reached the stage where it possesses academic integrity and coherence, and can assume its rightful place as part of a body of knowledge. A good proposal and tightly focused research questions will all help to keep you on track here.

Graínne was at the end of her doctoral studies and close to submitting her thesis. Her work was on the consumption of Guinness and Irish national identity. Part of her argument was that Guinness did not advertise itself as particularly Irish in the UK or the USA. However, just as she was finalising her thesis the company produced a new advertising campaign that made explicit reference to the Irishness of Guinness. Graínne was thrown into a state of panic, thinking that she should revisit her entire argument and rewrite her thesis taking account of this latest advertising campaign. Her supervisor advised her to do no such thing. The work stood as an original contribution to knowledge by examining the phenomenon up to the company's change of advertising strategy. Looking at the new campaign, Graínne was advised, would make an interesting subsequent piece of work after her PhD. Graínne passed her viva and got her doctorate.

A third reason why people have difficulty realising when enough is enough is that they simply can't bear to let go. For such people, concluding a stage in their research is a bit like giving their precious baby away. For doctoral students, in particular, the period of their studies has often been very intense and personally formative and there can be a kind of terror that once you are no longer a student you will not know who you are. Debbie calls this 'fear of finishing'.

The best way of overcoming this psychological hurdle is to think of concluding one piece or stage of a research project as something that will lead seamlessly to the next interesting thing to do. If you feel yourself suffering from these feelings, sit down and plan what you would like to do next in your research, taking care to see it as the development of a research agenda, or even a personal intellectual project.

Muddling through: fixing things when they go wrong

We're very much aware that, up to this point, we have been counselling perfection. Paradoxically, we've also been advising you against self-flagellation. We appreciate the irony and hope you do too. The truth is that the research process is always messy and one of muddling through. Things can, and under Sods' Law therefore always do, go

wrong. Research projects are usually planned and the final results presented as a seamless, neat and linear process. This is a snare and a delusion.

Unfortunately, inexperienced researchers are rarely made aware of this sad truth. Therefore when they encounter muddle, confusion, mistakes, obstacles and errors it enhances their own feelings of failure and inadequacy. Afraid of looking like the failures they feel they are, they don't tell others of their trials and travails. That leaves everyone feeling and thinking that they are the only ones to be having difficulties.

To our mind, the mark of a really good academic is someone who can work their way through all these issues and is brave enough to tell others how they did it. In medical science, Alexander Fleming is a famous example of this. He discovered penicillin because he allowed the medium used for growing bacterial cultures to become contaminated through sloppy laboratory practice. His genius was in noticing that what had gone wrong was actually much more interesting and important than the experiment he had set out to do.

So what are the sorts of things that are likely to go wrong on your research project? It's unpredictable, but we can tell you about the sorts of things that have gone wrong for some people we know.

Rachel and several colleagues were conducting a research project within their own institution which relied on the distribution of a questionnaire survey to all members of academic staff. The Personnel Department agreed to distribute the questionnaire with individuals' salary advice statements to achieve proper coverage.

In fact, the Personnel Department failed to do so. Instead, it sent out bundles of the questionnaires with the pay slips to the various university faculties. It did not give faculty administrators any advice on the distribution of the questionnaires. Nor did they send enough questionnaires for all members of academic staff. Furthermore, they failed to inform the researchers that casual hourly paid academic teaching staff received their pay slip by mail at home rather than in their pigeonholes at work. Administrators in the faculties had placed the questionnaires in staff pigeonholes along with the pay slips. Where there was no pay slip they did not distribute the questionnaires. The

instructions on the questionnaire asked respondents to return it in the 'enclosed pre-addressed envelope'. The harassed research assistant had forgotten to have these envelopes printed and attached to the questionnaires.

The research team met after this debacle to decide how to rectify the situation. They contacted named administrators of known competence in each faculty to establish how many members of regular staff had not received questionnaires, had further copies printed and distributed them to the faculties. They contacted Personnel regarding the casual hourly paid staff. Personnel declined to give the researchers the home addresses of such staff, but suggested that the Payroll Department would send out copies of the questionnaire with the pay advice slips the following month. The researchers contacted the Payroll Department, which declined to do the work.

The researchers then ascertained the number of casual teaching staff in each faculty and distributed hard copies of the questionnaire to each dean, with the request that they be placed in individuals' pigeonholes. One obstructive dean declined to have this done for self-evidently spurious reasons. The project leader wrote back to him, copying the letter to the dean's superior, pointing out the spurious nature of his objections and the fact that the university Ethics Committee had approved the project.

The survey was successfully conducted – eventually – with a good response rate from all the targeted respondent groups.

The lesson from this vignette is that excrement happens (to paraphrase politely). The skill comes in keeping a cool head and finding pragmatic solutions to obstacles and difficulties. In situations like this, it's really important to call on all your resources, human, financial and otherwise, to solve the problem creatively. Remember that the published output of research is the polished version for public consumption. Real research processes go round in circles, up blind alleys, and fall over with alarming regularity. It's like the swan swimming serenely across the calm lake, while simultaneously paddling furiously and invisibly under water.

5 Moving on: Developing Yourself as a Researcher

By the time you've got your first proper research project well under way, you've already begun to develop yourself as a researcher. In this chapter we want to look at two issues that will help you to continue that developmental process. These are: getting help and good ethical practice. These are more generic issues, but ones that should inform or shape every aspect of every research project that you undertake, and, indeed, your way of being in the world.

What is a professional researcher?

We would like to think that what you want is to become a professional research practitioner. So what is such a person like?

- They have a toolbox of personal attributes and skills that allow them to undertake academic research at an appropriate level in a professional and competent manner. The aim of this book, thus far, has been to give you some insight into what those attributes and skills are.
- They are capable of independent thought. They engage actively with the world and think creatively and innovatively about it. Good academics have a real buzz about them, interesting ideas and as much curiosity as killed the cat. They constantly ask questions. In this sense, they are a lot like young children who constantly, and often irritatingly, ask 'Why?'

  The actress Jodie Foster, who had been a star student at Yale, once made an alumni speech in which she told graduating students that 'it's not good enough to put change in the [parking] meter without questioning what the meter is doing there in the first place'

(*Guardian*, 19 December 1998). In similar vein, one of Rebecca's old mentors, and a senior academic, once told her that 'the job description of an academic is to ask difficult questions.' Even in these times of ever-increasing managerialisation, it is important to take your role as a public intellectual, who asks difficult questions, very seriously.

- At the same time as being self-reliant, you have to be self-reflexive and know your own limits. A good academic knows what they are good at and when they need to find others to compensate for their weaker areas or complement their expertise.
- Given what we've said about the need for good academics to be independent, critical and creative thinkers, it may sound paradoxical, but they also have to be capable of making a real contribution to a team. Being a good team member is about bringing your strengths to the team and about letting (and helping) other team members contribute theirs. In other words, you should neither dominate nor become a dogsbody. In a good team, the sum is greater than the parts and all members of the team recognise both the strengths and the weaknesses that they and others bring to it.
- Collegiality comes into teamwork but goes beyond it. Good researchers also need to be good colleagues. Ideally, this is about being part of a co-operative, self-directed community where you have a sense of belonging, mutuality and shared values. While it is important to look after yourself and protect your own interests, it is equally important not to become selfish and look *only* after yourself and your research.

Getting help but not being helpless

Becoming a good academic is a process of development, not an innate set of characteristics. Academics are not born, like Athena, fully formed from Zeus's head, or like supermarket chickens, oven-ready. Like any developmental process, people need help in getting there. Sadly, a lot of academics don't get the help they need. It's useful for mentors to ask themselves the question posed by an Australian academic, 'What sort of help helps?' Our primary motivation for writing the *Academic's Support Kit* is our perception that there are a

lot of people in universities who do not receive the kind of mentoring they should. That said, we can't emphasise enough that ultimately you are responsible for your own research career. You will frequently need to take the initiative and be a self-starter rather than waiting for other people to do it for you. A good mentor helps you to develop a strong sense of agency, as the following vignette illustrates.

> Cynthia was encouraging her doctoral students to become involved in academic publishing in various ways. She was particularly keen for them to get a good practical understanding of the publishing process and its different stages and practices. She therefore suggested to some of her students that they should offer to edit a special issue of a journal. In the process of doing this they learnt a lot about putting together a coherent set of papers around a common theme, the editing and refereeing process, negotiating with managing editors of journals, the time it takes to do such work and dealing with referees' feedback. The resulting special issue was accepted in its entirety by a respectable refereed academic journal and has now been published.

Why don't people get the help they need?

The reasons why people don't get the help they need are threefold. First, sometimes they are too proud, too shy or too scared to ask for help. These feelings are, in part, created and sustained by an academic environment in which there can be a perceived expectation that people will 'just be able to get on with it'. The fear of being 'found out' contributes to reluctance to ask for help. If you are someone who is quite capable and intelligent, others, who could help you, may not realise that you feel you need help.

Second, some of the more experienced and senior people who should be providing such help simply don't do their job. There are a variety of reasons. It may be because they are selfish with their time and energies or because they had to 'just get on with it' themselves and see this as a kind of rite of passage for becoming an academic. Equally, they may simply not have the know-how that you need – they may even be ill equipped to do the job they have been promoted into. They may have

poor social or communication skills and simply don't realise that others need their help or they don't know how to offer help. They might be judgemental or prejudiced – thinking, for example, that it's not worth the effort to help women with young families to develop a research career. Or they may be going through a period where they are, themselves, under considerable personal or professional stress and simply have no reserves of time or energy to help others. Those in the last group, will, however, come round when they get control of their lives and when times are better.

Third, some institutions simply don't take the formal training needs of staff seriously. Training courses can be useful ways of plugging specific skill gaps. Some institutions in some countries have got better at putting resources into the continuing professional development of academics, but it isn't general. The best training is an extension, or formalisation, of the help provided by good experienced academics. However, some staff training is provided by people who don't really understand what it is to be an academic. Consequently, they may put on courses that suffer from poor pedagogy or inadequate content. However, it has to be said that the very worst training, in our experience, is for management, appraisal or teaching rather than for research. Certainly you should lobby your university to provide the training you need but sometimes you may have to resort to putting on courses yourself. The following vignette shows that this can sometimes shame your university into attending to your and your colleagues' needs.

Jenny and four of her colleagues wanted to be trained in the use of NVivo. Using her contacts, she located a suitable external trainer. The trainer was expensive, unless a full complement of participants could be recruited on to the course and the cost shared between them all. Jenny advertised the availability of the three surplus places around the faculty. She was inundated with requests for places. She eventually organised training for sixty-four people. All the trainees were positive and enthusiastic about the training they had received and most are now planning to use NVivo in their research. The university has, as a consequence of the demand created by this training, bought a site licence for the software.

Can I really ask for help?

We think that getting help, advice and support in your academic research is a reasonable entitlement, especially given the pressures to 'perform' that you are likely to be under. But, like any entitlement, it also brings with it certain obligations.

Because the sorts of help, advice and support you are likely to need will be particular to you, and because we live in the real world, it is likely that you will have to be proactive in identifying what you need and seeking it out. Don't expect others to automatically divine what it is you need help with and freely offer it unrequested. Your colleagues are not mind-readers and are also busy with their own research and other work.

If you are at the very beginning of your research career, it is unlikely that you will be able to specify what your needs are, beyond saying that you need help in getting started. We hope that this book has gone some way towards helping you identify what you don't know and can't do as well as what you do know and can do. If you are at the very beginning, what you need is a friendly face, someone who will take an interest in your plans and take the time to chat with you and, metaphorically, hold your hand in the early stages. They may be able to give you the help you need at this stage themselves, or they may be able to point you in the direction of alternative sources of assistance. Often what you need is someone to give you enough confidence to feel that you can make a start, no matter how small your first step is.

Josie was a recently appointed lecturer who had successfully completed her MA but had not yet begun to establish herself as a researcher. The department she worked in had a tradition of getting more junior academics to join the research teams of those more experienced, but not of supporting them to do their own research. Josie wanted to do her own research and to register for a PhD in order to give her work some structure. The problem was that she didn't really know what it was that she wanted to do for her PhD project and didn't feel that anyone in her own department would be willing or able to help her define it, as that simply was not their way of working.

She became friendly with a new professor in another department whom she met at a management meeting. They met socially and she discussed her ambition to become a researcher and the problems of doing so in her own department. The professor encouraged her to continue in this vein and suggested that she write a brief research proposal outlining her interests. Josie did so, and the professor read it and suggested that it still needed to be focused. She also said that she was not really the best person to help Josie develop the proposal further and sent her to another senior woman in her (the professor's) department. Josie had several meetings with this other woman, and eventually narrowed her focus sufficiently to be able to write an excellent research proposal. She was accepted to do her PhD in one of the most prestigious departments in the country at another university and her own department agreed to pay half her fees.

By now perhaps you have embarked on an initial research project based on a well worked-through project proposal. If so, you should have a sense of the sorts of help, advice and support you need. The types of things you might need help with include:

- Library skills.
- Understanding or 'getting into' theory and theoretical debates.
- Locating and joining suitable networks of like-minded researchers.
- Particular data collection and analysis techniques and tools.
- Writing.
- Finding conference venues to present your work and preparing for those presentations.
- Finding suitable journals to send your papers to.
- Organising your research.
- Thinking about how you might move on from one topic to a research agenda or a personal intellectual project.
- Finding ways of gaining access to research respondents, archives and other sources of data.

Always remember that you are perfectly within your rights to ask for help on such topics. What's more, you would be foolish if you decided to struggle on miserably on your own.

Conversely, it is not okay to expect anyone or any system to carry you, to do your work for you, to mother you or to generally accept responsibility for your own personal professional development as a researcher. It is perfectly okay to have needs. It is not okay to be an over-dependent complete pain in the behind: this is unlikely to endear you to those people whom you most need to help you.

Sue's early academic experiences had, through no fault of her own, severely affected her confidence in her ability to do research. A new head of department established a new mentoring system. The head of department and the person responsible for the mentoring scheme took care to ensure that Sue got a mentor who would be sympathetic to her problems and patient with her because her previous experience had made her distrustful and lacking in confidence. Sue worked hard with her new mentor, who in turn devoted enormous amounts of time and energy to her – seeing her once or twice a week in the early stages. Over the ensuing six months, with consistent support, Sue was able to analyse some data that she had previously collected but hadn't known what to do with, write a conference paper, deliver it at the conference and submit it for publication in an international journal. During the summer vacation, when her mentor was away, Sue was notified that her paper had been accepted, subject to minor revisions. On her own she made the changes, resubmitted the paper and it was accepted for publication. Sue has now registered for a PhD – something that she would never have countenanced before this confidence-building mentoring process.

What Sue's story shows is that, with help, even people who have had the worst of experiences can grow into being capable of taking responsibility for their work, defining a project and developing their own research career. Sue will continue to need advice and support – as all doctoral students and emergent researchers do – but she now does so as an confident and self-knowing person who is making reasonable demands of a system that has a duty to provide care and support if it wants her to do research.

As people who regularly have to provide support and help to colleagues, we would ask you to make strenuous efforts to avoid the following behaviours:

- Always assuming that those helping you are available 24/7 to deal with your problems, or that your problems are the most important thing in their lives.
- Dominating groups, meetings, etc., with your requirements and needs.
- Giving someone something to read and then getting upset if they can't turn it round and give you feedback immediately. They will have many other competing demands on their time.
- Ignoring advice and feedback on your writing without good reason.

On the whole, our experience is that people don't always have a sense that it is okay to ask for support and help. At the other extreme, some people become time and emotion vultures. The best way to get balance is to sit down with the person or people helping you and agree about the basis on which you are going to get help. There will be an implicit/tacit contract in any such support relationship anyway, and it is better to make it explicit. Those who provide help and support are human beings with their own lives, needs and pressures. You need to achieve a certain level of reciprocity: the relationship should not be all one way.

How do I avoid bad advice and how do I know it when I get it?

This is a tough question. It's a bit like when your car breaks down. You take it to a garage you don't know and the mechanic takes one look underneath and comes up for air shaking his head, muttering, and talks about expensive parts and big labour bills. You know nothing about cars. What do you do? Is his advice good or is he incompetent or trying to take advantage of your credit card? There are a number of strategies that you might take to avoid the risk of bad advice – with your car or with your research:

- Take your car to a garage you know and trust. Similarly, seek help from sources that you know and trust. Look for people who are successful researchers themselves and who have a reputation among colleagues for being helpful, supportive and collegial. Pick your source with care.
- If you don't know any garages, or any good sources of research help, ask around among people like yourself.
- If the mechanic makes you feel stupid and undermined there is a fair chance that they are trying to deceive you. Similarly, if the person helping you isn't building your confidence but instead is bullying you, making you feel awful about yourself or is trying to get you to do their work instead of your own, then find another source of help.
- If the mechanic disparages the garage down the road, trying to get you to stick with them, it is reasonable to assume that they don't want to be exposed for having given the wrong information. Similarly, if the person or people trying to help you try to prevent you from speaking to anyone except themselves they may be trying to exploit you, make you their own 'little helper' or otherwise prevent you from developing your own academic research identity and independence. The idea is that you get help to become an independent free-thinking academic, not that you are caught in someone's shadow, doing their bidding.

By implication, if your help and advice are the inverse of all this, then it's probably pretty good.

What are my potential sources of advice and support?

Advice, support and help tend to have two principal dimensions: the formal/informal and the obligatory/discretionary. In our experience, the utilisation and provision of formal sources is to some extent or another obligatory whilst informal sources are more likely to be taken up and offered on a discretionary basis. As with everything, how well all these things works is dependent not only on having good systems but on the individuals involved, how they choose to make them work (or not) and their interpersonal dynamics.

We set out below a range of sources of help, advice and assistance that you might choose to access and to offer others.

Research degree supervisors or advisers

This is at the far end of the scale in terms of formality. If you are registered for a research degree your university will have regulations that require you to have at least one supervisor/adviser. For the supervisor, this is formally allocated work for which they are accountable to the university. They should have clearly set out responsibilities and duties with regard to being your supervisor. This should ease the pain of getting them to help you: in a very formal sense, they are simply doing their job.

Every supervisory relationship is different, and the expectations of supervisors/advisers will, to some extent, differ from department to department, from university to university and even from country to country. Broadly, you should expect the following sorts of things from your supervisor/adviser:

- They should know enough about your research topic to be able to start you off in a good direction and keep you on track. Inevitably, the culmination of a successful research degree programme is distinguished by your becoming more expert than your supervisor and probably *the* expert in that particular field.
- They will engage with you on an intellectual level around your research topic. They should suggest readings and be able to challenge you in constructive ways on your ideas.
- They should be able to provide practical advice on matters such as organising your research, data collection and data analysis. It's no good trying to be supervised by someone who has never done your type of research before.
- They should be someone with whom you can engage critically on ethical issues.
- They can and do help you develop your writing skills, not only for the thesis but also for publication of your research.
- They put you in contact with wider academic networks and help you develop your own.
- They can and will help you develop your wider and long-term academic career profile and think about that proactively. In short, they should also act as a sort of career mentor, not just a research adviser.
- They treat you with respect, courtesy and consideration, but at the same time are sufficiently demanding to keep you going when you are feeling demotivated and demoralised.

Unfortunately, bad supervisory practice abounds. The reasons why it doesn't work are numerous. Sometimes, the interpersonal dynamics in what should be a very close intellectual and academic friendship simply aren't right. This may not be anyone's fault. It may just be that the chemistry is wrong. In that case, you should discuss the problem with your supervisor and, if it can't be resolved, request a change of supervisor.

Sometimes the relationship doesn't work because the supervisor fails to take his/her responsibilities seriously enough or does not even know what they are. On other occasions the supervisor simply may know enough about your area of research. Sadly, few universities provide proper training on how to supervise research students well and supervisors have only their own, sometimes very bad, experience to guide them. Sometimes students have to 'manage upwards': seeking to define the relationship in such a way that they get what they need. Your relationship with your supervisor/adviser is a partnership in which both sides have responsibilities and you are entitled to have reasonable expectations about the other party's behaviour. If there is not a good match between their expertise and your topic then you should discuss with your supervisor whether to change supervisors or to add someone with complementary expertise to your advisory team.

How can you avoid some, or all, of these problems? As with any prospective long-term, significant relationship, don't get into bed with someone you don't know. Beware of universities that simply tell you that you will be 'assigned' a supervisor or adviser. Departments with good research degree programmes and good supervisory arrangements would never accept students for whom they did not have an entirely appropriate supervisor.

For such a significant person, or people, you need to do your homework: check out their academic and personal reputation; discuss your proposed topic with them; read what they have written; see if they are willing to give you helpful and constructive advice on your draft proposal before you have registered. If you are applying to do a research degree in another country, it is particularly important to find out about your prospective supervisor before you accept a place on a programme. If at all possible, arrange to meet your prospective supervisor or, at the very least, have an email and/or telephone conversation with them. Overall, you have to judge whether this is a person you like, can work closely with and who can help you in ways that are appropriate and good for you.

Increasingly, universities are willing to support members of staff who do not have a doctorate in obtaining one. In such circumstances, and

TABLE 4 Where to do your PhD

Factor	Own institution	Other institution
Finance	Usually no fee payable	A fee may be payable
Supervision	May not have a supervisor with the right expertise who is also sufficiently distanced from you	Choice of supervisor will be far less constrained
Institutional care	May have a greater vested interest in you succeeding at your PhD as part of their staff development. Conversely, may want to extract the maximum amount of teaching and administrative work from you	May have less commitment to you as an individual as a part-time student rather than a full-time colleague. Conversely their imperatives and demands may be a useful lever to help you manage your workload downwards in your own institution
Geography	Your supervisor may be more readily accessible	You may have to travel long distances to meet your supervisor and regular informal contact may be quite problematic
Widening perspectives	May promote parochialism in intellectual thought and even when it doesn't it's less likely to surprise you as you already know these people	More likely to challenge your thinking and widen your perspectives and you can bring something back to your own institution. Increases your knowledge of how other institutions organise things

for understandable reasons to do with financial and other resources, they are likely to encourage their staff to do a research degree within their own department or institution. This may or may not be the best course to follow. Each case needs to be carefully evaluated on its own merits. Table 4 may help you think/argue this matter through.

Formal/informal mentoring schemes

Much of what we have said about supervisors/advisers applies equally to research mentors, whether formal or informal. So if you skipped that section because you are not a research degree student and don't intend to become one, you might like to go back and read it.

By mentoring, what we mean is someone who takes an interest in you, your research and your career and is in a position which enables them to help you develop them. They will, therefore, be more experienced than you are.

When Roxanne was coming towards the end of her PhD she was fortunate to meet Ludmilla, a senior academic prominent in the field of gender and education. Roxanne was working in an administrative capacity to earn some money at a summer school for distance learners. Ludmilla was a very inclusive course director and made sure that Roxanne was included in all meetings and in as many of the academic activities as was practical and appropriate. Following the summer school, Ludmilla invited Roxanne to join a symposium she was organising at a major international conference – Roxanne's first-ever conference paper. Since then, Ludmilla has helped Roxanne to shape her research agenda, offered her significant opportunities for publication, ensured that she was invited to take part in seminars where other significant academics in her field would be present and acted as a referee and informal career adviser.

Some universities or departments have established formal research mentoring schemes. This means that better established researchers in the department are formally matched with their less experienced colleagues on a one-to-one basis. Done properly, these schemes can be invaluable, as can be seen from the vignette of Sue and her research mentor. The reason they are valuable is that they can make sure that everyone who needs it has a port of call when they need help with their research. When they work well, no-one should slip through the net of research support and advice. An advantage of formal mentoring schemes is that they signal the willingness of those acting as mentors to give their time and effort to such work. This can make the mentees feel a bit better about 'bothering' their mentors and consequently more likely to use them.

Conversely, formal schemes can work badly. In some schemes, mentors are assigned without any consultation or agreement and often with little care. Mentors may regard their position as giving them *carte blanche* to become bossy or controlling with their mentees. Sometimes these schemes are honoured more in the breach than in the

observance. At their best they work something like, albeit probably less intensively, a doctoral supervisory relationship.

Whether or not you have a formal mentoring scheme in your department, you can also seek out informal mentors. Sometimes concerned senior academics will seek you out. These informal mentors may be in your own department, elsewhere in your institution or even at another university. They may be people you have met at conferences, through your own wider research community, journal editors or through teaching or committees as in the case of Roxanne, above. They may also be your ex-teachers for your first or master's degree.

Inexperienced researchers often seem quite surprised that anyone should take a genuine interest in their research well-being. In fact, most good academics regard this kind of work as integral to, and one of the most rewarding aspects of, their professional practice. Many of them will be genuinely delighted if they find an early career researcher who is interested in the same stuff that they are and will derive pleasure from working with you and in watching you grow and succeed as a researcher. Many of these people will have benefited from just this sort of help when they were in your position, and should see this work as payback time. Alternatively, they may have received no such help and wish they had – their efforts represent an attempt to help you avoid the difficulties that they encountered.

You will have to rely on your judgement in deciding whether to accept proffered help or who to approach yourself. Be aware that some unscrupulous characters may just be keen to get their grubby hands on your data or your good ideas. However, fear of this shouldn't deter you from accepting genuine offers. In seeking out a mentor the same kinds of considerations apply as in seeking a good research degree supervisor or adviser. They are most likely to be a work colleague, so you should be able to have a pretty good feel for what kind of person they are.

Julie had been a teaching member of staff for many years. She became increasingly anxious as, simultaneously, the university wound down the specialist subjects that she taught and she came under pressure to become research-active. The Director of Research in her department made a practice of having a 'fireside chat' with all members of staff at least once a year, just to see how they were getting on and whether the department could offer any further support and assistance.

During this chat, Julie and the Director of Research realised that they had a very strong mutual interest in the subject of taxation. Julie had excellent technical expertise and the Director of Research was able to frame the issues in a more theoretical way. The Director of Research suggested that Julie should conduct some research on this issue, gave her some ideas about how to approach it and suggested that she could come back for further help whenever she needed it.

Julie has proven herself to be a good independent worker. At each stage in her subsequent research she went off and tackled the task, returning to her mentor when she needed feedback on how she had done and advice as to what the next stage was. Within six months of their initial chat, Julie had written a paper and presented it at a major conference.

Staff appraisal

As part of what an English academic calls the 'creeping cancer of managerialism' most universities around the world have some sort of formal staff performance review or appraisal. This can be a formal system for grading academics' performance in order to make decisions about tenure, promotion or levels of pay. Alternatively, it can be a system designed as more akin to a formal mentoring system with the added advantage that any developmental needs identified as a result of the appraisal process are formally notified to the university to action. (However, don't hold your breath that anything will actually happen.) The worst sort of scheme fraudulently attempts to marry these two approaches, pretending to be helpful and supportive whilst really evaluating your performance the better to control you as an employee. Here we are talking only about those systems designed to act as types of mentoring schemes.

Such schemes can be extremely helpful, for two reasons. First, they make the university pay individual attention and consideration to each employee on a regular and individual basis. Second, they give the individual a formal opening to discuss what is concerning them, how they feel they're getting on and what the university can do to further their research efforts. Such appraisals will take quite a long time and, to use it properly, both you and your appraiser need to prepare well. We think it important that such meetings are completely confidential, apart from an agreed record of what the university should be

providing for you, and should be addressing to help its academic staff. In other words, the record should not be about your performance but about that of the university. To paraphrase John F. Kennedy, in appraisal, but especially in records of appraisal, you should ask not what you can do for the university but what the university can and should do for you.

As with any other form of mentoring help that you get, in appraisal processes you should be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect, and you should make sure that you get positive help and guidance from your appraiser. Sometimes the management of universities attempt to impose schemes that are not regarded by academics themselves as optimal for these purposes. There's many a slip betwixt cup and lip, and many academic departments, in such circumstances, freely adapt the scheme to something that is good for them while maintaining the fiction to the university administrators that the scheme is operating entirely as designed. We could not possibly condone such behaviour …

Ken's anxieties about not doing research had reached crisis point when he had to have a formal staff appraisal. The professors in his department had objected to the university appraisal scheme because they saw it as insufficiently supportive and had 'tweaked' it so that it would be genuinely helpful to colleagues.

Ken carefully identified one of the professors, a well known and enthusiastic researcher, as likely to understand his dilemma over research. In a nerve-racking interview Ken confessed that he felt under awful pressure to do research but didn't know how to do it. It was evident to his appraiser that he was extremely stressed and unhappy.

During the course of the appraisal interview, the sympathetic appraiser helped Ken to decide that he wanted to explore whether or not he could do research and identify an outline research topic about which he was enthusiastic. Subsequently, the professor acted as his mentor and research partner and Ken is now regarded as an active emerging researcher in his department.

He subsequently admitted to the professor and other colleagues that he had fully expected his appraisal to result in dismissal from his post. This confession was an object lesson to his appraiser, who had previously failed to appreciate the very serious stresses that some colleagues felt under with regard to research.

Research training courses

We have already written briefly about research training. Most institutions, these days, provide access to training for their research students, at least, and usually extend this availability to all academic staff. They may also provide research training specifically for staff, particularly in the use of IT. Training courses may also be offered by disciplinary associations, by other universities which open them up 'for sale' or by analogous professional bodies.

You will need to make a judgement about whether you need these and will benefit from them. Don't become a training junkie and don't go on courses where you can't see any short or medium-term use for them. That is just research work avoidance. On the other hand, if you identify a need for a particular piece of training, don't be afraid to ask for it, perhaps justifying the running of a course by demonstrating that others in your department, faculty or university would also benefit. As with mentors and supervisors/advisers there are good and bad trainers. If you can, it is worth asking around to find the good courses on the topics or issues that you need help with.

Research teams

By research team we mean a combination of any number of researchers (more than one) who are working together on a project or series of projects which may or may not be externally funded. Teams can be formally constituted or be just two or more people who have decided to work together.

Being a member of a research team can bring mixed blessings. Being in a good team can give you support, teach you new skills, overcome isolation and help you to get good access, a good reputation and publications. Conversely, in poor research teams the inexperienced or novice researchers are thoroughly exploited: they do the dogsbody footwork, are 'invisible' professionally in that they are not credited with the work they have done (especially in any publications) and can have poor security of employment. If you work with a good team it can be one of the best research experiences ever. If you work with a bad one, it can make you very unhappy indeed and/or seriously prejudice your career prospects. If in the early stages, for example

when the proposal is being drawn up, you are excluded, bullied or 'put upon' you should not hesitate to withdraw from the team. A team that starts in that way will carry on that way. They never mend their ways.

Before you join any team, it is a good idea to thoroughly check out your prospective colleagues in much the same way as you would a supervisor/adviser or mentor. Make sure that your expected contribution to the endeavour and the *modus operandi* of the team are clearly articulated. In particular, get prior agreement on matters such as who gets named on publications and in what order.

Don't forget that, even as a 'junior' partner, you will have something useful to bring to the party. Don't underestimate the real value of someone who will do basic and often routine work such as searching the literature, gathering data or keeping the project archive. You aren't necessarily being exploited if that is your contribution: you are probably learning and rehearsing valuable skills and also learning how larger projects function. You should also be able, in a good team, and in time, to develop into a more 'senior' member, contributing your own ideas and suggestions for ways of moving the work forward. We have more to say on research teams and funded research in *Winning and Managing Research Funding*.

Research centres

Often, academics in particular universities come together in different sorts of combinations than the regular departments or faculties. These may be constituted as research centres. The main reason why people set up centres is to give a better profile to the particular area of research that they are working in (and thereby attract more external funding). They also aim to provide a focal point for collegiate research activities around particular research agendas.

Centres can be good places for the emergent researcher to hang out: they are often interdisciplinary; provide a lively intellectual environment in a specific area; have plenty of on-going projects and research teams; and can attract prestigious visiting speakers and fellows, enabling emergent researchers to meet inspiring people who are the leaders in their field. They are sometimes quite well resourced financially. A good research centre will be a warm and welcoming place for beginning researchers.

Robyn was director of a very successful research centre in Australia. She made a point of involving doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows and early career researchers in all centre activities. A representative of each of these groups was included on the centre steering committee. They were encouraged to invite their own visiting scholars, to run their own seminars, initiate reading and writing groups and, where possible, were involved in externally funded research projects.

Reading groups

A reading group is an informal collection of people who are interested in similar sorts of literature or areas of research. They agree to meet regularly to discuss a prearranged paper, book or report. The purpose is to help people in the group get to grips with difficult theory or keep on top of new developments in the literature in that area. The group can be a very enjoyable and non-threatening way of doing this. In time, they may well become research teams as people start to coalesce around particular topics of mutual interest.

If no reading group exists for you to join, you might think about collecting some of your colleagues together and setting one up. Debbie has found that joining or setting up reading groups has been one of the most productive and supportive aspects of her academic career. She has made new academic friends, enjoyed a mutually supportive environment and read much more widely than she might otherwise have.

Research networks and associations

These are discussed at length in *Building Networks*, but it is pertinent to make some brief points here. Many academic discipline areas have associations of researchers, such as the American Accounting Association, the International Sociological Association, the Australian Association for Research in Education, the Modern Languages Association (in the USA) and the American Historical Association. These provide a focal point for communities of like-minded researchers. They usually engage in activities such as running conferences, publishing their own journals, staging doctoral colloquia, organising research training or setting up special sub-groupings for doctoral

students. In addition, these associations usually facilitate the organisation of special interest groups (SIGs): sub-groups of people with more specific interests.

It is worth joining the appropriate association in your country, other countries and possibly some international ones. This will give you access to a community of scholars outside your institution, conferences, special workshops and so on. They can be good places to start to develop a wider network of support and help.

Outside such organisations, or if one doesn't exist, from time to time academics set up an informal network or grouping to help keep in touch and give each other support and share information. The Internet and email present an excellent way of doing this: both for identifying potential members and for staying in touch.

Peers and academic friends

The most important and long-lasting support that you can get will come from your peers and academic friends. Academia is a global community with relatively few inhabitants. This, combined with our propensity to move jobs and travel a lot, means that we often have quite a close-knit but geographically spread group of friends. It is this kind of friendship network that led Debbie and Rebecca in the UK to be writing this *Kit* with Jane in Australia. These sorts of friendships go well beyond the sorts of workplace friendships that people in other occupations tend to form. We think that it is a big compensation for what can otherwise be very hard work.

Is it okay to use such friendship networks as a source of help? We think so: friendships are, by definition, mutually supportive and everyone benefits over the long term. While one person may be more in need of support at one time, someone else will receive it at others. These networks are like help banks. Sometimes you pay in and sometimes you withdraw. We can't tell you how to find your friends, obviously, but participating in the research culture of your department, university or general disciplinary field is an obvious first step.

Jo and Hilary met because they were doing their PhDs with the same supervisor. They quickly discovered that they shared theoretical interests and enjoyed each other's company in a variety of ways. They

have subsequently published papers, developed conference symposia and research proposals together. Having completed their PhDs and gone on to academic appointments at different universities they remain in close contact and regularly give each other support and academic feedback for their teaching and research.

Everyone has to form their own relationships, but here are some of the ways in which we have benefited from our friendship networks in terms of:

- Kicking around new and half-baked ideas in a safe space where we know we won't be laughed at, thought stupid or ripped off.
- Reading of papers in early drafts by supportive but critical friends.
- Notification of and invitations to participate in interesting conferences, seminar series or research projects.
- Joint research and writing projects.
- Interesting and inspiring conversations.
- Knowing people at conferences whom you can hang around and have fun with.
- Telling us about interesting things that they've read which we should be reading too.

Librarians

University librarians are brilliant. We have found, with the utmost consistency, that whilst they are usually not researchers in their own right, they are very good scholars who take pleasure in having a comprehensive knowledge of the literature of the area in which they specialise and helping academics to access it. Even in times of straitened resources, they will usually do their utmost to help you. They also tend to be enormously patient as they take you, again and again, through the processes by which you can do literature searches, use the Web, and access international databases of literature. Cultivate good relations with them and respect their expertise. They will rarely let you down.

Books on research techniques

There are lots of books out there on how to do research and you may want to read some of them. Some are better than others, and we have

picked the ones we like in our Further Reading suggestions. Ironically, whilst one of the objects of research activity is to write and publish, academics rarely write and publish well on how to do research. Ultimately, learning how to do research is an experiential process, which requires a period of 'apprenticeship' either through doctoral studies or through active engagement in research and using such help and advice as are available. Books can help to some extent, but they provide a far from complete answer.

Ethical practice in research

We've already touched on the question of ethics in this book and now want to deal with it in more detail. We first of all want to draw a distinction between the structures for ethical approval for research which risk-averse universities and funding or research commissioning bodies establish and the notion of ethical practice as a research professional. We deal with each in turn.

Research governance is becoming a very trendy term. It basically means universities ensuring that they have in place formal procedures for 'ensuring' that 'good practice' is always followed. A major aspect of research governance arrangements is the establishment of procedures for scrutinising ethical aspects of proposed work and granting approval for it to proceed. The most common manifestations of these systems are university ethics committees and formal guidelines for the conduct of research.

We have mixed feelings about such formal systems. On the one hand, we find it hard to criticise the notion that researchers should always seek to apply the highest possible ethical standards in their research work. On the other, our experience tells us that all too often ethics committees represent the triumph of form over content. They may punctiliously insist that researchers keep to strict research protocols to avoid risk to the university regarding, for instance, the storage of data, but remain blind to issues such as the wider socio-economic consequences for marginalised groups of the release of that data. They may also insist on researchers following particular rules, regardless of their adverse impact on the research or the participants in it. Ethics committees are gatekeepers who can effectively stop your research going ahead if they are in some way prejudiced against it, as George's story shows.

George wanted to do his masters research, a substantial undertaking in Australia, on the masculinities of young men who identified as gay whilst still at school. The Ethics Committee of his prestigious university insisted that he could not interview school students without the informed consent and written permission of their parents. Obtaining this would have necessitated informing the parents that the young men identified as gay. However, the potential research respondents themselves, with few exceptions, had kept their sexuality a closely guarded secret from their parents and did not want them to know. Indeed, many of them felt that their family relationships would be seriously damaged, that they might be thrown out of their homes and even that they might suffer physical harm should their sexuality become known within their families. In the event, George changed his research proposal so that he interviewed older men about their experiences when they were at school. This resulted in a successful masters dissertation, but did not – and could not – capture the kind of fresh experience that George had hoped for.

Of course, you will have to ensure that your research projects comply with the formal requirements of your institution and/or funder. Reference to the relevant ethical guidelines of your research association may prove helpful in demonstrating to ethics committees that your proposed research is of a satisfactory ethical standard. However, far more important in our view is that you develop a good sense of what it means to be a good ethical practitioner in your research.

Key to ethical practice is that you think carefully, deeply and reflexively about the power relationships in the research process. What sorts of power relationships do we mean?

Consequences

When people agree to act as respondents in research it is important to respect them, and to understand the consequences that your intervention in their life may have. Speaking with you might bring to the surface difficult feelings, memories or emotions – only for you to leave their lives almost immediately, carrying your data (their lives)

with you. We see this as tantamount to the researcher acting as vampire. Moreover, our dissemination and publication of respondents' stories may expose them individually or as a community in many undesirable ways. Anonymity for an individual may be ineffective if the published research leads to the vilification of the group of which that person is a member. We therefore have to be both respectful and caring of respondents whilst we are engaging with them, but also mindful of the consequences of our findings for them and their wider group.

In a project that Debbie was involved in on how schools deal with violence, the team was very exercised about how to maintain the confidentiality of the schools which eventually took part in the research. The researchers realised that it had taken a great deal of courage on the part of the management teams of these schools, particularly where the schools were having considerable difficulty in handling the levels of violence within them. The researchers therefore made a number of decisions early in the project. They decided on pseudonyms for the schools before gathering any data and scrupulously referred to the schools in all their notes and transcripts by these. This meant that even if some of the data accidentally got lost or left on someone's desk so that anyone who came into the room, such as a cleaner, might see, the school would not be identifiable by name. They also agreed, and wrote it into their contracts with the schools, that at no time would they do more than identify London as the city within which the schools were located and they would never mention where in London the schools were situated. This meant that they were limited in the way they wrote about the schools and their neighbourhoods and had to be very careful about their descriptions. However, they feel that the price was well worth paying in order to undertake the research.

Blast from the past

In some cases, researchers make use of historical data. The fact that the data may be about, or produced by, people who are long dead

does not exempt the researchers from their ethical obligations. It can also raise some interesting ethical dilemmas. For instance, if you are doing research that involves the use of diaries or private papers, you should give serious consideration to whether the individuals who wrote them intended them for public consumption. We are not saying that you shouldn't use such material, but you should engage with the on-going debates about the ethics of such uses. Often, the descendants or other keepers of such papers may have concerns about the impact of your use of such material, as these two vignettes show.

In Australia there is an on-going debate about the use by historians of material describing Aboriginal culture written and collected by white colonialists (who subjected Aboriginal people to genocidal acts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries). Aboriginal communities are concerned about the indiscriminate use of material produced by their oppressors that purports to describe their cultures and communities. One response to this by some state archivists has been to place access to such material under the control of the relevant indigenous groups. More broadly, a number of institutions have developed specific ethical guidelines for any research project that involves indigenous people or artefacts.

Asha's doctoral research included biographical work on some nineteenth- and twentieth-century collectors of Chinese art and artefacts. She needed access to the private papers of these individuals, some of which were in archives and some in the hands of their descendants. She found that the keepers of the papers were generally extremely generous in allowing her access and, in some cases, opening their homes to her. As she wrote about the collectors, she became concerned that some of her more negative judgements might make her gatekeepers feel betrayed. While she did not wish to compromise her academic judgement, she was, nevertheless, careful in her expression so that she felt that she would be able to send the material to their descendants with a clear conscience and without causing them undue offence or pain.

Be generous

A further area of ethical practice is in our relations and working practices with colleagues. In essence, this is about being a good colleague. Most aspects of unethical behaviour are perfectly obvious: plagiarism and other ways of not respecting the intellectual property of others such as stealing their research ideas; stymieing others' research efforts and careers in an attempt to further your own interests or out of plain jealousy; not acknowledging the contribution of other people to your research; promoting research on the basis of favouritism rather than merit; and not giving people proper credit in the authorship of publications. We believe in the old adage 'what goes round comes round': that if you are mean now it will just come back to haunt you. Be generous, and others will generally be generous with you.

The good citizen

Researchers have a responsibility to the wider communities in which they live. We have already noted that one of the marks of a 'good academic' is that they take seriously their role as public intellectuals. What does this mean in practice? It means being aware of the impact that your research may have on how people think, what they believe and how they act. It means being prepared to talk to people who are not academics about your research without talking down to them – recognising that they are a legitimate audience for what you have to say, for their own reasons. Above all, you should never regard yourself as the producer of 'objective knowledge' the use of which you can or should dissociate yourself from.

And finally ...

What we've done in this book is suggest to you ways in which you might take the first steps towards becoming a researcher. We have looked at the generation of research topics, the refining of research questions, how to write a research proposal to act as a route map through the process, some practical points about actually doing your research and, finally, some thoughts about moving on and developing

as a researcher. Reading this whole book in one go may make the process of undertaking a research project appear quite intimidating. But you should bear in mind that the process we've described may take place over a prolonged period of months or even years, giving you time to reflect and learn as you go. Remember, also, that we've been trying to give you the kind of advice in one small book that we give to people we work with as and when they need it.

The reality of most researchers' lives is that this process of undertaking research projects is repeated iteratively. Everyone learns as they go along, and we haven't stopped yet.

Cumulatively, research projects should develop into research agendas, and eventually they should reflect the personal intellectual projects of individual researchers. Most people's research eventually runs in a series of parallel streams. But those streams aren't self-contained: there are points at which they meet, run together and then sometimes separate again.

As such, it's important to regard your research from the very beginning as the start of a life's work. You need to put in place all the practical things that will help you. This includes developing your skills, building your library and accumulating data, evidence and other materials that will sustain subsequent and continuing research projects.

Through all this, you need to think about achieving an identity as a researcher. The nature of academic research work is such that it isn't usually constrained by fixed working hours or a set place of work. As such it becomes an integral, rather than a discrete, part of our everyday lives.

Although these sorts of work practices can be stressful, there is a beneficial aspect. It can be nice to do the kind of work which has a lot of flexibility and which becomes an enjoyable aspect of our everyday existence.

Further Reading

Coffey, A. and Atkinson, P. (1996) *Making Sense of Qualitative Data*, Thousand Oaks CA, London and New Delhi: Sage. This book introduces new researchers to the many different ways of analysing qualitative data. It is written in accessible language and provides a practical resource for thinking about the range of analytic approaches available to the qualitative researcher. It avoids a narrow 'how to' approach and is constructed as a tool to think through and make choices about data analysis, emphasising that there is no one way to do it. The book offers practical examples of the stages of analysis of 'real' data, from coding to narrative analysis, from theorising the data to using computer software as an aid to analysis. This gives the reader a valuable understanding of the processes of data analysis while avoiding an over-practical 'guide' that distorts data analysis as a mechanical set of linear steps.

Creswell, J.W. (2003) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks CA, London and New Delhi: Sage. This book is aimed at research students or academics who are working on developing an academic paper. The book breaks down the processes involved in writing a research paper into a set of steps, although this may suggest to the reader that research is a neat process made up of predictable stages. The strength of the book is that it considers the use of mixed methods, as well as separate qualitative and/or quantitative methods, and examines the ethical issues that may arise from these different research approaches. The book usefully includes many exercises to help engage the reader in making connections between their own research and the discussion in the book.

Golden-Biddle, K. and Locke, K.D. (1997) *Composing Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks CA, London and New Delhi: Sage. This book is immensely refreshing because it adopts a vehemently anti-'writing-up' stance, choosing instead to see writing as an integral part of the qualitative research process. The book carefully takes readers through the theoretical underpinnings of this approach and then delineates the various stages in the writing process. It is richly illustrated with examples of cogent and successful academic writing and is very well written itself.

Hollway, W. and Jefferson, T. (2000) *Doing Qualitative Research Differently: Free Association, Narrative and the Interview Method,* Thousand Oaks CA, London and Delhi: Sage. This is not designed as a manual but rather as a substantive exploration of using psychoanalytic approaches in qualitative research. It uses the case of research on fear of crime to argue for such approaches when asking 'why' questions – particularly those related to identity. It is worth reading, whether or not you do this kind of research, because of the important points it makes about method and, in particular, its excellent discussion of ethical issues in research.

Marshall, C. and Rossman, G.B. (1999) *Designing Qualitative Research,* 3rd edn, Thousand Oaks CA, London and New Delhi: Sage. This is a valuable book for those writing a research proposal for the first time. Marshall and Rossman identify two main aspects of the research proposal: the conceptual framework and the design soundness. The chapters then provide detailed and in-depth accounts of the ways to write a proposal that meets the challenges of these two aspects. The book engages the reader in thinking through the connections between the 'what' of the research, or the conceptual framework, and the 'do-ability' of the research, linking the methods with theoretical, epistemological and methodological underpinnings. The vignettes that are used to illustrate the process of constructing an argument in a proposal, giving examples of how others have approached the research proposal and have been able to convince the reviewer(s) that the researcher is worthwhile, 'do-able' and methodologically sound. The variety of vignettes offered helps the reader to think through his or her own research approaches.

May, T. (ed.) (2002) *Qualitative Research in Action*, London, Thousand Oaks CA and New Delhi: Sage. This collection considers the theoretical, methodological and epistemological complexities of contemporary qualitative research practices. It focuses on the connections between research theory and practice. The book is divided up into thematic sections, with the aim of providing coherence as well as highlighting links between research process and product. The central theme running through the book is 'issues in practice' and this is approached in a critical way to interrogate current social research practices through the examination of specific examples. Although it is suggested that the book may be used for advanced undergraduate levels, some chapters may be inaccessible to those unfamiliar with contemporary debates within qualitative methodology. There are some highly accessible chapters, though, for those new to qualitative research, and the whole book is very useful to those who want to deepen

their understanding of and engage with contemporary debates in the field of qualitative research.

Potter, S. (ed.) (2002) *Doing Postgraduate Research*, London, Thousand Oaks CA and New Delhi: Sage. This book is of particular interest to postgraduate students and new researchers. It is clearly laid out, readable and easy to use. It starts by explaining that research is not experienced as a smooth, linear process as many guidebooks would suggest. Drawing on accounts of a PhD student, the editor points out that research is not straightforward, and that coping with change and problems is part of the research process. The structure of the book reflects this insight and the reader is able to dip in and out as needed. Each chapter begins with a clear set of aims and has a series of activities designed to get the reader to engage with the issues raised by research, and to get her or him to start writing.

Punch, K.F. (2000) *Developing Effective Research Proposals*, London, Thousand Oaks CA and New Delhi: Sage. Aimed at postgraduate students preparing a research proposal in the social sciences, this book covers issues including the function and purpose of research proposals, the processes of developing and writing research proposals, issues in identifying approaches and frameworks, research design and ideas for getting started. The book includes some examples of successful research proposals, as well as a summary checklist of guiding questions to help develop and write a proposal. The chapters are concise and the book could be dipped into according to need.

Rudestam, K.E. and Newton, R.R. (2001) *Surviving your Dissertation*, London, Thousand Oaks CA and New Delhi: Sage. This book is aimed at doctoral students in the social sciences. The authors explain that the research phases can be thought of as 'a research wheel … a recursive cycle of steps that are repeated over time'. Part I concentrates on getting started, including issues involved in finding a research focus, generating research questions and getting to grips with the different methods of inquiry available. Part II moves to a focus on the dissertation chapters, including literature review, method and different ways of presenting the analysis of the data in writing. Part III shifts from product to issues of process including overcoming barriers, writing processes, using the computer effectively and ethical issues.

Walliman, N. (2001) *Your Research Project: a Step-by-step Guide for the First-time Researcher*, London, Thousand Oaks CA and New Delhi: Sage. This book is aimed at novice researchers and focuses on the writing of a

strong research proposal. It addresses both practical and theoretical issues involved in research. It is clearly laid out and relatively easy to use. Each chapter begins by setting out its aims. The book is interactive, with cartoons to make it visual and lively, key terms clearly defined and various exercises aimed at engaging the reader in an active learning process. The eight chapters include: research and the research problem, information and how to deal with it, types of research, the nature and use of argument, more about the nature of research, research quality and planning, research methods, preparing the research, proposal and starting to write. This provides an overview of some of the theoretical perspectives in research and a guide to the stages involved in the research process, but is of particular value at the beginning of a research project when developing a proposal.

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writing for publication

The Academic's Support Kit

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Building Networks
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writing for publication

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Rebecca **Boden**

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Finally, as ever, our greatest thanks go to our nearest and dearest, without whose tolerance, love and hard work these books would not be in your hands today.

D.E.
J.K.
R.B.

Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*

Before you really get into this book, you might like to know a bit more about the authors.

Rebecca Boden, from England, is professor of accounting at the University of the West of England. She did her PhD in politics immediately after graduating from her first degree (which was in history and politics). She worked as a contract researcher in a university before the shortage of academic jobs in 1980s Britain forced her into the civil service as a tax inspector. She subsequently launched herself on to the unsuspecting world of business schools as an accounting academic.

Debbie Epstein, a South African, is a professor in the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University. She did her first degree in history and then worked briefly as a research assistant on the philosopher Jeremy Bentham's papers. Unable to read his handwriting, she went on to teach children in a variety of schools for seventeen years. She returned to university to start her PhD in her forties and has been an academic ever since.

Jane Kenway, an Australian, is professor of education at Monash University with particular responsibility for developing the field of global cultural studies in education. She was a schoolteacher and outrageous hedonist before she became an academic. But since becoming an academic she has also become a workaholic, which has done wonders for her social life, because, fortunately, all her friends are similarly inclined. Nonetheless she is interested in helping next-generation academics to be differently pleasured with regard to their work and their lives.

As you can see, we have all had chequered careers which are far from the stereotype of the lifelong academic but that are actually fairly typical. What we have all had to do is to retread ourselves, acquire new skills and learn to cope in very different environments. In our current jobs we all spend a lot of time helping and supporting people who are learning to be or developing themselves as academics. Being an accountant, Rebecca felt that there had to be a much more efficient way of helping

people to get the support they need than one-to-one conversations. This book and the other five in the *Academic's Support Kit* are for all these people, and for their mentors and advisers.

We have tried to write in an accessible and friendly style. The books contain the kind of advice that we have frequently proffered our research students and colleagues, often over a cup of coffee or a meal. We suggest that you consume their contents in a similar ambience: read the whole thing through in a relaxed way first and then dip into it where and when you feel the need.

Throughout the *ASK* books we tell the stories of anonymised individuals drawn from real life to illustrate how the particular points we are making might be experienced. While you may not see a precise picture of yourself, we hope that you will be able to identify things that you have in common with one or more of our characters to help you see how you might use the book.

Pragmatic principles/principled pragmatism

In writing these books, as in all our other work, we share a number of common perceptions and beliefs.

1. Globally, universities are reliant on public funding. Downward pressure on public expenditure means that universities' financial resources are tightly squeezed. Consequently mantras such as 'budgeting', 'cost cutting', 'accountability' and 'performance indicators' have become ubiquitous, powerful drivers of institutional behaviour and academic work.
2. As a result, universities are run as corporate enterprises selling education and research knowledge. They need 'management', which is essential to running a complex organisation such as a university, as distinct from 'managerialism' – the attempted application of 'scientific management techniques' borrowed from, though often discarded by, industry and commerce. What marks managerialism out from good management is the belief that there is a one-size-fits-all suite of management solutions that can be applied to any organisation. This can lead to a situation in which research and teaching, the *raison d'etre* of universities, take second place to managerialist fads, initiatives, strategic plans, performance

indicators and so on. Thus the management tail may wag the university dog, with the imperatives of managerialism conflicting with those of academics, who usually just want to research and teach well.

3. Increasingly, universities are divided into two cultures with conflicting sets of values. On the one hand there are managerialist doctrines; on the other are more traditional notions of education, scholarship and research. But these two cultures do not map neatly on to the two job groups of 'managers' and 'academics'. Many managers in universities hold educational and scholarly values dear and fight for them in and beyond their institutions. By the same token, some academics are thoroughly and unreservedly managerialist in their approach.
4. A bit like McDonald's, higher education is a global business. Like McDonald's branches, individual universities seem independent, but are surprisingly uniform in their structures, employment practices and management strategies. Academics are part of a globalised labour force and may move from country to (better paying) country.
5. Academics' intellectual recognition comes from their academic peers rather than their employing institutions. They are part of wider national and international peer networks distinct from their employing institutions and may have academic colleagues across continents as well as nearer home. The combination of the homogeneity of higher education and academics' own networks make it possible for them to develop local identities and survival strategies based on global alliances. The very fact of this globalisation makes it possible for us to write a *Kit* that is relevant to being an academic in many different countries, despite important local variations.
6. In order to thrive in a tough environment academics need a range of skills. Very often acquiring them is left to chance, made deliberately difficult or the subject of managerialist ideology. In this *Kit* our aim is to talk straight. We want to speak clearly about what some people just 'know', but others struggle to find out. Academia is a game with unwritten and written rules. We aim to write down the unwritten rules in order to help level an uneven playing field. The slope of the playing field favours 'developed' countries and, within these, more experienced academics in more prestigious institutions. Unsurprisingly, women and some ethnic groups often suffer marginalisation.

7. Most of the skills that academics need are common across social sciences and humanities. This reflects the standardisation of working practices that has accompanied the increasing managerialisation of universities, but also the growing (and welcome) tendency to work across old disciplinary divides. The *Academic's Support Kit* is meant for social scientists, those in the humanities and those in more applied or vocational fields such as education, health sciences, accounting, business and management.
8. We are all too aware that most academics have a constant feeling of either drowning in work or running ahead of a fire or both. Indeed, we often share these feelings. Nevertheless, we think that there *are* ways of being an academic that are potentially less stressful and more personally rewarding. Academics need to find ways of playing the game in ethical and professional ways and winning. We do not advise you to accept unreasonable demands supinely. Instead, we are looking for strategies that help people retain their integrity, the ability to produce knowledge and teach well.
9. University management teams are often concerned to avoid risk. This may lead to them taking over the whole notion of 'ethical behaviour' in teaching and research and subjecting it to their own rules, which are more to do with their worries than good professional academic practice. In writing these books, we have tried to emphasise that there are richer ethical and professional ways of being in the academic world: ways of being a public intellectual, accepting your responsibilities and applying those with colleagues, students and the wider community.

And finally …

We like the way that Colin Bundy, Principal of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and previously Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, so pithily describes the differences and similarities between universities in such very different parts of the world. Interviewed for the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (27 January 2004) by John Crace, he explains:

> The difference is one of nuance. In South Africa, universities had become too much of an ivory tower and needed a reintroduction to the pressures

> of the real world. In the UK, we have perhaps gone too far down the line of seeing universities as pit-stops for national economies. It's partly a response to thirty years of underfunding: universities have had to adopt the neo-utilitarian line of asserting their usefulness to justify more money. But we run the risk of losing sight of some of our other important functions. We should not just be a mirror to society, but a critical lens: we have a far more important role to play in democracy and the body politic than merely turning out graduates for the job market.

Our hope is that the *Academic's Support Kit* will help its readers develop the kind of approach exemplified by Bundy – playing in the real world but always in a principled manner.

Books in the *Academic's Support Kit*

The *Kit* comprises six books. There is no strict order in which they should be read, but this one is probably as good as any – except that you might read *Building your Academic Career* both first and last.

Building your Academic Career encourages you to take a proactive approach to getting what you want out of academic work whilst being a good colleague. We discuss the advantages and disadvantages of such a career, the routes in and the various elements that shape current academic working lives. In the second half of the book we deal in considerable detail with how to write a really good CV (résumé) and how best to approach securing an academic job or promotion.

Getting Started on Research is for people in the earlier stages of development as a researcher. In contrast to the many books available on techniques of data collection and analysis, this volume deals with the many other practical considerations around actually doing research – such as good ways to frame research questions, how to plan research projects effectively and how to undertake the various necessary tasks.

Writing for Publication deals with a number of generic issues around academic writing (including intellectual property rights) and then considers writing refereed journal articles, books and book chapters in detail as well as other, less common, forms of publication for academics. The aim is to demystify the process and to help you to become a confident, competent, successful and published writer.

Teaching and Supervision looks at issues you may face both in teaching undergraduates and in the supervision of graduate research students. This book is not a pedagogical instruction manual – there are plenty of those around, good and bad. Rather, the focus is on presenting explanations and possible strategies designed to make your teaching and supervision work less burdensome, more rewarding (for you and your students) and manageable.

Winning and Managing Research Funding explains how generic university research funding mechanisms work so that you will be better equipped to navigate your way through the financial maze associated with various funding sources. The pressure to win funding to do research is felt by nearly all academics worldwide. This book details strategies that you might adopt to get your research projects funded. It also explains how to manage your research projects once they are funded.

Building Networks addresses perhaps the most slippery of topics, but also one of the most fundamental. Despite the frequent isolation of academic work, it is done in the context of complex, multi-layered global, national, regional and local teaching or research networks. Having good networks is key to achieving what you want in academia. This book describes the kinds of networks that you might build across a range of settings, talks about the pros and cons and gives practical guidance on networking activities.

1 Who should Use this Book and How?

This book will help you get going in the business of writing and to develop your writing skill further. It will also help you tackle the complex and sometimes bewildering processes involved in getting your research published in a variety of formats.

If this is the first book in the *Academic's Support Kit* that you are reading, then you may find it useful to read 'Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*'. Logically, if you are a beginning researcher you would be reading this book after *Getting Started on Research*. That said, it is never too soon to start thinking about and undertaking writing projects. If you have already read *Getting Started on Research* you will know that writing is an integral and on-going part of the research process which starts with your proposal and never comes to an end.

This book will be especially useful for you if you are:

- A research student who has yet to write for publication.
- Someone who has had an academic job for a while, but who has not yet got going with writing and publishing their research.
- Someone in their first academic job (with or without a research degree) who needs to acquire writing and publication skills.
- A more experienced academic who is mentoring someone in one or more of these categories.

You may:

- Want to overcome your anxieties about your writing and publishing.
- Wish to share your ideas, theories, thoughts and research findings with others.
- Need to develop your career profile. (For more advice about how to do this, you should read *Building an Academic Career*.)
- Be required to report to your research funders about the work they have paid for.

- Be under pressure from your employing institution to publish your research work.
- Be a successful writer and publisher yourself but need to know how to help others do the same.

Looking back at this list, it's apparent that there are two explanations of why people write and publish their research. The first explanation is that writing and publication are fundamental to the process of being an academic. It is imperative for researchers to engage in academic debate and discussion and tell other people what they are doing in their own work. In short, there's very little point to researching unless you are going to be able to tell people about your work.

The second explanation is to do with institutional pressures on and controls over academic work. Managers like to manage what they can measure, and publication represents a tangible and supposedly measurable output of the process of thinking and intellectual work. It is, therefore, easy to see why publication has become a yardstick for institutions and their funders. We think it's really important that academics do publish, but when the measurement of publication (either by volume, perceived quality or use by others) becomes a management tool, it can generate perverse incentives that distort the real intellectual value of the publication process. In short, the tail starts wagging the dog.

Publication can be used as quite a strict management tool, so be aware that you are very likely to come under these sorts of pressures. This is a great shame, because we think that writing and publication for what we regard as the 'right' academic reasons should be one of the most fun and rewarding aspects of being an academic. Consider the story below of how a group of academics lost their jobs because of their perceived failure to publish enough.

It all adds up to a pretty Brum do

In theory, things couldn't look brighter for higher education: a government commitment to increase student numbers by 2010; superb research assessment exercise scores in 2001; a 'demonstrable improvement' in teaching quality; and an acknowledgement by the Higher Education Funding Council for England that there will have to

be a net rise of between 15,000 and 17,000 academic staff in universities by 2010.

But a harsh reality belies this picture. Of late, there have been wholesale departmental closures, cost-cutting regimes, widespread redundancies and bottom-lines slipping badly into the red.

Academics need to pay attention to what is happening in their own backyards before it is too late. The closure of the department of cultural studies and sociology at Birmingham University is a perfect case study.

Cultural studies at Birmingham has been the single most internationally influential academic group in the creation and development of the discipline. It achieved a perfect 24 in its last teaching quality assessment, student demand was buoyant and it was financially sound.

In the 2001 RAE, [Research Assessment Exercise] its entry was changed, without consultation, by senior managers with no expertise in the discipline. The head of department protested, predicting that this would damage the score. The result was a grading of 3a. Management decided that no score of less than 4 could be tolerated and moved to 'restructure' the department. All staff have taken what is technically voluntary severance, under conditions they maintain amount to duress.

This story tells us four things. First, it demonstrates a massive divergence between the world of academics and the management elite. The work of academics achieves and sustains the reputation of an institution, while managers, driven by different norms and values, have the power of life or death. Thus, the global academic outcry against the closure has fallen on the cloth ears of managers dedicated to the crudest forms of 'rational management'.

Second, it shows the power of pseudo-objective exercises such as the RAE. Staff were judged on the basis of a submission not of their own writing, under a research assessment regime not of their making, and were deemed to have 'failed'. The objectivity of the RAE gave management's judgements apparently greater legitimacy and authority than the outcry of academics worldwide.

Third, it demonstrates the extent to which managers fail to think strategically or in a businesslike way. The next RAE will take place in 2008 (not 2006 as Birmingham anticipated) under a scheme yet to be determined by Sir Gareth Roberts' review. Birmingham's managers have made short-term decisions based on the expectation of the

continued application of a research assessment system that they already know to be defunct.

Further, the department represented an important 'brand', crucial to attracting students, especially foreign ones, and staff. That brand has now been destroyed.

Fourth, the plight of the former staff exemplifies the disciplinary nature of the relationship between management and academics. Academics are subject to many different performance audit regimes, and management can choose arbitrarily which to act on. In this case, management used a 'failure' when it suited them, while ignoring concurrent audit 'successes'. Research and pedagogic success, in academics' terms and those of management, continues to go unrewarded while failure, as determined by management, is brutally punished.

Such an analysis will have little comfort for those who have lost their jobs and for Birmingham's academic community. The rest of us ignore the lessons at our peril.

(Rebecca Boden and Debbie Epstein, *Times Higher Education Supplement*, 20 September 2002)

Remember that writing and publication are important academic activities that bring real rewards. There is little more satisfying than getting your first article or book published and feeling that you have produced something of real value. The secret is to learn to get what you need out of the activity in order to work well as a professional and enjoy yourself, whilst managing and balancing the adverse (and sometimes perverse) institutional pressures. This book is meant to help you achieve that balance.

Before going on, we'd like to introduce some characters who might benefit from reading this book.

Jonny has been an academic for a number of years. His institution made a shift to becoming research-led and he decided to become a researcher. He registered for a part-time PhD in history. When he was

planning his PhD, aware of institutional pressures to publish (and the career benefits of so doing), he designed his thesis so that he could publish papers on aspects of his work as he went along. He ended up writing papers in tandem with particular chapters of his thesis. He struggled with the first paper – he had excellent data but found difficulty in shaping it into an argument for an article. He got three professors in his department and his supervisor/adviser to help him to restructure his writing. When everyone was happy that the paper was in good shape, he submitted it to a prestigious journal and it was accepted with only minor revisions. He was absolutely delighted when his paper was accepted and got promoted shortly afterwards. He is now writing a second paper in tandem with the next chapter of his thesis.

Claudia has become an academic as a second career. She was not well advised about her writing and publication in the first few years of her academic job and, as a result, had no publications to contribute when her department's research output was audited. Her confidence was severely damaged by this experience and she seriously considered giving up her academic career. Rather than do that, she worked hard with her newly acquired mentor to develop some of her existing work for presentation at a small, friendly conference and subsequent publication in a refereed journal. Her success in this regard boosted her confidence sufficiently that she decided to begin her PhD, with her mentor as her supervisor. She is now working on a second paper.

Bina has a first-class degree in mathematics. She subsequently became a schoolteacher and undertook an MA in the Sociology of Education, which required her to begin to think and write sociologically instead of mathematically. She is now becoming a confident writer although she originally thought that she would never be able to write sociology (rather than maths). She has a couple of publications to her credit and is thinking about how to develop her writing and publication profile.

2 The Business of Writing

In this chapter we address a number of generic issues around the business of writing, before moving on in subsequent chapters to discuss specific writing forms and publication formats.

Read this!

Like small children, before you can write you have to be able to read – and, in your case, read research. Good reading habits are helpful in two ways. First, writing and publishing can be thought of as joining in an academic discussion, albeit a written one at a slow speed. Unless you are abreast of what others are saying, you won't know what constitutes a valuable, valid and interesting intervention by you. Second, like any other skill, writing is one that you have to learn and keep developing. By critically reading others' work you should be able to learn what works well and what doesn't.

Your reading needs to be systematic and rigorous. If you are developing good research skills it is highly likely that you will have begun to develop good reading skills, as you can't have the first without the second. Some people with good scholarship practices will already have good reading skills, but will not necessarily be undertaking their own research.

Handy hints for effective reading

Even though you may already have good reading habits, we thought it worthwhile recapping here the things about reading that help with writing.

1. Get the habit

All academics have really busy lives. Stuff like regular reading of things that will augment your basic knowledge base (as opposed to reading things you have to) often slips off the edge of our mental in-trays. Try to avoid relegating this activity to those non-existent periods when you 'have time' by building a regular reading slot into every working day or, at least, into every working week. This is far from easy, and you may have to be determined and ingenious to achieve it. If you have a long commute to work using public transport or have to hang around while your kids are at piano lessons, use the time to read. Our experience is that if you intend to do your academic reading at bedtime then it just doesn't happen – you fall asleep before you have finished the first page.

2. Read actively, not passively

It is treacherously easy to believe that you are really reading when in actual fact you aren't. Your eyes go over the words but by the end of the chapter you have forgotten the beginning of it because you read it as if you were reading a novel. When you read academic work, you need to engage actively with the material by interrogating it. Ask yourself questions as you go along. Do I really agree with this? How convincing is this argument? What holes can I pick in that one? What would I say to the author if they were explaining their ideas to me in person? How can I make use of these ideas or data to inform my own? What key concepts is the author working with and why? If you read actively in this way, your reading will be of positive benefit in keeping up with the development of knowledge in your particular field.

Reading done properly is very time-consuming. We think it is a good idea to avoid redundant reading by quickly skimming through a text first of all, checking that it is what you expect and likely to be of use to you. In journal articles the abstract at the beginning (and often available on-line on the publishers' Web pages) is there specifically to help you decide whether or not you want to read the whole thing in depth. With books, use the contents page and the index intelligently to decide whether to read the book or not. It never ceases to amaze us how many students we come across who have absolutely no notion of the existence of indexes, let alone how they might be used. We harbour the suspicion that many of these students eventually become academics with the same lacunae of knowledge. Reading the introduction quickly, especially of

an edited collection where the editor discusses the contents and draws them together, can also help.

Once you have skimmed a text, don't think that you've actually read it. Skimming enables you to make a decision about whether to invest the time in detailed and proper reading. Unfortunately, we have discovered that there is no natural osmosis from text to head, either by leaving books on your shelf for months or years or placing them under your pillow at night. There is really no substitute for actually reading.

Good writers usually devote significant effort to structuring their writing carefully and leaving plenty of signposts for the reader, to let them know how the structure of the piece works. It is a foolish reader who ignores this thoughtful help. Use sections and signposts to divide up your reading and note-taking efforts and to make explicit to yourself what the structure of the argument is. This may be particularly important when you are reading complex or difficult pieces in which you encounter new and challenging ideas. Debbie tries to summarise each section in such pieces with the text closed after she has finished reading it. Rebecca works out what each paragraph is saying and makes a note of that as she goes along. Jane heavily marks the bits of interest and indicates in the margins how they link with her current research or teaching, returning to these later to write notes on the links. If you can write your own abstract of someone else's article or chapter when you get to the end of reading it, you can be pretty sure that you have read it thoroughly and intelligently and will not forget what it says. That means you will be able to use it in future without having to reread it several times.

3. Read widely

All too often, people maintain that there is nothing for them to read in their particular closely focused area of research. They almost believe that because no-one has written about their particular topic they are excused from reading. In fact, good researchers and writers read widely and eclectically, often drawing ideas from unexpected places or disciplines. If you read actively, you should be constantly asking yourself, 'How might these ideas or concepts be used in my writing?'

Victoria is a PhD student looking at the role of architecture in the employment treatment of visually impaired people. She was somewhat alarmed when she started to discover, unsurprisingly, that

there was no literature on architecture and blindness. In doing her research training, she was required to write an assessed course paper critiquing the literature in her research area. Her supervisor advised her to look in the extensive sociological, cultural studies and social policy literatures on disability. In that literature Victoria found well developed theoretical work on the construction of disability as a social concept and on disabled identities. In her own work she was able to successfully deploy these concepts and theories in examining the role of architecture in this area.

Emily is at the beginning of her PhD. She is interested in how boys from different social classes learn to ride horses, often in environments dominated by girls, and the issues faced by those who continue after puberty and become equestrian professionals. However, there is nothing written that draws together the questions of masculinities, social class and riding. Emily is drawing on the extensive literatures on masculinity, class and embodiment to frame her own research.

4. Be a style guru

In reading actively, don't just concentrate on the academic content and argument. Develop a keen critical eye, or rather ear, for the different genres of academic writing. Recognise elliptical and obscure prose for what it is and stop yourself from slipping into a similar trap. Learn from others how to express complex and difficult ideas in clear, albeit sophisticated, ways. Learn to distinguish between academic writing that is necessarily complex and therefore difficult to read and that which is just plain showing-off or sloppiness. Just as you wouldn't expect a motor mechanic to talk about a car engine without using technical terms for its constituent parts, so academic disciplines have their own particular languages that you must learn and use sensibly.

Develop a keen eye for what a well structured piece of writing looks like. Most disciplines have tacit writing formats and you need to learn how these work in your discipline and how to deploy them. Above all, use your reading to learn about style, language and formats in your field and to think about how you will develop your own distinctive version

of these. Find authors whose writing moves, inspires and stimulates you and analyse what's good about it. Learn your lessons from that.

5. Take note!

Your reading will be far more productive and yield longer-term benefits if you keep good notes both of what you have read and what's in it.

Make a careful record of the bibliographic details of your reading sufficient for you to cite the material in anything that you write, thus saving you time. It will also let you find the material again if you don't have your own copy. In *Getting Started on Research* we discuss bibliographic software packages that will help you do this very efficiently.

Keep systematic notes. Avoid, at all costs, extensive detail and exact copying of whole paragraphs. Everyone has their own system of note taking and you have to do what suits you best. You might:

- Use the note function on a bibliographic software package.
- Make notes in your research notebooks.
- Staple pieces of paper to the front of copies of articles.
- Have virtual conversations by writing in the margins of your books – but never anybody else's, especially those borrowed from a library.
- Draw a diagram or mind map representing the shape of the arguments.

Whatever system you adopt, make sure that you get the author's argument right in your notes or you run the risk of misrepresentation in your own writing.

You might like to think about making notes on:

- The main lines of the argument.
- Interesting empirical evidence.
- Important 'facts'.
- Your own reactions to the argument or the data.
- The theories and methods employed.
- The relevance to the particular thing you are writing/researching at present.
- Page references for particular parts of the argument or quotes that you might want to come back to.
- Connections with the writings of other authors you have read.

Quotable quotes

In your reading you will come across interesting snippets of writing that really encapsulate something important that you want to engage with. In such cases, copy a brief section exactly to incorporate into your own writing. Always make a clear note that this text is copied and keep a careful record of exactly where (including page or paragraph numbers) it is from. In copying out quotes, preserve the original spelling and be careful, especially when using the spell checker, not to alter it from the original. Even quite well established academics sometimes fail to do this and can suffer serious consequences as a result. Remember, plagiarism is the most serious and least forgivable of academic sins.

Get writing!

Psychological issues

Committing yourself to paper can be an intimidating process, particularly if you haven't done it for a long time. The benefit of writing is that it lets others see our work and enables them to engage with and challenge it. You can mitigate the entirely understandable feeling of exposure and vulnerability this often engenders by doing your research and writing well – that way it will stand up to scrutiny.

Novice researchers often delay writing or get uptight about it because, very wrongly, they perceive that others find it easy and they find it difficult. Writing does get easier with practice, but it is always hard work and even the most experienced of writers have bad days in which they write one paragraph and then find a host of other work avoidance strategies. Anyone who says that they find writing easy may simply be trying to undermine your confidence. Because it is hard, don't be ashamed about having to ask for help. There is no virtue in struggling on your own if there are people who can help you out.

If you are worried about starting writing and keep putting it off, practise just getting words down on paper or up on the screen. As we have said elsewhere in this *Kit*: 'Don't get it right, get it written' – well, at least in the first instance. The more you practise, the better you will

get. So try to write something each day, perhaps in your research journal. As time goes on, you will become more accomplished and comfortable with the writing process.

If you can overcome these wholly understandable psychological barriers, you should find writing exciting and enjoyable. A well crafted piece of writing will give you a real sense of personal achievement and satisfaction.

When do I start?

Some people imagine a magic land in which researchers know everything, have all of their material and data assembled, everything neatly organised and to hand, all their arguments marshalled and rehearsed and are ready to simply 'write up'. We have never been there and treat individuals who claim they have with the same scepticism as we treat people who claim to have been abducted by aliens. There is no point at which writing becomes a simple and straightforward task of 'writing up'. The process of writing is much more complex, messy and creative than that.

The perfect conditions in which you are 'ready to write' do not exist. Writing is an on-going and iterative process. As such, it helps you sort out your ideas, and shapes and guides your research in an iterative way. Additionally, constant writing helps you to develop and hone your writing skills.

We cannot overstress the need to write early and write often. Because writing is a learned skill and an activity that is integral to the research process, your writing should start at the same time as your research. Your early efforts may be:

- A few paragraphs in which you contest or explore what you have been reading.
- Fieldwork notes written up in a discursive/analytical way.
- A formal literature review in which you evaluate and synthesise your reading.
- A vignette from your fieldwork.
- A formal exposition of your research questions or an 'autobiography of the question'.
- A formal research proposal (for your own use or to submit to get funding).

Whilst none of this needs to be long, you should approach it in exactly the same sort of way that you would writing for publication. That is, use these writing exercises as a way of learning writing skills as well as helping you in your research. If you work in this way, these pieces of writing will eventually feed into the construction of pieces for publication. We are great believers in recycling: words written down are rarely wasted.

Planning your writing

It is surprising how many people begin to write before having made a plan. The principal reason why you need to plan is that it will:

- Ensure clarity about the questions/issues to be addressed.
- Make sure that you know, at least in outline form, what argument you are trying to make.
- Outline the data that will support your argument.
- Ensure that you don't leave anything important out and, equally, help you see which bits of your knowledge you can leave out of this particular piece.
- Ensure that you are telling a coherent story and that your writing has a viable structure.
- Stop you from simply writing down everything you know and ever wanted to know about the subject.
- Focus your thoughts and subsequent writing.

The clarity of purpose and structure that a plan will help you develop will be reflected in your writing. It follows that planning is an active and creative process. Plans don't just spring fully formed from people's heads. They are pieces of work in their own right that constitute an important part of the research and writing processes. As such, it may take a great deal of time and effort to get a plan right, but doing so saves time later and makes your subsequent work easier.

That said, it's a poor plan that can't be modified. Few people can write exactly to the original plan. As part of the writing process, your ideas, arguments and questions will evolve and become clearer as you write. Indeed, some people say that they don't know what they think until they've written it. They don't mean they haven't planned, only that the specifics and clarity of their arguments emerge in the writing process.

Everyone has their own way of planning their writing. Here are several that the three of us regularly use. Which one we choose will depend on the purposes of the writing, the difficulty of the particular piece, whom we are writing with and for.

- Talk your ideas through with your co-authors, peers, mentors or advisers. Sometimes people find it helpful to use a whiteboard or flip chart to make notes and draw diagrams as they talk.
- Rebecca keeps a special box of coloured gel pens and pencils and likes to draw multicoloured mind maps on large pieces of paper. Sometimes she tapes paper together as her ideas burgeon or uses large sheets of children's drawing paper.
- Some people of an artistic bent like to draw 'rich pictures' to visualise their ideas.
- Debbie likes to think about what she wants to write for a long time, letting ideas mature in her head before putting 'pen to paper'. Ideally, she likes to have virtually written the paper in her head before more formal planning and writing begin.
- Writing an abstract can be a great way of giving yourself a route map for the paper you will write. A one-page abstract forces you to present a coherent story about your intended writing. Some people use headings and bullet points to create their plans.
- One technique, which is particularly useful for complex writing, is to draw a vertical line down the middle of your page. On the left-hand side write the points of the argument in their logical order and on the right fill in the evidence (literature or your empirical data) that you will use to support your argument.
- A variation of this is to write the main points of the argument on index cards, with the supporting evidence on the back. Play around with arranging the order of the cards on a big table or the floor (beware disruptive toddlers and dogs) until you work out what makes a coherent and logical argument.
- Jane tends to write out the skeleton of the argument after lots of thinking, reading, looking at her data and general anguish. Then she weaves her theory and her data though the skeleton.

The architecture of writing

Buildings usually contain a variety of materials: bricks, glass, concrete, etc. In the same way academic writing has to consist of different

elements. Unless you are writing in some of the less conventional genres, which we will discuss shortly, these elements should include:

- A question, or questions, being addressed.
- An overarching argument that contains different strands and themes.
- Evidence to support the argument, which may consist of empirical data collected from archives or fieldwork, or it might consist of the writings of others. Most likely, it will include both.

Just as a pile of bricks, glass and concrete does not a building make, so a poorly constructed pile of questions, arguments and evidence does not constitute a convincing and powerful piece of academic writing. Academic writing, like buildings, needs to be put together in a precise and skilled fashion. As we've said, a plan is an essential first step in such a construction exercise. Builders don't just start randomly arranging bricks and carry on until they find something that looks interesting.

You must not make your reader do more work than is absolutely necessary. Be kind to them by giving them signposts, explaining what you are doing, using clear language and pointing to the significance of what you are saying. If you do all this, the reader is more likely not only to get real value from your writing, but also to read it in the first place. It's only when you are an academic mega-star (and sometimes not even then) that readers will persist with impenetrable and poorly written texts in order to uncover the meaning.

Our best and most basic advice on structure is that which we give to undergraduate students:

- Say what you are going to say.
- Say it.
- Say what you've said.

By 'say what you're going to say' we mean that near the start of your writing you should introduce what the focus of your enquiry or discussion is (that is, your question or issues) and explain what your general line of argument and sources of evidence will be. You also need to set out the order in which you will approach things. However, it's important not to pre-empt your argument. Rather, use this section as a way of enticing the reader to go further. Of course there is no need to be unduly ponderous about it.

Many academics approach the introductory section of their papers in much the same way. Usually such a section will consist of the following elements, in this order:

- An opening story, vignette, event or quote that the reader can instantly connect with from their everyday or professional experience. This is designed to capture the reader's attention and make them start to look at the world around them with a deeper interest and desire for understanding. An excellent example of the use of this device is the first few pages of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1977), in which he describes, in gory detail, the brutal execution of Damiens, the regicide. If you have a strong stomach, by the end of this description you will be hooked and will read the rest of the book. This works as an opening because of the immediate and disturbing effect of the description on your emotions as a reader.
- You can then use the opening to frame the questions or issues that will form the focus of the writing. You might say, 'That's very interesting. What questions or issues can we frame around this that will enable us to develop knowledgeable insights into what is going on here?' This helps the reader to see that you are not just writing the paper because no-one has written a paper on the topic before. You are emphasising that you have a focus and that you really are trying to explore or discuss a worthwhile issue or question.
- You can then set out the sort of arguments and evidence that will be used to address the questions and/or issues. Be careful not to go into too much detail here – you just have to say enough to give the reader clear signposts about what is coming and what the overall shape of the argument will be.
- Finally, conclude this section by setting out the structure of the rest of the paper. You should divide your paper into logical sections, each one doing a particular task. You need to flag up to the reader how many sections are coming, what each does and how they fit together to form a coherent whole.

Once you have set out what you are going to say in your introduction, you can move to 'saying it' in one or more subsequent sections (in a paper) or

chapters (in a book). What these are will vary according to your discipline and the sort of argument that you are making. They may well include (in varying orders) a discussion of the public story so far from the available literature, the introduction/discussion of various concepts or theories that you intend to deploy, some specific empirical data and a discursive analysis of data. You might organise your substantive arguments thematically. You might start with the general and move to the specific or vice versa. There are many ways to slice the loaf. However you break up what you are saying, make sure that the divisions are logical, that the links between them are made and that the overall writing is coherent and consistent.

Your ultimate aim is to give the reader a sense of being carefully led through your thoughts and arguments. With a building, an architect will make sure that there aren't any floors or windows missing and that there are no extraneous bits dangling off the sides that are neither use nor ornament. Do the same with your writing. If you have interesting things to say that don't fit in with the general run of this piece of writing, save them for a later piece. You can't make something not worth saying into a good piece of writing by throwing in extra bits to adorn it.

When you have had your say, there comes a time near the end of the paper in which you need to say what you have said. Don't repeat yourself here. The aim is to summarise your arguments, your data and what you have demonstrated or contributed to knowledge. Use this section to emphasise the value of your message and perhaps to indicate where further work might usefully be done. At this stage it is especially important to have an authoritative voice – if your research is good, then confidence is justified.

If you follow these three simple stages you will have a clear structure or architecture to your writing. Be kind to your reader and make it explicit when you are moving to a different stage of your writing by using headings and sub-headings. These act as signposts, effectively saying, 'Something different is happening now.' But don't use too many headings and subheadings and sub-subheadings because this makes your writing feel cluttered and ruins the flow.

Speak up!

Inexperienced authors often find it difficult to find their own authorial voice. This manifests itself in a number of ways.

- Some writers make extensive use of phrases like 'it may be the case that' or 'perhaps' or 'it could be argued' and so on. Whilst we would urge you to avoid making unsupported assertions in your writing, be confident about the validity of your evidence and arguments. If you really are in doubt then you shouldn't be using them. We think, as others have argued, that, on balance, it may, in the main, be best to avoid statements that might, perhaps, appear to others to be, er, somewhat tentative.
- Some writing is heavily 'sandbagged': someone has gone through it with the 'reference pepperpot', liberally sprinkling references everywhere as a pathetic means of attempting to legitimise what is being said (Blair, 2119; Forbes, 2110; Jones, 2230; Lee, 2112; Mbeki, 2115; Patel, 2120; Smith, 2117; Thatcher, 2118; Wilson, 2110). It is, of course essential to acknowledge the work of others properly where you have drawn on it. However, it is not necessary to give a list of ten references at every turn of your argument. Such practices are either a sign of low confidence or a way of showing off how much you have read. Note, however, that doctoral theses are a different genre and it may be necessary to reference more heavily to demonstrate that you have done all the reading that your examiners might deem requisite.
- Other writing relies heavily on extensive quotes from the works of others. Our advice to budding authors is to use quotations in only two situations. First, you may be undertaking a detailed textual analysis of the passage, engaging specifically with it. And second, you have made your own point and may then use a quotation to illustrate or emphasise what you have said. The latter should be used sparingly.

  'Never use a quote to make your own point' (Brown, 2010: 971; see also Jones, 2023; Li, 2027; Smith, 2120; Mphaphlele, 2017; Patel, 2035).

- Sometimes, the language used is deliberately obscure and obfuscatory in an attempt to make the author sound 'academic'. Symbolically exclusionary textual devices may be used elliptically as connotative of the author's dominance in hegemonic discourse, lending legitimacy to epistemologically dubious and ontologically unconvincing arguments, which may themselves be derivative, reductionist and essentialist.

- Often, novice writers are concerned about whether they are allowed to use the 'first person' in their writing. This varies across disciplines and you will have to take advice. However, the present authors would argue that the use of the third person is a way of distancing oneself from what is being said and not taking responsibility for it. Epstein, Kenway and Boden also argue convincingly that the use of the third person may create a false and unsustainable sense of objectivity in the text.

In the end, everyone has to find their own distinctive voice. The best writers can often be recognised immediately by their style.

Playing to the audience

Never forget that you are writing for your readers. Help them and don't make them work harder than they have to. Keep in mind your target audience as you write and be conscious of constructing your argument and using language which speaks to those people directly. When Debbie started her academic career, she always tried to write for the curious and enquiring teacher that she had been a few years earlier. If you are too ambitious and imagine that your typical audience will be international academic superstars, then you will be unduly inhibited. In writing this *Kit* we have always tried to hold in our heads an image of what sort of person you, the reader, are: what sort of job you are doing, what countries you are working in, how you might be feeling about various issues and what sort of phraseology you will relate to.

The further you move away from actually being the person you are writing for, the harder it becomes to remember how to write for them. For this reason, it is a good idea to get friends and acquaintances in your target groups to read your drafts before you attempt to publish them.

We are not saying that you should always pander to the base desires of lazy readers. Whilst you have to think about what your reader needs or wants (and the two aren't always the same) from your writing, this does not exonerate you from the responsibility of remaining true to your own work or challenging their preconceptions, prejudices or unthinking assumptions. But they won't respond to your challenges unless you can engage them, make them want to read you and persist in trying to 'get' what you are saying.

The ultimate aim is to make your audience want to sit up and listen to you. So you need to inveigle, seduce, titillate, enthral, enchant, fascinate and

leave them a metaphorical trail of breadcrumbs through the forest so that they feel secure about where they are going and how to get back. You also want to challenge, enrage (and engage), question, disturb and excite them.

Generically speaking

Academics write about their research in a number of quite distinctive genres. Later in this book we explain in more detail how to publish your work in some of the most common forms. In this section we want to get you to think about the gamut of writing genres that you might engage in. The main ones are:

- Dissertations and theses, which can be seen as 'apprentice pieces' for novice researchers.
- Academic journal articles.
- Book chapters in collections, usually edited by other academics.
- Books for academic audiences, often called research monographs.
- Books about research findings for practitioners and policy makers (that is, the 'end users' of research).
- Popular books based on research but written for non-academic audiences.
- Professional journal articles.
- Reports for specific organisations and/or government departments which may or may not be widely published.
- Newspaper or other popular press pieces.
- Conference and seminar papers and posters.

In addition, some academics disseminate their research using other media such as film making or artwork, but here we are dealing only with written texts.

Each of these generic forms has its own implicit and/or explicit rules and conventions. These are determined by a *mélange* of influences such as:

- The development of shared common practices and traditions in particular disciplinary fields, subject areas or communities.
- The needs and desires of the audience.
- The requirements of publishers, editors and research funders.

We can't go into the specifics of each genre for every discipline and field of study. You have to correctly identify the genre in which you are

writing and then discern the rules governing it. The best way to do this is to read several exemplars. Ask around for the best examples on which to model your own writing.

Rob was a PhD student nearing the end of his maximum registration period. Unfortunately his supervisor went on long-term sick leave and he had not previously been in the practice of writing. Without a supervisor, he took several weeks off work to 'write up' his thesis. His thesis was allowed to be a maximum of 80,000 words. Struggling along on his own, he realised that he had problems when all he could produce was 105,000 words of 'literature review'. He quickly sought help from a new supervisor, who counselled him on what a thesis should look like, helped him to plan his final text and sent him to the library to read some examples.

Jemima was commissioned by a research council to evaluate a major research programme that it had funded. As she had never done that kind of exercise before, the Economic and Social Research Council sent her three examples of similar evaluations on which she could model her own report to meet the funder's requirements successfully.

Because academics need to write for different audiences, using different genres, you will find that the same ideas or piece of research can and should be re-presented in many different formats. This gives an economy of scale to your writing, giving you multiple pay-offs.

You may wish to experiment, from time to time, with novel or innovative forms of writing. Some journals actively encourage this. Remember though that it is difficult to pull off an innovative writing style if you are an inexperienced writer. It is best to concentrate on getting the basic skills first, as getting less conventional stuff published can be problematic.

The hierarchy of which generic form is most prestigious varies across disciplines and countries. However, it is always the case in the academic world that peer-refereed articles in international academic journals or authored books published by reputable academic publishers are rated more highly than most other forms.

Challenging conventional writing

You may find yourself encouraged or required to write in a style that creates or reinforces notions of knowledge as neutral and objective. We think that such claims about the validity of knowledge are, in themselves, extremely political and subjective. Some writing styles seek to address such issues as power and authority in the way in which they are constructed. Such styles can be hard to carry off successfully, and you may have to cut your teeth on more conventional modes of writing first in order to get yourself established.

In *Publishing in Refereed Academic Journals* (Deakin University, 1998) Jane Kenway, Noel Gough and Miranda Hughs set out the following considerations to bear in mind when stretching yourself as an author. We've paraphrased them below.

- *Be aware that your research story has a personal or political dimension.* Authors often write as the neutral narrators of how they discovered 'research facts'. Yet we all bring to our writing a host of theoretical, political and cultural assumptions. These frequently remain unexamined, even by the writers themselves, and some people still struggle with the notion that their personal beliefs are relevant to or influence the knowledge that they produce. Hence the debate about the use of the first or third person.
- *Tell the research story from more than one perspective.* Think about presenting your work from a variety of perspectives or in a number of different voices. This is particularly suited to multi-authored writing, where group-work gives a rich opportunity for analysing the theoretical, cultural and political stance of each participant. If your research involved a number of respondents with very different perspectives, you could think about presenting their different angles as a kind of play script or conversation.
- *Present the research process in its honest, messy form.* As authors, we can tend to present our research as a linear story as if it really happened that way. But we all know that there are false starts and wrong tacks, or that serendipity plays a role. Your research may have failed to show the expected (or any) results, or a seminar, article or chance conversation unexpectedly crystallised a research solution. Writing about these experiences can help to challenge the belief that the truth is 'out there' waiting to be discovered, instead of the truth being something that we create ourselves.

- *Write in the contradiction.* Include the logical and theoretical contradictions, the dead-end trails of arguments. They may be aspects of your work that you find troubling (and would prefer to forget!) but you may find that others have had similar problems. It may indicate the inadequacies of a particular theoretical or methodological stance and contribute to developments in method or theory. Or it may show that neat solutions are not always possible. But, again, you must be sure that the problem lies at the theoretical or methodological level and is not due to inadequate analysis on your part.

Doing it together

Writing something entirely on your own as a sole author can be a lonely activity. However, it is one that you need to be expert and experienced in because:

- Regulations, such as when you are writing a thesis, may require it.
- You may need to demonstrate your competence beyond doubt for promotion/appointment purposes.
- Most important, there will be things that you want to say that are very particular to you and you need to give voice to.

You will therefore probably have to develop and maintain your capacity to write on your own. But writing with others can be immensely rewarding, creative and generative. It *can* also be very much more enjoyable than sole authorship, but you have to pick your co-authors carefully. If you are inexperienced, writing with others can be a good way of learning to write.

Collaborative writing is often an integral and natural part of collaborative research. If you have great data, or are a real rookie, beware the friendly but not well published colleague who offers to 'write your stuff up with you', despite not being involved in the research. They are probably more interested in getting their name on your publications than really helping you.

Claire was a junior faculty member undertaking a PhD. She had to have an appraisal meeting with her head of school. The head of school asked her what she was working on. Claire enthused about a great idea she'd had and explained that she had submitted an abstract of a

paper on the topic to a prestigious conference and had drafted nearly three-quarters of the paper. The head of school, with no publications ever to their name, said, 'I have come across this published paper in this area. If I give it to you, we could write your paper together.' Claire, wisely and quite rightly, politely demurred.

When writing collaboratively ensure that everyone brings something to the party. For instance, if you are the junior partner you may have done the bulk of the data collection but are reliant on more experienced colleagues to help with the analysis and the writing. You might, in contrast, be working with people who are your academic peers in terms of experience and ability where you bring different strengths and knowledges to the process of writing. The point is that the varying contributions should reflect the experience, skill and work done by all the collaborative authors (and that authorship attribution should too).

Tanya is working closely with Ivor, one of her formal mentees in her department. She was responsible for getting him started as a researcher and is providing some 'on the job' research training for him as part of a project that they are undertaking jointly. Ivor's main contribution has been undertaking the extensive fieldwork. Tanya has been treating writing as a sort of training exercise – showing Ivor how to draft and craft and then sending him off with specific tasks related to the writing that needed to be done. They will share the authorship of the papers. An eventual aim is that Ivor will feel confident and experienced enough to undertake his own writing projects.

Debbie works extensively with Richard. At the start of their research and writing collaboration Richard was significantly more senior than she was and had just examined her PhD thesis, though they are now both professors. He was initially the more experienced writer and theorist whilst she was more experienced as an ethnographer and more knowledgeable about the subject area they were exploring together. Over the years they have written together in a number of

different ways: sitting down at the keyboard and writing every sentence together; one of them drafting a chapter or paper and the other revising it; bringing ideas together and one or other of them writing the paper. Both of them feel strongly that they have learned a huge amount from each other, both substantively and about the writing process.

Pick co-authors with care. Choose people you know and trust, and if it doesn't work, don't write with them again (however much you like them), because it's not worth the grief. In contrast, you can become close friends with someone by writing with them, and particular collaborations may stay with you throughout your academic career. It's a good idea to choose someone with whom you share a theoretical, political and/or epistemological standpoint, but don't necessarily choose people who are identical to you – different knowledges can be complementary and enriching.

As with any other piece of academic work, collaborative writing needs to be planned and agreed on in advance. We speak more below about getting the attribution of authorship right, but it needs to be part of this planning and agreement stage.

There is no 'right' way of actually doing collaborative writing. You have to devise a way of working together that suits all the authors. There are a number of variations.

- Sitting together at the keyboard and deciding mutually on each word. This can be really productive and you are likely to develop a joint authorial voice that is different from either of your individual ones. The great advantage is that you can keep each other going and spark ideas off each other. The disadvantage is the difficulty of finding mutually convenient blocks of time when you can work together.
- Planning together and then one person drafting the first version for alteration/amendment by the other(s). This method often generates a productive game of drafting ping-pong as the text is bounced back and forth between authors.
- Planning together and then dividing up the writing tasks into discrete chunks and allocating them to specific authors. The skill in this method comes in uniting all the variously authored sections into

one coherent text that doesn't read like a dog's breakfast. When done well, it can be a very effective way of writing and doesn't impose the onerous responsibility of producing an entire first draft on one person. It does, however, take good editorial skills.
- In long-standing partnerships it may be that some jointly authored pieces are almost entirely written by one person, though the ideas will have been discussed extensively. This method is fine as long as the writing work is evenly distributed in the long term.

Which particular version of collaboration you choose will depend on the situation and how you get on with your collaborators. It's important to be flexible, using a number of methods, sometimes in the same teams at different times.

There are a number of potential pitfalls in collaborative writing.

- Some people write very badly and you may have to devote endless time and energy to being their sub-editor.
- Writing together is more, not less, labour-intensive.
- It's important not to let people down, and to let your co-authors know if you are not able to deliver on time.
- Sometimes you can have arguments with your co-authors over matters such as content, style, argument and authorship. You need to find a way of resolving these in a mature manner.
- If you always work with more senior colleagues, others may think that the work is theirs rather than yours.
- If it doesn't go well, for whatever reason, you risk falling out with friends and losing important relationships.

Handy hints for successful writing

Finally, we have a few quick tips to help you become successful academic writers.

1. Write more 'shortly'. That is, you should generally go for maximum clarity and conciseness in your writing style.
2. Avoid using the passive voice, where possible. It is both more wordy than the active voice and also distances you from your writing. Consider, these two ways of saying the same thing:

The man walked the dog. He threw the ball and the dog caught it.

The dog was walked by the man. The ball was thrown by him and it was caught by the dog.

The first statement uses fourteen words and the second twenty, or nearly fifty per cent more. If you are writing a 6,000 word paper then using the passive voice would in theory turn it into a 9,000 word one, with no added value or advantage.

3. Don't completely befuddle and confuse your reader, who may become dispirited and demoralised, by writing in incredibly long, albeit elegant, well constructed and grammatically accurate sentences with numerous sub-phrases, each of them important in its own right, such that the sentence becomes unwieldy, difficult to follow and downright annoying.
4. Develop a good 'ear' for how your writing sounds. We regularly read our own written work aloud to ourselves and others in order to expose our own shortcomings. These include downright howlers, infelicitous expressions, repetitive phraseology, incomplete sentences, fuddled writing, and writing which is too hard to follow or plain ugly. If it can't be read aloud easily and intelligibly then it's not good writing.
5. Develop regular writing habits. It's good to write something, however brief, at least daily.
6. Try to write the way you would speak in order to avoid sounding pretentious. Of course, this won't work if you are uncommonly pretentious in your speech. But remember that the spoken language is often in incomplete sentences and may rely heavily on context and non-verbal communication to convey meaning. Do not write in sentence fragments; rather, compensate with extra clarity and explanation for the lack of non-verbal context.
7. Make effective use of other textual materials beyond the written word such as figures, tables, pictures, photos, diagrams and so on. These can both encapsulate and strengthen the argument being presented.
8. Remember that a sequence in your text does not necessarily constitute an argument. Sometimes we get papers to review which sound a bit like a breathless five-year-old child telling what happened at school that day, 'And then … and then … and then …' This happens when authors are trying to describe what other people

have said or what they have done in their research without any analysis, synthesis or evaluation. You need to construct an argument, not simply give an account.

9. When you are struggling to get your ideas sorted out in your head and don't quite know what it is you want to say, the most useful thing you can do is to talk to some other interested person about them. If no-one is available, Rebecca talks to herself or to the dog. The very process of verbalising your thoughts and arguments helps you to frame and clarify them.
10. Always get other people to read your work before submitting it for possible publication and take their comments seriously.
11. Do not fall into the error of thinking that you can get it right first time and without the help of a significant body of others and several stages of drafting and redrafting.

3 The Business of Publishing

In Chapter 2 we talked about the business of writing and how to go about it. Here we deal with a range of generic issues around the real business of publishing. In Chapters 4 and 5 we will deal with two of the main publishing forms for academics – journal articles and book chapters/books respectively. In Chapter 6 we talk about some other, slightly more minority sports such as publishing in professional journals.

When to start publishing

The following is adapted from Kenway *et al., Publishing in Refereed Academic Journals: A Pocket Guide* (Deakin University, 1998):

How, when and where to start publishing is not necessarily straightforward. Some people who are new to publishing feel that they have little to publish unless they have completed a major funded research project or a PhD. Others procrastinate until they feel that they are really on top of all the current literature, and never get beyond the first drafts, frozen in anticipation that the definitive study they need must soon appear. But neither is the case. You are in the position to publish if you:

- Are exploring theories and ideas.
- Have something worthwhile to say on key questions, problems and issues in your field.
- Are seeking to identify some gaps and silences in your area of study and so to contribute to the redefinition of your field.
- Are making conference presentations.

- Are undertaking any research, funded or unfunded.
- Have enrolled on a research degree.
- Are working for someone else's research project as a research assistant or fellow.

Possibly the only reason for hesitating about thinking about publication is if there is a chance that your research may lead to a patent. In some countries, prior publication makes patenting impossible.

What strategies should I have for publishing?

There is no golden rule on what the best publishing strategy is. The most important thing is that you have a strategy and that it fits your needs, work and subject areas. Let's consider, for a moment, three individuals and how they approached the issue.

Nigel is a very laid-back geographer. He works hard at his research and has interesting things to say. However, his publishing trajectory resembles a pleasant and aimless afternoon's stroll more than a purposeful walk from one point to another. He consistently misjudges the contribution he is able to make to his field, undervaluing himself and the appeal of his work. This low self-confidence leads him to wait for publishing opportunities to present themselves rather than going out and proactively seeking them. As a result, his publications are quite randomly distributed across a range of journals which vary in status and prestige. This rather *ad hoc* approach to publishing means that some of Nigel's outputs are in journals that don't have a wide circulation, which are poorly rated in terms of academic status or are in books which disappear quickly without trace. Part of Nigel's dilemma is that he is under considerable pressure to demonstrate 'volume' in his publishing. In a sense, he is being buffeted by the system and his own lack of self-confidence and direction.

Shamila is a young sociologist in a fixed-term, junior lecturing post. She is anxious to gain a tenured permanent position but must demonstrate a good publishing record in order to do so. Shamila is very tempted to publish her work before she really has anything worthwhile to say. Because of the tension between the understandable paucity of her material and the unduly onerous demands on her, she is attempting to 'salami slice' her work (that is, pare very small sections off her research

to put in papers in order to generate as many as possible). Because she works in an interdisciplinary way, she is spreading her publications across quite a wide range of journals in different disciplinary fields.

Anthony is a political scientist and a young man in a hurry. He is determined to be recognised as a leader in his field in a short space of time. He has carefully demarcated 'his' research territory and will not stray out of it in undertaking his research. Equally, in publishing, he is highly selective about where he will publish and highly strategic in the placement of his articles and chapters. He has taken careful advice on which are the most prestigious journals in order to achieve maximum recognition by a particular readership. By the same token, Anthony is resistant to any suggestion that he might spread his wings to new fields, and regularly turns down invitations to work and publish with others.

None of these people has got it 100 per cent right or wrong. Your strategy for publishing will be a product of the opportunities that come your way or that you can generate, the nature of your discipline and field, the happenstance of whom you meet and work with and the pressures under which you do your job.

There are a number of important things to bear in mind that arise from Nigel's, Shamila's and Anthony's stories.

- Have confidence about the value of your work and the fact that, if it's good, then someone, somewhere will be interested in reading and publishing it. For instance, an author called Dava Sobel wrote a scholarly book about the development in the eighteenth century of an accurate clock for use at sea to facilitate the determination of the longitudinal position of ships. It doesn't sound like a bestseller, does it? In fact, sales were enormous and the BBC ended up making a widely syndicated drama documentary about it. The lesson is that good work will find an audience, so know the value of what you do.
- It's important to have a sense of where you are going without painting yourself into a publishing corner and declining serendipitous opportunities that might lead to great things. Devise and amend your publishing plan to take good opportunities as they arise.
- What constitutes a good publishing opportunity will invariably change as your career develops. For instance, contributing a chapter to an edited collection is undoubtedly a great opportunity, provided it's a good book, for an early career researcher. It can help you get your name alongside better-established people and help to build your own profile. It also gives you experience of getting published,

and, if the editor is proactive and supportive, this can be a real help in your career generally. Remember, too, that although journals are generally more prestigious, edited books tend to be more widely read. In contradistinction, as your career develops you would probably be best advised to shift the balance of where you publish more heavily towards refereed academic journals and research monographs, choosing contributions to edited collections with care or even becoming the editor of them yourself.

- It's a good idea to publish in a good range of journals, both within and across disciplines, thinking carefully about where you want to be known. Sometimes departments and universities can pressurise academics to publish in particular, highly rated, journals. This is quite short-sighted managerialism. You need to find the best journals for your work. Remember that journals come in and out of favour, especially when it comes to formal research evaluation exercises. Having all your eggs in one basket can therefore be quite a risky strategy as well as one that will minimise the impact that your work makes.
- Try to strike a reasonable balance between the pressures for volume in your publication record as against the importance of achieving quality. Whilst it's good to speak to a number of different audiences, avoid producing a stream of publications, each of which is only marginally different from the one that preceded it. Conversely, it's also good to see a body of published work as something that has intellectual coherence and is reflective of a broader personal intellectual project (as we discuss in *Getting Started on Research*).

Short-termist managerialist pressures to publish or perish in the interests of university finances or narrow careerist considerations, epitomised by the quantity versus quality conundrum, can sometimes blind us to the real importance of publishing. We think it's important to retain the core belief that publishing is about having a sort of written conversation with others in the field. This is its primary purpose, although we are painfully aware of the pressures to publish for publishing's sake that early career academics are all too often subjected to. So, we think that quality should win out, on balance, over quantity. Basically, you have to publish good stuff in reasonable quantities.

Nonetheless some generalisations are possible about this elusive term 'quality'. We think that a good yardstick for quality in academic work is the impact that the publication has in its field. Evaluating impact is a

bit like asking how long a piece of string is. Some organisations have attempted to develop pseudo-objective measures of impact, often involving bibliometric methods such as citation analyses. These have been adopted from the natural sciences, where their use is much more prevalent. Bibliometric means what is says: *biblio* = books; *metric* = measurement. A typical method would be to scour academic literature and count the number of times a particular piece is cited. The clear implication is that the more citations there are, the better the piece. It's not rocket science to work out some very fundamental flaws in this approach. First, those who compile citation indices are very selective in the scouring. They choose very specific journals to look for citations in, and these are usually the more mainstream, US-based ones. This can mean that whole areas of work and debate, and even the work of scholars in entire countries, are made invisible by the processes of measurement.

Second, work may be published that other researchers in the field see as tendentious, damaging and/or downright wrong. This can lead to a veritable storm of ripostes and rebuttals, all of which will necessitate citation.

Some people who try to manage the research work of others sometimes latch on to these bibliometric methods in an attempt to divine what the 'best' journals are in order to exhort their long-suffering colleagues to publish in them. For all the reasons we've argued, we feel that such exhortations are wrongheaded. This kind of stuff happens most in the natural sciences but we have all started to see it happen in our own areas. Be on your guard.

Others are not above using bibliometric methods to blow their own publishing trumpet. While this can be a useful device to advance individual careers, we would worry that it lends legitimacy to an illegitimate process and also makes the perpetrator look a bit pathetic. Yet in some Australian universities (and perhaps elsewhere) people are expected to indicate their citation rates in their promotion applications, and there are rumours that they may also be used by key government research-granting bodies as a one means of recognising 'impact'.

So if we can't use bibliometrics, how can we think about impact? This will vary by discipline and field. Here is a range of possible sources of evidence of the impact of your published work.

- Your book is widely (and well) reviewed in journals or one or more of your papers is substantively discussed in a review essay/article in a journal.

- Your work achieves tangible resonance in some way. For instance, it is widely and intelligently discussed and you are frequently cited as a reputable author in certain matters.
- Your work achieves a resonance with policy makers or practitioners. For instance, it may be cited in official reports or there may be some major regulatory/policy change as a result of what you have done. Unfortunately, sometimes governments and others may use your published work without properly acknowledging your intellectual property. The most overt example of this was when, in 2003, it became clear that the British government had plagiarised a (rather elderly) PhD thesis in producing its justification for going to war on Iraq in 2003.
- Your publications spawn further work – what you say and write generates a whole host of work by others that builds upon your starting points.
- You may be identified, through publication, with staking out a whole new field of enquiry.
- You may just get a fantastic response from a variety of different sorts of communities. For instance, you may start attracting research students who want to work with you in your area, get invitations to speak at academic and/or non-academic events or prompt a lot of wider media interest.

Planning your publishing

A good way of ensuring that you have a viable publishing strategy and that you are mindful of the intended impact of your published work, is to have a personal publishing plan. In some institutions you may be required to produce this periodically for the delectation and scrutiny of some manager or mentor. However, the most important reason for having a plan is for your own benefit, and if you do have to produce one for others you will at least be in the fortunate position of not having to do it just for someone else.

A plan, once you have drawn it up, needs to be constantly revisited and updated. It should be a coherent expression of your publishing strategy, aiming to help you achieve the desired impact. A publishing plan is output-oriented, concerned with the tangible products of your work. A bit like the old five-year economic plans of the former USSR,

they are usually more honoured in the breach than in the observance and there will be many a slip 'twixt cup and lip. Eisenhower urged his generals to have a cunning plan and execute it ruthlessly, but we don't think you can do that with publishing. So stay flexible and just make sure that the plan becomes something to help guide you in the right direction for you, not a stick to beat yourself with.

Here are some hints on how to plan for publication.

- Set yourself real deadlines for getting stuff done. One of the best ways of doing so is to commit to giving a conference paper – you have to at least do something that won't make you look stupid if you do this. Another good deadline technique is to work with others and mutually commit to deadlines. Most people will let themselves down before other people. If you are not like most people, then this won't work for you, of course.
- If you have something that you think will make a good journal paper, then a classical genealogy for that would be to give the paper at one or more conferences, get feedback and a feel for how/if it works, then write it up for publication.
- Think about the lead times that can be involved in publication. If you want promotion or are subject to a dreaded research review, then don't think that you can start sending things to publishers six months before the crucial date.
- Try to develop a stream of work. Rebecca often gives colleagues the analogy of a production line in a factory – once you have built up a decent pace and are in the rhythm then the whole thing can become self-perpetuating, with the finished goods rolling off the end of the conveyor belt. A steady flow of parallel work will ensure that there are no major peaks and troughs and, if something does go pear-shaped, you know that there is always something else in the pipeline. Don't put all your publication eggs in one basket.
- That said, do bear in mind that people at the start of their career will take some time to build up a steady flow of work. The thought that there is nothing 'in reserve' or 'nearly there' can be quite scary but is common and understandable. All academics, throughout their careers, can experience some peaks and troughs in published and publishable output. You might be working on a major project that involves a lot of fieldwork, or putting all your efforts into one book; or you may experience a personal crisis of some sort. It is not reasonable to expect you to publish at an absolutely steady rate. You

are not a sausage machine, churning out standardised products, and neither should you seek to become one.
- As we said above, avoid always having the same research/writing partners. It's a good idea to plan in a variety of co-authorships and also to do your own stuff independently from time to time.
- Be aware of the expectations within your own discipline for the 'mixture' of published outputs. In some areas research monographs are almost unheard of, whilst in others they are the norm. Some more vocational disciplines expect to see evidence that you have disseminated your research findings to practitioners and policy makers. Whatever the informal rules in your area, work out what they are and try to make sure that you comply.

At this point, you may find it helpful to sit down with your nice hardback research notebook and work out a publishing plan for yourself, or revise one that you already have. You will then be able to read the rest of this book more purposefully.

Authorship

One of the most enduring problems in publishing is the issue of authorship, by which we mean who gets named as an author in the published output and the order of the names on the published piece. If you have done the work all on your own and are the only author, then authorship is not an issue and you can simply put your name alone to the work with a clear conscience. However, many academics both research and write in groups or research teams, and here who gets named as an author can be more problematic.

Authorship conventions differ between disciplines. In the natural sciences co-authorship is the norm, reflecting team research practices. As such, authorship usually includes the whole research team, from principal researchers to technicians and doctoral students. In large multi-sited clinical trials, for example, the list of authors can take up a whole column of text. This is why, in some science, medicine and engineering subjects, senior academics can end up with frighteningly large numbers of publications each year – perhaps as many as fifty or sixty. It doesn't mean that they are working harder than the rest of us, simply that they are collaboratively engaged with a very large team or

teams and that, by convention, publications are all authored by the entire team.

Multiple authorship in the arts, humanities and social sciences is now fairly common, or at least not unusual. Unlike the sciences, though, authorship rarely involves more than a small handful of people. Who gets named as an author can be quite tricky and also the result of all kinds of political, careerist and funding pressures. In some countries there may be funding or other imperatives that encourage the exclusion of some people as authors. For instance, there may be research performance evaluation schemes in place that divide the credit by the number of authors or only allow one author to get the credit, or one author in each institution. Sometimes, people who have done quite a lot of work that contributes to a publication may remain completely invisible. We think that this is wrong.

The best way of tackling any problems with attributing authorship is to have clear, early and explicit agreements with your co-authors and fellow researchers. For instance, disbanded project teams may agree among themselves that they can each use the data independently for their own writings, as long as they acknowledge its source.

We think that it is always wisest to err on the side of generosity in such matters. Your colleague may have let you down or annoyed you in some way, but it might have been because of circumstances outside their control and to which you might be subject yourself at a later date. It is *never* worth losing friends in arguments over authorship. In our experience, if you are generous to your colleagues you will rarely be exploited and more likely to get responses such as 'No, I couldn't possibly be named, that wouldn't be fair on you.' At the same time, don't be shy of asserting yourself if you think that someone is deliberately or inadvertently being unfair or attempting to exclude you or minimise your contribution. These can be very hard conversations to have, but you must neither shirk them nor act with bad grace.

There are no hard-and-fast guidelines on who should and shouldn't be named as an author. However, anyone involved in the conception and design of the project, the collection and/or analysis of data, drafting the writing or some critical and substantial revision of it should be seriously considered as an author. One acid test, suggested by Kenway *et al., Publishing in Refereed Academic Journals* (1998), is that if you could present the findings on which the article is based and answer questions about the research theories and design, then you are a potential author – and vice versa.

People should not be considered or cited as authors for academically dishonest reasons – for instance, they are your boss or are being named only to improve publication chances. Similarly, if someone did no real part of the work, or was only marginally involved at the outset of a project, it would be wrong for them to share authorship. With regard to those who act as assistants to projects, the situation can be more fraught and such people can be unfairly treated. We think that if someone did the photocopying, typing or fetched books from the library they don't really have any stake in authorship. Conversely, if they were a valued and hard-working, albeit junior, researcher on the team who did things like the fieldwork or data analysis, then you need to give them the authorship credit they deserve and are likely to need to advance their career.

Megan was a professor responsible for research leadership in a department working hard to improve its research profile. Her junior colleague Isobel asked her to read and comment on a paper that she had written from her PhD. Megan did so and gave quite extensive help. Isobel was grateful for these comments and said to Megan that she wanted to add her name to the list of authors. Megan declined, arguing that, in this instance, she had only done her job and that an acknowledgement for the help would be fine. Megan was additionally concerned that, as the paper was well out of her usual field of work, it would look to the editor that her name had been added to provide additional 'weight' to the authorial line-up. She knew that sharp editors always see through such ruses.

If you are a research assistant employed on someone else's project and you want or need to write on your own for publication utilising the project's work, you must check with the team leader(s) first. They may have other pieces planned in the same area. You may want to write a sole-authored reflective piece about your experiences on the project. If so, it would be a courtesy to let your colleagues know first.

Having established the authors to be named, you need to consider the order in which they will be listed. There are a number of conventions, and our best advice is to choose one, in conjunction with your co-authors, that conforms to expected norms in your discipline and is also

appropriate and mutually fair to all. It is important to think hard before departing from normal conventions in your area because doing so can send quite big signals to your readers.

The possible conventions are to:

- *List the authors in descending order of contribution to the research project and/or to the writing of the work*. This method feels like the fairest but can be difficult or impossible to put into practice in such a way that everyone feels they have been fairly dealt with. It can involve comparing apples and pears – what is the relative value of the work of the research assistant in collecting the data as against the principal investigator in conceiving the project initially, when both are essential to the project? Also, it can be just plain hard to work out the relative work input from different people. One author may have done very little, but her input could be the thing that made the whole project work. In a team of peers it might be useful to agree that the person who writes the first draft of a paper becomes the first-named author, for example.
- *List the authors alphabetically by family name*. This is the most straightforward method. By always sticking to alphabetical order, the authorship order does not signal anything significant. We think that, in most circumstances, it is the best method unless you have a co-author called Aaron Aaronovitch who always does very little work.
- *In long-standing writing collaborations, to alternate who goes first in the list of names*. If you have a regular co-author you might consider swapping lead authorship on an alternating basis. If you do this, it's worth letting people know that it is what you have decided to do. Otherwise people will think that there was equal work when the names are alphabetical but that the first named author did more work when they are not.
- *Place a less experienced author first as a means of helping them to build their career*. Well established academics will sometimes do this for their less experienced co-authors. Of course, if you are following the alphabetical convention, they are being generous only if it results in an order that is non-alphabetical. We think that, at times, this can be a right and generous thing to do but that you shouldn't expect people to do it for you as a matter of course. Unfortunately, we see far more instances of people messing around with conventional orderings in order to relegate their more junior co-authors further down the list.

- *Refer to some authors at the end of the list, preceded by the word 'with'*, as in 'Bloggs, Smith and Jones with Spencer'. Sometimes this use of 'with' which directly signals the far lesser involvement of the final author is wholly appropriate. But don't use it vindictively or in a fit of pique.

Even if you have acted with care and courtesy in whom you attribute as an author and the order that you place them in, there will still be many people who have helped the publication to happen. These may be colleagues, your own critical friends, conference discussants or reviewers. It is always proper to acknowledge these lesser, albeit vital, inputs in an acknowledgement. However, save the more personal, witty thanks to your cats, the dog and your partner (usually in that order) for books.

A matter of entitlement: titles as totems in academic texts

Basically you need a good title for your work and, sadly, some people can think of them and others can't. If you're in the latter category, get help and advice. Titles fulfil a number of important functions:

- They tell the reader what they are going to read about.
- Most people do their literature search by electronic means, so titles of papers, and especially books, have to contain the types of words that your target readers are likely to type into a search engine.
- The best ones neatly encapsulate and come to symbolise the subject matter of the writing. The very best titles enter into common usage as part of everyday language. An example is Michael Power's *The Audit Society* (1997).
- A good title will entice and titillate the target reader.

You shouldn't be afraid of being creative and imaginative with your titles. But don't go so off the wall so that nobody knows what your piece is about, or you look frivolous, pompous or self-obsessed. Sometimes journal editors or publishers will constrain and shape the titles of your articles, books or chapters. They don't do it out of meanness: they have to consider factors such as the style and feel of

the journal, book marketing, page layout (for chapter titles) and house style. While you need to listen to what editors and publishers have to say, you don't have to blindly obey and it's worthwhile entering into a sensible discussion with them if you feel strongly about it.

A final word on the importance of colons. We are traditionalists and believe that the first part of a title should be the snappy, striking, exciting bit: and following the colon should be a subtitle that explains what the thing is really about. However, publishers sometimes prefer it the other way round. This is a matter for negotiation. Alternatively, if you have a *really* good short title, that both tells the reader what the book is about *and* invites them to read on, you can dispense with the colon.

Here are some good and bad examples of titles (you have to decide which is which):

Boyz' Own Stories: Masculinities and Sexualities at School

Pride and Prejudice: Women, Taxation and Citizenship

Was Mickey Mouse a Marxist?

Recipients of Public Sector Annual Reports: Theory and an Empirical Study Compared

Answering Back: Girls, Boys and Feminism in Schools

Failing Boys? Issues in Gender and Education

Teacher Professionalism or Deprofessionalisation? The Consequences of School-based Management on Domestic and International Contexts

Ruling Passions: sexual violence, reputation and the law

Schooling Sexualities

Haunting the Knowledge Economy

Rewards

You are extremely unlikely to gain any significant direct financial return from publishing your research. However, publishing brings its own distinct rewards.

- We can't overemphasise the sheer delight and sense of personal satisfaction that comes from seeing your work in print. Like many pleasures, it is best the first time, but, jaded as we are, we still get a thrill from each new publication.
- Publish or perish. In almost all universities and disciplines, if you do not publish you will not get that new job, promotion, tenure or a much needed pay rise.
- Publishing also helps your university to develop its profile and may bring it financial rewards where there are schemes in place that link funding with the quality and/or volume of staff publications, as in the UK and Australia. This is a case of 'performance pay' – you perform and your university gets paid.
- Publishing brings some closure to the research process. It is part of the dissemination process and there is no point in doing research if you don't tell people about what you have found out.
- It gives you peer standing and esteem in your wider professional community beyond your own university. People you have not met will read your work and know of you and about you (and vice versa). If and when you do eventually meet, you will have a common basis from which to start talking and building networks and friendships.

Of course, some academics do make money out of publishing. However, they either produce textbooks for undergraduates (where the market can be very large) or they write for the popular media. There are some, but not many, research-based books which become popular on student reading lists or which get picked up and made the core reader for some big undergraduate courses even though they are not textbooks. These can make quite a bit of money – but not nearly enough to live on. A few academics write popular novels (usually about universities). It is possible that they make money – certainly they must make more out of such work than out of their research publications.

IPR (otherwise known as Intellectual Property Rights)

This stuff can seem quite scary because it's all to do with the law. However, it's important to understand the basics about IPR, both to

protect your own interests and to ensure that you don't fall foul of the law.

Because creativity, knowledge and innovation can lead to the financial and other rewards that we outlined above, people have found it desirable to develop ways in which individuals and organisations can establish their ownership of such 'assets'. This is called intellectual property (IP). 'Intellectual Property Rights' (IPR) is the term used to refer to the system of law designed to facilitate the protection and exploitation of IP by its owners. Legal arrangements differ from country to country, often quite markedly.

There are four main types of IPR: patents (for inventions); trade marks (for brand identity); designs (for product appearance); and copyright (for material such as literary and artistic outputs, music, films, sound recordings, broadcasts, software and multimedia). Here we are concerned only with copyright issues.

Generally, copyright does not have to be registered with any government agency. This is the big difference between copyright and patents for inventions. Copyright protection is therefore automatic for the creator. Copyright is time-limited. The exact amount of time varies from country to country and according to the type of material but is usually upwards of twenty-five years.

Copyright gives the creator of a written text (as well as any other material created, such as videos or multimedia artefacts) the *moral right* to be identified as the creator of the material. This is your legal protection against plagiarists or those who seek to remove your name from co-authored work – although recourse to law usually won't get you anywhere unless you can prove substantive loss as a result of your right being breached. Your moral right also allows you to object to the distortion or mutilation of your creative work.

Copyright also gives the *economic right* to control the use of the work in a number of ways. This includes making copies, publishing copies, performing in public, broadcasting and use on-line. What usually happens when your work is accepted for publication is that you have to assign your economic copyright to the publisher. This enables the publisher to economically exploit your work, allowing them to cover their costs and also to (hopefully) make a profit. In return for this assignment of rights, the publisher may agree to make some payment to you. The form of payment varies with the format of the material. We've set out the usual way in which it works below.

- *Journal articles*. No money payment is made to the author(s). However, the publisher usually gives the author(s) a free copy of the journal in which the article appears and/or a number of offprints. Some publishers support their journals by giving the editors money for secretarial assistance. However, and increasingly, journals are so short of funds that they sometimes charge authors a submission fee on papers, or even a publication fee. This is particularly the case with small journals in low to middle-income countries and indeed some US journals, where the publishers make a big fat profit but still charge the authors.
- *Book chapters*. Usually a (very) small lump sum is offered to the author(s) and they get a copy of the book in which it appeared. Sometimes the lump sum can be taken in the form of books from the publisher's list to a slightly greater value than the cash. When you agree to write a chapter for an edited collection it is worth checking with the editors to see how they plan to distribute the money. In such circumstances you need to think about how well the book may sell – if it is to be a student textbook you might ask for a share of the royalties.
- *Authored and edited books*. The author(s)/editors usually get a royalty payment based on a percentage of the net receipts (sales less direct costs) that the publisher derives from the sales of the book or the sales of the rights to publish it in, for example, another language or geographical area. Some publishers will offer an advance on royalties and when you edit a book the payments to contributors are made out of such advances (i.e. it is you who pays them, not the publisher). You will usually also get a few free copies of the book.

Most academics are employed by a university. Because academics are employees, under some legal systems, the products of their work may strictly belong to their employer. Universities worldwide are ever anxious to maximise their income and IP can represent just such an additional source of income. However, they are usually most interested in patents, where the profits to be had are at least potentially significant. As we've already demonstrated, the money at stake from copyright in academic outputs is usually small fry in comparison. As a result, most universities allow most staff to reserve to themselves the copyright in their work and any resulting income. However, you should check out your own university's position on this. Sometimes, when people are working in research units within institutions, especially self-financing

ones, staff give permission or are required to assign the economic copyright in their work to the institution or the research unit.

It is important to understand that, when you assign your economic copyright to a publisher, it is no longer yours. This is a legal undertaking and you must take it seriously. For instance, if you are asked for permission to reprint something you have written (for instance, to reproduce a journal article in a student reader), the permission is not yours to give. You must ask your publisher and they may or may not give it. In the past, publishers were always willing to give such permission for journal articles, as long as the original source was acknowledged. However, we know of instances where such permission has been refused because the publisher wants to sell papers from back copies of journals over the Internet ('Click here, pay $15 and download'). Publishers may be less obliging with regard to books, as they have a longer shelf life. If publishers do consent, they may charge the other publisher. If they do sell the rights to your work in this or any other way, you will get some kind of payment as agreed in your original contract.

Of course, all this stuff to do with copyright applies to other people's work as much as to your own. This means that if you want to use excerpts, diagrams, photographs and so on from someone else's published work, you must respect their economic copyright and moral right of attribution. With regard to economic copyright, there are always circumstances in which you can reproduce limited amounts of someone else's work, for the purposes of critique, commentary and research. You must make yourself familiar with the rules in your own particular country.

Authors' societies

There are a number of authors' societies around the world that help authors get the benefit of payments made for the photocopying or lending of their work. There is usually a small fee payable for joining it, but this is usually more than offset by the income stream which members receive. For instance, in Australia you can claim money for lending rights from the Educational Lending Rights Scheme and for copying from the Copyright Agency. In the UK there is a body called the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society.

4 Publishing Articles in Academic Journals

Having covered the basics, we turn our attention in this chapter to some of the complexities and details of how to write journal articles and get them published in refereed academic journals.

What do we mean, 'academic journals'?

We find that undergraduate students often get confused about the difference between academic literature and other sorts of publication when doing literature reviews. This is often because we haven't been specific enough about what we mean by 'academic journals'. What we do mean are publications, on paper or electronic, which contain scholarly articles that present some or all of the following: research findings, new knowledge, new theorisations or interesting syntheses or re-presentations of existing knowledge. The authors and the readers are usually academics, but not necessarily so.

Academic journals are, therefore, the 'chat rooms' for the exchange of knowledge and ideas and for debate. In fact, this is exactly the reason why the scientific community invented academic journals in the eighteenth century. They were, and remain, an important mechanism by which geographically disparate scholars can communicate and share their thinking.

Journals have a particular structure. They are always edited by one or more academics, who take overall responsibility for the shape and character of the journal. They generally also have editorial boards, usually drawn from the international academic community and chosen to reflect the range of interests of the journal. They may be more or less actively engaged in the processes of publishing the journal. Journals come out regularly, usually three or four times a year, and from time to

time may have special issues edited by guest editors on particular themes. In most cases, however, each edition of the journal will present a fairly eclectic mix of papers, but all within the broad remit of the particular journal.

Another common misconception, but this time more often among postgraduate students and less experienced faculty, is that articles in professional journals are on a par, in research terms, with refereed papers in academic journals. Be in no doubt about this, among academics, academic journals are much more prestigious. But of course, writing for appropriate professional audiences is a means of achieving good dissemination of your work to those who might use it in theirs is important.

Some people think that writing for professional audiences is a good apprenticeship for doing academic writing. Indeed, early publication in professional journals can boost people's confidence, stimulate access to research fields and also help people experience the personal satisfaction of getting into print. But, these benefits are sometimes all too elusive and outweighed by two very serious risks.

First, the two genres are quite distinct, albeit related, forms. Professional journal articles based on academic research are really translations of academic writing for lay readerships. That is, they represent an attempt to render academic work more accessible to a wider audience. Logically, therefore, it is not possible to write for professional audiences before the academic thinking and writing have been done. Further, given that the genres are quite different, the writing skills you need to write for one do not necessarily translate into writing for the other.

Second, some inexperienced academics spend so much time and effort on writing for practitioners that they never engage with academic audiences, convincing themselves that they have done the academic job when really they haven't. A further problem for such people is that the quality of their writing for professionals is frequently rather poor because it is not grounded in the rigorous thinking and peer review processes that academic journals demand and provide. In short, putting the professional before the academic means that this stuff simply doesn't go through the academic mill and is therefore unrefined and unimproved.

Jennifer had established herself as a successful writer for the technical, professional press prior to commencing her research career. For these audiences, and for editors who paid by word length, she had developed a style that was very terse and directly factual. When she started her PhD, it took a long time for her to adapt her writing style to the more discursive, carefully argued approaches that are needed in academic writing.

Why publish in academic journals?

As an academic, you will probably have been subject to quite strong pressure from your institution to publish in academic journals, often because more publications mean more external funding for the university. Pressure to publish may also come from competition for internal promotion. However much universities say officially that they promote people for their teaching excellence, this is often patently untrue. Teaching is virtually always a secondary consideration when committees think about whether someone should be promoted or not. Whilst these pressures to publish are very real and often quite painful, we believe that you should not lose sight of the many much more positive reasons for doing such work.

- Publishing is academic journals is usually an immensely personally rewarding activity that can offer you a sense of progress, 'closure' as you finish one phase of your research, achievement and pride in yourself and your work.
- If you don't publish your work in academic forums you are failing to engage in wider academic debates or add to the body of publicly available knowledge in your field – which is one of the primary purposes of undertaking research in the first place. Remember that reading other people's refereed work helps academics to develop their own thinking, research and teaching.
- The rigorous review processes that your work will undergo will give it a certain standing or 'quality mark'. It is rare for papers to emerge from the review process unimproved – even if bruised authors are sometimes reluctant to admit it. Readers are likely to trust something that is as well written as it can be and which they know has been subject to scrutiny.

This is especially the case if you are trying to influence non-academic readers who might use or engage with your research.
- Quite simply, publishing helps you to build your reputation and that of your research and field. This may be crucial to getting new jobs or promotion.
- If you make a contribution to the research income of your department and/or university by achieving a good publication record, you will indirectly benefit by being a member of a more conducive and better-funded research environment.
- A good publication record will also help when it comes to winning external research funding by making you look more credible. We deal with this subject in *Winning and Managing Research Funding*.

What can I publish?

The first key consideration in deciding whether to publish or not is whether you have anything worthwhile to say at this point. Premature publication is frustrating, messy and really to be avoided. Therefore do not waste your energies and efforts and those of journal editors and peer reviewers or try the patience of readers. Conversely, don't be so coy about your writing that you constantly delay submitting anything for publication because it isn't yet 'perfect'. Perfection is a chimera – it can't be achieved and you can waste a lot of time and energy seeking the holy grail of the Perfect Publishable Paper.

Here is a list of the sorts of papers that you might be interested in writing for publication:

- A paper describing and analysing your empirical or archival data from a research project. This can be written at various stages in the research process – you don't have to wait until the project is completed to write about it. Often researchers find it useful to publish 'along the way' once they have appropriate data to comment on. Of course, you should publish articles (and/or books) on completed research projects too.
- Most journals have special issues around particular themes from time to time. The themes are generally broad and, with imagination, you may be able to craft your research into a paper that fits them.

- A review essay, which takes a critical look at a range of literature in your field, synthesising it and building on it to develop new insights. This can be a good one if you are doing a doctorate and therefore having to really master a whole field of literature.
- A 'think piece' which develops theoretical insights and ideas within your field of enquiry.
- A response to someone else's work. You are more likely to do this when you disagree with someone, but sometimes journals invite specific individuals to respond to a particular piece of work.
- A methodological reflection in which you explore problems and dilemmas that may have arisen in the course of your research. Some fields give rise to much more of this kind of writing than others.
- Some journals have slots for shorter, less developed 'work in progress' reports. These may include a fairly straightforward description of an on-going research project. They can be a good way of getting into print when you are relatively inexperienced or anxious to get a major project 'on the map'.
- Other journals invite 'opinion pieces' about issues that are of current importance. These, too, tend to be shorter than the journal's regular articles and may be more polemic in style.
- Some canny people planning their doctoral theses do so in such a way that they can develop papers for publication in parallel with their dissertation chapters. In this way, they give themselves confidence that their work passes muster; polish, through the refereeing process; and a significant career advantage when they start applying for jobs.

Keep in mind, though, that some of the sorts of pieces listed above may not be peer-reviewed. Whilst you will need to make clear the level of scrutiny to which your paper was subjected, even non-refereed pieces can help to build careers and reputations, especially in the early stages.

What makes a publishable paper?

Even though the types of refereed papers that you might publish can vary enormously, there are generic qualities that journal editors and referees look for in all of them. Good publishable papers will have a

majority, if not all, of the following characteristics. This list is adapted from Kenway *et al*., *Publishing in Refereed Academic Journals* (1998):

- They present new knowledge, either in the form of substantive research findings, theoretical developments, new insights into existing debates, new analyses of existing knowledge or a synthesis of the literature.
- They are grounded in the relevant literature, demonstrating familiarity and engagement in an on-going academic conversation.
- They address new or familiar issues pertinent to the discipline or field.
- They ask and attempt to answer provocative questions in a persuasive manner.
- They are well written, with carefully crafted and sustained arguments.

How do I get my paper published?

Taking a paper from the first twinkle in your eye through to publication is, unfortunately, quite a long and complicated process. Below we take you through the seven stages from start to finish. Figure 1 presents these stages in diagrammatic form.

Stage one: getting ideas, doing research and writing

If you haven't even started on this stage, you need to read *Getting Started on Research* and also Chapter 2 of this book.

Stage two: giving conference and seminar papers

Once you have developed a paper you really need to take it on the road – taking it to conferences, seminars and workshops. Within reason, a good paper can't have too many outings – but watch that you don't give the same paper to the same people again and again. We deal with conference papers in detail in *Building Networks*.

It's important to use conferences, seminars and workshops as a way of getting feedback so that you can reflect on, refine and polish your paper until you have buffed it up enough to be sent to a journal. You can

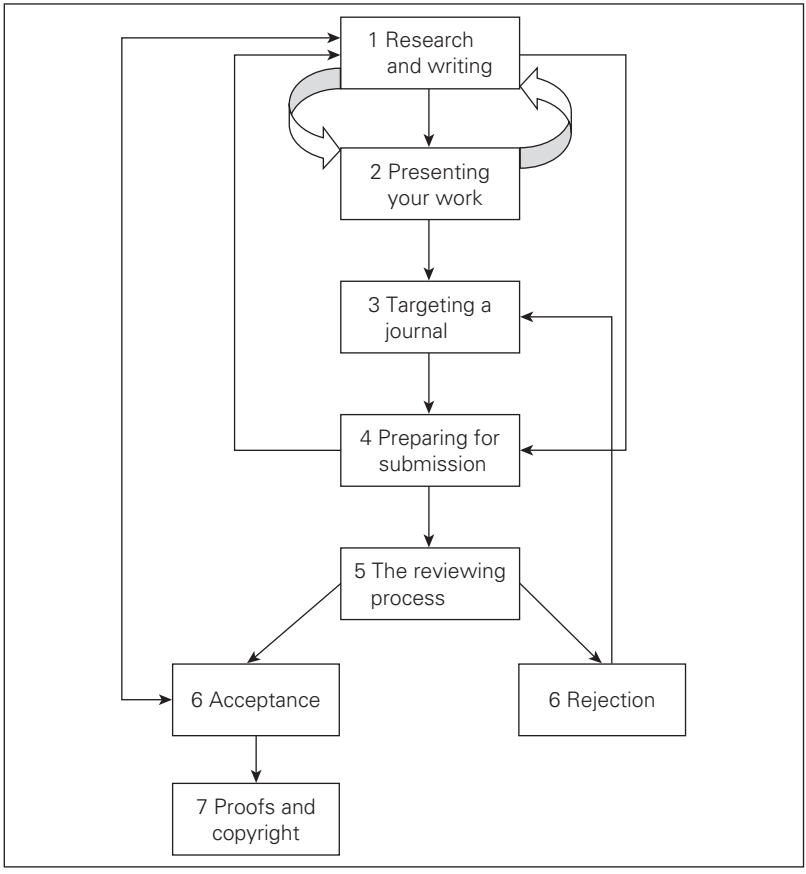

FIGURE 1 Seven steps to heaven: Stages in getting a paper published

be sure that if you keep getting similar adverse comments when you present the paper, your reviewers will also discern the weaknesses when you submit it unless you have resolved the problems. It may be a matter of explaining more carefully what you mean or addressing more fundamental issues. On the other hand, if your paper stimulates lively discussion and interest, it signals that you have struck a rich seam from which to publish. Be careful to take good notes on what people say about your work. Write these up either during your session or immediately afterwards. If you feel that you can't cope with presenting your paper, answering questions on it and taking notes of people's comments and suggestions, get a friend or colleague in the audience to do the note taking for you.

Stage three: targeting a journal

Okay, you have written a paper that has been well aired, commented upon and subsequently and iteratively improved. Now you need to identify an appropriate journal to eventually send it to.

Finding the right journal takes time and effort. But investment at this stage will save you much energy and grief later on. Not all journals, as you will be aware, are the same. They embody different areas of interest, styles, methodologies, aims and objectives. You must achieve a reasonable degree of congruence between your paper and the target journal. Inevitably this involves some compromise in both how you rewrite the paper and the journals you try to get published in.

You will already have some idea about journals from your own research and reading for it. However, here are some more suggestions about how to initially locate journals that may be interested in your work.

- You could do a lot worse than consider the journals that you have been reading for your research. If you find what they publish interesting and relevant, it is likely that your work will fit well.
- Go to the library and browse through the journals on the shelves. All of them will have notes for contributors and statements of editorial policy, usually inside the front or back cover. You should also scan the articles in their back issues to get a sense of whether your work is congruent with the journal's remit and style. This can be a good way of shaping your thinking about where work might be placed. Be imaginative and a bit eclectic about what you look at and don't necessarily confine yourself to a narrow sphere of interest.
- Go to the websites of the substantial publishers of journals and look through their lists of journals. Various search engines, especially in library databases of journals, will take you to these sites. There you will be able to search for journals in particular disciplinary or interest areas. Each journal will have its own page, including its editorial policy, sample issues and articles (for free download) and notes for contributors.
- Ask your mentors or more experienced colleagues for suggestions. But beware – the increasing preponderance of research quality measurement exercises has often tended to lead to a mindless, lemming-like rush for certain journals that achieve iconic status. If your work fits nicely with such journals, all well and good.

However, we would strongly counsel against twisting and distorting your papers in order to try to squash them into a particular journal box they do not fit.

- Sign up for the various journal electronic alert lists that are available. These can take the form of simply giving you the contents pages of journals in your sphere of interest, or may give you abstracts of articles. You can put in your own key words and, provided you choose them sensibly, this will be a useful way of finding out which journals publish your kind of stuff.

Handy hints for targeting journals

We have told you how to look for journals, but what exactly are you looking for? Remember that you need to take a really focused, strategic approach to this important task.

1. The stated editorial policy and your impression of the papers carried should give you a clear picture of the kinds of themes and issues that the journal seeks to address. Eliminate those journals that really have no interest in your areas of concern, broadly construed.
2. Sometimes journals have a particular epistemological, theoretical or indeed political leaning, either stated or unstated. By and large, you should respect these stances and not send your work to a journal that is patently out of sympathy with your own stances. On the other hand, sometimes you may be pleasantly surprised to find that journals with a reputation for publishing only papers of a certain type would actually welcome a broader range of submissions. This is most likely to be the case where the editorial approach is non-positivist because, by its nature, such thinking is open to differing notions of knowledge creation (see also *Getting Started on Research*). If in doubt, it's always worthwhile contacting the editors and sending them a short abstract of your article to check out whether it is the kind of thing that, in principle, they would consider.
3. Journals have different attitudes to publishing a range of styles of writing. Some will welcome experimental writing or poetry. Others are committed to the standard academic generic forms. If you have

written something experimental or unconventional, there is little point in sending it to a journal that does not and will not include that kind of writing.

4. Look at the list of editors and the editorial board to see whether the people included do your kind of work or are interested in it. Some journals also publish an annual list of people not on the editorial board who have reviewed papers for them. It's worth looking at this to see what kinds of people are receiving the papers. Don't send a paper to a journal that regularly uses reviewers who might be unsympathetic to your work and/or your area.
5. There are a number of practical issues to which you must also pay attention. For instance, journals accept articles of different lengths. Some want very short submissions while others are prepared to accept much longer articles. This will be stated in the guidelines for authors inside the back or front cover of the journal and on their web page. Failure to heed these guidelines makes editors very grumpy.
6. Journals have different turn-round times for the refereeing process and lead times for publication when accepted. Sometimes this information appears in the journal itself as a footnote to each paper. There are a number of complex factors that impact on lead times. The vagaries of research quality assessment exercises can mean that there is a rush to publish before the exercise deadlines, swamping journals. Sometimes editors seek to cluster papers that they think fit well together. Putting an edition of a journal together can be a complex jigsaw puzzle, especially as editors are limited in the number of pages they are allowed to have in each issue. This means that you may be moved up or down the queue, depending on the length of your paper, as they try to make the most economical use of the space available. If getting your work out within a tight period is crucial to you, then you should check out all these issues with the editor before you submit. New journals can be a good place to send your articles if you want them out quickly, as they are often in search of good material in order to make an impact with their early issues.
7. You should keep an eye open for information about upcoming special issues that may suit your work. These will be put together within a particular time frame and the guest editors often need to solicit, review and accept the appropriate number of articles quite quickly.

8. Pay attention to whom the journal is aimed at. It is, for example, a waste of time to send an article that has relevance only within your own national boundaries to a journal that promotes itself as being about genuinely international issues.
9. An increasing number of journals charge authors for submission or publication of papers. These charges can be substantial. If your institution does not pick up such fees, or you have to negotiate it, then that is another consideration in your journal selection. It is also a consideration to be built into any research funding applications.
10. Conversely, in the UK at least, funds exist to encourage journals to publish papers from academics in low to middle-income countries. Moreover, journals gain international prestige by showing that they attract authors from a wide range of countries. What can sometimes look like a closed shop isn't necessarily so.
11. Don't waste your time and energies trying to get published in a journal if you have had a huge argument with the editor. Conversely, try not to fall out with important journal editors.
12. Try to pick journals that you wish your name and work to be associated with – generally those that will help you to gain prestige and academic standing in a particular area. Thus journal selection becomes an important part of your networking and career-building work.
13. As time goes on and you build up your publications record, spread your wings a bit and don't always publish in the same place or places. At the same time, it is good to develop a relationship with the editors of particular journals, and you may want to publish in some places more than others. The key here is to keep the right balance.
14. Get to know editors by getting yourself introduced to them or going to their presentations at conferences. You can help to build up a good relationship with journals by undertaking what are sometimes regarded as thankless tasks, such as doing book reviews. As time goes on, and you get more established, you may be asked to be a reviewer or referee for articles submitted to the journal. It's always a good idea to be helpful and amenable in doing such work because then you will be regarded as a good friend of the journal. It won't mean that bad papers get published or that you will have an easier ride, but it may help to ensure that you and your papers are dealt with promptly and efficiently.

Again, this is part of building a network within your academic community (see *Building Networks* for more on this). Having such a relationship will help you to approach the editor with your ideas and have constructive discussions about how to take them forward.

15. The single most important thing in choosing where to publish is to select journals which suit your work, which you are interested in and which allow you to make the best possible impact. Other things being equal, however, try to target the most prestigious journal that you realistically have a chance of getting your work into.

    Journals are often ascribed 'national' or 'international' labels. As a matter of course, virtually all journals seek to be seen as international. If we started picking at the thread of what makes a journal national or international, we could fill the rest of this book. Ultimately, whether a journal is of national or international importance is a matter of judgement. The international relevance of research, even if it deals with a local subject, is a key marker of excellence. For journals, an international dimension is a necessary but not sufficient condition for excellence. That international dimension might be connoted by the breadth of the editorial board and the origins of the articles but, most important, by whether the papers themselves are capable of speaking to audiences beyond narrow national boundaries.

Stage four: preparing your paper for submission

The task of preparing your paper for submission to a journal is quite complex; Figure 2 shows the process. Preparing a paper for submission involves the synthesis of three important constituent elements: your pre-existing paper, the feedback that you will have received on it and the specific requirements and characteristics of your target journal. We call this process 'drafting and crafting'. What you will be doing is gently moulding your paper so that it is beautifully written, academically robust and irresistible to your target journal. When you have done this, you will need one last round of polishing before your 'baby' is ready to go off.

For this stage you should already have the draft paper, feedback and journal requirements to hand. You can't start without them. There are two key aspects to drafting and crafting: content and form. Both need

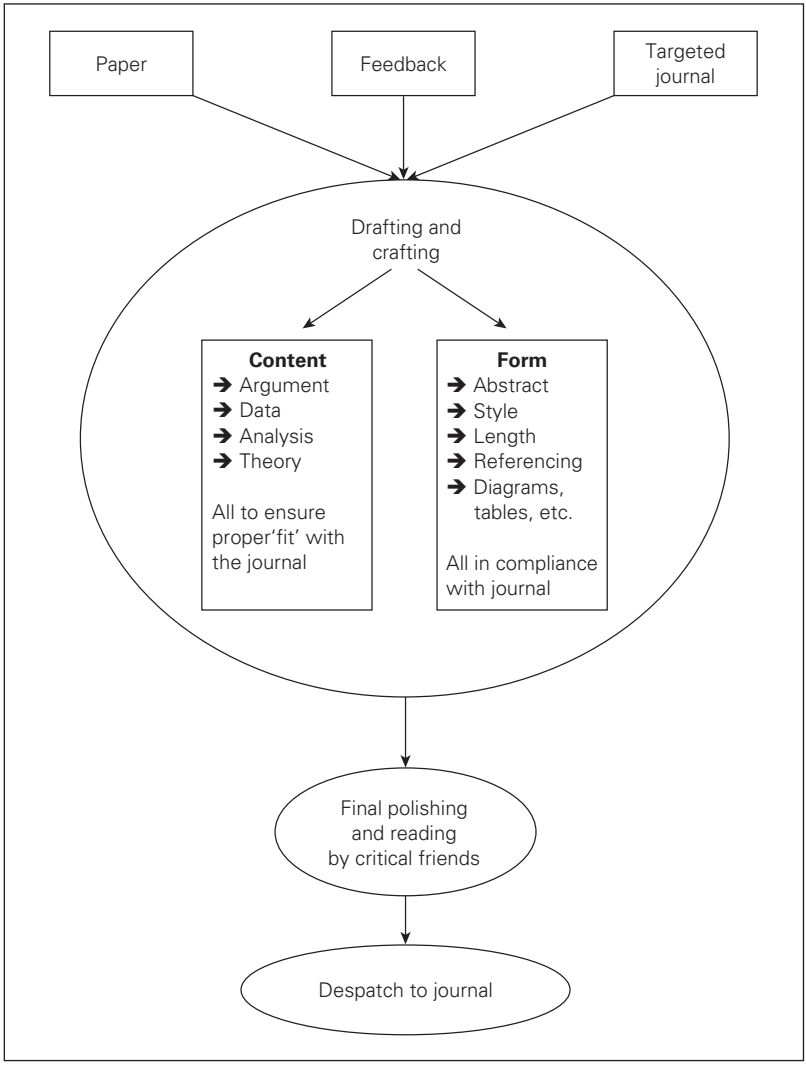

FIGURE 2 Preparing a paper for submission to a journal

to be carefully addressed if you are to be successful in getting your work published. The two textboxes below give you a checklist of things that you have to pay close attention to. You may also find it helpful to refer to *Getting Started on Research* and Chapter 2 of this book.

Content

- Has your paper got a carefully sequenced, logically organised argument that fits together and works like the finest Swiss clockwork? If so, is it explicit, so that you minimise the amount of work the reader has to do?
- Is there a clear and strong relationship between the argument and any evidence, data or other material that you have used?
- Is your analysis of any evidence, data or other material methodologically sound, clearly described and well justified?
- Have you drawn on appropriate theoretical resources and used them in ways that elucidate your arguments rather than obscure them? Are you sure that you have properly understood the theory that you have used? Do not, on any account, rely on derivative writings, as interpretations by others may be misleading or inappropriate.
- Overall, does your paper 'sit' well with the kind of work published in the journal and your intended audience?
- Finally, and most important, is your work credible as a publishable paper, albeit possibly with some revision? You must on no account use the journal review process instead of doing the drafting and crafting work yourself with the assistance of critical friends/mentors/advisers/supervisors and taking the paper around to conferences and seminars.

Form

- The overwhelming majority of journals require an abstract along with the paper. This is a very short (usually 150–200 words) summary of what the paper says. Abstracts are important because, if or when your paper is published, the abstract will be used by potential readers in deciding whether your work may be of value to them. Reviewers of your paper may also utilise the abstract as part of their work. Brevity does not mean that this is an easy thing to get right. Make sure that the abstract matches what the paper is actually about.

- Have you written your paper in the designated house style of the journal? For example, have you complied with guidelines on matters such as capitalisation, the spelling conventions, the use and positioning of footnotes and/or endnotes, punctuation and so on?
- It is vital that you adhere rigorously to the designated referencing style of the journal, so that all your references are complete, none has been omitted and there are no redundant ones from earlier drafts. This will be easy if you have taken our advice in *Getting Started on Research* and invested in a good bibliographic database package. Otherwise, you will just have to be pedantically methodical and careful. Failure to adhere to referencing guidelines is a major source of aggravation for editors and a good way to get on their bad sides. Consider it to be one of the Seven Deadly Sins.
- Is the layout of your paper on the page clear and comprehensible? Does it follow the guidelines for the journal? For instance, most journals ask you to include diagrams, graphs, pictures and so on as appendices with a note in the text where the typesetters should insert them. Usually journals request that the manuscript is double-spaced and that your name does not appear anywhere other than on the title page (except possibly in the bibliography, although you may choose to insert 'author' here instead of your name). We explain below why this is an important requirement.
- Is your paper a suitable length for the journal? Sometimes this is expressed as the number of words (usually by non-US journals), whilst US journals commonly use a page (i.e. 'letter size') length. Watch out for the fact that US paper sizes can vary quite markedly from those used elsewhere.
- Are your diagrams, graphs, figures, tables, pictures and so on clearly labelled, of good quality and obviously related to the written text? Don't rely on colour unless you know that the journal will use colour printing.
- Don't ferget to use the spillchicker. Don't rely on it entirely, as some misspellings don't get picked up. Rebecca once missed a critical 'l' off her curriculum vitae when talking about her 'public sector research'. Grammar checkers is sometimes helpful too, but didn't rely on it because their often wrong.

Your paper is almost ready to go. Whilst we caution against obsessive polishing which actually rubs the gilt off, it is worth while at this stage to get your critical friends and mentors to give the thing a final read over if they have the time and interest. Whilst you should be your own best critic by this stage, they may pick up on things that you, because of your closeness to the work, have missed. If time permits, put your paper away for a few days and then come back to it with fresh eyes and re-read it. A little bit of distance can really help you to see the wood for the trees. At this point you may do a bit of final tweaking, but it shouldn't be much. This may all sound like hard work, and it is. But you should be proud of your work and want it to be seen in the best possible light.

Finally, at last, you are ready to despatch it. All journals make it a condition of submission that the article is being sent only to them. Abide by this rule or you will lose credibility with editors and peer reviewers. There is a sensible reason for it – the reviewing process is time-consuming and expensive hard work for all involved. Nobody wants to go though it, thinking they are helping you, when you are in fact two-timing them.

You now have to write a letter to the editor. We think that it is a good idea to introduce yourself if you are likely to be unknown to them. If you do know them (perhaps because you have been doing good networking work at conferences, etc.) then remind them where they met you and perhaps what they said. If they know your doctoral supervisor/adviser or mentor, then remind them of that too. Don't be pushy, but do exude a nice quiet confidence that you are a worthy author moving in the right circles and doing interesting things. Tell them a little bit about what the paper is about (maybe just one sentence), but don't repeat the abstract. It can also be helpful to explain a bit of the paper's background – perhaps that it is derived from work on a major funded project or how you came to be doing it. Keep all this networking and contextual information very brief.

Check the journal's requirements regarding submission – do they want hard copies (if so, how many) and a computer disk or are they willing to accept electronic copies only? If so, will they accept them by email or do they want a disk? Keep your own copies of what has been despatched. Make a note of the date, but do bear in mind that the next stage (see below) can take a very long time, so you need to put it towards the back of your mind and not worry. Finally, put it all in the post/send the email and go out and celebrate in whatever way floats your boat.

Stage five: the waiting game – the review process

We thought you might find it useful to have a description of what happens to your paper while you are doing all that waiting.

When the journal editor receives your paper the first thing that they will do is to give it a quick read-over to check the following things:

- That the paper is in the right area for the journal and that, for example, you are not a dentist who has accidentally sent a paper to the *International Journal of Oral History*.
- It is in the required format for the journal or near enough so that it is worth sending out for review.
- Whether it is intended for a special issue or the regular journal, and any other exceptional issues that you may have raised in your covering letter.
- Most important, they will check whether it is of a sufficiently high standard to be worth sending out to review. Editors are very aware of how hard academics work and of what a lot of work it is to review a paper properly. They don't want to alienate their all-important pool of reviewers by sending out papers that wouldn't pass an undergraduate examination.

Gender and Education is the leading feminist journal in education. As such, it is committed to assisting inexperienced and/or unsupported academics to be able to publish in it. The journal rule is that all articles must be reviewed by at least one member of the 20-member editorial board. It became apparent that the review process of the journal was being used by authors as a kind of work avoidance, with too many half-baked papers being sent in and reviewed time and time again. This placed an intolerable burden on the editorial board and, indeed, on other reviewers. As a result, the board decided that papers could no longer be resubmitted more than once.

A good editor who is unhappy with your paper at this stage will send it back to you with a letter of explanation. Once the editor is satisfied, they will do two things. First, they will send you an acknowledgement informing you that they have received your paper and sent it out for review. If you have sent a paper off and don't hear anything for a

month, it is worthwhile emailing the editor politely to double-check that the paper has actually been received. However, you should not hassle and harry. Second, they (or their administrative assistant) will remove the title page with your name on it from the manuscript. They will also check to make sure that your name doesn't appear in other places, such as the headers or footers, and that you have not cited yourself in ways that identify you as the author. If you are identifiable in any way, they may well ask you to resubmit the paper rather than compromise the blind peer review process.

The editor will then give it a reference number and send it to at least two selected referees together with the journal's evaluation sheet, which asks them to comment on various aspects of your paper and to indicate whether it is publishable. Part of their response will be intended for your eyes but the editor may also offer them the opportunity to make comments just for the editor's eyes.

Who are these referees? They will usually be experienced academics and researchers whose expertise fits them well to critically evaluate the suitability of your paper for publication. Although they will not officially know who the author of a paper is, they may well be able to guess if they have been busy out and about at conferences or reading the journals in which you have previously published. They will usually not be people in your own institution or whose help you acknowledge, although this has been known to occur.

The reviewers will be asked to return the paper within a limited period – often about six weeks. However, because this is the kind of work that academics struggle to find space to do, papers for review often get relegated to the bottom of the pile and they do not manage to meet their deadlines. What this means is that the poor old editor (or their administrative assistant) will have to write reminding them that they have a paper to review. How quickly such a reminder is sent out after the due date for the review depends very much on the journal's administrative resources. You can help yourself here by submitting the best possible paper that precisely meets the journal's requirements. A well written paper on an interesting topic will incite the reviewer to do their work much more promptly than one that they approach with dread terror. This is another reason to write a really sparkly abstract, as nine of out ten reviewers will at least scan it when they open the envelope/attachment from the editor before putting the article at the bottom of their overflowing in-tray.

It has to be said that reviewers vary in quality. Some do a wonderful job whilst others are vindictive, destructive and self-obsessed or just

plain lazy. They are so heterogeneous that we can't begin to describe the gamut of behaviours. However, we give you below two completely fictional pen portraits of the Reviewer from Hell and the Reviewer as Angel.

The Reviewer from Hell

Professor Nick Beelzebub is not really an active researcher and is living on his past reputation. However, he always agrees to undertake reviews because he enjoys the power it gives him as a gatekeeper over his younger and evidently brighter peers. He delights in tearing a paper to pieces without making any constructive suggestions for revision. He is firmly fixed in his own research paradigm and will not countenance any alternatives. His comments on others' papers always start from the premise that they should have adopted his favoured approach and the fact that they haven't means that the research is valueless. That is, he never judges anybody's work on its own merits but only by reference to his own beliefs. The reviews are peppered with unfortunate and hurtful phraseology such as 'the author completely fails …', 'this is weak and insubstantial work' and so on. Old Nick has no regard for the feelings of the nervous authors who will be receiving his commentaries. It is either impossible to divine from his reviews what needs to be done to make the paper publishable or his demands are completely unrealistic and inappropriate.

The Reviewer as Angel

Professor Angelica Hope is a successful academic, who is quietly confident about her own abilities and expertise. She undertakes reviewing work assiduously although she has trouble fitting it in with her heavy work load. This means that she sometimes keeps papers for longer than she would really wish to. Her comments are invariably honest, straightforward and constructive. She aims to help authors

present their own work and ideas in the best way for them and the journal. When asking for a paper to be revised, she will give very clear and precise advice on how to go about it. She may recommend additional literature that would be useful or further analysis work. When she has finished writing her comments, she carefully rereads them and tries to imagine herself as the author receiving them, asking herself the question 'How would I feel if these comments were about my work?' This doesn't mean that she never has negative things to say. Furthermore, if she really thinks that a paper is unsalvageable, she will say so and explain why.

Once the editor has, eventually, received the reviewers' comments they can make a judgement about what should happen to your paper. The editor's job is a crucial one at this stage, as they may have to arbitrate between reviewers who disagree or make judgement calls about how much they should encourage you to revise the paper and resubmit it to them. Whatever the decision, the editor will write to you explaining it and enclosing any reviewers' comments. Opening that envelope/email can stimulate emotions from ecstasy to despair and dread terror and/or extreme anger. These emotional reactions are never completely attenuated, no matter how senior people become. You need to allow yourself to have the reaction but then think about how to move your paper along. A number of different sorts of editor's decisions are possible.

Scenario 1, and very unlikely, your paper may be accepted as it stands with no revisions or amendments. Let's be frank, this is very unusual so don't beat yourself up if it doesn't happen to you.

Scenario 2, the editor may accept the paper subject to relatively minor amendments that do not require it to be sent out for review again. The sorts of things you might be asked to do are, for example, to clarify the use of diagrams or graphs, to define your terms better, to strengthen the introduction or conclusion, to rewrite the abstract more clearly or to improve the referencing. This is far from an exhaustive list – it's just meant to give you a feel for the kinds of things regarded as minor revisions.

Scenario 3, and a very common category, you may be asked to make major revisions and then resubmit for reconsideration by reviewers.

Here the kinds of revision required will be more substantive and may require quite significant reworking either of the theory or data analysis or the structure of the paper. Reviewers should give you quite detailed and clear feedback on exactly what needs to be done and you need to pay careful attention to it.

Scenario 4, your paper may be rejected outright. Rather like asking someone you really fancy out on a date, rejection invariably hurts. There are many types of rejection and many reasons why a paper may be rejected. For instance, the paper may be deemed inappropriate for the journal. If that happens, you should not have had to wait too long, as a good editor should have picked this up before sending it out for review. In such a circumstance, some editors will offer suggestions of alternative journals to which you might submit the paper. Alternatively, the paper may be deemed irredeemably poor and not capable of sufficient improvement to make it publishable in that particular journal. Remember that no judgement is truly objective and that the reviewers' and editors' decisions may be prompted by fundamental epistemological or theoretical differences – they may simply not see the world in the same way that you do. Alternatively, the quality of your work may not have been very good and the reviewers should explain clearly in what ways your paper is deficient.

Barry received a hurtful rejection on a piece of important work that he had been doing. He realised that he had sent it to the wrong journal when one reviewer wrote, 'Why does the author keep saying things like "Our interviews showed" – qualitative interviews can show "nothing".' Barry subsequently revised the paper slightly and it appeared in a prestigious edited collection.

Stage six: what happens next? Acceptance or rejection

So you have heard back from the journal on the outcome of the reviewing process and have received the editor's decision. When there is no consensus among the reviewers as to what should happen to the paper, the editor should provide a lead. This is usually phrased

something like 'I suggest that you concentrate on Reviewer A's comments.' If there is disagreement between reviewers and the editor does not give a lead, then you should contact her or him to clarify exactly what they want you to do.

Anwar received the editor's letter and reviewers' comments on a paper he had submitted to a journal special issue. The decision was that he should revise and resubmit the paper for further reviewing. When he read the reviewers' comments, he realised that the two sets of suggestions would take the paper in completely opposite directions and that he could not possibly fulfil both reviewers' requirements. However, the guest editors of the journal had not indicated to him which reviewer to focus on. When he asked what to do, he was told that he should make his own decision on this, so he followed the suggestions that were more in line with his own thinking. The resubmitted paper was sent back to the reviewers. One reviewer (and you can guess which) pronounced the paper much improved and recommended publication without further ado and as a matter of urgency because of its immediate importance. The other reviewer said that unfortunately the changes made to the paper had 'rendered it unpublishable'. Happily for Anwar, the editors decided to follow the first reviewer's opinion.

What you do once you receive a response from the journal depends upon which of the scenarios listed above your paper falls into. Let's go through each in turn.

Scenario 1, unconditional acceptance. In this case there is nothing to do at this stage except celebrate.

Scenario 2, accepted subject to minor revisions. You need to pay very close attention to what you have been asked to do and think carefully about how to respond to each suggestion. You shouldn't make compromises that make you feel uncomfortable or that you don't agree with, but you shouldn't be truculent or resistant to what may well be sensible suggestions. When you have finished the revisions, write an itemised letter to the editor setting out how you have addressed each and every request for revision. If you have

declined to follow any particular revision, you need to explain in detail why.

Scenario 3, revise and resubmit. Here the suggestions are likely to be more general than specific and will undoubtedly require quite a lot of work. Again, you need to think carefully about what has been suggested and you may well need to take advice from your mentors and critical friends on how to approach the task. Again, when you have finished your rewrite, you need to construct a careful letter to the editor explaining how you have addressed the reviewers' comments. This letter will normally be sent back out to the reviewers with your revised paper. Your paper will then go through the same process as before, often being returned to the original reviewers. If you have done the job properly your next letter from the editor should be of scenario 1 or 2 type.

Scenario 4, outright rejection. You need to take a cool, long look at the reasons why your paper was rejected. It may take a little while before you feel able to do so, as you will undoubtedly feel hurt, undermined, angry or offended (or some combination of these) by the rejection. It is particularly important that you do return to your paper to see how it could best be salvaged. If you have taken our advice so far, it is likely that with sufficient effort you will be able to make a publishable paper out of it.

Having reappraised your paper in the light of the feedback you have received on it, and after taking advice from suitably experienced colleagues, you may genuinely believe that the rejection was a product of unfair reviewing, ideological conflicts or even personal animosity. In such circumstances you should send the paper, perhaps with some revision in the light of feedback, to another journal.

If, however, you realise that the paper was indeed very weak, you need to decide whether or not you can actually rescue it. This will involve you going back to the drawing board to restart the process at an appropriate point. How far back you go will depend on how bad you think your paper is and the reasons for the problems with it.

Stacey had recently completed her PhD and developed her first substantive journal paper from it. She received a crushing and ineptly worded set of brusque comments back from the reviewers and an outright rejection from the editor. In consequence, it took her a while

to regain her self-confidence and equilibrium. She took the paper to one of her senior colleagues, who she felt would be able to advise her. He suggested resubmitting the paper to a journal in a completely different disciplinary area where Stacey had no particular expertise, although she had called upon some of the theoretical resources of that discipline. She was uncomfortable with the advice, as it seemed to her that it did not take her or her paper seriously, was quite dismissive and had little chance of being a successful strategy. She went to another senior colleague, who spent some time helping Stacey to address the serious weaknesses in her line of argument so that she could resubmit the paper to a journal in her own disciplinary field. At the same time, she procured technical assistance from another experienced colleague who helped her address the criticisms of the statistical data in her paper. Clearly, reworking the paper at this level is taking her some time, but she has much more chance of success this way.

Stage seven: the technicalities of proofs and copyright

Once your paper has finally been accepted there will be what will probably feel like an age (and may actually be one) before anything seems to happen. Editors like to have a substantial number of accepted papers 'in the bag' in order to give themselves flexibility in putting each edition of the journal together and to save themselves nightmares about not having enough papers to publish. When things finally happen, you will be expected to act yesterday. It usually goes something like this. All of a sudden, when you are least expecting it, are about to give birth or go on holiday, you will receive printer's proofs. These are copy pages of the paper as it will appear on the page in the published journal. These days they are likely to be sent electronically as a read-only PDF file.

The editor will ask you to check the proofs for spelling errors, serious omissions of chunks of text, missing or inaccurate references, etc. If you have done your job properly up to now, you should have very little work to do at this stage unless something has gone wrong with the typesetting – unlikely but it does happen. However, you do need to proof-read very carefully and don't get so carried away with the beauty of your own prose that you miss glaring typos. Editors will be furious with you if, at this stage, you seek to make amendments (rather than

typographical corrections) to the text. And rightly so – the technicalities of actually putting a journal together are immense and amendments at this stage can be financially costly. If you really do need to make an amendment it will need careful and sensitive negotiations with the editor to see if it is feasible.

Along with the proofs, you will receive a copyright assignment form. We dealt with the issue of intellectual property rights (IPR) in Chapter 3. You and any co-authors will be asked to sign the form and return it with the proofs. This form is very important, as without it the publishers will not go to press with your article in case you sue them for breach of copyright.

Both the proofs and the copyright matters need to be dealt with as a matter of urgency – usually within two or three days of receipt.

5 Publishing Books and in Books

Having dealt with journal papers in Chapter 4, we go on in this chapter to talk about publishing books and in books. We first define our subject then discuss why you might choose this publishing form and set out the practicalities of how to go about it.

What do we mean, books?

In this chapter we talk about two specific sorts of books: research monographs and edited collections (we deal briefly with textbooks in Chapter 6). Because these terms are as clear as mud, here is a brief description of the type of books we mean.

- *Research monographs*. 'Monograph' is a confusing word and we looked it up in the *Oxford English Dictionary* to resolve an argument about its meaning. It has its origins in the study of natural history, where it meant a 'treatise on one species or genus' rather than a general work that covered a number of areas. In wider usage, therefore, it means a book that is concerned with one principal theme (which may, in itself, be quite broad). You should think of it as a book with one consistent argument or set of arguments that runs through from the introduction to the conclusion and is based on research (hence 'research monograph'). It follows that one or more people may author a monograph. Occasionally, the authors may have separate chapters specifically attributed to them. Monographs may be published as part of a themed series, in which case one or more academics will edit the series. Their job is to ensure that the series as a whole has some coherence.
- *Edited collections*. As the name implies, these books are put together by an editor (or editors). The book will be, or at least profess to be, on a particular topic or theme and will include several chapters by

different authors. Each chapter will have separately attributed authorship. The editor(s) job is to give the collection coherence, and they usually reflect this by writing an introductory chapter. Editors of collections of academic writing are nearly always academics and researchers themselves.

Of course this typology isn't comprehensive. There are some less common forms of academic research publication such as when well established scholars publish collections of work that has already been published in different places. These are often called 'essay collections'.

What's in books for me?

Now that we've defined our terms, you may like to think about which book format, if any, is going to suit you. Different disciplines have different traditions with regard to books. For instance, in accounting it is quite unusual to be the author of a research monograph, whilst in history it is the prime mode of publication. The popularity of edited collections similarly varies between disciplines. Whatever the traditions in your area, your first and main consideration should be whether or not a book format is an appropriate medium in which to publish your research work. We discuss the relative merits of research monographs and edited collections below.

Research monographs

A major advantage of a monograph is that its greater length allows you to develop your ideas into a more sustained, complex and comprehensive argument than would be possible in, say, a journal paper. This is especially the case if you have a large amount of rich qualitative data or archival evidence that you need to describe and analyse.

Associated with this, books offer the advantage of a reasonable degree of flexibility in terms of their structure, approach and generic form. That is, you can often be more experimental and innovative in the way in which you approach the writing of a book, especially compared with most journal publications.

A third advantage is that books can escape the kind of territorial gatekeeping that can be associated with journal editorship. This can be

especially useful if your work is somewhat less than mainstream. This is not to say that books are not subject to rigorous peer scrutiny both in the initial proposal stages, when the manuscript is submitted and after publication (that is, in reviews of the book). On the downside, publishing in books exposes your work to the sort of commercial pressures under which publishers operate and which are less in evidence in journal publication.

If you are finishing or have recently finished a higher research degree such as a doctorate, the book form offers you substantial publication at marginal cost. Don't run away with the idea that a thesis can simply be submitted to a publisher as it was examined, no matter how good it is. However, with some careful restructuring and rewriting, it may be possible to convert the one to the other relatively quickly. This can provide a substantial boost to a developing career.

Finally, writing a good and well received research monograph is undoubtedly an excellent way of firmly establishing your academic credentials and expertise in that particular area. The number of people who read journal articles is notoriously low and specialised. With a good book, you are more likely to reach a much wider audience including both academics in fields other than your own, practitioners and even interested lay people.

Edited collections

Edited collections come into existence for a number of reasons:

- One or more people at a conference (usually the organisers) may feel that some or all of the papers are of sufficient quality and hang together well enough to merit collecting them into an edited book.
- A group of people working loosely together over a period to discuss, research and develop ideas and articles may decide to collect them and publish them jointly.
- Quite often specially convened seminar series on particular themes may generate edited collections.
- An innovative thinker may decide to map out a new or developing field and do so by commissioning chapters for an edited collection.
- Research networks or teams may combine together to produce one or more edited collections based on their linked research projects.
- Major funded programmes of research, which consist of a number of parallel projects, will often result in the production of a volume

that pulls together various packages of work around the programme theme.

Of course there may be a multitude of other routes by which these books get started but we hope you've got the idea. It follows from the list above that edited collections are capable of doing quite a few different things.

- A typist transcribing one of Rebecca's research interviews heard 'research monograph' as 'research monologue'. In a way, that's what a research monograph is. By contrast, an edited collection allows a number of different voices to be heard. In good collections the chapters will 'speak to' each other, mapping or developing a field of research.
- The process of writing some edited collections can be a great way of getting authors to engage, talk and build relationships with other researchers.
- Edited collections, by virtue of the fact that the work is divided between more people, offer at least the prospect of getting the stuff out there quite quickly. That said, they also offer the opportunity for more arguments and delays caused by the bad behaviour of just one or two people.
- For those of you aspiring to promotion, being the editor of such a collection is a great way to demonstrate research leadership – if you do it well.
- For students and emerging researchers, edited collections can offer something of a panoramic view of a field without some of the intimidation that can come from starting on a pile of dense research monographs.
- Some edited collections (or research monographs) are so successful at speaking to a broad range of audiences that they come to be used in university teaching or even have courses based around them. If you ever succeed in writing or editing such a book then give yourself a pat on the back for making your research clear, accessible and influential in teaching.

All that said, edited collections are sometimes not popular with publishers. This is because edited collections can be a jumble of dislocated papers of varying quality with little internal coherence. As a result they don't sell well. Nevertheless, the best ones are very popular with both purchasers and, consequently, publishers.

Publishers, proposals and contracts

Okay, you may have got to the point where you have decided that publication in some form of book is the right thing for your work. What do you do next? It's an obvious thing to say, but books are published by publishers. This means that you have to engage with these strange beasts if you want to get a book into print. As part of the partnership there will be two key documents – a book proposal and a contract. The proposal is the document that you send to the publisher which describes your proposed book and in which you set out the case for why they should publish it. The contract is the legally binding agreement between you and the publisher concerning your book.

You need to treat writing a book as a publishing project from the outset. Your book will be a collaborative venture between you and your publisher, meaning that it is important to get a publisher on board as early on as possible. It is highly inadvisable to delay contacting publishers and obtaining a contract until your book is written. The publisher's deadlines and guidance will give you something to write to, both in terms of time and the nature of the book.

We will now consider publishers, proposals and contracts in turn.

Publishers

Publishers are people who are in business to make money. However, it would be wrong to assume that this necessarily stops them from being nice people with a commitment to the production of good books. An author's relationship with a publisher should be a genuine partnership. If you can find a publisher who has good business skills and shares your values about books then your partnership will be sound and mutually rewarding. Above all, remember that they need good authors as much as good authors need them. Try to make it a mutually advantageous and successful relationship.

That said, you will almost always have to take the lead in finding a publisher for your book and developing this relationship with them. A variation on this theme is that, sometimes, a publisher may agree to have a whole series of books around one general theme. They will appoint a series editor (who is likely to be a senior academic) who may come along and ask if you would like to contribute a book. We mention this route into publishing throughout this chapter, but here it is sufficient

to note that such an invitation obviates the need to find your own publisher and slightly changes the sort of relationship that you have with them.

Publishers vary enormously in the types of books they take on and also the subject areas they choose to concentrate on. Because of the potential profits, publishers are increasingly drawn to textbooks, making research monographs and edited collections something of a niche market.

The best way to find a publisher who might be willing to take your book is to start looking at and asking about the firms that have published books in your area. The publishers will have carefully developed markets, and target their marketing and sales at these. This means that you are unlikely to be taken on if your book does not appeal to their customer base, even if your book is the best thing since the fourteen-volume boxed set on sliced bread. Whatever types of book they take, they are unlikely to want to take on a book that is a direct competitor with something they already have on their list, especially if it's fairly recent.

Publishers generally have pretty good websites and this allows easy browsing of the sorts of stuff they publish and their guidance to potential authors. You should also evaluate how 'businesslike' the publishers are: look for ones that have a good reputation for effective marketing, good 'production values' (that is, their books look good and don't fall apart quickly) and minimal production delays. Think about which publishers regularly send you good catalogues and other publicity full of things that you find interesting.

It seems to us that the current trend in publishing is for publishers to follow what they think the market is rather than try to shape it. Because profit margins are usually small in research publishing, many firms are unwilling to take risks. Some smaller, independent publishers may prioritise political or strategic aims and be less commercially oriented, but they still have to wash their own faces financially. Yet others are niche publishers, concentrating on only very limited areas (but often doing it very well). University publishing houses tend to be more keen to publish monographs but, we think, are usually less good at marketing. Think internationally when you are looking for a publisher – your book will be more acceptable to publishers if it is saleable in major international markets such as the USA and the UK. All this means that you may have a long search for a publisher who is right for you.

Once you have done this stage of your homework you can draw up a list of publishers you wish to target, and a preferred order for doing so. Here you need to flex your networking skills (see *Building Networks*) because it is important to establish human contact with them in order to try out whether they would be interested in receiving a proposal from you.

The human you need to contact is called the *commissioning editor*. Publishers have a commissioning editor for each specialist area they deal with. You should be able to get this person's name from the firm's website. These editors are usually very knowledgeable about books, journals and individual academics in their field and, we find, are generally supportive and encouraging individuals. They need to become your friend and ally if you want your book published.

Sometimes commissioning editors visit university departments. Often such visits are to search out potential textbook authors, but if they have cold-called you in your office you shouldn't feel abashed about talking to them about your research publication plans. Commissioning editors can also often be found staffing publishers' bookstalls at conferences (and giving away freebies such as pens and copies of journals). These people will be happy to talk about research monographs and edited collections – and the easy-going conference atmosphere and the fact that they are holding themselves open to approaches can make this social work seem less intimidating. Alternatively, you can establish contact by email and then possibly phone them or arrange to go to their office if this is convenient. If you are based outside the USA or UK, you will need to make strategic and well planned use of conferences and your visits to cities overseas for other purposes to add on some networking with publishers – it may be the only chance you have to meet them.

You may decide to approach a series editor (who, remember, will be an academic) with regard to your book if you feel it would fit well in their series. The same considerations apply here except that the series editor acts as an intermediary between you and the publisher. And be warned that the support of the series editor does not guarantee the book will be published. It will still have to get past 'Sales'.

Because publishers vary enormously in the sort of books they publish and the areas they cover, a rejection from one doesn't necessarily mean that you will be rejected by all of them. Often commissioning editors will give you helpful guidance – either on how to shape your proposal

so that it is more likely to succeed with them, or on alternative publishers who might be more interested in your particular book.

Remember also that academic publishing is a small world, with lots of staff movement between publishing houses. Commissioning editors invariably know their counterparts in other firms and talk to them on a regular basis. This means that it is very bad form to send your proposal to more than one publisher at the same time – especially without telling them that you are doing so. It costs publishing houses real money to engage with your proposal so they would be justified in feeling rather annoyed if you were cheating on them. Enough said?

Proposals

When you have run your idea for a book by the commissioning editor and got at least a reasonably encouraging response, you need to draft the proposal. Do not underestimate the care needed in drafting this document or the amount of time it will take. A book proposal needs to be well written and to the point. You will, undoubtedly, have to go through many drafts to get it right and should get your critical friends – especially those who regularly read book proposals for publishers – to comment on it for you.

Before you start writing the proposal, make sure that you have read any guidelines that your proposed publisher has available. You will normally find these on the publisher's website. We have reproduced below the guidelines from the Sage website and expanded on each section. Nearly all publishers have similar guidelines on their websites. While you do not need to follow them slavishly, you do need to make sure that you have addressed all the questions raised in them.

Book Proposals

The following list is intended both as a guide to the points which the author(s) should consider when planning a book, and to the information which we need in order to consider a new book proposal.

Statement of Aims

Background: Please describe the background to the book (e.g. is it derived from research, practice or teaching?).

It's important to make an early impact with this section. You need to establish the absolute cutting-edge importance of what your book is about and the likelihood of it being good by setting out its provenance in solid research by reputable researchers. Don't say something like 'I've been thinking about this for a while and thought I might have a go at writing it up …' *Do* say something like 'This book arises from a major government-funded research project conducted over the past three years …'

If the proposed book is based on your PhD, you need to approach these explanations with some care. Publishers tend to be very wary of taking on PhD theses as books, largely because so many academics think that all they have to do is send in their thesis and it will be published as it stands. You should reappraise your doctoral research as if it were a regular stand-alone research project – which it is, but you won't be used to thinking about it like that.

Rationale: A brief description of the rationale behind the proposal. What are the book's main themes and objectives?

In this section you need to explain carefully why your proposed book will be worth buying and reading. Publishers need to know that there is a market for their books. For academic books, this means that you have to address pertinent and relevant issues in a rigorous and interesting way. You are trying to convince the commissioning editor that your proposed book passes the 'so what?'-ness test. In doing this, you will be laying good foundations for the arguments that you will make later in the proposal about the book's wide appeal.

Approach: Description and reasons for the approach adopted.

Your rationale for the book must run seamlessly into your description of how you will tackle the shaping and writing of it. For example, you may be interested in theoretical questions about national identity and approach them through a case study of constructions of Irishness and the consumption of Guinness. You need to make the links between the aims and objectives of your book and the way in which you have tackled the subject explicit and irrefutably logical. You also need to describe the way in which the book would be constructed and what the logic of that is.

Features: What aspects of this proposal would you emphasise as being of most importance? Are there any deliberate omissions? Any other features you would like taken into account.

This is the key place in which you can highlight the unique selling points of your book. What makes it original? What would draw people into reading it? We all have our favourite books for certain purposes and usually recommend them to others with comments such as 'If you want to understand that, you can't do better than read Jones' book …' At the same time, don't make claims for your proposed book that are plainly over-ambitious.

Definition of Market

This is an important section for publishers because they need to know if there will be a sufficiently broad market for your book and where to direct their marketing campaign if they publish it. Academic books seldom achieve mass popular readership, though sometimes academics write popular books. For instance, Stephen Hawking, a Cambridge theoretical physicist, would not get near the best-seller market with his regular academic work, but his *Brief History of Time*, written for the lay person, has been a runaway sales success. When was the last time you picked up an academic book at the airport for a long-haul flight? This means that the market for your book will be confined to people within your own academic discipline and possibly those related to it. The better theorised your work is, the more likely it is to appeal to a wider range of academic disciplines. There are a number of texts that are read across a wide range of disciplines despite their apparently narrow subject base.

If you work in an area which involves practice (for example, teaching) you may also have a practitioner audience. But bear in mind that writing well for both academics and practitioners simultaneously is very difficult. Be wary of falling between two stools.

Readership: Who is the book primarily aimed at? Who will buy it? Who will read it? Would this subject have international appeal? If so, where? Is the subject area of the proposal widely taught?

Level: What level of ability is assumed of the reader (undergraduate/postgraduate/prequalifying/postqualifying etc.)? To what level does the book take the reader?

Now that you have defined the broad market for your book, you need to make some detailed arguments about exactly which people are likely to read and buy your book and why. For instance, you may have identified that your market is among academic and practising lawyers but you now need to be able to say whether they will be undergraduate students or fellow academics, whether they will be corporate lawyers or family lawyers, and in which countries. Be quite realistic about the level of existing knowledge people will need in order to understand your book. Don't claim that it's for first-year undergraduates when you know that PhD students might find it hard. You must define the benefits of your book for your target audiences.

Existing Books

Which existing books in the area are closest to your proposal and how do they compare? Is there a clear competitor?

In responding, it's no good leaving out your book's main competitors in the hope that the commissioning editor has never heard of them – they invariably have an intimate knowledge of the market in which they work. If you don't mention key texts in the area, you will come over as someone who is uninformed and therefore not a reliable author. Whilst they won't want to enter a saturated market, they can be quite hesitant about publishing 'into a void'. So address existing texts and explain the ways in which your book can complement, extend or challenge or otherwise be distinguished from them.

Detailed synopsis

Outline: Provisional list of contents and working title, including chapter headings and subheadings and paragraph-length chapter descriptions explaining what you intend to cover in each chapter.

This is an extremely important part of your proposal. You need to use it to convince the publisher that you know what you are about, that your book has a good structure and flow, and that it makes sense. You will need to write a short abstract for each chapter and give them good titles. While chapter headings are essential, it is probably not necessary to provide subheadings for a research monograph at this point. Taken as a whole, the synopsis must summarise the story that you are trying to tell in your book in a lively and interesting fashion.

Length: Estimated overall length including references and footnotes, often best arrived at by assigning lengths to each chapter.

Because of technical production constraints and the need to keep the price of books to what the market will bear (longer books cost more), publishers will usually define the minimum and maximum length of books. Check on the publisher's website for details of the lengths of books that they will countenance. As a rough guide, a short book will be around 60,000 words, a standard one 80,000 and a long one 100,000. The length needs to be appropriate to both your subject matter and the target readership.

Timetable

This is a very fraught point. Academic work loads across the world tend to be excessive, and delivering a book to publishers on time becomes increasingly difficult in consequence. At the same time, publishers are becoming increasingly tetchy with academic authors who don't deliver their manuscript within a reasonable time. This is entirely understandable. Publishing houses are businesses and have to produce catalogues, plan production schedules and marketing campaigns and maintain the value of their 'brand' by producing a continuous, steady stream of high-quality texts. You are their suppliers and if you let them down, like any business, they will suffer. There is no easy answer here. However, you can make things easier by setting realistic timetables. If you find that you are falling seriously behind schedule, most publishers will understand, provided you keep them informed. They

are generally committed to your book once they have commissioned it – it costs them money to commission a book (for example, staff time and free copies or payment to academic readers of the proposal) so they won't give up on you lightly. Our commissioning editor for *ASK* told us that among recent, quite credible, reasons she'd been given for late submission of manuscripts were a ceiling falling down in a university and, in another instance, somebody being temporarily deafened by a dynamite explosion in Guatemala. *C'est la vie*.

Are any chapters available in draft form? When would you be able to make some available?

If you've already drafted some chapters for the book, you should enclose them, indicating their stage of development. However, it is not advisable to send a publisher your PhD or any part of it. Writing for publication and writing a thesis are two quite distinct genres and they can't be used interchangeably. If you don't have any draft chapters, the chances are that you will have one or more journal papers or reports relevant (at least tangentially) to the proposed book. It is a good idea to send one or two of these to the publisher simply to show that you are able to write coherently and also to give an indication of the intended nature of the book. It may be that you will use a journal paper as the basis of one of your chapters. If so, you should say so.

Illustrations: How many tables, diagrams or illustrations will there be (roughly)?

Publishers are very wary of production costs. If you are, for instance, an art historian or write about visual culture, you may well want colour plates. These can be very expensive to print and publishers will need the issue to be flagged up well in advance so that they can factor it in to their costings and pricing decisions.

If you want to reproduce anything that might be held under someone else's copyright (for example, statistical tables or visual images) it needs to be flagged up here too. Publishers usually require authors to obtain the necessary permissions. This may involve payments on your part, so factor that in to your own budget.

Additional Information

> About you: Please make sure you supply correct details of full name, position, address, telephone number, e-mail where available, together with brief details of other posts, degrees, relevant qualifications, publications (with any books indicated), and nationality.

Publishers don't need your full CV here. Nor do they necessarily need information about all the courses you teach or the university committees that you sit on. They need a short and relevant CV. For more guidance on how to do CVs see *Building your Academic Career*.

We are unsure why a publisher may need to know your nationality. It may be because it can affect matters such as the payment of royalties, and the British Library and the Library of Congress will eventually need the information for cataloguing your book. It may also be that the larger international firms of publishers like to let each branch deal with people in their own geographical area. You certainly shouldn't think that your nationality will affect the likelihood of your proposal being accepted.

> Referees: Please supply the names and addresses of several people whom you would regard as suitably qualified to comment on the proposal.

You do not necessarily have to know the people you name as referees personally, but it is good to know something about them. It's not a good idea to select someone with a reputation for being cutting and destructive about other people's work. You should ask friends, mentors and doctoral supervisors for advice on this. It's generally good practice to send an email to the people you want to name asking them if they are happy about it. Naming referees from more than one country is also a good idea, as it demonstrates that your work can travel.

> Supporting Material: Do you have any material which you would regard as an adequate indication of the book's level and content: draft chapters, lecture notes, journal articles etc.? We

may need to see draft chapters before reaching a final decision on acceptance.

We have written above about draft chapters and journal articles. The same things apply here. If you have something in reasonably good shape, it's sensible to send it with an indication of the relationship it has to your final book manuscript. What you send does not have to be in its polished, final form. Publishers know they are drafts but want an indication of your style, approach and abilities. However, don't send the publisher writing that is scrappy or unintelligible to anyone except yourself.

Once you've polished your proposal, you need to send it to your targeted commissioning editor. If you've prepared the ground thoroughly, they will be expecting your proposal and will send it out to readers, who are usually well established academics working in your field, some of whose names you may have suggested. This part of the process can take some time, as invariably the readers of book proposals will be busy people.

If the referees' comments are favourable and the publisher is quite interested in your proposal, you may have to enter a period of negotiation over the precise nature and shape of the book. It's important to be both flexible and persuasive in such negotiations. Remember that yours and the publisher's best interests are served by producing the best possible book and that publishers will have considerably more experience and expertise on matters such as what will sell than you are likely to. This doesn't mean that you have to agree to everything the publisher suggests, but you must enter into a professional dialogue in which everyone respects the other's experience and expertise.

If your proposal is ultimately rejected then you need to learn the lessons from this process, incorporate any useful feedback from referees and find a different publisher. Remember that rejection may not be a consequence of a poor proposal, it may be that the proposed book was just not right for that particular publisher. If so, they might be able to point you in the direction of a suitable alternative firm. If you are ultimately completely unsuccessful in finding a publisher you might consider turning your work into a series of refereed journal articles instead.

Contracts

Contracts are binding legal agreements between you and the publisher. They set out the terms on which the book will be released. These terms should include matters such as:

- The format of the book, for example hardback, softback or both and the number of copies to be printed in the first print run. This is an important matter. Some publishers usually produce hardback and softback editions simultaneously. This is advantageous to the author because hardback books are much more expensive to buy and consequently sales of them are low. Other publishers, who make their financial margins on copies sold to libraries, tend to be predisposed to producing only a hardback edition on the first print run unless they are absolutely convinced that paperback sales will be significant. Think about these things when targeting a publisher and engaging with them.
- Copyright matters. This is a very important matter. In signing a contract you are giving the publisher the right to economically exploit your work in return for royalty payments. We dealt with IPR at some length in Chapter 3.
- Needless to say, you should pay careful attention to financial matters especially if you think that the book is likely to be a runaway best-seller. The contract will lay down the basis on which you will be paid royalties for your book, including any advance. It will specify the percentage of net profit that you will receive from sales of copies of the book and other sales of rights. It is a good idea to negotiate a differential rate depending on the number of copies sold, so that you get a higher rate once the sales of your book exceed a certain number (usually 2,000 or 3,000 copies).
- One of the most vexed issues that the contract will address is the date for the delivery of your finished typescript to your publishers. It is reasonable for publishers to need to know when to expect your manuscript. They need to plan their complicated production schedules, marketing and so on and produce reliable catalogues.
- The contract will undoubtedly specify the form that your typescript must be delivered to the publishers in and also some form of wording about it being to an acceptable standard and within spitting distance of what you promised in your proposal. The publisher usually reserves the right not to publish if you are deemed to be in breach of such undertakings.

- Other stuff the contract is likely to include are matters such as who decides what goes on the jacket, the rights to produce further editions and who will produce and maintain any websites associated with the book. The contract is also likely to specify that you will be personally liable if you libel someone. Be careful about what you're getting into.

It goes without saying that you should read the contract carefully, ask about anything you don't understand or are not happy with and think about showing it to the appropriate person in your university if there is anything you are not sure about.

Writing and editing

The beauty of having a good proposal, whether it is for an edited collection or a research monograph, is that, like a research proposal (see *Getting Started on Research*), it gives you a clear route map of how to proceed with your work. The approach needed and the work involved for research monographs differs somewhat from that required for edited collections. We'll deal with each in turn.

Writing research monographs

Whilst research monographs are a particular generic form, the points we made earlier in Chapters 2, 3 and 4 hold for writing books. If it's a while since you read those, you might like to refresh your memory on these points. In addition, there are some further considerations you need to address in writing your book.

- It may sound obvious, but a research monograph is a *monograph* – a book around a particular theme. This means that you need to be particularly careful to achieve coherence from start to finish of your book. Don't try to tell too many stories or introduce too many themes in one book. Give the poor reader the clear impression of moving through a seamless but developing argument.
- Authoring a book is undoubtedly a very substantial and complex project. If you have written a doctoral thesis you will have experience of such sustained writing and will know that you need

to plan, set yourself milestones, be well organised and generally keep yourself on course.

- Think about how you will get sufficient 'joined up' time to get this complex writing done and do not underestimate the amount of mental energy and emotional commitment needed. You cannot fit the activity in to 'the odd hour' here and there. Plan ahead: you may be able to get a sabbatical or other paid leave from regular teaching or administration work or you might decide to timetable your writing in student vacations. You will need to liaise with any co-author(s) on such timetables.
- End details are important. Think about style as you go along and be consistent. This is easier to do from the start than to have to do a huge retrospective edit for style. 'Cite while you write': trying to compile a bibliography at the end of a complex piece of writing is likely to drive you mad and almost inevitably leads to errors and omissions. Early on in the process the publisher will either send you a hard copy of their style guidelines or ask you to look at them on their website. The best way to deal with this is to adapt your writing and formatting to the relevant style from the beginning.

We're aware that a number of people reading this book will have a doctoral thesis that they are thinking of turning into a book. As we've already intimated, books and theses are different beasts and achieving the transition from one to the other merits a special note here. The key difference between the two genres is that the thesis demonstrates your competence as a researcher and scholar. The focus is, therefore, on how the study was conceived, designed and conducted. By implication, if you have done this well, the thesis will be a contribution to knowledge. The writing that you do is the story of how you conducted the study and how that resulted in a contribution to knowledge.

In contrast, the emphasis in a book lies in the knowledge itself, and the story of the study (for instance, the techniques used) is of secondary importance, there to give legitimacy to the knowledge claims made. This makes a thesis quite unsuitable for publication as a research monograph as it stands. That said, if you have a thesis, you will have a substantial, well thought out, well structured and theorised research document that you can quite possibly revise into monograph format by shifting the emphasis of the writing.

One of the key things you need to do is to think about the difference between the readership of the two documents. Your thesis will be read

by very few people (chiefly your supervisors/advisers and examiners) and for a very specialised purpose (to pass an examination). In contrast, the audience for your book will be much more diverse and have a range of motivations. They will not necessarily be specialists in your field and they certainly won't be formally examining you. This means that the close scrutiny given to a thesis is never accorded a book. There are two principal implications for you as a writer.

First, in a thesis the golden rule is 'if in doubt, leave it in', as you need to make sure that all your knowledge claims are comprehensively and reliably justified. The fact that in the UK the oral examination is often referred to as a 'defence' of the thesis gives an indication of the imperatives in this regard. In contrast, with a book the golden rule is 'if in doubt, leave it out'. You do no kindness to the reader of a book by bludgeoning them with data and references, forcing them to wade through a morass of justificatory evidence. Of course, this is no excuse for sloppy scholarship or unfounded assertions rather than rigorous arguments – it's all a matter of balance and judgement.

Second, whereas there are certain necessary elements in a thesis, such as a detailed description of the methodology, historiography or whatever, these may not be relevant or appropriate in book format. Conversely, you may have material or case studies or other evidence that you decided to omit from your thesis but which would fit well into your book.

Writing for and editing collections

Writing for and editing collections is a very different sort of work from writing journal papers or monographs. In this section we talk first about writing for and then about editing collections. If you are a comparatively inexperienced researcher then you are more likely to be involved in writing than in editing.

Invitations to contribute to edited collections tend to be a product of good networking (see *Building Networks)*, producing polished conference papers, working collaboratively with others, attending seminars and workshops and in general making sure that you avail yourself of every sensible opportunity to participate in the wider academic community. Consequently, if you do become involved in an edited collection, it's important to demonstrate all the attributes of a good colleague. This means that you will:

- Do things on time – or, if you can't, let the editor know in plenty of time and explain why you have been delayed.
- Treat any guidance and support you get as constructive criticism and respect the fact that editors have a tough job in turning what can initially be a disparate set of chapters into a coherent book. Different editors will have very different styles and approaches to the task. Some will be very 'hands on' and interventionist, whilst others will be happy to let you do your own thing. Generally, the best interests of the editor (producing the best possible book) will coincide with your own best interests (producing the best possible chapter). Through their interventions, editors can often considerably improve your chapter and you should not just reject their interventions on principle or because you feel precious about your writing.

  That said, conflicts can arise, and you should not allow yourself to be pushed into changing your chapter in ways that you really don't feel comfortable with. It can often be worth asking the opinion of a friendly third party on such matters before you go off and give vent to your rage or cave in to such demands.

Peggy is a successful research student, who was invited to submit a paper that she had given at a conference as a chapter for a book. She wrote the chapter and her supervisors read and commented on it before she sent it off to the editor.

The editor sent the chapter out to a referee and eventually returned it to Peggy with comments and proposed changes that would have substantially altered the meaning of the chapter. Peggy felt strongly that she did not want to make such changes. She discussed this with her supervisors, who advised her that she was absolutely right in her judgement.

She wrote to the editor explaining that she was not prepared to make the changes requested and withdrawing her chapter. She then slightly revised the writing for submission to the leading international journal in her field and it was accepted with only minor revisions. As an extra bonus, under the UK research evaluation system, her work 'counts' for more as a journal article than it would have done as a book chapter.

- When writing, keep in your mind the brief that your editor has given you and remember that it was drawn up in order to make the collection hang together.
- Above all, treat the endeavour of an edited collection as a collaborative effort among peers. Don't be a *prima donna*.

The advice we gave above when talking about journal articles on matters such as copyright, proofs and royalties all hold here too. Remember, also, that a chapter in a book makes you one of the publisher's 'authors' and, as such, you will normally be entitled to a discount in price on any books you buy from them. Over a period, such benefits are likely to exceed any payment you receive for your own writing.

If you are experienced, or have the reliable support of a more experienced colleague, you may decide that you will undertake the project of editing a collected book. You might do this on your own, with someone else or as part of a team. It may seem that editing a book is relative easy, but that is a delusion. Putting together a good edited collection, one that publishers will want and that people will read, is hard work – although it can also be fun. Successful editors are generally proactive, diplomatic and persistent, and tend to be good at networking, bringing people together and academic research leadership in general. If you don't feel that you are ready for that sort of work on your own, or with the support of others, then think carefully before embarking on it.

There are several stages in the process of editing a book that you need to think about. We set them out below in order to help you formulate your own plan. Good planning at this stage can save many future heart and head aches.

Developing the concept

We dealt with the question of how such books get conceived above. But there are other issues here too. First, are there a sufficient number of suitably qualified and willing authors to write the chapters? You will need to identify and recruit suitable potential authors and you may have to be innovative and imaginative in how you do so. You may have to

negotiate with them and sometimes even persuade them that the idea is a good one. You shouldn't be afraid to approach people you don't know personally. If you are writing to 'famous' people in the field, you could also ask them if they know others who might make a good contribution. In other words, recruiting authors will stretch and test your networking skills. Edited collections are a good opportunity for established and 'new' authors to have conversations in print. Don't be snobbish and only want the big names. Indeed, inexperienced authors, given suitable help and guidance, can be reliable and often extremely interesting – after all, they may need a good publication and have no laurels to rest on.

Second, is there a publisher who is likely to want to publish the book? As we said above, it is advisable to contact the commissioning editors of different publishers and talk to them about your ideas. You may have to work hard at selling them an edited collection – they may have had bitter experience of edited books that include one or two excellent chapters but are otherwise unremarkable or even boring. One thing that you will have to convince them of is that a research monograph would not be able to do the job better than your edited one. The publisher will also need to feel confident that enough of the authors are sufficiently committed to the project to make it viable, and of your own ability and determination to pull everything together.

Third, do you have the personal resources (time, energy, skills, etc.) to undertake the task? If you don't, or you are not in a position to develop them sufficiently quickly, is there somebody else that you could work with who will have complementary abilities?

If you can answer these questions positively then you are ready to go on to the next stage.

Engaging the authors

Once you've thought about the concept for the book, you need a brief outline description of what the book will be about. You can then use it both in your discussions with publishers and also to approach potential authors. Busy people, who may not prioritise the writing of book chapters, are more likely to be persuaded of the merits of your project if they are given a pithy and striking overview of what it is about. You

have to sell yourself and your ideas if you want people to do work for you.

There are, obviously, many routes to finding contributors to your collection. The route you choose will often depend on the origins of the project. For instance, if it arises out of an existing research team or network, then locating a pool of authors should be less problematic than if your project arises out of a desire to pull together authors in an emerging field.

Once you have located a suitable group, you will need to check out whether they have something appropriate to contribute at this time, what their likely time scales are and whether these will work with your own. Remember that you and your authors are quite likely to need more time than you or they anticipate. You need to ask each author for an abstract. If you don't already know their writing then it's a good idea to ask them to give you quite a detailed abstract and possibly look at some of their other writing. If the potential author is an unpublished PhD student you might, for instance, ask to see an appropriate chapter from their thesis.

Of course, your interest in the topic is likely to be such that you will have important things to say in your own name and you will probably want to include a chapter on your own research work (as distinct from the introduction that you will write to the whole book). If you do this, it's important that you, as an author, are subject to the same kind of editorial processes as other contributors. If you are working with others to edit the book, then this is easily achieved by getting your fellow editors to do such work on your own chapter. If, however, you are sole editor, you should probably engage the services of a critical friend with expertise in the field.

When looking at the abstracts of potential chapters, you need to think about the overall shape of the collection and how it will all hang together. Think about connecting themes that will run through the volume. This work is necessary preparation for the introduction that you will have to write and also for writing the book proposal.

Writing the proposal

The work you've done to date in developing the concept, identifying potential authors, getting abstracts from them and thinking about how

their work fits together places you in an excellent position to write a proposal to send to a possible publisher of your book. Everything that we said about book proposals above holds here.

Organising authors = herding cats

Once you have your authorial team in place and a contract for the book, your hard work really begins. Your job as the editor is to manage the process in such a way that you achieve your goal. How you do this will depend on factors such as your own style and personality and those of the particular authors you have on board and the type of book it is. You need to be flexible and adaptive in this work: don't try to be highly interventionist with someone who is very senior, willing and capable.

Formally you will be responsible for organising legal matters such as the contract and also for setting out a time scale for the production of the book. When you send people the notional timetable you need to allow for slippage. It is very rare for everyone to be able to produce exactly to time. Wily editors know this and may set deadlines for authors well ahead of the actual ones.

The type of book you are editing will shape the organisation that's needed for its production. For instance, if you decide *ex ante* that you will produce a book from an intended seminar series, then somebody has to organise the meetings and make sure that the speakers understand what is required of them. Alternatively, if a good conference leads you to decide to pull a selection of the papers together into a book, the management task may be limited to co-ordinating the return of polished papers. In short, think about the tasks to be done in terms of the nature of the project and plan well ahead.

Editing the chapters

Invariably, the chapters of your collection will come to you in various stages of readiness. Whilst some will be wonderfully written, more often they will need careful editorial attention. Review them with two things in mind. First, does the chapter work as a coherent argument in its own right and is it well written? Your suggestions for improvement must be constructive and, if you want major changes, then you need to be both diplomatic and detailed in your feedback.

Sometimes a piece of writing will come in and it will be a horror story. You should give detailed and constructive feedback and give the author(s) at least one opportunity to get it right. If it comes back and is still unacceptable, then you may decide that the book really doesn't need it and reject it politely. If you do this, you should, however, give further detailed feedback to the author(s). If the topic of the chapter is crucial to the integrity of the book, you can either substantially rewrite it yourself or persuade an alternative author whom you are confident in to contribute a chapter on the topic.

Rosa and Gertrude were editing a book that was likely to be extremely important and influential in their area. The chapter they received from one key contributor was wholly unacceptable. However, the book would be seriously weakened if it did not address the issues raised in it. They felt they had no alternative but to substantially rewrite it themselves. This required careful negotiation with the original author and the editors, in the interests of diplomacy, decided to leave his name alone on the piece. The book was subsequently very influential and the rewritten chapter became one of the most frequently cited pieces from the book. The original author, sadly, used his supposed sole authorship of the chapter to his career advantage.

The second question to ask yourself when reviewing the piece is whether it fits with the themes and remit of the book as a whole. If it is problematic in this regard, you may want to remind the authors to look back at the proposal to the publisher, which you will have sent them at the outset and which will have included all the abstracts.

Feedback should be multilateral. That is, it should not be confined to a dialogue between you and each individual author. All the authors need to know about important themes and developments in others' work so that they can reflect (and reflect on) them in their own drafts. You may well want, with the authors' permission, to circulate drafts to all or selected contributors or to put particular authors in touch with each other in order to facilitate this process. Where it is practical, you may want to organise a day to 'workshop' the chapters once first drafts are in.

Pulling it all together

As the chapters start to be assembled in their final format, you need to think about the editorial writing that you will do to wrap them all up together. There are a number of ways of doing this and you will have to judge what is the most appropriate for your book. You may decide simply to have a detailed introduction that lays out the themes of the following chapters and explains what is to come. In addition, you may have decided (and proposed to the publishers) that the book should have a final chapter written by the editor(s) that explicates, develops and theorises the individual contributions. When you lay out your time scales you must remember that you won't be able to do this complicated work until you have all the first drafts in.

Delivery and deliverance

Your final task as editor is to get the manuscript into the format designated by the publisher. As with research monographs, you will have the publisher's style sheets from the publisher. This may appear to be a small matter of detail, but it is vitally important that you deliver a manuscript that complies as closely as possible with these stylistic guidelines.

A way of saving yourself huge amounts of rather mundane and tedious work at this stage is to ensure that you get hold of the publisher's style guidance early in the process and send it to your authors. You can then politely require them to ensure that their own chapters are produced in the appropriate form. This means that your job becomes one of checking rather than reformatting – as you hope, though it doesn't always happen like that. You should also ask your authors to put their manuscripts into whatever font you are working in, as you should send a good-looking manuscript in, not one that looks like a dog's breakfast.

Ensuring a happy ending

Whether you've written a monograph or edited a collection, the process once the manuscript is in its final form is essentially the same. If you

want your book to be published quickly and with good production quality, then you need to continue to play your part promptly and efficiently. This is what will happen:

Looking good

You need to send the publisher a hard copy (sometimes two) and an electronic copy of the whole book, in the style that they have asked for, with pages numbered appropriately and so on. We cannot over-emphasise the importance of making the text as good and consistent as you possibly can.

Readers' comments

Sometimes your book will be sent out for readers' comments at this stage. This will have been made clear to you at the contract stage. If this is the case, then you may be asked to make some revisions to content or approach and you will then have to respond to the suggestions made. You should look back at what we said above about responding to referees' comments on journal articles to help you with this.

Copy editing

All books will be subject to copy editing. Copy editors read for things like the formatting of the manuscript, diagrams, grammar, spelling, punctuation, clarity of meaning and the accuracy of citations and references. Sometimes they will return the whole manuscript to you with their comments and a letter asking you to look at particular pages and queries. Often they will send you only the pages on which they have suggested alterations.

Whichever, when you get the manuscript back, you will need to respond to their comments and queries quickly but being extremely careful in the way you review the proposed changes. Copy editors are not experts in your field and sometimes they may propose alterations that inadvertently change the meaning of what you have written.

If you are editing a collection, you should ask contributing authors to check their own copy-edited articles, but beware of the slow response. Make sure that you give authors a firm deadline for returning their comments to you and that they know that, whether you have heard from them or not, you will be replying to the copy editor by a particular

date. The fact that you have sent copy to individual authors does not excuse you, as editor, from your responsibility for checking the copy editing of all the chapters, so do it for the whole book regardless of what you send to your contributors.

Covering yourself

Although you are not supposed to judge a book by its cover, most people do. It is therefore very important to pay careful attention to what your finished book as a 'product' is going to look like on the shelves. You should be able to negotiate the type of cover with the publisher. If you have seen books in their catalogue that have a particularly good cover you should tell your editor, as it will enable them to commission the same designer. Bear in mind, though, that if you wish to use a photograph, original artwork or anything else which might carry somebody's copyright, then you will need to ensure that you have the necessary copyright clearance (and this might involve paying a fee).

Once the publisher has the manuscript and has accepted it, they will then commission a cover design. Publishers will often send you a few (maybe three or four) possible covers for your comments. Again, you need to respond as quickly and constructively as possible. It won't help the publisher if you just say that you hate that cover without saying why. If your book is one of a series, your cover will follow the series design, though it is likely that there will be some room for individuality within it.

In nearly all cases, you will be asked to provide the cover 'blurb' – the text for the back of the book. This text will also be replicated in the publisher's catalogue, other publicity materials and on e-booksellers' websites. It is therefore important that it is both accurate and enticing for the reader.

Once the cover design has been finalised, the publisher will send you 'proofs' (that is, an exact version of what the final thing will look like on the page) of your cover. This will require your careful attention, as it will also include the blurb and also any information, usually about yourself, that will go on the inside flaps of any dust jacket. You may also have been asked by the publisher to provide them with the names of reputable commentators in your field who might be willing to be quoted on the back of your book and in other publicity material.

Page proofs

At about the same time as you get possible covers, you are likely to be sent the page proofs of your book for proof reading. Publishers like to produce proofs that are as close as is reasonably practicable to the final printed product. Their chief concerns will be to ensure that the pagination of the text is not altered at this stage – inserting a paragraph, or even a sentence, on page 17 of a 200 page book may create 183 consequential page changes. This is very costly and if you insist on such changes at that stage the publisher may charge you for the extra work caused. This is, therefore, definitely not the time to make final revisions. But it is your last chance to ensure that there are no errors in the final text. Publishers have standard codes and symbols for each change that you might want to make (such as deletions, insertions, spelling corrections, the use of upper or lower case) and they will be able to supply you with a list of them or direct you to where you can find them. Use them, as it avoids confusion in making the corrections.

Indexes

Once you have the page proofs, you will also need to get the index sorted out. Usually, publishers will offer you the choice of doing the index yourself or commissioning a professional indexer. If you choose the latter, the payment to the indexer will come out of your royalties.

There are advantages and disadvantages both to doing the index yourself and to getting a professional to do it. If you do it yourself, you can ensure that you have a proper index that reflects what you judge to be the key themes, topics and issues in the book. Like copy editors, indexers are seldom experts in your field so they can't necessarily make judgements about the importance of particular themes as easily or accurately as you can. However, it is also a very time-consuming task to do yourself and you will be slower than a professional.

If you choose to do your own index, you cannot rely on technology to do it for you. Computer programmes can find words and phrases but they can't make important decisions for you. For example, they can't judge whether the same concept is carried through several successive pages or not. Neither can they identify a concept if the phrase you have given the computer doesn't appear in that exact form. Often publishers will have guidelines about how they like an index to be compiled. If they do, make sure you follow their advice.

One method for doing an index

Start by making a copy of your page proofs to mark up as soon as you get them for doing your proof reading.

Read through the manuscript highlighting the words and phrases that you want to have in the index and make a note on a separate electronic file or on a card of the word/phrase/name and page number as you go. Make sure that each time you come across something that is a subdivision of something else, you make a note of both the main category and the sub-category and, if necessary, any cross-referencing needed (for example, 'Bourdieu: cultural capital' and/or 'cultural capital: Bourdieu'). You need to know in advance how many sub-categories you will use. Usually it is best not to use too many. One main category and one sub-category are probably enough.

Once you have been right through the book, sort the list into alphabetical order. If you have done the list on cards you will need to put it into electronic form at this point. If you have made an electronic file you will now need to ensure that you haven't repeated words unnecessarily.

At this point your index will be a list that looks something like a regular book index.

Some books have an index of authors and a separate index for content, themes and so on. Make sure you keep them separate if that is the case.

Selling it

Publishers take different lengths of time to actually produce the book, but while it is in production is the right time to talk with their marketing people about how best to launch and sell it. You will need to give them a list of journals to which you think it should be sent for review and any particular individuals who would be in a position to review it (and you think would review it favourably). They will also send you a marketing questionnaire (probably much earlier on) and although this is boring, you need to respond to it helpfully.

And finally ...

We think it's important to be proactive in making sure that as many people as possible know about your book and also that you celebrate the very real achievement that it represents. So think carefully about your personal marketing. Look for opportunities to distribute flyers about your book. Ask your publisher if they can produce postcards showing the cover of your book that you can send out to friends and colleagues. And you should consider having a launch event – a nice party at which those you invite can meet the authors and have an opportunity to buy the book. If there is a suitable conference coming up, you might suggest to your publisher that they organise a launch as part of the conference. Some conferences have 'book sessions' at which authors of new books are able to talk about them. Another way of launching a book is by organising a seminar or workshop based on the publication.

6 Other Sorts of Publishing

This chapter is about the other sorts of publishing that you can do as an academic. We look briefly in turn at textbooks and a whole range of alternatives to journals and research books.

Do they really matter?

While many of these other sorts of publishing do not 'count' in research audits, they may be worth doing for other reasons, such as disseminating your work to wider audiences. However, our advice would be to make sure you get the academic research publications under your belt before you turn to these other kinds of publishing. It will be better for your academic career and we also believe that the best academic writing for lay audiences and undergraduates is usually by people who are good scholars and researchers in their own right.

Textbooks and other writing for students

The massification of undergraduate education across the globe has generated an explosion in the volume and number of textbooks published. Textbooks that are produced solely and exclusively for the student (and teacher) market are easily identifiable as such and are not research publications, even though the authors frequently are accomplished academicians and researchers.

There is enormous pressure from publishers to write such books because, quite simply, they are in business and they need to publish books that will have the highest volume of sales. This is particularly the case for those courses that regularly enrol large numbers of students. If your textbook is adopted for a first-year core course that regularly has

several hundred students (or, even better, for several such courses) sales will be well in excess of the usual sales of academic books and both you and your publisher will benefit financially as a result. Beware. Although encouragement may be flattering, and some people make a lot of money from writing (and annually updating) textbooks, remember that it will not count as research publication when it comes to applying for jobs, promotion or when your 'research output' is being evaluated.

There are textbooks that are very well done, extremely interesting and use excellent pedagogic devices. Such books can make a significant contribution to your own teaching and that of others and are deservedly popular. Writing a book like that can also be a good way of ensuring that you are up to speed across a broad range of topics in your field. In that way, they can help with your own pedagogic practice and perhaps even your future research. If you do decide to write a textbook, you need to make sure that you produce one like that.

The down side of the exploding market in textbook production is that many of them are of quite poor quality and uninformed by excellent scholarship or good research. If you are an emerging academic researcher and a relatively inexperienced teacher you are unlikely to be in a good position to write a good (or even a fair to middling) textbook. Anything less than a good textbook is highly unlikely to do anything to enhance your academic career and reputation. Furthermore, while you are writing it, you won't be doing the research and other academic writing that will build your reputation.

If you and your colleagues run a successful course that attracts significant numbers of students (either at your own institution or across your sector), it might be worth considering turning your course material into a textbook. Although you can do so at marginal cost, that cost may still be significant. However, it would encourage you to address pedagogical issues in a coherent and systematic way, enhance the reputation of your department in that area of teaching (thus attracting more and better students) and even make a tidy profit for you and/or your institution. (In the UK, at least, universities usually claim the copyright in course materials).

Quite often, 'textbooks' are now multimedia events and authors find themselves not only producing the text but also guidance notes for tutors to accompany them (sometimes with model 'answers' to examples or questions if appropriate), CD-ROMs, blackboard material, websites and so on. Whilst writing textbooks can be lucrative, you need to be aware that you may also be obliged to produce such additional

material, which, especially in the case of a website, may require constant updating. This can add up to a considerable amount of work without actually adding to your career prospects, list of publications or income.

One form of textbook that can be easier to produce, show greater synergies with research and become popular is the 'reader'. A reader may include book chapters or articles, whole or in part, specially commissioned new chapters, journalistic pieces, pieces of legislation or court reports, archival documents, photographs and so on. They should be carefully selected to map a whole field, to introduce students to an area or to highlight particularly salient issues. Whichever of these it is, you will need to write a commentary that links the pieces you have chosen together. This commentary may take the form of an extended introduction to the whole book, or to a particular part of the book, or it may be a narrative woven through all the pieces. In the UK, the Open University (a large distance learning institution) is renowned for its production of high-quality readers.

Dictionaries, encyclopaedias, reference books and annotated bibliographies

These types of book are many and varied. Some of them are a snare and a delusion, but others are invaluable to academics, postgraduate and undergraduate students. Most academics will have at least some of these books on their shelves and often recommend them to students. Libraries tend to be keen purchasers of such books. We say a few words about some of the main forms of this genre below.

Dictionaries and encyclopaedias

Academic dictionaries are only a distant relation of the type of book used for the definition of words in any particular language. Because they deal with concepts, writers, events, legislation, schools of thought, literature, etc., the entries tend to be more expansive and discursive than the name 'dictionary' tends to imply. As such, they can be almost indistinguishable from encyclopaedias and we will deal with both together. Rebecca's favourite dictionary is the *New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought* edited by Allan Bullock and Stephen Trombley. Debbie and Jane's favourite is the quirky and individual *Keywords* by Raymond Williams.

Most often, well established scholars edit such books. You may be invited by them to contribute a short piece for such a work on a specific topic or topics. Whilst it might not be high-profile and prestigious research publication, there can be real advantages in saying 'yes'. First, it exposes you to the discipline of writing concisely, authoritatively, accurately and comprehensively. Second, it may give you the opportunity to work with people who are considerably more experienced and senior than you. This can help to provide you with valuable networking opportunities. Third, if you are a struggling doctoral student, you may be motivated by the prospect of the (usually small) fee that you will receive for the work and/or the prospect of getting a courtesy copy of what will probably be quite an expensive book. Fourth, a dictionary or encyclopaedia entry can be a welcome addition to the CV/résumé of an emerging academic.

Reference guides

We think that the introduction to *The Blackwell Companion to Social Theory* edited by Bryan S. Turner provides the best possible definition of this type of book:

> *The Blackwell Companion to Social Theory* intends to provide a comprehensive introduction for a general audience to major developments in social theory.

That is, reference books don't set out or develop new knowledge but rather seek to provide comprehensive explanations of existing understandings in a manner that is accessible to those not already familiar with a particular field of enquiry at an advanced level. They are the sort of books to which people turn when they are first 'getting into' a subject and need a general but sophisticated introduction.

They usually contain a number of specially commissioned chapters, each of which addresses an aspect of the field. Whilst these will often be written by well established researchers, the editor may view the volume as a development opportunity for some less senior academics and also invite them to contribute. Equally, a commissioned author may invite a less experienced colleague to join them in writing such a piece. If you get either of these types of invitation you should take it as a vote of confidence in you and an excellent opportunity. If you are the right person for the job then it should be bread-and-butter work, done only at marginal cost, and a synthesis of or exposition on what you already know.

Annotated bibliographies

There is an annotated list of suggested Further Reading at the end of each book in the *Academic's Support Kit* that you can use as an example of this genre. It is, however, rare to see whole books consisting of annotated bibliographies. The key to a good annotated bibliography is to ensure that it gives a succinct and accurate account of the books it describes, says something about their intended readership and comments briefly on how successful they are. Making a good selection of books to be annotated is also important, and this means that if you have been asked to do one, you need to ensure that your selection is fit for the purpose for which it was intended.

Books for Beginners

There are several series of books intended for people who want to learn something about a completely new subject in an entertaining way. One of the best known of these is the … *for Beginners* series in which experts in different areas write pithy, witty introductory texts, usually illustrated with cartoons, about a whole series of issues and ideas. Titles in the series include topics as far apart as *Feminism for Beginners* and *Judaism for Beginners*. We like these books quite a lot and imagine that the authors make quite a lot of money, but we have never been asked to write one ourselves and it is unlikely that you will be either. Unless you find their style relatively easy to attain, you are probably better off steering clear of such books.

The digitisation of scholarship

There is much you need to know about the digitisation of scholarship, particularly around the politics and what they mean not just for you but also for the public's access to knowledge.

The changing nature of publishing

We are in the midst of a virtual revolution in scholarly publishing. More and more scholarly (i.e. peer-refereed) journals are now available on-line and as well as in hard copy. Some are available on-line only,

some are open-access and some you have to pay for in one way or another. At the same time, many of the big print publishing houses are getting together stables of scholarly journals. Furthermore many publishing houses have 'added value' to such journals by providing a range of additional services. These include such things as email alerts to the table of contents of new issues, hyperlinking, author and topic searches of data bases, hits and download data provision and archives of material about particular topics.

What does this mean for scholarly practices?

These changes have, inevitably, led to a shift in the practices of scholarship. Academics actually go to libraries less and less, because we can access so many journals on-line – both those that our libraries subscribe to and those that are open-access. Indeed, some literature suggests that if articles are not on-line, readers are becoming less inclined to chase them up in hard copy. As the editors of *Nature Magazine* (397, 195–199. http://www.uibk.ac.at/sci-org/voeb/nat.html) say:

> The ability to click from an abstract or citation to the full text of an article is prompting a shift in the way that journals are used. Scientists often care less about the journal title than the ability to track down quickly the full text of articles relevant to their interests. Increasingly, users view titles as merely part of hyperlinked 'content databases' made up of constellations of journal titles. As a result, the competitive edge of publishers is increasingly coming to depend on their ability to muster a critical mass of attractive information through a single powerful and user-friendly interface.

There are many benefits for academics and for journals if they publish within the publishing stables of the big publishing houses, not the least being the enhanced international visibility, citability, intellectual presence and potential impact that such a home brings with it. This is an especially important issue for researchers outside the USA, Europe and UK who have to struggle for recognition by UK, European and US publishers and scholars. The more journals that join these publishing houses, the more they can add value and the more academics are likely to access their particular 'databases' as their major knowledge sources. This leaves other journals and indeed other publications in a vulnerable position. Unless they have a strong presence in other

international abstracting and indexing systems they run the risk of becoming invisible and residualised in the globalising research scenario.

So what are the issues and concerns?

There are a number of far-reaching implications to think about in relation to the digitisation of publishing, which revolve around matters of access to and control of knowledge.

- All publishing houses are taking digital publishing and scholarship very seriously. Those particularly involved in it include Reed Elsevier, the Canadian Thomson corporation Wolters Kluwer, Wiley, Springer and Blackwell. Such companies are putting together huge electronic archives of intellectual property and are in competitive tension with each other (and sometimes swallowing each other) seeking to own all books, archives and research journals. ('Knowledge Indignation: Road Rage on the Information Superhighway', http://www.abc.net.au/rn/talks/bbing/stories/s345514.htm, accessed 12/8/2001). Why? The answer is the potential for profit.
- At this stage university researchers may be able to access various databases free of charge, but our university libraries, with their dwindling budgets, are being charged considerable amounts – not just for individual journals but also for bundles of journals, only part of which may be wanted.
- Of course, the more journals the publishing house has, the more it will be able to charge. And once it has a monopoly in a particular field the opportunities for additional charges increase. Perhaps we will soon see charges by the page or by viewing time. The potential is there for viewing, sharing and downloading opportunities to be further restricted and to be increasingly costly.
- If you don't have access via a library you may not even be able to access abstracts, and each journal article costs a considerable amount.

In essence, then, we are seeing the increasing commodification and privatisation of public knowledge in the digitising and globalising intellectual bazaar. While distribution may be enhanced, access may become more and more restricted as it becomes more and more costly. This is a particularly important issue for poor nations. And, equally, the control of knowledge slips yet further from the hands of those who

produce it and from those who fund those who produce it, namely the taxpayers.

In terms of the issue of public knowledge the following irony arises. Knowledge is produced by public money in the form of research and of journal editing and other refereeing services but then locked away in the profits of private publishing houses. The research published in the journals is most often funded by government money but certain profits go to international or global companies. Governments thus pay thrice: they pay to produce the knowledge, to 'quality assure' it and then to buy it back. Even notions of the knowledge economy are caught on the horns of competing needs:

- One, to expand the public knowledge base as much as possible.
- And, two, to commercialise that knowledge.
- Three, to keep the benefits of that knowledge in the national interest.
- And, four, to globalise it.

Responses in the academic and policy community

Many research projects, journals and websites and various stakeholders and interest groups are examining the issues associated with on-line scholarly publishing. Groups include international information technology companies, economists, librarians, lawyers and vice-chancellors, the Association of Research Libraries and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC). Some examples follow.

- The Public Knowledge Project at the University of British Columbia is exploring all these issues, and all who publish should regularly visit their site, which is to be found at http://www.pkp.ubc.ca/.
- The dangers of the commercial scenario in the market for science, technical and medical journals led scientists to be so concerned they established a lobbying group called the Public Library of Science (see 'Background Briefing', Radio National, 12 August 2001) They also publish open-access journals such as *Pubmed*, the *Journal of Insect Sciences, eScholarship* and *Documenta Mathematica.*
- Various professional associations, societies and other groups and individuals continue to publish open-access, peer-refereed and quality-controlled knowledge on line. They are getting into the pertinent international indices such as Ingenta and are also seeking to provide all the value-added features that are now available through the big

publishing houses. In education, for example, Gene Glass, from the USA, operates the highly popular and respected open-access and peer-reviewed *Education Review* and *Education Policy Analysis Archive*.

The matters debated in these forums include:

- New alliances for the delivery of scholarly information.
- The role of libraries and librarians.
- Electronic access versus ownership of information.
- Subscriptions and new pricing models.
- Information intermediaries.
- Society versus commercial publishing.
- Mergers and acquisitions in the publishing industry.
- Authorship.
- Readership.
- Archival access to electronic information.
- Digitising the past.
- Peer review.
- Self-publishing.
- Copyright.
- Open access.
- Escalating costs and consequent cuts to libraries holdings.
- Particular difficulties for poor to middle income countries (although some big publishers now give developing countries open access to top medical journals).
- How academics can control their own publishing processes, to ensure top-quality low-cost publishing.
- What alliances might best facilitate this?

(Thanks to the person who developed this list. We are still trying to locate their name and the source.)

Professional and wider dissemination (non-academic writing)

Finally, we want to talk about the dissemination of your work to professional and wider audiences through non-academic writing.

Whether this is for you or not is, in part, dependent on your discipline. If you work in a vocational field, such as health-related subjects or education, then writing for professionals will be a necessary part of your work.

These fields of enquiry all have their own professional journals, which may be more or less well respected within the profession. In some cases there is crossover between professional and research journals. For example, both doctors and medical researchers read journals like the *British Medical Journal* and *The Lancet*. In other fields the professional journals are separate from the academic ones but they are still worth writing in for two reasons. First, it is a way of disseminating your work more widely in order to make an impact on practice. Second, it can be used to provide evidence in your CV/résumé that your work is relevant and that you have the esteem of people who may use your research in their practice as well that of your academic colleagues.

Do not, however, fall into the trap of thinking that writing for professionals is a substitute for, or the same as, writing in academic refereed journals. If yours is a field that requires such writing, you need to remember that it is a very different generic form from the refereed journal article. In writing for a professional or lay audience you must pay careful attention to its needs and to the requirements of the publishers and editors of your work. It is important to be accessible and not to assume that lay readers will understand academic phraseology and jargon. If you have to use technical terms, explain them and give understandable examples of what you mean.

It is also worth writing about your research for serious newspapers from time to time. Before you do so, however, you need to speak to the relevant editor and agree on the word length and what you are going to write about. Newspapers have very strict word limits and will not publish articles that are longer than they have commissioned. Anything written for a newspaper needs to be very accessible, brief and to the point. Editors of newspapers will not worry about changing your article in order to make it shorter or more understandable, so if you want it to appear the way you wrote it you must adhere to an appropriate style and agreed length. It is also imperative to stick to the deadline you have been given.

There are three good things about writing for the serious press: first, it's a good discipline to have to explain yourself briefly and clearly; second, you will have a much wider audience than you could in any other way; and finally, you will be paid for your work.

And finally …

As this book has demonstrated, the business of writing and publishing is complicated, demanding and problematic. In contradistinction, it is one of the things that provides academics with a real and enduring sense of achievement and satisfaction. One of us was recently having a difficult discussion with a manager. We mentioned that we had a new book out that day. The manager looked wistful and a little sad and said, 'Oh, that must be nice, to have a book published.' Remember that, for all the hard work and sweat, and all the pressures that we are under to do it, it is still one of the most rewarding things an academic can do. Don't let anyone take that sense of satisfaction away from you, ever.

Further Reading

Clark, R. and Ivanic, R. (1997) *The Politics of Writing*, London: Routledge. This book argues that writing is a social practice and is tied to relations of power. It looks at how some forms of writing are given more prestige than others, how writing is a struggle for all writers, no matter how experienced, and how writing and identity are interconnected. Writing is seen as a resource for thinking and learning. The book draws attention to the ways that a piece of writing is shaped and constrained by the anticipated audience. Clark and Ivanic argue that writing is far more than a mechanical skill and they draw on social theory, cultural studies, media studies, semiotics, discourse analysis, linguistics, literacy studies and composition studies to make connections between these different fields to deepen their understanding of writing. They examine writing as a political act, the social context of writing and use examples of 'real writing' to illuminate the points they make.

Golden-Biddle, K. and Locke, K.D. (1997) *Composing Qualitative Research*, Thousand Oaks CA, London and New Delhi: Sage. The authors are concerned that the practice of writing is not addressed, in terms of supporting doctoral students but also in relation to professional academic writing. The aim of this book is to 'demystify writing to enhance our own and our intellectual communities' abilities to contribute knowledge'. Their audience is those studying or working in the field of organisational and management studies. The book draws on the metaphor of 'story' to explore the issues involved in writing for management journals. They explain: 'the issue in writing up qualitative research, then, becomes not whether we tell stories but rather how conscious we are of the stories we tell.' This requires writers to examine their theoretical positions and the way they develop it in their writing. Writers need to explore both what they write and how they write. The authors challenge the notion that writing reflects objective reality. Rather both the writer and the reader shape the text.

Ivanic, R. (1998) *Writing and Identity: The Discoursal Construction of Identity in Academic Writing*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia: Benjamins. This is an important book that explores the relationship between identity and academic writing. It starts from the position that the writer is not a neutral objective individual writing up the objective results of research. Rather the writer is

socially located and brings their identity positions, experiences, values and interests to the writing. Ivanic's overall argument is that 'writing is an act of identity in which people align themselves with socio-culturally shaped possibilities of selfhood, playing their part in reproducing or challenging dominant practices and discourses, and the values, beliefs and interests which they embody.' Although the book theorises writing, rather than it being a handbook for writers, it is useful for those wanting to explore the relationship between themselves and the writing that they produce. Part II is less theoretical, as it draws on the writing that different people have produced to illustrate the theory in Part I. It argues that understanding writing as intimately connected with self and identity can help us to write. One way into the book, suggested by Ivanic herself, is to begin with Chapter 6, which presents a case study and brings the issue of writing and identity to life.

Richardson, L. (2003) 'Writing: a method of inquiry' in N. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*, Thousand Oaks CA, London and New Delhi: Sage. This is a valuable contribution to thinking about the central role of writing in qualitative research as a methodology in itself. The chapter challenges the conventional approaches to writing qualitative research because, unlike quantitative research, which can be presented in tables and summaries, qualitative research 'carries its meaning in its entire text' and has to be read. Richardson points out that although she writes to learn she was taught 'not to write until I knew what I wanted to say, until my points were organised and outlined'. This is a problem, as are conventional approaches to writing tied to 'mechanistic scientism' because it overlooks the creativity of writing, it undermines new writers of research and it does not produce interesting texts. Richardson examines the historical contexts of writing conventions and then explores the possibilities of new modes of writing qualitative research, including 'creative analytic products'.

Woods, P. (1999) *Successful Writing for Qualitative Researchers*, London and New York: Routledge. This book focuses on the writing of qualitative research, in relation particularly to symbolic interactionism and education. It argues that although we have reached a new, postmodern moment in qualitative research, traditional approaches to writing remain hegemonic in both the thesis and published academic articles. However, Woods argues that 'the scope for experimentation is gradually widening' and for a creative approach to academic writing leading to new modes. The book explores the following issues: the psychology of writing and the 'pains and perils of writing', common modes of organising the writing of qualitative research (i.e. by category and/or theme), new modes of writing, the process of editing, new technologies in writing and writing for publication.

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teaching and supervision

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Many people reviewed the initial proposal for the *Academic's Support Kit* at Sage's request and gave it a very supportive reception. We are grateful for their early faith in us and promise to use them as referees again!

The annotated Further Reading was excellently crafted by Penny Jane Burke, Geeta Lakshmi and Simon Robb. In addition, Elizabeth Bullen gave enormous help on issues of research funding and William Spurlin helped us unravel the complexities of US universities. All are valued friends and colleagues and we appreciate their efforts.

Much of the material in the *Kit* was 'road-tested' in sessions for our postgraduate students, colleagues and others. Many other people kindly gave their time to read and comment on drafts. We are very grateful to these human guinea pigs for their hard work and can assure our readers that, as far as we are aware, none of them was harmed in the experiment.

Chris Staff of the University of Malta devised the title the *Academic's Support Kit*, and he and Brenda Murphy provided glorious Mediterranean conditions in which to write. Malmesbury, Morwell and Gozo were splendid writing localities, although Dox 'added value' at Malmesbury with his soothing yet sonorous snoring.

We are grateful to our universities – Cardiff, Monash, South Australia and the West of England – for the material support and encouragement they gave the project.

Many people in many different universities around the world inspired the books and unwittingly provided the material for our vignettes. They are too many to mention by name and besides we have had to tell their stories under other names. We are deeply indebted to our colleagues, ex-colleagues, friends, enemies, students and past students, old lovers, past and present combatants and allies and all the managers that we have ever worked with for being such a rich source of illustration and inspiration!

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Finally, as ever, our greatest thanks go to our nearest and dearest, without whose tolerance, love and hard work these books would not be in your hands today.

D.E.
R.B.
J.K.

Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*

Before you really get into this book, you might like to know a bit more about the authors.

Rebecca Boden, from England, is professor of accounting at the University of the West of England. She did her PhD in politics immediately after graduating from her first degree (which was in history and politics). She worked as a contract researcher in a university before the shortage of academic jobs in 1980s Britain forced her into the civil service as a tax inspector. She subsequently launched herself on to the unsuspecting world of business schools as an accounting academic.

Debbie Epstein, a South African, is a professor in the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University. She did her first degree in history and then worked briefly as a research assistant on the philosopher Jeremy Bentham's papers. Unable to read his handwriting, she went on to teach children in a variety of schools for seventeen years. She returned to university to start her PhD in her forties and has been an academic ever since.

Jane Kenway, an Australian, is professor of education at Monash University with particular responsibility for developing the field of global cultural studies in education. She was a schoolteacher and outrageous hedonist before she became an academic. But since becoming an academic she has also become a workaholic, which has done wonders for her social life, because, fortunately, all her friends are similarly inclined. Nonetheless she is interested in helping next-generation academics to be differently pleasured with regard to their work and their lives.

As you can see, we have all had chequered careers which are far from the stereotype of the lifelong academic but that are actually fairly typical. What we have all had to do is to retread ourselves, acquire new skills and learn to cope in very different environments. In our current jobs we all spend a lot of time helping and supporting people who are learning to be or developing themselves as academics. Being an accountant, Rebecca felt that there had to be a much more efficient way of helping

people to get the support they need than one-to-one conversations. This book and the other five in the *Academic's Support Kit* are for all these people, and for their mentors and advisers.

We have tried to write in an accessible and friendly style. The books contain the kind of advice that we have frequently proffered our research students and colleagues, often over a cup of coffee or a meal. We suggest that you consume their contents in a similar ambience: read the whole thing through in a relaxed way first and then dip into it where and when you feel the need.

Throughout the *ASK* books we tell the stories of anonymised individuals drawn from real life to illustrate how the particular points we are making might be experienced. While you may not see a precise picture of yourself, we hope that you will be able to identify things that you have in common with one or more of our characters to help you see how you might use the book.

Pragmatic principles/principled pragmatism

In writing these books, as in all our other work, we share a number of common perceptions and beliefs.

1. Globally, universities are reliant on public funding. Downward pressure on public expenditure means that universities' financial resources are tightly squeezed. Consequently mantras such as 'budgeting', 'cost cutting', 'accountability' and 'performance indicators' have become ubiquitous, powerful drivers of institutional behaviour and academic work.
2. As a result, universities are run as corporate enterprises selling education and research knowledge. They need 'management', which is essential to running a complex organisation such as a university, as distinct from 'managerialism' – the attempted application of 'scientific management techniques' borrowed from, though often discarded by, industry and commerce. What marks managerialism out from good management is the belief that there is a one-size-fits-all suite of management solutions that can be applied to any organisation. This can lead to a situation in which research and teaching, the *raison d'etre* of universities, take second place to managerialist fads, initiatives, strategic plans, performance

indicators and so on. Thus the management tail may wag the university dog, with the imperatives of managerialism conflicting with those of academics, who usually just want to research and teach well.

3. Increasingly, universities are divided into two cultures with conflicting sets of values. On the one hand there are managerialist doctrines; on the other are more traditional notions of education, scholarship and research. But these two cultures do not map neatly on to the two job groups of 'managers' and 'academics'. Many managers in universities hold educational and scholarly values dear and fight for them in and beyond their institutions. By the same token, some academics are thoroughly and unreservedly managerialist in their approach.
4. A bit like McDonald's, higher education is a global business. Like McDonald's branches, individual universities seem independent, but are surprisingly uniform in their structures, employment practices and management strategies. Academics are part of a globalised labour force and may move from country to (better paying) country.
5. Academics' intellectual recognition comes from their academic peers rather than their employing institutions. They are part of wider national and international peer networks distinct from their employing institutions and may have academic colleagues across continents as well as nearer home. The combination of the homogeneity of higher education and academics' own networks make it possible for them to develop local identities and survival strategies based on global alliances. The very fact of this globalisation makes it possible for us to write a *Kit* that is relevant to being an academic in many different countries, despite important local variations.
6. In order to thrive in a tough environment academics need a range of skills. Very often acquiring them is left to chance, made deliberately difficult or the subject of managerialist ideology. In this *Kit* our aim is to talk straight. We want to speak clearly about what some people just 'know', but others struggle to find out. Academia is a game with unwritten and written rules. We aim to write down the unwritten rules in order to help level an uneven playing field. The slope of the playing field favours 'developed' countries and, within these, more experienced academics in more prestigious institutions. Unsurprisingly, women and some ethnic groups often suffer marginalisation.

7. Most of the skills that academics need are common across social sciences and humanities. This reflects the standardisation of working practices that has accompanied the increasing managerialisation of universities, but also the growing (and welcome) tendency to work across old disciplinary divides. The *Academic's Support Kit* is meant for social scientists, those in the humanities and those in more applied or vocational fields such as education, health sciences, accounting, business and management.
8. We are all too aware that most academics have a constant feeling of either drowning in work or running ahead of a fire or both. Indeed, we often share these feelings. Nevertheless, we think that there *are* ways of being an academic that are potentially less stressful and more personally rewarding. Academics need to find ways of playing the game in ethical and professional ways and winning. We do not advise you to accept unreasonable demands supinely. Instead, we are looking for strategies that help people retain their integrity, the ability to produce knowledge and teach well.
9. University management teams are often concerned to avoid risk. This may lead to them taking over the whole notion of 'ethical behaviour' in teaching and research and subjecting it to their own rules, which are more to do with their worries than good professional academic practice. In writing these books, we have tried to emphasise that there are richer ethical and professional ways of being in the academic world: ways of being a public intellectual, accepting your responsibilities and applying those with colleagues, students and the wider community.

And finally …

We like the way that Colin Bundy, Principal of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and previously Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, so pithily describes the differences and similarities between universities in such very different parts of the world. Interviewed for the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (27 January 2004) by John Crace, he explains:

> The difference is one of nuance. In South Africa, universities had become too much of an ivory tower and needed a reintroduction to the pressures

> of the real world. In the UK, we have perhaps gone too far down the line of seeing universities as pit-stops for national economies. It's partly a response to thirty years of underfunding: universities have had to adopt the neo-utilitarian line of asserting their usefulness to justify more money. But we run the risk of losing sight of some of our other important functions. We should not just be a mirror to society, but a critical lens: we have a far more important role to play in democracy and the body politic than merely turning out graduates for the job market.

Our hope is that the *Academic's Support Kit* will help its readers develop the kind of approach exemplified by Bundy – playing in the real world but always in a principled manner.

Books in the *Academic's Support Kit*

The *Kit* comprises six books. There is no strict order in which they should be read, but this one is probably as good as any – except that you might read *Building your Academic Career* both first and last.

Building your Academic Career encourages you to take a proactive approach to getting what you want out of academic work whilst being a good colleague. We discuss the advantages and disadvantages of such a career, the routes in and the various elements that shape current academic working lives. In the second half of the book we deal in considerable detail with how to write a really good CV (résumé) and how best to approach securing an academic job or promotion.

Getting Started on Research is for people in the earlier stages of development as a researcher. In contrast to the many books available on techniques of data collection and analysis, this volume deals with the many other practical considerations around actually doing research – such as good ways to frame research questions, how to plan research projects effectively and how to undertake the various necessary tasks.

Writing for Publication deals with a number of generic issues around academic writing (including intellectual property rights) and then considers writing refereed journal articles, books and book chapters in detail as well as other, less common, forms of publication for academics. The aim is to demystify the process and to help you to become a confident, competent, successful and published writer.

Teaching and Supervision looks at issues you may face both in teaching undergraduates and in the supervision of graduate research students. This book is not a pedagogical instruction manual – there are plenty of those around, good and bad. Rather, the focus is on presenting explanations and possible strategies designed to make your teaching and supervision work less burdensome, more rewarding (for you and your students) and manageable.

Winning and Managing Research Funding explains how generic university research funding mechanisms work so that you will be better equipped to navigate your way through the financial maze associated with various funding sources. The pressure to win funding to do research is felt by nearly all academics worldwide. This book details strategies that you might adopt to get your research projects funded. It also explains how to manage your research projects once they are funded.

Building Networks addresses perhaps the most slippery of topics, but also one of the most fundamental. Despite the frequent isolation of academic work, it is done in the context of complex, multi-layered global, national, regional and local teaching or research networks. Having good networks is key to achieving what you want in academia. This book describes the kinds of networks that you might build across a range of settings, talks about the pros and cons and gives practical guidance on networking activities.

1 Who should Use this Book and How?

The purpose of this book is to help you understand the academic teaching process better, including supervising research students' dissertations and theses. If this is the first book in the *Academic's Support Kit* that you are reading, you may find it useful to read 'Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*'.

What are we aiming at?

We aim to help you establish sound practices and approaches to teaching and supervising that will stand you in good stead for the rest of your university teaching career. This book is not about the basics of teaching. It doesn't tell you how to do such things as develop courses, plan your classes, assess students or give tips about different ways of making your teaching more interesting. There is an ample number of books available that do this and we mention some of the best of them in our Further Reading section. Rather, it concerns:

- Good educational practice, helping you to think conceptually about your identity as a teacher, your own professional practice and the teaching environment within your institution.
- Some of the pressures that university teachers worldwide are under (and some tips on how to deal with them).
- How to develop your portfolio of teaching experiences so that you can both find out what you are good at and what you enjoy and demonstrate that you are a fully rounded teaching professional.
- How to become a good supervisor of students' research projects, particularly at postgraduate level.

Why might you find this book useful?

This book will be especially useful for you if you are:

- A research student of some sort. You may be doing some teaching yourself, in which case you will find Chapters 1–3 useful. You will certainly have a supervisor or adviser for your own studies, and Chapters 4 and 5 should give you some insight into the sort of help you can expect or demand and a different perspective on the process you are going through.
- Someone in their first academic job. This may be your first 'proper' job or you may have made a recent career change.
- Someone who is a casual (sessionally or hourly paid) teacher in a university who would like to develop an academic career in the full sense.
- Someone who has already done some teaching but who is anxious to reflect on or improve their professional practice.
- Someone who is beginning to supervise postgraduate research students or who wishes to develop their professional practice in this area further.
- A more experienced academic who is mentoring someone in one or more of these categories.

Throughout the book we will tell the stories of people, drawn from real life, to illustrate how the particular points we are making might be experienced by different sorts of individuals. While you may not see a precise picture of yourself, we hope that you will be able to identify things that you have in common with one or more of our characters to help you see how you might use the book.

First of all, we want to introduce you to some characters who are in the kind of position we think will lead them to find this book useful.

Charlie left school at eighteen and did professional training as an accountant. He then went abroad and spent twenty-seven years working as an accountant in an African country. He decided on a career change in his fifties and returned to the UK, where he obtained a bursary to study first for a research training masters and then for a doctorate.

One of the conditions of his bursary is that he undertakes some limited first-year undergraduate teaching that is carefully structured for him. Whilst the teaching is well within his area of professional competence as an accountant, he suffers from the dual handicap of never having taught and never having been a university student.

Maria is a university teacher of some years standing. Comparatively recently she has become research-active and embarked on her own doctorate. Doing research has made her think more critically about the nature of knowledge, the purpose of universities and her role in teaching. In addition, she voluntarily undertook a postgraduate teaching qualification within her university, which successfully facilitated her development as a reflexive teacher. She is still relatively junior in her department and has suffered interference in her teaching from more senior colleagues that is at odds with her new-found insights into the teaching and learning process. At a personal level, she cares deeply about students and is much loved by them. As an ethnic minority member of staff in a predominantly white university, she is extremely aware of social justice issues and has had to contend with racism at work herself.

Joan was always a highly successful student. She won a scholarship to follow a doctoral course at an Ivy League university in the USA. During her course, like other doctoral students, she became a Teaching Assistant. She was responsible for all aspects of teaching, its organisation and student assessment and progression, with the exception of defining the curriculum content and delivering the big lectures. Her university provided virtually no training or guidance for her or other TAs in how to do this work.

William was a mature student who, after gaining his first degree, was retained by his institution to do some casual sessional teaching. Because William and his wife also ran a business, he was under little

pressure to develop a professional career after graduating. He stayed in this casual employment role for six years and was relied upon and, indeed, exploited by his department to do a raft of unpopular and low-level teaching jobs. Nobody offered him any training or development for a number of years. Eventually he badgered the dean into allowing him to go on a short training course provided by the university for casual teaching staff. He also insisted that the university pay him to do so. He enjoyed this course and it gave him a renewed sense of professional competence and confidence. He then persuaded the university to pay him to do a research training masters and, as part of that, he set about researching the use of casualised staff by universities.

Saskia has been a university lecturer for some time. She is quite well established as a researcher because she has published in refereed journals, co-authored a book and is on the editorial board of a major international journal. However, she began her PhD quite a long time after she got her first academic job and is only now coming close to finishing it. She hopes to hand it in within the next three months and is anxious to begin supervising doctoral students as soon as possible, both for the enjoyment of the work and for her own professional career development.

You may:

- Want to further develop your thinking about your teaching: for most academics (quite rightly, we think) a successful career still encompasses both research and teaching, and you need to be skilled in both.
- Be under tremendous institutional pressure to teach more, to document and justify your teaching more and to 'objectively' prove that you are a 'successful' teacher.
- Be someone who is really dissatisfied with the notions of teaching and learning that are increasingly promulgated and enforced by the management of mass higher education institutions who are anxious to implement pedagogic systems that are marketised, measurable and auditable. You may want to develop a critical conceptual tool-box for reflecting on your place in such a system.

Whatever your motivation in reading this, you've almost certainly done some teaching already. Many academics cut their teaching teeth while they are doctoral students. Such people undertake teaching not only to earn much-needed cash to support themselves but also to start to learn how to teach in higher education. Those academics who have come into universities after a previous professional career may well have experience as sessional teachers on professional courses or have worked as teaching assistants in a university. Some may have taught children in schools or young people in post-compulsory colleges outside higher education.

What's our position on university teaching?

Whatever your experience to date, academics have traditionally learned to teach on the job and have received little or no formal training in how to teach. The quality of much higher education teaching has, consequently, tended to be variable. We have all had experience of truly excellent university teachers, and of really terrible ones. One of the advantages of this somewhat shambolic approach was that it allowed real creativity to blossom, sometimes in places where you wouldn't expect it. On the other hand, students were sometimes ill served by their teachers and did not have good or valuable learning experiences.

Increasingly universities are engaged in strategic 'risk management'. In theory this is about balancing risks against opportunities presented by innovation and entrepreneurial activity. The unfortunate reality is that 'risk management' generally involves an emphasis on the risks without linking them with the opportunities offered by innovation. This tends to lead to extremely risk-averse behaviour. This irrational preoccupation with the avoidance of risk has contributed to the imposition of onerous internal regulatory audit and surveillance mechanisms.

Increasingly, in countries such as the UK, the USA and Australia, universities have sought to minimise the risk of 'bad teaching'. Rather than do so by promoting reflexivity and self-regulation among academics, they have often resorted to rather crude managerialist techniques for 'ensuring quality' (sometimes known as 'quality assurance' or 'total quality management'). These regimes usually involve 'performance indicators', as we will show further in Chapter 3. Such approaches are great, they argue, because they enable league tables and other comparative devices to be constructed so that an institution can 'prove' that it offers students a better deal.

It is important to make the point that even though we are critical of these performative practices and empty rituals of verification, we are not critical of good teaching practices. One of the reasons why these so-called quality assurance practices can achieve purchase is that they appeal to the common sense of many teachers and their desire to teach well. Clearly, good teachers are concerned about what students get from their teaching and the impact that they have on students' understanding, knowledge and critical engagement. Equally, good teachers are concerned to get constructive feedback from students about their teaching and their courses. However, these regimes of control don't deliver on their rhetorical promises.

Furthermore, we would argue that the systems that such managerialism has fostered run the risk of squeezing out good and imaginative teaching practice and removing the real joy of pedagogic relations. Worse still, the kinds of approach to teaching that allow risk reduction and measurement are nearly always the worst kinds of teaching. They bear no relation to how people learn, to the unpredictability of the best classrooms and learning experiences, or to the importance of teacher–student relations in the teaching and learning process. What this means is that insistence on tying teaching to what can be measured actually institutes and produces poor pedagogy.

This regime of control puts professional teachers in a bind over what they are empowered to do. It encourages and promotes a regime of self-discipline that doesn't only control our teaching but also controls who we are as professionals. The neurotic pressures that can result from being forced into poor pedagogical practices can prevent people from enjoying their teaching. Rather like the move from craft production to factory manufacture, teaching stops being a creative act and becomes a series of boring chores done under rigid surveillance. The problem is that the whole regime is set up in such a way that it can feel as if there's no other way of thinking about teaching. There appears to be no other discourse – that is, ways of thinking, speaking or acting – about teaching available.

There are a number of additional pressures, which arise from such things as the reduction in public spending on higher education and associated marketisation and commercialisation of everything universities do. These include the overt and covert pressure to do some or all of the following things:

- Admit inappropriately qualified students to courses and programmes.
- Pass students who clearly should fail.
- Overlook plagiarism.
- Adjust course content to meet the demands of external bodies when it conflicts with maintaining the academic integrity of the course.
- Dumb courses down.
- Inappropriate accreditation of prior experience.
- Double-count previous study at a lower level.
- Inflate grades beyond what the work merits.

These are profoundly anti-educational moves and have no place in a university.

In this context, it is particularly important for academics to retain critical reflexivity about teaching. If you are in a situation where your teaching is controlled by one of these managerialist systems, you do need to be able to play the game competently if you are to survive as an academic. But it's critically important not to lose sight of the fact that it is a game, with rules, and that there are alternative ways of teaching. Remember that, as in any other controlling regime, you do still have professional standing and room to manoeuvre. Indeed, your room to move can arise from your professional standing and you need to take responsibility for that.

In sum, with regard to these controls over your teaching, we would urge you not to:

- *Over-comply*. Do the bare minimum to meet the requirements and concentrate your energies and efforts on ensuring that your teaching is as good and imaginative as it can possibly be.
- *Be intimidated* into believing that the consequences of minimal but sufficient compliance will be devastating.
- *Ever believe that this is the way to improve your teaching*. It's important to maintain a critical distance between what you believe to be good teaching and what these audit systems are saying.

In *Star Trek* there is an on-going story of the Borg, an alien entity who are trying to take over the universe, species by species. The Borg have no individuality and they take over other civilisations by

absorbing the minds and memories of each species member that they meet. The individuals thus absorbed lose their individuality and have cyborg implants that have to be regenerated at regular intervals. They work as a hive, and the individuals become 'drones', unable to think for themselves. In *The Next Generation* the Borg absorb Captain Picard, but his crew manage to free him and he manages to stop himself behaving and acting like a drone. In *Voyager* a Borg drone, Seven of Nine, joins the crew. She is integrated into the crew and gradually learns to be an individual. The Borg's catch phrase is 'Resistance is futile'. The stories of Captain Picard and of Seven demonstrate that, far from being futile, resistance can be extremely effective. We leave you to draw your own conclusions as to why we think this story is a good analogy.

We can't change the world and we realise that some of you may feel very vulnerable in terms of your employment. But in this book we can help you to think about how you can devise ways to minimise the bad effects of this sort of managerialist control, to find ways through the 'quality maze' and to maintain your integrity and ethical practice as a teacher. And remember that in your own institution there are likely to be academics all the way up the hierarchy who are equally critical, if not more so, of these regimes and who have found ways to teach well despite them.

We need to remember that the introduction of managerialist teaching quality control systems was made easy by the fact that academic teachers themselves generally did not have a well articulated sense of professional teaching practice. This was reprehensible. It's all very well criticising the new systems, but we have to give serious consideration to what we would like to develop in their place. This is a professional responsibility incumbent on us all.

What does a good university teacher look like?

It is likely that, even if you have done almost no teaching in the past, you already have some of the relevant skills for successful teaching. To be an excellent university teacher you will need:

- First-rate interpersonal and communication skills.
- Superior observational skills in order to be aware of how your students are reacting in class, how they are progressing and what their problems are.
- Excellent presentational skills, the ability to put a point across and to make people interested in what you have to say. This may require a level of acting skill. You certainly have to have 'presence'.
- Well honed innovative problem-solving skills, because every teaching situation is different and you have to be able to think on your feet and work your way through new and complex situations.
- The ability to listen and to facilitate the learning of others. This means shaping and steering the classroom space, not dominating it.
- An understanding of the processes by which, and situations in which, people are able to learn.
- Enthusiasm for working with others to achieve your goals.
- The ability to organise yourself, manage your own work and plan ahead.
- The capacity to meet and seek out new challenges without feeling (too) intimidated.
- To be knowledgeable about what you teach and why you teach it.
- To be excited by the material you are teaching and really engaged with it. This is why we think that the best university teachers are also active researchers.
- To be able to read, digest, summarise and synthesise complex material and help others understand it.
- Imagination and the ability to be creative about how you explain things and how you get students to engage with your material.
- Curiosity and an enquiring mind.
- A real, conscious awareness of power dynamics and a good sense of social justice.
- An attitude to students which is distinguished by care and concern for their educational welfare, but conversely keeps proper boundaries and emphasises that ultimately students are responsible for their own learning.
- An understanding of the potentially transformative, and sometimes personally disruptive, effects of good education on students.

This is a pretty exhaustive (not to say exhausting) and intimidating list. Nobody scores full marks all the time and all good, reflexive academics go on developing these sorts of skills throughout their careers. Done

well, teaching is hard work. It is tiring and demanding in physical, intellectual and emotional ways. It can also give enormous pleasure, joy and a sense of fulfilment and a job well done. Good teachers learn from their students in a whole host of different ways. And students are usually amazingly appreciative of good teaching and very loyal to good teachers.

2 Teaching Relations

In this chapter we discuss the three overlapping and interlinking sets of relations that being a university teacher involves: with students, with colleagues (both academic and administrative) and with university managers. Relations with external partners such as professional accreditation bodies or employers are discussed in *Building Networks*, so we will not consider them here. It is important to learn how to operate and survive successfully in all these sets of relationships, for in a sense, successful teaching is about good relationships.

Relations with students

It may seem obvious, but it needs saying: students are the most important people to think about in relation to your teaching. There is a tendency, in the marketised university system, to think of students as 'customers'. We regard this as dangerous thinking. The fact that students may have to pay fees to attend your courses does not make them 'customers' or even 'clients'. Students are people whose job it is to study and learn. It is the job of teachers to make that possible for them in the best ways they can. With their fees they do not purchase knowledge to be poured into them as if they were empty vessels to be filled. Instead they pay for access to the institution and its staff, libraries and other resources that will enable them to work at acquiring knowledge and personal growth.

Calling students 'customers' encourages them, colleagues and university management to regard them as participants in a commercial commodity exchange contract. It discourages everyone from viewing students as people who have to take responsibility for their own learning and as active agents in their own right. It is also delusional because students as 'customers' actually have no consumer rights. All they can do, if they don't like what they get, is sue or go to another institution. Neither of these options is likely to be to their educational advantage.

Lianna is a doctoral student undertaking some casually paid teaching. She has previously trained as a school teacher. She is always anxious to ensure that students are active participants in the seminar classes that she runs. One day she asked a truculent young man if he knew the answer to a particular question that had been raised. He replied, 'No. I pay fees here. You are supposed to give me the answers.' Lianna, a mother of young children, contained her exasperation and took a great deal of time and effort to explain to this callow youth where his attitude to education had gone wrong.

If we believe that the notion of a customer–contractor relationship between students and teachers is not helpful to anyone, how should we conceptualise these relationships?

The characteristics of good pedagogic relationships

When your teaching is good, it is likely that you will derive a great deal of pleasure from the process. Good pedagogy generally has the following characteristics, to a greater or lesser extent:

- Students are regarded as ultimately responsible for their own learning, and as individuals – even in classes which are too large for us to know them all individually.
- There is mutual respect and regard between teachers and students and among students themselves. The kind of attitude that allows one to think of students as 'thick' or 'stupid' has no place in teaching, as it connotes lack of respect or regard for individuals and an abrogation of responsibilities in the teaching relationship.
- Courses and lessons are well planned, but allow for the unexpected and for students to take some control over the process. This does not mean that teachers always do what students want them to, but it does mean that our reasons for doing things in a particular way are explicit, explained and justified.
- Relationships are built over time and classes develop a group dynamic all their own which includes their relationship with the teacher. In this way students and teachers feel as if they are part of a collective endeavour in which the teacher may have the route map but the

students can also look at it and make suggestions for alternative routes, modes of transport and, indeed, where on the map they wish to end up as a group and/or as individuals. In other words, the outcomes of any healthy learning process cannot, by definition, be predetermined by teachers alone or by external agents. The outcomes depend on a whole raft of different things, for example: the relationship between teachers and students; the group dynamics of the class; what the students bring to the class before the course starts; how much work students put in; and what they want to take away from it.

- Team teaching can be an extremely successful way of running courses, but it does not obviate the responsibility of the staff to ensure that students experience continuity and a real sense of collective class identity. We would therefore recommend that there is always at least one teacher who pretty much stays with the group from the first to the last class.
- Power relations are recognised, not only between teachers and students, but between different students. This should allow teachers and students to take joint responsibility for ensuring that there is no bullying, exclusion, abuse or exploitation. It is, however, the teacher who must keep on top of this and therefore the teacher has a special responsibility in this regard.

Hannah was teaching a small class in a British university that consisted of white British men and a group of Malaysian Chinese women. The women had recently arrived in the UK and had received no induction into Western pedagogic conventions. Hannah had noticed that they were reluctant to contribute to group discussions and were painfully shy. She organised the class into small sub-groups for an exercise and told them to appoint a rapporteur. At the end of the exercise, she asked one group, consisting of two men and three women, for their rapporteur's feedback. One of the men immediately said, 'One of them' (pointing at the silent women) 'should do it, because they never do or say anything.' Hannah replied, 'As you are so discourteous, I think you should do it,' and made him be the rapporteur. She spoke to the young man privately immediately after the class and asked him to reflect on his hostile attitude towards young women who probably needed his friendship and support as a fellow student.

In contrast, positive relationships with students are put at risk when:

- Teaching is seen as the delivery of prepackaged nuggets of information to students as customers. This undermines the crucial role of the teacher in developing these all-important relationships with students. Teachers aren't delivery systems that can be replaced at will by someone else or by a Web-based teaching package. Those universities which specialise in distance learning usually know this well and take a great deal of care to ensure that students have a sense of belonging and that they have a real relationship with a real person, albeit at a distance.
- Commercialised customer–contractor relations are put in place. In these circumstances students and teachers are set in conflict with each other. This undermines any sense of mutual trust. It is incumbent on teachers, we believe, to reach out to students and to form mutually beneficial alliances. In our model of education, students and teachers are partners or collaborators in the same endeavours. If they are driven apart the only people who benefit are those who seek to control the education process for their own purposes.

Rebecca was teaching a class of final-year Management Studies undergraduates. She asked them how they were getting on generally. They immediately started complaining that they didn't get very good 'service' from the university and about how much they resented paying their fees. Rebecca explained that, when she was a student in the 1970s, such upset would have led students to occupy the administration building. This was not their style. So Rebecca pointed out that they were in part the authors of their own misfortune: misguidedly thinking of themselves as 'customers' with 'consumer rights'. She suggested that they could do better for themselves by acting as real members of a collegiate community and exercising their legitimate voice. The next week the same students asked her how they could get to see the dean. She told them, but cautioned them to have a well worked out case, as they would be dismissed out of hand if they whinged to the dean in the same way they had whinged to her. In the end, the students turned up at faculty board with a closely argued and professional PowerPoint presentation. The faculty managers acceded to their reasonable requests. The students learned a valuable life lesson.

Relations with colleagues

Working with other academics

In teaching we often have to work with, alongside and sometimes for colleagues. We always have to work together to operate the routine systems of the administration that supports teaching. Clearly, in a university students have to be selected, recruited, registered, assessed and graded. We think that the more these processes are controlled by academics the better. Whilst it may be tempting for you and your colleagues to accept the kind offer of the university management to deal with applications for your programmes, beware Trojan horses. What can often happen in such situations is that you lose control, for instance, over the number, nature and quality of students admitted to your programme, to people who neither know nor care about what matters to you as a professional teacher and whose chief concern is to maximise income and justify their own jobs. This is not to say that you should take on basic, routinised clerical work – your task is to help to develop policy, decide strategic directions and oversee their implementation.

The more pressure we come under as academics, the more important it becomes to be and to have good colleagues. A good colleague might answer the following questions in the affirmative.

Am I a good team player?

By this we mean that good colleagues are able to take the wider view, taking account of the good of the department, faculty and university as a whole and not just of their own little corner or self-interest. This can be quite difficult in situations of straitened resources and near-intolerable work pressures. But in our experience, once academic institutions descend into dog-eat-dog behaviour, they are doomed and the people in them become very miserable. Moreover, it is hard for institutions to recover from such negative behaviour patterns and traditions.

Toby belonged to a teaching team consisting of some really high-flying academics. Toby did not have a research qualification and was not doing any research. He felt vulnerable and defensive in

consequence. His way of dealing with his feeling of inadequacy was to comment pejoratively on the intellectual content of the course. In tutorials and one-to-one sessions with students he sought to discredit his colleagues' material and approach by constructing them as 'airy-fairy ivory-tower' academics and himself as a 'real practitioner' with the only valuable insights. Behaviour such as Toby's may unwittingly endorse the anti-intellectual trends that we discussed earlier.

Am I flexible?

That is, in their work practices good colleagues will accommodate the needs and problem of others the best they can. For instance, they would not insist on continuing to teach a particular course when a less experienced and more junior colleague wanted and needed the experience of that particular kind of teaching. By the same token, they are not doormats, ever willing to bend over backwards to accommodate unreasonable expectations.

Susannah shared the teaching of a course for a particular group of part-time students with another colleague. The students attended the university one day a week, starting at 8.30 p.m. and ending at 9.00 p.m. Susannah had sole responsibility for two young children whom she had to either take to/collect from school herself or make complex arrangements for someone else to. Her co-teacher was a middle-aged childless man with no such domestic responsibilities. He was in charge of allocating the teaching and gave himself the teaching slots in the middle of the day, leaving Susannah to teach from 8.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. and 7.00 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. This, obviously, left her with insuperable childcare problems and was really quite unjust to her children. Susannah's representations to her colleague fell on deaf ears. She eventually went to her research mentor (another woman), who raised the matter with the head of department. He was sympathetic and intervened to give Susannah a more acceptable teaching schedule.

Do I carry my fair share of teaching and related administration?

The distribution, by volume and nature, of teaching and administration duties should reflect, to some degree, the levels of experience and expertise of the staff in any department. However, the allocation of teaching should be informed by a good staff development strategy and underpinned by principles of equity.

Ideally, staff in their first teaching post should be given partial remission of teaching duties, since preparation takes so much longer when you are teaching for the first time. Unfortunately, many departments do not have a sufficiently good staff–student ratio to allow this to happen to the extent that it should. However, in good departments the allocation of teaching duties and the justification for them are the subject of a transparent process.

Often more junior colleagues get put upon in a number of ways. They may have a disproportionate share of the teaching burden, get less choice of what they teach, be allocated teaching which is less enjoyable or career-enhancing or have to constantly prepare for new courses. This is bad practice and damages people's careers.

If you feel that you are in this position, you have a number of courses of action open to you. Your first recourse might be to your mentor and/or head of department. You will need to have a well argued case, not just a whinge. If that doesn't work, you may wish to take the matter up at greater length in your staff performance appraisal or review. A final recourse might be to your trade union.

Am I respectful of my colleagues, sensitive to the demands on them, and do I avoid draining their time and energy on trivia?

They will, however, ask for help when they need it. Every academic, no matter how they act, or what they say, experiences periods of extreme and near intolerable stress. You need to be aware that your colleagues may be feeling like this and, where appropriate, give them what assistance you can. The positions might well be reversed at some point in the future. However, avoid – and avoid being – the type of needy colleague who represents an unwarranted and wearisome drain on

those around them. You cannot be your colleagues' mother and they cannot be yours.

Dina is a compulsive over-achiever and regularly says 'yes' to demands that she really doesn't have time to deliver on. Failure to deliver feeds her tendency to think of herself as a failure. Things reached crisis point, with unmet deadlines looming. She had lunch with a sympathetic colleague and friend and ended up bursting into tears about her work load. Her colleague took charge of the situation by encouraging Dina to list all her outstanding tasks on the whiteboard in the office. She then made time to come to Dina's office to discuss each task in turn in order to decide which ones could be ignored, which could be handed over to someone else, and how to prioritise the remainder. She also made Dina a large notice to pin above her desk that said, 'LEARN TO SAY NO!'

Do I appropriately prioritise my own teaching, research and administrative responsibilities?

Colleagues who ignore their own work in order to do things for other people are actually more of a burden than a benefit. Those who unnecessarily create work for others to do fail to respect the needs of others to get on with their own work.

Boubacar and Achille were two hard-working, research-active but junior academics who shared an office. Both devoted considerable effort to their teaching work and were always ready to support each other and their students, who felt that they were given a very good deal. Leela was their new head of department and a relatively inexperienced academic.

Leela came into Boubacar and Achille's office one day. She explained that her understanding was that the whole department had to convene a special meeting in order to review the quality of the

course 'Quality' documents produced by each individual member of staff. Incredulous, Boubacar and Achille suggested making the minutes of such a meeting up or, less flippantly, that this rather pointless procedure should be tacked on to the end of their regular departmental meetings with separate minutes being produced. Leela insisted that the meeting had to be specially convened. She told Boubacar and Achille that she could make the meeting on any day except Tuesdays and asked them when they were free. Achille replied, without a moment's hesitation, 'Tuesdays.'

Both Boubacar and Achille have now got jobs at other institutions and others in their erstwhile department are seeking to make similar moves.

Do I avoid setting up unrealistic and inappropriate expectations of what teaching staff will do?

Like the rest of us, students generally want an easy life. The more you do for them, the happier they are, and the less they do for themselves the more they resent those teachers who do not spoonfeed them. To spoonfeed students does not help them to become mature and independent learners who take responsibility for themselves and their own learning.

The imposition of student evaluation surveys in universities may have the unfortunate and unintended effect of encouraging some teachers to court popularity by falling over backwards to do things for students where it is not appropriate and not to the students' long-term benefit. Such activities include: putting your lectures on the intranet so that your on-campus students don't have to bother to come to your classes; being endlessly available to see students who have missed your classes because of their own recalcitrance or lack of personal organisation; setting easy assessment tasks that are not challenging and are also subject to lax grading; giving students endless tutorials above and beyond what is appropriate in order to help them get through or raise their grades; bending the rules around registration, assessment or progression.

Of course some situations do arise where special consideration is due to specific students who, through no fault of their own, have

encountered difficulties. However, such treatment of students should not become part of regular teaching practice and teachers should not be seen as a 'soft touch' by self-serving students. This sort of conduct by teachers is not only detrimental to students' real interests, but also undermines the best teaching practice of their colleagues. It can put your colleagues in an invidious position if they are faced with a student who is protesting, 'But Dr Bush *always* does this.'

Working with academic support staff

Finally, we want to mention teachers' relations with those colleagues who support and facilitate so much of the work done by academics. Many of them are supportive, caring, efficient and committed colleagues. Particularly worthy of praise, we think, are librarians. It is imperative to work well with all these people and that you treat them with respect, work with them co-operatively, recognise their skills and make sure they can do their job effectively.

Nestor is an administrative officer to a Dean of Research in a large division (faculty) in a sizeable university. The dean wanted to encourage honours students to understand the pathways that existed for them to undertake postgraduate study. Rather than assuming that she needed to give Nestor detailed instructions about how to undertake this piece of work, she was able to delegate to Nestor complete responsibility for organising a special evening, including everything from room bookings to recruiting and briefing speakers (not choosing them) and maximising student attendance. When she congratulated Nestor on the success of the event, the dean discovered that she had substantial experience of organising such events in her previous job.

Efficiently undertaken, the work of such people can be invaluable in supporting the academic work process. Often they know their way round the rules and systems really well and can help you achieve your legitimate objectives with the minimum fuss. Such people are well worth cultivating as friends and colleagues too. Do not assume that all your university friendships will be with academic staff.

Vashti is the research manager of a large and successful business school. She is responsible for all aspects of procedural research support such as helping with grant applications, organising conferences and for all the administrative aspects of a large graduate research degrees programme. Her job is complex, beset by many and confusing regulations and involves interaction with over eighty academics and more than forty research students. Her job involves working alongside two senior academics: the Director of Research and the Director of Research Degrees.

The fact that Vashti has a PhD, albeit in ancient history, means that she has a real and deep understanding of both the research process and what it means to be a research student. In doing her work she is confident, assertive and makes her own distinct and valuable contribution. Yet, at the same time, she implicitly acknowledges that her job is to facilitate the research and teaching of the academics, not to tell them what to do. As such, she is a valued and highly respected colleague.

An example of her contribution is that, under university regulations, there must be a body of definitive and quite complex documentation relating to the research degree programmes. When Vashti took up her post, this was sadly out of date and neglected. Without being asked, Vashti set about collecting and collating the relevant information and identifying gaps and areas where updating was necessary. When she had completed her first draft, she arranged a meeting with the Director of Research Degrees. They reviewed her draft together and decided how it could be finalised. Vashti finalised the document and took it through the relevant committees for approval.

Whinging or critique?

As will be clear, by now, we believe that academics have a lot to put up with. However, it doesn't help anyone if we spend our time endlessly whinging, moaning and complaining. All that does is exhaust our colleagues and us. We would wish to distinguish, here, between whingeing and critique. Critique is about analysing (rigorously, theoretically and conceptually) why we want to whinge. Whereas whinging drains positivity and leads to individual and organisational paralysis, critique is empowering for you and also for those you share it with provided that you build on it and turn it into positive alternatives.

Let us take the case of the intensification of teaching and the burgeoning of bureaucracy and the implications they have for research activity. A whinger would simply complain endlessly and uselessly to anyone who would listen about the impossibility of their work load. A critique would involve somebody identifying and understanding the structural changes that have occurred in university work practices and rendering them explicit to colleagues and their managers. A critic with a sense of the possible would take the critique and find imaginative and positive ways of resolving the problems, to mutual benefit. For instance, rather than go to their head of school with a problem, they would go with a clear definition of the problem and a precise articulation of a feasible solution.

Relations with management

The good

We would argue that that there are two sorts of people who tend to do management work well. They may be, or have been, good academics with an aptitude for management-type work. Often you find these people working as heads of department, deans and so on. Traditionally, the heads of institutions have come through this route. Alternatively, good managers are not academics but do have empathy for and intuitive understanding of academic processes and practices, and see their role very much as facilitating academic work. If the managers and management systems of your institution come from one or other (or both) of these groups, you are unlikely to have fundamental problems in your relations with them. Usually such people will be able to listen openly to you and will support your reasonable requests, particularly if these are seen to enhance both your academic activities and those of their own institutional unit. And of course they will expect you to carry your fair share of the admin. work of your school or faculty.

The bad

Unfortunately, we discern a new development in universities world-wide. It is an increasing tendency towards managerialism (as opposed to management). It is not confined to universities but, as the journalist and commentator Simon Hoggart points out in the article quoted below, is ubiquitous.

Management is seen these days as a separate concept which can be plonked on top of any organisation, whether it cures the sick or sells office supplies. Therefore managers often have nothing to do with the trade they're managing. Instead they are trained in management. This is why someone like Gerald Corbett, who knew about hotels, catering, retail shops and oil, came to run Railtrack, with results we now know very well.

Because management is seen as a good in itself, managers feel free to spread it everywhere. Frequently the methods it involves don't work, which means that more managers are required to force it to work. Managers set wages, and since they rate management very highly, managers get the fattest pay packets. This draws more people into management and away from actually doing whatever their organisation is supposed to do.

We can see the results everywhere: in the health service, the railways, our schools and the police. We're plagued with managers as they spread destruction like ground elder in a garden. *Managing Britannia* – which I need hardly add is written in a straightforward, lucid fashion – is published by Edgeways Books.

On a long train journey this week I found at one point that no fewer than five businessmen around me were using their mobile phones. I no longer find this annoying; it's just part of the background noise of modern life, like barking dogs or traffic. I now have a game: I eavesdrop and try to work out what their business actually does. As they bang on about 'delivery outcomes', 'laptop presentations', 'input assessment' and 'faxing the specs to Chris in Woking' you can almost never work out if they're in manufacturing, retail, services or anything real at all. Try it some time; you usually can't tell if they run a probation service or a lap dancing club.

Then to my great relief, the chap behind me started talking about 2.25 kilo boxes of pickled eggs. 'We need to get 5,000 boxes,' he said. 'The whole order, 17 K boxes, is riding on it.'

Pickled eggs! Something real! He sold catering supplies, and you can eat what he sells! I almost wanted to hug him.

(Simon Hoggart, 'A plague of managers spreads destruction', *Guardian*, 2 March 2002)

Managerialism reflects a very different approach to the management work of a university than the traditional mode in which it's done by academics or, as we noted, by people who see their role as facilitating the work of academics. In many OECD countries and those that are subject to strong 'reforming' pressure from organisations such as the World Bank, this tendency towards the managerialisation of universities has been encouraged, promoted or even insisted upon by government, government agencies and/or supranational agencies.

The ugly

These governmental pressures have often led to demands on universities and their academic staff that are not only aggravating and time-consuming but also expensive to operationalise. Ironically, such managerialist systems and structures are seldom subject to the same kind of performance measurement and value for money analysis that they inflict on academics.

Barry is in charge of the graduate school of a large faculty. He is a very good 'systems man' – he likes putting policies, processes and procedures in place and usually does it well. However, he also has a tendency to overplay his hand in this respect. His systems sometimes place unnecessary and onerous burdens on staff and fail to achieve his objective of improving research 'performance'. For instance, he carefully recorded each staff member's success rate in publishing and attracting research grants and then published a league table within the faculty reporting these. Rather than inspiring and incentivising staff, it alienated and demotivated them. Further, Barry's main means of communicating with staff was via email. So rather than having a conversation with staff to alert them to what they needed to do, he would send them long diatribes explaining their failures. Barry was a research *manager* rather than a research *leader* and never attended any of the research seminars of visiting scholars, let alone those of his own colleagues.

Managerialist people tend to manage what they can measure. It is hard for those who don't have their own academic track record or any

empathy with academic work to get any measure of the quality of our research. Teaching, amenable as it is to 'customer satisfaction' surveys, league tables and other performance management regimes, is a much softer target. Managerialist demands can drain your energies from teaching and research.

A word of caution about the good, the bad and the ugly

Remember that not all managers are managerialists. Further, managerialists range along a continuum from the severely performatively disordered to the mildly performatively disordered. And of course, even managers range from those who are able to develop really good management systems that support teaching and research properly to those whose heart is probably in the right place but who could not manage their way out of a paper bag. And keep in mind that all these people, no matter how sympathetic they are to academic practices and processes, also have their financial bottom line, their Key Performance Indicators, and are ultimately largely answerable up. You would be wise to find out where your managers fit in relation to the manager/managerialist dualism and then where they sit in the range. Don't assume they are one thing or the other until you see how they behave in relation to you.

Managing the managerialists

One important thing for the early career academic is to learn to recognise the role of managerialist processes in teaching, to be able to critique them, and to devise strategies for managing your relationships in ways that protect you and allow you to maintain your professional integrity. We set out, below, some ways in which you can successfully manage managerialist actors and the managerialist systems they put in place.

First develop the right mind set

- An important basic truth to remember is that all academics are in their jobs to research and to teach well. Much else is largely tangential and will be an unwarranted drain on your energy and resources.

- Remember that institutions need good teachers and researchers, and the better you are at those things the more they are likely to want to keep you and to treat you well. Remember, also, that there is an accelerating global shortage of academic labour in a number of disciplinary areas. This can give you considerable bargaining strength when it comes to how you do your job.
- If you can teach and research well, you will also have the moral high ground when it comes to responding to pointless managerialist tasks and unwarranted demands on your time and energies.
- You should put in place procedures that enable you to fulfil your proper teaching obligations. These should be workable for you and should not impact adversely on your other obligations (research and your fair share of committee work) and your colleagues.
- You need to develop the confidence to know that you are a professional and the self-knowledge that the managerialist actor who is trying to tell you what to do probably couldn't do your job, although you could almost certainly do theirs.

'Acts of resistance' (and a salute to Pierre Bourdieu!)

- If compliance does not conflict with your professional values or ethical practice as a teacher (or researcher) you should not resist just for the sake of it. What you should always try to do is comply in ways that enhance your teaching and research, and to do so in a way that involves the minimum time and effort.
- However, it is sad, but true, that the more people comply with bureaucratic regimes designed to enforce control and surveillance over individuals, the more power such regimes accumulate. Yet academics, especially those in the early stages of their career, may feel uneasy about the prospect of saying 'no' to managerialism's and managerialists' unreasonable demands.
- *Always* take time to think before you agree to do things. Sometimes the requests will be reasonable and helpful to you and/or colleagues, students or the institution. However, be aware that many requests are made without any real thought as to the utility of the work or care for your efforts. Consequently, when people ask you to do something, never say 'yes' or 'no' immediately; always employ a delaying tactic such as 'I have to check my diary and I'll get back to you' because that will give you time to think about whether you want to do it or not.

Remember the vignette about Dina bursting into tears because she said 'yes' too often? Well, no more. She and her partner, also an academic, have devised a game they call 'No-tivation'. It works like this. Basically, each time you say 'no' to any piece of work, request or management demand that does not evidently contribute to your research, teaching, career development or the well-being of your colleagues or students, you are awarded one or more 'No-tivation Points'. Every time you get to ten, your partner has to buy or make you a treat. You might get taken out to dinner or have the ironing done for you. The bigger the 'no' the more the points.

It is safe to try this at home. It doesn't matter if your partner isn't an academic – they may rather like a better balanced you or they may have similar issues in their own job. If you don't have a partner, you can play the game yourself, making sure that you are amply rewarded with appropriate treats. Or you could play it with a friend in your own or another academic institution.

- You should not allow yourself to be pushed around. Of course, you have to be careful about the ways in which you choose to resist unreasonable demands from managerialist actors. We try not to pick fights we can't win unless we feel, on a particular issue, that it is a ditch we are prepared to die in. You need to pick your ground carefully and to keep your self-protection antennae out.
- If non-compliance is not an option, and compliance would be compromising, it's a good idea to make any engagement with you costly in time and other resources for the managerialists.

Zhand's colleague Arjun did not come up to the standard of research activity demanded by their institution. Accordingly, he had carved out a role for himself in charge of 'teaching quality'. The university had gratefully acceded to this self-appointed role as it couldn't get anyone else to do the job. Arjun decided that it was essential for all staff to display a complete weekly schedule of where they were and what they were doing on a special notice board outside their office doors. This was designed to maximise staff availability for student consultations. Zhand

responded to the announcement of this scheme by pointing out that the stringent local fire regulations strictly prohibited any uncovered paper being affixed to corridor walls. He helpfully pointed out that the proposed notice boards would contravene these regulations, creating a health and safety hazard and putting the university at risk of prosecution by the fire authorities. Arjun agreed with her analysis. He spent four working days researching the availability of special notice boards covered in Perspex. He had these notice boards installed at great expense to the university. Most staff never used them because, they maintained, they were unable to get the fireproof covers off.

- You might even consider completely ignoring patently daft requests. Often they will just go away. Often the sanctions that might be exercised against you are pathetically futile and work only if you allow yourself to be bullied.

UK universities have made heroic attempts to get all academics to complete time sheets for several sample weeks, categorising time spent on various work activities. These are known as TRAC returns. Resistance to this futile process has been widespread and innovative. The sanctions for non-compliance have created hilarity across the land for those on the receiving end.

Sophie simply ignored hers, along with the majority of her colleagues in her department who had better things to do with their time. This was made easy by the fact that she was head of department. Since then she has received increasingly frantic reminders that hers and her colleagues' TRAC returns are well overdue. The sanction proposed was terrifying. She was told that 'if you don't make these returns, we'll have to keep writing to you to remind you until you do.' The forms remain uncompleted, although the staff are cowering in their offices hiding the wastepaper baskets from the administration.

Lois's institution put the TRAC returns on the intranet and asked staff to fill in their returns on-line. She complied with the first email request to make a return. She ignored the second until a reminder arrived. She ignored the third request and the subsequent two reminders. Finally the system administrator wrote to her stating that if she did not complete her return, the administrator would complete it for her. Reluctantly she allowed the administrator to do so.

- A remarkably effective form of resistance is to over-comply in minute detail. This bogs the system down so that it cannot cope with the volume of pedantic, mind-numbing requests for clarification or expressions of concern for the correct and proper operation of systems.

Here's another TRAC return story. Benjamin, an eminent mathematics professor, was so involved in his work that he used to dream mathematics and said that he thus did not know whether he was working in his sleep or not. When he got his TRAC return to fill in, he deluged the administration with requests for clarification as to what the categories meant and how he was to decide which activity fell into which box. Eventually, the administration stopped replying to him – they didn't know the answers anyway.

- Remember that no regime of control is ever total and some have more bark than bite.

Lynn is a hard-working, successful researcher and teacher in a senior position at a prestigious university. Her department is well known for driving staff to over-work. Although she regularly works well over fifty hours a week, carries a heavy administrative load, teaches her fair share and publishes extensively, the system designed to measure her work contribution suggested that she was 'underemployed'.

Her head of department called her in for a 'firm chat' about this work 'deficit'. She explained that she was working as hard as she possibly could and refused to take on any extra administrative or

teaching work. The head of department said, 'But you will be in deficit.' Lynn replied, 'I'm willing to take the consequences of that,' and left the room. When asked by a friend exactly what the consequences were, she replied, 'The consequences are that the system will record that I have a workload deficit.'

We are sure that you have the imagination to think of many more modes of resistance to the more ridiculous demands made on you. The important thing is to ensure that you are safe, stay true to what you believe an academic's job is and remember that clearing the decks of useless extra bureaucratic work does not make you a bad colleague. Rather, it gives you more time, space and energy to be a good one.

And finally . . .

Clearly, all these relationships that we have outlined involve unequal inter-personal power dynamics. In this, universities are like any other large workplace. The dynamics may involve various forms of abuse, including harassment, bullying and inappropriate sexual behaviour. Most universities now recognise the existence of such behaviour and many have policies and procedures deigned to challenge it. As a member of the university you should be aware of these policies and procedures. More generally, you should not engage in such behaviour. Neither should you put up with them or be complicit with them. That said, dealing with this sort of problem is very difficult and in doing so you will need to elicit help and support from sympathetic senior staff. It's always worth tackling this sort of stuff, no matter how trivial it seems to you at the time. If inappropriate conduct is not nipped in the bud it can poison the institutional culture. This is a major health and safety issue. Universities have a legal responsibility for health and safety, and the risks associated with this sort of behaviour are ones that wise institutions wish to avoid.

In this chapter we have discussed the range of relationships that exist between you as a university teacher and your students, colleagues and managers. We now turn to the practice of teaching itself.

3 Powerful Pedagogies?

In Chapter 1 we explained our position on university teaching, placing it in a wider context. Here we expand on this, discuss the meaning of 'pedagogy', identify some institutional pressures on university teachers that make it difficult to develop good pedagogical practice and point to some ways in which good teachers have managed to get round such difficulties. We end with some brief examples of what we consider good pedagogy in context. But first we need to draw an important distinction.

We think it's vital to distinguish between training and education. Training implies equipping people for a very specific task by imparting to them, in a fairly standardised way, the relevant information or skills. It is about teaching people how to do things. Training often involves didactic pedagogic processes. In contrast, education is about helping people learn how to learn, enabling them to think critically, gain deeper knowledge and insights and ask questions to which there is not necessarily any answer – and almost certainly isn't any 'right' answer.

Education is therefore a much more slippery beast than training. This means that it is much less amenable to external control. As a result, in many parts of the world, and in many fields, education has been pushed more and more into a 'training' mode. For instance, in the UK there has been a long-standing battle between those who talk about 'initial teacher education' and successive managerialist governments, which prefer to call the process by which students become schoolteachers 'initial teacher training'. In Australia the government is promoting postgraduate 'training' whilst some universities prefer to speak of postgraduate 'education'. When we discuss pedagogy it is in relation to education, not training.

What do you mean, 'pedagogy'?

Literally 'pedagogy' means the 'science of teaching' and in most European countries people who research education and teach at

university often have the title 'professor of pedagogics'. In our view, this definition of pedagogy is problematic at the outset – teaching is an art, not a science, and learning is not the result of a scientific experiment or process. Furthermore, it is a naive teacher who imagines that pedagogy is not political. Just as the production of knowledge is a political act, so is its dissemination. Contexts count, as we will now demonstrate.

In the past, people concerned about education in schools have talked, researched and written endlessly about 'learning' or about 'teaching', about the 'learner' or about the 'teacher' but seldom about both together. More recently there has been a move to think in terms of 'pedagogy', which is taken to include both learners and teachers and to encompass the dynamic relations between them. In universities, in contrast, academics have not, until recently, been overtly concerned with matters of teaching, learning or pedagogy overall. Traditionally, academics have been regarded as experts in their field, working at the cutting edge, and the assumption was that all they had to do in order to convey their knowledge to the students was to tell them about it. Little attention was paid to what students brought with them to the class – they either learnt or they didn't learn, and academics were rarely considered responsible for this. While some excellent and inspiring teaching took place, and most teaching was at least competent, there was also some lacklustre, downright poor teaching – and little was done about it. In the elite, highly selective systems that universities once were, that didn't matter much. Students were, on the whole, self-starters, competent in the languages and codes required of them and could pretty well get on with things.

Josh was a mathematics professor in an internationally renowned department. All the students had done extraordinarily well at school – particularly in mathematics – in order to get a place there. The students were disaffected and hostile in class, often talking about football, dates, or whatever, rather than paying attention to what was being taught. Josh was at the end of his tether, but didn't know what to do, particularly because he was reproducing the teaching methods that he had experienced as an undergraduate. In despair, he approached a friend who was a primary school teacher well known for her successful teaching at school level. She asked him why he thought

the students were so disaffected. His reply was that they did not understand the mathematics. She suggested that this might indicate a need to think about his pedagogy. He was astonished at the suggestion – it had never occurred to him that university teachers might think about pedagogy. He explained that when he was an undergraduate at another internationally renowned department he had experienced exactly the same thing. He had sat in lectures, taking notes without understanding them. Then he had gone home and worked at the examples until things clicked into place. Why couldn't his students do the same?

The move to mass systems meant that this approach became more problematic and visible because a lot of new cohorts of students became part of the system but didn't necessarily bring with them the required cultural capital. The massification of higher education was accompanied by its corporatisation and marketisation. It was at this point that the new university managerialists were able to step into the vacuum left by the inattention of academics collectively to pay sufficient attention to questions of pedagogy.

When managerialists colonise pedagogy

There is no doubt that teaching programmes in universities need to be administered and managed. Timetables, assessment, student records and so on cannot exist without management. What we refer to as problematic in this section can be regarded as 'managerialism' rather than 'management'. We noted, in Chapter 1, that managers seek to minimise the risk of 'bad teaching' through regimes of 'quality audit' and 'quality management' rather than trying to promote reflexivity among teachers. This has been reasonably easy, in part because of the relative lack of attention that academics paid to pedagogy in the past. So what have they done? And what are their buzz words? The list includes:

- Outcomes-based education.
- Flexible delivery and innovation.
- Key skills.

- Benchmarking.
- The management and measurement of learning.
- Turn-round time.
- Graduate qualities.

The list goes on and develops over time, possibly becoming less crude but remaining problematic nonetheless. Along with such lists goes increasing emphasis on the evaluation of courses and of academics through generic survey-type questionnaires, usually devised by some centrally located 'quality manager' rather than by the academics teaching the courses. Sometimes these evaluation forms are also accompanied by more general surveys designed to assess the level of student 'satisfaction' with the teacher, the course, the programme, life, the university and everything. Students may also be expected to fill in 'destination' surveys approximately six months and/or a year after graduating. The results of such surveys are seen to reflect, either positively or negatively, on degree programmes, departments and universities. In some countries they, together with student satisfaction survey results, are used by government in such a way as to influence university funding. In other countries, faculty pay is tied to the results of student evaluations and surveys. Such practices are tied to the notion of students as consumers/clients/customers, to the 'user pays' privatisation agenda of many governments and to the vocationalisation of universities.

We have no quarrel with the notion that students should provide their teachers and institution with feedback about the education and facilities the university offers. Indeed, a dialogic relationship between teachers and students is a key element in developing sound pedagogies. Equally, universities need to plan around the parameters of student demand. Our quarrel is with the managerialist methodologies and mind sets employed. Take, for instance, student evaluation of courses. Every good teacher we know has well developed ways of finding out how students are getting on, whether they understand, what they think could be improved in their courses and so on. Such evaluations are both *dialogic* and *diagnostic*. They give teachers valuable information which allows them to improve their courses and practice year on year. In contrast, the generic survey cannot, by definition, address the specificities of particular courses. Students get sick and tired of filling in the same form over and again on each course they do for three, four or five years, and become increasingly aware of how meaningless they are. In terms of improving teaching the

evaluations do nothing at all. They also give students unwarranted power to harm teachers whose courses they find demanding or whose assessments aim to maintain high standards. It is so well known that students in the USA feel able to demand A grades from faculty because of this power that the problem features in such widely syndicated cartoons as *Doonesbury* – and the power can lead directly to what has become known as 'grade inflation'. In spite of these evident and indisputable problems, some universities use student evaluations as a direct and overt way of disciplining their academic staff through mechanisms of naming and shaming, as the story below shows.

The University of Woop Woop is a hyper-managerialist university. It subscribes to every new managerialist trend, fad and fancy. It treats league tables as if they were the word of God. Its senior managers' conviction is that if its teachers are named and shamed their teaching practice will improve. They have no evidence to suggest that their academic staff teach badly, but that is beside the point. They believe in the notion of Continuous Improvement through quality assurance practices. They have employed the services of external IT consultants, who have devised a program designed to keep teachers on their toes. In addition to regular evaluation surveys, students can go on to the university's intranet at any time and log in to 'evaluate' any of their courses on-line. Each course has its own virtual thermometer indicating the level of student dis/satisfaction. Even one evaluation, if it is extreme, can make a significant difference to the 'temperature' of the course. If the course 'temperature' gets up to the red (danger) level, the teaching staff receive a 'please explain' letter from their head of school and may be subject to disciplinary action beyond that.

Websites which allow students to randomly comment on staff, whether on the intranet or the Internet are now a global phenomenon. Some of them are on open access, available to anyone around the world, regardless of the reason for their interest or the students' particular motivation for putting comments up.

Of course generic student evaluations of academic staff or courses are not necessarily unfavourable to academics. But whether they are or not,

they remain methodologically and ethically problematic such that any results are more or less meaningless. Take, for example, this report from the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (30 January 2004, p. 11) about the pilot of the proposed 'National Student Survey' in the UK. The journalist, Olga Wojtas, writes:

> Findings show that students rate overall quality highly and give the biggest thumbs-up to teaching and improving generic skills, with an average of 3.9 out of a possible 5. Most students feel they have gained confidence in tackling unfamiliar problems and have improved their communication skills. Assessment and learning resources gained 3.7 out of 5. Learning support gained 3.3, and university departments were awarded 3.2 for feedback and workload.

The survey is flawed in a number of ways.

- It gives university teachers no indication whatsoever of how they might improve their teaching.
- All the categories are reduced to generic items such as 'feedback and work load', 'communications skills' and so on, so there is no room to think about specificities.
- While most university courses would be interested in helping students develop their communication skills, this is not likely to be the overarching purpose of all courses (unless it is a vocational course for, say, journalists).

As you can see, academic staff are under surveillance from 'above' (management) and 'below' (students). The demand that they 'improve' their teaching practice has come at exactly the same time as their work loads have intensified drastically. Expansion of student numbers has not been accompanied by matching increases in funding, leading to much larger classes, more marking and so on. The managerialist way of dealing with this problem is to ratchet up the mechanisms for surveillance of academics. Hence they have introduced rules about such things as 'turn-round' time for assessment and phone calls, making yourself available on email and in your office and so on – paying no regard to the fact that having a rule about turn-round time doesn't make it easier to mark 200 essays overnight. Simultaneously, a language of derision about supposedly labour-intensive ways of teaching has emerged and teachers are accused of running courses that are economically not

viable. For example, seminar/tutorial teaching is more expensive than lecturing – leading to the reduction in the number of the former in favour of the latter despite good evidence that lectures are a poor vehicle for both teaching and learning.

It is easy to make the observation that managerialists' money is not where their mouths are with regard to the improvement of the quality of university pedagogies. Rather than being put into supporting the teaching that academics do, money is usually diverted into surveillance mechanisms and the employment of staff to support them.

As if this wasn't enough, academic teachers are constantly required to develop 'innovative' approaches to teaching. What is usually meant by this? Interestingly, innovation in teaching is often (if not always) linked with the use of ICTs, and academic staff who make their course materials available on-line are often understood as being 'innovative'. This is the case even when face-to-face practices are simply transferred to virtual worlds. For instance, lecture notes, readings, reading lists and instructions for assignments are placed on the course website. This may be useful, but it is certainly not innovative. It is just another means of handing things out. It may be called 'distributed learning', but it is more about redistributing the costs of materials from the institution to the students than about teaching and learning. Such things are often associated with the notion of 'flexible delivery' and the arguments made in support of this are that students should be able to access the university, their courses and their teachers 24/7 and on demand. In other words, students shouldn't be forced to come to class in order to participate in their university education.

Clearly, it is proper to provide for students who have legitimate reasons – for example, living in remote locations – for not being able to attend campus classes. And it is entirely appropriate that pedagogies are developed which include the use of ICTs to support their learning. However, the danger associated with the notion of 'flexible delivery' is that clicks come to replace bricks, text comes to replace teachers and, overall, the possibilities arise of franchising course materials and is the employment of contract labour to assess students' work. There is a popular fantasy among many people in universities, management and academics alike, that on-line (flexible, virtual, electronic, e-learning or whatever your local language is) teaching is a way of saving effort and money. Anyone who has experience of developing well thought out, pedagogically sound distance learning material knows otherwise – and so do their accountants.

The institutional politics of pedagogy

As we indicated in Chapter 1, this all leaves academics between a rock and hard place. Don't allow such things to put you off teaching, which can be one of the most rewarding parts of academic life. What we'd like to do now is show you some examples of what good university teachers are able to do, in regard to the some of the buzz words we noted earlier.

Key skills

According to the 'quality' vernacular, all university courses must help students develop measurable 'key skills'. These include the ability to make presentations, communicate clearly, solve problems and work in teams – all of them things that many students can already do when they arrive. Certainly these things might underpin the pedagogies of many courses but usually the main focus is on getting students to engage with content and ideas rather than such basic skills.

Ahmed, a junior but highly qualified, much valued academic, is recognised by his students and other staff as a gifted and exceptionally conscientious teacher. He teaches an architecture course with large undergraduate numbers. While he was away on vacation, a senior colleague who regarded herself as a 'quality facilitator' redefined the assessment of Ahmed's course. The new assessment required each student to give a ten-minute talk in class on a subject determined by Ahmed. He was supposed to give each of them a mark and feedback on the presentation skills they exhibited. Ahmed became self-destructively angry and upset about this unwarranted, unjustifiable and high-handed intervention. He went to see his mentor, a senior professor, who became very concerned when Ahmed broke down in tears. His mentor judged that a confrontational response would only make the situation worse. Together they devised an altogether better strategy.

Ahmed already regularly incorporated presentations from students, followed by class discussion, into his teaching. He always insisted that form and content were integrated and included in the class discussion questions of how the form could be improved – developing strict

ground rules with the students about how they should offer their feedback in order to be critically supportive of each other. He decided that, rather than have the students do a whole new set of presentations, as prescribed by the 'quality facilitator', he would give all the students a high mark, provided they gave a reasonable presentation showing evidence of some work.

Doing it this way meant that the only thing he had to change was that the presentations had to be graded.

Was Ahmed's response pedagogically responsible? We think it was. Despite his evident distress and initial panic, he sensibly sought advice from a sympathetic senior colleague. He avoided confrontation and barely changed what he actually had intended to do in the first place.

There are a number of key points (as distinct from key skills) to note here. First, the 'quality facilitator' had no idea how Ahmed actually taught his classes, didn't bother to find out before interfering in the assessment and didn't even consider whether what she was imposing would be an appropriate strategy for this particular course. Second, such pedagogically irresponsible interventions need not necessarily have pedagogically irresponsible responses. Because Ahmed was committed to good teaching he was able to turn a negative into a positive.

Innovation

A dictionary definition of 'innovation' is 'the act or process of inventing or introducing something new' or 'something newly invented or a new way of doing things'. However, universities have tended to adopt the OECD definition of innovation, which is largely associated with creating knowledge that can be commercialised. In teaching, 'innovation' is usually associated with the introduction of ICTs. This widens the potential for the sale of university courses because they are not bounded by physical location.

Faculty at the University of Cleckhuddersfax are under pressure to introduce ICTs in their teaching – or rather, to put all their courses on line. The justification is that it is important for teaching to be innovative

and flexible and, moreover, the university is concerned that when teaching quality is next audited, it will fall down as a result of teaching methods perceived to be old-fashioned. Staff in the fine arts department were well versed in the use of ICTs and were keen to develop multimedia approaches to their teaching and, indeed, to teach the use of multimedia in installation art. Unfortunately the equipment required cost more than the department could afford from its devolved budget, so they used the opportunity to ask their university for additional investment to set up a new multimedia centre for research and teaching. Katie, the head of department, produced a convincing business plan to show management that such a development would become profitable within the medium term and that it would attract international interest and prestige. The university agreed to allocate significant funds to the development of the new centre and the department successfully sought matching funds from industry.

Here we see a department that is already thinking innovatively (in the dictionary definition) and is ahead of the game in terms of the use of ICTs for teaching. The staff were particularly smart in the way in which they responded to the management imperative and took it to its logical conclusion – to the benefit of staff research and student experience alike. Innovation, by definition, can't be standardised, and they were able to demonstrate to management the benefits of genuine innovation. To its credit, management got the point, but the credit goes largely to Katie, who was able to talk the talk required to persuade management. Staff were particularly appreciative of Katie's efforts because it allowed them to develop the innovative use of multimedia in their practice as artists, researchers and teachers.

Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a management tool which usually identifies 'best practice' in equivalent organisations or systems and then requires others to compare themselves with this 'best practice' and to devise strategies for 'continuous improvement' towards the 'benchmark'. Benchmarking can be done within subjects – say cultural studies in several universities – or across subjects – say, cultural studies and mathematics – depending on the criteria employed.

The School of Literary Studies at Downtown University has been instructed by the university management to benchmark against the School of Commerce in the same university. The School of Commerce is understood to exhibit best practice with regard to student numbers, retention, satisfaction, grades and graduate destinations. Literary Studies is required to produce a planning document which explains how they will achieve equivalence and institute continuous improvement. Faculty in Literary Studies meet to discuss these managerial demands and consider how best to respond. They decide to develop a campaign of resistance that utilises their skill in analysis and critique whilst appearing to engage enthusiastically with the exercise. They start by devising a set of questions, all quite difficult for management to answer, about the methodological and technical issues involved. Rather than asking all their questions in one fell swoop, they drip-feed them to management. Then, when management has been almost worn down, they write suggesting that they would love to benchmark against Crosstown University's School of Literary Studies, a department in a very similar university which has a very high reputation for its teaching, student retention and so on.

What they find when they do the benchmarking exercise is what they already knew but management hadn't taken on board – that, because Crosstown deploys its limited funds to employ academic and teaching support staff rather than extra managers and quality assurers, it has the twice the number of academic staff for the same number of students. They also find that all staff members get a considerable amount of staff support in developing and presenting their courses. For instance, all staff were trained by the university in the use of multimedia in teaching. In other words, staff have more time to devote to students because of the lower numbers, and their pedagogies are richer because they've been trained in the use of multimedia. Application numbers are high because Crosstown School of Literary Studies has developed a local and statewide reputation for its genuinely innovative approach to teaching and the quality of faculty interactions with students. As a consequence, Crosstown can select better students and retain them and they get better jobs after graduating.

Staff at Downtown School of Literary Studies used these benchmarked findings to press management to increase the spend per student and to introduce staff support systems more pedagogically relevant to literary studies itself.

What do we think about the response of Literary Studies at Downtown? The first point to notice is that they were not cowed by the management imperative. Rather than panicking and allowing themselves to be dragooned into compliance, they used their academic skills of asking difficult questions, detailed analysis and critique to ask a series of well honed questions. They had their own views about what best practice was and how it might best be achieved, and they knew through their epistemic community that the faculty at Crosstown had managed to get this just about right. In nominating their own benchmarking comparator, they were able to better identify the conditions that make for 'best practice' pedagogy in their particular discipline and use it to their own advantage.

Contextualised pedagogies

We finish this chapter by giving some examples that we have seen of approaches to teaching that we have found genuinely inspirational. While they do not provide you with a blueprint for your practice, we hope you will find them helpful in thinking creatively about your own teaching. Remember, good and innovative pedagogical practices in some circumstances may be seen as quite basic in others. Innovation in teaching is about developing new ways of improving your pedagogy within your own contexts.

Graínne teaches in a university in a relatively poor country in Europe. At her university students are in class for fifteen to twenty hours a week – that is, almost as long as they were in class at school – and they have virtually no time to read around their subject. One consequence of students' lack of time for reading is that staff feel they need to compensate by spoonfeeding them. Because of various changes in the structure of the degree to make it consistent with EU practice, Graínne found that one of her major courses would receive more credits and consequently more teaching time. After considerable thought, she decided that what the students really needed was not more time in class but carefully structured time in

which they could learn to read and study independently and explore the issues raised in class more deeply. She also instituted a system of learning diaries which had to be handed in at the end of the course together with student assignments.

As a good teacher, Graínne recognised the problems of a university education which spoonfeeds students. Her pedagogical challenge was how to ensure that students who had no experience of learning independently could and would actually start to do so. One of the difficulties faced by a lot of university teachers is that they imagine that they can take a group of students who have been educated in one way and suddenly introduce them to something new. What they tend to find in such circumstances is quite a bit of student resistance. In this instance, many students actually didn't mind being spoonfed – after all, it required less work from them. So Graínne's careful strategy involved making the work interesting, giving them a sufficiently structured framework for doing it so that they didn't feel abandoned, and insisting that they recorded their learning processes and practices in their learning diaries.

Colin taught in an education department responsible for the initial education and training of primary and secondary school teachers. His students were mostly from country areas in Australia and tended to be somewhat parochial in their experience and outlook and to have a very short-term view of education. They were particularly concerned about developing their teaching practice and many were quite impatient with courses that insisted on their developing conceptual thinking about pedagogy and schooling. Colin and his teaching team developed a new course on 'Educational Futures'. The team's approach was to get the students to think about futures in terms of social structures, educational inequality and the potential for educational transformation. The taught part of the course focused on the conceptual issues involved. The students' final assignment required them to undertake a case study of an individual pupil whom they identified (and anonymised) from their most recent school-based teaching practice as likely to have a bleak future of social exclusion. They had

to consider both why their case study pupil's future was likely to be bleak in current circumstances and to map out a range of alternative scenarios in which education might play a transformative role, justifying why they thought this could be the case. In doing so, they were required to investigate how comparable social exclusion and inequalities were addressed in a range of other countries and the politics of the different approaches they found.

The team eschewed a conventional approach to the notion of 'futures education', which usually focuses on the implications of information technology for social, cultural and educational change. Rather, it looked at the relationship between futures and social and cultural inequality and challenges to such inequality. It met the students' urgently felt need for practical strategies in their teaching, while insisting that they developed their strategies by engaging conceptually with the course material. Further, it required them to think outside their own immediate geographical location and, in so doing, challenged their parochial views of education.

Jeses teaches a course in the sociology of globalisation. He runs his courses in the conventional lecture/tutorial format and is fortunate that the lecture theatres at his university are particularly well set up for the use of technology. He is able to access his computer desktop from the lecture theatre and go straight to his previously bookmarked favourites on his Web browser. In lectures about the social activism that has arisen around questions of globalisation, he is thus able to go directly to the various activist websites and show them to students on the large screen at the front. He suggests that in their own time they should join in some of the Web conversations, to participate in some of the debates about the effects of globalisation and to share their findings and experiences in tutorials. He also encourages students to identify the impact of globalisation on their own everyday lives. Indeed, one of his tutorial sessions is given over to a street walk during which students identify all the global brands in the street and on selected supermarket shelves.

Jeses has been very concerned about the high levels of abstraction associated with sociological theories of globalisation. He has seen students turned off the topic because they simply can't relate to it – although he, personally, finds it fascinating. Consequently, he has ensured that his course on globalisation helps the students come to grips with its implications for their own lives and the lives of others around the world. Here we have an example of someone who is using ICTs to good effect along with a range of other resources immediately to hand.

And finally …

It is important to understand that there is no such thing as decontextualised pedagogy. A lot of teaching manuals fall into the trap of thinking that it is possible to develop a one-size-fits-all approach to teaching and learning. As we've indicated throughout this chapter, what is possible and preferable will depend very much on the politics of your own institution and your capacity to deal creatively with such politics. It will also depend on your own ingenuity when it comes to the imperatives of your particular discipline and the students in your classes.

4 Teaching Identities

In this chapter we attend to some issues that are central to your work as a teacher – developing your teacher identity, building your teaching portfolio and managing your time.

Developing yourself as a teacher

You should aim to plan the development of your experience and profile as a teacher in exactly the same proactive way as you should your research (see *Getting Started on Research)*. The list we will shortly give you of what might be included in your teaching portfolio offers some insight, we think, into the sorts of activities you should be undertaking and the experience you should be seeking to acquire. As you compile your portfolio you will be able to identify where the gaps and overlaps are. Try to make sure that you have a balanced portfolio with no major omissions.

Work load

Try to take some reasonable control over the direction that your teaching career is travelling in. With regard to the overall shape of your teaching work load, you should plan your teaching commitments with care and in consultation with your colleagues, mentors and managers. You shouldn't be asked, or offer, to take on too many new courses in a year. When you take a course over, it should be on the understanding that you will keep it for a reasonable period: the start-up costs involved with beginning or taking over a new course can be very high and you need to get some economies of scale. Don't spread yourself too thinly. Teaching on too many courses means that you can't give your proper attention to any of them or to the students on them.

People are often scared of undertaking teaching in new areas. We would not recommend that you develop new courses or take on new teaching in areas in which you have no interest. However, developing

new courses can be interesting and exciting for you if you are interested in the field, even if you don't yet have specialist expertise. It is a great way to get into new areas of literature. Having to teach a subject really forces you to make sure that you understand it. In some departments there may be real obstacles to developing new courses. For instance, colleagues anxious to defend their own territory or to defend student numbers enrolled on their own courses. The more universities cut back on staffing, the more vulnerable staff will feel. You have to negotiate your way through this, patiently, carefully and diplomatically, remembering that you don't have a God-given right to teach any course you like regardless of your colleagues' interests or the course's viability. Courses with very small student numbers are costly to run and the university is unlikely to support you in developing them.

Technical skills

Try to make sure that your technical skills are suitably and frequently updated and are what you require. This applies especially to IT, which is a fast moving environment. IT can provide a powerful range of tools that can really make teaching more effective, flexible, interesting and accessible. Conversely, don't be seduced into spending huge amounts of time learning fancy new IT skills that really, when you are honest with yourself, don't actually contribute much to your teaching. We all have colleagues who spend endless hours doing more and more sophisticated PowerPoint presentations with animation and sound effects who actually deliver pretty prosaic and boring lectures that are a triumph of form over content.

The more universities understand their capacity to attract a broader student base as a function of technology, and the more student numbers increase, the more the pressure is on teaching staff to put all their courses on-line and to do more and more on-line teaching. One of the arguments made here is that it is a flexible approach that attends to the needs of students. This may or may not be the case. There are several things to keep in mind under such circumstances, one of which relates to the IT issues mentioned above. However, there are broader pedagogical questions that you, as a teacher, need to resolve:

- What is best taught on-line and what is not?
- What are the best ways of teaching on-line?
- What technology and what technological competencies do you and your students have and need?

Don't make the mistake of assuming that the pedagogies that you adopt in face-to-face teaching automatically transfer successfully to the on-line environment. Neither should you make the big mistake of thinking that teaching on-line will save you time or effort. It is, in fact, one of the most demanding forms of teaching you can do in both these respects. All that said, it is useful to keep in conversation with those who are at the leading edge in the use of IT in teaching because they will know about the latest software packages that might well enhance your teaching on-line.

In thinking about the relationship between teaching and technology, don't forget that there are a variety of technologies at your disposal. They include such 'old-fashioned' things as the telephone, video, film or audio recordings and the well worn and trusty overhead projector (which is less likely to let you down than your slick PowerPoint presentation).

Training to teach

Increasingly, new academics are required to undertake some formal teacher training. If the course is good, which sometimes they are, you may find it genuinely supportive and helpful. If it is bad, which they sometimes are, you just have to get through it as best you can. If you have a choice as to whether and which course to attend, then do your homework on their quality and choose the one that suits your needs and style.

In the UK, there is government pressure to formalise the training and continuing professional development of university teachers. A national body, the Institute of Learning and Teaching, has been established to accredit university teachers. In order to get the institution going, the initial route to membership for experienced teachers is less rigorous than is usual for any professional accreditation body. This initial route to membership, originally intended to stand for just one year, has now been extended to three years as academics have experienced some inertia when it comes to applying. There has been considerable pressure from university managers to try and make people join. Sometimes they insist that promotion is dependent upon membership of the ILT. Many universities pay individuals' first-year

membership fee. Many of our less experienced colleagues who have been pressured or coerced into joining the ILT have decided, once they have achieved membership, not to renew it. In this way, they have met their university's requirements, while not colluding with a process for managing teachers with which they fundamentally disagree.

Problematic teaching personalities

Be reflexive about your teaching personality and *modus operandi*. There are two extremes in teaching personality types, both of which you need to avoid. At one end of the scale is the teacher who gives no time outside class and has made an art of positively avoiding and shunning students. Their teaching style in the classroom is likely to be one which holds the students at a distance – constantly talking at the students and taking up all the space and time in the class so as to exclude them. This person is being unfair to their colleagues as well as their students because the follow-on effects of their behaviour will impact on their colleagues. This kind of approach puts pressure on more conscientious teachers to pick up the pieces, tutoring neglected students and dealing with their problems and issues. If you are teaching in such circumstances and this burden becomes too great, then you need to talk to your head of department or mentor about it.

At the other extreme is the teacher who not only mothers but also smothers their students. Jane calls this the problem of the 'eternal breast' – succour (sucker) on demand. You are not your students' mother, their therapist or life coach. Not only are these inappropriate roles for you as a teacher (you may do more harm than good if you are giving advice that you are not qualified to offer) but you are also implicitly creating additional burdens for colleagues by creating unduly high expectations about what staff will do. If you hand out your home phone number to undergraduates, are constantly at their beck and call, read endless drafts of their assignments and generally exceed the boundaries of your real responsibilities, then you create the impression that all your colleagues will do the same. This is an unfair imposition on them. You and your colleagues should mutually agree on the service levels that you give to students and then stick to them except in very unusual circumstances.

If you are a mothering/smothering teacher you really need to look deep inside yourself and decide whether you are doing it because you think it is good teaching practice or because, for your own reasons, you have some real need to be loved and wanted. Playing out such desires has no place in good teaching. That's not to say, however, that you can't and shouldn't get a real kick out of students admiring and respecting you, or even loving you, but you need to keep a balance between necessary availability and care and keeping appropriate boundaries.

One almost parental point from us. Do not, on any account, ever and for any reason become sexually, emotionally or romantically involved with any of your students. We have said enough about the power relations present in the pedagogic relationship to make it self-evident why this is fundamentally abusive. It is generally a good idea to stay well away, in this sense, from *all* students in your university. Personal relationships of this sort are inevitably complicated and, if you must jump into these troubled waters, you need to think very carefully and very deeply before doing so. Furthermore, you must declare your interest with regard to such students in any situation where you may have some influence or be privy to any confidential material about their studies. For instance, you might be on a committee considering their grades or degree classification, and this is clearly problematic.

Building your teaching portfolio

What do you mean by a teaching portfolio?

It is a personal professional record of your teaching that can be used in various ways – as a resource for your teaching and as a record for such things as promotion. Your first year of teaching in higher education in a substantive post, regardless of your previous teaching experience or expertise in the field, is likely to be the single most exhausting and enervating year in your entire career. Everyone goes through it and the good news is that it does get better. There are two reasons why the first year is so hard. One is that you haven't learned the smart tricks that let you get by more easily. More important is that you have little or nothing in your personal teaching bank to call on. You will probably be dealing with new courses and possibly unfamiliar material.

As a resource

Your teaching portfolio provides you with ready access to past work and acts as a sort of teaching savings account on which you can draw (though, unlike your bank account, it won't become depleted when you call on it). So you will want to deposit all the materials that you think will be of future use to you in your teaching portfolio. These teaching banks are also resources that you can share with colleagues and they can share theirs with you. This stops everyone constantly reinventing the wheel, although, of course, you can't abrogate your responsibility to engage directly with and think about your own teaching. You can't pick up and run with someone else's ready-made courses and expect them to work well, notwithstanding the exponential growth in the franchising of teaching materials and courses. You may be in a position in which you are not developing the course on which you teach – for example because you are a graduate teaching assistant, a casually employed teacher or a tutor on a distance learning course such as those run by the UK's Open University. Clearly you have significantly less autonomy in these circumstances and you are unlikely to be free to decide what you teach. You will, however, be able to plan your teaching methods and approaches. The course materials and these plans can all go into your portfolio.

In building your portfolio, you need to keep in mind that universities are now marketised institutions that commodify knowledge. This means that the intellectual products of university staff, such as teaching materials, are increasingly being placed formally and legally under the control of institutions. That is, universities may seek to assert intellectual property rights over your teaching materials. Where this assertion of rights occurs, it seeks to supplant existing collegial systems where professionals shared their materials. For some universities, control over intellectual property is important because they make serious money out of selling courses and franchising them. Your legal situation will vary according to your contract of employment and the law of the country where you are working. You should properly inform yourself about your own situation with regard to IPR on teaching materials. This is particularly problematic for materials that you might place on the intra- or Internet such as lecture notes. Bear in mind that anything to which you give a public material or electronic form may become the university's property. There are two competing traditions at work here. One is that of colleagues sharing teaching materials and acknowledging

their provenance. The other is the claim that employers own these materials and can prevent academic staff from freely exchanging materials. Again, we see an example of the ways in which the marketised university can undermine academic freedom and modes of collegiality which enhance teaching.

In *Getting Started on Research* you will find extensive guidance on writing research proposals. This began life when Debbie wrote some shorter guidelines for her master's students at the Institute of Education. Debbie agreed to allow it to be reproduced for a wider student audience. She then shared it with Rebecca, who developed it further and used it in her own masters teaching and then placed it on her university's website to help applicants for doctoral places. Debbie, Rebecca and Jane then used this material in *Getting Started on Research*. The intellectual property rights in that book are shared by us with the publishers. Who has the intellectual property rights in this material?

Interestingly, the material was reproduced at the Institute with no attribution to Debbie. At the University of the West of England, Rebecca claimed the copyright on our behalf. Her university queried it and she insisted that the material could not go on the Web without attribution of copyright to us.

As a record

A further use for your teaching portfolio is that it provides a comprehensive record of your professional teaching practice that you can use for things such as: staff appraisal/performance reviews; promotion applications; tenure applications; and when seeking a new post. You will also find it useful if you need to get your teaching expertise formally accredited.

In assessing your record of teaching achievement, those judging you will be looking at the following sorts of things:

- Good teaching involves the development of original and interesting ideas both for content and for pedagogy. You need to show that you can think not only about what you teach, but also about how you

teach. These ideas will have to be appropriate to the material, your disciplinary area and the students involved.

- One of the things that every competent teacher in higher education should be able to do is to create and mount courses in particular areas, on particular subjects, at various levels.
- As your teaching career progresses, you should be able to demonstrate that you can put together whole degree programmes that have coherence, intellectual integrity and also appeal to students.
- Again, as your teaching career develops, you will be expected to have taught successfully across the complete range of students, from first-year undergraduates to doctoral research students.
- Courses and degree programmes occur within distinct institutional structures and are framed by regulations and university procedures. You must be able to show that you can go further than the drawing board, taking your ideas for teaching, fashioning them and steering them through formal procedures to the point where they become actual programmes.

Alarmed at the lack of deep intellectual thinking among their masters students, Robert and Andreas designed a reading-based course in which they tried to get the students to engage with the great classical texts in their discipline from the previous fifty years. When they took their proposed course to the relevant university committee for approval, the outline reading list, which they had been required to include, was severely and roundly criticised by managers because it was 'out of date'. Rather than fight people who clearly did not understand the rationale of the course, they simply removed the older of their chosen classic texts from the official documentation and resubmitted it. The course was duly approved. In the documentation that went to the students (and in Andreas and Robert's teaching portfolios) they reinstated all the original texts.

- As a professional teacher in higher education, you should be able to work with others in teams to develop and teach courses. You will need evidence of this in your portfolio.
- Good academics see teaching and research as a seamless web. There is a synergy between teaching and research at both first and higher

degree levels. In order to do good research, you will, inevitably, be engaged with and fascinated by your subject. This will enable you to teach it with enthusiasm. You must be able to demonstrate that you have translated your research-led engagement with your subject into your teaching.

- You need to be able to show that the students you have taught feel that they have, for most part, derived enjoyment and benefit from your teaching even if, at times, they found the work difficult, confusing or challenging. In fact, when they find the work challenging, realise there are no right answers and are moved to work hard to try to make sense of things, then you are doing a really good job.
- Finally, the proof of the educational pudding is whether your students generally make satisfactory progress. In managerialist terms, progress means their relative success in passing assessments. However, we think other forms of progress are equally important. These include things like: helping students who might otherwise drop out to stay with the course; assisting all students to achieve their own objectives, even if these don't have much institutional cachet; or making sure that all or most of your students know how to learn for themselves.

What to include in your teaching portfolio

Here is a reasonably comprehensive list. We suggest that these should be on your computer, backed up on disk and also in hard copy. Clearly your teaching portfolio will also include a number of artefacts that can't be kept on your computer.

- *Course outlines*, especially for courses you develop yourself or with others. Keep both the documentation submitted to the university for approval and the stuff that the students actually receive. The official documentation may be useful to you in future if and when you need to go through similar exercises. The documentation for students will demonstrate much better your approach to teaching and your engagement with them.
- *Lesson plans, teaching/lecture notes, overhead projector slides or PowerPoint presentations*. Don't forget to include any agendas or other hand-outs that you have prepared for students.

- Related to your lesson plans will be *activity sheets, games, exercises, teaching aids,* and *seminar notes* for colleagues who teach on your courses, particularly when they are innovative and exciting. Increasingly, university teachers are expected to demonstrate that their programmes are innovative, especially when applying for a new job. As noted earlier, 'innovative teaching' is not synonymous with using digital technologies in teaching, though it may include it. It may also include opening up teaching in new subject areas, developing new teaching methods and/or materials, attracting a new body of students, forging new interdisciplinary links in your teaching.
- *Examples of materials produced by others that you have used*. These will include videos/DVDs, audio material, artefacts, visual images, newspaper cuttings and so on. You will need a note to yourself about how you used them and in what contexts.
- *Student evaluations and other kinds of feedback*. This will vary from formal student evaluation questionnaires that your department or university may insist on (summative assessments) to nice letters from students in which they talk about the impact of your teaching on them. If you are in a position in which you must use the evaluation questionnaires designed by others for management purposes, it is a good idea also to get students to give you additional, formative, feedback in a more useful way for developing your teaching.

Shannon allocates time for students to discuss with her how they feel the course is progressing and makes iterative adjustments in the light of their feedback. In addition to this oral feedback, she asks students at the end of the course to reply in writing to the following three questions:

- What did you enjoy about the course?
- What constructive suggestions can you make for improving it next year?
- Do you have any other comments about the course?

This formative feedback helps her to shape her subsequent teaching.

At the end of each course you should be able to write a short reflection on your own teaching and put it alongside your students' evaluations to contextualise what the students have said. This is particularly important if you feel that the evaluations don't really reflect what went on in the course.

Often generic university questionnaires are not appropriate for your teaching, your students or your courses. Another disadvantage of such generic feedback forms is that they permit, even encourage, the occasional abusive act by individual students even in the best taught classes and at the best universities. You should not feel obliged to retain, or pass on to anyone else, feedback that is personally abusive or patently troublemaking. You should be aware that it is common for people in certain groups to have had, at least once, anonymous racist, homophobic and/or sexist comments and for all staff to have had adverse comments about their personal appearance, dress sense and so on. The best thing to do with such feedback, if you can't identify the perpetrator, is to treat it with the contempt it deserves. You should also bring such incidents to the attention of the appropriate university authorities. Even if such material does not particularly upset you, other colleagues may be distressed by it, and reporting it may lead to the whole issue being addressed.

- You may have to produce formal *written reports* on your course either for 'quality assurance' purposes or to act as guidance to external examiners or validation bodies. When you are writing such reports, do bear in mind that they have an extremely public audience. Be honest, but be very careful in your phraseology, as bad wording can come back to haunt you. This is not the place for teaching confessions. Everyone screws up from time to time, and you may need to discuss this with a supportive colleague, but you definitely do not need it on the university's official records.
- Your university may have formal mechanisms, such as *course committees or staff–student liaison committees*, where student representatives can give formal feedback on teaching and raise any issues of concern. Minutes of these may be included in your portfolio.

- Examples of the formative *feedback* you give students on their work indicate the quality of your engagement with them. They need to be written to reflect the respect that you show your students in your teaching. Remember that students need a balance of comments that affirm their work and those that suggest ways of improving it.
- Keep a good record of any work of an *administrative nature* related to teaching that you have undertaken. You may have been the director of a degree programme, chair of a student progression committee, responsible for collecting and collating examination marks in your department and so on. Demonstrating that you have done such work and done it well will enable you to show that you are a good colleague and also have a keen understanding of university processes and procedures with regard to teaching.
- University teaching now frequently involves staff in team teaching efforts on specific courses. You might be working with a group of peers or be responsible for co-ordinating the efforts of any number of sessional teachers or Teaching Assistants. Do not underestimate the skills required for this sort of team working and teaching leadership. Keep good records of where you have worked in this way to show that you can and will do it.
- If you have helped and mentored less experienced colleagues in their teaching, it is useful to keep a record of this, in the form of either your own notes or copies of theirs (with their permission).
- If you become known to be a good 'performer' as a teacher, you may well receive invitations to offer specialist classes, or even entire courses, in other departments, faculties or even universities. Keeping records of such work is a marker of the esteem in which your colleagues elsewhere hold you. Similarly, if your course materials are used by other colleagues, either at your institution or elsewhere, keep a note of it.
- If you know that your publications are used in teaching at other institutions, it's useful to have a record of it, for example by getting a copy of the relevant course outlines.
- The more senior you become the more you will be expected to demonstrate not only that you have taught but that you have successful experience of teaching leadership. This may include managing teams of seminar leaders, developing new programmes and courses, introducing new ideas into your courses, leading collaborative teams and managing all the administrative aspects of running large course or degree programmes.

What your mother never told you about time

Everyone we know who works in a university is chronically short of time. Here are some issues to think about in relation to your own time.

Don't forget research. Teaching is, for the most part, a highly structured and formal activity. Apart from one-to-one supervision, tutorials and some aspects of on line teaching you will have to be in a set place, at a set time, with a particular group of students over a particular period. This gives a largely non-discretionary structure to your working week for a significant proportion of the year. This means that you can't ignore teaching and put it on the back burner in the same way that you might do with your research. As such, it's important that you always keep the fact that you have other things to do, such as research, in the foreground of your thoughts and planning. Don't let the formal, compulsory nature of teaching duties swamp out all the other stuff that you must do. This may feel more discretionary because it doesn't occur at fixed times, but it is not.

Busy work and necessary admin. The other activity that has some sort of formal imperative is administration. If you don't submit your exam questions in the appropriate form at the appropriate time, for example, it can cause real problems for all concerned. That said, you need to distinguish carefully between those aspects of the administration of teaching that are truly necessary and important and those which are nothing more than time-wasting trivia. We told you the story earlier on of Boubacar and Achille and their reaction to such 'busy work' (see also *Getting Started on Research*).

Balance your work activities. You may work in a department that has some sort of formal system for the allocation of time between activities such as research and teaching. Some systems just allocate teaching time and expect staff to get on with their research in the time remaining. If you have such a system, try to use it to make sure that you are spending an appropriate proportion of your annual working time on each of teaching, research and administration. You can use these schemes in arguments about work as a justificatory device to make sure that you are not pressured or guilt-tripped into spending undue time on teaching and/or admin.

Timetabling and 'joined up' time. Because you need 'joined up', connected periods of time to get on with your research, it is imperative that your periods of teaching are not spread, like confetti, across the

entire week. Timetabling is a real skill and you and your colleagues should work hard with your timetabler to make sure that she or he knows what your needs are. Resist any managerialist system that always prioritises expediency and the needs of 'students as customers'. At an individual level, do your best, when organising your own courses, classes and lectures, to make sure that you protect important research time while still behaving ethically towards students and recognising their legitimate needs. Be a good colleague and, when making teaching arrangements that involve others, bear in mind that your co-workers also need consideration.

Fatu, a lecturer of some years' standing, was struggling to find enough time to complete her doctoral thesis. She taught a second-year undergraduate course and her more senior colleague, Lindsay, taught a related third-year course. Lindsay suggested, for good pedagogical reasons, that they should take some of the seminar groups on each other's courses so that they could develop and maintain better continuity between their two courses for the benefit of the students. The trouble was that all the seminar classes on Lindsay's course were held on the only day of the week that Fatu had otherwise free of teaching and on which she liked to stay at home and work on her thesis. She discussed this with her mentor, who suggested that she explain the problem to Lindsay. Lindsay was very understanding and they agreed to defer their planned swap to the following year, when they could make more mutually satisfactory timetabling arrangements.

It is obviously helpful to be able to get all your teaching on to two or three days in the week if you possibly can. Another good strategy, if you can manage it, is to try to get the bulk of your teaching duties concentrated in one term or semester. We often imagine managing an academic work load as a bit like the old-fashioned circus act, where the performer sets dinner plates spinning on top of poles, the art being to keep as many of them spinning at the same time as possible without letting them crash to the ground. The entertainment value lies in watching the increasingly frantic activity of the performer as they race

around maintaining each plate's momentum. This may be entertaining for circus audiences, but it's not much fun as a working life for academics. If you can divide your working year such that you have very concentrated periods of one activity such as teaching, followed by another such as research, you will be far more productive and far less exhausted.

Miranda was head of a nurse education programme in a university health sciences faculty that was placing increasing stress on research. The programme as it stood involved having both university-based teaching and hospital practice taking place across the whole year. Thus there were always some students needing lectures, seminars and tutorials and others needing to be supervised on their placements. This meant that members of the teaching team had virtually no discretionary time in which they could do their research.

Miranda led her team in a reorganisation of the programme, which meant that the university-based teaching for all students was concentrated into the first semester, while clinical work in hospitals was moved into the second. In the new system, the first semester is very intensive and lecturers have very little time. However, in the second they are able to arrange their own timetables for visiting students in order to give themselves connected, joined-up time to do research. A further advantage is that much of the clinical supervision of students is done by experienced staff in the teaching hospital. This relieves academic staff of their commitments and provides them with much more flexibility.

Research days or research daze. We often find it wryly amusing, when we have been rushing round at our universities all day, teaching, seeing students, going to meetings and dealing with our email, that we get home and say, 'I haven't been able to get any work done today.' Of course, this is ironic. What we really mean is that we haven't had the opportunity to do any sustained intellectual work such as reading, writing or thinking about research or teaching. It's very naughty of us to see all the stuff that we do when we are rushing around in our departments

as 'not work'. This is one of the many forms of self-flagellation that academics impose on themselves. Because meetings, seeing students and dealing with routine administrative tasks eat into time, it's best to try to get all that stuff done in the interstices of formal classes. This will leave you free on the days when you are not teaching to stay at home and do some 'real work' uninterrupted. On such days, do not on any account be seduced into 'popping in' to work for anything. It will always take up a good part of the day, if not the whole day. Give your apologies for any meetings on your research days and do not be frightened to prioritise research over meetings. Let it be known what your research days are and make clear to your colleagues that you will not be available for anything on those days under any circumstances. Eventually people get the message. Put your answering machine on and turn your email off.

Teaching, learning and pedagogic praxis. We notice that novice teachers tend to replicate the teaching practices by which they were taught. Practice makes practice, as the Canadian academic, Deborah Britzman, says. And, as Gramsci would say, 'history has congealed into habit' here. It is better pedagogically and in your own best interests to design your teaching (as distinct from scheduling it) in such a way that students quickly become accustomed to taking responsibility for their own learning. For example, if you are teaching students how to do a literature search, consider setting them a group exercise that they have to undertake independently in the library rather than you standing and doing a 'chalk and talk' act. You can always check how well the students have done on the exercise by getting them to do a short presentation back to the class. Many institutions have 'mission statements' and suchlike that espouse the virtues of 'independent learning' and 'student empowerment'. We are inclined to be cynical about such statements, often seeing them as weasel words and managerialist-speak, combined as they usually are with reductionist notions which direct teachers to adopt easily defined 'learning outcomes' and the 'objective measurement' of education. However, when students take real responsibility for their own learning processes, they invariably find it the most educationally satisfying experience that they can have. Equally, as a teacher, it is very rewarding to see students develop in this way.

You should be aware, however, that this kind of teaching does have heavier than usual start-up costs and requires careful preparation.

Students have to be trained and inducted into that sort of approach, especially if they are used to being spoonfed with predigested gobbets of pap-like information. Some students will need additional support to help them adjust to these methods. However, done well, this becomes low-maintenance, low-cost and satisfying teaching.

> Wu was a senior academic in the UK who had strong research links in Australia. During a busy teaching term he needed to go to Australia to pursue his research interests. He spent a few weeks training his seminar students to run their own classes. He equipped them with topics, suitable materials and discussed with them what they would like to achieve. He then went to Australia and let them get on with it on their own. The students in Wu's department regularly voted for a 'Teacher of the Term'. Wu won this accolade during the term in which he ran this experiment and went away. This wasn't an ironic statement by the students (although we tease him that it was); it was just that the students found the whole experience immensely enjoyable and it made them feel as if they were being treated as the mature, responsible people they in fact were.

Some forms of teaching, such as formal lectures, are much more labour-intensive than others. Additionally, many of these types of teaching are actually quite ineffective but tend to be popular with unconfident teachers and lazy students. They therefore have little to recommend them either as a pedagogical device or as a way of getting your work load under control. We say more about lectures below in the section on developing your teaching.

Working at social time. A lot of academic work is quite isolated and lonely. It's a good idea to try, as far as you can, to make busy time at work also act as pleasant social time. You might, for instance, take a lunch or coffee break with colleagues in your own or other departments. A lot of academics we know, including ourselves sometimes, tend to eat a sandwich at our desks. This is really not a good idea – either for your digestion or for your mental well-being. It's better to make a point of going to the coffee bar, canteen or wherever people

tend to congregate. That way you get some social interaction and, very often, hear the important gossip, network and actually get some university work done in the process.

Some of the best teaching and research ideas start and are developed over a cup of coffee (or even herbal tea) or lunch. Where small meetings are not confidential, formal or difficult, it's often a good idea to go and have a coffee (or whatever) with the colleagues or students involved. We have had many a productive research meeting or supervision over just such coffee tables – and they can also be the best places to sort out departmental problems (provided you don't need confidentiality). Remember that such social time is not time wasted.

Email is a really important means of communication with colleagues and students all over the world. However, it can also invade your day, fragmenting your time and distracting you from getting on with more substantial tasks. This problem is acute in all walks of professional and commercial life. It is also treacherously easy to think that you must answer an email immediately, without really considering what your answer should be. It is possible to tame this beast. Consider strategies such as opening your email only at a set time each day. On days when you are working at home, consider not looking at your email at all. Pick low value/low energy times to deal with your email correspondence – but if you have an important email to write, don't do it then. Consider having a separate email address for important research projects, significant correspondents or for your personal email.

And finally …

It's worth pointing out that a teacher identity is something that is built. It comes with time, work and experience. In difficult times, many teachers are tempted to become cynical and jaded in relation to the work. This is understandable but not at all helpful in developing creative strategies for making your teaching a rewarding activity in itself. One of the most satisfying things about being a teacher is the opportunity it provides for you to make a major difference to people's lives. The saying 'everyone remembers a good teacher' has been deployed in advertising campaigns in the UK to recruit schoolteachers, but that does not detract from the fact that it is true. For the jaded and

cynical, it is worth remembering that the converse may also be true – few of us forget our really terrible teachers.

In this chapter we have discussed the things you will have to cope with as a teacher and provided you with some advice about how to manage and develop yourself as a teacher. We next consider the teaching associated with postgraduate research students.

5 Postgraduate Research Supervision (I) Getting Going

In this chapter we turn from our focus on undergraduate teaching to consider the supervision of postgraduate research. The chapter starts with a brief discussion of different kinds of postgraduate research programmes. We then turn to the structuring of students' postgraduate research, focusing particularly on PhDs. The second part of the chapter is about your first steps towards becoming a good research supervisor.

What kinds of postgraduate research are there?

At an appropriate point in your academic career, you should begin to take responsibility for the supervision of the research element of postgraduate students' work. These include students doing:

- A research dissertation as part of a taught masters.
- A masters degree by research (often called an MPhil).
- A 'professional' doctorate – these are programmes designed for senior professionals who wish to acquire research skills and a deeper understanding of their professions. Examples include the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA), Doctor of Education (EdD), Doctor of Psychology of Education (DPsychEd).
- A traditional research doctorate (usually called a PhD, but also known as a DPhil or a DLitt).

All these types of programmes will require students to undertake some piece – larger or smaller – of original research.

Like any sort academic work, you need to acquire and develop the skills necessary for this over a period of time. You should not be thrown in at the deep end in an unsupported environment. Nobody should

expect you to simply 'know' how to supervise research students, even if you have been one yourself. We all have substantial experience in this area, but are acutely aware that we still need to carry on learning about and reflecting on our supervisory practice. In the rest of this book we offer guidance to those new to supervisory work and those who are more experienced but who are keen to improve their skill.

Of all these different kinds of postgraduate research, the traditional research doctorate (which, for shorthand, we will refer to as a 'PhD') is the most sustained and demanding for student and teacher, and requires considerable skill and experience from the supervisor (who is usually called the 'advisor' in the USA). However, all of them require similar generic skills and processes. Throughout this part of the book we will concentrate on PhD research students, as you will be able to adjust what you do for other kinds of postgraduate research supervision.

The sorts of supervisory experience that can be useful as a precursor to supervising PhD students' theses are:

- Undergraduate research projects or dissertations.
- Masters students' dissertations.
- Shorter research papers undertaken by students on doctoral programmes with a taught element.

Of course, most people undertaking supervisory work are likely to have been supervised themselves at some point in the past and you can learn both good and bad practices from that. Unfortunately, not all supervisors do a good job. Even more unfortunately, some of those who survive such bad practice go on to reproduce it themselves when they become supervisors. Drawing on Alice Miller, we call this 'Poisonous Pedagogies of Supervision'.

Why ask students to do research?

We think that there are a number of reasons why degree programmes include greater or lesser elements of research by students:

- Research encourages independent thinking and the development of students' intellectual creativity.
- It provides an opportunity for students to pursue their own interests in a close way.

- Undertaking research develops and tests important practical skills of enquiry, analysis, the application of theory to practice and problem solving.
- Doing a piece of research tests the student's understanding of their disciplinary field at a deep level.
- High-level research degrees such as PhDs provide training for people to undertake research careers inside or outside the academy. Indeed we would argue that this is one of the most valuable aspects.
- Students usually gain immense personal enjoyment and fulfilment from completing such a piece of work, even if they find it very hard actually doing it.
- It is the ultimate educational form: it's about knowledge acquisition and building driven by personal curiosity and requires challenging and difficult work over a sustained period. Ultimately, it should make the student think about some aspect of the world in a very different way.

Karina was a part-time taught master's student studying accountancy. She had no first degree. She is a professional accountant and also the treasurer of the local branch of the political party of which she is a member. When she started her 20,000 word dissertation she envisaged it being a technical description of the effects of new legislation governing the reporting of political parties' income. What she eventually ended up with was a significant, and potentially publishable, theoretical analysis of the relationship between democracy, political marketing and sleaze and how these impact on regulatory controls over political parties. She came to view her own role as treasurer somewhat differently and more reflexively and is now able to make a real contribution to deeper understanding of these issues within her party. Finally, she plans to contribute to wider national debates on this subject using the insights she has gained from her research.

Should students' research be a structured process?

Of course students' research should be structured for them. It is unlikely that students will start their research already equipped with sufficient

research skills to enable them to complete the work. Furthermore, an unstructured environment in which students do not get adequate guidance and support is likely to have adverse outcomes. These may include some or all of the following:

- They never finish, or take an eternity to do so. The longest we have ever heard of is sixteen years to complete a PhD that should have taken no more than five. Failure to complete, or delays in completion, are bad for students' self-esteem, job prospects and family life. Failures and delays are also bad for the reputation of the institution.
- Students go off pursuing red herrings down blind alleys (to mix a metaphor or two). This is dispiriting and causes delays and frustration. That said, we think that some element of getting lost and finding your own way back is an integral part of the early stages of a PhD.
- There may be unintended and unfortunate ethical consequences for research respondents and others. These problems can be irreparable, or only fixable with immense institutional effort and expense.
- Students may be ill prepared to deal with physical and emotional dangers, putting them at risk.
- The work fails to reach the expected standard and the student fails the degree entirely or is awarded a lesser qualification.
- Disgruntled students justifiably feel let down by their institution and may even sue.

Institutions have become increasingly aware of these adverse outcomes. Unfortunately, this awareness has been prompted less by the poor quality of student experience than by an assessment of the risks of litigation and also an increase in external regulation and quality assurance monitoring.

Whatever the motivations, we welcome recent efforts to ensure that students are properly supervised and advised throughout their research degrees. For the most part, the enhanced regulatory environment that is developing in many countries is to the students' benefit (unlike the quality audit of other teaching). We think that the reason is that, thus far, the increased regulation of research degrees has been under academic control and has not (yet) become the subject of managerialist interference to any significant extent.

In the UK, the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), which was set up by the Higher Education Funding Council to monitor and audit teaching quality in universities, is seeking to regulate PhDs. Initially it tried to apply to research degrees its credit rating system for taught degrees (under which the amount of study necessary to achieve a particular degree is determined by reference to the accumulation of a set number of 'credit points' attached to individual courses). It was hoist by its own petard: the credit rating of taught courses is supposedly 'objectively' determined by their individual 'Learning Outcomes'. 'Learning Outcomes' are defined by the QAA as 'objective and measurable' statements of the knowledge, skills and information to be acquired by the student. Of course, by their very nature, research degrees are not amenable to the setting of such narrowly defined 'Learning Outcomes'. The real learning outcomes, in contrast to those defined by bureaucratic regimes, cannot be reduced to narrowly defined and reliably measurable definitions of knowledge, skills and information. Consequently, PhD students will not have to pass *x* credits at D level (though those doing professional doctorates will).

How are PhDs structured?

The traditional European PhD, a model widely adopted across the world, has had an extremely *laissez-faire* structure. Many people's experience of their own PhD is of being largely left on their own to get on with it in a relatively unstructured way. They muddle through, but many students left to fend for themselves either fail to finish their thesis or complete it on time.

The North American system has traditionally been shaped differently, with considerably more structure and formal interim examination/assessment of students' progress. North American PhDs also have longer registration periods than their counterparts in, for instance, the UK and Australia. These long registration periods may contribute to fairly significant student drop-out rates. We describe Rohana's experience of doing a PhD in history at an Ivy League university in the USA in Table 1. Although the process described is something of a Rolls-Royce version, we think that the various formal stages that Rohana had to go through illustrate well the actual stages of work that all students should pass

TABLE 1 Time line for a research degree at an Ivy League university in the USA

Time line	Activities	Assessment
Application process	Satisfactory results on Graduate Standard Achievement Tests (GSATS) Application with outline research area and CV	Accepted by university and offered bursary
Year 1	Substantive taught courses in history, historiography (historical method), epistemology and individual reading course(s)	Assessed by course work and presentations MA awarded
Year 2	Substantive taught courses in history, historiography, epistemology, individual reading course(s) and the writing of assessed research papers	Assessed by course work
Year 3	Reading in one major and two minor fields (approximately 100 texts in the major field and fifty in each of the minor fields, chosen by the student in consultation with advisers (supervisors) Preparation of thesis prospectus (i.e. a very detailed and worked through proposal)	Oral examination and grading on reading by advisers (supervisors) Must be judged acceptable by advisers (supervisors). Student is now informally known as 'ABD' – All But the Dissertation.
Years 4–6	Data collection in archives and writing of the doctoral dissertation (thesis)	Read and graded by advisers (supervisors) and PhD awarded. No formal or oral examination

through. In most universities around the world, however, students have to go through these stages without – or with very much less – formal structure. The support that is built into the various courses that Rohana did in the first two years has to be provided by the supervisor, through research education (training) and attendance at appropriate substantive courses, possibly at master's level.

Recent developments in some countries, including the UK, represent a move towards the US-type system, albeit significantly adapted. These changes fall into two types. First, the research training received by students has been formalised and extended. In the social sciences now

many universities offer specialist research training masters degrees, taken before the PhD is formally commenced. You can see how this is similar to Rohana's experience in the USA. Second, the specific milestones that students must pass during their doctoral studies are generally taken much more seriously. In addition, the formal reporting and monitoring of student progress have been significantly increased.

When Rebecca first registered as a research student she was enrolled, like all her fellow students, on the MPhil programme. After a year she was allowed to 'upgrade' to the PhD programme. The formal hurdle for this to happen consisted of nothing more than giving a satisfactory departmental seminar to fellow students and some staff. Many years later, as the director of research degrees at a large business school, she oversaw the introduction of a system of progression examination for doctoral students. All intending doctoral students are registered on the PhD programme but within twelve months of first registering (eighteen if they are part-time) the student has to submit a progression report which is subject to formal oral examination by staff other than their supervisors. The progression report has two parts. The first, 6,000 word, part is a detailed synopsis of the intended thesis, together with an account of work done so far and a reflection of any research training the student has had. The second part generally consists of 10,000 words of substantive writing towards the thesis. Alternatively, if the student has done the university's research training masters, their dissertation from that degree is required to be a pilot or feasibility study for the intended doctoral research. In that case, they can submit that dissertation.

In general, we give a cautious welcome to these changes. They offer the prospect of giving students a more carefully structured and guided experience, helping to make sure that they finish, and finish on time and successfully. As we have said before, the submission of the final thesis can feel like an insurmountable hurdle for students in the early (and sometimes in the later) stages. Instituting some sort of structured guidance and interim milestones can help to make the process much more manageable and less daunting for all concerned. Formal

requirements can also be used as a real spur to motivate recalcitrant students.

Should I find the prospect of supervision worrying?

Why might academics be worried about the prospect of supervising research students? We think it is very understandable. The causes of anxiety are likely to include at least some of the following issues:

- Whilst student research has a number of common characteristics, students are likely to be engaged in a bewildering variety of degree programmes with a whole host of different expectations. Understanding the nuanced differences between the standards and expectations of different research degree programmes can be a complex task and something that calls for real professional judgement.
- Failure to do this work well can have serious consequences for the student and, sometimes, for the institution. If a student fails to get a PhD because of your poor supervision, you have significantly damaged their lives. Supervision is a very big responsibility and not one to be undertaken lightly.
- There is an increasingly stringent regulatory framework in most universities that can be hard to get your head round. Because your student numbers tend to be low, you don't get to learn the rules and regulations by constantly having to apply them.
- It can be very anxiety-inducing, especially at doctoral level, if you feel that you are not *the* expert in the student's intended area of research. The supervisor needs to have sufficient expertise in the area to get the student well underway with the work and to recognise blind alleys. However, you should expect that the student will eventually become more expert than the supervisor. Supervisors can often be more helpful on matters of process than of content.
- We've already noted that training for teaching in higher education can leave a lot to be desired. This is even more the case in training for research supervision. Very many, perhaps most, supervisors have never received any formal supervision training. Consequently they may base their own supervisory practices on their own experience as research students, whether good or bad. In good doctoral

programmes, novice supervisors normally serve a kind of apprenticeship with someone more experienced. They join a team of supervisors in the hope and expectation that they will learn on the job. Sometimes experienced and successful supervisors will work with a student who is researching a topic some way away from their own expertise, in order to provide the support for a less experienced supervisor who is an expert in the field.

Sounds awful – why should I do it?

Despite these common anxieties, we still believe that supervising research students at all levels is just about the best sort of teaching that you can do, ever. We have several reasons for our enthusiasm:

- You can develop wonderful research relationships with students. Their efforts inform your own, feed into your thinking and working, give you new things to think about, engage you with new literatures and so on. Their enthusiasm can be very uplifting when you are coping with a stressful job. At its best, seeing your research students is a highlight in a busy day.
- Because of the intense efforts involved, you can get real pleasure from sharing the students' sense of achievement and satisfaction.
- As you build a body of research students around you, you are helping to develop a whole network of research collaborators and friends who should stay with you for the rest of your career. Thus supervisory work helps to build academic communities and networks in a really organic way.
- You can also significantly further the wider research in your particular field, building your discipline and helping to carve out new areas. You can develop a sense of joint academic endeavour with a good group of students.
- Demonstrating that you are a successful supervisor will enhance your career and promotion prospects.

Am I suitably qualified for this work?

The first thing to ask yourself when contemplating starting to supervise, or if you are currently supervising research at any postgraduate level is, 'Am I suitably qualified to do this work?' No-one should supervise research students if they are not themselves an established and active researcher. By this we mean that you should not supervise postgraduate

research unless you yourself have seen at least one substantial project through from conception to completion, including producing academic publications. If you can't or don't do research yourself you simply will not be able to guide others through what is a complex, difficult and highly skilled process.

In addition to being an experienced researcher, we think that you should also be a competent and confident teacher before you take on supervision. This is because being such a teacher will mean that you have the insights necessary to understand how people learn, study and construct knowledge. You will also know something about how to help them understand and write about complex ideas. Ideally, then, supervisory work should be a later developmental stage of your career as a teacher.

If you are an experienced researcher and teacher, then, in our view, you are basically qualified to undertake postgraduate research supervision. If you are already supervising and you do not meet these basic prerequisites, then you should think hard about whether you and your department are acting responsibly towards your student(s).

There are some additional prerequisites. First of all, you should see doctoral supervision as a natural progression from supervising master's students or those doing research papers on professional doctorates or taught elements in PhD programmes.

Second, as part of their new regulatory regimes many universities are now insisting that supervisors of doctoral students should normally have a doctorate themselves. We think that, whilst desirable, this is significantly less important than that the supervisor is an established researcher who has a good understanding of the doctoral research process.

Finally, another increasingly common and sensible requirement is that academics should first undertake supervisory work alongside an experienced colleague. Generally, it's a bad idea to be a principal and especially a sole supervisor if you haven't seen the whole process through to completion of a thesis at least once, playing a real part in the work done.

How do I actually get started on doctoral supervision?

Students end up being matched with supervisors through a number of routes, some better than others.

- You may have taught or supervised a really good undergraduate or master's student. They want to go on to do research work broadly in your area and you both feel that you can work together.

Ken is an experienced teacher and established researcher with his own PhD. He supervised Bill, an MBA student, for his dissertation which was awarded a distinction – the highest possible grade. Bill subsequently applied for and obtained a university scholarship to do a one-year research training master's, in which the dissertation is a pilot study followed by a PhD. Ken and Bill knew that they worked well together and Ken was the only suitable supervisor in the intended area of the research. However, Ken had not yet supervised any doctoral students. The director of postgraduate research degrees decided that Ken should be Bill's MA dissertation supervisor and arranged for Ken to go on the university's supervisors' training course at the same time. The supervisory team for the PhD consisted of Ken's head of department (an experienced supervisor) as the principal supervisor and Ken himself as second supervisor.

- Students who are completing the taught element of a PhD or professional doctorate may approach you and ask you to supervise/advise them.
- Your department or faculty may have systems for routing enquiries from prospective PhD students through to the most appropriate supervisor(s) for you to comment on their suitability for doctoral work and their interest for you.
- A prospective student, who has found you because they are interested in your work, may approach you directly. Such people may be colleagues, people who have read your work or people who have heard you speak at conferences and suchlike. As a matter of courtesy to the colleagues who run your doctoral programme, and because it is good practice, you must get serious applicants to engage with the formal processes even if you know that such applicants will eventually end up as your students.
- In poor doctoral programmes, students are accepted without much idea on anybody's part as to who will supervise them. These unfortunate students are then 'allocated' a supervisor or supervisory team. Often,

for both the students and the supervisors, these arranged if not forced marriages prove to be deeply unsatisfactory. We come back below to the whole issue of the formation of student–supervisor relationships.

- A senior colleague in your area may approach you and suggest that you share the supervision of a particularly suitable new student with them. This can be a really supportive and helpful way of getting you started on supervision.

Seteney is a junior lecturer in sociology, who completed her PhD with Zhang a few years ago. She and Zhang now work in the same university, where Zhang is a professor, albeit in a different department. Some time ago a prospective new student, Philippe, approached Zhang, having read her work while he was an undergraduate. He was successful in gaining a scholarship to undertake his PhD and has now begun his research training. Zhang suggested to Seteney that, since her interests were close to Philippe's, she should join the supervisory team. Zhang is Phillipe's principal supervisor and Seteney is the second supervisor. Zhang and Seteney do every supervision session together.

Given what we have said about the importance and the closeness of the student–supervisor relationship, it is crucial that at this stage both you and the student are confident that you like each other, can work together and that you have complementary skills and needs. You have to ask yourself, 'Is this a partnership that's going to work?' After all, it may last a lot longer than many marriages and other significant intimate relationships.

As the more experienced partner in this relationship, you are chiefly responsible for ensuring that it at least has the potential to work. So how do you do this? There are a number of different things that you may need to do if you don't already know each other through a previous pedagogic relationship.

Your first step must be to have a conversation with your prospective student. Ideally, this will be face to face, but if that is impossible, by telephone or email. This first conversation needs to be about what the

student's abilities and interests are, what their expertise is and how their interests match yours.

At this stage, if you feel that the student is not ready for doctoral work, you need to give them appropriate advice. It might be to undertake further taught study, to read themselves into their proposed field more or to give up the idea of a doctorate completely. If you judge that they are ready to undertake this kind of endeavour, but that your interests do not match theirs, or that for some other reason you are not able to work with them, then it is better to refer them elsewhere. In such a situation the ethical thing to do is to direct them towards someone who is more suited to their particular topic either at your own university or another one.

If you are a relatively junior member of staff, do not feel intimidated or be cajoled into accepting students who are unsuitable. Sadly, you may come under pressure to accept such students from those anxious to meet student admission targets and suchlike. You should remember that whatever pressures you come under, as supervisor you are the person who will have ultimate responsibility for that student's progress and welfare.

In similar vein, do not take students on against your better judgement because you feel sorry for them. In the medium and long term you do no-one any favours by accepting them on to a programme of study that they cannot succeed on.

In thinking about whether a prospective student's interests match your own, you need to think about how far away from your own direct research interests you can, and should, supervise. You should keep in mind you that you will never (or extremely rarely) find a perfect match with your own interests. It's best to look for complementary interests – you do not need clones as research students. You need to feel enthusiastic about the student's proposed research, but it does not necessarily have to be research that would be your own first choice.

How far away from your own interests you decide to supervise will depend in part on the nature of your own work and thinking. If you tend to be fairly eclectic, broad-ranging and interdisciplinary in your own research, then you can probably supervise further away from your direct interests than if you are someone who prefers to work within a tight disciplinary framework and range of topics.

As you gain confidence as a supervisor, you may feel able to work with research students further away from your own direct interests or, indeed, it may be something that's forced on you by unfortunate circumstances.

Nathan was a part-time PhD student in the area of organisational studies. Towards the end of his period of registration, at the point at which he should have been drawing his thesis together, his supervisor went on long-term sick leave. After an interregnum, in which no suitable supervisor in the area of organisational studies could be found, the director of research degrees for the faculty agreed to become his supervisor. She was a professor of marketing and had no experience of supervising in Nick's area. However, Nick had good data, was familiar with the literature and was an excellent student. Where he needed help was in organising his material, conducting his analysis and writing the thesis. His new supervisor sought advice as needed from a more senior colleague with experience in Nick's field. He has now completed his PhD, passing with flying colours.

It may be that you think that the student's proposed research is not viable but that, with suitable adjustment, it could make a good project. Don't be afraid to engage with the prospective student to make these necessary adjustments. Be cautious, however, about the extent to which you urge them to change their topic. After all, it is their project and they have to want to do it.

It may be that the prospective student will require supervisory input additional to that which you can provide. At this point you should consider how it could be made available. It might be that a colleague, in your own department, another faculty or even another university, could be recruited as an additional supervisor.

Pamela wanted to build on her successful MA dissertation for her doctoral research. She was very keen to be supervised by Ruth, who had taught her on the MA. Although both Pamela and Ruth were interested in the broad issues, Pamela's particular topic was significantly outside Ruth's area of expertise. Ruth felt that she did not know enough of the literature to be able to supervise Pamela on her own. The more junior member of staff who had supervised Pamela's MA dissertation and who did have the specific expertise needed, but no experience of PhD supervision, joined the team as Pamela's second supervisor.

In these initial conversations with prospective students you must stress to them that doing a doctorate is a long-term commitment that involves hard work, is potentially isolating and can have a significant impact on people's family lives. Unfortunately, some prospective students (and part-time ones in particular) have little cognisance of what a PhD actually involves. You are doing them a disservice by not stressing to them how hard it is going to be. If, for example, they have an onerous work load, a demanding professional job, poor health or heavy family responsibilities, then doing a PhD may be beyond what they can manage physically, emotionally or in terms of time commitment. This is something that you cannot decide for people – sometimes, if they are very determined, they will do a PhD against all the odds.

On a similar note, sometimes people think they want to do a PhD but it is not really the right course of action for them. For example, we have had approaches from people who were already experienced researchers, who had supervised doctoral research, but who, for some reason, felt that they wanted to get a doctorate themselves. It may be possible for such people to undertake a doctorate by publication, which normally involves writing a commentary explaining how an appropriate selection of your academic publications hangs together. One group of people who may feel they want to embark on a PhD but who really shouldn't are those who have a particular political, moral or religious axe to grind or a personal agenda not amenable to academic research. Such people would be better advised to write articles or a book making their case.

Finally, some prospective students will need additional support of one kind or another if they are to get through the process. Some research projects undertaken by students may necessitate expensive equipment or other resources. Some may have some sort of impairment or mental health problem and need additional help with access of all kinds or facilitation of their study. Some students may need to acquire particular skills such as learning a foreign language. Before you take any such students on, make absolutely sure that you and your institution can help them to meet the requirements of their project and their particular needs.

In the following chapter we aim to set out some of the basic skills and information that we think you might need to help you to start supervisory work, or to improve your current practice.

6 Postgraduate Research Supervision (II) Getting and Keeping them Going

In this chapter we take you through the various stages of supervision. We are using the supervision of PhDs as a case study, because any kind of postgraduate research project involves similar stages – although how complex each stage is will clearly differ according to the level and demands of the degree it forms part of. The chapter ends with a brief consideration of some of the wider aspects of the supervisory role.

Getting students going

You have accepted your first student(s), they have a project, and now they are about to come to see you for their first ever supervision – how do you get them going on the long process of doing a PhD? At this stage in the process the student will probably feel as if they are at the base camp of Mount Everest with no ropes or other equipment and certainly no map. Your job as supervisor is to help them break the task down into manageable bites and to order the work so they don't go crazy.

Common problems

Some common problems that we have encountered with new PhD students are:

- They are filled with enthusiasm and want nothing more than to start immediately on their data collection. For obvious reasons, this is a really bad idea. You need to restrain them (sometimes with difficulty) whilst maintaining their enthusiasm as you get them to do the necessary preliminary literature-based and theoretical work.

- Often the same sort of student really resists becoming engaged in theoretical debates, which they find hard and/or classify as 'irrelevant'.
- They have only a partial or naive understanding of the knowledge fields in which their proposed research is situated. Consequently they may over-estimate what it would be possible for them to achieve. These students may be those who, at the other end of the process, find difficulty finishing because they seek all-knowing perfection in their work. Conversely, they may underestimate what is achievable and set themselves too low a target.
- There are some students who believe that their doctoral research will change the world in some significant way. This is another kind of over-estimation of what can be done with a PhD and demonstrates that they do not understand the purposes of it. Such students should be encouraged to reconfigure their ambitions more realistically early on if they are to avoid severe disappointment and cynicism later.
- In a similar way, students rarely understand the standard of work required at this level. After all, they are likely to have little or no direct experience on which to base their judgements. Most commonly, they lack confidence about their abilities and the level at which they are working. This is easier to deal with than those students who underestimate the standard required.
- Almost invariably the research topics of new students are too huge and their questions are insufficiently focused. An early task in supervision is to give students the confidence to feel that they can narrow their topic and focus their questions and that it will still constitute a valid PhD.

Students at this stage may find reading *Getting Started on Research* particularly useful.

Handy hints for things to do in the early stages of research supervision

There are some things that we have found useful, either for the first supervision or soon after:

1. Each and every supervisory relationship is different. There are no set rules on how to conduct these and you and the student have to work out what works for you all. Both supervisors and students have legitimate needs and expectations here.

At the first supervision meeting, discuss how you will conduct the supervision process and agree on matters such as roughly how often you will meet and what you expect of them and they can expect of you. If you are co-supervising with someone else, this is the point at which you need to discuss with the student and the other supervisor(s) what the roles of each person will be.

2. We strongly recommend that you get your students writing from the very start. We make it clear in the first supervision that we will not normally see our students unless they have sent us some written work, no matter how brief. You will need to agree with the student how long before your meetings you need to receive their written work. Obviously the nature and content of this work will vary and the length is likely to increase as time goes on.
3. It is very important for you and your student to keep good records of all your meetings. This acts as a protection for both of you and, more importantly, an *aide memoire* for your subsequent meetings and work. We favour systems where the student is the person who compiles the formal record of the meeting and gives all their supervisors a copy. This encourages good practice on their part and also saves busy academics the work. Furthermore, making the student prepare the record enables you, as supervisor, to verify that your understandings are shared. You might want to keep your own notes, for your own purposes, on the supervision and on how the student is progressing.

   Many places have formal ways of keeping records, which require the student and/or supervisor to fill in a form. The student has to complete this and send copies to their supervisor(s) and the Research Degrees Office. Debbie has disciplined her students into sending her (and other supervisors) an email memo after each supervision summarising what was discussed and agreed at the meeting. Similarly, at the end of each supervision session Jane and her students agree on what they have agreed on and then the student emails this agreement to Jane. She also asks her students to prepare agendas for each supervision meeting.

   Before the end of each supervision you need to agree on the date, time and place of your next meeting and you need to make sure that it is in your diary. The formal record should of course also note this. At the later stages, when students are writing intensively, your arrangements may be much more contingent. In any case, you and the student must record the arrangements made.

Whatever methods you adopt, the early supervisory meetings are the places to establish these good practices. It is important that these formal and informal record-keeping processes become second nature.

4. Your student's research proposal should include an initial timetable for the work to be undertaken. At this stage, you will need to put more detail into this and regularly revisit it so that you and the student together can monitor progress. Remember that it's a bad plan that can't be modified. With something as complex and amorphous as a PhD, it is very unusual to be able to schedule tasks for long periods ahead with any degree of exactitude.
5. You should strongly encourage your students to keep a research journal – or even insist that they do so. We have written, at length, in *Getting Started on Research*, about the uses of such a journal. We would recommend that you look at that book to see what kinds of uses it can be put to. We would suggest that you ask students to bring their research journals to supervisions both for their own note-taking during the meeting, and so that they have to hand a record of what they have been doing and thinking. Otherwise, like the small child asked what they did at school today, they might unhelpfully reply 'Nothing,' or 'Reading.'
6. At an early stage you should help your students to develop good habits of, and systems for, note-taking, filing, keeping records and self-organisation. We discuss all this in detail in *Getting Started on Research*.
7. Increasingly, universities are insisting that doctoral students undertake some form of formal research training at an early stage in their doctoral studies. This follows well established practice in US universities. Early research supervision meetings are an excellent place to discuss students' individual research training needs and to identify how these will be met.
8. Students should be strongly encouraged to participate in the wider research culture of their institutions. By this we mean that they should look out for and attend research seminars, not only in their direct area of study but also in cognate or related areas and even in areas unrelated to what they themselves are doing. It's good for students to have broad interests beyond their own particular research and they may pick up surprising and helpful information, knowledge or insights at such seminars, which are also good places for networking. This can sometimes be really hard for part-time

students, those doing PhDs at a distance or those with, for example, childcare responsibilities. As a supervisor it's important to lobby for appropriate arrangements for people in such circumstances.

9. At an appropriate point, it can be a good idea to suggest to students that they look at some completed PhD theses. You will need to give them some guidance as to what they're looking for. You also need to exercise caution: an unconfident student could feel completely undermined if asked to look at a completed PhD thesis too early. By the same token, an over-confident student might find such an experience beneficially salutary.

You may have an excellent group of doctoral students. However, they are not foolproof. Further, no matter how good their students are, supervisors remain responsible for making sure that they are making the right sort of progress.

As a supervisor there are three sorts of structures and constraints on your students that you need to be aware of:

- Research education (formal and informal).
- The need for the sort of informal structuring/guidance that you and your fellow supervisors have to provide (especially in the early phases).
- Formal monitoring and/or progression exams and requirements.

We discuss each of these below.

What is research education?

Different countries and universities provide different levels of generic formal research education or training for PhD students. In some institutions, some or all of it is mandatory. As a supervisor you must familiarise yourself with what is available and with any formal requirements that your students are subject to. An important part of your role is to advise your students on what constitutes the best research training for their particular needs.

We have encountered supervisors who thoroughly resent their students having to do such training. It's almost as if they see it as an insult to their professional prowess. These are often not the best

supervisors. If you do have objections to or criticisms of the research education offered to your students, make sure that they are well founded and that you actually do something about them. We feel that research education is, in principle, beneficial for all students, provided it is well conceived and delivered.

We like those courses best where the work and assignments are contextualised within the students' intended research topics. This helps to overcome a feeling common to many students that research courses are nothing more than frustrating hurdles designed solely to prevent them from 'getting on with their work'. Formal courses can also give students at the start of their research a certain degree of structure – especially if the work they do on them is made meaningful within the context of their own intended or actual research.

Unfortunately, it is also our experience that some research training courses are *unbelievably* bad. For example, some treat the students like undergraduates and fail to teach at a doctoral level. When forced to take such courses, students are right to see them as an obstacle rather than as a way of acquiring necessary knowledge and skills. If you and your doctoral students don't like what is on offer, you and your colleagues might consider mounting some courses yourselves if it is possible.

Part-time students need extra consideration here. The scheduling of formal (and possibly compulsory) research training courses can place real obstacles in their way to obtaining a PhD.

At Jenny's university the needs of part-time and distance research students are taken seriously. For example, the entire structured programme for doctoral students is offered in two slots, one for full-time students and one for part-time students. For distance students regular tele-conferences are conducted so that they can talk to each other in ways similar to those who are doing face-to-face on-campus sessions. The university has developed a statement of minimum resources to which all students are entitled and in so doing it has ensured that distance students have the same order of entitlement as face-to-face students. There are lessons to be learnt here for less accommodating institutions, which would do well to take heed of such good practice.

Different sorts of disciplines will have different potential research education needs. You might helpfully distinguish between generic skills and subject-specific knowledge and skills. Formal research courses can be invaluable for a number of reasons above and beyond those noted earlier.

- In areas that typically recruit students who may not necessarily have social science/arts/humanities backgrounds (such as business and management, health and social care, education), there may be a real need to give students a good grounding in epistemological issues. A common fault in such fields is that research is descriptive and un- or under-theorised. Courses can help avert this.
- Some forms of research may necessitate students updating or acquiring particular skills.
- Where students are 'discipline-hopping' they may need substantive education in new fields.
- Generic training in methods of data collection and analysis may open students' minds to research methods that they had not conceived of or had little previous knowledge about.
- Some students, especially those returning to study, may need to develop their IT skills. In particular, research students may well need training in bibliographic databases, Web skills, library skills and other data analysis software aids. Librarians often offer wonderful courses to help students (and others) to meet such needs.
- Research courses can help to overcome the social and work isolation and the sense of inadequacy that many PhD students feel by putting them into contact with others in a similar position. Cross-disciplinary courses can have the added advantage of helping students to meet others from outside their immediate fields, thereby widening their intellectual horizons.
- Students may benefit from taking courses on such matters as intellectual property, commercialisation, career building, university-level teaching and so on.

It is a good practice to discuss your students' research education needs at regular intervals with them. Make sure that you are well informed about what the institution can offer and where else they can get the education that they need. But encourage your students to take responsibility for defining what they need help with and sourcing the

requisite courses. It is unreasonable for students to expect you to be the expert in all such areas and their only source of assistance and training. Students may need financial help if the requisite courses are externally held. We think that good departments, within reason, should pay such fees or they should make it clear to the students at the outset that it will not be possible.

Ruth was doing a PhD in Latin American studies at a wealthy university in the USA. She spoke some Spanish, but it wasn't sufficient for her to undertake her research. Her institution paid for her to go to Mexico to spend five weeks undertaking an intensive Spanish course at the end of the first year of her taught doctoral studies.

Maggie is doing her PhD on the experiences of Deaf people at work. She needed to learn British Sign Language, the main language of the British Deaf community. Her institution paid for her to attend the relevant courses at a neighbouring university.

As well as formal courses, remember that there are plenty of sources for more informal education. Seminars and conferences offer good opportunities for students to learn about research. It is helpful for a student if their supervisor knows which conferences are particularly useful and student-friendly. While the large conventions may be good for networking, they are rarely the best places for students to learn from others or to present their own work.

Students might also wish to establish their own small reading/support groups as a form of mutual education and training. If/when you have a big enough cohort of doctoral students, they may find it helpful if you organise regular informal meetings at which they can raise issues of concern or interest to them for mutual consideration and build up a sense of solidarity.

Don't underestimate the informal training and education that supervisors give their students. For instance, the best way of helping people to learn how to write is undoubtedly to sit with them and demonstrate the processes of planning, structuring and composition.

Helping students to structure and develop their work in the early stages

A key aspect of supervision, especially in the early stages, is to help students develop their ideas; sequencing their work in useful ways. This is not a linear process, but rather an iterative one with plenty of overlap between different kinds of work. However, for the sake of clarity, we will deal with the different things that students need to do in the first few months of their research for their doctorate as if the stages were discrete. This is dealt with at much greater length in *Getting Started on Research*. If you want more detail than we give in this section, we would recommend that you read that book in addition to this one.

Students need to:

- *Gain a good idea of what they're going to do*. At the earliest stages they need to identify the field within which their particular topic falls and begin to understand the nature of the intellectual space within which they are operating. For this reason, they will need to read widely in that field to start with. They need to have a rough map in their minds of where their topics and questions are situated. This is best developed by wide reading. It is your job to direct them towards suitable initial reading but it is their job to follow it up and extend your initial list.
- *Read within their chosen field*, with a focus on their own particular topics and questions. Once they have a mind map of their field they are ready to read in a more focused way. At this point they need to know what is already available in the public story about their topic that can help them answer the research questions they have set themselves.
- *Read their way into the most immediately pertinent literature*. They need to develop a real sense of what the wider debates in their chosen field are. This will involve looking at key authors and thinkers, methodological issues and generally getting to know the 'intellectual space' to which they wish to belong. However, it's a poor farmer who allows her cattle to graze all over the field at will: students have to be encouraged to graze with a purpose and in carefully defined patches. Such critical grazing is essential for the development of a critical gaze. That said, we also believe that a certain amount of 'getting lost' in the literature is the sort of activity

that both encourages people to think their way through things in a flexible way and also, quite often, leads to serendipitous thoughts, finds and insights.

Common problems are both grazing too widely and narrowing too quickly. There are also real problems with 'recency effects' – where the most influential thinker in the student's life is that last one that they read.

- *Regularly revisit their research proposal*. As students become *au fait* with the literature and debates relevant to their topics, they need to revisit their research proposal and iteratively refine it to ensure that it remains relevant and useful to what they are doing. In particular, they need to consider whether their research questions need adjustment – which may be minor tweaking or represent a more major refocusing of the research.

  In addition, as the work progresses, students need to plan well ahead how they will identify, access and collect the material that they need and how it will be analysed.

  As part of guiding students through the research process, we get all of our students to regularly revisit and revise their research proposals, paying particular attention to their research questions.
- *Be taught how to read actively and take notes from their reading*. In *Writing for Publication* we talk about the need for researchers to read widely and to engage actively with the texts they are reading. This is, of course, just as essential for research students, and one of the most useful things you can help them with in the early phases of their research is how to do it. Taking systematic notes is an essential part of active reading, and your students must devise or learn their own systems for doing so. Carrie Paechter uses one such system and always shows her research students how it works very early on in their degree. We include it here as an example that you and your students might think about.

Carrie's note-taking system came to her from Arthur Lucas, who was the professor in her department in her first job, in the days before bibliographic databases were easily available and in common use. As it was such a good system, she has adapted it for use with electronic bibliographic databases and teaches it to her research students.

The system has three parts. The first part is in a series of hardback notebooks, all of them the same size and colour (in her case, black) and lined. As she finishes each notebook she numbers it with a sticker on the spine. In her current book, she makes notes from whatever she is reading. Each item starts on a new page, and if she is reading more than one thing at a time she leaves a sufficient number of pages to make the notes that she thinks she will need, so that the different texts don't get muddled up. At the beginning of the notes about a particular piece she gives it a unique number. So the first piece in book No. 14 is called 14/1.

She also writes down the bibliographic details, including author, date of publication, source (e.g. book or journal), title of the piece, place of publication and publisher, ISBN or ISSN, page numbers for chapter or articles, and the library class mark if appropriate. For Web pages she notes the date accessed and the URL as well. This gives her all the information that she may need if she refers to the text in something she later writes and publishes. It also lets her find the item again easily.

Her notes are relatively brief, though they may include the occasional direct quote, clearly indicated, together with the page number(s) from which she copied it. For the most part, however, she notes only the key ideas and main lines of argument.

The second part of her system is a bibliographic database kept using a special piece of software on her computer (see below). On this database, once she has finished reading the text, she enters:

- All the bibliographic details noted above.
- Keywords that she has extracted from the text.
- Sometimes, but not always, a few notes or her own abstract of the paper.
- A note of where she found the text, for example, whether she owns it, which library she borrowed it from (including the library class mark), whether she has a copy of a journal article and so on.
- A note of the number of the notebook in which she made the original notes.

The final part of her system is the filing of her books and article offprints. The former she shelves in alphabetical order, by first author, the latter in a filing cabinet, also by first author.

This system enables her to do a number of things:

- She can go to her database and quickly find relevant works by typing in appropriate key words.
- From the information in her database she can find her full notes in her notebooks quickly and easily and remind herself of the article or book she is interested in.
- She knows pretty much what she was doing at the time when she was reading things because they appear in chronological order in her notebooks. This means that, as her ideas have changed over the years, she can look at her previous notes and remember what was uppermost in her mind at the time.
- She knows where to find the text if she wants to go back to the original.

Helping students meet formal requirements

We have already discussed the ways in which universities are increasingly seeking to structure a student's doctoral work by putting in place formal milestones and monitoring processes. We have also explained why we welcome these moves with modified rapture.

Your role as a supervisor in these processes and requirements is crucial and, for the sake of your students or your own career, you cannot afford to screw up here. You have to take these things seriously and ensure that you and your students:

- Do what is required, when it is required.
- Do what is required to at least the expected minimum standard.
- Do not wait to be chased or cajoled into compliance. This puts out your colleagues who are responsible for such processes, and can also reflect badly on your students.
- Take seriously the presentational aspects of these requirements. For instance, if the requirement is to submit work in progress, make sure that the presentation is professional and not an insult or an inconvenience to those examining it.
- Take care in using your discretion (if you have any) in matters such as the selection of examiners for interim oral exams. An undeserved

rough ride for a student at this stage can seriously damage their confidence. Equally, a good examiner can really help you and the student to develop the work.

- Take these processes seriously. If a student is not progressing well then you are not necessarily doing him/her any favours in 'easing them through' formal hurdles so that they may have an even bigger fall later on.

Gargi was an overseas doctoral student whose parents were very anxious for her to obtain a PhD. She struggled constantly with the work and made poor progress for no obvious reason other than that her heart was not in it and she was therefore not capable of giving it the attention it needed.

Her supervisor was not only research-inactive but also had little idea about university progression requirements and why they were in place. He arranged for Gargi's progression examination to be conducted by a nice chap and friendly colleague. The examiner expressed serious reservations about Gargi's progress in his report. However, instead of recommending that she withdraw from the programme or do an MPhil he allowed her to progress and recommended that she should be given an extra year because of her slow progress.

Gargi continued to fail at her research. Eventually, after four years during which she had paid high fees for full-time study, the professor in charge of the doctoral programme decided to terminate her registration. Gargi was offered the possibility of being registered for an MPhil and being given exemption from the minimum registration period if she worked informally with a new supervisor and completed a near final draft of her dissertation. She is currently working, as an unregistered student, towards an MPhil.

If Gargi's original supervisor had done his job properly and the progression examiner had not acted out of misplaced kindness, Gargi's situation would not have become so dire, expensive and distressing for her. She was unnecessarily placed in a position where she was distressed and humiliated by being removed from the programme.

How do I help students to keep on keeping on?

Maintaining momentum in research can be a problem for PhD students. Doing a PhD is a long-term, often lonely and essentially difficult task. Students may understandably cling to comfort zones in such circumstances. A common one is to carry on collecting data well past the optimal point for stopping.

Students may also endlessly invent tasks that, in their view, are absolutely essential to do but which have the real and probably unconscious purpose of delaying actually getting on with what they need to do. Everyone does this to some extent, including us. The job of the supervisor is to help students contain this kind of activity at reasonable levels. Deciding that you can't start writing until you have been out to the stationery shop and bought a new coloured gel pen is one thing, but deciding that you have to undertake a new six-month-long archival search is quite another.

Real problems can arise as students start to bury themselves in a field and accumulate large quantities of material. Often the process of analysing and making sense of it all can appear overwhelming. Students in this situation may avoid what they see as an insurmountable task by insisting that they need to carry on collecting more material, thereby making their dilemma worse.

Developing your theoretical thinking is a really challenging and difficult process for everyone. Students are usually initially perplexed at how to bring their theoretical insights from their reading together with the material they have. It's helpful, at this point, to encourage students to locate and read examples of where this is done well in order to see how they themselves might do it. This is one of the biggest challenges of the whole research process.

One common tendency is for students to be unsure that they themselves have got anything worthwhile to say. Such students often produce writing that consists of the confident recitation of synthesised literature, tentatively illustrated by little snippets of their own work. The trick for the supervisor is to help the student see the value of the work that they have done and help them develop a confident voice.

Another common motivational problem is that students may have a real reluctance to write and to write often. Such students often feel that

they cannot start writing until they know everything, have collected every conceivable piece of material and have every idea perfectly conceptualised. Only when all their ducks are in a row will they start shooting. Supervisors can play an important role here by encouraging, chivvying and, indeed, insisting that students develop good writing practices at an early stage. We talk more about helping students develop their writing below and about the writing process at length in *Writing for Publication*.

Finally, it is worth saying that students often go through periods of feeling resentful and angry with their supervisors. They may even hate you or hide when they see you coming down the corridor. As with any long-term and intense relationship, this is perfectly normal and you should not be cast down when or if it happens. The gamut of the dynamics of the supervisor–student relationship will vary from nurturing and consoling to cajoling, chivvying and getting really tough and demanding. It's normal.

Handy hints for helping students start writing and to write well

As we have just said, students may have a real reluctance to write and to write often. Their second big problem can be the need to have done everything and thought of everything before they start writing. These students often refer to 'writing up' their thesis. They fail to see writing for what it is – an on-going integral part of the research process.

1. Writing is often something that students feel anxious about. Dealing with this can be difficult for those supervisors who, themselves, find writing problematic or worrisome. Helping students to write can actually help supervisors to improve their own writing skills and practices. This is because the process of articulating how to do it and the sharing of writing experience informs your own thinking. Thinking about students' work makes you read your own more critically.
2. Having other people read their work can make students feel very exposed and vulnerable. For this reason you should never ever, under any circumstances, set out to make a student feel stupid about their writing. They are likely to feel bad enough about their writing without you making it worse.

Shamila is the best writer that Davina has ever met. When she became Davina's student, first during her MA and then as a doctoral student, Shamila already wrote with a fluency and elegance that Davina could only long for. She is also a remarkably original thinker and nuanced theorist. Even her rough field notes were of publishable standard. When she handed her work in, Davina's feedback took the form of further ideas to develop, but virtually never about style, composition or structure of the writing. Shamila noticed that Davina's other students had their work returned to them with far more extensive comments on such matters. She decided, erroneously, that this was because Davina hated her writing.

Esther is also a talented writer. However, she had the misfortune of being allocated a supervisor whose behaviour at every supervision session sapped her interest in her topic and her confidence in herself as a writer and a thinker. During the entire process he never once offered her any positive feedback on her work. Over the period of her supervision, as her confidence in her own abilities diminished, so did the quality of her writing. Her supervisor's criticisms thus became even more shrill, further diminishing her capacity to produce high-quality work, to the extent where she became almost paralysed. She was fortunate to have access to other sources of support which enabled her to complete her degree and get a good mark, though not as good as her potential suggested it would be.

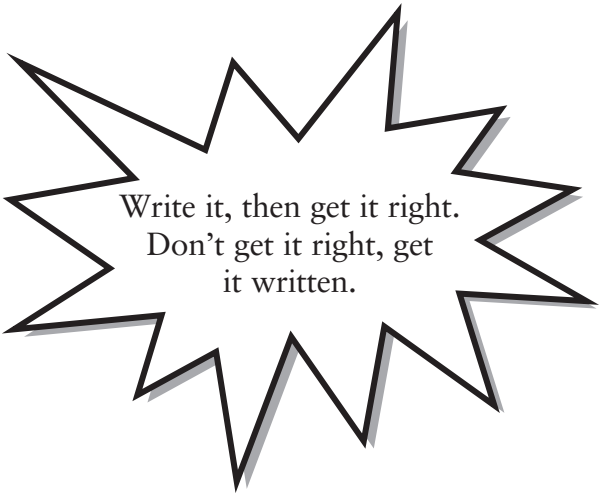
Refrain from rude comments and, above all, avoid a red pen for them. Using one will make your students feel like they are ten years old, getting their unsuccessful maths homework back. Better to invest in some nice coloured gel pens (purple, green, whatever) and keep the red for your own writing.

Ian was in the final stages of drafting his thesis. He had recently had to change supervisors because of circumstances outside his control.

His new supervisor devoted a lot of effort to helping Ian to structure and write his thesis. He was appreciative of the fact that Ian was quick to learn the skills needed for this purpose and Ian was delighted to have found someone who could help him in his writing. One day he confided to his supervisor that he had shown his wife one of the returned draft chapters, pointing out that his supervisor had unthinkingly, hurriedly and untypically written 'inept' in the margin against a particular piece of text. Far from showing the sympathy he expected, his wife merely replied, 'Well, if he ever writes anything complimentary you'll know he means it.'

3. There are remarkably few people whose writing appears effortlessly beautiful. You will be lucky if you get to supervise one of them in a whole career. Writing, like bricklaying or plastering, is an apparently prosaic skill that can actually be developed only by frequent and regular practice.

   Try to build good writing practices into your supervisory activities. Encouraging students to keep good research journals can be an excellent way of getting them into the regular writing habit.
4. Students may feel defensive about their writing to the point where they can't listen to constructive criticism. Or they may not want to show you any writing until they think it is nearly perfect. To these students, you need to say:



The more writing your students do, and the more constructive criticism you and others give them on their writing, the better they will become at it. They need to learn, if they don't already understand, that writing is an iterative process. You should encourage them to show their work to their fellow students, their partners, their friends, other members of staff and any other friendly critical readers they can find, as well as to yourself.

5. Not only does frequent writing improve students' skill, it's also an important way in which they can achieve real unity with their materials, sort out their ideas, articulate their thoughts, decide where they've gone wrong, discover the holes in their theory, work out what they really think and so on.

   The process of writing is essential to the development of productive dialogue between the supervisor and the student and between research materials and theory. Without those dialogues, it is not possible to write a good final thesis. It is only when you read your students' work that you really begin to understand what they are thinking. Conversations, important though they are, are simply too slippery and imprecise as a tool for developing a thesis.

6. One of your responsibilities as a supervisor is to help your students develop their own particular writing or authorial voice. They need to be fully present in their writing. Eventually, anything they write will be recognisably theirs. In many areas of the arts, humanities and social sciences these days, it is conventional for authors to use the first person. We think that this is a very good development, since it encourages honesty in writing and makes it harder to adopt a quasi-godlike, pseudo-objective stance. However, many students suffer from 'physics envy' and will thus find it uncomfortable at first, particularly if they have had it drummed into them at school and/or university that they should distance themselves by writing in the third person.

7. The PhD thesis is a very particular and peculiar genre – and almost unique in being written for an audience of only a very few people (consisting of the supervisor(s) and examiners). Students obviously need to learn how to write according to PhD generic rules but they also have to be able to write for other audiences.

   Whilst doing their doctoral research, students should also learn to write for publication and begin to publish. This is essential for their future career prospects. The best theses are designed such that papers can be relatively easily generated in parallel to the writing of the thesis at each stage. It can immeasurably increase students'

confidence in their own work to have had it accepted for publication, whole or in part, prior to the completion of the thesis. Indeed, it is often the case that one of the key criteria for passing a PhD is that it is 'publishable whole or in part'. The student who has already published doctoral work in reputable places prior to being examined has, by definition, met this criterion.

Jane was a well organised and hard-working PhD student who completed her thesis ahead of time. Her supervisor put her in touch with a reputable academic publisher, who commissioned her thesis as a book. Jane was able to use the time that good progress on the thesis had saved in order write her book. By the time she was examined, the book was already in press. Thus Jane was able to go into her oral examination knowing that she had already satisfied a key criterion of a successful PhD – that the thesis was publishable whole or in part.

A word of caution is necessary here. There are some universities where the regulations prevent students from publishing from their theses in advance of examination. Obviously such regulations must not be ignored. Our advice to students is to avoid those universities or lobby for a change in the rules. We would urge supervisors to put the case to their university that it is cutting off their nose to spite their face and out of line with most current practice. Not having published puts students at a significant competitive disadvantage in the job market compared with those who have.

There is plenty more advice about writing styles, practices and publishing in *Writing for Publication*.

Finishing and beyond

The finishing phase in the doctoral process necessitates helping the student to mould all their research and writing into the completed thesis. The thesis must hang together as a coherent and convincing story. In short, the thesis must have a thesis – that is, an argument. In Figure 1 we illustrate the metaphor used by one of Rebecca's colleagues, Charles Harvey, who compares a finished thesis to a string of pearls.

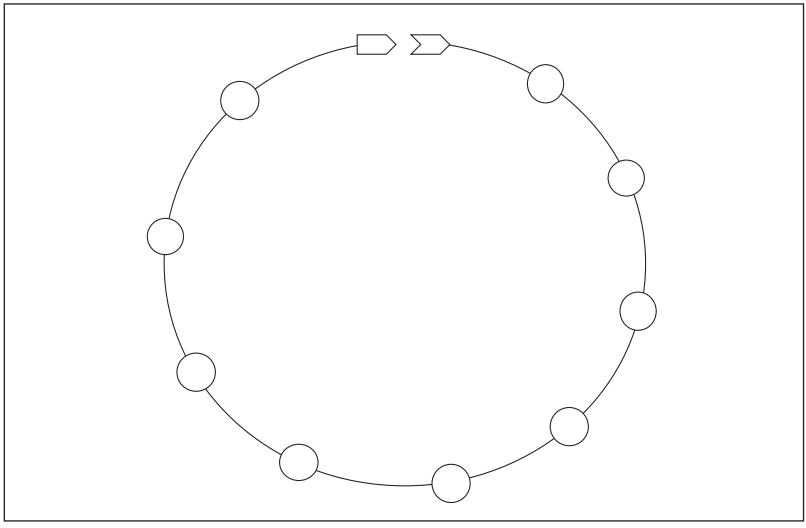


FIGURE 1 The thesis as a string of pearls. The fastenings at either end of the string are the introduction and conclusion, the chapters are the pearls and the string is the line of argument that runs through all of them. Of course, the clasps have to match perfectly to make the string whole. Reading the thesis should be analagous to a journey round this string of pearls. The reader starts at the introduction, in which the purpose of the thesis and the nature of the journey are set out clearly. The argument then progresses through a series of discrete but connected chapters, eventually arriving at the conclusion, which returns to the introduction and ties the whole together. Like a string of pearls, the thesis should be a thing of beauty.

Students who are within spitting distance of finishing should develop a detailed and realistic timetable for the final completion of their thesis. They should start this by working backwards from their intended submission date and should factor in time for slippage.

Students frequently underestimate the amount of time that the technical aspects and tidying involved in the final production of the thesis will take. Matters such as checking the bibliography, pagination, labelling of diagrams, images or figures, compiling tables of contents, checking any appendices and so on can take days, even weeks of tedious work. It is made more difficult because the student is usually exhausted by the intellectual effort expended up to this point. In addition, many students, by this stage, may have started a new and demanding job, and

simply finding the hours to do the work can be difficult. Encourage your students to factor this finishing phase into their scheduling of their work.

Completing a thesis is very hard work and the final stages are particularly demanding. Students are nearly always totally exhausted, physically, mentally and emotionally, by that point. An added dimension of the finishing phase is dealing with the associated difficult emotions. These emotions may reflect a fear of finishing.

- They are about to give their thesis over for critical scrutiny and are likely to be very anxious in case it is failed or has major revisions. This is often particularly acute for the best students, who set themselves the highest standards and strive for perfection.
- It can mark the end of a very important period in their lives, which has been formative intellectually and emotionally and socially sustaining. They know who they are as a doctoral student. They may not be sure who they will be when they are no longer a student.
- They may feel apprehensive or uncertain about what the future holds. If they are going on to a new job or career they may not have the confidence to feel that they can cope and may be afraid of being 'found out' as wanting. If they are students who are continuing in another profession, they may be apprehensive about the transformative effect that their research may have had on their attitudes to their work or their lives. In similar vein, those who are returning to very different cultural environments may be concerned about how they will fit back in.

All in all, it is not surprising that many students find themselves suffering from quite serious depression as they finish their thesis and immediately afterwards. The supervisor should be there for them at this point, see them through it and encourage them to plan positively for the short and medium term. Good advice to students is to get them to go on vacation immediately after they have handed their thesis in, if this is humanly possible. At the very least, even if they can afford only a long weekend away, it will do them good.

Planning for finishing may also have to include preparing for an oral examination and should always include thinking about future publications arising from the work and future research plans, if any. Planning publications and thinking about research possibilities arising from the thesis are, in fact, good preparation for any oral examination that the student has to go through.

Where students have to have an oral examination, they should put their thesis away for a minimum of two or three weeks before doing any preparation or planning. They need to get a bit of distance from it. Then they need to reread their thesis with a view to thinking and reminding themselves about:

- Its contribution to knowledge.
- Its originality in terms of opening up new areas of enquiry, methodology, empirical data, theory building and analysis.
- Where their work is situated within their discipline and field.
- Who would be interested in what they have done and what the likely impact of their research will be within their own intellectual field and/or among practitioner communities, policy makers or the wider public.
- With the benefit of hindsight, what they would have done differently and how.
- The 'so what?'-ness of their research.
- Future lines of enquiry suggested by their research.

These are the same sorts of questions that one has to address in writing a book proposal. They are also the kinds of question that are likely to be pursued in an oral examination. Consequently, suggesting to students that they actually should write a book proposal kills two birds with one stone: it allows them to plan for putting their thesis into wider circulation and it is good examination preparation. Another good activity for students at this point is to identify several articles that could come out of their thesis and think about where they might be published.

Once students have submitted their thesis, Jane advises her students to develop a publishing plan. This may involve a book plan, but more usually involves a series of articles. With regard to each, the following details should be developed: title; journal, proposed date of submission, abstract. Previously published articles should be included in the publishing plan because they indicate what has already been done and the direction of the subsequent publications. The benefits of the publishing plan are that it encourages students to move past the story of the whole thesis and to develop papers that can stand on their own merit. A second benefit is that distributing the publishing plan at interviews for jobs at other universities impresses selection panels.

The examination process

We'd like to add a note here for the majority of supervisors whose students' work is examined by people other than themselves. This may or may not involve an oral examination. The selection of appropriate internal and external examiners is one of the most important moments in a student's doctoral studies. It needs to be done well in advance of completion, with great care and in close consultation with the student themselves.

Make sure that the prospective examiners' own epistemological approach complements that of the student and that they are likely to understand and be sympathetic to the topic and the methods used. In addition, good examiners are people who can read a thesis from the point of view of the student's stated aims, rather than the kind of reader who thinks that everyone should do it the way they would. In general, it is our experience that examiners who are, themselves, confident and established in their research career are better at doing this than those who feel that they have something to prove. Be aware that an examiner whose work is very close to that of the student may, despite the best of intentions, find it difficult to distance themselves adequately from their own perspective, and this may disadvantage the student. Bear in mind that the higher the status of the examiner, the better the halo effect on the student when they pass. In addition, good examiners may also be willing to act as referees in future job applications, publishing projects and generally promote the student and their work.

Good examiners will read the student's work closely and be able to engage with them helpfully in discussions on publication plans and ways to take the work forward in further research. They will be simultaneously challenging and supportive. The student should have already engaged with the examiners' work in their thesis. This is one reason why you and the student should start thinking about potential examiners at least a year in advance of the intended submission date.

Obviously, if and when you become an examiner, you need to try to be like the best examiner you could wish for your own students.

Sometimes your students will be required to make major or minor revisions to their thesis before it is finally passed. If these go beyond correcting typographical errors, your involvement will be absolutely essential. You will need to help the student pick up the pieces both intellectually and emotionally and help them find practical solutions to

get a prompt, positive result. Your supervision does not stop until after the thesis is passed.

Wider aspects of the supervisory role

In conclusion, we want to talk about three wider aspects of supervisory work. These are:

- Helping your students to develop a rounded professional profile.
- Being supportive and nurturing to your students.
- Maintaining good boundaries and knowing the limits of your responsibilities.

We will consider each in turn.

Helping your students to develop a rounded professional profile

Most doctoral students will either want to pursue a career as an academic or as a researcher in some other environment. For such students, you need to think about the skills and experience they will need to develop in such a way that their career prospects are optimised.

With regard to research, we have already spoken about the importance of their getting published during the PhD process. But you also need to encourage them to think about getting experience of such things as going to conferences, presenting papers, building academic networks and, indeed, finding their own place in their research community. These are all things they can get valuable experience of whilst they are your student, and you are in part responsible for facilitating it. At a practical level, you should think about doing such things for them as: co-authoring papers; attending and presenting at conferences with them; offering them research or writing opportunities; and introducing them to your circles and networks. You may also be able to help them acquire project management or administrative experience by finding them limited tasks to do on your own projects or on those of colleagues.

At a mundane level, you will be aware that universities are places where getting hold of very basic resources such as office space, a desk, filing cabinets, a computer and a car park pass can turn into a major

headache. You should be aware that your full-time students, in particular, require basic resources similar to your own and you should do whatever you can to make sure that they are provided or that the student can access them.

Students who wish to pursue an academic career in teaching and research will also need to be able to demonstrate to prospective employers that they are competent teachers. All students need help in selecting and applying for appropriate teaching opportunities. They will need guidance on how to teach, and support through this particular learning curve. It shouldn't be an onerous task for the supervisor. With regard to your students, you need to keep a careful eye on the balance of their work load between teaching and research. It is all too easy, especially for inexperienced teachers, for teaching preparation and marking to expand to fill their entire working week, to the detriment of their research. In general, as a faculty member, you should be mindful of the fact that, almost invariably, students undertake such work at very low rates of pay, are frequently untrained or poorly trained and unsupported in an institutional sense. It is part of your responsibility, as a member of the university, to do what you can to minimise or end such exploitative treatment.

Being supportive and nurturing your students

You need to be aware that students are vulnerable people by nature of their relatively powerless position within universities. It is, therefore, incumbent on supervisors to be reflexive about the impact that their supervisory practices may have. Doctoral students are part of the academic community and should be treated as such. We find it helpful in our everyday dealings and personal relations with such students to think of them more as inexperienced and less senior colleagues than as 'students'.

In working with them, it is important not to try to turn them into some kind of carbon copy of yourself. They are independent people in their own right and must develop their own research and research careers. You have to get the balance right between nurturing them, and helping them to develop, and taking control of their lives and work. You are not their parent and shouldn't endlessly feel responsible for them. You can't and shouldn't want to live your life through them. You can take pleasure in their successes, but such successes should always ultimately be their own. (Good advice for parents, too.)

In good supervisory relationships your students should remain your academic friends and colleagues for the rest of your career. They should be able to rely on you for mentoring, letters of support for job applications, assistance with research funding applications and as a critical friend who continues to be willing to read their work. By the same token, as they become more confident and competent academics they will prove to be valuable critical friends to you.

Developing good boundaries and knowing the limits of your responsibilities

First and foremost, as we said in Chapter 3, you should never, ever get into your students' knickers, no matter how beguiling, gorgeous or seductive they are. Teaching generates all kinds of emotionally close and charged relationships. It is one thing to have intense and often very satisfying close pedagogical relations with your students, in which you may feel close and affectionate towards each other. It is another thing entirely to become involved with them sexually. The former is a mark of an exceptionally good teacher–student relationship. The latter represents an abuse of power by the supervisor and always has adverse consequences for the student and sometimes for both.

Second, it's important to have effective and flexible working arrangements with your research students. You might, for instance, find it nicer or more convenient to see them in your study at home. If they are part-time students, they may need to talk to you on the phone in the evening at home. At work, your research students should feel comfortable enough to drop by when they have a small thing they need to check out with you or to share something that has interested or amused them. They will most certainly need to be able to make robust and reliable arrangements with you for supervisions and other aspects of their work with you. It is appropriate for them to have your home phone number and they certainly need to be able to contact you by email. This can be especially important during any fieldwork phase, where they may encounter problems or difficulties that require urgent resolution with your help and possibly out of office hours.

Having said all that, you are not married to them (and if you are, stop supervising them NOW). They need to learn to respect your space and privacy and to know that they are not your only responsibility. In practice, if you treat them with respect, the overwhelming majority will reciprocate. You may need to agree explicitly on matters such as

when it's okay to ring you at home. Don't be afraid of having such conversations – they can make for sound working relationships in the long run.

It is part of an academic's working life that, from time to time, they will have longer or shorter absences from the university. When you do, you need to make adequate and appropriate arrangements for and with your doctoral students. In some cases, this will involve nothing more than telling them that you will be away on vacation or at a conference for a limited period and checking that there are no outstanding, urgent matters looming on their horizon.

If you are going away for a longer period of study/research leave, you will need to decide whether you wish to carry on active supervision or whether it is better to arrange for a colleague to assist them in the interim. You and the student together have to make individual judgements on this. If you are in a supervisory team, it may be that the other supervisor can take full responsibility for this limited period. If you are the senior or sole supervisor and are going abroad for an extended period, you may need to make arrangements for email and/or telephone supervision. In any event, if you are going to be away for more than a couple of weeks, you need to make sure that the student is aware of a nominated and responsible individual in the department whom they can contact in an emergency or crisis.

And Finally ...

We hope we have demonstrated that supervising research students is not only a complex and challenging form of teaching, but also has the potential to be very rewarding work for you as a teacher. Not only can doing such work make a substantial and positive difference to students' careers and their perspectives on their lives, but it can also have a transformative effect on your own research work. It can give you lifelong research friends, and the very process of helping others to engage with research should help you to engage more critically and reflexively with your own research practice.

Further Reading

Bates, A.W. and Poole, G. (2003) *Effective Teaching with Technology in Higher Education: Foundations for Success*, Indianapolis In: Jossey Bass Wiley. As the title suggests, this book addresses how to utilise information technology in pedagogical practice. Because the introduction of information technology into student learning is frequently driven by (usually unfounded) managerial expectations of cost cutting it may be wise to be well informed in this complex area. Rather than being a simple proselytising book, this one aims to provide a sound theoretical basis to explanations of why technology may aid teaching and learning. The book also provides practical advice on how to design and implement courses that involve the use of information technology. The text appears to be popular among those who, unlike us, are keen on such teaching modes.

Delamont, S., Atkinson, P. and Parry, O. (2004) *Supervising the Doctorate: A Guide to Suceess*. Maidenhead: Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press. This is the second edition of *Supervising the PhD* by the same authors. Its new title has been chosen to reflect the fact that they have not only updated the text, but added substantial material about professional doctorates. It is based on a combination of a major research project about doctoral supervision and the wealth of experience that Sara Delamont and Paul Atkinson have of supervising research students and running courses for them and for staff who wish to develop their supervision skills. It covers doctoral supervision across social sciences, humanities and sciences. While based on UK experience, the book is also relevant to doctoral supervison elsewhere. It contains many illustrative and exemplary vignettes drawn from experience and research and the authors offer heaps of good advice. At times, the tone can seem to be somewhat prescriptive and to assume that supervisors are able to devote themselves almost exclusively to their doctoral supervison, but the authors are careful to say that people must find their own best patterns of working together. Overall, the book is an invaluable resource for supervisors and for research students alike.

Newbie, D. and Cannon, R. (2000) *A Handbook for Teachers in Universities and Colleges*, 4th edn, London and New York: RoutledgeFalmer. This book tackles a range of issues from different types of teaching styles, class sizes,

planning for a curriculum and the use of technology in the classroom to presentations in conferences and teaching in physics labs. Diverse learning styles as well as implementation models are discussed. Clear flow charts and graphics are used to illustrate how students learn. Newer areas such as 'problem-based learning' are discussed. The subject of teaching is dealt with thoroughly from aims to methodology and the respective advantages and disadvantages of each. The book is invaluable to someone who is embarking on a teaching career and discusses assessment methods as well as teaching evaluation routines. Though interesting, the book skims over each topic and would benefit from more in-depth discussion in each area, as the areas are so discrete. The work is generously peppered with cartoons and checklists driving home the key messages.

Holbrook, A. and Johnston, S. (eds) (1999) *Supervision of Postgraduate Research in Education: Review of Research in Education No. 5*, Coldstream, Vic: Australian Association for Research in Education. Although this book draws on the experiences of Australian education academics – in relation both to being supervisors and to being supervised – it actually speaks to a much wider audience than that would imply, both geographically and in disciplinary terms. Much of what these Australian writers have to say about their supervisory work and doctoral students within education applies equally to other disciplines (especially those in the social sciences). The book starts with an overview of the literature about doctoral research supervision and continues with personal and theoretical reflections on different aspects of supervision and being supervised, an extensive consideration of ethical issues in supervision, and finishes with a look to the future in relation to 'off-campus' (that is, distance) supervision and developments in postgraduate pedagogy. This book won't tell you how to do it, but is a rewarding read from which you can learn a great deal about supervising and being supervised.

Leonard, D. (2001) *A Woman's Guide to Doctoral Studies*, Buckingham: Open University Press. The book is aimed at students contemplating and engaged in a doctoral programme. Written engagingly and clearly, it tackles such practical issues such as how to select a supervisor and a university from the bewildering array of choices available in the UK, USA and Canada. It not only discusses the process of research but also the aftermath of completing a PhD and life following the examination. The problems of getting off (and staying off) the ground are scrutinised. The title is misleading because this excellent book would benefit all doctoral students, male or female, and also addresses issues such as race and nationality (home versus overseas), which may be encountered whilst studying for a degree. Anecdotal evidence is used

in the form of case studies/quotations in boxes to bolster the points made about doing research, which is really helpful, and is supplemented with extra reading suggestions at the end. A really thorough book which is a pleasure to read.

Montgomery D. (ed.) (2002) *Cogs in the Classroom Factory: the Changing Identity of Academic Labour*, Westport CT: Greenwood Press. This is an academic study, rather than a guide or support book. The principal focus of this collection of essays is the subject of academic unionisation (and all that goes with it) in the context of the academic labour market in the USA. It considers matters such as casualisation, unionisation, tenure, the potentially problematic nature of professional unions (as opposed to blue-collar ones) and so on. Montgomery has a fine reputation as a labour historian and for involvement in such matters, and this book will make insightful reading for all academics, whether US-based or not.

Phillips, E.M. and Pugh, D.S. (1987) *How to get a PhD*, 3rd edn, Buckingham: Open University Press. A definitive book appealing to a wide audience, including prospective/present doctoral students, supervisors, examiners and university managers. It is the standard text for doctoral studies in the UK and is frequently referenced by other writers. It offers a wealth of practical examples, to illustrate abstract areas such as the suitability and originality of a research topic, motivation to do a PhD (including a chapter on why not to do a PhD) and so on. It also has excellent ideas to cope with preparation for the amorphous nature of the *viva*, including practical ideas such as grid techniques and mock *vivas*. The style is easy to read and includes a summary of action points at the end of each chapter.

Salmon P. (1992) *Achieving a PhD,* Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books. This book theorises the doctoral process through the stories of ten diverse doctoral students whom the author has met in different circumstances. These pen portraits are used to analyse leaning styles, objectives and procedures the students used in achieving their PhDs. The problems of these students are drawn upon to provide a model of how gender and other social relations enter the learning equation. This book draws the reader into the world of the doctoral student, exploring some of the pains and pleasures, and does not focus extensively on practical matters such as examinations. It is premised on the notion of the PhD as a joint exploration by the student and supervisor rather than the PhD as just another qualification.

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winning and managing research funding

The Academic's Support Kit

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Building Networks
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Debbie **Epstein**

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Much of the material in the *Kit* was 'road-tested' in sessions for our postgraduate students, colleagues and others. Many other people kindly gave their time to read and comment on drafts. We are very grateful to these human guinea pigs for their hard work and can assure our readers that, as far as we are aware, none of them was harmed in the experiment.

Chris Staff of the University of Malta devised the title the *Academic's Support Kit*, and he and Brenda Murphy provided glorious Mediterranean conditions in which to write. Malmesbury, Morwell and Gozo were splendid writing localities, although Dox 'added value' at Malmesbury with his soothing yet sonorous snoring.

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Finally, as ever, our greatest thanks go to our nearest and dearest, without whose tolerance, love and hard work these books would not be in your hands today.

J.K.
R.B.
D.E.

Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*

Before you really get into this book, you might like to know a bit more about the authors.

Rebecca Boden, from England, is professor of accounting at the University of the West of England. She did her PhD in politics immediately after graduating from her first degree (which was in history and politics). She worked as a contract researcher in a university before the shortage of academic jobs in 1980s Britain forced her into the civil service as a tax inspector. She subsequently launched herself on to the unsuspecting world of business schools as an accounting academic.

Debbie Epstein, a South African, is a professor in the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University. She did her first degree in history and then worked briefly as a research assistant on the philosopher Jeremy Bentham's papers. Unable to read his handwriting, she went on to teach children in a variety of schools for seventeen years. She returned to university to start her PhD in her forties and has been an academic ever since.

Jane Kenway, an Australian, is professor of education at Monash University with particular responsibility for developing the field of global cultural studies in education. She was a schoolteacher and outrageous hedonist before she became an academic. But since becoming an academic she has also become a workaholic, which has done wonders for her social life, because, fortunately, all her friends are similarly inclined. Nonetheless she is interested in helping next-generation academics to be differently pleasured with regard to their work and their lives.

As you can see, we have all had chequered careers which are far from the stereotype of the lifelong academic but that are actually fairly typical. What we have all had to do is to retread ourselves, acquire new skills and learn to cope in very different environments. In our current jobs we all spend a lot of time helping and supporting people who are learning to be or developing themselves as academics. Being an accountant, Rebecca felt that there had to be a much more efficient way of helping

people to get the support they need than one-to-one conversations. This book and the other five in the *Academic's Support Kit* are for all these people, and for their mentors and advisers.

We have tried to write in an accessible and friendly style. The books contain the kind of advice that we have frequently proffered our research students and colleagues, often over a cup of coffee or a meal. We suggest that you consume their contents in a similar ambience: read the whole thing through in a relaxed way first and then dip into it where and when you feel the need.

Throughout the *ASK* books we tell the stories of anonymised individuals drawn from real life to illustrate how the particular points we are making might be experienced. While you may not see a precise picture of yourself, we hope that you will be able to identify things that you have in common with one or more of our characters to help you see how you might use the book.

Pragmatic principles/principled pragmatism

In writing these books, as in all our other work, we share a number of common perceptions and beliefs.

1. Globally, universities are reliant on public funding. Downward pressure on public expenditure means that universities' financial resources are tightly squeezed. Consequently mantras such as 'budgeting', 'cost cutting', 'accountability' and 'performance indicators' have become ubiquitous, powerful drivers of institutional behaviour and academic work.
2. As a result, universities are run as corporate enterprises selling education and research knowledge. They need 'management', which is essential to running a complex organisation such as a university, as distinct from 'managerialism' – the attempted application of 'scientific management techniques' borrowed from, though often discarded by, industry and commerce. What marks managerialism out from good management is the belief that there is a one-size-fits-all suite of management solutions that can be applied to any organisation. This can lead to a situation in which research and teaching, the *raison d'etre* of universities, take second place to managerialist fads, initiatives, strategic plans, performance

indicators and so on. Thus the management tail may wag the university dog, with the imperatives of managerialism conflicting with those of academics, who usually just want to research and teach well.

3. Increasingly, universities are divided into two cultures with conflicting sets of values. On the one hand there are managerialist doctrines; on the other are more traditional notions of education, scholarship and research. But these two cultures do not map neatly on to the two job groups of 'managers' and 'academics'. Many managers in universities hold educational and scholarly values dear and fight for them in and beyond their institutions. By the same token, some academics are thoroughly and unreservedly managerialist in their approach.
4. A bit like McDonald's, higher education is a global business. Like McDonald's branches, individual universities seem independent, but are surprisingly uniform in their structures, employment practices and management strategies. Academics are part of a globalised labour force and may move from country to (better paying) country.
5. Academics' intellectual recognition comes from their academic peers rather than their employing institutions. They are part of wider national and international peer networks distinct from their employing institutions and may have academic colleagues across continents as well as nearer home. The combination of the homogeneity of higher education and academics' own networks make it possible for them to develop local identities and survival strategies based on global alliances. The very fact of this globalisation makes it possible for us to write a *Kit* that is relevant to being an academic in many different countries, despite important local variations.
6. In order to thrive in a tough environment academics need a range of skills. Very often acquiring them is left to chance, made deliberately difficult or the subject of managerialist ideology. In this *Kit* our aim is to talk straight. We want to speak clearly about what some people just 'know', but others struggle to find out. Academia is a game with unwritten and written rules. We aim to write down the unwritten rules in order to help level an uneven playing field. The slope of the playing field favours 'developed' countries and, within these, more experienced academics in more prestigious institutions. Unsurprisingly, women and some ethnic groups often suffer marginalisation.

7. Most of the skills that academics need are common across social sciences and humanities. This reflects the standardisation of working practices that has accompanied the increasing managerialisation of universities, but also the growing (and welcome) tendency to work across old disciplinary divides. The *Academic's Support Kit* is meant for social scientists, those in the humanities and those in more applied or vocational fields such as education, health sciences, accounting, business and management.
8. We are all too aware that most academics have a constant feeling of either drowning in work or running ahead of a fire or both. Indeed, we often share these feelings. Nevertheless, we think that there *are* ways of being an academic that are potentially less stressful and more personally rewarding. Academics need to find ways of playing the game in ethical and professional ways and winning. We do not advise you to accept unreasonable demands supinely. Instead, we are looking for strategies that help people retain their integrity, the ability to produce knowledge and teach well.
9. University management teams are often concerned to avoid risk. This may lead to them taking over the whole notion of 'ethical behaviour' in teaching and research and subjecting it to their own rules, which are more to do with their worries than good professional academic practice. In writing these books, we have tried to emphasise that there are richer ethical and professional ways of being in the academic world: ways of being a public intellectual, accepting your responsibilities and applying those with colleagues, students and the wider community.

And finally …

We like the way that Colin Bundy, Principal of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and previously Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, so pithily describes the differences and similarities between universities in such very different parts of the world. Interviewed for the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (27 January 2004) by John Crace, he explains:

> The difference is one of nuance. In South Africa, universities had become too much of an ivory tower and needed a reintroduction to the pressures

> of the real world. In the UK, we have perhaps gone too far down the line of seeing universities as pit-stops for national economies. It's partly a response to thirty years of underfunding: universities have had to adopt the neo-utilitarian line of asserting their usefulness to justify more money. But we run the risk of losing sight of some of our other important functions. We should not just be a mirror to society, but a critical lens: we have a far more important role to play in democracy and the body politic than merely turning out graduates for the job market.

Our hope is that the *Academic's Support Kit* will help its readers develop the kind of approach exemplified by Bundy – playing in the real world but always in a principled manner.

Books in the *Academic's Support Kit*

The *Kit* comprises six books. There is no strict order in which they should be read, but this one is probably as good as any – except that you might read *Building your Academic Career* both first and last.

Building your Academic Career encourages you to take a proactive approach to getting what you want out of academic work whilst being a good colleague. We discuss the advantages and disadvantages of such a career, the routes in and the various elements that shape current academic working lives. In the second half of the book we deal in considerable detail with how to write a really good CV (résumé) and how best to approach securing an academic job or promotion.

Getting Started on Research is for people in the earlier stages of development as a researcher. In contrast to the many books available on techniques of data collection and analysis, this volume deals with the many other practical considerations around actually doing research – such as good ways to frame research questions, how to plan research projects effectively and how to undertake the various necessary tasks.

Writing for Publication deals with a number of generic issues around academic writing (including intellectual property rights) and then considers writing refereed journal articles, books and book chapters in detail as well as other, less common, forms of publication for academics. The aim is to demystify the process and to help you to become a confident, competent, successful and published writer.

Teaching and Supervision looks at issues you may face both in teaching undergraduates and in the supervision of graduate research students. This book is not a pedagogical instruction manual – there are plenty of those around, good and bad. Rather, the focus is on presenting explanations and possible strategies designed to make your teaching and supervision work less burdensome, more rewarding (for you and your students) and manageable.

Winning and Managing Research Funding explains how generic university research funding mechanisms work so that you will be better equipped to navigate your way through the financial maze associated with various funding sources. The pressure to win funding to do research is felt by nearly all academics worldwide. This book details strategies that you might adopt to get your research projects funded. It also explains how to manage your research projects once they are funded.

Building Networks addresses perhaps the most slippery of topics, but also one of the most fundamental. Despite the frequent isolation of academic work, it is done in the context of complex, multi-layered global, national, regional and local teaching or research networks. Having good networks is key to achieving what you want in academia. This book describes the kinds of networks that you might build across a range of settings, talks about the pros and cons and gives practical guidance on networking activities.

1 Who should Use this Book and Why?

This book is designed to help you win the money and other resources that you need to support your research and to assist you in using the lovely money once you have got it. Straitened research resources are, sadly, a global university phenomenon. And even though doing research is part of most people's job contract or at least expectations, most universities take the view that, to a substantial extent, academics must raise the money to do that work themselves. Nobody said it was a sane system.

Getting the funding to do our job can be a daunting prospect. Research funding systems are complex and vary considerably between disciplines, universities and countries. Nevertheless, there is some generic knowledge that, once acquired, will help you to navigate your own way.

There are many research websites and books (mentioned in Further Reading at the end of this book) that tell you how to write research proposals with a view to winning funding, and *Getting Started on Research* also gives you some strong pointers. We do not propose to replicate what they do here. Rather, we aim to help you understand university funding systems, locate possible funding sources, write winnable research applications and then manage the funds.

This book will be especially useful if you are in any of the following situations:

- You have some research experience and have seen through at least one research project. For instance, you may have a doctorate, have been a research assistant or an associate on someone else's project or have been a junior research partner in a research team. You now think that it is time to branch out and get your hands on some more substantial resources in order to pursue your work further.
- You may be employed in a 'contract research unit' in a university – a place where the payment of staff salaries is dependent upon winning external research funding. You might have been taken on in such a place as a junior research assistant and now want to establish your institutional position by winning your 'own' research monies.

- You may be a less experienced lecturer who has previously had small amounts of research support and funding from your university and are now wanting to or are coming under pressure to seek external funds.
- In terms of your career you may be just starting in the academic world, you may have been around for a while but mainly concentrating on your teaching and administration or you may be quite an experienced researcher but not experienced at winning external grants.
- You may be a mentor of any such people.

This is the point at which you may wish, or be pressured, to apply for external research funding. This is also the point at which you have to put your researcher identity on the line, as you are about to be subject to external scrutiny most probably in a highly competitive and/or a highly politicised funding environment. How do you feel? Possibly you feel quite vulnerable and exposed, possibly you feel stressed and stretched, and possibly you feel quite excited and challenged. Whatever the case, you know that there is a lot you do not know about this process and you are anxious to ascend a steep learning curve quickly and to produce winnable research applications as soon as possible. This book offers words of advice and caution.

Our first word of caution is *don't rush*. A hurried grant application is usually shoddy. Shoddy applications are highly unlikely to get funded and are bad for your reputation both with potential funders and indeed in your own university. Winning research grants is partly about your academic reputation: about developing a good one or about having a reputation for 'delivering quality outcomes' – as they say in polite management circles. If your bid is slapdash, assessors will assume that your research will be too. So take the time to prepare yourself to be a funded researcher and take time with your applications. Taking time at this stage may be frustrating in the short term but pays dividends, big time, in the long run.

You may:

- Feel completely in the dark about how this money thing works.
- Be unable to understand the key differences between the different sorts of support available and what the pros and cons of each are.
- Be bewildered by the array of possible sources and unsure about how to locate funding opportunities, or
- Need help in shaping yourself and your work to become a successful winner of research funds.

The positive incentives to apply for research funds are increasingly strong, whilst at the same time there are very real pressures on academics to 'perform' in this regard.

Let us now introduce you to some people who may be a bit like you. If not, other people you will meet throughout this book certainly will be.

George had been a teacher in a university for a number of years. He had been successful in getting some time allocated to him to start a small research project but then the dean vindictively decided that George's proper role was as a teacher and removed this resource from him. George enjoys his research and has therefore decided that he will seek external funding for it that will enable him to 'buy out' some of his teaching duties.

Louise has recently completed her PhD. During her examination for this, one of the examiners suggested that she should take one particular aspect of her work and develop it further – something she had not been able to pursue in the PhD itself. Louise is anxious to do this but she has recently been appointed as a lecturer and is struggling to cope with her new job. Some research funding would enable her to maintain her research momentum and also relieve her of some of the more tedious aspects of her teaching work. It would also impress her new bosses if she could win external funding.

Mohammed has been a successful researcher for a number of years, has been steadily promoted as a result and is now quite senior. He has reached a position where his university is pressing him to apply for external funding – something he has never really bothered with before. Whilst a confident and competent researcher, he is unsure about how to go about it and feels that he would look foolish if he asked someone.

2 The Research Funding Pressure Cooker

In this chapter we explain what we mean by 'research funding', introduce you to some key concepts you will need to know, describe your likely position within funding systems and give you some pointers as to how to understand the contexts within which you may have to operate.

What do you mean, 'research funding'?

All research requires heaps of resources: your time, machinery (such as computers), books, libraries, travel, conference fees and so on. All these have to be paid for. For those academics in the arts, humanities and the social sciences, the biggest single cost is likely to be time – someone has to pay your salary and those of research assistants, librarians and other staff.

If you are employed within a university, where does the money come from? Very broadly, there are two main sources of money to support research activities.

- *Money that flows to the academic institution (unrestricted funds)*. This is the money that universities and other higher education institutions get as institutions. It can take many forms: it may be 'core funding' from state and/or national government, income from trust funds or endowments, bequests from grateful ex-students, income from the sale of university assets such as land or rare books in the library, the profits on university trading activities such as publishing, catering or facilitating conferences, royalties on patents based on staff work and so on. The exact mix of this money at your university will depend on the country you are in and the nature of your institution.

- In countries such as the UK, Australia and South Africa most of this income will be core funding from government. Increasingly, governments tend to support higher education because they think it is an important activity that underpins economic competitiveness. The precise way in which governments calculate how much to give higher education institutions will vary between states and countries. Because funding mechanisms can be a really useful way of influencing institutional actions, governments and other organisations that give core funding tend to set up systems of allocation that support the objectives of the giver. For instance, if a government wants to increase the number of young people going to university, it may make taking extra students a financially attractive proposition for universities. However, generally, once the university has been given these funds, it can spend them on whatever it pleases – for instance, it might receive extra money for taking extra students but just have larger class sizes and spend the additional income on research. It might be helpful to think of such money as *unrestricted university funds* – no restrictions are placed on the university as to how it is spent.

Because universities are generally independent, self-governing institutions, when all this type of money comes in the university itself generally has discretion over how it is used. So a university committed to increasing its research profile might decide to channel an increased amount of income into funding research activities. It might choose to deploy the money in a number of ways – for instance, lightening the teaching load of academic staff so that they can get on with research, or making funds available for conferences. But remember that, just as funding is a useful means by which external funders such as governments influence universities, the same is true between universities and individual members of staff. Whilst some universities may distribute such resources evenly across all staff and let them get on with it, others may make the allocation of resources the subject of a competition among staff. Some will operate a mixture of these two systems – for instance, everyone might get the same teaching relief but staff would have to get a paper accepted for a conference in order to secure funding to go to it.

- *Money that flows to universities for specific purposes (restricted funds)*. This is the money (and sometimes other resources such as

time on a big machine like a telescope) that external funders allocate not to the unrestricted funds of the university but rather for a specific, defined piece of research work. That work might be an individual project, to run a research centre or to fund a conference. A variety of external agencies provide such funds. The funders here might include government, charitable foundations or organisations in the private or not-for-profit sectors. The funders' motives may be altruistic or they may want some piece of knowledge the better to further their profit-seeking objectives (and sometimes the two shade together).

The important thing to remember here is that such money can be used only for the precise purposes for which it is given. Such funds might usefully be thought of as *restricted funds* – because their application can be quite tightly controlled. Such restricted funds are an even more precise means of controlling universities and their research agendas than the mechanisms for calculating the allocation of unrestricted funds. 'We'll fund project *x* on subject *y,* but not project *a* on subject *b*.' This type of restricted funding is becoming increasingly popular with governments, as it gives them a great way to directly influence the research agenda. In countries such as Australia and the UK, and probably others, governments are increasingly channelling funding through the restricted rather than the unrestricted route.

The distinction between the two types of money, like all accounting, is not always precise or objective. For instance, *restricted* funding may include elements of so-called 'overhead costs' – contributions to general university costs that may be siphoned away into university unrestricted funds and spent, for instance, as 'seed corn funding' for further research projects. Alternatively, because bidding for restricted funds can be viciously competitive on price, universities may offer cut-price deals to external funding agencies, subsidising such work from their unrestricted funds.

Whilst money is a useful means of controlling things like research agendas, it is important to realise that this does not mean that you have to be buffeted around on the capricious winds of those who fund research, be it your own university or external agencies like government. You may, however, have to 'package' your work in particular ways, put a 'spin' on it or otherwise do the 'hard sell' in order to secure the access to resources that you need. In order to do this, you need to learn about, analyse and understand your own local funding environment.

Some basic concepts

As will be clear from the section above, there are many different sorts of 'research' money available. The language people use varies considerably between universities, systems and countries. Here is a glossary of some of the more common terms. We use these terms in this way in this book. However, you need to know how the terms are used in your own situation.

Research. The fundamental notion here is that research is about the generation of new knowledge or new applications of knowledge. For instance, in financial economics, the development of new knowledge might include the formulation of new mathematical models of how stock markets work. Research that applies such understandings might include an analysis of how a particular stock market has functioned in certain circumstances. The distinction often drawn here is between *basic* or *pure* research and *applied* research. Despite the best efforts of many people over many years, it remains a fact that it is almost impossible to draw sharp distinctions between these different gradations of research activity. Another distinction sometimes employed is between *strategic* research and *contract* research. The former applies to research where the research topic and questions pursued are identified by the researchers themselves. In contradistinction, the term *contract* research is used where the research topics, questions, etc., are developed by the organisation funding the research.

Consultancy. We would define consultancy as the process through which you provide paying customers with the benefit of your expertise and knowledge in order to provide answers to specific problems that they have identified. The difference between consultancy and contract research is difficult to define. For instance, a social policy researcher may be contracted by the Social Security Ministry in her country to research the reasons why potential welfare recipients fail to apply for the payments that they are entitled to. She might then be hired as a consultant by the same Ministry to translate her knowledge of such issues into practical solutions to the Ministry's problems of low welfare take-up.

Evaluation. Evaluations involve an assessment of the merits or otherwise of an existing situation, programme or policy perhaps according to the criteria laid down for the establishment of such. These can be either formative (as they develop and are put into practice) or summative (once they are complete or have gone through a certain

round). For instance, to return to the social policy research/consultant above, she may subsequently be asked to conduct an evaluation of the Ministry's procedures, processes and performance with regard to getting potential welfare recipients to apply for their benefits.

Research (of whatever variety), *consultancy* and *evaluation* all shade into each other in what can be quite confusing ways and involve interesting status hierarchies among academics. But the matter doesn't stop there for your university – these status hierarchies can also impact on the funding of universities. For instance, in Australia and the UK universities are financially rewarded by government for attracting *research* money, but not for earning *consultancy* income. For this reason, *consultancy* income is often subject to the creative accountant's version of semantics and reclassified as *contract research*. At the same time, universities can also be anxious to demonstrate that they have *consultancy* income, as this enables them to argue that they are assisting the economic development of the country and producing 'relevant' and 'useful' knowledge.

It is important to note that, although consultancy and evaluation work can be an essential part of 'performing' your role as an academic (see *Building an Academic Career*), it is not research work *per se*. That said, such work can and does successfully facilitate aligned research work – for instance by providing funding to look at problems, access to data or people and so on.

Why should I be interested in all this?

Because research requires resources, you will need access to these in order to do it. The amount of money people need to do research varies markedly according to discipline, topic, time-lines and personal preference. When thinking about the resources that you need and have available for research it can be helpful to categorise it in two ways.

- *Mode I support*. This is financial and other resource support that you may get as of right in your university. For instance, you may be in a position where all academic staff are given a certain amount of time during their working week to conduct research in, or have an

entitlement to go to, say, one international conference a year. Alternatively, you might think of the cost of the provision of a good library as part of this type of research support. This type of support usually comes from universities' *unrestricted funds*.

- *Mode II support*. This is where you have to actively go out and seek the financial and other resources for your work. This may well be competitive with other researchers within or outside your university. For instance, you may have to apply to your organisation for study leave, presenting a cogent and convincing case. Alternatively, you might apply to an external funding body for cash to buy you out of all teaching for a year while you conduct a specific research project. This type of support may come from either the university's *unrestricted funds* (and the organisation has decided to have a competition for its allocation) or constitute *restricted funds*. Either way, you will have had to be proactive in making moves to get the cash.

In our experience, support is becoming very tightly squeezed as a result of the general squeeze on *unrestricted* funding that we discussed above. In some disciplines, at some universities and in some job contracts it is entirely possible to do the work that you want to do on Mode I support. In fact, some very productive and influential researchers in philosophy or literature, say, never actively seek funding at all. Their Mode I support gives them all the time that they need to read, think and write and to systematically rummage around in the library, on the Web or in various archives.

Mode I research support has a number of advantages:

- Arts, social science and humanities research can often be done on very little money, saving the researcher the considerable time and effort involved in winning Mode II support.
- You can choose your own foci and work to your own time-lines.
- You don't have to worry about the priorities and preferences and 'deliverable' deadlines of funding agencies.
- Your work may be of the type where it is difficult to attract any other sort of support, but be no less valuable for that.
- This type of support can be used strategically to do small, pilot projects, and publish from them, to improve your chances of getting research funding.

Lucia is now a senior scholar in the field of leadership. But at one stage early in her career she was frustrated by the difficulties she was experiencing in attracting funding to undertake research she wanted to conduct on women in leadership. A more senior colleague encouraged her to undertake a small pilot project using Mode I support to provide the basis for a funded project grant application. She then selected a small and interesting group of women leaders, interviewed them and from the interviews identified the core questions and issues for a later successful funding bid.

The down side of using Mode I support is that the pressure is still on you to bring in money. This is often because universities are anxious to get their hands on the 'overhead costs' that we mentioned above. And, depending on which field you are in and on the way that your university thinks about the matter, you may be seen as less valuable as a researcher in comparison with others who do bring in money. This, sadly, may be the case even if you are putting out well recognised and reviewed publications. Indeed, you may find you are not as popular with your head of school as you would like to be and that your teaching load is increased to free up others to do externally funded research. Further, you may proceed for several years without any significant experience of writing applications and winning such funds. Then, if you do begin to chase money, you will probably find you do not have the necessary grant-writing skills.

Giovanni is an experienced academic and has produced some remarkable papers. She has relied on small amounts of Mode I support and some internally provided Mode II money to support her research and has usually secured such money without much difficulty. However, when preference for internal money was given to early career researchers she was at a disadvantage. She was forced to compete for the money she needed in wider and more competitive research circles. Her early endeavours in such circles were marred by her lack of experience in bidding for external money and by her limited knowledge of the tricks of the trade. Having her first external grant application rejected led her to seek some help and to do some fast 'upskilling'.

In short, it is unwise to rely exclusively on Mode I support. The rest of this book deals with the thorny question of how to win and manage Mode II money. Although social scientists, arts and humanities researchers don't usually seek or receive as much money as those in the so-called hard sciences, they can and do attract the big bucks. There are no hard-and-fast rules about the amount of money that you should seek.

There are many reasons why you should try to secure Mode II research funding:

- It may enable you to broaden and deepen your research work in a way that enhances your field, discipline and indeed your subsequent academic career.
- It may free you of some of the more burdensome and tedious aspects of your university work, enabling you to concentrate more intensely on the work you really love.
- In some environments, it may be the only means of actually finding support for your research.
- This is the direction in which university researchers are being pushed as part of the 'performance culture' that now permeates most institutions.
- It wins you prestige within and beyond your university, a degree of bargaining capacity and academic independence.
- It looks good on your CV and assists your promotion and employment chances.

At the most pragmatic level, you can use your research money to:

- Employ research assistants (e.g. for literature reviews, gathering and interpreting data, setting up field visits, archival work, filing, editing and so much more – but you cannot use it for babysitting or shopping).
- Buy equipment.
- Buy out some of your teaching and marking.
- Host visiting scholars.
- Conduct conferences, seminars and workshops.
- Travel to: research sites including archive sites, consult with colleagues and conferences and network opportunities.
- Develop research centres or institutes.

Funding may well allow you to do research you otherwise could not do because of other commitments. Here is an example of one source of funds for this sort of activity. ('Science' in this context includes social science.)

The European Science Foundation (ESF) Exploratory Workshops allow leading European scientists to meet to explore novel ideas at the European level.

The aim of a workshop is to:

- initiate the exchange of knowledge and experiences between researchers from across Europe in an emerging area of research;
- help establish new collaborative links between different disciplines;
- test innovative ideas and develop potential collaborative research projects.

Each year the ESF Scientific Standing Committees select particular topics of interest as well as providing the opportunity for an 'open' section.

Applications must demonstrate the potential importance of European collaboration in the chosen field (European added value).

(Follow the Exploratory Workshop link from http://www.esf.org/, accessed 23 January 2004)

Mode II money may support:

- Discrete projects.
- Seminars and conferences.
- Research centres.
- National and international research networks.
- Major equipment/software purchases.

If you approach such support strategically then you can ensure outputs that can lead to future funding and other benefits such as building research networks. Mode II support may be valuably underpinned by Mode I support from your university that may involve, for instance, the provision of the services of support staff. This is often known as 'in kind' support and is invaluable.

Shirley and Alison both held postdoctoral positions at an Australian university and both had an interest in aging and in innovative research

methodologies for researching it. Encouraged by their research centre director, they gained 'in kind' support to run a mini-conference on 'researching aging'. They invited established and new researchers to write papers discussing the research methodologies they employ to undertake their research. These papers were circulated beforehand and then 'workshopped' at a day-long mini-conference. The papers were then revised for an edited book. This whole process allowed Shirley and Alison not only to address their shared research interests, to gain experience at running a conference and editing a book but also to provide leadership in their field by bringing an inventive set of papers together into a book. They also provided one of the building blocks of their subsequent research careers.

In summary, you might find it helpful to think of research funding money as the fuel that drives university research. You can classify how this fuel is delivered and used as a 2×2 matrix – restricted/unrestricted funds promoting Mode I/Mode II research. In Figure 1, we've represented this matrix as a four-chamber research combustion engine, indicating the availability of and horsepower generated by the different types of fuel and activities. As you will see, it's not going to be a terribly smooth-running engine because, unlike a sweet engine, it can't fire equally well on all four cylinders.

What are the contexts of funding?

There are several contexts you need to understand in order to maximise your chances of attracting research funding and, yes, it's hot inside. This is partly because research funding is inevitably caught up in the wider politics of knowledge production, circulation and consumption. There is no escaping this, and one of your responsibilities as a researcher is to develop an understanding of such wider politics, not just as they apply to you but also as they apply to funding agencies and publishers, the research community as a whole and to various disciplines and sectors within it. An understanding of the politics will help to make you an astute bidder for funds but it will also alert you to at least some of the ethical issues associated with particular funding opportunities.

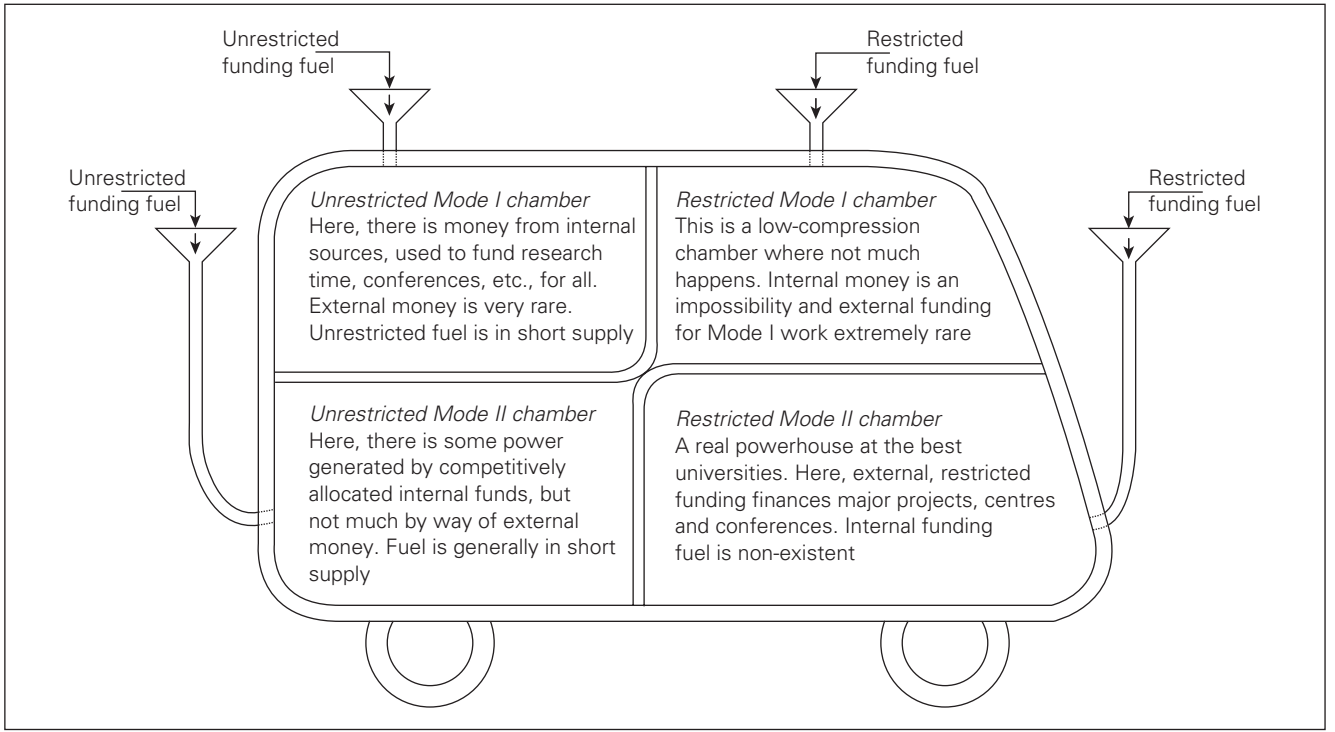

FIGURE 1 The universities' research funding machine: a cut-away sketch of the four-cylinder research internal combustion engine

Your own university

The first context you need to be savvy about is your own university. This is for two reasons. First, you might want access to some of the university's jealously guarded unrestricted funds and, second, if you want to apply to an external funder then you will have to do so *through* the university. (This is because the contract relating to the eventual funds will be between the funder and the university, not you.)

Each university has increasingly elaborate structures and processes internal to it that relate to research and research grants. You need to familiarise yourself with these within your own school or department and within other layers of the university more widely. You should locate a chart that lays out the structures and the individual roles (e.g. dean of research, pro-vice-chancellor of research and so on), the committees and the responsibilities associated with them and the administrative structures and personnel. You should seek out the key people involved in research leadership and administration and get to know them and have them get to know your research foci and achievements. Try to get some insider knowledge – in some cases this may involve getting on some key committees.

You will need to find out information that will help you seek funds and will clarify what you are required to do when submitting an application. These may include the following:

- Sources of research support, information, assistance and advice – especially about budgets and about how much money you will be expected to charge for university infrastructure and the like (see further below). Universities also have lawyers and business or financial managers or budget officers who can help you with budget contracts.
- Sources of seed funding.
- Information about available external grants and time-lines. This will usually include the time-lines for you to submit certain bids through the university and its subsystems. University research officers are the people to talk to here, and they are usually 'worth their weight in gold'.
- Information about the processes that you must go through to get each grant 'signed off' by your head of school perhaps or dean. Most universities have policies you must follow and these are usually on their websites.
- Information about research reporting procedures.
- Chairs or members of ethics committees can advise you about the ethics processes associated with your projects.

Below is an example of the sort of thing we are talking about when we mention administrative support. Check out your own university's website and you will find something similar, along with a whole swath of material about pertinent people, policies and procedures – the vital three Ps.

University of British Columbia: Office of Research Services Overview

The ORS is responsible for the following research administration functions:

- Providing information and assistance in the research grant application process.
- Providing the institutional signature for research grant applications.
- Establishing research accounts and spending limits for research grants in accordance with UBC and granting agency policies.
- Providing administrative support for a variety of research programs offered by several internal UBC committees.
- Ensuring compliance with government regulations and granting agency requirements for the use of human subjects, animal subjects and biohazardous materials in research conducted at UBC.
- Establishing inter-institutional arrangements for the transfer of funds to research collaborators at other institutions.
- Providing statistical information on research funding at UBC.

(http://www.orsil.ubc.ca/overview.htm, accessed 23 January 2004)

You should also know that the university carefully monitors your research performance, and that winning grants is understood as part of that performance. So next to your name on lists at various levels of the organisation will be a record of the research grants you have won, the title, the amount of money and the funding body. You are under surveillance, like it or not. One sure way to accrue Brownie points with those further up the food chain in your university is to bring in research money – especially if the amounts are substantial, come from prestigious sources, and/or if you miraculously manage to generate a surplus which can be raked off by the university. The capacity to attract research income has become more and more important to universities because of wider changes in the university sector. And it is helpful for you to know about

these changes so that you can understand the pressures on your university and by extension on you – and consider how best to deal with them.

The university sector: a national focus

Universities worldwide tend to be short of cash, and this is particularly the case in the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, where unrestricted funds from public sources have seriously diminished. It is not so much the case in certain parts of Europe where the flow of unrestricted funds to universities is still quite strong or in the USA, where there are many independently wealthy universities. Added to this, governments are increasingly shifting the funds they do give from the *unrestricted* category to the *restricted*. This means that there is less money overall, a decline in large 'block grants' and greater competition for and control over the expenditure of available funds.

In turn, universities now expect the researchers that they employ to apply for Mode II funds. This cash helps universities to get research done (thereby enhancing their profile and legitimating their mission statements). It also provides much-needed 'overhead' monies – those elements of such funding that are paid to cover the universities' more or less fixed costs such as keeping the buildings warm or cool and maintaining the library. Moreover, winning external funding – especially that which leads to prestigious publications – may bring bonuses from government in terms of *unrestricted funds*. For instance, in the regular UK Research Assessment Exercise, the quantum measures of research performance include external research funding won. The better the department's overall score, the more money the government gives individual universities in *unrestricted funds*. Overall, what this system of bonuses means is that if universities are to undertake their 'core business' of research, staff must attract research funds. If they do not, the university loses its identity as a 'real' university and loses status within the university 'league table' system, and staff at that university have their opportunities to do research reduced. It's a vicious circle. What's more, it's important to note that just because your university receives overheads or additional unrestricted funds as a result of your successful research funding bids, it doesn't mean that you will necessarily benefit directly. The money is most likely to be spirited away for use or distribution by university research managers – or at best shared between you and them.

Because governments are now not only making less cash available but also expect universities to align themselves more closely with 'customers' for their research output, researchers are encouraged to seek

funding not only from the public sector but also from all other sources (discussed later). This is usually referred to as 'diversifying the research funding base'. It is increasingly the case that, at the behest of their university, researchers are looking further afield for research money and at sources that they once might not have considered. They are expected to be highly lateral in their thinking in this regard.

This is clearly a game not of your own choosing but you can learn to play the game and to consider ways of winning without losing your ideals – at least, not all of them. Keep in mind that while managers do have to focus on income streams and thus want you to generate income to help the institution to stay afloat financially, they also have an interest in research reputations and in the identity of the university as a research-intensive institution. They want to bask in your reflected glory. Your aims are somewhat different – to generate funding to support your research and, indirectly, that of your colleagues.

Universities – a global/regional/international focus

Of course, many universities now understand themselves as global institutions and have links with international, supranational or transnational institutions that provide research funding. In other words, the nation state and those within it are no longer seen as the only source of research funding. Equally, as universities 'partner' in one way or another with universities across national borders, and as researchers become better linked with their international colleagues through email, the Web and increased travel for teaching and research purposes, new opportunities for research funding and research teams arise. So, too, do new research foci. If, for instance, you are one of those people involved in international teaching, you are well placed to spot new research and funding possibilities. Equally, all researchers should now keep their eyes peeled for new funding opportunities outside their own country, and, as time goes on, these funding opportunities will both increase and also become more competitive. We discuss examples of cross-border research funding possibilities below.

In sum, you will inevitably have to face the prospect of applying for research funding of some sort at some time in your career. In the main, unrestricted, internal funding is likely to be increasingly constrained. This means that you will have to look increasingly at sources of funding external to your university. In the next chapter we introduce you to these types of funders, and then go into some detail about how to access specific information on them.

3 Getting to Know the Funding Agencies

In this chapter we introduce you to the generic forms of external funding agencies – and describe their general characteristics.

What are the main sources of funding?

Generally speaking, funds will be available from the following types of sources, which we elaborate on later:

- Your own university.
- Government research funding organisations. The job of these organisations is to allocate government funds for research.
- Government contract research (for Ministries and agencies). Here, as distinct from government research-funding organisations, government departments or agencies may specifically contract researchers to undertake research of a more consultancy type.
- Foundations and charitable trusts. These may have as their main focus the sponsorship of research or they may combine this with other sorts of activity, such as philanthropic work.
- Private sector corporations. These organisations may need research/consultancy work undertaken to help them with specific work they are trying to do. For instance, a private company manufacturing mobile phones may need to know the best way of marketing them and may employ a social anthropologist to advise it on the role of mobile phone technology in youth culture.

In this globalised age there are also a number of organisations that provide funding for research which is not confined within nation states – hereafter referred to as 'states'. The terms employed here are 'international', 'supranational' and 'transnational' organisations. These are contested terms. We are using them in the following ways:

- *International organisations* are those which include national representatives who remain accountable to their home state.
- *Supranational organisations* are those which exist above nations, have members from many states but are accountable only to themselves.
- *Transnational organisations* may be based in one country but operate in many and are not aligned with any particular state. These are usually global corporations.

While these may be formal definitions, they don't give an adequate indication of the relationships of power that exist between states and these different organizations.

What do funding bodies tend to have in common?

Many funders have:

- Funding rounds at certain times of the year.
- Restrictions on which individuals and organisations can apply (e.g. some organisations reserve some funds for 'young scholars' or 'emerging researchers').
- Very explicit application processes and reject, out of hand, applications that do not conform exactly.
- Nominated areas of focus or priority.
- Information on the maximum amount of funding available per project but will also indicate the average amount allocated and explain that getting the maximum is rare.
- Limits on the number of grants you can hold simultaneously.
- The expectation that they will be persuaded of the significance of your project and its impact or benefit.
- Increased their emphasis on partnerships across the public/private divide and across nations.
- Become very positively disposed to collaborative links between different disciplines and to the development of collaborative research projects.
- An emphasis on innovation. (Sometimes they will even explain what they mean by this term.)
- Their assessment criteria laid out in the information and guidelines to applicants that they provide.
- A range of research they are prepared to fund which may be so broad as to include research centres – but usually not.

Some also:

- Ask for short (perhaps two-page) expressions of interest in the first instance and usually require the following information: name; organisation; concise statement of the purpose, justification and cost of the project; other sources of funds and contributions; and referees.
- Have established links with particular individuals, teams or universities and prefer to work with them. Consequently it may be difficult – and certainly very time-consuming – to build new links with them.
- Expect 'co-financing' or matching funds or at least some contribution in kind from the applicants and their organisation: if these can be 'leveraged' then the grant is looked upon more favourably. This is also called 'co-funding from alternative sources', which include industry, trusts, foundations and various national sources and international sources.
- Specify 'deliverables' over the duration of the grant as well as at the end.
- Are very keen on such key words as 'multi-stakeholder collaboration', 'capacity building', 'knowledge dissemination' and 'synergies'.

What are the key differences between funding agencies?

Funding agencies differ in lots of ways that will become evident as we proceed, but two of the main differences you need to be aware of are the sort of research they fund and their attitude to knowledge. Some include in their funding programmes research that is directed to the production and dissemination of new knowledge – basic or what is sometimes also called curiosity-driven research. Here knowledge does not necessarily have to have an immediate utility. Others place much more emphasis on research likely to have an immediate impact and which has an action and change orientation. As indicated earlier, this is called applied research or sometimes called policy-relevant research. Clearly, the distinctions are not always easy to uphold and are a matter of considerable debate in research circles.

The other key difference to note is who initiates the focus of the research – the researcher or the funding body. This has many implications for the power you have over the research and its outcomes and outputs – so to speak.

Who are the funders?

At the beginning of this chapter we identified the various major types of potential funding body. Most funding bodies have their own websites at which the details of their funding programmes are identified. Obviously it is up to you to chase up various organisations and find out what they say on their websites. We provide details from some websites as illustrative examples only and clearly things may have changed since the times we accessed the sites.

Your own university

Whilst money from your own institution is not external, we mention it here for important reasons. Often internal university grants provide you with a research launch pad. Through internal money you can get funded for small-scale projects from which to begin to publish and establish your research profile and reputation. Such funding can also give you a much-needed apprenticeship in learning how to manage a funded research project. It is a good idea to apply for these early and to make the most of them in terms of outcomes and outputs. Some universities give priority for internal funding to early career research researchers in order to give them a 'leg up'. However, in the longer term it is sensible not to rely on internal university money, and the more senior you get the more you will be expected to seek outside funds.

As we noted earlier, you can win internal university money for a range of research-related activities. Take a further example. Some universities provide support for research groups or research centres. You may be in the position to form such a group or at least to join one. Such groupings are beneficial for the following reasons. They:

- Usually provide administrative or research assistance support for members.
- Concentrate the efforts of like-minded researchers to produce what is called a 'critical mass' of people who work together and develop a collective sensibility and reputation.
- Provide you with immediate opportunities for team research and research-related activities such as inviting visiting scholars and running reading groups.
- Often include experienced and emerging researchers and thus mean you have ready access to potential mentors.

Government research-funding organisations

There are two main sources of research funds from governments. The differences between them are considerable and it is important to understand this. Most governments have organisations usually called something like 'research councils'. These are the traditional funders of basic and applied university research, acting as a conduit for funds between government and researchers. The second source, which we deal with below, is where government contracts university researchers for a specific piece of consultancy-type research.

Research councils are organised into fields of research and this varies across countries. For instance, in the UK there are a number of research councils. Those that are most relevant to readers of this book are the Economic and Social Research Council and the Arts and Humanities Research Board. The National Research Foundation is the South African government's national agency promoting basic and applied research and innovation across a wide range of fields. In Canada there are also a number of research councils; the most relevant for readers of this book is likely to be the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. You should also note that a number of other research councils which, from their names, may not seem relevant to you may also be worth exploring – for instance, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council in the UK does fund a small amount of social science and business research. The following are examples from other countries.

Research agencies in various countries

- Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training Co-operative Research Centres (Australia)
- Australian Research Council
- Centre national de la recherche scientifique/National Centre for Scientific Research (France)
- Bundesministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Forschung und Technologie/Federal Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Technology (Germany)
- Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft/German Research Foundation (Germany)

- Israel Science Foundation (Israel)
- Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche/National Research Council (Italy)
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (Japan)

Most research councils have comprehensive websites that give details of such things as:

- Thematic priorities (that is, the broad areas that the council sees as being priorities).
- 'End users' (a term used to describe those who, at the end of the day, will use research findings).
- Application processes and information for award holders.
- Peer review and decision making.
- Reporting and evaluation.
- Frequently asked questions.
- Links to other sites that may be of use.

Some also give you information about past grant winners and patterns of funding, and this helps you to see where you fit in this scenario.

The grants provided by research councils are highly competitive and prestigious. Winning them is great for your sense of self as a researcher and also for your reputation. However, just as they involve high expectations, so they also entail heavy responsibilities. You must deliver on what you say you will – of course, that is the case with all research grants. Research councils expect full reports and these all go on record and may be accessed when you apply for further funding.

National governments are increasingly sensitive to the benefits of research that has an international sensibility and, through their research councils, are encouraging researchers to consider the international aspects of their research questions. In addition, some are keen to support research that involves international research partnerships of various sorts. The following example from the ESRC in the UK illustrates the point and indicates some of the strategies employed to achieve this end.

ESRC international policy and strategy

Vision

The scope of the social sciences is international. They transcend national boundaries and nation states in their methods and subjects of enquiry, and in the knowledge, which they produce. The ESRC's role in developing social science in the UK involves a strong commitment to work across national boundaries, taking advantage of the intellectual opportunities to be gained from co-operative and comparative research as well as maintaining and developing the high standing of UK researchers within international social science research networks. Council's international commitment is embedded in its strategic goals. In particular, Council endorses the aspirations of the European Research Area in addressing the fragmentation of much European research with a view to increasing European competitiveness and enhancing the evidence base that contributes to the design of policy in response to common problems facing European societies. Council's commitment to strengthening its role as a national and an international player will enable it to gain maximum benefit for the social science community from new opportunities for research funding and co-operation as they develop. It will also ensure that the research undertaken is of maximum benefit to users.

Strategy

The strengthening of the Council's international commitment requires:

- Changes in the Council's strategic planning priorities.
- Mainstreaming the international research agenda as a generic concern for all Council Boards and Committees.
- Adapting the allocations of financial resources by the Boards and the allocation of time and staff resources within the Council's offices.

- Increasing involvement of overseas scholars on Council committees and as referees and evaluators.
- Developing an implementation plan that identifies strategic priorities.
- Efforts to build effective platforms of co-operation with other countries.
- Active consideration of ways of strengthening pan-European research infrastructures.
- Active communication of the strategy to other Research Councils, RCUK and the OST as well as to relevant overseas organisations.
- Explicit recognition of the need for active international networks involving both researchers and users, particularly in key growth areas.
- Greater co-operation over the design and delivery of research training with overseas partners.
- Promotion of knowledge and understanding of different cultures and institutional arrangements.
- Searching for new opportunities for international partnerships beyond Europe, for example, in North America or Asia.

(http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCContent/researchfunding/interpol_strategy.asp, accessed 23 January 2004)

The strategies listed indicate a serious process of gearing up for an expansion of international research, so this is clearly a matter to keep in mind as you develop your research agenda and networks; as predictably, support for international research will only increase.

Further, within nations there are funding bodies that fund international research, i.e. they fund people to go outside their own countries to conduct research in others. An example is the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX):

> IREX higher education programs give individuals in the United States and overseas the resources and opportunities they need to conduct innovative social science and humanities research; increase their professional knowledge and abilities; and advance their leadership skills.
>
> (http://www.irex.org/highered/research.asp, accessed 23 January 2004)

Additionally, there are some supranational governmental organisations, such as the European Union, which have their own research funding arms and which fund strategic research. For example, the European Science Foundation funds strategic research and supports the pursuit of knowledge that does not necessarily have an action component:

> The European Science Foundation promotes high quality science at a European level. It acts as a catalyst for the development of science by bringing together leading scientists and funding agencies to debate, plan and implement pan-European initiatives.
>
> (http://www.esf.org/, accessed 23 January 2004)

It runs a scheme for the social sciences called the European Collaborative Research Projects in the Social Sciences (2001–2003) that, at the moment, involves co-operation between national research councils and the European Science Council. It describes its foci thus:

> The new scheme is open to applications on any topic within the social sciences that demonstrates an international framework for research collaboration. Projects need not be exclusively European in their topic focus. The scheme offers the opportunity to fund multilateral projects addressing international topics and issues pooling European research expertise. Project applications must involve collaboration amongst research teams in a minimum of three European countries. The scheme is designed to enhance the continuing process of European academic networking and career development by providing financing for problem-driven research projects to consolidate these achievements and trends. It offers the opportunity for researcher-led innovation in topic choice and directions for international research.
>
> (http://www.esf.org/, accessed 23 January 2004)

Government contract research

We mentioned above that there are two principal sources of government funding. We've dealt with that available through research councils and the like. The second main type of government funding is contract research. Because here the government is specifically 'buying' a piece of work, the research agenda is set and tightly prescribed by the funder. The subject of the research will generally be defined by reference to some 'policy need'. In the UK in particular, there is an increasing

demand from government for what it calls 'evidence-based policy'. This is where government is supposedly setting policy agendas on the basis of 'evidence' rather than, say, ideology. This sounds good but, inevitably, because the research agenda is set by the funding organisation, such work often produces 'policy-based evidence'. In other words, the researchers almost inevitably end up telling the policy makers what they want to hear. Such work needs to be approached with some caution. However, it can provide a fruitful means of funding research and giving access where it might otherwise prove difficult.

Here are some of the ways in which you might get access to such funding.

- Some of these contracts are open to tender, advertised widely in newspapers and on government websites and are allocated according to competitive selection processes (although usually you do not get feedback on your application and the processes are not as transparent as one might like). Anyone or any team can apply, although clearly to win you have to be a credible applicant in terms of expertise and experience. It also might be the case, however, that the tender implies that certain sorts of research individuals or teams are preferred. Some government departments with major research programmes may operate an email alert service of upcoming tender possibilities.
- Some other government grants are put out to tender to selected individuals, organisations or institutions and the competition is more restricted. You should always try and get yourself on appropriate tender lists. Check with the organisation how to do this.
- Yet other grants are allocated to selected individuals or institutions.

The latter two cases tend to arise when trust relations have been built up between people in government circles and researchers, or when researchers have a strong reputation in the field and/or when they are understood to be in sympathy with the government agendas. These contracts can be more politicised than other government grants.

Government research funding of this sort is for contract research. There are several points to be alert to here. The contractor:

- Has greater power.
- Sets the specifications.
- Controls the expenditure.
- Establishes milestones and their associated 'deliverables'.

- Specifies outcomes.
- Controls the outputs (and may even decide not to publish your report).
- Monitors the contract – closely.

It follows that, if you undertake this sort of research, you must scrutinise the contract carefully and negotiate, where possible, before you sign anything – your university's legal adviser will assist you. You need to ensure that:

- You are very clear about what is expected at each stage.
- The research can be completed in the time-lines specified.
- You have clarified matters of intellectual property. This is a particularly contentious issue, which we address further below, but note that the contract may mean that you can neither speak publicly about the project until it is complete nor publish from it at all or until a certain time after completion. It may also mean that your name does not even appear on the report, or that the report gets buried.

We prefer to do this sort of research in teams. This is partly because the deadlines are usually so tight and you thus need lots of people on deck – particularly those who are prepared to work above and beyond the call of duty. Often such research contracts also call for multiple research skills, some of which you as an individual may not possess, and thus again teams are valuable. It is also useful to have various people to help you to liaise with those in government, as such liaison work can be very demanding, particularly if you're contracted to undertake research on a contentious topic.

Again, you must deliver what you say you will but you (and your team) are not usually alone in this responsibility. Often the government funder will have a management team that oversees the research and that considers each deliverable as it is submitted.

At the global level, a number of quasi-governmental inter- and supranational organisations (such as the OECD) provide funding for contract research. Their objectives in funding such research are usually associated with global or regional governance. As such, the funding is aligned to their primary 'mission'. For these bodies, strategic research is not the norm. Grants are usually available for specific development or action projects that mainly seek to directly address a particular issue and to effect change.

These grants usually require various complex partnership arrangements and are often restricted to specific countries. The various requirements for partnerships involve different public/private/civil society combinations, which tend to include:

- Local authorities.
- Local stakeholders.
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs).
- Community organisations.
- Professional associations.
- International development organisations.

The World Bank is an example of a supranational organisation that funds research. Its website states:

> A limited number of grants are available through the Bank, either funded directly or managed through partnerships. Most are designed to encourage innovation, collaboration with other organizations, and participation by stakeholders at national and local levels.
>
> (http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/OPPORTUNITIES, accessed 23 January 2004)

Its list of grant categories includes those below.

Grant Resources for Civil Society Organizations

Describes a wide range of Bank-supported grant resources that are available to qualified organizations, including eligibility requirements and instructions for making applications.

InfoDev (http://www.infodev.org/projects/apply.htm)

A global program managed by the Bank to promote innovative applications of information and communication technologies, with

emphasis on meeting the needs of low-income communities in developing countries. The program pools intellectual, technical, and financial resources of public and private institutions from across the globe to assist promising projects and initiatives.

Social Funds

The Fund helps empower the poor and vulnerable by allowing them to become actively involved in the development of their communities. Typically, social funds develop into long-term poverty reduction and social capital creation mechanisms, with the objective of improving infrastructure, providing employment, community development, improving the delivery of social services and/or supporting decentralization.

(http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/OPPORTUNITIES/0%2C%2CcontentMDK:20061756~menuPK:96315~pagePK:95645~piPK:95672~theSitePK:95480%2C00.html+grants)

As you will see, in each such category a rather limited range of grants, scholarships, fellowships and study grants exists. Foci include capacity building, the environment, health, nutrition and population, education, information technology, poverty reduction and social development. We shall have more to say on the World Bank later.

International and transnational funding agencies sometimes name academic institutions and research institutes as possible recipients of research funds, but this is not usual and sometimes they may be actively excluded. Researchers from universities tend to become involved as a result of their networks or as consultants. They may undertake such things as case studies, surveys, policy analysis, pilot studies, feasibility studies, evaluations, research and non-research-based consultancies and may also be involved with organising and offering training activities.

Foundations and charitable trusts

What is a foundation or a trust? Basically, these are organisations established in order to administer funds of money. They are created in

order to pursue certain stated objectives and are generally governed by a group of trustees or a board whose task is to ensure that the foundation or trust's income is managed well and applied as designated by the original benefactors. The benefactors can be (rich) individuals or corporations. The organisations usually hold substantial capital wealth and use the income from this capital in pursuit of the trust or foundation's purposes. This means that during times when stock market or interest rate returns are low, the income available for grants, etc., may also be commensurately reduced. A number of these organisations support academic research. Many foundations now have an increasing emphasis on public policy and social welfare and on action-oriented research.

The exact form of these organisations will vary according to the legal forms available in different countries, but you will know one when you see one. The Foundation Center's website (http://fdncenter.org/research) explains that there are two main types in American law, public and private, and elaborates on the differences between and within each category. Here are some extracts, which exclude small details not pertinent beyond the USA.

A private foundation

- is a nongovernmental, nonprofit organization;
- has a principal fund or endowment;
- is managed by its own trustees and directors;
- maintains or aids charitable, educational, religious, or other activities serving the public good;
- makes grants, primarily to other nonprofit organizations.

There are three different types of *private* foundations:

- *Independent* or *Family Foundations* receive endowments from individuals or families.
- *Company-sponsored* or *Corporate Foundations* receive funds from their parent companies, although they are legally separate entities.
- *Operating Foundations* run their own programs and services and typically do not provide much grant support to outside organizations.

A public foundation

- is a nongovernmental, nonprofit organization;
- receives funding from numerous sources;
- is managed by its own trustees and directors;
- operates grants programs benefiting unrelated organizations or individuals as one of its primary purposes;
- makes grants, primarily to other nonprofit organizations.

There are numerous types of *public* foundations:

- *Community Foundations* seek support for themselves from the public, but like private foundations provide grants. Their grants primarily support the needs of the geographic community or region in which they are located.
- *Women's Funds* – examples include the Los Angeles Women's Foundation, the Ms Foundation for Women.
- *Other Public Foundations* include funds serving other population groups and field-specific funds, such as health funding foundations.

(http://fdncenter.org/learn/classroom/ft_tutorial/ftt_part1_q1.html, accessed 23 January 2004)

The Foundation Center website contains extensive information on private and public philanthropic foundations in the USA. Searches can be made for basic information of more than 70,000 private and community foundations. Searches, by subject or geographic key word, can also be made of annotated links to private foundations. It includes information on trends in grant expenditure and a list of the 100 largest US grant-making foundations ranked by spending.

Similar initiatives exist outside the USA. For instance, Funders Online is an initiative of the European Foundation Centre Orpheus Programme that operates from the European Foundation Centre (EFC). Orpheus, the information and communications programme of the EFC, provides a public information service on foundations and corporate funders active in Europe (http://www.fundersonline.org/). The Japan Foundation Center (http://www.jfc.or.jp/eibun/e_index.html) includes information on grant-making foundations in Asia and Oceania.

Some trusts are happy to respond to research proposals, whilst others are more proactive and have defined research agendas. These establish the parameters within which they would like to receive proposals. Foundations have a tendency to focus on particular fields. For example, in the USA the major foundations interested in education include the Ford, Rockefeller, Spencer, Macarthur, Pew, Markle, Gates, Atlantic, Pew and DavisVining Foundations.

All major trusts and foundations tend to have very good websites (after all, they are trying to give their money away) and may also have email alert services by means of which you can receive prompt notification of any special projects they wish to support or advance notice of major new programmes.

There are many funding agencies that are international foundations. Lists and details about these are readily accessed through the TGCI Grantsmanship Centre website (http://www.tgci.com/intl/index.asp) with its live links to International Funding Sources. The Asia Foundation is one such body and below is the programme page of its website.

The Asia Foundation

For 47 years, The Asia Foundation has sponsored and administered programs throughout Asia and in the U.S.

Programs by Subject – Information on Asia Foundation programs by subject matter, organized according to the Foundation's four primary areas of focus: Governance, Law, and Civil Society, Economic Reform and Development, International Relations, and Women's Political Participation.

The Foundation also has significant crosscutting programs in Information & Communications Technology (ICT) and the Environment.

Programs by Location – Information on Asia Foundation programs in:

Afghanistan – Bangladesh – Cambodia – China – East Timor – India – Indonesia – Japan – Korea – Mongolia – Nepal – Pakistan – Philippines – Sri Lanka – Taiwan – Thailand – Vietnam

U.S.-Administered Programs – Information on U.S.-based programs, including the Asian-American Exchange Program, Books for Asia, Information & Communications Technology (ICT), the Luce Scholars program, Environment, and programs in Washington, D.C.

Project Lists – View all individual Asia Foundation projects by location and subject matter.
Grant Guidelines – View general information about Asia Foundation grant-making procedures.

(http://www.asiafoundation.org/ accessed 23 January 2004)

The private sector

University–industry research partnerships are not new, but with many nations attempting to develop so-called 'knowledge-based' economies this form of research funding is becoming increasingly significant. Indeed, it is being heavily promoted by governments and by universities. The former see it as way of achieving economic growth through the commercialisation of research and for the latter it is also a means of gaining access to non-government money. This trend now extends beyond the conventional science, technology, engineering and medical science industry–university partnership and also includes such partnerships in the social sciences and humanities.

In the past, the mechanisms for establishing links were largely informal and, unlike most of the funding sources we have already discussed, they were not generally accessed via a formal application process. Today, opportunities to forge links are increasingly supported by government programmes set up to foster and, sometimes, to co-fund collaboration. For instance, the Scottish Research Information System (www.scottishresearch.com/) promotes itself as the 'one-stop source linking industry and academic research in Scotland'. The Industry Canada website includes links to Industry Liaison Office in Canadian universities, technical institutions, teaching hospitals and colleges (http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/SSG/tf00135e.html). In Australia, the Australian Research Council co-funds university–industry partnerships through its Linkage grants scheme. The Australian commonwealth government funds the Cooperative Research Centre Program and is promoting

access to this programme for small and medium businesses, although the centres are concentrated in the science and technology disciplines. Universities themselves are beginning to institute mechanisms for facilitating partnerships, offering advice and support to both university staff and industry partners. Below is an example from the University of Toronto.

UTech Services

The Innovations Foundation and University of Toronto's Technology Transfer office have joined forces to create UTech Services, an integrated storefront of services for industrial partnerships, technology transfer and commercialization. The staff of UTech Services includes:

- Specialists in contracts, agreements and negotiations
- A team of business development officers
- The staff of the Innovations Foundation, who are experts in licensing technology and fostering new spin-off companies

UTech Services helps researchers to:

- Identify potential industry partners
- Negotiate funding and intellectual property agreements
- Access government matching programs
- Seek legal protection for their intellectual property
- Comply with the university's policies
- Market and license inventions
- Access sources of seed and venture capital
- Create spin-off companies

(http://www.rir.utoronto.ca/utech/, accessed 23 January 2004)

The current promotion of research and development (R&D) in many countries creates a climate in which private corporations are open to opportunities for collaboration. However, they will fund only projects that are seen to meet their needs. It is worth while keeping in mind that,

included among the key incentives to collaborate for industry, are strategic access to specialised research and development and the resolution of problems. Different forms of co-operative relationships include:

- The provision of technical and scientific training.
- Research.
- Consultancy.
- Services.

Industry may offer research funding as a cash grant as well as in-kind contributions such as:

- Material and expertise.
- Access to facilities.
- Services.
- Research 'subjects' – or, to put it more politely, participants or respondents.

Although university–industry partnerships are becoming more formal and structured, informal strategies for establishing a partnership remain important. These include personal networks. Academics with experience in industry may access opportunities via contact with former employers and co-workers or through contact with former contemporaries now working in industry. Participation in industry-focused conferences and participation on boards and consultative committees provide other means to develop informal networks.

Thinking globally again, many transnational organisations will also fund research. Keep in mind that these organisations are profit-motivated and that their provision of research funds is aligned to this. As part of the organisations' corporate social responsibility efforts they may establish a pseudo-foundation – an organisation that looks independent from the corporation but isn't necessarily so.

IBM is an example of a transnational organisation whose primary purpose is profit but which also awards funds as part of its 'corporate philanthropy'. For IBM 'Good Philanthropy is Good Business …'. The fact that IBM's corporate giving helps the spread of its product demonstrates the point.

> IBM corporate philanthropy spans the globe with diverse and sustained giving programs that support initiatives in education, workforce development, arts and culture, and the environment to

> benefit communities in need. IBM demonstrates its commitment to good corporate citizenship by providing grant recipients with technology, employee time and talent, and project funds.
>
> (http://www.ibm.com/ibm/ibmgives, accessed 23 January 2004)

Such philosophies translate into programmes of grants, as the following shows:

Grants program

To make the most effective use of IBM resources and expertise, IBM has selected priority issues and key initiatives for investment. Our main focus is Education. We also provide smaller grants in the areas of Adult Education and Workforce Environment. In addition, we provide opportunities for IBM employees to support their communities and the issues they care about through Employee Giving.

Education

IBM realizes the power and importance of education. Through major initiatives such as Reinventing Education, the IBM KidSmart Early Learning Program, and IBM MentorPlace, IBM is working to raise student achievement and enhance academic productivity to support thriving communities around the globe.

Adult training and workforce development

Technology can be a powerful tool in education and job training programs for adults, helping broaden opportunities and strengthening programs available to adults in need of new skills and employment. It also can help simulate real job conditions, make the acquisition of education and skills more effective and help people get the network of support they need to obtain and retain employment.

Arts and culture

IBM's support of the arts stems from our strong tradition of bettering our communities. We feel a deep sense of responsibility both inside and outside the company – a focused determination to enhance the communities in which we do business and in which our customers and employees live. By joining with libraries, museums, and other cultural institutions in exciting partnerships that leverage IBM expertise, we also demonstrate the critical role technology plays in enhancing the arts.

Helping communities in need

Wherever IBM does business around the globe, we form connections to communities and support a range of civic and non-profit activities that help those in need. In all our efforts, we demonstrate how technology can enrich and expand access to services and assistance.

Environment

IBM's support of the environment promotes the optimal use of leading-edge technology to conduct environmental research to offer new knowledge and enhanced understanding of these important issues.

Employee giving

IBM teams with employees to support organizations and causes in the communities where they live and work. Community-level grant making and extensive volunteer programs help our employees become personally involved in community projects.

(http://www.ibm.com/ibm/ibmgives/grant/,
accessed 16 February 2004)

Checking out the ethics and politics

It's worth pointing out that all funding bodies have their own particular ethos. Sometimes this is clear from their websites but not necessarily, so you may need to check more widely. Take the case of the World Bank. It has a Social Fund which, as we have shown, provides funds for projects to support the poor and the vulnerable. But you may like to consider its commitment to such a social project given its other activities. Indeed, for critical and satirical comments on the World Bank go to The Whirled Bank at http://www.whirledbank.org/.

You would be well advised to try to check out the politics of the funding body you are considering, because you may:

- Be ideologically opposed to its politics and not wish to be associated with it – no matter what size the grant.
- Agree with its politics and thus be able to write the grant application in good faith.
- Attempt to be apolitical and simply wish to tailor your grant application accordingly so that it will be favourably assessed.

You should be aware that such politics, particularly but not exclusively in regard to corporate sponsorship, might generate ethical issues and dangers. These may be around findings with which the funder disagrees or around notions of 'commercial confidentiality', which prevent you publishing. If you are interested in the ethical basis of funding you need to check out not only what the funding body does (for example, do you want money from tobacco or arms producers?) but also what it supports (for example, political parties).

Getting the low-down on funders

You now have an idea about the nature of research funding, why you may actively seek funding and the main types of funding body. We now turn our attention to the pragmatic, if somewhat prosaic, subject of how to divine the kind of detailed information on funders that you will need to prepare yourself for making an application.

As well as knowing about the various sources and types of funding, you need to know how to readily access such information in a timely

and time-saving manner. There are various ways to do this, and you might try any or all of the following:

- University/faculty research offices.
- The higher education press.
- The tender sections of newspapers.
- Professional knowledge (e.g. when you read papers in journals, or research reports in the press, check who the funding body is, as it is usually acknowledged).
- Personal contacts and informal sources: information can be gleaned through casual conversation, seminars, colleague review and contacting researchers in similar fields.

How can I find out about them?

The Web is a particularly useful source of information and you can use it in various ways. There are many websites, particularly US-based, which provide information on almost-everything-you-need-to-know about winning and managing research funding. A good example is the Foundation Center website (http://fdncenter.org/research), which, unlike many of its compatriots, does not charge for its on-line tutorials. You should obviously make yourself familiar with such sites, noting, however, that they are not necessarily aimed at early career researchers in the academy.

You should regularly visit the sites that you know. Take the example of government websites. The Australian commonwealth government publishes *GrantsLINK* (http://www.grantslink.gov.au), which provides information about commonwealth government grants and funding opportunities. The GrantsFINDER allows you to search for commonwealth government funding by subject, agency or grant name. GrantsLINK also includes links to state government entry points and commercial/non-government grant providers.

Looking for a grant from the Commonwealth Government?

GrantsLINK WILL HELP YOU FIND IT.

- **Getting Started**

Learn how GrantsLINK works, the types of grants the Commonwealth provides and get some general tips on completing your application form.

- **Search by keywords**

Use the Quick Search to the left of your screen to find a grant by keyword. An **Advanced Search** facility is also available.

- **GrantsFINDER**

Not sure what you should search for? Browse through a list of grants programmes organised by **subject agency** or **grant name**.

- **GrantsASSIST**

Didn't find what you were looking for? A range of assistance is available through GrantsASSIST. You can contact **Commonwealth Regional Information Service** by calling us on (freecall) 1800 026 222 9am-6pm Mon-Fri AEST)

(http://www.grantslink.gov.au/, accessed 23 January 2004)

You can also, of course, use various search engines to locate funding sources. After such a search you can focus on those possibilities that pertain to you and follow them up. For instance, if you type in 'international research grants' or 'international research opportunities', Google generates a helpful list. However, doing it that way is time-consuming and not necessarily timely in relation to funding timetables and deadlines. Fortunately, there are various other ways you can get information about funding opportunities, and the mechanisms available are becoming more and more sophisticated – particularly Web-based services. Consider IRIS, the Illinois Researcher Information Service.

IRIS is a unit of the University of Illinois Library at Urbana–Champaign. IRIS offers three Web-based funding and research services: the IRIS Database of federal and private funding opportunities in all disciplines; the IRIS Alert Service; and the IRIS Expertise Service. The IRIS Database currently contains over 8,000 active federal and private funding opportunities in the sciences, social sciences, arts, and humanities. Users can search IRIS by sponsor, deadline date, keyword, and other criteria. Most IRIS records contain live links to sponsor Web sites, electronic

forms, or Electronic Research Administration (ERA) portals. The IRIS Database is updated daily. Researchers at subscribing institutions can create their own IRIS search profiles and detailed electronic CVs ("biosketches") and post them to a Web-accessible database for viewing by colleagues at other institutions, program officers at federal and private funding agencies, and private companies.

(http://gateway.library.uiuc.edu/iris/, accessed 23 January 2004)

While this site is mainly for the USA, it does include hot links to government sites in other countries. It is also worth noting that whilst this site has open access for staff at the University of Illinois, its information is available to other colleges and universities only for an annual subscription fee. Similarly, the Foundation Center in the USA, which provides information on private foundations and corporate grants, charges users for its advice, as does Global Grant (http://www.globalgrant.com/). Grants Online (http://www.grantsonline.org.uk) also charges a subscription fee for its service, which includes a database of funding opportunities in the European Union and UK government and grant-making trusts.

Similar services exist at other selected universities in other countries. The University of Southern Queensland, for instance, provides access to the Grant Search Database (http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/funding/grant_search.jsp), which allows you to search Australian federal and state government, philanthropic and corporate grant funding options that are available in Australia. The Sponsored Program Information Network (SPIN), to which a number of Australian universities subscribe, also includes international funding sources.

InfOffice – SPIN, SMARTS & GENIUS

In the current economic climate, researchers have no alternative other than to look for industry and non-government sources for research dollars to support their work. Universities now have the benefit of three inter-related database services –

SPIN (Sponsored Program Information network),

SMARTS (Spin Matching and Research Transmittal System) and

GENIUS (Global Expertise Network for Industry, Universities and Scholars).

Each database not only assists with searching for alternative funding sources but will also help to foster networking.

SPIN is an extensive database of potential funding sources both within Australia and overseas updated on a daily basis.

SMARTS is an electronic matching and funding opportunity notification engine which provides investigators with direct and targeted information about relevant funding opportunities.

GENIUS is a global database containing the expertise of researchers and scholars from universities and research organisations throughout the world. Profiles detailing expertise are created and maintained by researchers and scholars themselves. An increasing number of funding bodies and organisations are targeting individual researchers via the **GENIUS** database.

(http://www.unisa.edu.au/orc/grants/infofficeinst.htm, accessed 23 January 2004)

If your university does not subscribe to such services, you might consider lobbying to get access to them – after all, it is in the university's interests that you are successful as a funded researcher.

Another way of getting information is through electronic or paper-based funding alerts. These:

- Are usually provided regularly.
- Can come to you as a newsletter.
- Include a range of funding opportunities such as funding for services and programmes as well as research.
- Have lists of available grants, agencies and deadlines and sometimes also indicate what/who has been funded in the past by particular funding bodies.
- Give details of:

- The grant provider.
- The grant scheme (including all the restrictions on topic and who is excluded).
- Funding amounts and limits. Usually a funding range is indicated.
- The closing date.
- Further information on the grant itself.
- Contact phone, fax numbers and email and Web addresses. They will usually hot-link you to the website of the provider so you can get information directly about the organisation and readily access and download the funding guidelines and application forms in Acrobat or PDF.

Easy Grants, Information Service in Australia puts out a newsletter monthly and it usually includes:

Part 1 – Summary and index of information
Part 2 – Updates, Hot Tips and the Search for Grant Information and Resources
Part 3 – This edition's Great Grant
Part 4 – Easy Grants in Detail

The grants covered by Easy Grants are grouped as follows:

Arts and Culture
Community Services
Sport and Recreation
Infrastructure
Philanthropic
Research
Environment and Heritage
Economic Development and Tourism
Technology and Telecommunications

Now that researchers have a much more global sensibility, it is very useful to use researcher information services that alert you to funds made available by providers beyond your national borders. The TGCI Grantsmanship Centre (http://www.tgci.com) provides hot-links to Funding Sources grouped as follows:

- Africa.
- Asia, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.
- Canada.
- Central America, the Caribbean and South America.
- Europe.
- The Middle East.

Additionally, the TGCI centre offers 'grantsmanship' training and low-cost publications to non-profit organisations and government agencies. Its publications include *Winning Grant Proposals Online*, which collects the best of funded federal grant proposals annually and makes them available on CD-ROM, and a guide called *Program Planning and Proposal Writing*.

It will take you some time to check out all these information sources but, again, it is time well spent. The aim here is to become so familiar with them that using them becomes a habitual part of your research practice.

4 Getting the Basics in Place

In this chapter we help you to develop the basic skills you will require to put in winnable funding bids. We put this in the context of helping you to establish a grant-winning researcher identity.

Making choices

The way in which you have chosen to develop yourself as researcher and the institutional imperatives to which you are subject will frame the funding choices that you make. The options available will depend on your:

- Field of expertise.
- Research interests and those you wish to develop.
- Preferred research modality.
- Time and energy.
- Motivations and ambitions.
- Politics.
- National location.
- Institutional location.
- Networks.
- The possible research teams you may form or join.

In short, they will depend on your researcher identity.

Shaping up your image: funding and your researcher identity

Funding is so important to your development as a researcher that your choices about it should be an integral part of your decisions about the

direction that you want your research career to take. Seeking and winning funds should be part of a continuing personal research development strategy for you and your research collaborators. It should not be an *ad hoc* or unprincipled grab for money. In planning your research directions carefully, sequentially and realistically you need to:

- Be highly focused.
- Be very strategic.
- Consider the ways in which all your academic activities interrelate and can benefit each other – in other words, the multiple pay-off effect.
- Consider how your research connects with other pertinent research in your university and the broader research and other communities with which you identify.

There are a number of questions (many of which are discussed in *Getting Started on Research)* to address:

- Who am I as a researcher?
- What is my main research focus and agenda?
- What are my medium and longer-term goals?
- In terms of those goals, what are my research strengths and what areas do I need to strengthen?
- What relevant networks do I have and which do I need to build? (See *Building Networks*.)
- What do I want to achieve in terms of identity, profile and research performance?
- What range of activities will get me there – what publications, research-related activities and links, for instance?
- How can I link my teaching and research?
- What might I have to give up to achieve this? Consider what you can legitimately say 'no' to at your workplace, when and how.

You can use your answers to these questions to construct a plan for yourself of the type shown as Table 1. We've made this one for three years – which is a sensible medium-term time frame. Such a plan should help you to systematically integrate your various academic activities with a view to steadily achieving your research objectives. We have filled in an imaginary example. It is best if you revisit your plan at least once a year and you may, indeed, be asked to do something like this by your department, faculty or university.

TABLE 1 Planning your research for the next three years

Year	Research grants (internal/external)	Publications	Collaboration with industry and/or international scholars	Research community activities (internal/external)	Connecting teaching and research	What can I say no to?
1	Apply for internal seed funding for a pilot project on gender and consumption. Examine EU websites and conditions for grant applications	From literature review for pilot, submit a review essay to *Journal of Gender Studies*	Make contact with proposed European partners and discuss possible collaboration with them. Link with key feminist scholars in field to explore ideas	Present conference paper laying out the issues for the proposed project	Speak to convenor of undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees about possibility of teaching about gender and consumption. Develop courses and get them validated	Constant student demands on my time – allow only set times for students and make them keep to these except in the direst emergency. Don't let email eat up all my time
2	Carry out pilot study and write full application for European funding with academic partners in Europe. Apply internally and externally for funds to host visiting scholars	Revise article above and, from pilot study, write refereed journal article for European *Journal of Cultural Studies*	Work closely with selected EU partners on pilot study and to fully develop project proposal	Organise a seminar/colloquium with European partners	Begin teaching courses on gender and consumption. Speak to convenor of postgraduate research degrees about advertising for research students interested in gender and consumption	Continue as above and reduce the number of committees I serve on
3	With European partner universities, apply for EU research funds for big cross-national project on gender and consumption	Develop publishing plan linked with European proposal	Write up results from cross-national pilot study. Finalise proposal and put it in. Hopefully, begin research project with EU partners	Host European collaborators to visit my university as visiting scholars, including seminar series and 'master classes'	Continue undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and begin supervising in the area	Focus on project and refuse to review books or write chapters in edited collections unless they are related to my project

Try not to do this planning in isolation from your institution, especially if you are in the early stages of your career. You will need to work with and within the university on research funding bids, so talk to the relevant people and find out what the approval policies and procedures are and what financial and other support is available for formulating bids. Use any incentive schemes designed to encourage people to put in bids and see what administrative support is available to assist with budgets, formatting and the like, or research assistance to help with chasing references, typing up bibliographies and so on.

Hopefully, such planning exercises will let you identify your research funding needs and help develop a strategy for getting what you want. Your plan needs to be flexible enough to allow you to include new knowledge and relevant opportunities but also sufficiently firm to prevent you whimsically taking off in all directions and responding to opportunities that are tangential.

Who will find me attractive?

Having done your strategic planning, you will need to give serious consideration to precisely locating the funding bodies that have the greatest congruence with your research plans over the short to medium term. Consider a possible range of potential funders across:

- Those agencies that fund researcher-initiated projects and those that fund projects they have initiated themselves.
- Public and private funders.
- National, international, transnational and supranational bodies.

Be neither too humble nor too ambitious and be realistically optimistic. Having a good mix of target funders will enhance your chances of winning at least something, and your diverse successes will also look good on your CV. Remember that one type of grant can feed into another type, providing you with 'multiple pay-offs'.

In developing your plan, it may make sense to start with Mode II funding from your university, if at all possible. The competition will be less severe and you will be able to develop the kind of 'grantsmanship' skills that you will need with external funding bodies. Moreover,

such funding will enable you to build up your research management experience, conference presentations and publications – all of which will make you look more credible as someone who 'delivers' in the eyes of external funders. This is called the elevator effect.

When you turn your attention to external funders you should compile a list of key agencies with which you would like to develop a relationship. You might do this alone or with your research collaborators. If you have access to research assistance, such people may do the work for you. Alternatively, a good research administrator in your school, department, faculty or university may well be able to help – but you will need to brief them carefully. Even if you do have help with this work, it is ultimately down to you to refine your list, as the idea is to tailor it to your plans.

Your university's research website should be a good starting point, as others may have made a start with collecting the kind of information that you want. Rather than just 'bookmark' websites, document your list of potential funders in a chart similar to Table 2 . This illustrates the sorts of things that you need to be very clear about, and documenting them like this aids clarity. It may seem like an awful lot of work, but you only need to do it once from scratch. However, you do need to update it regularly, because funders change. For instance, the fact that the value of stocks and shares fell dramatically during the 1990s and early twenty-first century means that foundations (and often universities too) have less money to distribute and they may thus have tightened their criteria. And of course, their main concerns and foci change over time as different issues emerge. As you get to know your funding agencies you will not bother with some, and others will require only minor alterations year on year.

Dating is important

Next, you need to construct a formal funding calendar. Because funders' dates are often immovable, you may have to integrate other, more flexible, activities around them. Important things to factor in are listed below.

- All dates fixed by the funder. Remember too that many funding bids may involve important dates after the initial submission – for

TABLE 2 Recording friendly funding agencies

	Details
Agency Contact details Key personnel	
Funding calendar	
Are submissions at any time or are there deadlines?	
Dates of the notification of outcomes and, if in stages, these dates	
Current concerns and foci	
Preferred knowledge (basic or applied research; disciplinary or interdisciplinary research)	
Preferred recipients, partnerships and restrictions	
Average allocations and expectations re co-funding	
Application process	
(expressions of interest or full applications)	
Politics (note the language used)	
Agency priorities	
Attitude to intellectual property	
Ethical issues	
Assessment criteria: summary only	

instance, you may be asked to submit a fuller proposal or respond to referees' evaluations.

- Time to integrate valuable feedback from your colleagues and mentors before the bid is submitted.
- Most universities and other institutions have a range of institutional processes for submitting grant applications, and you need to factor them into your own timetable. They may include getting the signature of senior colleagues, having the university legal adviser check any legal issues, having business managers check your budget, gaining preliminary ethics clearance and so forth. And, if you are working in a cross-university team or a cross-institutional team that involves outside partners, remember you will dealing with the

procedures of more than one institution. This considerably complicates the task.

- Also keep in mind that the bidding process, especially in the final stages, can be very time-consuming. You will have to do things such as putting things into the agency's format, producing multiple copies of your document, getting innumerable university signatures and complex on-line submission processes. You should never underestimate how long this last stage will take. It is a well known and universal law that as deadlines hover ever closer, computers, photocopiers, fax machines and email links all break down. And key personnel such as technicians or signing authorities are suddenly unavailable or difficult to reach. So on no account leave anything to the last minute. We promise you will rue the day if you do.
- Universities and research councils are the main funders of *researcher-initiated* research. This means you can begin planning submissions to such bodies far ahead of the due date. Fixed submission dates can be a good discipline – when the UK Economic and Social Research Council abolished fixed submission dates for smaller grants the number of applications dropped, possibly because academics no longer organised themselves to meet essential deadlines and 'just let things slip' instead.

You should always, where possible, try to create ample time for bidding activities, rearranging commitments well in advance if necessary. If you are bidding as part of a team, consider how you and your colleagues' diaries may be synchronised. For instance, you may be able to do the early leg work while your research colleague is on leave, and then pass the next stage of the process over to that person while you take leave. And finally, unlike Anita in the story below, always give people you want to help you plenty of advance notice and time.

Anita had completed a superb PhD and, over the subsequent year, had a number of articles accepted in peer-refereed journals. Towards the end of the year, she decided she wanted to apply for a research council grant based on an area of interest arising from her PhD. She also decided that she would like the support of some senior academic

colleagues in putting her bid together. The applications were due in early March but she didn't contact these colleagues until late January. Needless to say, none of them was available and she was unable to put in her application. She was advised by one of them to spend a year preparing her application properly and consulting people about it and to submit it the following year, perhaps after conducting a small project.

When you have completed your research plan, you will have a calendar for the year which at a glance will tell you what bids you are applying for and the time you have set aside to write the various applications.

What about unexpected chances?

Your calendar will not be able to include the funding possibilities that arise unexpectedly. These are often *contract* research opportunities. For instance, on your (regular) visits to, say, the government's website you may learn that it has suddenly decided to throw a lot of money at your area of interest. While you may have a general sense of what your government is likely to fund, you cannot always predict precisely what it will be and when. Because of the short time frame for such contracts, you will need to make a quick decision about whether to bid or not. Our advice is that unless this is the grant to die for (loads of money, time and potential impact), think hard before immediately dropping everything else in order to bid for it. You will need to consider the implications of such a contract for any other on-going work that you have. You may have to postpone other work you had planned or seek extensions of deadlines – all of which may be difficult to recover from if you keep responding to potentially dangerous but delicious opportunities. If you can't head up such a bid, you may have colleagues who can and who will involve you in some manageable way. If that is the case let them know of your availability but also of the limits of your time and take it from there. Above all, don't be like Bruce in the following story and let such work mess up your career.

Bruce is a mature-age academic who, for years, has been trying to complete a PhD in the history and philosophy of science. When he concentrates on his PhD he is inspired and motivated to complete. However, opportunities for funding keep arising and he can't resist them. Because he is particularly clever and in high demand, he also keeps winning them. This means that his PhD is constantly on hold. His publications mostly take the form of project reports, so he is not in a position to get a PhD by publication. Unfortunately for Bruce, his lack of a PhD and, in a sense, his lack of discipline and inability to prioritise his own interests and work meant that recently he missed out on promotion.

When is enough enough?

A number of people we know put their hands up for lots of bids in the hope that they will get as many as they can – or at least one. Depending on who they are and how much expertise they mobilise this has various consequences, which include the possibility of:

- Winning them all and thus facing the difficulty of completing them all. They run the risk of compromising the quality of the final product as well as their mental health.
- Winning none because they have concentrated on the quantity of their applications at the expense of the quality.
- Getting a reputation either as an outstanding success or the academic equivalent of a lawyer–ambulance-chaser.

The basic rule here is don't be greedy and only ever submit winnable bids. It's worse to put in rubbish than nothing at all in reputational terms. Moreover, bids take up serious amounts of time and effort, and if you are not selective and strategic you are wasting your efforts.

Learning from old hands

It is important to gain a sense of what a successful bid for a particular funder looks like. Where possible, look at successful and unsuccessful

applications made by others and try to work out the reasons for the funder's decisions. Keep in mind, however, that some very good bids do not get funded simply because of the highly competitive nature of bidding to some research councils. Conversely, some rather ordinary bids do get funded for reasons other than what you may see as merit. Some websites include abstracts of successful applications, and it is useful to see what has won in the past and to try and work out the reasons why.

Getting fresh ideas

Okay, you have decided on your main research focus and agenda, targeted appropriate funding bodies and drawn up a funding calendar. The next major challenge is to generate winnable bids. Where do you go for additional ideas to help ensure that others see your proposed project as worthwhile? This will depend on your researcher identity and where you want your research to have impact. Clearly, we can't cover all bases here but we can give two examples from which you can generalise to your own research agendas. For further ideas we refer you to *Building Networks*.

First, if you work in a vocational or professionally oriented field of study such as education, health, sport, tourism or the law, you may seek recognition as a researcher who contributes in a very practical way to that field. If so, you will need to keep in touch and up to date with what is going on in that field, professionally as well as academically. You might do so in the following ways:

- Serve on professional bodies such as peer review panels, journal review boards or any other professional or academic body.
- Undertake some professional field experience.
- Read the academic and professional literature.
- Interact with others in various locations in the field.
- Read recent public reports and other public documents.
- Monitor social trends, legislation or agency goals.

If you are in a discipline without such a professional or practitioner orientation the sources that may help you (as well as professionally oriented academics) include:

- Casual conversations.
- Seminars.
- Colleagues' review of your work.
- Discussions with researchers in similar fields.
- Your reading.

All these are activities during which ideas for specific projects will constantly arise, and, given your close engagement with the field, they are highly likely to be seen as topical and relevant.

Making yourself irresistible

Producing a winnable bid involves two things, a quality project and quality applicants. So, what you and your research team look like on paper matters.

As the planning exercise we've outlined implies, looking good on paper does not happen overnight or serendipitously. It requires you to be very focused on getting a record, a profile and a reputation in your field. Some academics do so via a more traditional route and gain kudos through the publication of books, in peer-refereed journals and by focusing on winning research council grants. Others concentrate on professional or practitioner publications (for instance, reports and articles in professional journals) and seek much more *contract* research funding. Yet others do a lot of consulting work and 'leverage' their research grants off that. In most of these cases such people get out and about doing such profile work as conference presentations or running workshops and seminars. Of course, many people's research careers involve various combinations of these pathways.

Keep in mind that what looks good to one funding body may not look so good to another and that no-one expects people at the start of their research career to have a monumental CV. However, whatever your stage, you must be able to demonstrate that you are doing interesting and valuable research and disseminating the results.

Looking good as an individual is not the same as looking good as a team. Whilst funding bodies may have different preferences, usually the teams viewed most favourably have different but complementary research records and cover the range of knowledge and skills required

for the project. A history of successfully completed projects, even if only among some of the team, also helps.

The most important thing, however, is to have a well designed project proposal which is tightly written, responsive to the particular needs or priorities of the hoped-for funder, and persuasive about the value of your research. *Getting Started on Research* goes into some detail on how to write research proposals.

Notching up a record

You should build a funding portfolio consisting of:

- Your up-to-date CV. See *Building an Academic Career* for advice on how to put this together.
- All your grant applications (even the unsuccessful ones).
- All your reports to funding bodies.
- All the feedback you have received on them – informal or formal, positive and negative.

There are many reasons for keeping all this stuff, either in electronic or in paper form (or even both).

- You can cut, paste or adapt from earlier applications – bibliographies, CVs or whatever.
- You can reuse earlier formatting.
- If you are reapplying to a funder you can readily remind yourself of the feedback you got last time.
- Invitations to tender for *contract* research are often at very, very short notice. If you have something 'on the stocks' which could be adapted quickly and easily, all the better (but don't feel you have to tender just because you've been invited to and have something there you can use – remember the story about Bruce, above).

Having all your application information together in one folder and structured by year and by organisation is a sensible way to organise this aspect of your research files. Part of being a successful researcher is having a filing system not just for each individual project but also for

your overall research record. Apart from anything else it helps you to avoid the anxiety generated by chaos, but also being well organised saves you time in the long run. Have a chat to your research colleagues and see how they organise and archive their research.

In this chapter we have identified some of the important foundations of good research funding practice. In the next chapter we tell you everything you might ever want to know about the bidding process itself.

5 Getting Down, Dirty and Detailed

In this chapter we will help you to think about how you can set about the process of actually applying for money. We will talk about and give you our best advice on the various decisions and activities involved.

Where now and where next?

At this point you have:

- An emerging record, profile and reputation – you are looking good.
- An overall sense of your research directions.
- A specific plan for your research career over the next three years.
- A good knowledge of who funds what sort of research, of their priorities and specifications and of what a good bid looks like in the circles you want to move in.
- A funding calendar that matches your plan.

You have covered all the basics. Now let us get down to the very focused practice of winning a research grant. In the context of all the above you will have done one or more of the following things:

- Identified the funder whose money you want.
- Seen a project opportunity advertised that you wish to bid for.
- Been invited to tender for a project.
- Been invited to join a research team bid.
- Chosen wisely.

And where to next? The next main sets of decisions and activities include (1) deciding whether to work alone or in a team, (2) attending to the funder's specifications, (3) routine but important tasks, (4) higher-order conceptual work, (5) dealing with time, timetables and reporting

requirements, (6) doing the budget. We will now deal with each in some considerable perhaps even pedantic detail. But as we said, this is about getting down, dirty and detailed.

Deciding whether to work alone or in a team

Choosing whether to go for a bid alone or in a team is a big decision and there are costs and benefits involved. Let us take some scenarios to enable us to explain these.

> Joe is an early career researcher. He has behind him a successful PhD in criminology, a few publications and the odd consultancy. He is a new member of a successful research centre and has been invited by the director to be part of a team bidding for a research council grant. The team includes some experienced grant winners and some early career researchers with a record similar to his. The topic involves empirical research and is not quite in his space but he can see where his ideas might fit into the overall project and how he might make a contribution.

Should Joe accept the invitation? Yes, is the simple answer. The team is strong and complementary, the questions the research is to address are fresh and exciting and the bid will have a strong chance of getting funded. If it is, Joe will get a foot on the first step of the funded researcher ladder. That will make it easier for him to get another grant later on. Further, being part of strong and experienced research team is a good induction into the process of winning and managing research grants. It also links him with his research colleagues in the research centre. While the actual research topic is not quite his, there is plenty of space for him to make a contribution, and he sees opportunities for taking this work more clearly in his own direction at a later date. In fact, even if the grant does not get funded, he will have had the benefit of learning how such a grant is prepared and of working closely with a group of colleagues.

Mary is an Indigenous researcher and one of few Indigenous academics with a PhD, which she has just completed while working as an academic. She is building up her research project experience by seeking internal university funding for collaborative action-oriented research projects and has chosen to undertake these projects with people she trusts in Indigenous communities. She has given quite a number of well-received conference papers out of these projects and is in the process of turning them into publications for refereed and other journals. In the following year she plans to bid for the research council money that is earmarked for Indigenous researchers. She is approached by a big multi-state high profile research team and is invited to join them to bid for a large government grant to study violence in Indigenous communities. The rest of the team is non-Indigenous but with a strong record of winning grants on gender and violence.

What should Mary do? This is a hard one. Or is it? The topic is important and certainly the money and the potential profile are enticing. However, Mary does not know the people, the lack of other Indigenous researchers on the team is a problem, and the project does not appear to have the action orientation that Mary is committed to. There is a danger that Mary will get swamped by the size and seniority of the research team and that she will be distracted from her own research agenda. The team has given her no indication that it is aware of the ethics of undertaking Indigenous research. It is thus probable that she will have to teach them about this aspect. Further, she and we have a sneaking suspicion that she has been included in the bid only because she will serve as the legitimisation device for a white research team. Our view is that Mary should not accept the invitation because not only does it interrupt her own research agenda, but more important, it is also in conflict with her research priorities and principles. It also appears that others wish to use her. She might instead build her own team on the basis of the principles she believes in and with the people she knows and trusts while at the same time making a strong case that research of this sort should be collaborative, action-oriented and involve Indigenous researchers and communities.

Prior to completing her PhD in record time Sarah had a career in the public sector and while there led a number of research projects on urban housing and poverty. She published quite extensively in research journals from her PhD and won some prizes and grants for international conference travel on the basis of these publications. These and also her links with industry resulted in her winning a postdoctoral position. Whilst doing her postdoc she undertook some consultancies for the housing industry and participated in research project teams within the research centre she was appointed to, all the while continuing to publish.

Should Sarah try to win a research council grant by herself? We say yes. This is in part because the research council in her country allocates some grants to early career researchers but also because Sarah's record means she is competitive in this field. She has a strong publication record, strong research team experience, including the experience of leading research projects. Her prizes and awards indicate that her more senior peers consider her outstanding. She has a winning record and all she now needs to do is produce a winnable bid.

Barry has just got a teaching post; his new PhD received rave reviews. His examiners have invited him to join international conference symposia, and, through them, others have invited him to write chapters for their books in his field and a reputable book publisher has offered him a contract. He is a widely and wisely read and charismatic academic and although new to his post is being courted by more senior academics at his university to join their research project teams. None of these offers has much to do with his research agenda but the projects are interesting and the prospect of working with at least one of the professors in his faculty is attractive because it provides him with mentoring opportunities. Also, and quietly, he does find it rather difficult to refuse someone so senior. However, his teaching load is huge and he is struggling to find time to publish from his PhD let alone to do new research.

What is our advice to Barry? We want to say first that most academics can recognise hot talent when they see it. Some seek to promote talented people by opening up opportunities for them to flourish in their own right. Others seek to harness that talent to their own agendas, and some do so in the guise of mentoring. Talented new researchers need to be wary of being co-opted in this way. They also should know that they need not take the first opportunities that arise just because they are there. We think Barry would be well advised to resist all offers to join research teams and to take all the opportunities available to him to publish out of his PhD. Further, when he does apply for a grant it should be on his own terms. Others are likely to want to join any team he develops because he has so much to offer but he should lead the ideas. However, given his high teaching load and his relative inexperience of managing a funded research project, he may want to form a team that includes others whom he knows and trusts and whose experience compensates for his inexperience.

We could go on with examples here but the overall point is that each case must be taken on its merits and there are few hard-and-fast rules. You must decide what is best for you, but remember, there are many traps for inexperienced players and you need to weigh up your choices in the light of your:

- Record.
- Research plans.
- Research agenda.

Do not get sucked into other people's agendas if they do not fit in with yours. We suggest you take advice from a trusted and *disinterested* mentor. The general rule is to choose your project partners very carefully.

With teams there are titles and hierarchies. Team members can be full or associate members – sometimes called chief investigators (CIs) and partner investigators (PIs). Confusingly though, the person leading the team may also be called a principal investigator (PI) and the others may be regarded as co-applicants. You need to be aware of what the acronyms in your particular situation mean. There is obviously a hierarchy here but there may also be hierarchies among the CIs. Often the funder wants a contact person named, and sometimes that person is called the Principal Investigator or First CI. Sometimes the grant goes through that person's university, and it gets the Brownie points and any

associated infrastructure money – though sometimes it can be split between universities. This is quite a sensitive matter and must be carefully negotiated in the preliminary stages of pulling a team together.

Teams sound complicated. Why should I bother?

In general, the benefits of team research are that you can:

- Include people across disciplines, universities, other institutional sites including international locales. This can broaden the scope of the topic.
- Share the load.
- Get intellectual and other input from various people.
- Always have someone to talk problems through with.
- Learn heaps from others.
- Write and present at conferences in teams.

Further, as a junior researcher, you can get your feet wet without too much risk and can learn a host of things from senior members of the team.

There are, however, many difficulties and questions that can arise in relation to team membership. For example:

- Who is to be the chief and who are associate investigators?
- Which university should manage the grant? Often this is defined by where the first chief or principal investigator works. Think hard on this one.
- The uneven distribution of load, credit and visibility.
- The authorship of publications and ownership of ideas.
- Power struggles that arise around different agendas.
- Rivalry and envy within the team.
- Thoughtless or cliquey behaviour by team members.
- Teams are time-consuming, all decisions take much longer and even matching the diaries of very busy members can be a serious headache – ask any of our research assistants.

The benefits of individual research projects are that you avoid the above difficulties – although not totally, as some may arise in relation to the research associates or assistants you employ on the project. The difficulties associated with individual research projects include the lack

of collegial input and support. However, research associates or assistants (RAs) can help to fill this gap. And there are other choices. Although you may choose to do the research alone you may develop a team with which you consult, for example. Or you may include PhD students or a postdoctoral position in your funding application. If you are considering developing projects with industry partners, it is worth remembering that the main reasons industry wants to be involved with research, apart from access to trained experts, is access to potential employees, so its important to include students who could be potential employees in the research proposal if you are chasing funding from industry.

Keep in mind, of course, that some funding bodies expect or give priority to team research and insist on various sorts of research partnerships. So, you may not have a choice about whether to team or not to team, unless you choose not to be funded by such bodies.

Having decided whether you want to work by yourself or with others, you need to get stuck into the all-important task of actually writing your funding application.

Attending to the funder's specifications

These specifications must be imprinted on your consciousness all the while you are doing the application. If you have done as we suggested above you will have a list of the funder's specifications. You will know their:

- Priorities – general and current specific.
- Inclusions re research approach (basic or applied) and discipline.
- Exclusions and restrictions over what and who they will not fund.
- Expectations re co-funding.
- Attitude to intellectual property.
- Ethical and political base.
- Average allocations.
- Application format and process.
- Assessment processes and criteria.
- Deadlines.

When writing applications make sure that, without exception, you clearly address the funder's specifications and follow their document

format. Yes, right down to the suggested font and margin size if need be. They will throw your bid out if you do not. Indeed, it is usually the case that funding committees process so many applications they are looking for reasons to eliminate some to make the selection process less onerous. So don't make it easy for them to drop your bid off their pile.

We are surprised by the number of people we know who make plenty of applications for funding but never get in touch with people associated with the funding body. We think it is important to have a certain level of personal contact. It is still a good idea to make personal contact with the programme or grant officers. Try for a face-to-face visit or at least a phone call and have a list of topics ready just to clarify that your understandings are correct and that there have been no last-minute changes to their specifications. However, the main reason for the contact is to check out whether the direction you are taking is 'on target': whether there is anything more you can glean, need to know or can do.

Routine but important tasks

We suggest that at the outset of the application process you identify the routine tasks to be done. These include:

- *Assembling the team's track record*. This includes team members' CVs, their previous project reports, bibliographies, statements about project management histories. The track record is often assessed alongside the project itself. So don't be a slouch on these matters. As always, do not leave these things to the last minute. And, when you get requests for such information from your colleagues, answer them promptly.
- *Developing your publishing plan and dissemination strategy*. They may include the conferences, journals and publishers you plan to 'target', the development of a website, a media strategy and workshops or seminars for the profession. These should not be randomly thrown together or thought about just in an opportunistic manner but rather constructed carefully in relation to the purposes of the project and the audiences or 'end users' it seeks to reach.
- *Selecting codes and key words* if these are required in your application. The funders will often use such codes and key words to

choose reviewers of your application from their electronic database. Just as crucially, these words may determine which category of application your bid will be seen to belong to and thus who your competition is. This is a particularly difficult issue if you are doing interdisciplinary work. Some disciplines have cultures that are particularly punitive and super-critical. If you have the choice not to put down a code for a discipline you know to be like that, then make that choice.

- *Nominating a list of referees from which the funder might choose*. This list might only include academics or might also include 'users'. Choosing referees requires you to be strategic: so choose people who know your work or who will at least speak favourably about it in an informed and apparently disinterested manner. You also need to pick people who you know will honour this obligation. However, it is not a good idea to choose anyone who is too close to you, for they might be seen as having a conflict of interest. The referees must be seen to be both expert and detached. It is acceptable, indeed a courtesy, to contact your chosen referees before putting their names forward. You might send them an abstract of the bid and let them know the times they are likely to be called on. They can then let you know if they are willing and available. For many applications you will not have the opportunity to suggest a referee. However, it is useful to know that these may be chosen from your bibliography. So, it is not a good idea to include in your bibliography people who are likely to suggest politely that your work is unmitigated drivel that should be consigned to the compost heap without further ado. You should check your bibliography for such people, and consign them to the compost heap without further ado. The following story is an example of one way of being strategic with regard to your referees.

Davina, whose field is cultural studies, found that her research council bids were frequently being sent to mainstream psychologists for review. These reviewers were totally out of sympathy with the cultural studies paradigm and would usually trash her proposals on the grounds that the study was not 'scientific' or 'verifiable'. While

receiving one such review among a set of superlative ones did not necessarily prevent her from getting grants, Davina felt that it was a potential danger. She therefore made a habit of naming critical social psychologists whom she knew to be sympathetic to her theoretical frameworks whenever she was asked to nominate reviewers. This meant that the research council did not feel the need to obtain further reviews from psychologists.

- *Getting accompanying letters of support* from those to whom you need access and who are potential users of your research. Again lead time is crucial, as it is often the case that those who are to write these letters have to go through many layers of their own organisation to get them written and signed off. The letters can be just standard communiqués and sometimes that is all the funder permits. However, if the funder makes no such stipulation it cannot hurt if you make some suggestions about the text. Indeed, the authors of such letters may welcome a draft that they can they modify. Some of your carefully chosen words in their mouths can only be to your advantage.
- *Meeting the word length requirements and formatting the document*. Some Not Very Smart people try to fudge the length and seek to cram as much into the bid as possible by using a small font, reducing the size of the font or the spacing or widening the margins of their text. No. No. No. The formatting needs to look professional and the text must be easy to read. Indeed, the aesthetics of the document are important, so you should also avoid too many headings and sub-headings and sub-sub-headings and indents and dot points and numbered points and diagrams. Go for simple elegance in your headings rather than *italics* and **bold** and underlining and shading and different sized text or various **fonts** or Upper and Lower Case. Also try to balance the length of the various parts of the text. Some funding body headings require less text than others, so you need to work out which these are and get the balance right. Your diagrams should help to explain to the reader what you are seeking to do and should be easily understood. Of course the grammar and spilling must be impekable. A slapdash bid gets on assessors' nerves and negatively disposes them towards the applicant.

- *Getting feedback on your application* once you have a good draft available. (Don't waste people's time looking at very early drafts.) Often universities will organise sessions where you can take along your draft proposals and workshop them with other colleagues. Also, where possible get feedback from experienced and successful researchers or at the very least several critical friends. Give them enough time to enable them to do a jolly good read and for you to do jolly good revisions once you have the feedback. And, if you win the funds, let those who assisted you know. Offer some form of reciprocity. (We like money best but we are also happy with expensive meals or theatre tickets.) You should, for example, offer to read your colleagues' funding applications if you are asking them to look at yours.
- *Being your own best critic.* We do not mean here that you have to self-flagellate, talk yourself down and eventually cower in a corner in a foetal position. We mean that you must be able to get a certain distance from your work and to evaluate it critically in the same way you would any other person's. A bit of ruthless self-appraisal never goes astray as long as you follow it though with massive corrections and revisions and maybe ingest loads of chocolate at the same time.
- *Jumping through your university's hoops*. It has procedures that must be complied with before bids can be submitted to the funding body. Many universities like to check research grant applications, and this drives many researchers crazy because it is yet another deadline to meet. But if you want to produce winning bids it is important to have the support of finance departments, research officers and the like. They can often give you some handy hints to improve aspects of your grant. They also often find strange glitches in your budgets. So do not treat them only as bureaucratic functionaries there just to make life difficult – although some may be and may well do so.

The dean of research at a New Zealand university chose the following method to improve the quality of research grant applications in her university. She insisted that all colleagues prepared their grant applications well in advance and then subjected them to an appraisal process of precisely the same nature as that used by the research

council. While her colleagues were rather irritated at being put under this pressure, they ultimately found the process very generative and success rates improved markedly.

- *Completing the final checklist* which is available to assist you to ensure you have jumped through all the required hoops. Having sat on numerous funding committees we know that many people do not use these lists and leave out much of the detail that is required by the funding body. Hard to believe but true. These checklists may save your bacon. *Use them*.

So who gets to do this work?

If you are developing a bid by yourself you will find that these routine tasks are not too onerous. But once you are in a team they get complicated and time-consuming. Some of the work might be given to a research assistant but not all of it. This is because it still often requires some academic judgement in relation to the priorities and specifications of the funding body. For instance, some funding bodies only ask people to include in their list of publications work that is peer-refereed. Bids that accidentally or otherwise include work that is not peer-refereed in such lists run the risk of being seen as either incompetent or as an attempt to fudge the record. Not nice either way. When there are tight word limits, which there usually are, further judgement is required and only the most relevant work should be included. Take another case. Your research grant track record needs to demonstrate that you are reliable, that you deliver the goods and on time. Your remarks on the team need to be more then mere reportage but should point out, convincingly, to the funder or assessor that it is a dream team with a unique and exciting blend of the talents and skills necessary to produce an outstanding result.

Higher-order conceptual work

The sort of higher-order conceptual work required to produce a winning bid will depend on the type of research grant. And so we need to say a bit about that, before we can return to the focus of this section.

Earlier we mentioned that research grants can be divided into different categories on the basis of different criteria. These include sponsored and contract research, which we defined in Chapter 2. What you need to know in this context is that funding for sponsored research is allocated competitively, usually on the basis of peer review. The intellectual property of the research usually remains with the researchers and their university. Contract research, on the other hand, may be awarded on the basis of competitive bidding but the selection process does not usually involve peer review. The outcomes of such projects tend to be seen in terms of the benefit to the funder, who usually owns the intellectual property but may be prepared to negotiate on how they exercise their rights.

These are loose categories and the specifications of funders can lead to variations. For instance, in the case of sponsored research there are situations where the funders provide categories within which researchers develop their own projects. In other words the researchers are not totally free to dream up their own research topics: to undertake what might be called 'curiosity-driven' research. Rather, their curiosity is framed by the funder. Often foundations sit in this ambiguous space. In such circumstances researchers may not be assessed by their peers and may be assessed by other experts. Equally, governments or industry may choose to fund basic research and to employ academics to peer-review such research.

As you can see there are lots of variables at work here and clearly what constitutes a winning bid will vary accordingly. Hence it is difficult to give generic advice. However, for the purposes of this exercise we will work with the categories employed above, keeping in mind that they are rather pure forms with lots of mutations.

If you are seeking to win a sponsored research grant your assessors will use a number of criteria to judge your bid.

- You will be expected to *show that you know your stuff*. Your bid should demonstrate that you are on top of your field and topic. It must be evident that you know the key debates, issues and authors pertinent to your chosen topic. However, when you demonstrate this, the assessors expect to see more than a condensed literature review or (shudder) a literature summary. They expect to see a distinctive, sophisticated and critical take on the issues.
- You need to *establish the warrant* or *rationale* for your project. Your peer assessors want to be persuaded by your warrant, they

want to know why they should give a damn. They will be persuaded not by mere assertion or indeed by hyperbole or rhetoric, but rather by systematically marshalled argument and evidence. There are many ways of justifying the worth of your project and you should look them up in *Getting Started on Research* if you feel you need guidance on how to do it. It is sometimes helpful if you can show the significance of your idea and you familiarity with the area through a previously conducted 'needs assessment' or pilot study on your topic.

- Your bid should also *demonstrate that you have a good research question that is worth asking* – that is, it is significant. In *Getting Started on Research* we talk about writing good research questions and so we will not repeat the points here. The questions should also be answerable and likely to be answered by the proposed project. You must be able to show clearly that the research approaches or methodologies that you adopt and the theories that you mobilise can do the job laid out in the aims and questions of the project. We are constantly astonished by the number of research proposals we see where the aims of the project do not match the questions and where the methods employed cannot address either. Your research application is a winner only if the project is do-able. And you must convince the assessors of that.
- You will be expected to *show that you know your methodological stuff* too. Again, the assessors expect you to demonstrate a critical awareness of the key methodological debates, issues and authors pertinent to your chosen theories and research techniques. And they expect your theories and your research techniques to be well integrated and compatible. For instance, although positivist methods do not sit well with post-positivist theories, you would be surprised how many people seem to think it is perfectly fine to unproblematically blend the two. Needless to say the bids from such applicants go down in a screaming heap.
- You need to *have a realistic time line* for the research and show that you know what order you will do it in.
- Believe it or not, the hard conceptual work also includes the *project title and abstract or summary*. These have to get to the heart of the project in very few words. Doing it well is an art form. When an assessor is reading your bid these are what they will usually come to first. The title and the abstract are like a newspaper headline and strap line in the sense that they try to compress meaning but at the

same time grab attention. They are also often the public face of the project, so they can't be full of in-house language that the informed lay person can't even begin to comprehend. We think your abstract should try for a 'killer ending' which points to the significance of the research and lingers in the mind.

What ultimately gives your bid the winning edge in highly competitive sponsored research funding fields? This is a very difficult question to answer because frankly it is often an indefinable quality that makes the bid sparkle. 'Innovation' is the common buzz word but it fails to capture what we are talking about. The ideas in a winning bid sing; they intrigue, enliven and excite the reader. They have a wow! factor. Ultimately they will generate in the academic peer reviewer a genuine desire to see the finished product when the project is over. Many good solid and technically competent pieces of research do get funded, no doubt, but the proposals that have this sort of compelling edge go to the top of the pile.

If you are seeking to win a contract research grant the chances are you that will be assessed by a committee formed by the funding body. This may include some of your academic peers but is unlikely to be dominated either numerically or, indeed, ideologically by them. This is not to say that the committee has no experience of research. It is probable that it includes people from within the funding body who have research expertise both in terms of their qualifications and in terms of the work they do for the organisation. Trusts and foundations are likely to obtain academic referees' reports that they will consider in their decision-making processes.

The likelihood also exists that the research project's focus has been clearly established and also much of its broad design. In that case, you will need to undertake rather different intellectual work from that outlined above. Or, to put it another way, the things outlined above will have a somewhat different inflection.

You will still need to show a number of things:

- You have *a strong knowledge of the main debates and issues in the field*. However, the debates in the research literature may not be as pertinent as those within which the funder is immersed. The funder's priorities as outlined on its website and the specifications of the actual research project will make these pretty clear. In very broad terms, such debates are usually associated with various sorts of practice,

with on-the-ground problems or with 'out there among the public' issues that are making politicians' lives difficult. Youth suicide, for instance, or global warming, or terrorism, or family law, or drugs.

- You need to show that you have *a strong knowledge of the research methods involved*. However, it is unlikely that you will be expected to problematise them unless that is part of the project brief. It is much more likely that you will have to demonstrate to the committee that you are an expert in the application of the method and can deliver clear and convincing results through its application to the research question, problem or issue.

  As you know, sponsored research may be associated with commercialisation; that is, making money from the research outputs and applications. If this is the case, you need to demonstrate knowledge of the path that your research will take to commercial development in the market place – the so-called 'path to market'.
- You will need to persuasively demonstrate *the relevance and reliability of your track record;* that your team is outstanding and the best one for the job. The track record that is best valued in relation to contract research is not necessarily that most valued by your academic peers. Most contract research has an applied, action or change orientation. The selection committee is likely to want to see that you have a record of or at least a strong interest in such things. So it is important for you to be able to show that you are more than 'just an academic expert' unfamiliar with the ways of the world, full of airy-fairy, highfalutin' ideas relevant only to the ivory tower. You know the stereotypes often traded here and, unfortunately, you do need to understand that they are sometimes in the minds of members of funding committees. You must knock such stereotypes on the head with regard to your funding application and your research team. This is not the place for obscurantism or intellectual posturing – but is there ever really a place for that even in the academy?

So what are some of the key differences between sponsored and contract research and what are the implications for the conceptual work you will have to do?

- In contract research, the research questions, methods, time-lines, 'deliverables' (outcomes, outputs) are likely to be more closely specified by the funder than in sponsored research.

- You probably will not have to be as overtly concerned with theory as you would be in a sponsored project. The theory will often be implicit and undeclared and you will not be expected to problematise it. You may, however, be expected to subscribe to the funder's implicit theories in your application, at least in the first instance, and probably throughout the project. Indeed, if you problematise the funder's theory in the application it is likely to be the kiss of death. Let us be blunt here. If you can't stand the theory, don't do the bid. Simple. If you do, it will only cause you heartache. At least, that is our view, but others say: get in there, get your hands dirty, if you don't do the bid someone worse than you will, and then where will the world be? They try to see the good sense in the project, to maximise it in their research and project reports and to minimise the bad sense. Perversely, we are sympathetic to this argument too.

A trade secret. We should let you in on a secret at this point. People in government departments do not necessarily hold the views of their political 'masters'. So, although they may put the project specifications together in such a way as to satisfy and gratify their bosses, they may also try to leave them open to interpretation and open for the researcher to come in with a somewhat different take. Indeed, there may be a 'hidden text' associated with the bid which is not known to you. If you have good networks within the funding institution you may be able to informally get access to this. Having done so you may find that you need to write your bid with a hidden text also. Again, your conceptual and creative skills will need to be mobilised so that you get the right blend of commitment to the project with a tiny hint of scepticism.

- Contract research may be highly charged politically – particularly if you are doing it for government. The focus and the output may be controversial and may propel your reports and you into protracted negotiations with your 'project management team' appointed by the funder – though you might have a say in who is on it. They may not like what you do and want you to change your report, or bury the report and you.

What has politics got to do with winning bids? Some academics claim to have no position; no stand point. They say that they can take on any project in a dispassionate and disinterested fashion and deliver as the project specifications indicate. This no-stance stance means that they are tame pussycats and often win grants because of this. Of course their no-stance is total nonsense as their actual standpoint is usually purely instrumental. Their aim is to secure grants and all the accompanying kudos and power/knowledge, no matter what. Now, you can be a tame pussycat if you wish and yes, it will allow you to win some grants in the short term. However, if you get this sort of reputation your credibility as an expert will diminish and in the end you will not win the grants. This is because a hired gun (to mix the metaphors) must not be seen as a hired gun but rather as a dispassionate and disinterested expert. It is an interesting paradox is it not?

It is possible to infer from much of what we have said thus far that contract research is pretty one-sided and that for you there is little opportunity for agenda setting. Certainly winning such grants usually means putting in applications that stick closely to the specifications but it also involves enriching them. Enrichment does not mean adding new directions or issues, or taking the bid off in new directions. It means that, in the terms of the tender, you make it clear you are not only 'across the issues' but also have a depth that may not be of the sort that the funder's people have. Keep in mind here that those who developed the project or tender specifications and are assessing your application will often have expertise that they want enriched but they also want to fund someone who is in sympathy with the agenda which informs the tender. Winning thus means establishing your credibility and compatibility on the topic but also your capacity to 'add value'. And you must also establish your credibility as someone, or as a team, who will deliver promptly and in a way that is of practical use. This notion of enrichment suggests that researchers can often interpret the project rather more liberally than may at first appear possible and they may thus help to shape agendas.

And the winner is ...

What ultimately gives your bid the winning edge in highly competitive contract research funding fields? Again, this is hard to specify, partly

because such fields are so diverse and involve many different value systems with regard to knowledge production, circulation and consumption. Maybe the secret is about understanding the value systems that are peculiar to the specific funding body and ensuring that your bid speaks to those values while at the same time enriching them. We are not sure. Again, though, we think the wow factor comes into play, although this time the wow is associated with the potential the bid appears to offer for addressing the priorities and needs of the funder.

Dealing with time, timetables and reporting requirements

Some project briefs set the time-lines up for you, in others you are free to set up your own and in yet others the broad parameters are set and you will devise more specific time lines within them. In *Getting Started on Research* we talk about phases and deadlines and offer an example of a time-line. Let us consider these issues a little more now in the light of the imperative to win grants from funding bodies.

Even though some funders do not set time-lines you do need to know what length of project they are prepared to support. Such matters will usually be laid out on their website. And you can go back through the records to see what is typically funded. A core part of developing your project is deciding on its length. Is it a short pilot project? Is it a longitudinal study that may require several rounds of funding over the years? But beyond these obvious differences, how do you work out how long your project is to be? The length you finally decide on will be a judicious combination of what the funder is prepared to pay for and what you are trying to do. Many people start with the specified or average time that a funder provides funding for and then work their projects into that time frame. They modify the project's questions, purposes, activities and outcomes accordingly. As always, some try to fudge things and others have a totally unrealistic notion of what is possible. Indeed, there is a tendency among academics to promise much more than can be delivered and to deliver more than is paid for.

Usually it is obvious to the funder, if, for example, it is a project that really requires only one year's funding but you are trying to string it out to three and get three years' funding. And project bids that claim that the researchers will do what is patently impossible do not get funded. Some mistakenly think that funders see such projects as value for

TABLE 3 Overall research plan: timetable of activities in different locations over three years

Year	Sem.	Location	Activity
2002	1	UniSA	Establishment stage – apply for ethics clearance and employ research assistant
		Interstate	Build policy archive and begin analysis Conduct and analyse interviews with policy agents in Australia (twenty-four) Select six university cameo studies in SA, Vic and NSW
	2	UniSA Interstate	Continue policy text analysis Conduct and analyse university sector cameo studies Select six school cameo studies in SA, Vic and NSW
2003	1	UniSA Interstate	Intertextual analysis of policy texts Conduct and analyse school cameo studies Prepare for international interviews Select six VET case studies in SA, Vic and NSW
	2	Overseas Interstate	Conduct and analyse international interviews (eighteen) Conduct and analyse VET cameo studies Select six informal education settings for cameos in SA, Vic and NSW
2004	1	Interstate UniSA	Conduct cameo studies of informal education settings in SA, Vic and NSW Begin synthesis of material for book
	2	UniSA	Write book

money. They are usually seen as rather foolish. So asking the answerable question and developing the do-able project is crucially tied up with getting the timing right.

Similar points apply to the milestones of the project. In much contract research these are specified at the start and are monitored. What you submit to your funder is sometimes called a deliverable. It may, for example, be a literature review to be submitted after the first three months, then a set of case studies in the second three months and so on. Some funders will not advance the next lot of money until the previous deliverable is in and approved.

In sponsored research you usually establish your own milestones, and your funding application will clearly lay them out. How you organise your time is up to you but we find it handy to do it by university semesters. Table 3 is an example of one of Jane's grants organised in

this way. It is from her Australian Research Council project called *Knowledge/economy/society: a sociological study of an education policy discourse in Australia in globalising circumstances*. There are several things for novices to notice about this timetable:

- It includes an establishment phase.
- Each stage anticipates the next.
- The analysis of the data is built in at the various stages.
- The main publication is included in the time line.

We cannot overemphasise the importance of including everything in the timetable, and note that Jane might also have included conference presentations and other publications. The broad point is to plan a publishing schedule early and to avoid project debt.

Project debt

Many researchers, new and old, fall into the trap of gathering and analysing data right up to the end of the funding period. What often happens then is that they roll on to another project and do the same thing all over again, moving into a state of constant 'debt' to earlier projects. Sometimes it becomes impossible for them to repay the debts and half-written papers and chapters languish in the bottom of filing cabinets alongside boxes and boxes of unanalysed data. This does not look good when it comes time to do the final project report. And, even if you repay the project debt later your final report will be a record which indicates that the project did not produce the goods. Your reputation among those who distribute research funds is thus diminished and you may become known as someone who does not deliver.

Most projects require *interim and end of award reports*. The structure of these is often set out by the funder. You are usually expected to explain:

- Whether the project has altered from the original and in what ways. These may have to be approved.

- Whether the project is going to plan.
- What your preliminary or concluding results are or what you have achieved.
- Whether you have experienced any difficulties that affected the progress of the research project.
- What your research plans and objectives are for the coming year.
- Your outputs to date.

With the intensified emphasis on the accountability for research funding and on 'impact' particular attention is paid to your outputs. Table 4 shows the form that the Australian Research Council asks researchers to use in reporting the project's 'academic outputs'. You can check out the funding council in your own country to see how it expects you to report.

You should note that researchers are asked not to include 'forthcoming' and 'submitted' work. So those half-finished papers and the debt you have accumulated from previous projects simply don't count. As you see, many outputs are covered in this form. Increasingly funders are looking for other indices of impact, including press coverage and citations. Witness this, also from the ARC.

- *Evidence of scholarly impact and contribution.* Is there evidence that this research project is having/has had an impact in the research field or the broader public domain? If yes, give details.

The ARC has access to standard citation data on articles published in ISI journals. However, there may be other indicators of impact including, for example, citations to books, republication, translations, reviews, invited keynote addresses, other invitations, newspaper/media/expert commentary.

- *Research commercialisation.* If there has been commercialisation resulting from the research project, in the period covered by this report, give details.

In the case of the ARC these reports are not published. But different systems do things differently, of course, and some expect much more substantial reports which must be publicly available, and these may even be peer-reviewed or subject to some kind of evaluation. In the case of contract research normally a publishable report is required at the end of the project, sometimes including recommendations.

TABLE 4 Form from the Australian Research Council

Publications and other academic outputs. Enter the number of publications in each category, for the period covered by this report. Where appropriate, enter full publication details; include 'published' and 'in press' publications but exclude 'forthcoming' and 'submitted' work.

Item	Category	Number	Publication details
A1	Book – authored research		
A2	Book – authored other		
A3	Book – edited		
A4	Book – revision/new edition		
A5	Book – translation		
B	Book chapter		
C1	Journal article – articles in scholarly refereed journal		
C2	Journal article – other contribution to refereed journal		
C3	Journal article – non-refereed article		
C4	Journal articles – letter or note		
D	Major reviews		
E1	Conference – full written paper – refereed proceedings		
E2	Conference – full written paper – non-refereed proceedings		
E3	Conference – extract of paper		
E4	Conference – edited volume of conference proceedings		
E5	Conference – unpublished presentation		
F	Audio-visual recording		
G	Computer software		
H	Designs		
J1	Major creative works		
J2	Creative work included in group exhibition, performance, recording or anthology		
J3	Exhibition curatorship		
K	Other academic outputs (in categories other than those above)		

Doing the budget

You *must* read the rules and apply only for money for the kinds of things that the funder will pay for. Don't include anything else, because if you do it will be clear that you have not read the rules or that you are 'trying it on'. Given the university imperative to bring in the bucks, you are under inexorable pressure to win grants. This may lead you to bid low; in other words, not to charge the full costs of the project and to ask for less money/time than you need. Universities, however, expect full cost recovery and you must not under-sell yourself. This will come back to bite you, big time, if you do.

You may be able to apply for money for:

- Salaries (research assistance, secretarial and administrative support).
- Teaching release (possibly all or part of your own).
- Equipment (computers, tape recorders, digital cameras).
- Consumables (software, video and audio-tapes).
- Books.
- Maintenance or overheads, including phone, printing, office expenses, photocopying, library requests, postage.
- Travel to research sites and conferences and associated *per diem* expenses.
- Payments to respondents and respondents' expenses.
- Payments to a project consultancy group or for individual consultancies.
- The costs of advertising for staff.
- Printing and dissemination costs, including the possibility of payments to commercial publishers or submission charges by certain journals.
- Some funding bodies will also pay for the cost of developing the grant. Indeed, when thinking about costings, bear in mind that one of the costs you have to cover is the cost of getting the grant in the first place.

You may be asked to indicate items in order of priority. If you are working across institutions you must indicate how the money will be divided between you. Make sure that resources (financial and other) are

equitably distributed within the team, or if not, that the team has agreed to this.

Your university will have lists of pay scales for all the staff you wish to employ – casual (by the hour) or contract (by the calendar time period) and by levels of seniority based on experience. And you will have to consider carefully the levels of expertise you want, can afford and can convincingly justify to the funder. With salaries, always include 'on costs': leave loadings, salary increments and any other predicted extra costs. These vary according to the type and length of employment and can have quite an effect on your budget. You also have to find a balance between what is in the best interests of the project and what is in the best interests of the people you employ. Hopefully these coincide, but sometimes not. We try to keep our staff happy first, as it is best for them and also for the project. If you are seeking funding for an extended period you should factor in likely cost rises (e.g. airline costs). Make sure you have factored in sufficient clerical and administrative support and that you have distinguished it from your research assistance. You do not want to be doing the clerical work yourself and neither is it necessarily appropriate for your RA to be doing it.

In developing your budget you also need to find out certain things from your university, above and beyond the question of salary scales. Issues that arise regularly with regard to budgets are as follows:

- Who is available to help me do my budget? You will find that the university has all manner of people who may be available to help you at the various stages of doing your budget. These include business or financial managers; research officers, budget officers, 'human resources' staff. Make full use of them early. Once your budget is complete you will be expected to have it officially checked by one or other of these people to make sure all costs have been factored in at the right rates.
- What percentage of the budget do you need to allocate to cover university overheads? Most universities will charge a standard fee but you may also find that structures further down the university food chain also charge, for instance your school or faculty. Your dean or equivalent manager will not sign off on projects until these costs are built into the budget. You need to find out what the project

gets for such a percentage. Usually it covers such things as the management, administrative and advice systems set up to support research but also includes such basic things as the use of offices, existing equipment and lighting and so forth. It does not usually include phone use, fax, photocopying costs and the like.

- You should discuss with your head of school the time you need for the project, whether they are prepared to release you from other duties to allow for it, the space that is available for your new research staff, whether you actually need to buy new computers and other equipment or whether there might be some available that can be used, university or other funds that may be available if the funder is seeking co-funding. In other words you need to know the institutional resources that are available for the research. And, while you have their attention, you should find out what research staff they know of who might be available for the project and how good they are.
- How do you pay the university for the time you spend on the project and at what rates? Because most universities are less and less funded to undertake research out of government block grants they now expect users to pay for every aspect of the research project. This includes your time. You need to talk to your head of school or dean about this. You may be expected to charge your full replacement cost or you may just be expected to charge for teaching replacement. This is usually at your current salary level even if someone at a level lower replaces you. There are some exceptions. For instance, in Australia the Australian Research Council allocates institutions additional money when academics win ARC project grants. This means staff do not have to include the cost of their own time in the grant application.

Your budget will be carefully checked by the funder and by its peer reviewers. They will be asked to see where your budget can be cut. You will usually be required to include a budget justification, which is designed to assist them make such judgements. You will often find the budget cut no matter how good the justification. We have included quite a detailed budget justification below so that you can see the sorts of things you need to do. It is from Jane's ARC *Knowledge economy* project mentioned above. We might add that despite the following details the budget was cut.

C2 Justification of funding requested from the ARC

The direct costs requested from the ARC for this project per year averages at $57 820 per annum.

Personnel

A research assistant (RA, level 5–7, over three years) will be appointed at 0.6 fraction, three months into the project. The level of appointment reflects the high level of responsibility the RA will assume in working closely with the CI throughout the project. The appointee will be required to possess highly advanced research, critical and communication skills. The RA will be responsible for the creation of a policy archive in the first year and as he/she will be subsequently involved in the analysis of policy documents and other data, a knowledge of theory is required. The RA will assist in conducting interviews for the cameo studies and in writing the proposed book and papers. A secretarial assistant (general staff, level 4, step 3) will be employed casually. The level of appointment is based on the need for an experienced person able to complete tasks with a minimum of supervision. Further, as transcription will make up a large component of their duties, efficient and accurate audio-typing skills are imperative. The anticipated number of hours of transcription has been calculated using the number of hours of interviews each year (sixty-six hours in year 1, 102 hours in year 2, and forty-two hours in year 3), multiplied by three hours of transcription per hour of taped interview. The cost of additional administrative assistance for years 1–3 of the project (fifty hours, 100 hours and fifty hours, respectively) has been added. The secretarial assistant will be responsible for scheduling interviews and making travel arrangements for the CI. He/she will also give general administrative support (photocopying, faxing and correspondence). The budgeted salaries include on costs, leave loading and annual increments for the RA and 20 per cent casual loading for the secretarial assistant. Both take into account enterprise bargaining rises.

Teaching relief

Teaching relief of twenty-four days is requested for the final semester of the project in order to provide free time for the CI to focus fully on writing the proposed book. Teaching relief will expedite delivery to the publisher and, thus, the dissemination of the research results. The requested amount is calculated using the base rate of the ARC Senior Research Associate scale.

Maintenance

Good-quality recording equipment is required to record interviews, including an omnidirectional flat microphone. This will be required for both the CI and the RA, as the RA will conduct VET cameo studies while the CI is interviewing overseas. The budget for audio-tapes reflects the need to retain primary data. It is anticipated that the bulk of the money requested for maintenance will be spent on telephone and photocopying costs. Although the university will provide for reasonable photocopying and phone costs, these expenses will be larger than average. The creation of a policy archive will lead to large amounts of printing and photocopying as well as library costs, particularly in year 1. Telephone budget estimates are based on the anticipated expense of negotiating interviews with inter-state and international agencies and senior staff and phone interviews with participants both preceding and following each cameo study and set of interviews with policy agents. Data collection is concentrated in the second year and includes international telephone calls in addition to STD expenses. This is reflected in the amount requested in the second year.

Travel

This project aims to amass data from state, national and international sources, and this is reflected in the travel budget. Private car reimbursement is requested for cameo studies and state government interviews conducted in South Australia, and five-day advance

booking air fares, *per diems* and local transport costs for Victoria and New South Wales. Travel will occur according to the project's overall design, with studies conducted at a rate of one sector per semester. Within this constraint, travel costs have been kept to an absolute minimum and, in order to reduce air fares, the two cameo studies per sector per state in semesters 2–5 will be conducted during the one visit. Overseas interviews will be conducted with senior staff in: Paris (UNESCO and OECD); Brussels (Education International and EU); Geneva (ILO); and Washington DC (World Bank). The budget includes a round-the-world air ticket. Overseas *per diems* and local transport have been determined with regard to the current value of the Australian dollar.

What happens next?

It depends, yet again, on the funder.

- If you have put in an expression of interest, you may get a letter asking for a full application.
- You may be asked by the potential funder to provide more detail or to come for an interview.
- You may get the reviewers' reports and be asked to respond. If you do, take this very seriously and get advice about how best to do it.

Whatever the case you are in limbo till the results emerge. But do you sit on your hands till then? No, for you still have your funding calendar, which tells you which you-friendly grant possibilities are coming up, and you know that there are regular opportunities that will always be there. Now is when you take the bid you have developed and see what other sources of money may be available to support all or part of it. Also, consider the possibility of doing a little unfunded research in relation to it – a pilot study or needs assessment, for instance. Or perhaps in putting the bid together you spotted some serious holes in your CV or your researcher identity. Consider attending to these. You may, for example, have some conference papers that need to be written up or some data from a previous project that is not yet analysed and written

up. Or you may just have recognised that you need to do some more reading. Whatever you do, don't imagine that once the bid is in you can rest on your laurels, fabulous though they may be.

And what if you hear you have missed out? Damn! Damn! Damn! Quite naturally you will feel disappointed and possibly inadequate. You may also feel annoyed with the funders, the reviewers (what do they know?) or your university for pushing you to chase research dollars. You may be jealous of your successful colleagues. You may conclude that you will never be a researcher and decide to chuck it all in. You may become cynical about the whole damn research enterprise. We have all been there, done that, and it sucks. However, you do have to get over it, and the sooner the better. A few nights of bitter and twisted invective shared with a sympathetic colleague and accompanied by whatever comforts you best are okay. But several weeks? Nah! As soon as you can bring yourself to, have a chat with your mentors and your best academic colleagues and get back to your research agenda. No-one wins all the time and everyone must expect to rework applications for subsequent funding rounds or other possible funders. And on no account should you ignore the feedback which led your bid to fall over. Use that and other feedback to rewrite your bid.

This has been a detailed and complex chapter, and for good reason, as the outline of the various tasks involved in writing a winning research application indicates. As we have shown, writers of winning bids know that it is a game about horses for courses.

6 Project Management

In this chapter we talk you through the project establishment stage and the issues you will deal with as the project proceeds, including working in a team, publishing and dissemination.

Where are you now?

At this point you have heard that you have won the bid. Wild celebrations are in order, of course. Winning is great, and you will be on a high for while, or maybe for the length of the project. But it is not uncommon for people to feel anxious at this stage, particularly if it is their first funded project. You may remember, for instance, all the things you promised – or foolishly over-promised. You may realise what a very hard slog it will be to complete the project and that there will be no relief for the next few years. You may wonder how it will be possible to do the project and all your other work. You may even panic, and with good reason if the research starts Monday next. Well, there is no escaping. You won the money, now you have to do the work. Our task in this chapter is to give you some tips on managing the project well, with the least possible trauma and the best possible results.

The establishment stage

The contract

The contract will accompany any offer of an external funding grant and you must deal with it pronto. It may come with the letter of offer or it may arise after a period of discussion and negotiation with the funder. If the contract is from a funding body such as a research council it will

be standard and you can comfortably sign it and your university will do the rest. For other grants you must have your university's legal adviser take a look and help you negotiate any necessary changes. If you are working across several universities each university's legal adviser will have to check it, especially if the money is to go to the separate institutions rather than through one lead university. Prior to doing this, you must check it to see if everything is there and that nothing has changed or been slipped in under your guard. Major matters of concern are time-lines, deliverables and intellectual property.

Also you must attend to things that have changed since you put in the bid. Perhaps the original time-lines have become difficult or the project team may have altered. Under such circumstances the contract needs to be changed and you, or the solicitor, must negotiate this with the funder. Make sure that you can still meet time-lines and that they include everything, particularly the work of the final project stages. Do not get caught doing final revisions to reports after the project is complete and payment over. Funders will vary on the amount of time that is seen as acceptable or necessary between the offering and the signing of the contract and indeed the end of the project and the final report. For instance, the ESRC in the UK insists on a six-week gap between the offer and the signing, and all reports must be submitted three months after the project finishes.

We discuss Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) at length in *Writing for Publication*. In this context you need to think about how to deal with IPR provision in research contracts and make sure it is not only clear from the beginning but does what you want. Don't sign away your right to be known as the researchers and to publish from the project. What you want is the right to:

- Have your team's name and institutions on all the project publications put out by the funder.
- Publish from the project in peer-refereed journals.
- Talk publicly about the project outcomes to your colleagues and the media. You do not want to be gagged for ever – but you may be happy to be gagged for a while to give your funder a chance to read and think about your report.
- Publish the report yourself if the funder refuses to publish it for whatever reason.
- Royalties and other copyright money.

Melissa has done heaps of research and development projects for government education systems. They have involved producing innumerable curriculum and other documents and reports either alone or in teams. She has a fine mind and some astute, practical and original ideas. She also works hard, and in fact usually does most of the work despite being a member of a team. Almost invariably the good ideas are hers. In her early days of doing such government work she was quite naive about matters of IPR. Although she produced a huge amount of curriculum material little had her name on it. Of course this is not unusual in government circles. It did not particularly worry her until she found quite a bit of her work put out under someone else's name. Subsequently she has been much smarter about IPR. Indeed, she recently had a financial windfall from the Australian copyright agency.

Doing budget and project revisions

You don't always get all the money you asked for despite your carefully crafted and totally persuasive budget justifications. Once you know your final amount you must carefully revise your budget for the entire period of the project. This will require you to revise aspects of the project. You cannot try to deliver what you have not been funded for. So downsize your activities and promises and revise your time-line and publishing plan if necessary. Before doing so check to see if your institution can provide you with any top-up money – you may get lucky.

Finding and appointing your research staff

Employ your research and other support staff early. While you can't make or finalise appointments before your contract is through and your budget revised, there are things you can do in advance.

- *Keep your eye open for good people*. Let your colleagues know you need research and/or administrative assistants. They may be able to recommend people to you – but don't just take their word for it. Check out the work of anyone recommended if you can, and do not promise anything until you are in a position to. If you can appoint someone good without going to external advertisement, this is a

bonus, as it saves time and money. But it may also mean you do not get the best person. Don't be too hasty to appoint someone just because they are there, warm and upright. You also need to be careful that you don't fall foul of equal opportunities principles and regulations.
- *If you have to advertise*, chat to people in your human resources (personnel) division to see what it entails, how much it costs, and consider what the project can afford now your budget has been revised.
- *Write a preliminary advertisement and job description*. Consider carefully the selection criteria, job description and application time-lines. The personnel people may be able help you do this. Think about who you want to have on the selection committee and line them up informally.
- *Line up all the necessaries* – office and desk space, computers, access keys, telephone access and the like – so that once someone is on board they can get down to work immediately. If you are in a research group or centre, there may be people available to help you do this.

Appointing people is just the start of what you need to do. Once you have them on board you will have to:

- Make sure they have a thorough induction into all those aspects of the university that are pertinent to the project. For example, have them spend some time on the Web getting to know research policies and procedures and in the library, introduce them to the university's email and other systems, and to other researchers, research support staff and research leaders.
- Sit down with them and carefully go though the project, noting particularly time-lines and deadlines. Make sure they understand the project's purposes and the expected outputs.
- Clarify their working hours, role and responsibilities. Make clear what you expect of them and that they are responsible to you.
- Let them know they must plan their holidays and include them within the time of the contract.
- Clarify questions of authorship and ownership with them early. Indicate whether these are negotiable and on what grounds.
- In the context of the time-line, set them to work on a small set of activities, which can be evaluated at the end of that time. Keep a close eye on their work.

- If research assistants are doing research degrees within the project, factor in the fact that they have to be able to identify what work is theirs to legitimately claim their PhD. This is quite difficult and requires very careful and sensitive negotiation and monitoring. Lifelong enmities have arisen out of failure to clarify who owns what under such circumstances.

Today, Daniel and Don are both big guns in their field. They both have Chairs. In earlier times, though, Daniel was Don's PhD supervisor. In fact he recruited Don to work with him on a funded project. For a while they got on really well and the relationship was highly generative for both of them. However, as time went on the relationship became more rivalrous. Daniel started to assert his seniority and to claim many of Don's insights for the project. Don was incensed and tried to secure them for his PhD, even going so far as to take the case further up the university system. The rivalry had initially been contained within the project team but now it was public knowledge. Eventually it was resolved, but the deep hostilities remained and sadly spilled over into subsequent workplaces and professional relationships. People were 'recruited' either to Don's or to Daniel's team. Many colleagues did not want to take sides, as they found the whole thing distasteful.

Applying for ethics approval

If you are doing research with people (often and insultingly referred as 'human subjects') or animals you must get ethics approval from your university and possibly other research sites before you commence your research. You need to find out what the requirements are in your particular situation. In many countries and universities this should be done before submitting your grant application to the funding agency. In others, the university will only be willing to consider ethics approval once the grant is obtained. Whatever, you should already have thought about the ethical dimensions of your research when writing the research proposal, and you can find out more about this in *Getting Started on Research*.

Your university website will probably have all the details and forms on line and will also have the dates of ethics committee meetings. You may also need ethics approval from your other research sites. If you are doing research in medical settings getting ethics approval may be particularly onerous. If you haven't had to get ethics approval beforehand and you have been able to appoint a research assistant, then tracking down what you need to do in this respect is a good early job for them, as is working on early drafts of your various ethics applications. Some institutions will require you to renew your ethics approval annually – and if your project has changed you may even need to apply afresh. At the end of the project, your university may also require a final ethics report.

University ethics committees tend to be very determined and cautious, always want their instructions followed to the letter and also prefer more rather than less detail. The more you give them first up the more likely is their quick approval. They are also very conservative and don't take kindly to methodological innovation or 'out there' topics. If your project fits these descriptions put a great deal of extra care into your ethics application, carefully and convincingly laying out your legitimations and justifications.

Your publishing and dissemination plan

Authorship and attribution are among the most contentious aspects of team research. Recognise this up front and deal with it. Reach an agreement and put it in writing. The sorts of things you will need to negotiate are as follows: How the publications will be authored. Will all team members' names be on each paper? If so, in what order? How will book authorship be ordered, alphabetically or in order of contribution? How is 'contribution' to be understood? What if you do not want your name on a certain paper? Of course you have that right, but what does it do for team morale? Is having single or sub-group-authored papers the best way to go, provided they always acknowledge the project and the rest of the project team in footnotes? If so, what are your responsibilities with regard to critical feedback on others' drafts? At what point does heaps and heaps of feedback turn into at least associate authorship? Are you better-off negotiating authorship on a case-by-case basis? We have tried various methods. None is perfect and you can get stung in many unexpected ways. Don't ask us to elaborate! The main thing is to agree and to keep the lines of communication open on the

topic. If the approach you agreed on does not appear to be working, talk about it and renegotiate it. Don't brood, it's an awful waste of energy.

The on-going work

Looking after your budget

You have your revised budget and you are now spending money on staff, various sorts of infrastructure and travel. Here are the questions you need answered about the university's finance practices with regard to research money:

- Can you get a credit card for your research project?
- What do you do with receipts for costs incurred outside the university? Indeed, do you have a decent system for keeping receipts?
- What can you sign off on?
- Can you, should you, keep your own accounts and records? How is this best done?
- How can you keep a check on your accounts?
- How does the university keep you informed of your expenditure?
- Can you understand the forms they send you? These are usually in totally incomprehensible codes and are organised in counter-intuitive ways.

Most early career researchers don't know the answers to these questions. However, some universities do run short training sessions on the university's finance systems and the software packages used and it very useful to go along to these so you can get up to speed quickly. If your university does not offer such things suggest to your research office that they offer them as a research training activity for new researchers. Such activity should include preparing budgets, using spreadsheets and the like. If no formal training exists, or if you have done the training and still don't understand, it may be worth going to see your finance officer and asking her or him to explain the budgeting systems to you. Not only can you ask the questions you need answered, but it will also mean that the finance officer is more likely to remember you and respond quickly to your questions in future.

You must never ever put your trust in the university to keep your records correctly and thus pass all responsibility over to it. Mistakes are always made with mysterious outgoings and incomings. You must regularly check your budgets and fix them up pronto.

Leadership and membership of research teams

The research team is central to the success of the project. It is crucial that you get your membership and leadership right. A good research team is hugely productive in many ways and is a joy to be part of. We have each been blessed on many occasions in this regard. However, we have also had some less than pleasant and productive experiences. These drag you and the research down. If you have appointed good research staff that is a good start. Research teams include the following combinations:

- The sole grant winner and:
  - Research staff.
  - Research staff and a PhD student and/or a postdoctoral appointment.
  - A project consultancy or management team invited and appointed by the grant winner or by the funder.
- A grant-winning team consisting mainly of:
  - Academics at one university or more, within one or more school, department, research centre or discipline, within one or more state or country, and research staff.
  - Research staff and a PhD student and/or a postdoctoral appointment.
  - A project consultancy or management team invited and appointed by the grant winner or by the funder.
- A grant-winning team consisting of academics and research partners from elsewhere: industry, government, the community, the profession, anywhere. This team might include any or all the above and also:
  - Research staff appointed by the partner.
  - Permanent employees of the partner whose work has been diverted to the project either part or full time.

Teams are complex and consist of many types of research identities and relationships. Team members might include very experienced researchers and novices, people with different types of research experience and with different expectations of the project's processes and outcomes.

Handy hints about team work

Being the boss. Almost inevitably teams involve some sort of formal and clear power hierarchy. Certain people are the employing researchers and others are the research workers employed on a contract and answerable to you, the boss. Being the boss does not mean being tyrannical, exploitative or a dragon of the first order. Neither does it mean becoming your staff's new best friend or their therapist, life coach or mother/father figure. It does mean taking responsibility for the work and working conditions of your employees and treating your staff with respect and care. At a minimum your role is to:

- Clearly allocate, schedule and oversee their work.
- Make sure it gets done.
- Evaluate it and assist them to improve it if necessary.
- Ensure that the conditions in which they undertake that work are conducive to working well, and are safe and healthy.
- Know the rules and procedures that govern employment in your university.

You are a *really* good boss if you do such things as:

- Give lots of feedback to your researchers about when their work is going well and how it might be improved.
- Get them to talk about how they think they are going and what might help them to work better.
- Find out if they need any additional training and organise that for them. Perhaps plan a programme for their time of employment with you.
- Keep in mind that they also have a future and consider how their involvement in the project might help them in their own career plans.
- Factor into their work any rewards that you can which will increase their enjoyment of their work and their attachment to the project.
- See your role as offering research training for your research staff and give them plenty of opportunities to build their skills through new research-related experiences.
- Help them gain new positions and/or develop their own projects as their work on yours draws to a close.

Problems!

Researcher/contract researcher relationships can get difficult if, for instance, the contract researcher is your PhD student, long-standing friend, lover, a member of your family, your daughter's best friend or whatever. Such complicated relationships are best avoided in our view. But relationships can get difficult anyway. And, of course, you may become friendly with your research staff, occasions may require that you hear their personal troubles and take into account what is going on in their personal life. But ultimately they work for you and you are together to get a job of work done under the terms of the project and their employment contract. This is the base line.

You are a problematic boss if you do not do the 'good boss' things noted above, and if you:

- Don't do what you say you will.
- Are difficult to contact and talk with.
- Keep changing your mind or their schedule.
- Are rigid and don't allow a little flexibility when it is required.
- Expect them to work above or below their job descriptions and skills.
- Expect them to work above and beyond their paid working hours.
- Don't trust them to do the right thing by you.
- Do not properly acknowledge their work, or if you claim theirs as your own, failing to include their name on the paper. Some scoundrels do this and should be shot at dawn for it. It is not on. Paying someone for their work doesn't absolve you of your moral obligation for proper acknowledgement and attribution of their contributions.
- Do not consider their career development needs and help them move on from their position as your research assistant.

You, as boss, may have problems with your research staff if they:

- Do not listen.
- Do not do as they are asked.
- Are not up to the job and more training won't get them there in the short term.
- Skive off when they are supposed to be working.
- Turn up late for meetings.
- Try to take control of the project. Some like to call this 'managing up'. In some senses your researchers will have to do it when trying

to arrange aspects of the project or trying, for instance, to organise meetings. But we are talking here about when they try to make the sorts of decisions that are rightly yours and when they will not follow your instructions to do otherwise.
- Become possessive about project data, such as field notes, regarding it as their own rather than the project team's.
- Decide what they will do at their own rather than the project's convenience.
- Expect attributions or authorships that are beyond the level of their contribution. This happens quite often, and for some clarity about who has the right to be named as an author you can read *Writing for Publication*.
- Or if you end up doing the work they are supposed to be doing or having to double-check everything they have done because you do not trust them to do it properly.

You should know that sometimes any or all such problems may arise no matter how good a boss you are. While some RAs are bliss, some are hopeless.

Dealing with problems

There are no hard-and-fast rules for dealing with these two sets of problems except that they must be nipped in the bud early and you must take the lead in doing this. The first set of problems – about being a bad boss – is particularly difficult because your RA is unlikely to give you the feedback that will enable you to be a better boss. After all, there is an imbalance of power and you are not only the boss, you are also the source of future references, job opportunities and career sponsorship. The best thing you can do is: first follow the golden 'good boss' rules listed above, second make sure the lines of communication are as open and dialogical as possible and third regularly reflect critically and ruthlessly on your own boss practices.

The second set of problems – about having a poor RA – is not easy to deal with either, particularly if you are the sort of person who finds it difficult to be frank with people or who always makes excuses for them even when they are patently behaving inappropriately or if you compulsively avoid potentially conflictual or confrontational situations. Be clear on this. Such ways of being in the world do not help you, the project or indeed the contract researcher. You must name the problem and

address it as soon as you are aware of it; don't indulge in avoidance strategies, otherwise known as the strategies of the totally gutless who cannot live up to their responsibilities to the project or the employee.

Your university's 'human resources' department will be able to provide you with advice and information about processes to follow. If the situation gets so bad that you have to sack the researcher you need to know what their and your legal rights are and you will need to have followed due process. This usually requires you to have clearly laid out your performance expectations for a set period and for the assistant's performance to be evaluated at the end of that period. It also involves a number of stages, and if they do not come up to scratch at the end of them you then have grounds for dismissal. This is a big step to take and hopefully it will not come to that.

Before entering the process you may try to deal with the recalcitrant staff member informally. There are a number of tactics you could try:

- Call a meeting and let the person know that you have concerns about their work and that you want to talk to them about the problem and how to resolve it quickly and without rancour.
- List your concerns and email your list to your researcher. Invite them to come to the meeting with an explanation and also with a set of propositions about how they might get up to speed.
- In the meeting first go though your concerns. Give them the chance to go though their responses to your concerns and to lay out any of their own. Quietly but firmly get them to agree that they must lift their game. (And, if you need to lift yours, then agree to do that too but do not take any blame where it is not warranted.) Go through their proposed ways of doing this. Share some of your own and let them know how you will monitor their work. Set out a time period for the first stage of this monitoring and let them know that if they are not up to speed, your next step is the formal university process.
- You must keep good, written records of all of this.

Louise was really rushed to appoint a research assistant on a new project of the 'starting Monday' variety. Jim worked down the corridor, seemed friendly and capable and had just finished his contract on another project. She got chatting to him at the photocopier

and before she knew it she was offering him the job – starting immediately. She did not have a chance to contact his previous employer until a few weeks into the project, at which time she learnt that he had been unsatisfactory and had actually been under a process of formal review. Louise had always been rather unimpressed with the previous employer and anyway thought that her superior people skills would ensure that Jim got up speed. Further, she had no time to follow though with the HR people to find out exactly what had happened and what it might mean for her work with Jim. As time went on she found that indeed Jim was below par and that he spent lots of time and effort trying to hide the fact. He took twice as long to do things as was reasonable but got defensive when she tried to 'intervene'. Meanwhile she found that she was regularly having to check his work, as she could never be sure that it would be done properly. When she had finally had enough and decided to institute a process of review herself, she found that she did not know how to go about it. By the time she found out, it became clear to her that she had no decent evidence of his poor work history because she herself had in fact covered over the trail. When she told him she intended nonetheless to institute proceedings, he was furious and complained about her to the union and senior staff. All this took huge amounts of time away from the project but she did not let the funder know of the problems she was having. Eventually a 'deliverable' was due that she could not deliver. The funder charged her a penalty from the next round of money she was due to get. When she protested, the funder pointed to the contract, which neither she nor the university solicitor had read before she signed it. She had no choice but to keep Jim on for the remainder of the project and to fund, out of another consultancy budget line, someone else to do his work.

Being a member of a collegial academic team

What of relationships within a project team consisting mainly of experienced or fledgling academics, including project PhD students and postdoctoral fellows (postdocs)? These need care too, especially when there are big differences of power and status.

Formal and informal lines of responsibility, authority and accountability

With the PhD students and the postdocs on your team it is likely you will also be their boss in that they were invited on to your project and thus work to you – although, as noted earlier, ownership of ideas and authorship of publications may be an issue. In such cases many of the points we made about being a good and very good boss apply. There may be chief and partner investigators on the team. Again it is clear that the responsibility for the project and the lines of authority within it are with the CIs. Also, if there is, or you are, a project director then the buck stops with them/you.

If you are all named on the project bid as CIs then it is open slather even if some team members are more junior than others. There are few guidelines even though this is the most common form of research practice. In such circumstances you would be well advised to attend to the following matters and to invent your own rules for the project no matter whether it is a long one or a short one.

Very early in the project negotiate *roles and responsibilities* and do up a responsibility matrix. We give an example of such a matrix in Table 5. You need to make sure that responsibilities are distributed equally and that no-one gets more to do than the others and that no-one gets more of the cream or the crap jobs than do others. However, too much democracy can be as problematic as too little. It is smart to make use of the particular skills people have. So, for instance, if one of the team is brilliant at statistics and the rest mediocre, it makes sense and is of overall benefit to the project if the stats person plays to their strengths. This may mean you do more menial things at some stages of the project. So what! There will be swings and roundabouts. On other occasions you may be doing the higher-order stuff while she is making the coffee. In other words, don't be too precious or too short-term in your thinking about team democracy. View project work in the whole and take things in the round. That said, more senior researchers have a responsibility to more junior colleagues to make sure that they are getting what they need out of a project and aren't being exploited by their ethically challenged colleagues and that they are not exploiting themselves. And the load will also be distributed according to role and level of responsibility.

TABLE 5 A responsibility matrix

Name	Role	Budget/ money	Talking to funder	Literature review and fieldwork	Data analysis	Writing
Jamila	Chief investigator	✓	✓	10%	Supervisory Keeping an overview	Lead role
Peter	Partner investigator			10%	Quantitative data	Quantitative aspects
Anne	Research associate			50% (and to help Ilan). Setting up access to research sites	Qualitative data	Support Jamila and Peter
Ilan	Part-time research assistant PT doctoral student			30% with special attention to the literature review	Support to Peter and Anne	

Ethical practice in research teams

Not all research bosses or general members of a research team are highly reflexive about their own practices and some have no clue. Sadly, also, some contract researchers or junior members of research teams do not even know when they are getting ripped off. You are being exploited if:

- You wrote or contributed significantly to the conceptualisation of the bid but you are not a co-applicant (unless it is your job specifically to be developing bids with and in support of other people).
- You are employed fractionally but are working much more than that.
- You are employed as a research assistant but you are doing the work of a more senior research associate.
- Your work on a project is not appropriately recognised or acknowledged, e.g. you did a substantial amount of analysis of quantitative data but that's not acknowledged.
- Someone else uses your ideas without acknowledgement.

When there is a project team consisting of a number of academics it is sometimes not made clear to the research support staff what the *lines of authority and accountability* are. How should they work to a team? How can you avoid giving them conflicting directives? It is beneficial all round if there are clear lines of accountability: who should they go to first, who should they go to for what? In the early stages of the project the academics on the team would be well advised to sort this out and to discuss together what it means to be good and very good bosses and then for the rest of the project to monitor their progress on it, perhaps by including it as an item at your regular meetings.

Regular and open communication

Such communication among the project team is crucial. It is useful at the start to develop a detailed calendar of meetings for a semester and also to plan some key dates for the year. Team meetings need to take place quite frequently so that you don't lose track of what is happening in the project. The more complex the work, the more frequently they need to be held. In addition to regular meetings of the whole team (if it consists of more than one main researcher with assistance), there need to be more frequent regular meetings between any contract researchers and the researcher they are working with. Such meetings may need to take place as often as once a week or once a fortnight – fieldwork permitting. Your more regular meetings will involve lots of routine project management activities and of necessity will include regular budget updates but should also include progress reports and recurring discussions of the research itself, perhaps based on the progress reports. You might also have your research assistant do a regular email communication bulletin. Set these dates early and in stone. Under no circumstances keep altering them because others want you to. You research must take high priority. Try to include some project team retreats so that you can go away together and enjoy some serious project thinking time. You might use this time to discuss your data or your reading or to workshop your papers.

Dealing with different working styles

Among team members working styles vary. Some members may need huge lead times, for instance, while others may work best under the

pressure of fierce deadlines. Try to get to know the different ways of working among team members and accommodate them in your plans. On the other hand, though, because it is a team, you may need to modify your ways in order to progress the team's plans. It's a fine line, but being aware of the issues is a good start.

Time-lines

Your time-lines were produced as part of the project application and revised in line with the reduced budget. They may also need to be revised owing to other things that delay you: achieving ethics approval or getting access to the field, for instance. Clearly your time-line is a moving feast to some extent but it should not be too movable or you will not complete the project on time and it will haunt you while you are trying to do later projects. If some things delay you in one aspect of the project, do other project-related work. This might include such activities as your reading on theory or methods, updating the literature review, working though some thorny conceptual problems or designing research instruments. *There is no such thing as down time on research projects.*

Don't get interrupted by anything outside the project

If you have taken our advice about planning the rest of your teaching and admin work alongside your research, you have no excuses. But some people lack self-discipline. In a highly Pavlovian manner, they respond to every stimulus out there. It is one thing to respond to a reasonable request from your head of school, say, for you to take on some unexpected new activity above and beyond what you knew to expect when you planned your research project's timetable. It is entirely another for you to rush off to everything that looks interesting at the expense of the project which is supposed to be one of your primary responsibilities. If you do this it shows little respect for your research team and also of course drives them crazy. 'No' must be in your vocabulary, and remember, opportunities come along all the time; to miss one is not to miss them all for ever.

Dissemination activities

You should try to keep to your publishing plan but it should be sufficiently flexible to admit out-of-left-field opportunities. However you organise authorship, you should certainly do conference symposia and other public fora together as well as separately. This is vital for the visibility of the project as a whole and it offers you opportunities to collectively test out your ideas in public and to get feedback. It has other benefits, not the least being that you get to go away together and have fun. More invitations to present again on the project are among the usual benefits, unless of course your symposium goes down like a lead balloon. If that happens at least you are there to support each other and can go off together and do group therapeutic activity. We have found that if the papers are badly received the fact itself can provoke some quite generative discussions both at the conference and later. So don't be too gloomy about it. You should make sure you encourage each other to turn conference presentations into papers for peer-refereed journals. Don't make the common mistake of too many conference presentations and not enough publications.

Your dissemination plan may also include developing (and regularly updating!) your website, regular media releases, workshops for industry, promo talks to potential users, talk-back radio and the like. Keep a list of journalists you have found helpful and competent and use them regularly. You do not have to wait till you have conclusive findings; work in progress material is always of interest. Your dissemination plan may also include conferences or workshops that you organise yourselves. These might be highly specialised, by invitation and include only academics in your field. Or they may be designed to speak to policy makers or practitioners and be open to all comers, or specified cohorts. In allocating dissemination responsibilities you might put certain members in charge of overseeing such activities and making sure they happen. It is too easy to let such things slip to the bottom of the list. All research projects should have some sort of *public profile* and you have to build it. In doing so you may take advice from your university's media and PR people. Often the media people are looking for copy and will run stories for you. You should also make sure you and your project are listed on the university's register of expertise or the equivalent.

Acknowledgement

Acknowledging each other's contribution to the work of the team is important. But how does the team recognise and deal with the big ideas of individuals? If someone has had an idea that you can clearly identify as having influenced your thinking it must be acknowledged. However, often in project teams such big ideas are a result of the synergies among the group and it is hard to pin them down to one individual or moment. We thus urge you not to be too precious about this with regard to ideas you think are yours. They may have arisen from the springboard of the group and you may not be acknowledging it sufficiently. On the other hand breakthough thoughts or compelling or evocative new concepts may well deserve to be acknowledged. A little generosity goes a long way. And remember that you need to go on acknowledging the collaboration of your team long after the actual project has ended, whenever you use data collected during the project or the big ideas from it.

Different opportunities among the team

Dealing with these differences is crucial. In many teams there are people who get more invitations than others to strut their stuff at conferences, in print or to the media. If you are such a person try to share some of the opportunities with other members of the team. If you don't, public perceptions of the project will be skewed towards you and also, eventually, there will be undercurrents of resentment within the project team. On the other hand, if you are not one of these people it does you no good to get resentful or envious. Take the opportunities that are available to you to get out and about even if they do not arise from invitations. Volunteer papers, submit proposals for symposia, let people know who you are and of your availability to talk on the project. All such things will enhance your profile in regard to the project and also the project itself – which is the main game, is it not?

Slackers and what to do about them

What do you do if some team members do not share the load equally? One always hopes that if one pulls one's own weight others will pull

theirs. But sadly this is not always the case. Sometimes people fall in a heap for personal and entirely understandable reasons, and you can usually live with that for a while as they will eventually come out of it, hopefully sooner rather than later. If it goes on for too long you do need to deal with it, because maybe they can't. However, some people are just plain lazy and are happy for others to do their leg work, and yet others are too busy doing other things to attend properly to the project. It is very hard to sort out such situations. Yet failure to do so can lead to serious rifts within the team. If you have done many of the things we suggest above you may minimise the problem but some people have very thick skins.

Our view is that you should, as always, try to nip the problem in the bud and put the issue up front and on the agenda of meetings. Sometimes all your best efforts have no effect. What do you do then? We think you should cut your losses and count them out. It is not appropriate for them to get credit where credit is not due – and credit for work on your project which they are not actually doing might include some significant benefits to them, such as a reduced work load, access to project money, recognition with regard to project outcomes and so on. That would be plain unfair. You may want to formally negotiate their departure from the project and have funding authorities and the university record the fact. Such a step is serious, and even the threat of it may get them moving. If you do not wish to go that far then we suggest you rewrite the rules the project has negotiated in such a way as to ensure that the person is excluded from project benefits. Certainly their name should not go on any publications or acknowledgements. If, however, they made a big contribution in the early stages of the project and fell by the wayside later, you must acknowledge their early contribution.

Falling out with members of the team

This is not uncommon and neither is it the end of the world, even though it hurts. This can happen at any stage of the project and over any of its activities. Rightly or wrongly, people may feel marginalised in the team or undervalued, they may feel their ideas are neglected, that they carry too much of the load or that some people get more credit than they do. There may be genuine theoretical, methodological or political differences in the team that cannot be reconciled, or totally incompatible

working styles. You do need to be alert to the falling-out warning signs in yourself and in others. You might, for example, find yourself constantly anxious or negative about the project, or that after meetings or field trips you come away with feelings of irritability, hostility or disappointment with regard to your co-researchers, or you might feel jealous each time they speak because they are so articulate in comparison with your view of yourself or they get the attention you crave or feel you deserve. All this might lead you to withdraw from them or to make bitchy remarks behind their backs or whatever. In others, these warning signs might include negative body language, withdrawal, hostile, defensive, sarcastic or disruptive behaviour in meetings, a tense and fraught aura when the team is together, the formation of team sub-sets who go their own way or who respond negatively to everything that others do.

How do you deal with such things? You probably need to develop some 'emotional literacy' with regard to your own negative feelings and behaviours. They may arise because you are tired and overworked, because other things are going badly in your life or because you are insecure or paranoid. It is not fair on your co-researchers to project it all on to them. So you do have to get a grip; try to deal with the root causes, get counselling if it will help. On the other hand there may be good reasons for your negative mind set, although if you are paranoid you will be unable to distinguish between these good reasons and your paranoid fantasies. The team may indeed not be working as well as it might. This is the point at which you have to speak up, without dumping on your colleagues, let people know how you feel and ask how the group might collectively improve the situation. This may work; it may not. Some things are not resolvable. Having tried your best you may just have to work and live the project out, or cut your losses and get out if you can do so without too much damage to your reputation or the team. You must then resolve not to work with certain people again.

Four overarching principles apply to the personal dynamics of working in research teams:

- Be very careful who you get into bed with.
- If you are going to err, it's better to err on the side of generosity. There is no place in research for the small-minded or the mean spirited.
- Don't take everything too much to heart – save your angst for the big things that really matter. There is no place in research for the over-sensitive ego.

- If you get seriously, badly, deeply stung don't work with those people again but also don't go around publicly ruining their reputations. They will do that by themselves – eventually, hopefully.

Everybody (or nearly everybody) has a *dream team* in their head. In this team, the ideas would flow, the work would go smoothly, everyone would agree, stimulate and support everyone else all the time, no-one would suffer any angst over the project, everything would run to time and the outputs would be outstanding. Unfortunately, such a dream team doesn't exist. In practice, as with all other relationships, teams need to be worked at. You should no more expect to be part of a perfect team than you expect to have a perfect relationship at all times with your mother, lover or friends. What matters is that the team is good enough and that members of it are prepared to work at making things work.

Relationships between the team and the funder

These are on-going. They don't end once you have the money in your hot little hand (the university's account, actually). All sorts of to-ing and fro-ing will be required, some of which we have already mentioned and is to do with regular reporting and delivery requirements and which may involve dealing with a management team. However, other things may arise as the project proceeds. It is helpful to know that funders often have one person who is your contact and whom you should cultivate. Being on the good side of this person can be very handy at times. Your project might be wise to specify the team member who will be in regular touch with the funder. If there's someone in the team who is particularly adept at that sort of thing, then let him or her deal with it, although you may want to learn some skills from them for future application in different projects. You should always let the funder know if you are seriously behind, or having major difficulties, or have to make significant changes. This is not just a courtesy, it is a necessity. You need to cover yourself and have their agreement to such changes (preferably in writing if need be). But you may also be able to get some help and advice from them with regard to the trouble you are having. The funder is not an ogre, at least not often, and they want to get the project done, and done well, as much as you do. So don't put your funder in an awkward position, ever. It may come back to bite you. Good relationships are always of benefit, personally and professionally. If you are

working in a sensitive area and you have some trouble brewing (e.g. hostile journalists phoning you) then make sure you contact the funder, who may have better resources and press officers to deal with it than you have at your disposal. Discuss how best to address the issues.

While funders are not ogres, they can also be pretty damn demanding and can try to squeeze more work out of you than you have been paid for. This may happen at the end of the project in negotiating the final product, or after the project is over they may want you to be involved in a raft of dissemination activities above and beyond those you agreed to. If so, you naturally expect to be paid. Your time requires their money. Don't be a sucker and don't forever give your time for free. They will not respect you in the morning.

Being a member of a team that includes industry partners or government

Many of the things we said above about research teams apply here, but there are some additional matters to consider. These vary for many reasons, including how the funding has been gained. You and your industry partner may have joined forces to gain money from a third party, or perhaps industry has provided the money and contracted you to do the work along with its research staff. There are other options we could list but the point is that the method of funding will determine the power relations within the team and the main pressures on the team. If industry funded you or if it has put more resources into the project than you then it holds most of the aces.

You may find that you and your industry partner have somewhat different values and cultures. Of course you must not assume significant differences exist or go into the research with your mind full of stereotypes – but you may, nonetheless, find such differences and you have to work to try to bridge them. This does not mean that you have to subordinate your culture to theirs, or they theirs to yours. But it probably does mean acknowledging that such differences exist and considering where they advantage the project and where they get in the way. Keep in mind that differences can be very generative and exciting, so don't be afraid of them or dig your heels in unnecessarily.

You will be able to iron out any potentially debilitating differences in the probably protracted process of putting the grant application together – a process that requires both you and your partners to compromise. Such differences may have to do with the research focus

or styles or IP and publishing and you may well have found each other's processes annoying. Obviously you would not be proceeding with the research had you not been able to resolve those differences – but that may only have been on the surface and they may simmer for some time. As always, there are no hard-and-fast rules about how to deal with them. The best advice we can offer is to do so early and in as dialogical a manner as is possible.

Winding up, gearing up?

All good things come to an end (and so, thankfully, do the less good). But when is the project finished? Apart from deadlines bearing down on you, there is also the matter of the money running out – and, inevitably, you've so much more that you could still do in relation to the project. Hopefully by this point you will have fulfilled all your promises. You have now:

- Let all your research staff go after due farewells and assistance with future employment.
- Offered your final acknowledgements to participants and undertaken any acts of reciprocity that you deemed necessary and that they wanted.
- Written the final reports.
- Put out the requisite publications, which are being well reviewed and cited.
- Had the impact you hoped.
- Run your budget dry but not overspent it.
- Carefully archived all the material on CDs and in archive boxes or files.

Is that all there is? Is it the end? Well, no, not if you are a career researcher. This is the start of another project. Where you have left off is a place to begin again.

Further Reading

Gitlin, L.N., and Lyons, K. (1996) *Successful Grant Writing: Strategies for Health and Human Service Professionals*, New York: Springer. Aimed primarily at health professionals and academics, this guide is also useful for early career academics and those more advanced, in most disciplines. It is relevant for applications to government, foundations and corporations and takes the reader from a desire to attain research funds to life just after the proposal submission. This advice is complemented by persuasive examples that flesh out the advice. The book covers the following areas: becoming familiar with funding sources; developing your ideas for funding; technical strategies for effective proposal writing; preparing a budget; models of individual and collaborative proposal development and understanding the review process.

Locke, L., Spirduso, W. and Silverman, S. (2000) *Proposals that Work: Guide for Planning Dissertations and Grant Proposals*, Thousand Oaks CA: Sage. This book has three main sections: developing a research proposal for either graduate dissertation or postdoctoral grant applications, finding funds for research proposals and sample proposals. Information in the first section concerns areas of research ethics, developing a rationale as well as being a style guide for writing proposals. In the second section the book contains brief but pertinent advice on finding the right funding source (including advice on cultivating links with industry) advice on planning, budgets and the use of support services. The third section is perhaps the most useful, where all preceding advice is applied in the form of an on-going critical commentary to four actual grant applications.

Orlich, D. (1996) *Designing Successful Grant Proposals*, Alexandria VA: ASCD. Orlich argues that there are three key steps to successful grant proposals: start with a good idea; locate a source that has already funded similar ideas; develop your idea into a well crafted statement. The book is aimed at those attempting to win grants as individuals or as university-based researchers. It covers grants from governments, foundations and industry. It is applicable to any discipline, although much of the advice is particularly pertinent to the social sciences. This book is a straightforward generic guide which supplies practical checklists for each stage of the grant development process. Contains annotated list of resources for grant seekers.

Orosz, J. (2000) *The Insider's Guide to Grant Making: How Foundations Find, Fund, and Manage Effective Programs*, San Francisco: Jossey Bass. Although this book is aimed primarily at new workers in foundations, it is also an informative 'insider' view for grant seekers. As the author points out, all roads in philanthropy lead to the programme officer, and, this book could be a valuable part of a grant seeker's research into the culture of foundations and the professional life of the officer they deal with. The book focuses on US private foundations but most of the practices outlined are also applicable to community and corporate foundations. The author argues that charitable and philanthropic foundations operate (ideally) as an instrument for transforming private funds into public benefit, a process that has been on-going since Plato's academy. Foundations concentrate on philanthropy (root causes) as opposed to charity (meeting immediate needs), and innovation instead of on-going programmes, and so are well placed for the early career researcher. The book includes an extensive bibliography of foundations.

Ries, J. and Leukefeld, C. (1995) *Applying for Research Funding: Getting Started and Getting Funded,* Thousand Oaks CA: Sage. An accessible and useful guide to developing a research proposal and managing the time it takes to complete it. The authors argue that success in grant applications is achieved through attention to three key areas: focused research, networking, personal and management skills. The book develops strategies for each of these areas. Emphasis is given to developing 'inventories' of personal and professional strengths. These assist in knowing whether you need to collaborate with other researchers or strengthen certain areas yourself. Comprehensive definitions of types of grants, contracts, as well as government and non-government funding bodies are offered. Other topics include how to write a persuasive application, how to target the application for the reviewers and reacting to the reviewers' decision. Most of the information can be used by researchers in any disciplines, although the book draws on examples from the sciences.

Schumacher, D. (1992) *Get Funded! A Practical Guide for Scholars seeking Research Support from Business*, Newbury Park CA: Sage. Although this book is aimed at researchers who are advanced in their careers, it contains useful advice for early career researchers in an environment where industry partnerships are important to research funding. Much of the advice could best be utilised if the early career researcher worked in collaboration with more experienced researchers. The main argument is that successful applications depend on developing and maintaining good relations with industry personnel. Successful applications depend on good relations as much

as on the quality of the proposal itself. Researchers must discover what the company needs are. Developing networks within industry is the best way to do this. Researchers need to develop an understanding of business culture and the ability to communicate effectively using the dominant codes of that culture. Successful applications offer industry an opportunity for collaboration that can benefit the enterprise. Schumacher argues that industry needs to be treated as a valued partner that has genuine interests in contributing to all aspects and directions of the research. The corporate perspective about research is informed by relevant interviews with industry, and the university perspective is informed by debates around the role of universities and the ethics of industry linkage.

Websites

This is a selection of the many websites available. Remember that nearly all large charitable foundations which fund research are likely to have websites and you can find them using your Internet search engine.

Australian Research Council (ARC), http://www.arc.gov.au/. The main body that administers funding for researchers working at Australian universities. This site provides information about the ARC, its Competitive Research programmes, grant application information and previously funded research projects.

British Academy http://britac3.britac.ac.uk/index.html. This site offers information concerning grants in the humanities and social sciences. Grants are available to support advanced research at postdoctoral level (or equivalent). Grants are offered for the support of scholars who are normally resident in the UK, except the programmes for visiting scholars. The Academy sponsors approximately forty major research projects (called Academy Research Projects), each organised and run by its own committee. These projects aim to make available fundamental research tools of benefit to a wide range of scholars. The website also contains contact details for those wishing to pursue country-specific agreements for individual research visits and joint projects.

Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance, *[USA]* http://www.cfda.gov/public/browse_typast.asp?catcode=B. Described by Orlich *Designing Successful Grant Proposals* (1996) as the most important index for identifying federal resources. Lists specific project grants, which can include fellowships,

scholarships, research grants, training grants, traineeships and experimental and demonstration grants. The CFDA website is updated twice yearly at approximately the same time as the printed *Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance* is published (June and December).

Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), [UK] http://www.esrc.ac.uk/index.asp. Describes itself as 'the UK's leading research funding and training agency addressing economic and social concerns'. Contains current list of all research activities where applications are invited, with links to further information, application forms and thematic research priorities. It also provides links to commissioning updates, and flags possible future funding opportunities. Also contains searchable database of research projects funded, their duration and the amount funded.

EU Grants, http://europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgc/aides/index_en.htm. Contains information relating to EU funding for research. Funding. encourages collaboration between member nations of the European Union as well as international research collaborations. The focus of calls for research is on science and technology but there is scope for social science projects. The site has links to current calls for research, the EU research archive and a list of names to contact for further information.

Foundation Center, [USA] http://fdncenter.org/research/. This contains extensive information on private and public philanthropic foundations in the US. Searches can be made for basic information of more than 70,000 private and community foundations in the US. Searches can also be made of annotated links to private foundations by subject or geographic keyword. Includes list of the 100 largest US grant-making foundations ranked by total giving. Includes on-line tutorials 'Proposal Budgeting Basics' and 'Proposal Writing Short Course'. Includes information on trends in grant expenditure.

Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FRST), [New Zealand], http://www.frst.govt.nz/index.cfm. The foundation invests in research, science and technology (RS&T) on behalf of the New Zealand government. It funds research in areas such as social, economic and public life in New Zealand and research in innovation-based enterprises and their associated consequences. The site includes information on research tenders for private companies in areas such as information and communication technology.

Funders Online, [Europe], http://www.fundersonline.org/about/. Funders Online facilitates access to online funding information on foundations and corporate

funders active in Europe. Information and tips on how to research independent funders, how to package your project proposal and where to find additional information, both in print and on-line, on foundations and corporate funders.

Grants Information Center, [USA], http://www.library.wisc.edu/libraries/Memorial/grants/proposal.htm. There are many sites that provide proposal writing advice. This site addresses a US audience but may be useful to other grant seekers. It includes advice on letters of enquiry and has sample proposals and covers proposal writing for industry, government, private and public foundations. It also provides a list of websites for proposal writing. Site of the Grants Information Center, University of Wisconsin – Madison.

Intellectual Property, http://www.magna.com.au/~prfbrown/ip_links.html. A comprehensive resource site for IP-related information. It includes searches relevant to Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Canada, Europe, Japan, Spain and the Philippines.

Illinois Researcher Information Service (IRIS), [USA], http://gateway.library.uiuc.edu/iris/. IRIS is a unit of the University of Illinois Library at Urbana–Champaign. IRIS offers three web-based funding and research services: the IRIS Database of federal and private funding opportunities in all disciplines; the IRIS Alert Service; and the IRIS Expertise Service. The IRIS Database contains over 8,000 active federal and private funding opportunities in the sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities. Users can search IRIS by sponsor, deadline date, key word and other criteria. Most IRIS records contain live links to sponsor websites, electronic forms, or Electronic Research Administration (ERA) portals. The IRIS Database is updated daily. Researchers at subscribing institutions can create their own IRIS search profiles and detailed electronic CVs ('biosketches') and post them to a web-accessible database for viewing by colleagues at other institutions, programme officers at federal and private funding agencies, and private companies.

Marsden Fund, [New Zealand], http://www.rsnz.govt.nz/funding/marsden_fund/#Marsden. This fund invests in investigator-initiated research aimed at exploring the 'frontiers of new knowledge'. The research is 'not subject to government's socio-economic priorities'. The Marsden Fund is operated as a fully contestable fund. Eligibility to bid to the fund is unrestricted provided that the research proposed is either to be carried out in New Zealand or, if its nature demands that it be carried out elsewhere, by New Zealand-based researchers. Funds are allocated for the support of research projects or programmes, or for the support of individual researchers, including

postdoctoral fellows. The fund supports research in the sciences, the social sciences and the humanities.

National Research Foundation (NRF), [South Africa], http://www.nrf.ac.za/. The South African government's national agency responsible for promoting and supporting basic and applied research as well as 'innovation'. Provides grant information for the humanities, social and natural sciences, engineering and technology; including indigenous knowledge.

World Bank, http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/OPPORTUNITIES/0,,pagePK:95647~theSitePK:95480,00.html. This site offers information on grants and consulting that may be useful to early career researchers whose work is related to the goals of development assistance. A limited number of grants are available through the bank, either funded directly or managed through partnerships. Most are designed to encourage innovation, collaboration with other organizations, and participation by stakeholders at national and local levels. The bank regularly uses a variety of consulting services from individuals and firms at the headquarters or in country offices. The bank also offers research internships (unpaid) for graduate students to gain experience in an international environment on development issues.

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building networks

The Academic's Support Kit

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Building Networks
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Much of the material in the *Kit* was 'road-tested' in sessions for our postgraduate students, colleagues and others. Many other people kindly gave their time to read and comment on drafts. We are very grateful to these human guinea pigs for their hard work and can assure our readers that, as far as we are aware, none of them was harmed in the experiment.

Chris Staff of the University of Malta devised the title the *Academic's Support Kit*, and he and Brenda Murphy provided glorious Mediterranean conditions in which to write. Malmesbury, Morwell and Gozo were splendid writing localities, although Dox 'added value' at Malmesbury with his soothing yet sonorous snoring.

We are grateful to our universities – Cardiff, Monash, South Australia and the West of England – for the material support and encouragement they gave the project.

Many people in many different universities around the world inspired the books and unwittingly provided the material for our vignettes. They are too many to mention by name and besides we have had to tell their stories under other names. We are deeply indebted to our colleagues, ex-colleagues, friends, enemies, students and past students, old lovers, past and present combatants and allies and all the managers that we have ever worked with for being such a rich source of illustration and inspiration!

We particularly thank that small and select band of people who have acted as a constant source of succour and support, wise guidance and true friendship at various crucial stages of our careers: Michael Apple, Richard Johnson, Diana Leonard, Alison Mackinnon, Fazal Rizvi, Gaby Weiner, Roger Williams and Sue Willis.

Finally, as ever, our greatest thanks go to our nearest and dearest, without whose tolerance, love and hard work these books would not be in your hands today.

J.K.
D.E.
R.B.

Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*

Before you really get into this book, you might like to know a bit more about the authors.

Rebecca Boden, from England, is professor of accounting at the University of the West of England. She did her PhD in politics immediately after graduating from her first degree (which was in history and politics). She worked as a contract researcher in a university before the shortage of academic jobs in 1980s Britain forced her into the civil service as a tax inspector. She subsequently launched herself on to the unsuspecting world of business schools as an accounting academic.

Debbie Epstein, a South African, is a professor in the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University. She did her first degree in history and then worked briefly as a research assistant on the philosopher Jeremy Bentham's papers. Unable to read his handwriting, she went on to teach children in a variety of schools for seventeen years. She returned to university to start her PhD in her forties and has been an academic ever since.

Jane Kenway, an Australian, is professor of education at Monash University with particular responsibility for developing the field of global cultural studies in education. She was a schoolteacher and outrageous hedonist before she became an academic. But since becoming an academic she has also become a workaholic, which has done wonders for her social life, because, fortunately, all her friends are similarly inclined. Nonetheless she is interested in helping next-generation academics to be differently pleasured with regard to their work and their lives.

As you can see, we have all had chequered careers which are far from the stereotype of the lifelong academic but that are actually fairly typical. What we have all had to do is to retread ourselves, acquire new skills and learn to cope in very different environments. In our current jobs we all spend a lot of time helping and supporting people who are learning to be or developing themselves as academics. Being an accountant, Rebecca felt that there had to be a much more efficient way of helping

people to get the support they need than one-to-one conversations. This book and the other five in the *Academic's Support Kit* are for all these people, and for their mentors and advisers.

We have tried to write in an accessible and friendly style. The books contain the kind of advice that we have frequently proffered our research students and colleagues, often over a cup of coffee or a meal. We suggest that you consume their contents in a similar ambience: read the whole thing through in a relaxed way first and then dip into it where and when you feel the need.

Throughout the *ASK* books we tell the stories of anonymised individuals drawn from real life to illustrate how the particular points we are making might be experienced. While you may not see a precise picture of yourself, we hope that you will be able to identify things that you have in common with one or more of our characters to help you see how you might use the book.

Pragmatic principles/principled pragmatism

In writing these books, as in all our other work, we share a number of common perceptions and beliefs.

1. Globally, universities are reliant on public funding. Downward pressure on public expenditure means that universities' financial resources are tightly squeezed. Consequently mantras such as 'budgeting', 'cost cutting', 'accountability' and 'performance indicators' have become ubiquitous, powerful drivers of institutional behaviour and academic work.
2. As a result, universities are run as corporate enterprises selling education and research knowledge. They need 'management', which is essential to running a complex organisation such as a university, as distinct from 'managerialism' – the attempted application of 'scientific management techniques' borrowed from, though often discarded by, industry and commerce. What marks managerialism out from good management is the belief that there is a one-size-fits-all suite of management solutions that can be applied to any organisation. This can lead to a situation in which research and teaching, the *raison d'etre* of universities, take second place to managerialist fads, initiatives, strategic plans, performance

indicators and so on. Thus the management tail may wag the university dog, with the imperatives of managerialism conflicting with those of academics, who usually just want to research and teach well.

3. Increasingly, universities are divided into two cultures with conflicting sets of values. On the one hand there are managerialist doctrines; on the other are more traditional notions of education, scholarship and research. But these two cultures do not map neatly on to the two job groups of 'managers' and 'academics'. Many managers in universities hold educational and scholarly values dear and fight for them in and beyond their institutions. By the same token, some academics are thoroughly and unreservedly managerialist in their approach.
4. A bit like McDonald's, higher education is a global business. Like McDonald's branches, individual universities seem independent, but are surprisingly uniform in their structures, employment practices and management strategies. Academics are part of a globalised labour force and may move from country to (better paying) country.
5. Academics' intellectual recognition comes from their academic peers rather than their employing institutions. They are part of wider national and international peer networks distinct from their employing institutions and may have academic colleagues across continents as well as nearer home. The combination of the homogeneity of higher education and academics' own networks make it possible for them to develop local identities and survival strategies based on global alliances. The very fact of this globalisation makes it possible for us to write a *Kit* that is relevant to being an academic in many different countries, despite important local variations.
6. In order to thrive in a tough environment academics need a range of skills. Very often acquiring them is left to chance, made deliberately difficult or the subject of managerialist ideology. In this *Kit* our aim is to talk straight. We want to speak clearly about what some people just 'know', but others struggle to find out. Academia is a game with unwritten and written rules. We aim to write down the unwritten rules in order to help level an uneven playing field. The slope of the playing field favours 'developed' countries and, within these, more experienced academics in more prestigious institutions. Unsurprisingly, women and some ethnic groups often suffer marginalisation.

7. Most of the skills that academics need are common across social sciences and humanities. This reflects the standardisation of working practices that has accompanied the increasing managerialisation of universities, but also the growing (and welcome) tendency to work across old disciplinary divides. The *Academic's Support Kit* is meant for social scientists, those in the humanities and those in more applied or vocational fields such as education, health sciences, accounting, business and management.
8. We are all too aware that most academics have a constant feeling of either drowning in work or running ahead of a fire or both. Indeed, we often share these feelings. Nevertheless, we think that there *are* ways of being an academic that are potentially less stressful and more personally rewarding. Academics need to find ways of playing the game in ethical and professional ways and winning. We do not advise you to accept unreasonable demands supinely. Instead, we are looking for strategies that help people retain their integrity, the ability to produce knowledge and teach well.
9. University management teams are often concerned to avoid risk. This may lead to them taking over the whole notion of 'ethical behaviour' in teaching and research and subjecting it to their own rules, which are more to do with their worries than good professional academic practice. In writing these books, we have tried to emphasise that there are richer ethical and professional ways of being in the academic world: ways of being a public intellectual, accepting your responsibilities and applying those with colleagues, students and the wider community.

And finally …

We like the way that Colin Bundy, Principal of the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and previously Vice-Chancellor of the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, so pithily describes the differences and similarities between universities in such very different parts of the world. Interviewed for the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (27 January 2004) by John Crace, he explains:

> The difference is one of nuance. In South Africa, universities had become too much of an ivory tower and needed a reintroduction to the pressures

> of the real world. In the UK, we have perhaps gone too far down the line of seeing universities as pit-stops for national economies. It's partly a response to thirty years of underfunding: universities have had to adopt the neo-utilitarian line of asserting their usefulness to justify more money. But we run the risk of losing sight of some of our other important functions. We should not just be a mirror to society, but a critical lens: we have a far more important role to play in democracy and the body politic than merely turning out graduates for the job market.

Our hope is that the *Academic's Support Kit* will help its readers develop the kind of approach exemplified by Bundy – playing in the real world but always in a principled manner.

Books in the *Academic's Support Kit*

The *Kit* comprises six books. There is no strict order in which they should be read, but this one is probably as good as any – except that you might read *Building your Academic Career* both first and last.

Building your Academic Career encourages you to take a proactive approach to getting what you want out of academic work whilst being a good colleague. We discuss the advantages and disadvantages of such a career, the routes in and the various elements that shape current academic working lives. In the second half of the book we deal in considerable detail with how to write a really good CV (résumé) and how best to approach securing an academic job or promotion.

Getting Started on Research is for people in the earlier stages of development as a researcher. In contrast to the many books available on techniques of data collection and analysis, this volume deals with the many other practical considerations around actually doing research – such as good ways to frame research questions, how to plan research projects effectively and how to undertake the various necessary tasks.

Writing for Publication deals with a number of generic issues around academic writing (including intellectual property rights) and then considers writing refereed journal articles, books and book chapters in detail as well as other, less common, forms of publication for academics. The aim is to demystify the process and to help you to become a confident, competent, successful and published writer.

Teaching and Supervision looks at issues you may face both in teaching undergraduates and in the supervision of graduate research students. This book is not a pedagogical instruction manual – there are plenty of those around, good and bad. Rather, the focus is on presenting explanations and possible strategies designed to make your teaching and supervision work less burdensome, more rewarding (for you and your students) and manageable.

Winning and Managing Research Funding explains how generic university research funding mechanisms work so that you will be better equipped to navigate your way through the financial maze associated with various funding sources. The pressure to win funding to do research is felt by nearly all academics worldwide. This book details strategies that you might adopt to get your research projects funded. It also explains how to manage your research projects once they are funded.

Building Networks addresses perhaps the most slippery of topics, but also one of the most fundamental. Despite the frequent isolation of academic work, it is done in the context of complex, multi-layered global, national, regional and local teaching or research networks. Having good networks is key to achieving what you want in academia. This book describes the kinds of networks that you might build across a range of settings, talks about the pros and cons and gives practical guidance on networking activities.

1 Who Should Use this Book and How?

The purpose of this book is to help you establish and develop the sorts of connections and links that are essential for you to flourish as a researcher and teacher in higher education. If this is the first book in the *Academic's Support Kit* that you are reading, then you might find it useful to read 'Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*'.

What do we mean, 'networks'?

Whilst much academic work is a solitary endeavour, it can't be done in isolation from others. Research work necessitates access to a whole range of people-related resources – a critical and generative wider academic community, funding, research sites and other data, training and other assistance. You will know by now that you can't do such work on your own and are utterly dependent on others to make it all happen. Similarly, teaching can occur only when properly facilitated by institutional structures and arrangements.

By the same token, neither teaching nor research is worth doing unless it contributes in some way to socio-economic well-being or generally makes society a more knowledgeable and civilised place. Generating these effects also requires us to work with others. Students have to attend our classes and we have to find effective ways of disseminating our research findings.

The sorts of contacts we need in order to do our research and teaching and those we need to disseminate the fruits of such work are what we mean by 'networks'. Building and maintaining such networks, along with using them effectively, is self-evidently a fundamental part of academic life.

If you've read our pragmatic principles in 'Introducing the *Academic's Support Kit*', you'll have an appreciation of some of the contextual and ethical issues that, we would argue, frame all our work. Because working with

and through networks, by its very nature, requires engagement with the wider context in which the university is situated, it can present particularly acute ethical problems. We try in this book to encourage you to think carefully about the ethics of how you develop and engage with networks.

What are we aiming at?

We aim to help you to acquire the skills that will enable you to develop:

- Worldwide academic networks.
- The ability to work in partnership with a wide range of non-academic organisations and individuals.
- Links with the media.

Mapping on to this, we talk about three different sorts of interrelated networks:

- *Academic networks*. Examples of these include: the people within your discipline, sub-discipline or interdisciplinary field of study; networks of like-minded scholars at university, national or international level, discipline-based academic associations (both national and international); groups or more formal organisations that focus on a particular topic or field of enquiry; colleagues at your own institution and elsewhere with whom you may work, are friendly with or simply hang out with at conferences and keep in touch with.
- *Stakeholder networks*. Examples here include: non-university partners such as government, supranational organisations, business and industry, non-governmental organisations, the voluntary sector, campaign groups – indeed, all the organisations and individuals who might contribute to, make use of and benefit from your research and teaching efforts. Such organisations and individuals are collectively known as 'stakeholders'.
- *Networks for dissemination*. Examples here include conference and workshop circuits, editors of academic journals, email discussion groups, academic message boards, electronic conferencing, the popular media, professional bodies and associations. Many stakeholders can also constitute important networks for dissemination.

Networks can exist at local, national and international levels, often simultaneously. What's more, there is usually a high degree of overlap between networks at all levels. This geographical and social complexity can be enriching and dynamic if you use it the right way.

Why might you find this book useful?

This book will be especially useful for you if you are:

- *A research student of some sort*. You may be at the beginning of your research career and will need to connect with fellow research students and academics at your own and other universities who are in the same or similar intellectual 'spaces'. This will enable you to get to know their work and them to get to know yours. Such networks help you to feel a sense of belonging in your particular academic 'corner' and give you a sense of place there. These networks can be quite affirming – giving you reassurance that you are 'on the right track'. Finally, networks are important in giving you access to additional resources, such as support and advice that you might not have available locally.
- *Someone in their first academic job*. This may be your first 'proper' job or you may have made a recent career change. Either way you may well need to build the sort of networks and relationships that are necessary for your new career.
- *Someone who is a casual (sessionally or hourly paid) teacher in a university* who would like to develop an academic career in the full sense. In your particular case, networks will be essential to getting a foothold on the academic career ladder.
- *Someone who has been in post for a long time* but whose networks are more local than national or global and who needs to make the next career step. It may be that your teaching load or family responsibilities have previously impeded you from doing this.
- *Someone who lacks self-confidence, assertiveness or an outward-going disposition*. This book will give you basic information and strategies that will help you to overcome these real hurdles.
- *A more experienced academic* who is mentoring someone in one or more of these categories.

You may want to:

- Develop your research reputation by achieving a wider audience for your work.
- Get to know better the 'users' of your research and teaching work in order to give it a better 'resonance' outside academic circles.
- Understand better the intellectual communities that you want to belong to and the place of your research and teaching within them.
- Connect with organisations that might help you with access or funding for your research and which you might want to help with their work.
- Develop your teaching by gaining a better understanding of what other teachers are doing or what is happening in the wider world.
- Utilise the media to disseminate and promote your research.
- Get yourself better known and widen your circle of contacts in order to enhance your job prospects.

Whatever your motives in reading this book, you've almost certainly already got some of the skills necessary to do that kind of work.

First of all, we want to introduce you to some types of people who might find this book useful.

Bongani is a professionally trained fifty-three-year-old who has just come to university for the first time as a research student. He understands how the business world works, but universities are a mystery to him. Consequently he is extremely anxious about being in such an alien environment. He appreciates that, in order to build a successful career as an academic in the short time available to him, he must build a whole new set of relationships within and beyond his institution and understand how his new 'eco-system' works.

Carmen is a senior academic who has published widely and whose work is well known and respected internationally. She has good networks in Canada, where she lives and works. However, her domestic responsibilities have prevented her from putting herself out and about internationally. Consequently, whilst people know her

published work, they do not know her personally. This causes her problems when she needs to name referees for her job, promotion and research funding applications.

Ewan has been an academic for many years and has recently started a PhD in order to develop himself as a researcher. In terms of his PhD he is doing everything right and has started to publish from his research at a very early stage. He has one major problem: he is apprehensive about travel and leaving home. This is preventing him from going to important conferences and presenting his very good work at them.

Nancy has been working at a university as a casual hourly paid lecturer for five years. She is a graduate of the same institution. She is now taking a research degree that she hopes will lead to a permanent post. The only university world she knows is the one she was taught at and now teaches in. She has great social skills and confidence and needs to use them to help her to widen her professional world and enhance her job prospects.

2 Networking Basics

In this chapter we deal in some detail with what networks are, and with their importance, and offer basic advice on some key do's and don'ts. Additionally, we deal with the ethics of networks and alert you to a number of intellectual property rights issues.

Networking in context

Contrary to the myth of the ivory tower, universities have always been part of the wider community and society. At the same time, academic freedom has always been essential to independent critical enquiry, and this has meant that universities as institutions have had to maintain a certain distance from that which they study. Robert Merton, a scientist writing in the 1940s, emphasised the need for academic science to be done in what he called 'the independent republic of science'. We think that this principle should be extended to all fields of academic enquiry. In such contexts, the relationship between the academy and wider society has traditionally been based on trust and has generated a sort of implicit social contract in which academics generate knowledge for the public good in return for resources and rewards such as status and prestige.

However, the increasing pressure on universities generated by cuts in public spending and the economic imperatives of the global knowledge economy to turn knowledge into a tradable asset have altered this relationship. It has been recast in commercial-contractual terms. This means that there can be considerable pressure on academics to adopt particular sorts of connections with the world beyond their own institution. The outside world is increasingly perceived as consisting of a set of potential business partners and other universities/academics/countries as business competitors. Governments encourage universities to think in this way, sometimes quite forcefully through funding mechanisms, and increasingly universities are establishing commercial

divisions and appointing people to liaise with the business world and to make money out of such links. Alongside this, universities now devote considerable resources to marketing their courses and the consulting and research capabilities of their academic staff.

Academics may be torn between the competing imperatives of the more traditional social contract and public good role and this commercialisation. There is a popular rationalising discourse promoted by people such as Michael Gibbons which asserts that universities and other knowledge-producing institutions can maintain their independence and disinterestedness whilst at the same time servicing commercial business customers. We encourage you to recognise this discourse as a snare and a delusion. It is inevitable that changing the relationships that frame knowledge production will change the nature of the knowledge produced. No disciplines are immune from these pressures. Many are thinking about how to reconfigure them as a result.

As an individual you must be able to negotiate successfully between these competing imperatives. This is far from easy; the moral agendas associated with it are highly ambiguous and you can be subject to a lot of unwelcome pressure from your employer. While on the one hand you may well do such things as take on consultancies in return for cash or access to research material, it's important to keep your integrity and sense of purpose as an academic. In other words, you should engage in the networks that contribute to your work and that you feel are worth making your own contribution to, in preference to those that are merely instrumental.

Having voiced lots of cautions, we would like to identify the various networks and explain why they are important.

Networking benefits

Academic networks

As we said in Chapter 1 these are networks that you may form with colleagues within your own institution and with colleagues from other disciplines, universities or researchers in other types of organisation. The potential benefits of these networks include the following:

- Networks within your own institution are obviously vital to your work as an academic and also to your well-being and everyday survival.

- Academic networks provide you with sources of peer esteem alternative to the (possibly managerialist) hierarchies of your own institution. One benefit here is that if you don't share the values and aspirations of those people in your own institution, such networks can give you the affirmation that you need and a sense of being valued. Further, external networks can feed back positive narratives to your institution on your performance, encouraging your institutional colleagues to reassess their view of you.
- They assist you in the dissemination of your ideas, get you connected with others with similar interests and provide timely access to new ideas. This can be very motivating and stimulating.
- Collaborative work between academics from different disciplines or institutions facilitates the pooling of resources such as research expertise, ideas, funds and research materials. This can be a productive and creative way to work
- Extensive networks provide you with a wide range of potential research collaborators. This allows you the important freedom to choose who you work with. Valuable personal friendships are built and sustained in this way. Such networks may also provide you with valuable and prestigious opportunities for international comparative work.
- The wider your networks, the more people you will have available to provide references for your applications for research grants, promotions, new positions and so on. It is therefore wise to get yourself known across the range of the academic hierarchies in your field.
- As a supervisor, your networks will be very helpful to your PhD students (see *Teaching and Supervision*), whom you should encourage to make good use of them.
- Building up a network of international contacts can lead to invitations to visit universities abroad on study leave, give keynote addresses at conferences, join editorial boards, participate in international collaborative research projects, apply for new posts and suchlike. Not only does this help your work, it also provides valuable evidence of your international standing as an academic. This kind of reputation is useful when you apply for funding, promotion, new jobs and so on.
- Making contact with researchers at other universities, especially when they are abroad, can be invaluable in widening your experience and understanding of a range of research cultures and styles.

You can feed much of this back to your own institution, thereby broadening perspectives and understandings of teaching and research. Where this cross-fertilisation doesn't occur, universities, their staff and their research work can become introspective and parochial.

- Networking with academics from other disciplines or universities can also usefully enhance your own teaching practice. If you have good contacts you can swap teaching materials, ideas for classroom practice and reading lists.

Stakeholder networks

As we said in Chapter 1, stakeholder networks include those organisations and individuals that may either help you out with your research in some way or benefit, directly or indirectly, from it. The potential benefits to be derived from such networks will vary, but in general, they include the following:

- If you are in a professionally oriented faculty, such as education, business, health sciences or law, networking with external professional groups can be essential to your credibility as a teacher and researcher as well as being necessary to keep you well informed.
- Universities are increasingly required to diversify their funding base across a range of external bodies. Therefore maintaining good working relations with such potential funders is obviously very strategically important.
- Networks with relevant stakeholders will help you to evaluate the wider social, economic or political impact of your research. The logic here, which may sometimes be flawed, is that if such groups give your work an audience then it must be good. Increasingly, funding bodies expect you to demonstrate the impact of your previous work.
- Good relations with such organisations can be useful in opening doors for your research projects if you have their endorsement and support. For instance, such bodies may be happy to provide enthusiastic letters of support to accompany your funding applications. Similarly, people from whom you are seeking research data may be more willing to participate in a study if it carries this kind of support.

- Networks with funding agencies allow you to keep abreast of current opportunities and changes in their funding strategies and orientations. This may well help you to 'keep ahead of the game' as you factor such information into your forward research planning.
- Research can make important differences to the real world. Sometimes, people undertake research as active participants in these networks in order to achieve political objectives. Alternatively, lobby groups may employ other people's research even though it was not undertaken with them directly in mind.
- Many academics understand their research as producing knowledge that will assist certain causes or peoples. For this reason, advocacy or campaigning groups sometimes fund or otherwise assist with research into issues of concern to them.
- For some individual academics, such networks and their membership of them are an important expression of their academic identity and they derive great satisfaction from the work that they do with them.

Networks for dissemination

As we said in Chapter 1, these networks are those that help you to get your stuff out and about. The benefits of establishing and maintaining such networks include the following:

- The research community functions on the basis of mutual communication between participants. If you do not participate in such communication by disseminating your work, you are not a member of the research community in the full sense.
- Dissemination is, ultimately, the way in which academics build their reputation. No-one will think you are great if they have never read/heard of your work.
- Universities have an important role as knowledge-disseminating as well as knowledge-producing institutions. There is little point in producing knowledge if you don't share it. Your work will have no impact if you don't 'get it out there'.
- Academics have an important social role as free thinking and disinterested commentators on public life. This is usually called being a 'public intellectual'. We are sure that you can think of respected academics in your own country who appear regularly in

the press or other public forums, commenting on important social issues of the day.
- By disseminating your work you alert other people to it, inform discussion and debate and consequently further develop your networks.

Networking perks and quirks

Networking sounds like, and indeed is, hard work. The compensation is that it can bring with it significant personal benefits. We like it because we make a lot of friends, meet interesting people, go to all kinds of cool places, travel abroad and wine and dine a lot.

Networking activities require the investment of significant resources. The types of 'capital' necessary to support networking are multifarious – we'll go through each of them in turn.

- *Human*. These resources include colleagues who appreciate what needs to be done and with whom you have a mutually beneficial working relationship. They can help with building your networks, and you theirs.
- *Organisation*. Networking is a complex activity and requires a lot of basic organisation skill and capacity. So you really need good support staff – the best you can muster. If you're a good networker, you keep good records, keep your promises to deliver and do things and have all necessary information at your fingertips. This can be massively facilitated by a good administrator to help you.
- *Intellectual*. To network successfully you need to be up to date and interested in current thinking in your specialist field. This means that you need to devote serious time and energy to reading, thinking and talking/debating with others.
- *Cultural and social*. You'll need a stimulating atmosphere with people who thrive on the work of knowledge production, circulation and consumption.
- *Time*. Time is probably the scarcest of scarce resources, but is absolutely vital for networking. You need the time to speak to people, maintain email contact and so on, and this needs to be factored into your planning.
- *Money*. Another scarce resource, but one that you can't manage without. You need access to funds both for going to places (like conferences) and to bring people to you.

If you need to justify this investment of resources, either to yourself or to your university, it's worth remembering that networking attracts:

- Reputational benefits for you and your university.
- Income for research, scholarships, postdoctoral fellowships, research and support staff.
- New academic staff of calibre to your department.
- Visiting scholars and speakers.
- Good students.

What does a good networker look like?

Some people have a better aptitude for networking activities than others. However, like any other skill, you can learn how to do it well and success doesn't depend entirely on innate personality traits. Some qualities that you are already likely to possess as an academic are also key to becoming an effective networker. We list some of these below.

- *Good interpersonal and communication skills*. Skilled and experienced teachers will have honed these in relation to their teaching.
- *High levels of awareness of the environments in which you are operating*. Fortunately, research is an activity that often requires this sort of sensitivity.
- *A good communicator*. People engaged in research and teaching activities are usually pretty enthusiastic communicators. Academics are keen to tell other people about their work and interests and to hear what they have to say.
- *Active listening skills*. Most academics have a keen sense of natural curiosity – this is often what attracts them to the work in the first place.

You can utilise these skills in a wide range of activities and behaviours that will help you to develop and sustain useful networks. We've listed below some of the sorts of things that really effective networkers do. Whilst the list is long, and you shouldn't think that you have to be an expert practitioner in everything, you might use this list to reflect on the sorts of activities that you may undertake. So, good networkers:

- *Put themselves out personally in order to build the links they think necessary*. This involves really making an effort – perhaps collecting people from airports or enduring boring dinners and so on. Networkers will also be good at taking the social initiative – introducing people and generally acting as the social 'oil' by smoothing the edges of conversations.
- *Take the initiative and make the most of the opportunities available to them*. This means always being alert to opportunities and building on them. For instance, you might hear that someone whom you want to meet is coming to town and contact them to arrange to meet up with them.
- *Have good presentational skills, the ability to put points across well and to make people interested in what they have to say*. Don't be too flash, but a touch of real professionalism in such matters is most likely to make people take notice of what you are trying to get across.
- *Have a genuine interest in other people and their work*. Networking is not about self-publicity or other forms of self-aggrandisement. Good networking is about genuine engagement with others, hopefully to some form of mutual benefit. Successful networkers are able to see connections between people, issues and topics that may be invisible to others.
- *Appear comfortable and competent in a wide variety of milieus*. We say 'appear' quite deliberately – everyone has their own self-doubts and moments of real lack of confidence. Good networkers don't let this show and actively work at overcoming these entirely natural inhibitions.
- *Are willing to take risks and deal with rejection*. Everyone can feel hurt if people don't have time for them, but they rise above it.
- *See networking as an important activity and build it into their everyday lives*. Networkers treat this work as habitual and it is carefully planned and executed.
- *Understand systems and organisations*. Its important to develop an almost intuitive understanding of how places work and make creative use of that knowledge. In short, good networkers know how to pull strings and get things done.
- *Keep good records of the people they meet and their contact details*. The skilled networker will have an enviable address book. They will usually have good systems for keeping information, which make it easy for them to follow people up without trawling though desk drawers full of old chocolate wrappers and dead packets of crisps for copies of people's cards.

Alison is a senior academic with extensive academic, professional and personal networks. She goes out of her way to connect with people wherever she goes and always follows up all the contacts she makes. Upon arrival in any new environment, she immediately introduces herself to a wide variety of groups, she remembers everybody's names and where they 'fit' into their organisations. She is very sociable and regularly entertains colleagues. She is an energetic correspondent and keeps in touch with people over sustained periods. This means that people regard her warmly and will often choose to include her in their work activities. People will also often agree to undertake tasks that help her in her work.

In contradistinction to the good networker, poor ones are often quite unproductive, doing all or some of the following things:

- They become networking bores, talking endlessly to everyone they can find about their own interests without listening to or thinking about the other person and their projects.
- Poor networkers forget the people they have met. No-one can remember all names and all faces, but usually people are good at one or the other. These people can do neither and also may have no social skills that enable them to deal with it in ways that don't offend. We all know the person who never remembers us and whom we have thus been introduced to several times in response to their blank stare.
- They may be obsequious around 'big names', hanging on to their every word and imposing their own company on those they regard as important. These people only network 'up'. Don't be a groupie.
- The reverse of the groupie is the person who networks only with their immediate peers. You need to network with people across the spectrum. Senior people should network with junior people and *vice versa*. Networking is imbued with power relations and good networkers are sensitive to this and can handle it successfully.
- Poor networkers may be full of good intentions, but fail to follow through because they become paralysed by anxiety and self-doubt in social situations with people they don't know. Such people either over-rely on their immediate colleagues and friends to carry them through or they move into an avoidance mode and simply stop trying.
- They may allow themselves to be put off by a single 'bad' experience of something like a conference and therefore refuse to engage in such

activities any further. Such people may need help in getting back on their networking feet – for instance, a mentor might arrange for a number of their colleagues to go to a conference with them, with a brief to make sure that they're okay.

- Their interest in other people is, or appears to be, purely instrumental and only related to their careerist ambitions. Such networking endeavours are bound to fail. For instance, there is nothing more off-putting at conferences than talking to someone who makes little eye contact because they are scanning the rest of the room for more 'important' people to talk to.

Henry Evans likes to network but does it poorly. Ruth had just arrived in her new university when she got a voicemail from an unknown secretary saying that 'Professor Evans would like to meet you at 10 a.m. on the 9th of April'. Ruth was perplexed and somewhat taken aback by this imperious invitation. She rang the secretary and first of all ascertained that Professor Evans was not a member of the senior management of the university. Having established that he was indeed her peer, she enquired of the secretary why Professor Evans had issued the 'invitation'. She was told that Professor Evans was new to the university and that he had asked his secretary to arrange meetings with all the people he wished to meet. Ruth suggested that the secretary should inform Professor Evans of her room number and phone extension and her willingness to join him for coffee at her convenience. Henry did get in touch with Ruth and even bought the coffee. Ruth found his personal style quite offensive because she did not like being summoned in that way. She was further alienated by his delegation of a personal social task to a secretary.

Of course, if you never try to network then you'll never succeed. No pain, no gain.

Handy hints for novice networkers

- Networking is time-consuming and you need to balance the benefits against your other work commitments such as teaching and research. Remember that you can't network if you have nothing to bring to the network party.

- Similarly, time spent networking can eat into your personal time for family and friends. A lot of networking happens outside normal working hours – time that your family and friends have a legitimate claim on. Furthermore, it's not good for you to work all the time. Remember, all work and no play makes Jack and Jill dull boys and girls – and probably dull networkers too.
- At times the level of effort and the types of things that you have to do when networking can be a serious drain on your energies and enthusiasms. Again, keep it in balance and remember that even boring work can sometimes have long-term pay-offs.
- When networking with stakeholders, remember that their time frames and time scales may not be congruent with your own. In practical terms, this can mean that you will have to mutually adjust and align your expectations of what can be achieved and when. For instance, you may have to explain to a stakeholder your immovable commitments, such as teaching.
- When networking with stakeholders, there is often considerable demand for you to undertake consultancy work. It's important to keep a balance between your consultancy work and your research, remembering that consultancy is not the same thing as research. Most important of all – the very best consultancy is firmly grounded in solid research.
- Networking with stakeholders can be a good way to gain access to people, institutions and materials that you may need for your research. This obligates you, formally or informally, to do bits of consultancy work or otherwise help the stakeholder out with your expertise. However, whilst reciprocity is an essential characteristic of networking, you don't necessarily have to accede to every expectation, as these may be unreasonable.

Timothy was successful in gaining a government research contract to look at the operation of trade policies. He was a good networker and, over the course of the project, he built up productive and positive relationships with the civil servants in the Trade Ministry. From time to time, they had some complex problem on which they would seek Timothy's professional opinion. Usually this took the form of chatting to him about the issue briefly over a cup of coffee or lunch when he

was at their offices. He was happy to oblige and this also helped to strengthen his networks. However, one day an anxious civil servant rang him at the university and explained that they had a crisis and that an urgent report had to be with the Minister by the following day. Timothy was asked if he would draft it. Timothy recognised that this was imposing on his goodwill and, furthermore, he had a heavy teaching day ahead of him. He apologised to the civil servant and explained that he was unable to do as requested because of his other commitments. He also suggested to the caller that he would be happy to talk about the possibility of a consultancy contract that would allow the Ministry to call on his services a certain number of times a year.

In conclusion, what we have done so far in this book is alert you to the different types of networks that you might participate in, identified various benefits and limitations that networks can offer. In the next chapter we deal with three substantial networking issues that you need to be alerted to: ethics; intellectual property rights; and planning for networking.

Meanwhile, we'll leave you with some golden networking rules.

- Don't just be on the take.
- Reciprocity is important. You must pay back favours.
- Generosity repays itself.

3 Thinking through Networks

In this chapter we help you think through three of the more complex issues that arise in relation to networking. You need to address working ethically, who owns the fruits of networked labour and, finally, planning your own networking. These topics are linked in the sense that if you don't pay careful attention to them, they may well come back and bite you.

Ethical networking/networking ethics

Because of the complex relationships implied, networking activities can generate a lot of ethical dilemmas and challenges for academics. Here are some examples of what we mean:

- You have agreed to meet somebody at a conference at their request. It is not a meeting you are particularly looking forward to and you're unsure what's in it for you. Subsequently you get an invitation, from someone who you really want to meet, at exactly the same time. What do you do?
- You are doing academic research that necessitates networking with people in a government department that is a major stakeholder in your work. The officials in the department offer you a significant consultancy fee (which would be yours to keep personally) if you do some work for them that will assist the government's policy objectives. The trouble is that you disagree on moral grounds with those policies. You know that the government will be trading on your research reputation in using your work. Such situations require a delicate balancing act between staying true to your own moral beliefs and ethical values, whilst at the same time not offending your stakeholders.

- You have done some research that has caught the attention of the media. A journalist wants to run a story about your work, but is quite insistent that you name the organisations that were respondents in your research. This would breach the assurances of confidentiality that you gave to the organisations. Even so, you do want the media to cover your research.

Academics are, or should be, accustomed to considering the ethical dimensions of research work. Indeed, universities often have procedures, committees or guidelines to instil, enforce or regulate ethical practice in research. Networking presents its own significant and substantial ethical issues, but these are rarely discussed and are seldom the subject of any formal procedures. The absence of informal discussion or formal governance means that it is imperative to keep your ethical antennae extended.

Much of what we mean by ethical networking is implicit in what we've already said about reciprocity. That is, you should not be purely instrumental or exploitative and must be sensitive to power relations. Faustian bargains are never a good idea, and you should not use your networks to improper personal or professional advantage.

John is a professor who does a great deal of consultancy for the New Zealand government. One of his part-time doctoral students is a senior civil servant who, on occasion, issues consultancy contracts. John accepted such a lucrative contract from this student. He presented it to his university without disclosing that the person responsible for letting the contract was, in fact, a student of the university and closely connected with him. Furthermore, he represented the work to be done as 'research'. In fact the government had placed stringent conditions in the contract, preventing the team involved from publishing the results of the work. He did not recognise that his unethical actions placed his student, his university and himself in jeopardy and had the potential to prejudice future stakeholder networker relations between his university and this government department.

Each type of network that we identified earlier – academic, stakeholder and dissemination – has a particular set of ethical issues associated with it. We will deal with each in turn.

In networking with other academics, you should try and build the following sorts of responses and behaviours into your work:

- Attribute ideas to their rightful source and don't wrongly claim them as your own.
- Ensure that you do not use your power to exclude or discriminate against people.
- Act kindly towards people and help them, especially when they are junior to you or in a vulnerable position.
- Be honest when someone who is applying for a job or a grant asks you to act as a referee. If your reference will be negative, to a greater or lesser extent, you should give the person an opportunity to find someone more positive.
- Be generous and fair in providing feedback to help people improve their work, whether as an anonymous peer reviewer or as a known colleague.
- Be careful, especially in public forums, to behave respectfully towards your colleagues, even when engaging with their work critically. In the case of inexperienced researchers, you need to be particularly sensitive as to how you couch your responses.

Miriam does a lot of refereeing for a journal that actively seeks to promote critical and well theorised research. The US editor of this journal sees one of his editorial roles as being to develop and bring on researchers in his field who are often quite isolated within their own institutions. When he receives papers, which are often clearly weak, from such isolated researchers he does not reject them out of hand as many editors would do. Instead, he sends them out to carefully selected reviewers, requesting them to give careful and detailed guidance to the author on how to make the paper publishable. Before sending her comments back, Miriam always puts her review on one side for a couple of days and then rereads it prior to despatch, asking herself the question 'How would I feel if I got these comments on one of my own papers?'

In networking with stakeholders, you need to think about a different range of considerations.

- Choose who you get into bed with, in a network sense, carefully. You will have to make individual decisions and choices about who constitutes an ethically acceptable partner for you, your colleagues and your institution.
- Do not allow your work or your reputation to be used by your stakeholder network partners in inappropriate ways.
- Be sensitive to the employment positions of people in non-academic organisations with whom you are networking. You need to understand and take account of the pressures and constraints that they operate under. This means not disclosing information given to you in confidence and not 'dropping them in it' with their colleagues or bosses.

Dissemination networks involve ethical considerations that are different again.

- You must try to ensure that media coverage of your research does not compromise any individual, group or institution. This goes beyond questions of the anonymity of individual respondents to include situations where your findings might fuel pejorative public stereotypes of certain groups of people.
- Although most media people are highly professional with good ethical practices of their own, some may attempt to distort or be highly selective with your research findings.
- Do unto others as you would be done by. Exercise sound academic judgement and be fair when you are asked to review books or papers for publication. That is, do not use your power, position or voice unfairly. It is inappropriate to use such opportunities to make personal attacks on individuals. Negative reviews, even more than positive ones, must be very carefully framed and evidenced.
- Ensure that, when you author government or other 'official' reports, you do not give in to any pressure to distort what you say or the recommendations that you make. This can be tough and may require sustained negotiation and possibly even institutional support.
- Give credit where credit is due in the authorship of any reports or other dissemination. Named authors could well include people in stakeholder organisations who have helped substantially in the

research process. However, you should resist including the names of people who have made no real contribution to the work (or the stakeholders who simply 'managed' the work) in the list of authors.

Later in this book we identify some specific strategies to address these issues.

Laura was part of a team researching the control of drug use by students in schools. Schools were understandably nervous about giving access for such research, as they did not want any dirty linen washed in public. The team negotiated a good confidentiality policy with the participating schools, which were part of the stakeholder network. Subsequently, a TV company approached the researchers and said that they wanted to make a serious documentary and requested the team to negotiate access to the schools for them. This had the potential to be a good dissemination opportunity for the researchers. However, they turned it down because they were aware that the media exposure could have had very negative consequences for the schools involved.

Intellectual property rights

In knowledge economies, knowledge is a tradable commodity. This means that participants in such an economy need to pay attention to who owns and controls the knowledge that is traded. As knowledge economies have grown, people have increasingly sought to assert their legal rights over knowledge. Such 'knowledge' is usually called 'intellectual property' (IP) and is subject to three main property rights: patents (or know-how on how to do things), designs (what things could/should look like) and copyright (the use and publication of words, images, text, sounds, etc.). In the arts, social sciences and humanities the most important form of IP is copyright. You can find out more about this in *Writing for Publication*.

Because universities see themselves as major players in the knowledge economy, they are increasingly paying a lot of attention to these issues. This means that you can't avoid them either. Whether what you

produce in the form of IP belongs to you or to your university will depend upon your contract of employment, and you should familiarise yourself with what that contract says. Generally, universities now claim ownership of everything you produce in the execution of your contractual duties. However, most allow you to keep the copyright in written works. This really isn't generosity; it's because academic publications usually make so little money. Remember that the law is different in each country, so as well as checking your contract, it would be useful to check what the law is in the place where you work. Here we deal with those aspects of IP that arise specifically with regard to networks and partnerships.

Any collaborative teaching or research work that involves academic or stakeholder networks may give rise to three intellectual property rights (IPR) issues: (1) *Research materials*: who owns and/or controls the materials used in or created by the research process? (2) *Publications*: who has the right to be known as the author of any material and who has the right to publish such materials or software? (3) *Teaching materials*: when you develop teaching materials, who can claim them as their IP? We will discuss each of these in turn.

Research materials

There are two sorts of material here. One is material that belongs to, or access to which is controlled by, someone other than the researcher(s). The other is material that is created by the researcher(s). If research involves the use of material where the IP belongs to someone else, you will need to be very careful to ensure that any necessary permissions are obtained for its use and for any subsequent publications. For instance, if you are a historian using someone's books and papers from a private archive, you will need to make up-front arrangements about the use of and quotations from them and make sure that you stick faithfully to them.

Second, the research process will invariably involve the creation of a whole host of intellectual products. These will include research instruments (e.g. interview schedules, questionnaires and so on), data (for example, survey results, transcripts, fieldwork notes) and all kinds of project documentation, from the proposal itself to minutes of meetings, sketches, diagrams, research notebooks and so on.

If you are working with others in an academic network, you need to make very explicit agreements about the ownership of such materials and how they may be used. However, if you simply share an idea or set

of ideas with other members of the team without recording this idea anywhere, then you cannot claim economic IPR over these ideas, though you may have a moral right to attribution (see *Writing for Publication* for definitions of these terms). Ultimately, your best protection is to have good, open relations with your colleagues and to discuss these important issues with them before they become a crisis or a bone of contention.

Samantha, from the USA, was working with academics from a number of other institutions on a major research project that generated a lot of data, including interview transcripts. While the project was in process, all team members shared all the data generated. Publications arising directly from the project listed all the team members as authors. They agreed that when the project was wound up, any of them could continue to use their pooled data. They further agreed that subsequent publications would always include an acknowledgement of the source of the data and list the project team. However, authorship would be confined to those people who had actually worked on that particular publication.

Sometimes, on funded projects, the data created will remain the property of the people who gave you the money to do the research. This can be very problematic and interfere with your academic freedom. If somebody else is going to own the data that your project creates, you need to make absolutely sure that you are clear about what you are getting into and what you are letting go of, and carefully negotiate any use rights that you may want.

Publications

There are two IP aspects here, whether you are working with academic or stakeholder networks. First, who gets named as an author? Second, who has the right to control the contents of the publication and even whether it is published or not?

We deal with the question of authorship at length in *Writing for Publication*. But remember that, with few exceptions, all genuine authors of a text have a moral right of attribution – that is, they have a

right to be known and recognised as author. If you are writing in the context of an academic or stakeholder network, you may come under pressure to include people as authors who did not contribute in a significant way to the publication. Such pressure may come from more senior academic colleagues, the funding organisation or people whose contribution to the project was essentially clerical – such as photocopying or fetching books from the library. Further pressure can come from people who are technically part of the team but actually don't do any work on the project and none of the writing. As Stavros's story, below, shows, occasionally people have the cheek to take over the work that you have generated.

Stavros had organised a symposium at a major international research conference. He was a doctoral student but had brought together some of the best-known researchers in his field. Furthermore, he had identified the theme, had written the proposal to be refereed and generally done all the conceptual and organisational work associated with putting it together and making it happen.

The symposium was a runaway success, generating considerable interest from audience and publishers alike. When Stavros returned to Greece, he found an email from two of the stellar symposium participants inviting him to contribute a chapter to the edited collection that they planned to publish arising from the symposium. Stavros's initial reaction was delight at being invited to contribute a chapter to a book edited by two of the superstars in his field. He excitedly contacted his supervisor to tell her about this *coup*.

Her reaction was very different. She said, 'Oh, please! The entire symposium was your idea and your work, Stavros. I suggest you write to these people pointing this out and indicate your willingness to share editorship with them.' Stavros took his supervisor's advice and together they crafted a polite but firm email pointing out that he had created the symposium and that his supervisor had suggested that he might invite them to join him in editing a book. Stavros was eventually able to negotiate that he became the first named editor of the book, recognising the benefits of editing a collection in such illustrious company. Ultimately the network was strengthened as a result of Stavros's tactful but assertive response.

If you are going to do a specific piece of work that involves funding from, or working with, stakeholder organisations, then you need to clarify the ground rules around publications from the outset. Government departments, especially where sensitive policy matters are concerned, and corporations, where there might be matters of commercial secrecy, will require sensitive but assertive handling in this regard. You have to respect any legitimate needs of these stakeholders and, conversely, they have to be encouraged to appreciate the imperatives on you both to adhere to rigorous academic standards and to publish your work. All kinds of complications can arise if you think you will be able to publish and turn out not to be, as Birgit's story shows.

Birgit and some colleagues from another university were commissioned by a government agency to undertake a major research project and to produce a report for government. Birgit and her colleagues were concerned to ensure that they were able to publish from the project in academic journals and to give papers at academic conferences. They therefore asked the university solicitors at both universities to negotiate with the agency to secure that end.

The government acceded to their request, but only on condition that no such publications were produced until six months after the publication of the official report. In the event, the government held up publication of the report for some considerable time after it had been submitted, delaying for considerably longer than might reasonably have been expected.

This left the researchers in a very difficult position. They had submitted an abstract for a conference symposium, thinking that their report would have been published at least six months before the date when they would give their paper. In fact, it was eventually published just three weeks before the conference began. Fortunately, because of their carefully built networks, they were able to negotiate the funder's permission to give the conference paper.

You may feel uncomfortable about raising such issues at the start of a project, but it is essential to do so, diplomatically but assertively. One of the ways in which such discussions and any subsequent renegotiations can be made easier is by having built good contacts and relationships with the relevant individuals in the stakeholder organisation, as Birgit's story shows.

Teaching materials

Universities now frequently seek to maximise their income stream by 'selling' courses, either by registering students or by franchising course materials. If you are producing such materials you need to know that the university may claim them as its own IP. What many universities have failed to understand is that teaching materials are often the product of a genuine academic collegial networking process. Academics frequently swap materials with promiscuous abandon and think such promiscuity is laudable for obvious reasons. It's creative, synergistic, efficient, economical of time and effort and therefore just plain good sense. So, claiming IPR in such circumstances is a highly problematic thing to do, as such claims fail to recognise the provenance of the material. They also fail to recognise the ways in which academics regularly network and the limitations of the possibility of commodifying knowledge.

Shamila and Naoko got to know each other as doctoral students and shared a common interest in postcolonial theory and its application to media studies. As doctoral students in the same university they developed a course in postcoloniality and the media, which they taught together. Since graduating and taking up employment in universities in their home countries, they have both introduced this course and continued to share by email the ways they have developed it. They share lecture notes, lesson plans, new ideas about readings and examples, reflections on how particular sessions went and so on. It is difficult to tell which person invented which bits of their courses. However, each of their universities now wishes to claim IPR in Shamila and Naoko's joint work and to franchise them. In this instance, networking about teaching has become, on the one hand, a very generative and productive process and on the other very problematic. Whose intellectual property is it?

Planning networking

It can be inferred from what we have said thus far that the smart networker sees networking as more of an extension of their personality

TABLE 1 *Planning networks.* Judy is a new lecturer in social geography. She has recently completed her PhD and is now setting about the task of building on the relatively limited, mainly academic networks built up during her time as a doctoral student. She does, however, have some innovative research in the field of the geographies of social exclusion. Here is her plan. As we have said, these three sorts of networks shade into each other, and this is evident from Judy's plan

Year	Academic networks	Stakeholder networks	Dissemination networks
1	Attend and give papers at two conferences, one in this country and one abroad, funded by the university Contact my PhD examiner (as he loved my thesis) and ask if he minds being named as a referee for my book proposal Remain on the social geography e-list and take part in discussions Talk to Robyn [PhD supervisor] about whether we could do a joint grant application towards the end of the year and building on my PhD work	Ask my PhD supervisor to introduce me to her contacts in relevant government Ministries Write a lay person's brief report on my PhD and send it to selected relevant Ministries and voluntary sector, explaining briefly what my future research plans are Contact selected stakeholders who might support my next project and talk them through it	Finish the three papers in progress drawn from my PhD and send them off – aim to do one per term this year Complete my book proposal (drafted already when preparing for the examination of my thesis) Use the lay person's brief report as the basis of a short article in a suitable practitioners' journal
2	Organise a panel at the national conference of social geographers Finalise and submit grant application together with Robyn Attend specialist conference on social exclusion being held in Durban and give paper there	Keep in touch with stakeholders in project work regarding the funding application. See if they will consider joint funding. If application is successful, will need to liaise with them pretty swiftly See if I can get someone from the Ministry to participate in my conference panel from a policy perspective	Write up and submit for publication the two papers given at conferences last year. Work on the book (hopefully with a contract)
3	Together with other members of my panel, put together a proposal for an edited collection of the papers. Decide which conferences to attend – one here and one abroad if possible. With colleagues here, offer to organise the next but one social geography conference at this university	If the project is funded, will need to draw stakeholders into the research, both as informants and a couple on the project advisory committee	Finish the book Write up and submit papers from last year's conferences

than just a serendipitous process. Whilst the right kind of personal approach is necessary, it is not sufficient to make you a successful networker. We think it is also helpful for people to include networking in their academic planning. One of the major benefits is that it will help you to ensure that your networking is integrated with your research and teaching plans, supporting them in a timely manner. The danger of not planning is that simply responding opportunistically may leave you running to catch up with events and that you may not be able to do what you would like (for example, in setting up research sites) if you haven't got the relevant networks in place in advance.

In *Winning and Managing Research Funding* we encourage you to develop a three-year plan with regard to your researcher identity. You may like to remind yourself of the template and then draw up a plan like the one in Table 1 that addresses each of the three types of network. Whilst trying to avoid the risk of being totally instrumental, address the question 'Which links in which networks will help me to achieve the outcomes I want?' It would be sensible to develop networks across the range. You might also find it handy to develop a list of first contact points. Ultimately you need to get a solid understanding of the stakeholder groups.

This chapter has alerted you to three areas that need your close attention. We'll now go on in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 respectively to look at the three main types of network that we have identified for you: academic, stakeholder and dissemination.

4 Academic Networks

In this chapter we describe the sorts of activities involved in academic networking and offer some detailed advice about how to participate in them, both at your own university and more broadly.

A global belonging

Individually and collectively, universities have long understood themselves as communities of scholars. Indeed, even the most solitary scholarly endeavours are nonetheless part of academic conversations between scholars. We call these communities 'epistemic communities' – that is, communities that have shared ways of thinking and knowing about the world. These epistemic communities are local, national and international in character. Academics now have a greater sense of being part of a truly global (as distinct from international) community because of changes in communication technologies and cheaper, faster travel. Academics are now more mobile as workers in the global academic 'market place' and have greater and more diverse interconnections than ever before.

This sense of belonging to a community is an essential part of an academic identity and is integral to the process of knowledge production. This means that it is simply not appropriate or feasible for you to isolate yourself in your office, corridor, department, faculty or indeed university.

This long-held tradition of collegiality stands in stark contrast to the contemporary paradigm of the marketised university where individuals and institutions are expected to compete with each other in a global knowledge economy. In contradistinction to the multi-layered unboundaried nature of academics' epistemic communities, universities have tended to put up defensive walls around themselves to protect their economic interests. Even the collaboration that universities

(as distinct from the academics in them) promote, such as the franchising of degree programmes abroad, is done to further commercial interests.

This means that academics are pulled in a number of different directions. They are under pressure from their own universities to advance particular institutional interests (which may also benefit the individual) and they also need to be members of collegial epistemic communities if they are to do their academic work. In order to operate successfully they need to be able to understand these tensions, balance them and sometimes make hard decisions between them, as Nandha and Thandi's story below shows.

Nandha is a well established professor at a prestigious South African university. He developed an international reputation during his period of exile, when he worked in British universities. He has been approached by Thandi, a young academic who has recently gained her PhD and is in her first job at another South African university. Thandi has done a lot of work developing a research proposal in an area of common interest, and wants Nandha to join her in finalising the funding proposal and submitting it to a major US charitable foundation.

Thandi wants to work with Nandha and thinks that the application is more likely to be funded if she is joined by a more senior academic. The project is also likely to be significantly better if they work together on it. Further, Thandi's career is likely to be enhanced by working with Nandha on a successful project.

They discuss who should be the principal applicant and, consequently, whose university will be the institutional 'winner' of the project funds – something which, in itself, attracts prestige. Nandha is under constant pressure as a professor to continue to bring in significant amounts of research money. In addition, the project is more likely to be funded if he is the chief applicant. However, this would be intellectually dishonest. So Nandha insists that, whilst they will make a joint application, Thandi should be named as the principal applicant.

Nandha's university will be far from happy with his decision. However, he is satisfied that he has made an academically ethical choice and is content to live with the consequences.

Inside your own institution

Although networks *inside* your own institution are important they often slip off the agenda when people talk about academic networking. The intensification of all academic work loads has meant that many academics come to work and bust a gut doing their teaching, answering bulk emails and doing the many mind-numbing tasks associated with the hyper-accountability pressures of corporatised universities. They often eat lunch at their desk or in meetings, seldom go to the coffee room (which may have been converted to a tutorial/store/photocopy room anyway) and then go home again, having seen their students but enjoyed minimal contact with their academic colleagues. This is a sad state of affairs and if it is the way you are leading your life as an academic, stop it now. Networks at your workplace are important to the quality of your working life for the following reasons:

- They are good sources of friendship and support. How happy you are in an institution will often depend on them.
- Such networks provide immediate and on-going opportunities to chat about various aspects of work. If you have good colleagues you can use each other as sounding boards and for sharing ideas and knowledge resources, new books, teaching videos and the like. Such corridor or quick coffee interactions are important to your on-going development as an academic.
- Colleagues can share insider knowledge about the ways the institution functions and how best to get things done quickly and easily. This includes the gossip about who is best to work with in various areas and who to avoid.
- People you network with in this way may well become reliable and valued teaching and/or research partners.
- Your colleagues can help you out if you need someone to stand in for you – so you long as you return the favour, of course.
- Your immediate colleagues can empathise when your institution is driving you mad. Outsiders will not engage with your frustration sessions about your own place anywhere near as enthusiastically as your own immediate colleagues. They may help to keep you reasonably sane. Beware, however, of falling into an ever downward spiral of mutually reinforced dejection and negativity.

- Your immediate academic network may act as a gateway to the networks of your colleagues, thus saving you from continually reinventing the wheel.

All that said, your own institution is the start of the networking story, not the end of it. Ask yourself, 'Am I known beyond my own university?' Some people do great research or teaching but remain unknown outside their own institution. Others may publish good papers or do a lot of virtual networking but never appear in the flesh. A profile inside your own university is not sufficient to help you properly develop your career. You should regard your internal academic networks as a launch pad for your external activities.

When Vashti took up her first academic post in political science, the faculty she joined was at its zenith. It was filled with well connected and internationally famous professors. Scholars from all over the world came to spend time in the faculty and the senior staff regularly visited their colleagues in far-flung places too. As a group, the faculty worked with cutting-edge ideas and were influential on the publishing and conference circuits. Along with the other junior academics, Vashti benefited greatly from this. They rubbed shoulders with many great names, often having the chance to discuss and debate with them over extended periods, sharing their ideas. Some even became friends. These contacts led to many subsequent opportunities to visit other universities and collaborate on conferences and other ventures. It was not a one-way street, as these senior professors found much to interest them in the research of their junior colleagues and the dynamic environment they engendered together. Overall many long-standing academic relationships were begun.

Even internal networks don't just happen. You need to be proactive and take part in constructing good relationships. Here is the sort of 'people work' you will need to do in order to establish good academic networks inside your own university.

- With colleagues, try to build a stimulating, collaborative, generative and innovative environment. Help to organise seminars, reading

groups, conferences, staff development programmes and so on that attract other people to you.
- Take advantage of opportunities to meet people from outside your own department and faculty. A good way to do so is to make selective use of interesting-looking and relevant staff development activities, sit on cross-faculty committees (but only interesting ones) and join specific networking groups. If such groups don't exist, think about setting one up.
- Make and maintain contact with people in other centres, institutes and research concentrations within your university. Get along to some of their seminars, meet their visitors and offer some seminars yourself.

So what else does academic networking involve?

First, it involves reading widely and finding out which people and what ideas make up your epistemic community. In other words, you need to work out who you want to mix with, where you might belong and whose ideas you feel comfortable with and challenged by. Equally, you need to find out who is going to be interested in you and your work. You will thus be able to develop a global intellectual geography of your interests and field of study. It's particularly useful to know which institutions have a critical mass of scholars working in your areas of interest.

Second, it may seem an obvious point to make, but simply reading and mapping are not enough. You do need to get out and about, to strut your stuff, exchange ideas, get to know other researchers as individuals and let them get to know you. Remember that if you find someone else's work interesting, there's a good chance that they will find yours interesting too – although there are some exceptions to this rule. You will need to show initiative. It never hurts to have a bit of what Debbie and Rebecca call *chutzpah* or what Jane calls 'front'. This means you *must* do a number of things:

- Go to academic conferences.
- Attend workshops and seminars.

- Join email chat groups and research lists.
- Be a visiting scholar.
- Offer seminars in other universities.
- Invite visiting scholars to your own institution.
- Be willing to travel both within your own country and abroad.

If you've taken the opportunities to build up your identity as a researcher during your doctoral studies, all this will come more easily. In the first instance you must unashamedly plug into your supervisor's/mentor's networks and not be afraid to contact your 'super-heroes'. Senior academics are often happy to spend time with new people, and the worst they can do is say they can't meet you.

We will now go through each of the imperatives we have listed, elaborating on each in turn.

Go to academic conferences

For those of you who have never been to academic conferences, it's worth pausing briefly just to give you a quick taster. Conferences are organisational headaches, so the people organising them publish timetables for the submission of papers or abstracts of papers. If these are to be peer-reviewed the deadline will be a long way ahead of the conferences. Whatever, the organisers need time to select the papers to be presented and put the conference programme together. This is a complicated job, so you can help by sticking to deadlines – it will also 'avoid disappointment'. The same applies to conference accommodation and travel: make your arrangements early to 'avoid disappointment'.

Whilst most conferences have published themes, these are usually ignored or people's papers relate only tangentially to them. That said, try to stay within the right ballpark. Conferences vary in size, but almost all the larger ones will have parallel sessions of papers on various themes, keynote speakers, plenary sessions, panel sessions or symposia, workshops, editors' presentations, special interest group meetings, annual general meetings of the associations and publishers' bookstalls and representatives.

There are a variety of formats in which you can present a paper. Inevitably, time for your paper will be constrained – sometimes to as

little as ten minutes. At some conferences, discussants may have been selected who have the job of presenting *your* paper, adding a critical commentary or responding critically to your presentation.

Contrary to what you may believe or have been told, listening to other people's papers in formal sessions and delivering your own is not the only purpose of conferencing. Conferences offer invaluable networking opportunities that allow you to:

- Meet other people and get to know them.
- Have conversations and arguments with them.
- Find intellectual/research buddies.
- Get your work out into the public sphere.
- Have people engage with your ideas in a semi-formal context so that they understand where you're coming from and going to.
- Have your work subjected to critical scrutiny by your peers prior to it being submitted for publication – an extremely valuable process.
- Possibly impress someone on the lookout for people to appoint to their university.
- Give you different institutional perspectives because you hear about and learn from people at other universities.
- Get to know the working ideas of other people in your field, particularly what they are thinking now rather than what was in their last published paper, which may have been written two to three years ago.
- Enjoy the buzz and excitement of discussion, new ideas and meeting people you may have admired for a long time.

Of course, conferences are not just happy, clappy events that everyone enjoys. They have a down side too and can, if they go wrong, be quite a miserable experience. You may feel vulnerable when you present your paper and may have problems coping with any critique levelled at it. You may be anxious about answering questions on your paper, perhaps because you might be unfamiliar with certain authors or ideas. You may feel intimidated by the people or the place – and people you admire for their work may be less admirable in the flesh. Coping with conferences in a language other than your own will be tiring and can be stressful. You may feel that people of a particular ethnic group, gender, sexuality, country or class that you don't share dominate the conference, causing you anxiety or feelings of being marginalised. All these feelings are entirely understandable and very common. However, conferences are

an essential part of academic life and you have to learn to deal with them effectively.

Handy hints for conference presentations

Disciplinary traditions

Different disciplines or conferences have different traditions with regard to papers. Some require the full written paper to be available some weeks before the conference. The papers are usually then made available on the conference website in the forlorn hope that people coming to the conference will have read them in full prior to leaving home. Some people will read them on the plane, but others prefer to watch the in-flight movie (even if it is *Father of the Bride II*). Other traditions are that people simply submit an abstract of what their paper will eventually be and give only an oral presentation. They may, however, choose or be required to distribute a written version of their presentation in their session or make them available via the conference registration desk.

Whichever tradition is followed, you will need to tailor your presentation accordingly. Making a written text available (either before or at the session) lets you refer to materials in there and make comments such as 'There is a section on this in the paper if you want more detail …' Making a written text available may also draw more senior academics' attention to your work – there is just a chance that they will pick up a copy and read it on the way home (in preference to *Father of the Bride III*).

Prepare in advance

Your presentation needs to be carefully prepared. Unfortunately, however good their work, many academics are appalling presenters. They wander shambolically through their paper or they read the entire text in a monotone, making no eye contact with the audience. Alternatively, they talk about something that bears no relation whatsoever to the paper or its abstract.

In preparing for a conference presentation write what you will actually say out in full, bearing in mind the length of time you have in

which to say it. If you haven't had to provide a full text prior to the conference this will probably involve working out what you want to argue from scratch. If you have provided a full text, you will need to select the points you wish to make/emphasise. Either way, having a text makes you think carefully about what to say and also acts as a kind of script or comfort blanket that will help you through any nervousness. If you haven't had to provide a written paper before the conference, such a text can also provide the basis of a publication.

Consider the discussant/session chair

Find out what the role of any discussant or session chair is. If they have the task of responding to you then you must get the paper to them in plenty of time. If you don't, you run the risk of being the recipient of ill considered and rushed views on your precious work.

Watch the time

Keep in mind that people who overrun their time in their presentation become very unpopular, as they are stealing time from someone else, preventing the audience from asking them questions or keeping their colleagues from the bar.

Papers are performance

Some people just read their paper to the audience whole or in part. This is the dominant genre in some disciplines, and if this is the case in yours you will need to write a paper for being heard rather than read. The problem with reading aloud is that it is a difficult art and, equally, it's hard work for the audience to take in what you are saying. A presentation *from* your paper is a wholly different form of communication. It enables you to engage with the audience much more interactively, for example by making eye contact and responding to their reactions as they happen. A presentation should be a concise and coherent distillation of the principal points you wish to make. You might combine a mixture of reading and talking about your paper, which can work quite well if you are skilled at

it. Your presentation *must* be coherent, logical and should engage the audience. Bear in mind that in presentations, smoke-and-mirrors devices will not disguise a paucity of ideas.

Think about translation

At international conferences your paper may be simultaneously translated into another language – although this is far from universal. It can be done in two ways. If you are fortunate, you will be asked to provide the translator with a copy in advance of your presentation so that they can familiarise themselves with the text, discuss any technical terms with you and so on. The translation may then be done simultaneously into headphones for the audience. If you are unfortunate, somebody will stand alongside you while you are presenting your paper and will translate as-you-go, requiring you to stop at regular intervals for them to deliver the translated version. In either case you need to think carefully about how best to prepare your paper. In fact, whatever the language of the conference (your own or another), always remember that the audience is likely to include people for whom your language is not their first. This means you should avoid vernacular phrases, slang and culturally specific aphorisms, and remember that humour doesn't necessarily travel well.

Polish and sparkle

When you give your paper, do bear in mind that many senior academics use conferences (especially the big ones) as a way of pre-screening potential employees. Therefore, make sure that your shoes are shined and that your paper and performance are well polished too.

Handy hints for getting to and being at conferences

Be proactive in finding conferences

Use all the sources available to locate the conferences that you want to go to. Look in newsletters, websites, advertisements in journals and ask around about what is going on. As you start to go to conferences your name and address will get pasted into all sorts of other notification lists and the whole thing will snowball. Good research directors will share

all the conference alerts they receive – perhaps putting them on notice boards or circulating them electronically.

Be eclectic

You don't just have to pick conferences in your narrow field. Often the papers and other materials from previous conferences are left up on the Web. This means that you can assess what kind of conference it was and whether you want to be part of that particular epistemic community. Sadly, many of our colleagues just go to the big 'mega-conference' of their scholarly association rather than the smaller and often much better conferences that are more specialist. You can't go to them all, so be selective.

In the first instance, you need to be clear about the company you want to keep and who you want to share ideas with and learn from. Choose conferences where those people are most likely to be and where you are most likely to get access to them – much easier at small conferences than at big ones. Conferences that run in cycles or series can be quite a good idea because they allow you to feel familiar with the intellectual and social milieu. But don't get in a rut. You should also go to conferences in other disciplinary areas than your own and those that are one-off and interesting-looking.

Find out who else will be there

Check out beforehand who is going to the conference. There may be people you know or want to meet up with. Unless it's a small conference, you need to make careful arrangements – don't count on just 'bumping into' him or her. Swap hotel details and mobile phone numbers in advance.

Think about doing your own panel

One way to ensure that you meet the people who are interesting in your field is to put on a special panel or symposium. This can be quite daunting if you are at the beginning of your career and don't know a lot of people. In that case, it might be worth asking your better established

supervisor, mentor or senior colleague with interests similar to your own if they will take part and/or join you as panel organiser. Even if you have to do all the leg work, having them on board will help get other interesting people to join in. You can invite people to be discussants.

Plan ahead

The meta/mega conferences with fifty parallel streams across four large hotels have a place in your conference learning curve. If you plan well they can provide excellent networking opportunities, and if you are inexperienced they can be a good place to get the overall feel of a discipline. If you are going to one of these conferences get the programme well ahead of time and *plan plan, plan!*

Travel with friends/colleagues

If you are anxious and really don't know anyone, you could arrange to go with colleagues from your university. You might travel together or stay in the same hotel. But make sure that you spread your social wings a bit and don't just hang out with people you know.

Seek financial assistance

Remember that it should be possible to get some financial assistance from your university for going to conferences. In many universities such funds are available for doctoral students as well as for staff. If they are not at your institution you might consider lobbying for policies to be brought into line with best practice globally. If you are a doctoral student, there are often also travel awards made by the organisation putting on the conference.

Book your accommodation early

Arrange your accommodation early, booking yourself into the main conference venue or in the hotels where you know a lot of other

participants will be staying. It's really worth spending the extra cash this might involve if you possibly can because it will enable you to meet people in the bar, restaurant and lobby serendipitously. Remember, most people are in the same situation as you and will be quite happy to find someone to have a drink with, go out to eat with or just chat about the conference and other things. Sometimes the ubiquitous poor-quality conference rucksack or document bag can be helpful – people can identify you as a conference participant.

Don't be anonymous

Wear your name badge even if it makes you feel stupid. People may well have read your work, notice your badge and come and say hello. Most people have trouble remembering names and it is much easier if it is written down on your chest. It's important that people remember who you are – and for good reasons, rather than because you got hideously drunk and behaved badly at the conference dinner, for instance.

Dress for comfort

Some inexperienced researchers get quite anxious about what to wear at conferences. Wear what makes you feel comfortable, but do bear in mind that academic conferences do almost invariably tend to be quite informal.

Solomon, a historian, was going to give a paper at a critical accounting conference. It was his first accounting conference and he imagined that the people at it would be much more formal than the historians he usually hung out with. Consequently, he went out and purchased a rather smart charcoal grey suit. He was very out of place among the accounting academics, who were wearing jeans and T-shirts as usual. He managed to salvage his pride by making self-deprecating remarks about his lack of dress sense at the start of his presentation.

Don't be the spectre at the feast

You shouldn't just be a silent presence at papers. Ask questions, join in the discussion and, if you are very interested in someone's work, introduce yourself at the end of their paper. At the least exchange email addresses – business cards can be useful here. You can always informally invite people you meet at conferences to visit your institution, and you will need their details (and they yours) in order to follow up later. When you collect other people's business cards at conferences, write down the details of the person on the back of them – for instance, the paper they gave or what you promised to send them. That way you won't stare at the cards in puzzlement when you get home, trying vainly to remember what you were supposed to do with them.

Speak and listen to journal editors

Many journal editors go to conferences (and indeed, many conferences are organised by the editorial boards of journals). Many conferences also have panels of editors at which they speak about the sorts of things that their journal is seeking to publish. It may be a good idea to attend these and take notes of what they say. You can also use the opportunity to introduce yourself to editors and members of editorial boards, talk to them about the sorts of papers they want and that you have to offer. That way, if and when you do send them your paper, it will ring a bell. In addition, keep in mind that journal editors often take the opportunity at conferences to identify papers that they want for their journal and to find new authors. It is not uncommon for editors to subsequently invite authors to submit their paper to the journal.

Meet the publishers

When you visit bookstands at conferences, take the opportunity to talk to the company representatives there. At most reasonably sized conferences, commissioning editors for the appropriate discipline will staff their publisher's stand. This is a great chance to get your face, name and work known to these people. You can find out what kinds of

books they are seeking to commission. Further, if you have a book proposal or ideas for one, it's best to contact them in advance and make a time to meet them at the conference. Sometimes they will even buy you a drink/meal.

Engage with others

Finally, when you are at conferences and talking to the people whom you want to know and whom you want to know you, engage with their work before you tell them (preferably not at great length and in a monologue) about yours. Don't be too humble (but don't appear arrogant either). Don't appear too needy, too supplicant, too demanding of people's emotional and intellectual energy and time.

Other networking opportunities

We have spent a great deal of time on conferences and turn now to the other networking opportunities we listed above. Much of the advice – especially about preparation – that we gave about conferences also applies to these other venues and ways of meeting and getting to know other academics, so we won't repeat it here.

Attend workshops and specialist seminars

Workshops are usually quite small events in which a high level of participant attendance, commitment and engagement is required. For this reason, they tend to be for specialist groupings and are often invitation-only. They usually last for one or two days. Specialist seminars usually consist of an individual presentation, possibly with a respondent. They are likely to be much shorter events and may be more open. They may be part of a series. You should be aware, however, that there can be some slippage in usage between the two terms and sometimes 'seminars' are longer events with several papers over the course of a day.

It is important to attend such specialist meetings if you can, as they are likely to attract the leading and most exciting thinkers in your field.

The audience usually consists of people who are very engaged in a particular topic and you will hear their current views on things, the main lines of recent debate will probably emerge and you will be able to take part in these debates. If you give a paper yourself, you will receive the attention of a specialist group within your field. Sometimes papers given at these events can become chapters in edited books or journal special issues. As you can see, even though you may be really, really busy, it is always a good idea to go to such events when offered the opportunity, even if you are not giving a paper at them.

These events constitute an important part of the intellectual geography of your epistemic community and you may wish to stage such an event yourself, especially if your epistemic community is embryonic.

Roisin was in the early stages of her academic career and her research was in the area of taxation. She looked around for others with a similar interest but found little going on. In the end, she approached a professional institution and was successful in obtaining a small sum of money to allow her to put on a one-day workshop to bring together all those who might be interested in doing taxation research. She struggled to find participants, but eventually managed to get fifteen people together. The meeting was very successful and the scholars decided to meet again the following year, with another academic taking responsibility for organising the meeting. In the ten years since the inaugural meeting the event has developed into a well established research network with an annual conference, special issues of journals and an edited book.

For Roisin, being proactive in organising this first workshop led to her being well established within her particular specialist field from an early stage in her career.

Join email chat groups and research lists

We've already noted that modern communication technologies have transformed and globalised academics' epistemic communities. You

need to engage with these technologies if you are to participate fully in your epistemic community. You should, therefore, familiarise yourself with the increasing range of Web-based facilities which enable academic networking and collaborations. For instance, in writing the books in the *Academic's Support Kit*, we have made extensive use of a sophisticated Web-sharing facility (the Basic Site for Cooperative Working) designed for academic collaborators. It has acted as a sort of virtual shared project filing cabinet and a shared drafting and chat facility. There are many other such sites and some university computing services are willing to help you set up your own sharing site on your university's server.

Email lists and websites now provide excellent and instant means of disseminating information on events and publications, as well as facilitating conversations. These are an essential aid to building the international networks that are now demanded by funders such as the European Union. We have listed a number of websites that you may find useful in the Further Reading list. Just beware of OUS (over-use syndrome), as these lists can become sinkholes of time and energy.

Be a visiting scholar

As with all things global, there are local differences between universities. This means that there can be significant differences in emphasis or perspective on exactly the same academic subject in different universities. Similarly approaches to teaching, curriculum content and so on will have local differences. It is, therefore, extremely important to find out how teaching and research in your area are done at a variety of different institutions. This will broaden your own horizons and help prevent parochialism. Equally, most institutions are eager to have visiting scholars because they bring with them these different perspectives. This means that there can be cross-fertilisation from which all parties gain.

How does the business of being and having visiting scholars work? Many universities provide money to assist you either to become or to host a visiting scholar. There are also fellowships available from some research funding bodies specifically intended to facilitate this kind of networking. Some people get invited, but it is fine to invite yourself. People you meet at conferences or seminars can often be helpful in facilitating an invitation. However, it's very important to find out what the institution's arrangements for visiting scholars are and to do so in advance, particularly with regard to office space, computing and other facilities and what you will be expected to offer. Most institutions

expect you to offer presentations about your research. You may also be asked to do some guest lectures or classes and to make yourself available to graduate students and colleagues interested in your work. Sometimes it may be more sensible to choose a less prestigious institution which welcomes you and provides you with good facilities, good intellectual company and is appreciative of what you have to offer in preference to a place which is inundated with visitors because of its institutional status but which often regards such visitors as a burden and offers them few facilities or even none at all.

As director of a major research centre, Rohana was very conscious of the importance of treating visiting scholars well. She was particularly concerned that her centre should have a reputation for dealing with visitors well because of the difficulty of getting people to spend time at such centres in a poor country. She had heard many horror stories and knew that being a visitor can have a nightmare quality to it. Indeed, friends of hers had been to some of the top universities in the world and had been left totally to their own devices, not to mention housed in 'cupboards' and with no access to any facilities. Certainly no dinner or even coffee invitations had been forthcoming. Needless to say these friends were lonely, became dispirited and left, sometimes without people even knowing they'd been there.

Rohana was determined this would not happen in her research centre. So, well in advance of visitors' arrival dates, her very efficient administrator organised people's rooms, computers, email, library access and the like. They were also helped in finding accommodation and met at the airport on arrival where possible. Seminars and public lectures were also planned for them, as well as enough social activity to prevent them feeling lonely, but not so much as to impede their work. Graduate students were encouraged to link and lunch with them too. Any money coming to them was always ready for them before departure and in their own currency if required. Further, if they were too heavy to take with them, she posted various papers back to their home institution. Needless to say, many visitors returned many times, invited centre members to their institutions and ensured that they were treated equally well.

What do you do when you get there? What is a reasonable expectation of a visiting scholar? Your first priority will be to locate yourself both in your physical environment and with your new, albeit temporary, colleagues. It's also a good idea to set up a programme of activities early on. This should include a range of appointments with people you want to meet, events you want to attend, and presentations that you will do. One of the things you might do with your host is to plan a mini-conference, international or national seminar around your joint interests. Consider putting out an edited collection in association with this or a special issue of a journal. Do make sure that you balance your study leave programme between such activities and your own need to get on with your research.

We think it's a good idea to give your seminars early on in your visit because that alerts people to your presence and your exciting ideas, opening up many more opportunities for others to engage with you. This may well result in more invitations than you can appropriately handle and you need to be selective about what you agree to do. If you have been invited and partially or fully funded by your host institution, then you need to be sensitive to their expectations without allowing them to eat you alive. In this case, you really need to sort out ahead of time how much work you will be expected to do for them.

Although being a visiting scholar is generally related to research, it is useful to check out courses and teaching in your host institution, to maybe do the odd lecture or tutorial class, and to go home with some copies of people's unit guides, reading and resource lists. But you are not there to teach, so do not get sucked into doing too much teaching despite the 'kind' offers of your hosts. Of course some visits are for teaching exchanges. These can be particularly beneficial if you are able to try out new ideas or pedagogies or if you are in a teaching team which introduces you to new approaches to take back with you.

When James visited a university in Brazil, he became very involved with Javier's education studies course, doing a lot of teaching and running tutorials. He was particularly keen to be part of a teaching team that contextualised education within popular media culture. Javier's team was exploring the best pedagogies to do this and coming up with many highly original and successful pedagogies. James became a very active member of the team. He gave and learnt

heaps. When he returned to his Californian university he arranged for Javier to visit in order to teach in a similar programme. Both James and Javier benefited greatly from teaching in different national/cultural contexts, as this also enhanced their teaching in their own cultures. And they became firm friends.

What should I do about my family? Many academics with families nonetheless visit other universities for prolonged periods and take all or some of their family with them. This takes a lot of extra planning and also means that family needs, like children's schooling, have to be addressed. None of this is easy and it can cut into your study leave time quite a lot. However, there are also many benefits to having your family with you, not the least being that you do not miss and worry about them. The other benefits are that you have their company, can enjoy local activities together and having a family may well help you to integrate more readily among the locals. They of course have the benefit of lots of new and hopefully interesting experiences and often make new friends for life.

A golden rule for all visiting scholars is, be sociable. Go to coffee, go to lunch, invite people to join you. This will make your stay more fun and will also help you make new academic allies and friends.

Offer seminars in other universities

You are likely to get invitations to visit other universities if you are getting out and about and have something interesting or useful – or hopefully both – to say when you do. Let us assume that you have lots of interesting ideas, so if the invites are not flowing it may be because you are not out and about in the right places. How do you rectify this and ensure that the invitations start flowing in?

Perhaps you could start by inviting yourself to visit another institution. This may sound extremely embarrassing, but it is actually a common practice. For instance, many people who go to conferences away from home invite themselves to nearby universities so as to make the most of the travel costs and the time away. And, of course, you may also suggest to colleagues at nearby universities that you could offer a seminar for them.

You will probably be aware of which universities you would like to visit and know of people or research groups there who are likely to be

interested in your ideas. If you have never met the key people involved, you can contact them by email, indicate you would like to visit and explain what you are working on. In this first approach, it is helpful if you establish your common interests. You might do this by saying something about what you've read of theirs or that some common friend/acquaintance suggested that you make contact.

What are the likely responses to this initiative? Academics are usually happy to invite interesting people to come to their institutions but it is possible that your email will be ignored – possibly because the person you've sent it to is so overwhelmed with emails that they can't respond to everything or they may be on leave. You may be invited to visit and spend some time chatting. Such visits may lead to an invitation to do a seminar – and it's a good idea to be prepared for this to happen at short notice when big distances are involved. Or they may respond to your initial email by immediately inviting you to give a seminar.

You may already know the key people at the institutions you want to visit – they may have heard you speak at a conference and spoken to you about your paper or have marked your PhD and reacted favourably. In such cases, it is absolutely fine to email them and say that you are going to be somewhere near their institution and you would love to visit, to see them and to give a seminar for their colleagues and students.

The next step, in both instances, is to send some engaging titles, abstracts and a short CV. It may also be useful if you indicate any particular people you want to meet. Near to the date, email ahead to make sure of the arrangements. Prepare properly for any seminars/papers you are giving so that you can present yourself at your best. Don't be disappointed if you only have a few people at the seminar – they may be the very people you want to connect with.

It may not be possible for people to pay you anything, or they may be able to give you a small amount. Even if you have to pay for your own travel in full or in part, this might be quite a good investment for you. In some countries you might be able to claim part of it against tax, so you need to keep records and receipts for everything. Check this out with your accountant or tax office and devise a good system for keeping a record.

Invite visiting scholars to your own institution

Even if you do not have study leave yourself or are unable to go away because of other responsibilities, you can get some of the benefits of going elsewhere to network by inviting people to your own institution.

You will have to expend some effort to arrange visits and on looking after visitors when they are with you.

How do you fund such visits? They will inevitably cost money and you need to check out the sources of funding that are available both within and beyond your own institution. If you are chasing an international speaker, your university may be able to help you with funding directly or to get it from another source. For instance, the British Council and other funders have money for making links between universities in the UK and the Commonwealth. Also, travel scholarships to bring overseas scholars to your country may be available from major funding bodies – though you will almost certainly have to bid competitively for them. Most universities have funds to support the travel, accommodation and *per diem* costs of visiting scholars. Some require you to find matching funds from other sources or a co-host. Some also have restrictions on what they will pay for and what they expect the co-host to pay for. You can usually co-host with other universities or with industry partners or government agencies. Of course they will all expect their pound of flesh and you need to be clear to your potential visitors what is expected of them.

In organising the visit, you need to pay attention to what is best for your visitor. Visits will vary in length and intensity and your plans will vary accordingly. If your visitor is from near by and will be around only to give a seminar you do not need more than minimal planning – making sure they know how to get there, booking parking and a room for the seminar, advertising and so on. For long periods of study leave, the planning should be aimed at helping visitors settle in quickly and ensuring that they have all the appropriate facilities available.

Visits that will last a few days are probably the ones that need the most careful preparation. In this case it is really important to think carefully about and discuss with your visitor what they should do. If your visitor is someone whom everyone wants a piece of, even the shortest visit will have to be planned in such a way that they do not collapse with the strain. You do not want to kill them through overwork and you must leave space clear for them to mix informally without being exhausted. They also need time to themselves.

When someone is coming to visit your university, you should set up an itinerary for them well in advance. Do so in consultation with them rather than rushing ahead yourself without allowing them to take any of the initiative. For instance, they may have their own wishes about who they want to meet, at your university and at others. Nor should

you spring any nasty surprises on them when they arrive. The itinerary should include:

- Arrival and departure dates, times and travel details. You need to be clear on these, even if your visitor is making their own travel arrangements.
- Whether you will collect them from the airport or station and, if not, whether someone else will meet them or where they can get a taxi.
- Similar information about what will happen when they are due to leave.
- How they will be ferried around when they are with you.

Your co-hosts, if any, should also be involved in the negotiations and local travel plans. These basic courtesies are very important if you are going to make the best use of your visitors. It's important that they know what to expect so that they can do their own preliminary planning. You do not want them to be unhappy when they are with you and then leave with a bad taste about you and your university in their mouth.

Don't be exclusive and greedy with your visitors. You can share them. Keep in mind that one of the reasons for them to visit is that they want to get stimulated academically by the work of you and your colleagues. They want to be part of academic conversations that move their thinking on and not to feel that they are simply putting in without getting anything back. So encourage your colleagues to be more than passive recipients of their pearls of wisdom and to engage them in discussion and debate.

Be willing to travel both within your own country and abroad

As we've indicated throughout this chapter, there are lots of opportunities for academics to travel in relation to their work and these are growing all the time. At the same time, electronic communication allows ready connections and links in virtual worlds, which can be easily translated into corporeal links though travel. Some people travel all the time for research, teaching or consultancies, such that they are hardly ever at their own institution. Others stay put. Both these extremes are problematic. Those who are never at home can't make a proper contribution to their own department and colleagues. Those who never travel often have a heads-down, highly parochial way of being in the

academic world and have little sense of what is going on in other places and cultures. In these globally interconnected times academics need to have their heads up, to see what is going on beyond their own little world and to consider the implications for their teaching and research. The best way to do this is through travel (within reason) and not just virtually.

Travel can be costly, in terms of time, money and physical effort – just how costly will depend on where you are based and the transport links available to you. Sometimes others will pay for you and sometimes you have to fund yourself, claiming the money back through tax as a work-related expense if possible. Whatever, it is worth it. And while you are away, try to get to places that are dissimilar from your own and to work with people who come from various cultures. The well networked, global academic has to be cosmopolitan.

One of the main benefits of being an academic is that it provides opportunities for you to spend time with interesting people in interesting places. Moreover, your work and career can only benefit from well planned and appropriate academic networking.

5 What are Stakeholder Networks?

This chapter discusses the notion of 'stakeholder', identifies what and who they are and explores the sorts of work you can do with them.

Dominant discourses to be wary of

The lexicon of contemporary university governance contains a number of 'buzz words':

- Partnerships.
- Collaboration or links with industry.
- End users.
- Capacity building.
- Co-sponsorship, co-funding.
- Serving the professions.
- Applied knowledge.
- Commercialisation.
- Path to market.
- 'Mode 2'.
- 'Useful' knowledge.

And the list goes on. Many of these terms are related to the notion that universities have a wider 'stakeholder' community. Universities are increasingly obliged by government to demonstrate that they adequately serve these stakeholders and there are financial incentives to do so. Consequently your university may encourage you to give top priority to those perceived as stakeholders. There are two main ways in which this happens.

First, many governments argue that the best way of ensuring that universities serve their stakeholders' needs is to set up funding arrangements whereby the stakeholder is, effectively, a customer for

universities' work. This is generally achieved by government simultaneously scaling down its funding for universities and implementing various policy processes to force them to seek alternative funds from stakeholders. Stakeholders, it is assumed, will act as discerning customers and will want to ensure that they get 'value for money' from universities.

To be successful in this area, university management teams have spawned further internal machinery and structures to secure business and thus additional income for the university. Most universities now have commercial arms and their job is to facilitate the winning of such funds from stakeholder/funders. You can usually recognise them by the inclusion of the terms such as 'Innovation' in their titles. We've even heard of one, tautological, 'Dean of New Initiatives'.

These management structures don't win stakeholder funds themselves. At best they facilitate the work of academics in building these networks and at worst they just plain pressurise them into it. Thus you may find yourself coming under pressure to produce the sorts of research that can be commercialised or that will at least be supported financially by industry or other sources. Equally, you may also be expected to develop teaching programmes that produce the sorts of 'oven-ready' employees that some employers want. This is commonly called the 'commodification' and 'vocationalisation' of the university.

Second, these financial incentives have been accompanied by a strong ideological campaign directed at the elevation of the status of the types of knowledge that are produced for stakeholders: the applied, the functional and that with a practical application or utility. This new ideology preaches that knowledge must have a 'use value' or an 'exchange value' and be understood in mainly technical and instrumental terms. That which cannot be understood in this way is increasingly residualised – that is, discredited and marginalised.

In consequence, knowledge can no longer be seen as a gift, free, disinterested, for its own sake or as contributing to the common weal. The knowledge that once might have justified its existence in these terms must now account for and justify itself in terms of the knowledge's commodity value. Stakeholders, it is argued, need 'evidence', not idle speculation or unpractical claptrap. Thus philosophy departments now turn their hand to business ethics and English departments work with the creative industries and so on. Of course, because under this ideology the customer is always right, a further imperative is that the knowledge that universities produce should not threaten their

relationship with their stakeholders, so it must not be critical or political.

Within this ideological construction, stakeholders are understood in a very limited way. The university itself is not permitted to be a stakeholder in knowledge production and distribution, even though it clearly is. Neither can the term 'stakeholder' include the public, the ordinary citizens, the community or other such non-institutional actors who cannot either sign a contract or pay for knowledge. Stakeholders must be clearly identifiable, legal entities with resources that can be 'leveraged'.

The stakeholder rules, okay!

It is important to resist the imperatives that may well be dominant in your university to see stakeholders in this way. We think that it is important not to subscribe to the reductionist views outlined above and to have a richer and more robust view of the range of stakeholders available to you and a more dialogical view of your relationship with them. Further, if you are a reflexive academic, you will recognise that these all too dominant discourses divert and pervert the knowledge production process and indeed the very nature of the university. Clearly universities need to support themselves financially, but equally they must have an agenda that is more than that of their stakeholders so conceived.

So what is a stakeholder?

In Chapter 1 we described stakeholders as all organisations and individuals who might contribute to, make use of and benefit from your research and teaching efforts. Thus a stakeholder is anyone who, or any entity which, has some form of 'stake' in your work. They do not need to have paid you or your university for it. In contrast to the dominant discourse we described above, here are just a few examples of stakeholders more broadly defined:

- People in poverty may have a stake in the research you undertake on the causes of poverty and on the ways in which it might be alleviated. They have a stake in the sorts of explanations you offer and the suggestions you make.
- The public is a stakeholder not just because taxpayers may fund much of your salary but also because your work may be in the

general interest. For instance, the public has a general interest in protecting the environment even if sectional interests such as those associated with high-polluting industries do not. So research that is directed towards environmental protection is in response to the public as stakeholder.

- Students are in the stakeholder category too. As 'users' they are increasingly expected to pay for university knowledge and credentials. The climate in higher education combined with the state of the job market encourages students to see their university studies as an investment in their own human capital – that is, as a private benefit. Further, their choices of academic programme and their subsequent employment opportunities steer the directions of universities. Faculties with lower student demand lose 'load' and the funding that goes with it. This money then goes instead to those who get 'bums on seats'. Faculties and their courses may vary in popularity among students at any one time. At present, the major growth area is in business, management and commerce. You may care to check out the following website for a satirical view on this: http://www.cynicalbastards.com/ubs/. Yet, despite all this, and their vested interest in their university's research and teaching, students tend to be thought of as clients, not stakeholders.

So, in reality, you may have multiple stakeholders and their interests will often be somewhat diffuse and perhaps contradictory. Sectional interests may conflict with the public interest and some of those sectional interests will conflict with others. For instance, unions may have a short-term interest in keeping certain high-polluting industries going to protect the jobs of workers. But the longer-term interest of workers in general is in a clean and safe environment. Some stakeholders will want you to undertake work that is about addressing longer-term concerns and others will just want their short-term needs addressed. Further, some stakeholders will be in a position to pay you, others will not or may support you indirectly.

The challenge for you is to ensure that you have an understanding of your responsibilities towards various stakeholders. And students should be included here, as can the university system within which you work. Universities clearly have a stake in you making money to help their bottom line, but they also have a stake in the university sector being seen as a superior provider of 'knowledge services'. They cannot get this kind of reputation if their academic staff are in the pocket of particular

commercial or political stakeholders and thus have no academic independence and credibility.

By now it should be clear to you that the notion of stakeholder networks is very far from unproblematic. For instance, how do you network, say, with the public or the poor or with poorer nations?

Who are the stakeholders, then?

It is time for a little specificity about who may be your stakeholders. Our list of possibilities may surprise you, for it is more inclusive than a list that might be inferred from the reductionist notion of a stakeholder implied in government discourses. We think that stakeholders can be usefully subdivided into four categories:

- Professional associations and unions.
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs).
- Business.
- Government.

The lines of demarcation between these may not be as clear as the list implies and you do need to be alert to the border-crossing and hybrid formations that exist. Additionally, some of these stakeholders may form umbrella representative organisations and these can provide fruitful networking opportunities. For instance, particular industries may form national or international groupings with names such as the 'National Council of Clothes Drying Technology Producers'. Some of these umbrella groups cover whole sectors. For instance, in the UK there is the National Council of Voluntary Organisations, the Confederation of British Industry and the Trades Union Congress. We will now look at each of these major stakeholder categories in turn.

Professional associations and unions

Professional associations include any association formed by a body of people practising a (generally white-collar) profession. Such associations are designed to protect and further the interests of that profession. We don't intend getting into a debate about the notion of a profession, but the people who generally identify themselves as being in a profession include chartered or certified accountants, registered

psychologists, literary publishers and doctors. Unions tend to be formed to protect the industrial rights of workers. While they are often formed by blue-collar workers, they are also associated with pink-collar work (that is, female-dominated work such as retail) and some professions (for instance, nursing).

You will need to identify which associations and unions are pertinent to your particular disciplinary or interdisciplinary space. You may be amazed at what you turn up once you start looking. For instance, in the field of school education you might find:

- Principals' (head teachers') associations.
- Associations related to school subject areas such as English or mathematics or knowledge orientations such as vocational education.
- Associations formed around age cohorts – for instance, the post-compulsory or pre-school years.
- Teachers' unions.

It can often be difficult to distinguish between unions and professional associations. Whilst associations may be more concerned with professional standards and knowledge and unions with the particular employment interests of their members, generally both types of group engage in both sorts of activities.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

This very broad term is usually taken to include those groups that are not part of government, business or professional associations and unions. They are sometimes also referred to as the third sector or even as civil society. Sub-groups here include

- Charities.
- Lobby groups.
- Social movements.
- Clubs.

NGOs are therefore a wide-ranging and eclectic group and it may be hard to differentiate between the sub-categories above. Generally, NGOs are not-for-profit organisations, although they may try to generate operating surpluses to use in furtherance of organisational objectives. NGOs may:

- Work for particular communities and subscribe to broad public-good imperatives, such as peace, public safety or child protection.
- Be advocates on behalf of exploited or vulnerable people, such as sweatshop workers or refugees.
- Maintain important public institutions such as museums, libraries and art galleries.
- Focus on vulnerable nations, such as those that are poor or carry high debt burdens.

Both social movements and charities may engage in substantial lobbying activities. At the same time, charities are increasingly engaging in 'social entrepreneurship' as a means of garnering the money and other resources necessary to achieve their charitable objectives. In working in such ways, charities are said to be 'not-for-profit' organisations. In other words the surplus that is produced through their activities is channelled back into their activities. Lobby groups may engage extensively with activities designed to promote sectional interests, especially corporate ones.

Business

'Business' is also a surprisingly broad and eclectic term encompassing a wide range of activities and actors, from small or micro-enterprises to multinational corporations and from primary producers (who run mines and so forth) to stock markets (which sit on gold mines). However, these are all organisations that have the maximisation of profit or 'shareholder value' as their *raison d'être*.

Despite their profit motivation, businesses may establish subsidiary organisations of an ostensibly philanthropic nature to work in areas such as the arts or sport. Such subsidiary interests are part of what is often called the corporate citizenship or corporate social responsibility work of business. The work of corporations in these areas may be genuine or thinly disguised self-promotion or legitimacy claims. The work that you do for business may be in relation to its 'core business' or such philanthropic sidelines.

Government

Government exists at a number of levels: local, state, national or federal. Government organisations tend to be elected and to generate the bulk of their revenue from taxation. Governments are generally

expected to be accountable to the general population. In addition, there are a number of quasi-governmental organisations that are either international (such as the United Nations) or supranational (such as the International Monetary Fund)

Things have got more complicated of late, as countries across the world, either at their own volition or at the behest of organisations such as the World Bank, have increasingly sought to apply what is often called 'new public management'. At its simplest, this means that governments have sought to become more like business in their principles and practices. For instance, the provision of education may now be called a 'business sector' or 'industry' and be subject to the same kind of accounting rules and performance indicators as businesses in the private sector.

Governments are often restructured when there is a change of political party or leadership. Indeed, such structures can change with breathtaking rapidity, and when they do, key personnel usually change too. New governments also try to distinguish themselves ideologically from the previous incumbents as a means of distancing themselves. Such distancing often involves a new linguistic repertoire and the labelling of previous repertoires as politically incorrect. This process may also involve distancing themselves from the academics who supplied services to the last government and who are known for their political alignment. Networkers need to keep up to speed with such changes and with the changes of ideology that accompany them. Such changes may require some fast footwork.

What can you do for or with stakeholders?

These various types of stakeholders may want to work with you in a number of ways. These include the following:

- Research, consultancy and evaluation projects.
- Professional development activities.
- Education and training activities.
- Participation in their governance.
- Involvement in their on-going activities.

We will now deal with each in turn.

Research, consultancy or evaluation projects

We discuss contract research, consultancy and evaluation in *Winning and Managing Research Funding*. As we say there, the distinction between these categories can be quite blurred.

The ways by which you might win such funded projects can vary. The funder might issue a general invitation to tender for the work or just invite a selected list of people and institutions to bid. If the funder knows you or your work well, you may simply be asked directly if you will undertake the work. If this happens you may be in a strong position, as the stakeholder may have few alternatives to using your services.

With contract research, consultancies and evaluations the funder may be clear about the specific amount of money available, may indicate a range within which the work will be funded, or may ask you to name your price in any tender for the work you submit.

The differences between consultancies and contract research in terms of the specification of work are not great. The contractor (the stakeholder in this instance) will set down the parameters of the work with varying degrees of specificity. The stakeholder may lay down terms of reference, with details of how the intellectual property issues will be dealt with.

In the case of consultancies you will certainly be expected to produce more than research findings. The stakeholder will want you to produce findings that allow you to formulate advice, make recommendations, propose a course of action, implement solutions and so forth. The funder may already have a rough idea of what the answers will be or what sort of solutions it wants, or it may alternatively give you a more open agenda. Make sure that these issues are clarified ahead of the work starting.

Evaluations involve an assessment of the merits or otherwise of an existing situation, programme or policy and can be either formative or summative. The methodologies of evaluations vary as widely as those of research. Such things as future funding, staffing, policy directions and so on can depend upon the outcome of an evaluation. Formative evaluations are designed to improve things along the way, whereas summative evaluations constitute a retrospective assessment of past performance. Summative evaluations can be contentious, as they involve the delivery of a judgement and can therefore 'make or break'. A summative evaluation may also be designed to improve things for future rounds of similar work by the stakeholder organisation, and the evaluator may therefore

be offered successive rounds of contracts as the work progresses. Often the results of evaluations are confidential and involve little hope of you being able to claim intellectual property rights (IPR) and thus to publish.

Here are some examples of the sort of thing you might be asked to do. Consider how you would categorise each one.

Professional associations and unions

The academic unions are very bothered about the heavy work load of university staff and the effect that it may have on their health. Neither has been well documented, even though there is enough anecdotal evidence about for the unions to be worried. The unions want to undertake a campaign to push for reduced work loads. Len is an active member of one of these unions and is offered a contract to gather data about how heavy the work loads are, how such work loads are manifested and the effects on academics' health. His report is to be used to lobby employers.

NGOs

The major football association in Murray's home state is concerned about the future careers of its players once they stop playing league football. Many league players finish their football career quite young and then wonder what work to do. This life transition is sometimes accompanied by psychological distress. The football association is also concerned about how to assist those young hopefuls who missed out on the big time, but came close. The association has employed Murray, who has a well known record of research in the field of player welfare and also in education, to identify the educational pathways they might follow and to make recommendations about the best options available to these players in various parts of the education system. His brief includes negotiating with the education institutions to see what sorts of fee reduction and entry concession packages they might be prepared to offer.

Business

Smithfield is an ailing locality whose economy is in recession, depleted by the privatisation and downsizing agendas associated with the government's restructuring of the power generation industry. As a consequence, many small businesses in the town have shut down. The town now has rows of empty shops and a depressed economy and population. The local business people have banded together to form a local urban regeneration committee. This committee has employed Steve, whose expertise is in the economic and social renewal of local communities. He has been asked to undertake an audit of the area's current and potential resources, to work with the committee over the next three-year period to develop future directions for business in the town and to chase new money for such opportunities.

Government

The government is concerned about children and obesity. The press has run scare stories about the number of young people who are seriously overweight, and various health and parent lobby groups have been pressing for government action. They have been asking the government to address the problem and also been scathing about the government's neglect of children. Although the government is unsure about the real extent of the problem, it has caved in to the pressure of 'public opinion' and funded the development of a three-month public awareness campaign directed at parents. This is about to go to air. However, the government agency is not sure about the extent or severity of the problem. It has advertised for a multi-disciplinary methodological team to evaluate the public awareness campaign. In addition, it would like this team to undertake a preliminary analysis of the extent of the problem and its causes as well as to recommend any necessary further action.

Professional development activities

Many stakeholder groups may seek professional development (PD) training for their managers, employees or members. They want and may

need to keep up to speed on important professional matters and/or want to provoke discussion and debate among themselves. And they may want to employ relevant university 'experts' to assist them. You may be able to provide just the expertise they need. Hence they may invite you to do such things as:

- Be a speaker at a conference.
- Present a seminar.
- Conduct workshops.
- Lead discussion groups.
- Prepare discussion documents or issues papers.

Below are the sorts of things the people we know have been asked to do.

Professional associations and unions

Ilse is a health education expert on the AIDS pandemic and has been invited to South Africa to talk at a conference of school principals. The incidence of AIDS in South Africa is very high. She will give a keynote address that outlines dominant patterns and trends and alerts the principals to current research about the impact of AIDS on the lives of children and their education. She will run a series of workshops with principals, identifying the sorts of issues they commonly have to deal with and developing practical strategies for responding to them.

NGOs

Rhonda is an expert on the issue of women's budgets and has been asked by a major international NGO to write a discussion paper for senior staff who have only recently heard about women's budgets and feel the need to know more. Once it is complete she will meet them, talk them though the issues and assist them to consider what the ideas in her paper and the issues it identifies mean for their next round of policy development.

Business

A major food company is concerned about the many recent examples of contaminated food products. It has in place a set of risk management practices, but worries they may not be adequate and that many staff do not take them sufficiently seriously. Robert has a lot of experience of helping companies develop their risk management practices. He is also up to date with the latest developments in the field. He is invited to present a seminar on senior management and then to run workshops for staff.

Government

The new government has adopted a 'tough on drugs' stance. Members of the Department of Education and Children's Services have been told by their political masters to work out what needs to be done in schools. Those who have received these instructions are not really on top of the issues and certainly do not know the latest research. They commission Jeanette to do a literature review for them which includes the 'grey literature' – that is, the reports and curriculum documents that have been developed and any evaluations of drug education programmes. Her time lines are very tight, as it has to be done 'yesterday'.

Education and training activities

Formal education and training of their members is likely to be a responsibility of several stakeholder groups. Whilst some will do it in-house, others will make provision through an assortment of partnership arrangements with universities and similar bodies. They may want you to be involved in the following ways by:

- Contributing expertise and perhaps writing material for their professional courses.
- Providing formal accreditation for their courses.

- Offering university programmes (short courses, diplomas, degree or postgraduate courses such as master's or 'professional doctorates') tailored to their needs in some way.
- Acting as an examiner for their professional exams.

Stakeholders may also be prepared to contribute to your teaching programmes, perhaps by:

- Offering lectures.
- Sitting on advisory panels.
- Assisting as examiners.
- Helping to formulate courses.

Here are some examples of the sorts of things that this work might involve.

Professional associations and unions

The national umbrella organisation for trade unions is concerned about falling membership levels and wants to start a major initiative to recruit new members. It appreciates that local union organisers may need to be trained to do this work. It approaches the employment studies unit of a major university and asks it to develop a range of distance training materials for distribution to local officials. The university accepts this offer and persuades the stakeholder to let the university run the programme and award a certificate to those who successfully complete it.

NGOs

A large US NGO that focuses on assisting poorer countries to develop their local economic infrastructure is concerned that its staff have insufficient expertise in economics, business and management. It therefore contacts the economics department of a major university and asks for some sort of training. The university agrees to stage a series of intensive short courses in development economics. Contact with the organisation and the students proves to be a useful network-building exercise for the researchers in the department.

Business

A large multinational corporation has just arrived in Botswana to set up a brewery. The managers know little about local employment laws. They approach the law lecturers at the university, who are happy to provide a diploma course for both managers from overseas and local senior staff.

Government

The senior staff in the department of social services are concerned about the difficulties experienced by social workers in dealing with their 'clients'. The social workers tell them that they feel stressed, stretched and also ill prepared to deal with the conflict that often arises between themselves and their 'clients', let alone with helping them to manage the conflicts in their own lives. Senior staff decide that a training programme is in order and approach the local university's department of social work and social policy to provide some weekend workshops on conflict, anger and stress management. The demand is so great that the university sets up a diploma course directed towards people in the helping professions. It invites senior staff in the department of social services to sit on the programme's advisory committee.

Participation in your stakeholders' governance

Many stakeholders want to involve people from outside their organisation in their governing bodies. This widens the basis of their expertise and provides a range of points of view. It may also add status and authority. University staff are among the outsiders they like to have involved. They might invite you to be:

- A non-executive director.
- On their executive bodies.
- On their sub-committees, especially the ones dealing with policy or development.

Here are some examples of how you might get involved.

Professional associations and unions

A large car workers' union was anxious to develop strategies for future development, especially in a climate of globalisation of the industry. It approached Darrel, a sociology professor who specialised in the study of the industry, and asked him to join the union's strategy working party.

NGOs

A small charity providing outreach support to street sex workers was growing fast but lacked expertise in the complex issues surrounding moving its clients on and out of prostitution. It asked Cindy, a senior academic in the social policy department of its local university, to join the management team of the charity as a volunteer in order to contribute her expertise. Cindy had an interest in the subject and was able to integrate her work with the charity into her research work.

Business

Luigi was conducting research on how companies hold their annual general meetings. As a result of his fieldwork he became well known in this field. A local but substantial company asked Luigi to join its board of directors so that he could contribute his expertise on communication with shareholders.

Government

Peter was an academic lawyer and an expert in social security matters. The government had a standing committee that was responsible for reviewing the operation of the law in this area. Peter was asked to chair the committee and produce an annual report for the Minister.

Involvement in your stakeholders' on-going activities

Outside input into their activities is crucial for stakeholder groups. There are many occasions and circumstances when this will be required and it will take various forms. You might be asked to:

- Be on their working parties or committees.
- Provide feedback on various sorts of documents.
- Consult on particular policies, programmes or practices.

Here are some examples of this type of activity. Our example is of just one man – Steve, a social anthropologist specialising in a remote South American country. When that country experienced a large amount of civil unrest the complete gamut of national and international stakeholders flocked to his door for assistance.

Professional associations and unions

Much of the civil unrest was associated with economic instability, high unemployment and inflation. Steve was contacted by an international congress of trade unions and asked for a briefing on the situation, as they were concerned about the plight of workers in the country.

NGOs

A charity with a large number of projects in the region asked Steve to come to an emergency meeting to discuss the likely prospects of stability in the country, as it needed to know whether it had to pull its workers out.

Business

The Corned Beef Company had major business interests in the same South American country and also contacted Steve, asking him to give it an emergency briefing on the impact that the civil unrest was likely to have on economic stability and the risks associated with its investments.

Government

Some academics on a field trip to the country were taken hostage by the rebels. The Foreign Ministry of Steve's home government contacted him urgently and asked him to join the team negotiating with the rebels.

In this chapter we have discussed likely stakeholders in some depth and considered some of the ways in which you might work with them. In the next chapter we deal with how you might go about this work.

6 How to Network with your Stakeholders

This chapter explains the ways that you might go about networking with your stakeholder networks, and offers some tips on how to begin, the things to do and the things to avoid.

How do you get to do this stuff?

You will normally be invited to do such activities or win the bids for them if some or all of the following things apply to you:

- You have got to know relevant people, developed sound relations with them and have reached an appreciation of their needs.
- Your work is in circulation in the public sphere and it is known to be what the stakeholder wants.
- You regularly appear in the press or in the publications read by your stakeholders.
- You lead a high-profile working life and are frequently seen doing excellent work in the places that matter.
- You get a good reputation for making an important contribution among the right people in the right circles.
- You belong to the groups who get to hear about such opportunities.
- You have influential friends and colleagues who put your name forward when names are needed.
- People are aware of your interests and availability.
- You respect those you work with as equal partners.
- You put together impressive tenders/winning bids.

Your value to stakeholders is in your special skills and expertise, and you need to keep these finely tuned. Stakeholders will not usually need you if you simply replicate what they have already – they want you to enhance what they have in some way or another.

Of course, particular stakeholder work will require particular sets of skills. For instance, you will probably be invited to prepare discussion documents or papers on particular issues if you are recognised as someone who is able to:

- Use their knowledge of the field and their networks to identify trends and patterns.
- Distil issues down to their essence, or 'cut through the crap' (as they say in less polite circles).
- Put new issues on the agenda.
- Provide a balanced but incisive report.
- Write in a style free from jargon and make your work accessible to non-academic readers.
- Deliver written work to deadlines and in good shape.

In sum, once you are well known in your space, invitations to do these sorts of activities will probably flow in quite regularly. But, if you hide your light under a bushel, this work will not normally come your way even if you are pretty good at what you do inside the university.

What if my stakeholders don't know me yet?

If stakeholders are to know that you exist, you have to do profile work and network in the places and circles where you want to be seen and known. And you will have to accept that it takes a while for visibility to translate into interest, acceptance, rapport, trust and reputation and then into invitations and successful tenders. Your early profile work might include such things as:

- Volunteering your services.
- Asking people for introductions.
- Contacting the press about your work.
- Placing articles in the right publications.
- Going to the 'right' events.
- Engineering invitations to the functions attended by the people you want to know.
- Arranging meetings with key contact people to discuss your work and how it links with their interests. Remember that first impressions often last, so keep the tips in Table 2 in mind.

TABLE 2 Do's and don'ts of stakeholder visits to your university

Do	Don't
Arrange a decent room and be free of interruptions	Meet them in your office and then take phone calls or answer students' knocks at the door while they are sitting there
Allocate sufficient but not excessive time	Make them wait and then squeeze them in for ten minutes between a lecture and tutorial
Make sure all equipment is working and have your materials and displays ready	Have them hanging about while the technician is called to fix the equipment and then when it is finally ready present them with half-baked ideas
Serve good coffee and tasty morsels	Take them to the canteen and let them buy their own coffee
Have some good-quality materials for them to take away	Let them leave empty-handed
Follow up immediately	Leave it to them to follow up or let so much time elapse that they have forgotten who you are when you finally call

Here are some of the techniques used by people to build their profile with stakeholders.

Bill's research expertise is in criminology and he is also involved in an ex-prisoner support and lobby group. He has devised a media strategy to gain public profile for the cause and for his work. He regularly puts out press releases on his latest papers. Indeed, if he is giving a paper at a conference he sends out the press releases two days before and includes his contact details. Usually these result in lots of media follow-up. The conference organisers don't mind, as it gives the conference publicity. However, they do get a bit upset if he spends most of his time at the conference giving interviews to the press rather than mixing with those who want to meet him.

Erin works in a medical health faculty. She has moved quite frequently to new academic posts in new cities. She has devised an entry strategy that allows her to quickly connect with her new sets of local stakeholders. When she arrives she finds out who the key players are, contacts them and arranges to meet at their workplaces. Her conversations with them demonstrate her interest and expertise in their fields and her value to them. She points out that she would be willing to sit on pertinent committees and to run workshops. Within the first few months she has usually presented workshops to the range of groups she needs to know. As they are seen to meet the stakeholders' needs there is inevitably lots of follow-up.

Paul works in a business school which provides plenty of short courses to cohorts of students from the large businesses that surround his campus. Paul starts to teach some of these students, thereby gaining knowledge of the businesses and what they need. He then visits the students at their place of work and they, as courtesy dictates, introduce him to their bosses. As a consequence, Paul has a legitimate opportunity to discuss with these senior managers what else he might provide for the firm. Because Paul's students really rate him – and tell their bosses that – he has a receptive audience.

Insider knowledge from the outside

Each stakeholder organisation will have its own culture and practices. These will impact on the ways in which stakeholders respond to you as a potential network partner. As such, it is absolutely imperative that you understand who you are dealing with. This can be quite a complex task. Getting to know individuals in the organisations is one way, watching them work and being a keen observer is another. A further way is to talk to people who are outside the culture but who know it well. These people will often be able to point to the blind spots of the insiders and also to the roadblocks you may confront in trying to get inside. Both insider knowledge and outsider knowledge are therefore essential to understanding how stakeholder organisations tick.

We can't cover the gamut of organisational cultures that you are likely to encounter among stakeholders. But, using the example of business, we offer some quick tips below on how you might resonate with such cultures. For more on this subject, we suggest that you read Schumacher's work, which is cited in the Further Reading suggestions at the end of this book.

- Learn what their needs are. Businesses are interested only in their own needs, not yours, and will fund only those things they see as meeting their needs. This means that you have to learn what their needs are and then represent them to the organisation in a way that also aligns them with your own.
- Make it clear in what ways you are a trained expert whose expertise is of direct and practical relevance to them. Show how you do/will meet their needs.
- Show that you also provide access to other expertise that is of value to them. For instance, potential employees are important to industry, and so you might bring with you your best and brightest graduate students.
- Winning work from industry may require you to make a presentation. And as Schumacher (*Get Funded!*, p. 129), says, 'pay close attention to the mode of delivery in the business world: slick, snappy and entertaining'. This means that, for once only, you can have a dispensation from our injunction not to use PowerPoint.
- Make it clear how you 'add value' to the organisation. You may be able to suggest some appealing new directions it had not thought of.
- You may choose to host an industry visit to the university. Make sure this is well prepared and that those visiting are treated as significant and respected guests.

What to do or not to do

We are going to return now to the five principal ways in which stakeholders might want to work with you that we identified earlier:

- Research, consultancy and evaluation projects.
- Professional development activities.
- Education and training activities.

- Participation in their governance.
- Involvement in their on-going activities.

We discuss some of the major do's and don'ts associated with each type of work in turn.

Research, consultancy or evaluation projects

In *Winning and Managing Research Funding* there is much information about stakeholder-funded research, consultancy or evaluation projects. We don't go into this again here, but would emphasise that you must have a good sense of the rules of each game. If you don't like the rules, don't play the game. Like contract research, consultancies and evaluations are very much on the stakeholder's terms and offer few opportunities for you to do your own thing. As in all academic work, however, you have a responsibility to pursue the work without fear or favour and to produce reports that are transparent (to make clear your methods and how you reached your conclusions) and robust.

Stakeholders may be anxious to achieve a particular result and may, as a consequence, try to steer you in certain directions. This can become especially fraught if your work gets caught up in internal political manoeuvring. At the same time, you may have some strong personal views. Despite all this, you must remain true to the best principles of research. Within the conventions of the consultancy or evaluation methodology that you are employing, your work must be able to be defended as robust on the following grounds. It must:

- Be recognised as a credible depiction of the situation by those well placed to know.
- Be 'at the highest level of achievable quality, methodological, theoretical and textual' as Paul Willis says in *The Ethnographic Imagination*.
- Provide a sufficient basis for others to build from in subsequent research or practical action.

It should be up to you who you choose to consult or provide evaluations for and with regard to what issues. Don't do it if:

- You cannot agree to the terms of reference.
- The amount of money is insufficient to cover the time involved or the costs.

- You have a major ideological disagreement with the stakeholder.
- You have a conflict of interest.
- You do not really have the expertise or the time.
- You are not willing to be honest with your stakeholders; in other words, if you are not prepared to provide a 'warts and all' report.

Professional development activities

Invitations may come from groups that are very experienced at bringing in outside people or from those who do not have a clue how best to do it. Whatever the case, you need to be clear about the following matters.

Dates and times

Are these firmly fixed or can they be negotiated to fit round your other commitments?

Place and travel

Is the venue easy for you to get to or is it an out-of-the-way place that will involve lots of time to get there, possibly involving time-consuming stopovers, for instance?

Expenses

Are they all covered? You will need to be specific about such matters as: travel (including taxis where necessary, tickets that enable you to rearrange your schedule and matters such as whether you can travel any way other than economy class); accommodation (including location, quality and the facilities available to support your work); *per diem* expenses if necessary to cover incidental costs whilst you are there; and preliminary expenses such as printing and copying.

A fee for you

Most stakeholders will expect to pay for your services. Local arrangements for academics vary somewhat. Your university may allow you to keep the fee yourself (provided that you don't spend too many days a year doing such work) or may split it with you (allowing you to have part of it paid as salary or to keep it for research funds) or it may want to keep it all (although this is rare, as it deters academics from doing such work).

The level at which the fee should be set can be difficult to gauge, though there may be guidelines from your university, union or association. It might be based on your salary (as a minimum threshold) or be set by what the 'market' will bear (as an upper threshold). The fee should be in proportion to the amount of time that the event or activity takes you away from your university work. If you are in doubt about what to ask for or negotiate about, ask your department head or research centre director. If you do have to share your fee with the university, or want to, then make sure that you ask for enough to leave you with a worthwhile amount – bearing in mind that the work may have other, non-financial beneficial spin-offs for you. You should negotiate with the stakeholder about payment not only for the event itself but also for your preparation and travel time. Don't be shy about asking for a fair amount. Don't be greedy, but don't be too cost-humble either. You should be aware that some stakeholders can and do pay huge fees to certain snake-oil merchants who operate on the KISS principle (Keep It Simple, Stupid).

Venue

Does the venue where you will be working have facilities for copying and printing and other resources necessary for you as a speaker? If you will be using technology such as PowerPoint, will it all work for you on the day and be compatible with what you bring along? Is the venue near your accommodation and will you need a map or transport to help you get between the two? Make sure that you have contingency arrangements to cope with the inevitable snarl-ups that will happen – for instance, make sure that you have the mobile (cell) phone number

of the organisers and that they have yours. Even if you will be collected and ferried around, make sure that you have the details of where you are supposed to be going and when. When it comes to the room itself, clarify what it is like and whether you can rearrange the furniture.

Their expectations of you

Make sure that you clarify well ahead of time exactly what the stakeholders expect you to do. They may want you just to do your 'spot' or they may want written materials too or copies of your presentation. You need to know what format the session will take and how you are expected to handle the time.

Audience

Get accurate information on your audience. This includes who they are, what they expect to get out of the sessions, how they have been briefed and so on. This will enable you to prepare more effectively.

Time-lines

Agree a clear timetable with the stakeholders with regard to things that they may need in advance. They will usually want a short CV, an abstract of what you will do and perhaps even a picture of you for their flyers/brochures.

Translation

If there are language issues involved with regard to the event itself, you need to sort out well in advance what kind of arrangements will be made. If there is to be a translator, will they need to have an advance copy of your presentation? If the event is to be 'Signed' for people with hearing difficulties, make sure that you are briefed on the best way of working with the signer.

Dress

Find out how formal the event will be and whether you will be expected to do things such as attend formal dinners. Take the right clothes for any activities and the weather.

Permanent records

Do your stakeholders propose to have the session video-taped or audio-taped? If so, make sure that you are content with this and how they plan to use the recording.

Undertaking professional development activities puts you under the spotlight. How well you do them will influence your chances of getting further invitations, not to mention your capacity to have an impact in your area and with your chosen stakeholders. So make sure you do it right.

You are also entitled to have expectations of the stakeholder. Here is a list of things that you should make sure of.

- Ensure that everything to do with all the matters we discussed above comes to you in writing and in plenty of time. Insist on full details of travel arrangements, especially if you are in a country in which you do not speak the language. If they want you, they have to make it easy for you to do your work. Do not consent to being treated like a second-class citizen, but don't be a prima donna either.
- Agree with your stakeholders how you will be introduced and represented to the participants. Make sure that any information they have (from your website or CV and so on) is accurate and up to date and that they use it properly and appropriately. To do this, you will need to establish an effective working relationship with the organisers. Such introductions are part of developing your profile.
- Make sure that your itinerary suits you. You will need time to relax or perhaps to meet people who can help you with your work. Ensure that proper arrangements are made to properly 'host' you so that you are not left floundering around in an unfamiliar social environment.
- Be certain about the payment methods for both your fee and your expenses. It is not usually a good idea to pay your own plane fare and then reclaim it, as that might involve you in a lengthy wait before you can pay your credit card bill.

- If the session is to be evaluated by the participants then ask for copies of the report. Otherwise, ensure they provide you with informal feedback so that you can improve for next time.

Some handy hints on doing professional development

1. Never accept an invitation on the spot. Always ask for the details and indicate that you will need time to think about it.
2. To mitigate against disasters such as lost luggage or theft, always have spare copies of the papers or disks you will need to use, perhaps in different bags.
3. Always keep a folder with all the details of the event, addresses, contact names, etc., on you. Do not leave home without it. Don't be over-reliant on a single electronic device such as a handheld computer.
4. Give yourself plenty of time. You don't want to arrive all breathless and flustered, and you do want to check out the room and the equipment beforehand.
5. Make a point of mingling with people and stay a while if you can. Don't be a fly-in, fly-out prima donna or one of those people who escape as soon as they have delivered their pearls of wisdom. This smacks of arrogance and points to lack of interest in the people in your stakeholder group. Bad impressions often last longer than good ones.
6. When you leave, don't slink out the door. Make a point of speaking to your hosts to thank them for the invitation. Talk positively about the event (remember, they will have put a lot of work into its organisation) and indicate your willingness to participate in future activities.
7. Do not give away the copyright of any papers that you have distributed and also ensure that all the material they take of yours is identifiable as such. Make clear to the stakeholders that they must ask your permission to use your material again. Do not let them have copies of your notes, even though many will press you for them. You may be able to make sense of them, but others may not be able to.
8. Don't let people press you into doing extra work after the event that was not agreed and paid for unless you can foresee non-financial benefits in such a goodwill gesture.

Hopefully, if you follow the above suggestions you will be successful in managing scenarios like those in the following stories.

Chris was sitting in his office marking papers when he got a phone call from the president of the local Rotary club, who seemed agitated. The caller demanded, 'Where are you? Why aren't you here? The meeting is due to start in an hour!' Chris had no idea what he was talking about.

An explanation finally emerged. During the previous semester Chris had had an informal chat with the president, who had casually invited him to come and give an address at the annual Rotary conference. There had been no communication after that as far as Chris knew, so he had assumed that the Rotary had decided not to follow though. The president assured him that a fax had been sent with the details on it; Chris had not received it.

The president tried to press Chris to drop everything, rush to the conference and give an off-the-cuff address. Chris was unwilling and unable to do so. He never gives unprepared talks because he knows that he is not good at them. Nor did he have a suitable talk on file that he could use for the occasion. So he refused, explaining that the fax had not arrived and that he was unprepared.

The president was furious. While he was willing to acknowledge that Rotary should have made personal contact with Chris rather than just relying on the fax, he could not understand that an expert could not just talk of the cuff. In the end Chris did not go and his relationship with Rotary has been frosty ever since.

Lesley spends her academic life rushing between commitments. While she is brilliant in her field and in great demand by her stakeholders, she is very disorganised in the ways she runs her affairs. She was due to give an address at a professional organisation's international conference, but five days before her departure date she found that she did not have a visa to get into the country. Luckily she was able to pull some strings and get one quickly to enable her to leave only a day late. Fortunately too the conference organisers were able to shift her opening keynote address to the final day of the conference. On arrival at her destination she found that she did not have all the details of her hotel and the conference venue with her. She had to call home at midnight local time and talk her rather aggrieved partner through the mess on her desk to find them.

Education and training activities

There are two main ways of providing education and training to stakeholders: either you become involved in their activities or they use your university as a provider to them. Each has its own requirements and complexities.

If you are involved in their training courses, this is likely to be a well structured activity very much under the stakeholder's control. As with many other things, they will know exactly what they want and will expect you to 'deliver'. You may, for instance, be involved in giving training to trainee professionals such as lawyers or accountants. The variety of possibilities here is endless. If your stakeholders decide to access your university to provide their members with education and training the university will obviously have a much greater degree of control over the process.

As with other sorts of stakeholder work (and especially professional development work), make sure that everything is agreed and confirmed between the partners and is fair to all sides. You must be:

- Absolutely clear about their expectations.
- Absolutely clear about which of these you can meet.
- In what ways.
- At what costs to you and thus to them.

If the education and/or training is to be provided through the university, make sure that your stakeholder understands the ways in which your institution operates with regard to teaching. Keep in mind that what may be common sense to you as a university teacher may not be at all clear to stakeholders. Much detail will have to be both negotiated and then spelt out in writing. This will include:

- Prerequisites and exemptions.
- Enrolment processes, fees and charges.
- The length and composition of the programme.
- Work experience or field placement requirements.
- Mode and site of delivery (face-to-face, on-line, on or off campus).
- Expectations of students with regard to attendance, participation, work load, assessment types and processes.
- Standards of work required.

- Access to university facilities such as the libraries.
- Student appeal procedures.
- Final awards.
- Regular processes of programme evaluation, review and revision.
- Membership of programme committees.

Things to avoid in the negotiation stage include:

- 'Special deals' that compromise quality just to get the contract.
- Seeking *post hoc* support from your university.
- Being passive. Stakeholders may think they know what they want but they may not know what else is available or possible. Take the chance to open up new options for them.
- Promising more than you can deliver.

Once agreements are reached, do not:

- Fail to honour the deal in any way.
- Start excluding the stakeholder from the processes.
- Drop any standard on the basis of special pleading, for instance by letting students proceed without the prerequisites or by constantly giving exemptions. Remember that they are enrolled in a university and are gaining a university qualification. So there should be no compromise on standards. If a programme bears a university badge it must be a standard bearer of university-level education.

At all times, after such matters are settled, the lines of communication between you, the stakeholder and the rest of the university need to be kept open.

Max was teaching on a professional doctorate in health. This degree was offered, on a fee-paying basis, to local students and also to a select group of students situated in another country. Max was disappointed to find that an assignment by one of the latter students bore no relation to the topic. It was simply a report the student had written for a government committee. He naturally failed the student's assignment and let the programme director know. The director

suggested that he might like to reconsider, given that the student had been instrumental in securing the enrolment of the cohort of foreign students, resulting in a handsome cash inflow for the university. Max gleaned from his conversation with the director that this student had been told that his doctorate could largely be gained on the basis of the reports he had already written before being enrolled in the programme. Max refused to pass the student and indicated in writing that he was most concerned about the ethics of the programme.

Involvement in your stakeholders' governance

Whilst being involved in the governance arrangements of stakeholders may bring many networking benefits, it can be quite onerous and time-consuming. You may have to sit through a lot of meetings, for example, that are of little interest or value to you.

In taking on such a position you should clarify your role's obligations and responsibilities. You need to be clear about such things as:

- The number and duration of meetings and the likely amount of normal business.
- Any likely additional responsibilities.
- The duration of your appointment and options for reappointment.

You might ask to see the previous year's minutes so that you can assess how relevant your expertise and experience are. This will also allow you to see how potentially useful the appointment is to your other work. If either is tangential then don't accept the position – it will be a burden and your reputation will suffer if you are of no use to them.

Once you have accepted a post, you must take your responsibilities seriously, which means:

- Attending all the meetings (no constant apologies, late arrivals or early departures).
- Being well prepared for meetings by making sure you have read the agenda and all the attached papers.
- Having some views on the issues raised rather than sitting there with nothing to contribute.

- Having some self-control over your use of linguistic space; in other words, do not hog the time.
- Contributing on the basis of your expertise and on other matters of more general interest.
- Volunteering for the occasional working party or sub-committee (but not too many).

Nancy was known among her immediate colleagues as very ambitious and as someone who was constantly on the look-out for new experiences to include in her CV. She was also quite a high-flyer in her field and well known in government circles. She accepted all the invitations but rarely attended the meetings. When she did, she was unprepared and her contributions were unhelpful, to say the least. While she still looked sufficiently good on paper to eventually secure a senior university management post in another country, she had a lasting poor reputation in her home state.

Involvement in your stakeholders' on-going activities

Academics often do occasional work for their stakeholders. It might involve informal and unpaid work such as feedback on draft documents or policies. Academics who do this sort of voluntary work often see it as a community service, a gesture of goodwill or as one way to build their networks and reputation. Such work may also be undertaken under contract. If the work you are doing is in this category you need to go to *Winning and Managing Research Funding* and read what it says about contracts. But what if you are volunteering your services?

We think it is worth insisting that a gift economy can still exist even in our 'user pays' world and we would not quarrel with your good intentions. However, it is worth considering to whom you might best offer your gifts. We think it is fine if, in moderation, you volunteer your services to those who cannot afford them or if you do the odd freebie as a 'loss leader'. This is provided you can reasonably find the time and if it does not distract or detract too much from your other activities. However, we know a number of very busy academics who do such unpaid work at the drop of a hat for stakeholders with plenty of loot. Perhaps they:

- Hope that it will eventually pay off in the form of research, evaluation or consultancy contracts.
- Are so flattered to be asked that they would not dream of charging.
- Do not know how to say no to powerful bodies.
- Do not know how to ask for payment.

We have also often seen such people passed over for contracts by others who charge like wounded bulls. If your stakeholders have reasonable amounts of money at their disposal, it is reasonable for them to pay you. Ask for advice at your university if you are unsure how much to charge. You should not provide such bodies with free services too often or for too long.

In this chapter we have looked at the practicalities of working with stakeholders in a variety of ways. This can be exhausting and complicated work and we would urge you to be quite controlled about what you take on and why. In the next chapter we deal with using dissemination networks.

7 Dissemination Networks

In this chapter we explain what we mean by dissemination, identify the main dissemination networks that are of concern to you and then focus on media dissemination networks.

Dissemination – what does it mean?

Dissemination means different things to the many different people and groups associated with universities. For individual universities, dissemination is associated with marketing the quality of the institution and thus enhancing its drawing power. It is about getting a reputation for teaching and research achievement that will bring in students, money and prestige. For your faculty or research group, dissemination is largely similar.

The stuff they do not want to 'get out' is called:

- Lies.
- Media distortion.
- Misrepresentation.
- Idle gossip.
- Bad publicity.
- Mismanagement by the PR staff, who, incidentally, have just lost their jobs!

For governments and 'knowledge managers', dissemination is associated with 'impact', which, in their view, can and must be monitored, measured and, where appropriate, rewarded financially. It's worth noting that counting dissemination and impact has become something of a fool's errand on the part of governments. Assessing 'impact' is very labour-intensive, potentially costly and notoriously difficult. The methods of counting involved are invariably

methodologically flawed and the whole emphasis on output and impact often results in a 'quantity over quality' mentality. It thus skews the whole academic enterprise in the wrong direction. Clearly dissemination is important, but not in the ways conceived of by the bean counters.

What do you want, really really want?

For an individual academic, dissemination is about getting your work, ideas and name out and about in the right places, among the right people and in the right ways. These people will usually include current and potential students, academics in your field, people in your stakeholder groups and more broadly the public. The places will include whatever academic journal and books these people are likely to read and whatever teaching and research venues they are in. You will also be pleased to achieve some media coverage of your work – provided it is reasonably accurate and positive. This is because you know that research and teaching are of interest to sections of the public and that they will want to hear about it. Most academics are not interested in fame for its own sake. Well, only a bit.

You may want any or all of the following:

- To be well known inside your field.
- Students flocking to your courses because you are acknowledged as a great teacher.
- Graduate students clamouring for you to supervise them, so you can pick those you really want to work with.
- To be in print in good journals and books.
- To be widely read and widely and favourably cited.
- To be respected and in demand among your stakeholders.
- Positive media coverage.

Overall you want to be a knowledgeable and skilled communicator who is able to achieve all the above with ease and panache. You want to be able to speak to various audiences well and in the right voice.

Not all publicity is good publicity. You don't want to be well known for such things as being:

- Pedantic and ponderous at conferences.
- The dreariest teacher in the history department.

- Crucified on talk-back radio.
- Publishing drivel.

So what are dissemination networks?

Simply, these are the networks that enable you to get what you really really want. There are three main types.

Academic dissemination networks

Much of what you need to know about these is in Chapter 3 and in *Writing for Publication* and *Teaching and Supervision*. Important nodes in these networks are:

- Academic journal editors and editorial teams.
- Editors of book series.
- Commissioning editors from publishing houses.
- Conference and special interest group (SIG) organisers.
- Research and teaching leaders in universities.
- Academics who peer-review for journals.
- Academics in key positions on, or who review for, research funding bodies.
- Academics who occupy key positions in funding councils.
- Academics who are understood as leaders in their fields.
- Student group leaders, and editors and writers of student publications.

Stakeholder dissemination networks

Chapter 4 contains what you need to know about these. Important nodes may be individuals or organisations and include:

- Editors of professional journals and newsletters.
- People in leadership roles in individual or umbrella organisations, for example their presidents, chief executives or general secretaries.
- People in key posts in individual and umbrella organisations such as heads of departments or people with particular responsibilities relevant to you.

- Civil servants and policy makers with responsibilities relevant to your work.
- Politicians.
- Office bearers and workers in relevant non-governmental organisations.

Media dissemination networks

In what remains of this chapter we will focus on these. They include not only print and broadcast media but also Web-based media (such as on-line newspapers and websites associated with radio and television programmes) and also alternative Web-based media outlets, which have sprung up largely in opposition to mainstream media and politics. The main nodes in these networks are:

- Journalists (staffers, freelance and those who are commissioned).
- Editors or their equivalent in Web-based media (particularly those responsible for special segments of their newspaper or programme, for instance the sport or food editors).
- Researchers for radio and television programmes.
- Media liaison people in your university (PR, marketing, press officers).

Media links and logics

We think that academics need to develop some understanding of how various aspects of the media work and should consider how best to share their ideas with the press. Fox and Levin, whose book *How to Work with the Media* is listed in our Further Reading offer suggestions that are very helpful in this regard.

Media profile

There are two ways to look at this: having a media profile and having the media profile your work.

To have a media profile means that you appear regularly in the press over an extended period and have become known to the press and the public. Usually it is because of your expertise in your particular field. This means that, when media commentary is wanted, yours is among the first names that spring to the mind of journalists.

It also means that the public will often associate the particular issue with your ideas. Some academics have such a media profile and have, for instance, come to host their own TV shows or radio programmes or have their own regular newspaper columns. They have become academic celebrities. You will, undoubtedly, know examples pertinent to your own country.

Of course, some academics have developed a media profile because they are involved in controversial research and have become part of a media war among academics or between academics and their university. They may lose their profile once public interest in the particular issue dies down. Others may have a media profile for all the wrong reasons. They may, for instance, have been caught plagiarising others' work, falsifying results, or 'soft marking' and have thus become the focus of critical media attention.

If the media profile your work, it means that your work is out in the public sphere along with your name. However, the ideas are likely to have a higher profile than you. You might for instance be part of a media debate on a particular topic and your research may be drawn upon in the coverage along with that of others. Of course, if the media constantly profile your ideas then you may well develop a media profile.

Most academics fit into this latter category. Most of you will not become academic celebrities, although you may indeed have a period of time in your academic career when your work attracts media coverage for a while. The rest of this chapter is mainly concerned with helping you to ensure that the media profile your work in ways that you feel comfortable about.

What's in it for you?

We have discuss the benefits of media dissemination of your work in *Building an Academic Career*. To summarise briefly, it is worth developing media dissemination networks because media coverage of your ideas provides you with the opportunity to:

- Educate the general public or your particular publics.
- Participate in public debate.
- Influence policy and practice.
- Be seen by the bean counters as fulfilling your obligation to have an impact.
- Enhance your status within your university and among your stakeholders.

- Acquire additional academic opportunities.
- Gain some coverage, which often leads to more coverage.
- Draw attention to work that your stakeholder may have tried to bury.

Patricia and Dale had done some work for the Canadian government on the impact of taxation on poverty. They returned their report to the government department on time and waited for it to be released. They waited, and waited, and waited. Eventually they became impatient and started writing to and calling the Ministry. They were assured that the report would be released in due course. In fact, on Christmas Eve the report was released on the Web, and only on the Web. Patricia and Dale decided that they would adopt two dissemination strategies: to give lots of conference papers at conferences normally attended by journalists, and to issue a press release drawing attention to their report. The press and other news media picked up the story and ran it for several days. The *coup de grâce* came when Dale was invited to appear on a major national talk show.

But it's no picnic

Having the media profile your ideas is, however, no picnic, and the disadvantages of working with the media include:

- Your inability to control what is said about you and your work.
- The excessive time it can involve.
- The disruption it can cause to your normal work patterns.
- Misrepresentation of you and your ideas.
- The usual lack of an equally visible right of reply.
- Public harassment.

Madeleine is an academic with expertise in psychiatry. She has been involved in assessing the impact of the incarceration of refugees on the mental health of children in refugee camps in Australia. She is shocked at the harm to children she has found and along with her

professional association has participated in media campaigns to promote the rights of refugees and the removal of children from the camps. She has received threatening phone calls and hate email, and the more visible she has become the more such mail has grown in volume and vehemence.

When the media contact you

Usually the media will want you to provide background or some quotes or an interview for a newspaper story or for the news on radio or TV. They may also want you to do radio talk back or to be part of a discussion panel on radio or TV.

If you have a media profile or are well known in your field by your academic peers or stakeholders the press may contact you to comment on a particular story they are pursuing. If you don't have a media profile your name will most likely have arisen from their conversations with others in your field. They may have little idea of who you are or where you are coming from. Or they may have the wrong idea. Often they are trying to provide what they call 'balance', or two sides of a story, and you may have been identified by your peers as someone who sits on one side of the fence. Very often the fence is of their construction and they couch the story in simple binary terms. You may find that you have been painted into a corner you do not wish to occupy. The scenario may go something like this.

When things go wrong

You come into work to find that your voice mail has several messages from a journalist. They include her contact details and a brief indication of the story line she is following. She has also sent you several email messages and left messages for you with any other staff member she has been able to reach. She makes it sound urgent, asking you to get back to her as soon as you possibly can, but without telling you when she will be available. When you do finally manage to reach her you find that:

- Her deadline is excruciatingly tight.
- She has already decided on the spin of the article.
- It is couched in binary or sensationalist terms.
- She has little knowledge of the topic but has a strong point of view.
- She wants to pick your brains about what you know.
- She wants to decide whether you and your opinions are newsworthy.

How do you, the media novice, usually respond when the media call?

- You get excited and wander the corridors looking for someone to tell that the press want to speak to *you*.
- You call back several times to find that the journalist is constantly on other calls or out of the office.
- The day ends and you leave your home number on her message bank and email.
- When she finally reaches you, you spend a good deal of time offering her the benefit of your expertise, explaining the complexities of the situation, referring her to other papers to read, and emailing her several of your own academic papers.
- You arrive early at the newsagent to collect a copy of the paper in which you expect to feature, only to find any one of the following possibilities. The article does not appear or is buried in the later pages. Perhaps you get a tiny mention towards the end of the article but with your academic title wrong. Perhaps you are misquoted or allocated a position in a debate which you do not hold. Perhaps you are made to look rather foolish or pompous. And so on and so forth.
- You contact the journalist but she does not take your calls or call back.
- You contact the editor to try to get a right of reply. He suggests that you write a letter to the editor.
- You resolve never to get sucked in again. Once bitten twice shy, you think.

But, the next time the press call, you perversely repeat the process.

We have all been there and done that. We could tell many similar stories involving radio and TV, but we won't because they expose yet

further the naivety of novice academics trying to get their ideas out through the press. Clearly things can go wrong and you need to be alert to the dangers. But this is only one possible scenario – not all journalists are like the one above, you can learn how to make the best of such opportunities and also to take some initiative.

When you contact the media

Some academics are very proactive. They take the initiative and do the following sorts of things:

- Contact the university press office with their latest news – a new research grant for example – and have the press office develop a press release for circulation.
- Contact journalists and indicate their availability on certain issues.
- When a particular topic is dominating the media they contact the editors and suggest a new angle.
- Write opinion pieces and articles about their research for the newspaper.
- Make calls to talk-back radio shows and offer their opinion.
- Ensure that information about any conferences or seminars they conduct is provided to the press. Some conference organisers use media liaison people to assist them to promote the conference and its main speakers.
- Take advantage of media coverage of conferences and introduce themselves to the journalists.

Other academics are less proactive but are sensitive to media possibilities. They do such things as:

- Leave a statement of their expertise with the university press office – just in case!
- Ensure that they feature in the regular university newsletters, knowing that the mainstream media sometimes pick stories up from them.
- Couch their conference paper titles and abstracts in ways that may entice media interest.
- If something particularly pertinent to their work comes up in the news, they behave more proactively for a while.

Jean-Paul worked in a particularly controversial and sensitive area. Generally he did not spend significant effort on getting his work into the media – partly because he did not want to become the focus of media attention. However, when the government decided to pass punitive legislation directly about his area of expertise, he decided, with his vice-chancellor, that he should contribute to the public debate. He drafted a press statement in consultation with his university's press officer and contacted some journalists he knew to be sympathetic to his point of view. He also wrote a feature article for a major French newspaper. As a result, he was asked to appear on television and radio programmes, both as a commentator in current affairs programming and in talk-back programmes. Although the media campaign that he was part of did not change the legislation, it did seem to have quite an impact on public opinion.

As this vignette indicates, sometimes working with the media can pay off in terms of media profile and coverage. The most common scenario is for this to be short-lived and followed by nothing at all until the next media opportunity arises.

However, sometimes attempts to get things into the media don't pay off and press releases are met with deathly silence. Why the deathly silence? It might happen because the news they want to convey is not considered newsworthy by the press.

What is newsworthy?

According to Bivins' *Handbook for Public Relations*, in our list of Further Reading, for something to be considered newsworthy to the media it must have most of the following features. In considering your work you should be able to answer the following questions with regard to each feature.

- Consequence. Will it be regarded as important to the reader or audience?
- Interest. Is it entertaining, unusual, controversial, exciting?
- Timeliness. Is it current, or a new angle on an old problem?

- Proximity. Can people connect with the ideas? Does it hit home, resonate?
- Prominence. Does it connect with prominent people, or institutions?

Additionally, the media particularly enjoy a good bunfight.

For years John, a grammarian, had been sending pieces to newspapers, magazines and radio and TV presenters about his work on the importance of punctuation. No-one had taken a blind bit of notice. Suddenly, when Lynne Truss's book *Eats, Shoots and Leaves* was published in 2003 and became a runaway bestseller, John found himself in huge demand to contribute reviews and other articles to the press and to take part in radio and television discussions about punctuation.

What kind of academics do the media really want?

According to media workers, academics are chosen for interviews because they are:

- Available when the media need them – a key element in managing the media successfully.
- Succinct.
- Relaxed.
- Reliable.
- Attractive.
- Able to translate professional language into something accessible to a particular media audience.
- Media-savvy.

But what kind of academics do the media really *really* want?

They want you to be all the above and preferably:

- Entertaining.
- Charismatic.
- Provocative.
- Controversial.

Many academics who shine in lectures and conferences may go to mush or suddenly speak gobbledygook when in front of a camera or microphone. Dealing with the media has not been part of most academics' professional or academic training and so it does not come 'naturally'. Any academic who wants to deal with the media successfully needs to ensure that they have been well trained in how to do so. Indeed, this has been included by the UK Economic and Social Research Council in its guidance about the preparation of research students for academic life.

Mediating the media

While we would strongly advise you to try to get some good training in how to handle the media, there are some pointers that we can offer here. Remember, however, that the media differ between countries and you need to check out what your local media culture and expectations are and adjust what you do accordingly.

First things first

If you want your work to gain media profile then you need to get the basics in place.

- *Understand what 'newsworthy' means* for the media and then apply the concept to your own work. Don't waste your own or others' time with stuff that is not newsworthy and can't be made to appear so.
- *Decide which media you want to target and do some research*. You need to have a sense of which outlets you can realistically expect to cover your work. Make sure you become familiar with them and their audiences. You need to know what is normally covered, how it is covered and who the usual journalists are. Keep in mind that it is important to get your name in newspapers because they are the prime source that other media use when preparing a story.
- *Develop a contact list.* This should include the journalists who tend to cover your field or who work for the outlets you wish to target. Highlight those whose reporting you like. You need to try to get to know these people and always have all their contact details to hand. More than that, it is worth cultivating particular

journalists you like and trust. Do them favours and they'll be more than ready to help you.

- *Find out what facilities are available in your university to assist you.* Most universities now have press officers and PR people (often trained journalists) who may help you in various ways. They may, for instance, write press releases about your work, provide you with their media contact lists, be prepared to provide media training to groups of staff or be able to provide you with media kits containing things like advice about how to write press releases.
- *Develop a short biographical statement and a longer media résumé.* Always have these on hand. Your short biographical statement should include the most basic details that you want the media to use in any coverage of your work. Your longer media résumé clarifies your expertise and experience. This can be given to your press officer, who will share it with the press when they contact her. Journalists often contact local universities looking for expert commentators on particular issues and they often go through the press office.
- *Practise new ways of talking and writing.* Media-savvy academics can demystify academic language and make difficult ideas accessible. They are able to speak to the specific audience of the media outlet they are using. In a sense you have to 'deskill and reskill' yourself to be able do this. Practise writing brochures, short articles or editorials for newsletters or for house and trade publications. These require a new sort of writing discipline.

Melissa worked in an area which, on the face of it, should have been very newsworthy. It was topical, controversial and cutting-edge – and included lots of human interest. But Melissa had great difficulty getting her stuff into the press, and on the one occasion she was on television she froze and was unable to speak without stuttering. Rather than just give up, Melissa went to see her institution's press officer, who organised a series of media training sessions for Melissa and other members of her department. These training sessions included some run by professional journalists from the print and broadcast media as well as some run by the press officer herself. In the course of the media training Melissa and her colleagues were:

- Shown how to write press releases and given the opportunity to practise doing so.
- Interviewed for mock radio and television programmes and given the chance to critique their own and each other's performances.
- Helped to think about the do's and don'ts of successful media appearances.

Following this course, Melissa had much more success in getting her research disseminated in the media.

Now put your toe in the water

Even in the absence of a good media training course, like the one that Melissa's press officer organised, you can help yourself prepare for working with and disseminating your research through the media. In order to do so, you need to do several things, which we discuss below.

Learn to nutshell. This means identifying the kernel of what you want to say – your core message, if you like – and then identifying a few key points that you want to get across in relation to it.

- Do you have a hook? Can you spin? Have you got an angle? These are what grab people's attention.
- If you have any compelling human-interest narratives that bring your story alive, remind yourself of them. It's best if you can 'paint' some vivid pictures that bring your story to life for readers, listeners and/or viewers.
- Try to develop some catchy turns of phrase that the press may latch on to – yes, sound bites.
- Can you address the need-to-know factor? In other words, can you explain why the topic is of importance to the media audience?
- Can you succinctly but convincingly support your claims?
- Can you give examples?
- Can you make any suggestions for action?

Take some of your academic papers and try to do a nutshell for the press.

Rehearse. Try your media persona and style out on some friends who are not academics or with your university press officers or PR people. Are your ideas newsworthy? Are you able to get your complex

ideas across succinctly and simply? Do you make sense to them? Are you engaging and interesting?

Try writing some media releases and backgrounders. Check how others do them. Share them with your press office or a friendly journalist and get feedback. Note that you must speak the language of the media you are dealing with and have a newsworthy topic and heading, supply information in descending order of importance and make available all contact details.

Start small. Gain your early experiences with local, lower-profile media that are not likely to be picked up by national or even international media. Your neighbourhood or university newspapers may be good places to start. As Fox and Levin who are listed in Further Reading, say, 'Talk to the local community before talking to the nation' (*How to Work the Media*, p. 12). However, be aware that the national press can pick up even low-profile media and you need to be cautious about what you do and don't say or do. Don't, for example, allow yourself to be photographed with a pint of beer in your hand – it will be just your luck that this is the very story and the very picture which are relayed round the country or the world.

Harvey, an American academic, researching issues of embodiment, had been doing body building for many years – in fact this leisure activity was what got him into his research in the first place. He won a major body building competition and he took the opportunity to place a story in the local media about his research. The local newspaper persuaded him to have a photograph taken in his office. He posed for them, wearing only his posing pouch and a mortar board, and the photograph was duly published in the local paper accompanied by a story that was less to do with his research than with his corporeality – as he would have put it. As if this wasn't embarrassing enough, the story was picked up by the national gutter press and the article and photograph were syndicated across the nation. Next, it was placed on a website and some of his colleagues overseas found it when they were looking for his email address using a search engine. Matters reached their apotheosis (or perhaps nadir) when it turned out that someone had pinned up a copy of the article and photo on the wall in the women's toilets next door to the (female) vice-chancellor's office. Dr Wallbanger was then summoned to the vice-chancellor's office to be disciplined.

Notwithstanding our cautionary tale, you shouldn't be deterred from trying to get your work known in and through the media. The idea is to practise and make perfect.

Now dive in the deep end

You are now well equipped to take the calls and the initiative and to do what is required with and for your media dissemination networks. Here are four possible scenarios and some handy hints.

Writing a column or story for the print media

This is the media form that comes closest to academic writing. Unlike other forms of media communication, writing your own article allows you to retain a significant level of control. Such writing may consist of opinion pieces, human interest stories or an account of your research for the newspaper or magazine audience. You will probably start by writing occasional columns but if you are good at it, you could become a regular contributor to a particular newspaper or magazine. Such pieces of writing vary in length, but are usually about 500–750 words. You should feel free to recycle your material. However, if you are in a country like the UK, which has a national press, you should not submit the same piece to, or publish it in, another newspaper. In contrast, in countries where newspapers are more locally or regionally based, like Australia and the USA, doing this is entirely acceptable. The key thing to think about is whether the two outlets are in competition with each other or not. Sometimes newspaper articles are syndicated nationally and even internationally, and it may a good idea to ask if this can happen with yours – always assuming that the subject matter would travel.

To maximise your chances of publication you should do the following things:

- Call the editor who oversees the particular area your work is about and discuss your ideas to find out whether they might be interested in you writing a piece. You could fax or email a background briefing about your work to the editor and ask if they are interested, but remember that they probably get even more emails each day than you do and are unlikely to take much notice of one from someone

they have never worked with before, so this is a strategy better used when you have previously written for that editor or which your press officer could use in trying to place a piece by you.

- Once the editor has agreed to commission a piece, you need to negotiate how much you will be paid for it. They will usually offer you a standard amount.
- Remember you are engaged in a process of translating your ideas to new audiences, so write as simply as you can. Do not allow yourself to run away with your beautiful complex theories such that your lay readers can't understand what you are on about.
- Always begin with a bang and with your most important point. People generally read the first paragraph of a newspaper article with some attention, allow their concentration to slip with the second and skim the third. Also, if your piece is going to be cut by a sub-editor trying to get it into the space, they like to be able to just cut off the last couple of paragraphs and don't want to do the work of rewriting to tighten up your language.
- Be provocative, or, at least, be different or edgy in some way. You want people to find your piece interesting, but don't falsify or misrepresent your research in order to do so.
- Be relevant and timely. If you keep an eye on the news, or if you know about particular events likely to happen soon, such as the publication of a major government report relevant to your work, you will be able to time your writing for the press to fit in with what is topical.
- Overall, be newsworthy.

Katie was a well respected academic and an experienced editor of a major social science journal. The editorial team decided to create an offshoot from the journal in the form of a more popular magazine. This required Katie to develop new editorial skills and to commission and write articles for a more lay readership. She learnt these new skills rapidly and soon became adept at journalistic writing, without abandoning her high academic standards. She then thought she would turn her hand to generating some opinion pieces for newspapers. Although her message is not at all mainstream – indeed, it might be regarded as quite radical – she has become expert at

constructing her newspaper pieces in such a way that they are entertaining, persuasive and thought-provoking. Initially, she wrote occasional articles for the state press. Now, however, the press commissions her to write articles on all manner of topics.

Answering a request for information for a newspaper report

Sometimes a journalist will approach you in connection with an article they are writing. You need to be on your toes when you speak to them and not be seduced or flattered into saying things that you regret later. With this in mind, you should pay attention to the following things:

- When you get a phone call, on no account should you spend hours giving the journalist background information or agree to talk to her on the spot.
- Ask about her deadlines, when she expects her article to be published and what format it will take. Is it to be a news piece or an opinion piece? If she is a staffer there is stronger likelihood that it will be published but also that it will be a news item rather than a more extended discussion. If the journalist is freelance, then it is worth asking whether they have been commissioned to write the article already or whether they are planning to write it in the hope of selling it to someone. In the latter case the chances of not getting published are the highest. If the journalist's work has been commissioned, on the other hand, it will almost certainly be published – although the editor will still go through it with the metaphorical blue pencil. Make a judgement about whether the time you will spend talking to the journalist is worth your while.
- Ask the journalist what angle she takes on the issue, what story she is trying to tell and what questions she intends to ask you. This is another point at which you must make a judgement about whether it is worth your while. If the line she is taking is completely alien or offensive to you, then don't proceed any further. Don't get taken in. Remember that journalists are very good at making you feel you can trust them – it is one of their key professional skills.

- It's not a good idea to simply brush a journalist off, as that can form a negative part of her story. You should always appear to be helpful and if you feel you don't want to speak to her, for whatever reason, give her the names of some other people she could speak to instead and say politely that you haven't the time to talk at the moment – for example, you have a class waiting for you and are going abroad tomorrow. As soon as you put the phone down, however, you should contact the people whose names you've given out and warn them that they may be approached.
- If you do agree to talk to the journalist, arrange to have her call you back at a mutually convenient time and ask her to fax or email you with her questions in advance.
- In the meantime you may want to fax or email an abstract of your relevant papers or the executive summary of any pertinent reports you have written.
- Fax or email her your biographical statement and your media résumé. (It's good for journalists to have this on file.) Make sure she is clear that you want to be properly cited and to have your institution and your official title correctly attributed.
- Then do your nutshell exercise. You will thus have your central theme and key points ready when she calls. And, of course, you have a hook!
- When she calls back, keep focused on what you have prepared, the contact time short and your conversation to the point. Do not take the liberty of making any off-the-topic, off-the-cuff, off-the-record remarks unless and until you know the journalist well enough to feel confident that you can trust her implicitly.
- If the reporter is asking you to comment on work that you have done with colleagues, make sure that she mentions them in her report. If they are not mentioned there will be heaps of negative fall-out for you and your team.
- Ask to see a copy of the article before it is published or at least of what she plans to use of what you have said. However, whether they are prepared to do so or not will depend very much on local conventions. In the UK, for example, it would be very unusual for a journalist to agree, while in Australia she will probably be happy to do it, given sufficient time.
- Keep a file of your media clippings. Put the information in your CV next time you update it (which should be a regular event – *Building Your Academic Career*).

For the last two years Jeff has been involved with a major research project together with senior academics from another local university. The project has recently been completed and Jeff has contacted a journalist from the higher education press in order to try to get some coverage for the project's conclusions. In the course of the interview, Jeff talks about the project with pride and ownership and, unintentionally, completely forgets to mention his collaborators. When the story is published, it inevitably appears as if Jeff did the project on his own. His colleagues are incensed at being written out in this way. They know that it must be Jeff's fault because the journalist writing the article specialises in reporting research and knows very well the conventions of attribution.

Accepting an invitation to go on the radio

Radio interviews are a very different genre from those in the print press or on television. Academics often think that they will be easy, but in fact they are really difficult to do well. This is because listeners rarely give their full attention to the radio and nearly always listen with only half an ear while they do something else – washing up, driving, ironing and so on. This means that you have to be particularly crisp and clear, not only in what you say but also in how you say it. Don't mumble or speak in a monotone, for instance. It also means that you have to ensure that you draw vivid pictures with your words, sound lively and interesting so that you catch the audience's ear and make your points easy to follow. The only way to ensure that you are able to do this when a microphone is stuck in front of you is to practise, practise, practise.

When you are asked to do an interview on the radio (or television) the person who contacts you will be the programme's researcher, not the actual broadcaster. There are a number of things you need to do for a radio interview, in addition to the relevant points about press interviews.

- Ask about the radio format and audience. You can also ask about payment – they may pay if you ask but may not always offer. If there is no payment then you can make your own decision about whether you want to spare the time or not.

- Find out whether the interview is to go live to air or is to be pre-recorded. If the latter, you may be able hear the tape before it goes to air. If it goes out live, the advantage is that no-one can alter what you say or take it out of context. On the other hand, if you mess up, there's little you can do to fix it. Conversely, in recorded interviews you can ask to re-record your answer to a question – though perhaps not too frequently – if you feel you haven't responded clearly, but your words can be cut and slotted into a context in which they seem to say something you didn't mean.
- Find out when the interview is to be conducted, how long it will last, who is to conduct it and where it will take place. It may be in the studio or down the line (that is, on the phone or in a remote studio). It may be interesting for you to go to the studio to see how things are done and good to meet the interviewer as part of your networking – but it probably isn't worth spending a huge amount of time and effort getting there for an interview that lasts only a very few minutes. Agree to go to the station or studio only for an extended interview or if you want to do so for your own purposes. In some cases the broadcasting company will send a car for you, and this can considerably ease your travel problems – always ask about this.
- Find out whether you are the only guest. If not, ask who will accompany you. If it is someone whom you do not want to be interviewed alongside, refuse the invitation or ask for another time slot.
- Ask for the questions and particularly for the first question. It is always comforting to know how to start. Radio interviewers will generally be happy to give you the first question in advance, but may not be sure how they will follow up until they have heard your answer.
- Nutshell.
- Rehearse if this is one of your first few radio interviews.
- If you are going to a studio, then, when you arrive, the sound technicians will mike you up, check sound levels and so on. Whether the interview is down the line or at the studio, if you are to go live to air you will be put on hold for a while as the technical staff wait to cut to you and as the previous part of the programme winds up. This allows you to get a sense of the interviewer's style. You will also know more or less what to expect if you have previously listened to broadcasts by your interviewer.
- Attend the interview well prepared and with a little time to spare at the start.
- Keep to your agenda. Don't be tempted to go down all kinds of alleys proposed by the interviewer. If you are asked a question that

gets you away from the points you want to make, you can respond by saying something like 'Of course, the most important point to remember is … ' and return to the point you want to make. Listen to how politicians do this when they are interviewed on news programmes – you may not want to emulate them, but they are usually adept at the craft.

- If a question does not make sense to you, then it's okay to ask for it to be rephrased. Or, perhaps even better, you could answer a question you want to have asked. For instance, you could introduce your answer by saying something like 'I think it is helpful to come to that issue from another angle.'
- If the interviewer is wrong, don't correct them automatically. If they have made a mistake that doesn't really matter – for instance, given you the wrong title – then correcting them not only makes you look pompous and petty but also gets in the way of what you actually want to say. Most news item interviews are for three minutes or less, and fifteen seconds taken up with an unimportant correction is simply a waste of time and a distraction from the real points that you want to make. On the other hand, if the interviewer's mistake is one of substance – for instance, they quote you as having said something diametrically opposed to what you believe – then it's appropriate to correct them politely, always taking care not to make them look foolish.
- Try for a killer ending. It is good to conclude the interview on your terms and in a memorable way.

Another radio genre you may be invited to participate in is the radio talk-back programme. This has some common features with the radio interview, but you will be responding to listeners' points, made in telephone calls, rather than to an interviewer. Such points may not necessarily be taken in any logical order and it may be hard to anticipate what kinds of question will be asked. Although calls are screened and callers may be interviewed briefly before being allowed on air, sometimes crazy and/or offensive people do get through the net, so you need to be prepared. Keep in mind what we have said about interviews, and also attend to the following matters:

- Be clear and firm about how you will be identified. The title Dr helps – though obviously you shouldn't claim it unless you genuinely have a doctorate.

- Do not accept the invitation unless you are quick on your feet and on top of your subject matter.
- Stay very focused. Do not allow yourself to be sidetracked from your main messages.
- Do not respond to attempts to bait or anger you.
- Be prepared to acknowledge that there are things you do not know but accompany the acknowledgement with an assertion of what you do know.
- Remain calm and courteous.

For our illustration, we return to the radio interview, since academics are more likely to be asked to do these than the talk-back programme.

Gisela, who studied the work of the German poet Goethe, was asked to participate in a serious arts programme. She prepared by going back to an academic paper she had written about one of his most complex poems and thought carefully about how she could capture her detailed, highly theorised argument for radio listeners. She summarised her argument in listener-friendly language, getting rid of as much technical jargon as she could. Then she chose some vivid illustrations from Goethe's writings and what was known of his life to inject into her argument. Finally, she made notes of the three most important points she wanted to get across and thought carefully about which of her illustrations would best support the points. After that she got her partner to interview her as a practice, using the questions that the radio researcher had primed her with. The actual interview was a wow – Gisela gained plaudits from people who had heard it, and it featured positively in the radio review columns of several serious newspapers. Subsequently Gisela has been invited to take part in many arts programmes on radio and, latterly, on television – indeed, it has become quite a nice little earner for her.

Tangling with television

A researcher may approach you from a television company asking for your help in a number of ways. They may want you to help them with

background for a programme they are hoping or have been commissioned to make. They may be looking for people they can interview on screen in some kind of documentary programme. Or they may be from a news programme and looking for good people to interview as part of an item of the day's news. In a few cases you may be asked if you will write and front a whole series – and some academics have done very well out of this – but we are not going to talk about that here, as it will apply to such a small minority of people. Television is different from the radio: in some ways it is easier but it is also often more daunting. There are a number of things you have to bear in mind when tangling with television.

- In interviews you should follow the same general principles as those outlined for radio and newspaper interviews – be crisp and precise, avoid patronising language and jargon, use vivid examples, and so on. Preparation is all-important here too.
- Ask where they will be filming. If it is to be in your own space – say your office – then check that it is tidy and have them film with an uncluttered background behind you. Clutter is really distracting on screen – and it's particularly important to avoid having your favourite Mickey Mouse poster or your Elvis clock behind you, which will both distract the viewer and trivialise you. The most difficult situation is a down-the-line television interview from a remote studio. In that case you will be in an empty room with a television screen and a cameraperson. Your instinct will be to look at the screen when your interviewer is speaking and then to turn and face the camera when you respond. Unfortunately, the television screen is invariably to the side of the camera and looking from screen to camera and back just makes you look shifty. The audience doesn't necessarily know that you're not in the studio with the interviewer, and this very natural movement of your eyes and head can make you look completely untrustworthy. So you must look at the camera – and do so as if you were engaging with the interviewer, not with a fixed stare. You really have to practise beforehand – though, even if you have, it is difficult.
- Think about what you are going to wear if you are being filmed. White shirts and blouses cause problems for the camera, as do checked and striped ones. If you notice a strobe effect on someone

when you are watching television it will probably be because they are wearing a striped shirt. By the same token, don't wear anything fussy. Simple, plain, quite dark and fairly formal is best. If you wear earrings, make sure you are wearing neat studs and nothing that dangles and swings. Next time you watch someone with dangly earrings on television, notice how distracting they are. Do wear make-up, as the lights make you look very washed out without it. The studio may offer to make you up, and you should accept the offer – although it looks hideously overdone to you, their make-up people generally know what they need to do to make you look reasonable on camera. If they don't offer you make-up, then it's worth doing your own and overdoing it – yes, even if you are a straight man. If you've never made yourself up before, practise or get someone who has to help you. If you're not sure whether you will be offered make-up or not, put it on anyway, as the make-up people can easily deal with it. Check with someone (make-up person, presenter or floor manager) that your clothes are tidy immediately before filming starts. If you are suddenly called by a television news researcher and asked to appear on their programme that night you may need to rush home to change or to the shops to buy something new – but it's worth it. If you are in a period when you know that you may be called on at any moment you should dress for television every day without fail.

- If you are asked by a researcher to provide background information about a programme they are in process of making, it's fine to talk to them for a limited period – you don't want to offend. However, such conversations can turn into very long and time-consuming affairs. Remember that television production companies have money to spend on consultants, so don't be shy to say up front that you can give them half an hour or so, but if it becomes more than that they will need to pay you (or your university) a suitable consultancy fee.
- If you are asked to take part in a documentary, then be very careful indeed. Often researchers will tell you that they are taking a responsible line and will be respectful of your work. You can easily end up spending hours being interviewed and have only a few seconds of your interview included, completely out of context. This can make you look and feel very stupid indeed.

Francis still cringes at the memory of his experience of being interviewed for television – and so do his colleagues and friends on his behalf. A television researcher persuaded him that they were making a responsible documentary series in his specialist area. Francis was quite experienced in dealing with the media and confident that he would be able to handle the situation. He spent a long time speaking to the television researcher and the producer in advance and then travelled a hundred miles to be filmed in their studio, spending nearly three hours there. When the programme was aired, he was devastated to find that the tone was trivial, vulgar and sensationalist and that his painstaking and lengthy interview had been cannibalised in ways that completely distorted his message. He appeared for a total of approximately one minute, split between several snippets showing his talking head, in a programme that lasted about fifty minutes.

Felicity was an experienced academic working in controversial areas of social science. She had established a good relationship with people in one of the big television stations. She wanted to do some research that she thought could form the substance of an interesting and important television documentary and pitched the idea to the TV company. It agreed to fund her to research and participate in the making of her proposed programme, and assigned a producer to work with her. This meant that she had a significant degree of control over the direction of the programme, and the producer took responsibility for aesthetic and technical questions. The documentary was not only successful as a television programme but played a significant part in changing the points of view of policy makers in her area. The academic book and articles that she wrote based on the research for her television programme were well received by her academic peers.

And finally ...

This book has emphasised the importance of networking for academics. We have taken you through academic, stakeholder and

dissemination networks. In all cases we have pointed to the benefits and dangers involved. We have also offered some practical strategies to help you become a skilled networker. If you take only one thing out of this book, it should be that successful interaction with other academics, stakeholders of all kinds and the media will be more likely if you regard all these people as professional colleagues and your networking as the give-and-take of professional courtesies.

Further Reading

Bivins, T. (1995) *Handbook for Public Relations*, Lincolnwood IL: NTC Business Books. This book is a practical guide for public relations writing and is aimed at both the professional and beginner. It addresses the key ideas of target audiences and newsworthiness for both print and electronic media. It covers writing media releases, newsletters, magazines and professional publications, as well as advice on media interviews. PR is about establishing and maintaining good relations with key publics (p. 2); summary of key processes to achieve success (p. 5, expanded on pp. 5–27); definitions of newsworthiness (pp. 33–4); questions to consider when writing for television or radio (pp. 40–1).

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (1998) *The Academic Career Handbook*, Buckingham. Open University Press. This book argues that networking is one of five key activities of the academic. (The others are teaching, researching, writing and managing.) The book bases its suggestions on the trend in academia towards highly competitive contract work. The chapter on networks is well researched and covers the different types of network relevant to academic careers, these being conferences, seminars and societies. Although the authors write primarily for a UK readership, the advice and research on networks are applicable across a range of contexts. This is a well researched book with extensive annotated bibliographies on academic careers and related areas.

Fox, J. and Levin, J. (1993) *How to Work with the Media*, Newbury Park CA: Sage. This book argues that academics can use the media to broaden the impact of their work, to bridge the gap between academic and non-academic cultures and to raise their professional status and profile. However, working with the media may also entail problems. Academics may find that it involves a disproportionate commitment of time and energy and may lead to a loss of credibility in the eyes of colleagues. This book contains practical advice on dealing with a variety of media contexts: interviews for the news; talk shows and feature programmes; print media and opinion columns. The authors stress the importance of image as well as content in visual media contexts. The book is complemented by

interviews with producers from electronic and print media who give their advice on how academics can successfully use the media. It also supplies excellent examples of media releases and media biographies.

Sadler, D.R. (1999) *Managing your Academic Career: Strategies for Success*, St Leonards NSW: Allen & Unwin. This book aims to assist early-career academics to plan and manage the main tasks of academic life. The book is written in the form of letters to hypothetical early-career academics, and as such locates its advice in the personal experience of the author, rather than an assessment of scholarly work done in this area. The book covers a broad range of strategies for early career academics, including time management, confronting bias, choosing referees, teaching and publishing. In establishing a personal academic network, through, for example, conference attendance, academics are forced to articulate their work over a range of contexts, and this process can be highly valuable for the researcher. One of the ways that academics can maximise the potential networks within their faculty is by establishing a publishing syndicate of four or five members who meet regularly to assist and encourage the production of articles.

Schumacher, D. (1992) *Get Funded! A Practical Guide for Scholars seeking Research Support from Business*, Newbury Park CA: Sage. Although this book is primarily concerned with gaining research support from business it contains much that is useful in terms of networking with industry. The book argues that successful partnerships depend on understanding business culture and the ability to communicate effectively using the dominant codes of that culture. The corporate perspective about research is informed by interviews with industry, and the university perspective is informed by debates around the role of universities and the ethics of industry linkage.

Winter, C. (1994) *Planning a Successful Conference*, Thousand Oaks CA: Sage. This book argues that organising a conference can be an excellent way of networking. The book lays out the basics for a successful conference based on the author's experience in addition to supplying some tips on promoting yourself and networking at other conferences. The author argues that there are four basic rules on planning a successful conference: put everything in writing; be flexible; plan thoroughly; expect the unexpected. Of particular importance for the conference organiser is the need to be clear about the purpose of the conference and how it will meet the needs of those attending. Chapters cover areas such as conference budgets, preparing programme schedules, promotion and marketing, on-site logistics and post-conference activities.

Websites

About PR dot com, http://www.aboutpr.com/. Has enterprise-oriented yet useful information on dealing with the media, writing a press release and other public relations concerns. One of a myriad of sites dealing with PR that can be found by searching 'public relations resources'.

Academy of Management, http://www.aomonline.org/. A leading professional association for management research and education in the US. Its on-line services include journal archives, conference calls and events and job placements.

American Association for Higher Education (AAHE), http://www.aahe.org/. A cross-disciplinary forum for academics interested in higher education issues. Contains information on conferences and related events.

American Council of Learned Societies, http://www.acls.org/. A private non-profit federation of sixty-six national scholarly organisations. Its mission is 'the advancement of humanistic studies in all fields of learning in the humanities and the social sciences and the maintenance and strengthening of relations among the national societies devoted to such studies'. Contains links to all affiliated societies.

Associations and Societies, http://www.health.library.mcgill.ca/resource/associat.htm#American. Maintained by McGill University, Canada, it lists associations relevant to the health sciences in the US and Canada.

Conference Alerts: Academic conferences world wide, http://www.conferencealerts.com/index.htm. Lists conferences by discipline or country. Includes conference information form Australasia, the US and Canada, Europe and the UK and South Africa. Also offers free e-mailed updates of conferences matching given interests.

Directory of UK Associations and Learned Societies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, http://www.britac.ac.uk/links/uksahss.html. A database managed by the British Academy with extensive list of UK associations in, for example, classical antiquity, modern languages, history of art and music, economics and economic history, psychology.

European Academy of Management, http://www.euram-online.org/aims.htm. Aims to be an open, international and multicultural European forum for networking and research in general management, strategy, corporate

governance, organisational theory, organisational behaviour and decision making. Also contains information on conferences and job markets.

Grapevine, http://www.sosig.ac.uk/help/gv.html#1. A search engine and recourse site for social science researchers to publicise information about events, career development opportunities and professional colleagues. Use it to find conferences, events, organisations and societies relevant to social science research in the US, Europe, UK, and Australia.

Intellectual Property Law Resources, http://www.magna.com.au/~prfbrown/ip_links.html. A comprehensive resource site for IPR-related information. Includes searches relevant to Australia, New Zealand, the US, Canada, Europe, Japan, Spain and the Philippines. Includes links to the Moscow Patent Bureau. and other IP information and news groups.

JISCmail, http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/. A mailing list service sponsored by the UK higher and further education communities, enabling members of any discipline to stay in touch and share information by e-mail or via the Web. The aim is to support topical discussion, wide collaboration and rapid communications.

Research Finder, http://rf.panopticsearch.com/search/search.cgi?collection=research. Provides an on-line gateway to find researchers and research capabilities in Australia's research organisations. Primarily targeted at researchers, investors and industry, both in Australia and overseas.

Scholarly Societies project, http://www.scholarly-societies.org/. Lists academic and professional societies throughout the world in the areas of arts and humanities, health sciences, business and economics and social sciences. Maintained by the University of Waterloo, Ontario.

Social Science Research Council, http://www.ssrc.org/. An independent, non-governmental, not-for-profit international organisation that seeks to advance social science throughout the world and supports research, education and scholarly exchange on every continent.

World Federation of Public Health Associations, http://www.apha.org/wfpha/about_wfpha.htm. An international non-governmental organisation bringing health workers throughout the world together for professional exchange, collaboration and action. The only worldwide professional society representing and serving the broad field of public health, as distinct from single disciplines or occupations. It enjoys official relations status with the World Health Organisation and maintains close ties with UNICEF and other international organisations.

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