# 9. APPENDICES

## A. Exploratory interviews: interview schedule

1. What is your current position in the organisation and your length of service?
2. What is your current job role (including structure, tasks & responsibilities)?
3. What is your previous work history (job roles & institutions)?
4. Describe the motivation for your move into your current position/motivation for a career in Personnel.
5. What are the key strategic decisions facing the university?
6. How do you think Personnel is perceived within your organisation? Why? Does this apply to the department as a whole or particular individuals?
7. What are the potential sources of power and influence of the Personnel department in your organisation?
8. How much does the Personnel department use IT in your organisation?
9. What is your experience of the level of IT skill and knowledge of Personnel people?
10. Do you have any professional IT-related qualifications/experience?
11. What issues do you think IT raises in your organisation?
12. Does IT impact on the Personnel department's role and relationships in your organisation?
13. Is IT affecting the department's power sources?

# B. Variables in previous studies exploring the strategic contingencies model

The concepts in the following table are generic terms that were adapted to the relevant industry sector and environment in each of the studies explored.

| Concept | Generic indicators |
|---------|--------------------|
| | |
| *INDEPENDENT VARIABLES (predictors)* | |
| **Determinants of power** | Contingency variables: <br> Extent of uncertainty <br> • demand for service or product <br> • supply of necessary resources <br> Coping with uncertainty <br> • number of strategies in place per key area of uncertainty <br> • type of strategies adopted per key area of uncertainty: <br>      o prevention <br>      o information <br>      o absorption (double weight due to immediacy) <br> • loss resulting from inability to cope <br> • the perceived need of each department to cope in general <br> Centrality of workflow <br> • perceived pervasiveness <br> • inputs from where - internal/external sources <br> • outputs to where - internal/external units <br> • frequency of inputs and outputs <br> • total pervasiveness (the extent to which the department is connected with and is dependent on information and workflows of other departments) <br> • immediacy (also referred to as task criticalness or control of strategic contingencies) <br> • speed of impact on final service or products <br> • perceived interdependence of departmental tasks in successfully accomplishing key organisational goals <br> Perceived substitutability <br> • individuals within the department <br> • individuals between departments <br> • individuals external to the organisation <br> • role variety <br> • difficulty in hiring personnel <br> • level of education required <br> • length of experience and training required <br> • current labour market conditions <br> • legal restrictions <br> • degree of outsourcing <br> • functions able to be carried out by others <br> • difficulty in replacing whole department <br> Routinisation <br> • rationalisation <br> • proceduralisation |

| Environment | Organisation size<br>Financial status (source of funding)<br>Subunit variables:<br>   •  number of professional staff in subunit<br>   •  number of other staff in subunit |
|---|---|
| Professional-isation | Level of formal education and training<br>Formal & legal requisites for practising |
| Information Technology | Extent of use<br>   •  requests for reports<br>   •  user log time<br>   •  number of transactions<br>Subunit specific applications<br>Networking applications<br>Other applications<br>Perceived change in workflow centrality as a result of automation |

| DEPENDENT VARIABLES (criterion) |
|---|

| Power | Relative to specific key issues in the organisation:<br>Participation:<br>   •  scope as formally defined in organisation documents<br>   •  stage of involvement:<br>        o  initiating<br>        o  providing information<br>        o  choosing the course of action<br>        o  implementing action<br>   •  net scope deviation (scope beyond that which is formally defined)<br>   •  net involvement deviation (involvement beyond that which is formally defined)<br>Position (structural):<br>   •  scope (number of issues covered)<br>   •  hierarchical status of department head<br>   •  committee membership<br>   •  share of budget received<br>   •  size of subunit staff<br>Perceived:<br>   •  weight (perceived amount of power relative to other subunits)<br>   •  scope (perceived range of power relative to other subunits)<br>   •  awareness of other subunits of power level<br>Contribution to organisational goals<br>Ability to obtain desired resources |
|---|---|
| Influence | Perceptions of level of influence on key organisational decisions |

Source: adapted from Astley & Zajac, 1990; Cavaye & Christiansen, 1996; Cohen & Lachman, 1988; Crawford, 1997, 1998; Crawford & Rice, 1997; Giroux, et al., 1986; Hackman, 1985; Hinings, et al., 1974; Homburg, et al., 1999; Huff, 1991; Jobber & Watts, 1987; Lachman, 1989; Lucas, 1984; Saunders, 1981, 1990; Saunders & Scamell, 1982, 1986.

## C. Pilot letter and questionnaire for Personnel departments

### Personnel Departments in Universities:
### a Study into Power & Influence

How much say does your department have? Can you influence key issues within your university? Do you find that information technology is changing the way you work? These are some of the questions I have set out to address as a result of my own experience in Personnel in universities, as part of my PhD studies at Cranfield School of Management.

I am contacting you as the Deputy Head of Personnel or HR Manager. You are the sole target group for the study, hence the results will be directly relevant to your situation. It is therefore important that you complete the questionnaire yourself. Everyone who returns a questionnaire by the deadline will receive a summary report of the findings of the survey, allowing you to see how your experiences compare with other departments across the country.

You may have already seen some information about the study at the UPA Conference last September in Exeter. It is now time to carry out the study, and I would be very grateful if you would complete this questionnaire and return it to me at the address at the end of the booklet in the enclosed prepaid envelope by .............. Most questions will ask you to tick a box from a list of possible options, so it will only take about 15 minutes to complete. All information provided will be treated in confidence and used only for the purposes of this study. Your answers will be anonymous in the final report which is produced, so please feel free to answer as fully and honestly as you can.

If you have any additional information that is relevant but not directly requested here, you are welcome to return this along with your completed questionnaire. If you have any queries about the study or the questionnaire, please contact me on 01234 751122, or by email at e.farndale@cranfield.ac.uk.

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP**

Elaine Farndale
Research Officer

Questionnaire

# SECTION I: The Personnel/HR Department

1. **Who does the Head of Personnel/HR report to in the university management hierarchy?**

   A. Vice Chancellor / Principal Officer ☐1

   B. Other, Please specify title _____

   *Please attach a copy of your organisation chart if you have one available.*

2. **How many people are employed in total by your university? Please state the Full Time Equivalent figure.**

   _____ FTE employees

3. **How many people are employed in the Personnel/HR department (including those in the Training and Development section if this is a separate unit)? Please state the Full Time Equivalent figures.**

   _____ FTE professional grade staff (e.g. officers, managers)

   _____ FTE other grade staff (e.g. secretaries, administrators, assistants)

4. **What proportion of the total annual staffing budget for your university is allocated to staffing the Personnel/HR department?**

   _____ %     0☐ Don't know

5. **At what stage in the university decision making process does the Personnel/HR department become involved in the following issues? Please tick all that apply.**

| | Initiates discussion | Decides action | Carries out action | Provides info | Not involved |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. University-wide budget setting | ☐4 | ☐3 | ☐2 | ☐1 | ☐0 |
| B. Top-level strategic planning | ☐4 | ☐3 | ☐2 | ☐1 | ☐0 |
| C. University quality assurance | ☐4 | ☐3 | ☐2 | ☐1 | ☐0 |
| D. Introduction of new degrees | ☐4 | ☐3 | ☐2 | ☐1 | ☐0 |
| E. Student recruitment initiatives | ☐4 | ☐3 | ☐2 | ☐1 | ☐0 |
| F. Pricing of teaching & research | ☐4 | ☐3 | ☐2 | ☐1 | ☐0 |
| G. Major purchasing decisions | ☐4 | ☐3 | ☐2 | ☐1 | ☐0 |
| H. Major staff planning decisions | ☐4 | ☐3 | ☐2 | ☐1 | ☐0 |
| I. Introduction of major new computer systems | ☐4 | ☐3 | ☐2 | ☐1 | ☐0 |

# SECTION II: Central Administration

Here reference is made to the various departments that are commonly part of the Central Administration. **If there is some discrepancy between department titles, please refer to the closest matching department:**
**Estates** (including Bursar's Office, Site Services, Purchasing, Facilities, Health & Safety, Security, Residential Services, Catering, Conferences, Events)
**Finance** (including Payroll, Research & Contracts, Enterprise)
**Personnel** (including Training & Development, Human Resources)
**Registry** (including Student Accommodation, Services, Admissions, Alumni, Examinations, Liaison, International Office)

1. **How easy would it be for others to carry out the primary tasks of the following departments if they were to close, either internally by others within the university, or externally by outsourcing or hiring consultants?**

|  | Not at all difficult | A little difficult | Difficult | Very difficult | Impossible | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

2. **Thinking about your university's mission statement, what type of contribution do you think the following departments make towards its achievement?**

|  | Minimal indirect | Some indirect | Substantial indirect | Some direct | Substantial direct | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

3. **In your opinion, how much of the work in each of these departments follows defined procedures and rules with little scope for variation?**

|  | Most | Quite a lot | Some | A little | Almost none | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

4. **How much influence do you think each of the following departments has in general over the everyday activities of your university?**

|  | Almost none | Limited amount | Reasonable amount | Great amount | Very great amount | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

# SECTION III: The Use of Information Technology

1.  **Which of the following functions does your computerised HR database /
    Information System currently have available?**

    |  | Yes | No |
    |---|---|---|
    | A. Run standardised reports | □1 | □0 |
    | B. Run ad-hoc reports | □1 | □0 |
    | C. Direct access for managers to run reports | □1 | □0 |
    | D. Direct access for managers to see employee information | □1 | □0 |
    | E. Direct access for managers to update employee information | □1 | □0 |
    | F. Employee self-service | □1 | □0 |

2.  **How frequently do you provide other departments with reports from your HR
    Information System?**

    | | |
    |---|---|
    | A. Service not available | □0 |
    | B. Never | □1 |
    | C. Occasionally | □2 |
    | D. Regularly | □3 |
    | E. Daily | □4 |

    **If you answered 'B. Never', is this because other departments run their own
    reports on employee data?**

    1□ Yes          0□ No

3a. **Does the Personnel/HR department have its own web page on the University
    website?**

    1□ Yes          0□ No

3b. **If yes, does the Personnel/HR department web page have facilities for applying
    for vacancies or courses on-line, or other interactive facilities?**

    1□ Yes          0□ No

4.  **How would you describe on average the extent of computer literacy and skill in
    your Personnel/HR department?**

    | | |
    |---|---|
    | A. Mainly novices | □1 |
    | B. Mainly users with limited skill | □2 |
    | C. Mainly competent users | □3 |
    | D. Mainly experts | □4 |
    | E. All experts | □5 |

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# SECTION IV: Respondent Details

*The following general questions monitor the representativeness of the responses received.*

1.　　**What is your job title?**

_____

2.　　**How long have you been working for your current university in your current position?**

_____ years

3.　　**How long have you been working for your current university in total, including in any other positions?**

_____ years

4.　　**How long have you been working in a Personnel/HR capacity in total, including in any other organisations?**

_____ years

5.　　**Are you a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development?**

₁❑　Yes　　　　　　　　₀❑　No

## D. Survey letter and questionnaire for Personnel departments

*Covering Letter*

### Personnel Departments in HE: a Study into Power and Influence

How much say does your department have? Can you influence key decisions within your institution? These are issues that I found interesting when previously working in Personnel in a university, and am now asking as part of my PhD studies at Cranfield School of Management.

I am contacting you as the Head of Personnel or HR Manager. You are the sole target group for the study, hence the results will be directly relevant to your situation. It is therefore important that you complete the questionnaire yourself. The UPA Executive has kindly agreed to send this questionnaire to you, and will be receiving a copy of the study findings. Everyone who returns a questionnaire by the deadline will also receive a summary report of the survey, allowing you to see how your experiences compare with other departments across the country.

I would be very grateful if you would complete this questionnaire and return it to me in the enclosed prepaid envelope by ............... Most questions ask you to tick a box from a list of possible options, so it will only take about ten minutes to complete. All information provided will be treated in confidence and used anonymously only for the purposes of this study and related publications.

If you have any queries about the study, please contact me by email at: e.farndale@cranfield.ac.uk.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP

Elaine Farndale
Research Officer

Questionnaire

# SECTION I: The Personnel/HR Department

1.  **Who do you as the Head of Personnel/HR report to in your institution's management hierarchy?**

    A. Vice Chancellor / Principal Officer      $\square_1$

    B. Other      $\square_0$

         Please specify title _____

    *Please attach a copy of your organisation chart if you have one available.*

2.  **How many people are currently employed in total by your institution? Please state the Full Time Equivalent figure.**

    _____ FTE employees

3.  **How many people are currently employed in the Personnel/HR department (including those in the Training and Development section if this is a separate unit)? Please state the Full Time Equivalent figures.**

    _____ FTE professional grade staff (e.g. officers, managers)

    _____ FTE other grade staff (e.g. administrators, assistants)

4.  **What proportion of the total annual staffing budget for your institution is allocated to staffing the Personnel/HR department?**

    _____ %      $0\square$ Don't know

5.  **At what stages in the corporate decision-making process is the Personnel/HR department involved in the following issues? PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY.**

| | Initiates discussion | Decides action | Carries out action | Provides info | Not involved |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Institution-wide budget setting | $\square_4$ | $\square_3$ | $\square_2$ | $\square_1$ | $\square_0$ |
| B. Top-level strategic planning | $\square_4$ | $\square_3$ | $\square_2$ | $\square_1$ | $\square_0$ |
| C. Academic quality assurance | $\square_4$ | $\square_3$ | $\square_2$ | $\square_1$ | $\square_0$ |
| D. Introduction of new degrees | $\square_4$ | $\square_3$ | $\square_2$ | $\square_1$ | $\square_0$ |
| E. Student recruitment initiatives | $\square_4$ | $\square_3$ | $\square_2$ | $\square_1$ | $\square_0$ |
| F. Pricing of teaching & research | $\square_4$ | $\square_3$ | $\square_2$ | $\square_1$ | $\square_0$ |
| G. Major institution-wide purchasing decisions | $\square_4$ | $\square_3$ | $\square_2$ | $\square_1$ | $\square_0$ |
| H. Major institution-wide staff planning decisions | $\square_4$ | $\square_3$ | $\square_2$ | $\square_1$ | $\square_0$ |
| I. Introduction of major institution-wide computer systems | $\square_4$ | $\square_3$ | $\square_2$ | $\square_1$ | $\square_0$ |

# SECTION II: Central Administration

Here reference is made to the various departments that are commonly part of the Central Administration. **If there is some discrepancy between department titles, please refer to the closest matching department:**
- **Estates** (including Bursar's Office, Site Services, Purchasing, Facilities, Health & Safety, Security, Residential Services, Catering, Conferences, Events)
- **Finance** (including Payroll, Research & Contracts, Enterprise)
- **Personnel** (including Training & Development, Human Resources)
- **Registry** (including Student Accommodation, Student Services, Student Admissions, Alumni, Examinations, Student Liaison, International Office)

1. **How easy would it be for others, either internally or externally (by outsourcing or hiring consultants), to carry out the primary tasks of the following departments?**

|  | Not at all difficult | A little difficult | Difficult | Very difficult | Almost Impossible | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

2. **Thinking about your institution's mission statement, what type of contribution do the following departments make towards its achievement?**

|  | No direct | Minimal direct | Some direct | Reasonable direct | Substantial direct | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

3. **How much uncertainty or a lack of information in their daily work do the following departments have to face?**

|  | Almost none | Limited amount | Reasonable amount | Great amount | Very great amount | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

**4.** To what extent do the following departments help other administration and academic departments in your institution to cope with uncertainty or a lack of information in their daily work, for example, by providing essential information or forewarning on problems?

| | Not at all | Limited extent | Reasonable extent | Great extent | Very great extent | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

**5.** How much influence do you think each of the following departments has in general terms in your institution?

| | Almost none | Limited amount | Reasonable amount | Great amount | Very great amount | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

# SECTION III: The Use of Information Technology

**1.** Which of the following functions does your computerised HR database / Information System currently have available? PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY.

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| A. Run standardised management information reports | ❑1 | ❑0 |
| B. Run ad-hoc management information reports | ❑2 | ❑0 |
| C. Direct access for managers to run their own reports | ❑3 | ❑0 |
| D. Direct access for managers to see employee information | ❑4 | ❑0 |
| E. Direct access for managers to update employee information | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| F. Employee self-service | ❑6 | ❑0 |

**2.** How frequently do you provide other departments with reports from your HR Information System?

A. Service not available ❑0
B. Never * ❑1
C. Occasionally ❑2
D. Regularly ❑3
E. Daily ❑4

* **If you answered 'B. Never', is this because other departments run their own reports on employee data?**

5❑ Yes        0❑ No

**3a.** **Does the Personnel/HR department have its own web page on your institution's website?**

1❑ Yes          0❑ No

**3b.** **If yes, does the Personnel/HR department web page have facilities for applying for vacancies or training courses on-line, or other interactive facilities?**

1❑ Yes          0❑ No

**4.** **How would you describe on average the extent of computer literacy and skill in your Personnel/HR department?**

A. Mainly novices                    ❑1

B. Mainly users with limited skill   ❑2

C. Mainly competent users            ❑3

D. Mainly experts                    ❑4

E. All experts                       ❑5

# SECTION IV: Personal Details

*The following general questions will be used to monitor the representativeness of the responses received.*

**1.** **What is your job title?**

_____

**2.** **How long have you been working for your current institution in your current position?**

_____ years

**3.** **How long have you been working for your current institution in total, including in any other positions?**

_____ years

**4.** **How long have you been working in a Personnel/HR capacity in total, including in any other organisations?**

_____ years

**5.** **Are you a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development?**

₁☐ Yes ₀☐ No

**6.** **Which of the following options best describes your institution?**

A. Pre-1992 university ☐₀

B. Post-1992 university ☐₁

C. College of Higher Education ☐₂

D. Other ☐₃ Please specify: _____

# E. Survey letter and questionnaire for other departments

<u>*Covering Letter*</u>

## Administrative Departments in HE: a Study into Power and Influence

How much say does your department have? Can you influence key decisions within your institution? These are issues that I found interesting when previously working in university administration, and am now asking as part of my PhD studies at Cranfield School of Management.

I am contacting you as the Head of your department. You are the sole target group for the study, hence the results will be directly relevant to your situation. It is therefore important that you complete the questionnaire yourself. Everyone who returns a questionnaire by the deadline will receive a summary report of the survey findings, allowing you to see how your experiences compare with other departments across the country.

I would be very grateful if you would complete this questionnaire and return it to me in the enclosed prepaid envelope by ............... Most questions ask you to tick a box from a list of possible options, so it will only take about ten minutes to complete. All information provided will be treated in confidence and used anonymously only for the purposes of this study and related publications.

If you have any queries about the study, please contact me by email at: e.farndale@cranfield.ac.uk.

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR SUPPORT.**

Elaine Farndale
Research Officer

Questionnaire

# SECTION I: Central Administration

Here reference is made to the various departments that are commonly part of the Central Administration. **If there is some discrepancy between department titles, please refer to the closest matching department:**

- **Estates** (including Bursar's Office, Site Services, Purchasing, Facilities, Health & Safety, Security, Residential Services, Catering, Conferences, Events)
- **Finance** (including Payroll, Research & Contracts, Enterprise)
- **Personnel** (including Training & Development, Human Resources)
- **Registry** (including Student Accommodation, Student Services, Student Admissions, Alumni, Examinations, Student Liaison, International Office)

*Please note:* The numbers next to the tick-boxes are for administrative purposes only and should be ignored.

1.  **At what stages in the corporate decision-making process is your department involved in the following issues? PLEASE TICK ALL THAT APPLY.**

| | Initiates discussion | Decides action | Carries out action | Provides info | Not involved |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Institution-wide budget setting | ❑4 | ❑3 | ❑2 | ❑1 | ❑0 |
| B. Top-level strategic planning | ❑4 | ❑3 | ❑2 | ❑1 | ❑0 |
| C. Academic quality assurance | ❑4 | ❑3 | ❑2 | ❑1 | ❑0 |
| D. Introduction of new degrees | ❑4 | ❑3 | ❑2 | ❑1 | ❑0 |
| E. Student recruitment initiatives | ❑4 | ❑3 | ❑2 | ❑1 | ❑0 |
| F. Pricing of teaching & research | ❑4 | ❑3 | ❑2 | ❑1 | ❑0 |
| G. Major institution-wide purchasing decisions | ❑4 | ❑3 | ❑2 | ❑1 | ❑0 |
| H. Major institution-wide staff planning decisions | ❑4 | ❑3 | ❑2 | ❑1 | ❑0 |
| I. Introduction of major institution-wide computer systems | ❑4 | ❑3 | ❑2 | ❑1 | ❑0 |

2.  **How easy would it be for others, either internally or externally (by outsourcing or hiring consultants), to carry out the primary tasks of the following departments?**

| | Not at all difficult | A little difficult | Difficult | Very difficult | Almost Impossible | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

**3.** **Thinking about your institution's mission statement, what type of contribution do the following departments make towards its achievement?**

|  | No direct | Minimal direct | Some direct | Reasonable direct | Substantial direct | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

**4.** **How much uncertainty or a lack of information in their daily work do the following departments have to face?**

|  | Almost none | Limited amount | Reasonable amount | Great amount | Very great amount | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

**5.** **To what extent do the following departments help other administration and academic departments in your institution to cope with uncertainty or a lack of information in their daily work, for example, by providing essential information or forewarning on problems?**

|  | Not at all | Limited extent | Reasonable extent | Great extent | Very great extent | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

**6.** **How much influence do you think each of the following departments has in general terms in your institution?**

|  | Almost none | Limited amount | Reasonable amount | Great amount | Very great amount | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Estates | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| B. Finance | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| C. Personnel | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |
| D. Registry | ❑1 | ❑2 | ❑3 | ❑4 | ❑5 | ❑0 |

# SECTION II: Respondent Details

*The following general questions will be used to monitor the representativeness of the responses received.*

1.      **What is your job title?**

        _____

2.      **How long have you been working for your current institution in your current position?**

        _____ years

3.      **How long have you been working for your current institution in total, including in any other positions?**

        _____ years

4.      **How long have you been working in your specialist professional capacity in total, including in any other organisations?**

        _____ years

5.      **Which of the following options best describes your institution?**

        A. Pre-1992 university          ❑0

        B. Post-1992 university         ❑1

        C. College of Higher Education ❑2

        D. Other                        ❑3      Please specify: _____

## F. Main study interview schedule

1a. How do you think the Personnel department is perceived within your institution and why?

1b. How does the perception of the Personnel department compare to other administrative departments, such as Finance, Registry and Estates?

2a. How would you rate the professionalism of your Personnel department? What measures of professionalism would you use?

2b. How does the professionalism rating of the Personnel department compare to other administrative departments, such as Finance, Registry and Estates?

3. How substitutable is the Personnel department in terms of others carrying out the role that it fulfils?

4. Which two of the following (where applicable) do you believe have had or are having the most impact on your perception of your Personnel department:

    a. the amount (or lack) of trade union influence in your organisation?

    b. the outsourcing of Personnel activities?

    c. the HEFCE initiative 'Rewarding and Developing Staff in Higher Education'?

    d. the devolution of personnel management activities to line management?

    e. the use of computerised Personnel information systems?

    f. the decentralisation of the Personnel department to Schools/units?

5. Please can you describe the top-level structure for decision-making in your institution, and at what point the Personnel department is involved?

6. Is there anything else on the subject of the power of the Personnel department that you would like to add? Anything specific about your institution or the HE sector?

## G. Coded interview transcript

See attached photocopy.

**(1a)** How do you think the Personnel department is perceived within your institution and why?

Reading your report, which I'll comment in that context, it raised some issues to think about that. I think, unlike some of the other departments, I think there's less sort of clarity of view of what is Personnel for. I think that it's clear that the Registry registers students, etc., Finance has a remit, and I think it's a confusion of roles that comes part through Personnel themselves and partly through a lack of transparency of the role of line management. That Personnel are not line managers and don't claim to be, and certainly it was something the Head of Personnel's predecessor kept banging on about was we are not line managers. Line managers manage, we can advise, etc. Yet at certain times perhaps with some of the less easy things there's a view that perhaps 'they can do that': I'll tell them how wonderful they are, they can tell them when they're not. I think that's partly lack of clarity of view. They do have a sort of remit in providing an oversight but it's not a management oversight; it's an oversight about giving advice on policies and procedures. Of course, if it's a disciplinary, a grievance or whatever, actually it's the line manager, our procedure states quite clearly, it's the line manager's role to take that. You might be advised by

influence

centrality

devolution

devolution

devolution

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Personnel, who might be present at meetings. But then colleagues sometimes get confused where Personnel might actually be advising the member of staff. To give an example, if somebody thinks the head of department is being unreasonable, they might go to Personnel. So Personnel might be saying, not supporting the member of staff, but just what they would see as facilitating a resolution to the problem. And the head of department says 'well, you say I'm the line manager, I'm line managing, what's it got to do with you?' So I think in those terms, they're just two examples of what could be seen as a lack of clarity of view, whereas with the more functional departments it is a lot clearer to people what it is they do.

**centrality**
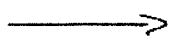
⟶ Can you summarise in one sentence how you think the department's role is perceived?

**other** As it is currently, and it has been different under each head, as it is at the moment it's the area of the college that oversees the **centrality** administrative process of the appointment of staff and the college's policies, procedures for HR-related aspects. Now, I sort of classify Personnel Managers in three types: there's the **other** sort of touchy-feely type who really like to get involved with how the staff are feeling **other** and morale, etc.; there's the staff development sort who really spend most of their time

concentrating on staff development issues, alright they have to do appointments and things; **other** or there's <u>the ones who concentrate on well let's get it right</u>, let's make sure we don't end up in any tribunals, etc. I think the current staffing we have is the third. I think that two personnel managers ago it was the first. <u>That's a caricature but it does tend</u> **other** <u>to reflect which particular aspects of the role they find most comfortable.</u> It is the same in the Quality Office. We're more interested in quality assurance, and we're more interested in quality enhancement, and that can set a focus but it's <u>more stark in Personnel.</u> I see the way the priorities are dealt with and the issues they will themselves take up are the issues they will say to line managers 'look, you're the line manager, you manage it.'

→ Do you think the department has a reputation as a whole, rather than just the head?

I think the department as a whole does, but ours is a small one. And <u>I think it very much</u> **other** <u>takes the lead the head gives it,</u> whereas if you've got a bigger one it's a question of. I suppose I'm saying it's easier if there's only another three to set the parameters, whereas if you've got twenty people, certainly by the edges of the empire you can't set the parameters because they're going in their own way. And it gives more scope for

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individuals to approach different people. With a particular thing, I'll go to that person because they're the hardnosed tell them what to do, and they're the touchy-feely, so I'll keep well clear of them if it's a touchy-feely person So whereas I think in the smaller department it is much easier, and it is generally, to set a view of this is what we do.

**size**

**16** → You were saying the remit of Finance for example appears to be clearer. Can you tell me how that influences the perception of the department?

**coping**

**influence**

**involvement**

Well, looking at some of the Finance, which your research so far shows, tends to come at the top because it controls resources. It's really got to sign everything off. It's got its nose into everything. It's giving monthly reports, it's involved, etc., etc. So it really is seen to be very much an all-pervasive influence across the institution. In terms of the Registry, again its remit is clearer. The Registrar pops up in more committees, the decision-making. Very few decision-making committees don't have the Finance Director, lots of committees have the Registrar there. Particularly in anything related to the academic work of the institution. It is the Registrar. And so for most colleagues in the institution academically, the Registrar is there guiding them, advising them, etc. So throughout the whole academic board and its decision-making processes, the Registrar

**involvement**

**influence** is there. The Personnel Manager isn't. So in fact in most of the decision-making processes which the academics see, the Personnel Manager is never involved. Now, the Personnel Manager is involved on some of the Governors' side, but the academics don't see that. The Governors aren't here. And so their perception is the

**influence** Registrar is omnipresent; the Personnel Manager isn't.
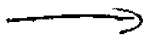
⟶
⑤ Can you describe how the decision-making structure works here?

I'll give you the official version. There's a Board of Governors. They run the institution, the majority external appointees, etc., but in reality because they're external appointees they're not responsible for the management of the institution; they really endorse issues that are coming up. The senior staff team,

**involvement** which is the Principal, Vice Principals and the Finance Director, meets weekly. There are no minutes; there is an agenda; and I think some would say that's where the major decisions are made. There's Planning and Resources Committee which is made

**involvement** up of the senior staff and the heads of school, the Finance Director, the Director of Information Services, that's serviced by the Registrar who is present (the Registrar services committees). That's relatively new. I don't think the Principal entirely wanted

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it. He can control it, he chairs it, what goes on the agenda and what doesn't. I don't think he entirely wanted it because it is all minuted, it's all in the public domain. And I think he has therefore less flexibility with it. And at the moment he seems to be giving it lots of things which to me seem to be entirely marginal relevance to do. So that might just be my cynical view of the way he's working it. When it was set up there was a great deal of thought on who should be on it, other than the non-heads of schools. There's five heads of school, senior staff, Finance Director. We put the Director of Information Services on, (the Librarian was very ...), because she has such a key role in supporting teaching and learning across the institution. There was the question of should the Estates Manager, the Personnel Manager, etc, be members? At that time it was decided 'no'. They should come along when it's items in their remit, because the danger was because it is at the end of the day an academic institution, and if the balance of the committee is not that, it can get distorted. We used to have what was called the extended senior staff, and it was all the heads of units, so there was the head of student services, head of Personnel, head of Estates, head of Catering and Conference, head of Housekeeping, etc. They actually are more numerous than

other

centrality

involvement

other

other

the academic heads of school, and so it can give a distorted picture, a distorted view, a lack of balance. It's the same constraints if I talk to colleagues who work in the health service, that they're there for patient care, the doctors and the nurses, yet again you could fill the place with all the other heads of what we call the service departments. And the balance can get wrong. The hospital exists for the patients. <u>We exist for the students</u>

**Non-sub.** <u>and a lot of those roles could be contracted out.</u> We don't here, but, we contract little out, but in other institutions that I know, they contract out security, one or two contract out catering. I know one institution that contracts out finance — the systems — the Accounts Department just provides the services. So you can, but <u>you can't contract out your academic — why are</u>

**Non-sub.** <u>you doing it otherwise, what are you existing for?</u> So I think that possibly reflects the make-up of that.

⟶  So the main bodies are the senior staff team and the Planning and Resources committee?

Yes. They are actually managing the institution.

⟶  Assumably that's the formal structure, although informally there's a lot more going on?

**involvement** <u>There's a lot more going on, particularly the role of the Chief Executive, and one-to-one meetings</u>

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he will have with lots of people, because
certainly here we have a very much
hands-on Chief Executive.

———→ The Chief Executive is the Principal?

Yes. In some institutions the Vice Chancellor
is known for not being there. His role is
to fly the flag out and about, raising
reputations. The Principal/Chief Executive
here is very much a hands-on person, so
the informal mechanisms, he'll have
more and more what I call bilaterals with
different people. And I would say the
decision management making in the
institution is actually in one-to-one
meetings with him.

involvement
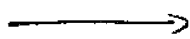
———→ How involved is Personnel at this one-to-one
level?

involvement

It depends what the issues are. In the
last academic year when there was a
measure of restructuring, quite a bit in seeing
that these people who sadly had to be made
redundant, because the Principal's objective
is to make sure nothing goes wrong at
the Board of Governors. That's because
what might cost him his job, is a big
problem with the Board of Governors. So he
wants to make sure absolutely there's no
unexploded bombs go off at the Board of

involvement
/coping

Governors if something happens. <u>So last year</u> <u>there was quite a lot of involvement because</u> <u>it was really that department that had to</u>

**involvement**

<u>ensure that when it went to the Board of</u> <u>Governors every 'i' had been dotted, every 't'</u> <u>had been crossed.</u> Not least because the Deputy Chair of the Board of Governors is a former senior HR professional. So he will make sure everything was squeaky clean. And so that was a key issue, <u>mainly in</u> <u>terms of process.</u> As always with tribunals, it doesn't matter how bizarre your process is as long as you keep to it. As long as there is a process and you've kept to it in the order you say you'll do it, then they don't really get behind that. <u>So this year I think was</u> <u>probably a lot less because the issues</u> <u>that are of concern at the moment are not</u>

**involvement**

<u>in that sense HR-related. They'd have more</u> <u>involvement as well if it were an appointment</u> <u>for which he had a personal interest.</u> So a head of school, anyone who reports to him, there'd be a much more one-to-one there. Such appointments, we haven't had any of those this year so again it wouldn't have been reflecting his personal interests in the way in which the institution is managed.
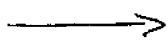
⟶
② To what extent would you describe the Personnel department as professional?

**professionalism** <u>Our HR department is. The two leaders are</u>

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<u>professionally qualified</u>, which was a requirement. When I came here it wasn't. The then Personnel Manager was a former Squadron leader who knew about 'the chaps'. He ran it like that and knew nothing. How we didn't get involved in tribunals all the time!

→ The world is changing!

I think it is. I think it's partly in institutions this size, but not only that. When I worked at another institution, a lot of the senior administrators were ex-forces. Four or five were, certainly the division I worked in, when I worked there, were all professionals, but previously all but one of them were ex-forces: Colnel x, Major y, Commander z. You saw minutes and there they were using their ranks. But our Personnel department now is, which it wasn't when I first came, they're all IPD, etc., which is <u>something I've tried to do, is to professionalise the support departments in the institution.</u>

professionalism

→ 
(2b) Are the other support departments equally professional?

'Yes. There's a Chartered Surveyor, Finance run by not surprisingly Accountants, etc.

→ What do you think is the impact of a

professional qualification on how Personnel can perform their job here?

**professionalism** Two aspects. One is <u>by obtaining their professional qualification we assume they know something about it. There's a basic knowledge there</u>, and you also assume that through, if they are in any way active with <u>professional updating, CPD</u>, that's not compulsory for them, but you assume you can soon find out and they know how to do their job. But if they're not reading what's happening particularly with the impact of legislation which is more apparent now.

**professionalism** <u>Finance I do know gets the same sort of impact, but it's not as upfront, you know, having a new SORP, a Statement of Recommended Practice, it's more an anorak's thing, it actually makes a big impact.</u> Risk management's very much a big thing for them at the moment with the joint cap returnable code, etc. But <u>that's much less in peoples' faces what they're doing,</u>

**centrality** <u>whereas changes to the working time directive, paternity leave, etc., it's perceived to have more of an impact across the staff</u>

⟶ You mentioned there were two aspects to professional qualification?

**professionalism** Yes. One is by having it you know that they've got a basic knowledge of how it works. And the second one is the <u>CPD</u>, the professional membership, that <u>they will at least be getting</u>

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**professionalism**

things that are <u>keeping them up-to-date</u>, and you can find out are they actually reading them. And the sort of <u>networks</u> that provides.

⟶ If I can just summarise: the role of Personnel here is to give advice based on the knowledge they're expected to have, but at the same time managers are expected to manage and only when a problem comes up to get advice from Personnel?

**coping**

Not just if they have a problem. <u>Generally to know that the advice is available. But it tends in reality they only do turn up when there is a problem.</u> The advice I remember with maternity leave is don't talk to them .... Don't start as the chances are you'll have broken the law in the first ten minutes.

⟶
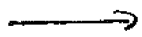
④ Which two items from the list do you think have had or are having the most impact on how Personnel is perceived?

- the amount (or lack) of trade union influence in your institution
- the HEFCE initiative, 'Rewarding and Developing Staff in Higher Education'
- the use of computerised information systems in Personnel
- the outsourcing of Personnel activities
- the decentralisation of the Personnel

department
- the devolution of personnel management
issues to the line

**devolution**

I think the decentralisation of the department in terms of making the managers manage. We need to do more here in developing line managers. That possibly reflects the fact that our particular HR department are not staff development people. Whereas previously they were organising a number of staff development opportunities. These don't, whereas the other ones did. And that decentralisation issue is people taking ownership. There is

**coping**

still a view that if it goes wrong, Personnel will sort it out. One issue that we have had is the fact that we haven't had a

**IS**

decent database. And that has been of influence in a negative way, in that Registry and Finance are always sending people things. Personnel aren't because they haven't got anything. So that... that's very much being perceived that they're not in that

**coping**

constant communication, whereas even if some people get their monthly print-out from Finance and file it straight in the bin, it is something that is happening. And by the time chasing them for certain things. And Registry does student records which are always wrong because the day you do them students have changed their mind. The fact that HR has not had this sort of information to share,

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to develop, to use, I think may have perceived. And also there is much more of a sensitivity about the data they've got. So the way in which it is promulgated is different. Financ can go around saying that budget's overspent, that's not whatever, that's not sensitive, but if you are producing a list of the following people coming up for retirement, it's got a different sensitivity.

**IS** _(margin)_

**trade unions** _(margin)_

But I'll also comment on trade unions. We have had here in each of the last two years an element of industrial action. One nationally, and that was just a farce, a one-day strike as part of a national dispute. But this year we had London weighting which is a little nearer to us. It still wasn't against this institution, but it was more closer to us. They know our influence on national negotiations is just slightly above zero. In London it's different. We could have more influence, still not a big player just in size or whatever, but nevertheless it was perceived to be a little closer. We did also have discussions with them last October, I'm talking about the academic staff union. UNISON is incredibly weak here. They, non-academic staff, its level of membership is very, very low. And its local officer is useless with a capital 'u'. But the NATFHE has a lot of membership, but again the quality of officers is poor. Last year

**trade unions** _(margin)_

**trade unions** _(margin)_

they refused to co-operate with us on two issues. When the local officer came down, she virtually told them off in the meeting. She told them they were being stupid and it was in their members interest to participate in these exercises because if they didn't they would have no influence. Management would be entirely arbitrary. And so that's from my point of view. We need that dialogue with the unions, which I think the previous head of Personnel was better at it than the current one. Developing good dialogue across the officers.
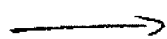
**trade unions**

→ Does very little local negotiation take place here?

**trade unions**

Very little negotiation. In fact they're out of their depth very, very quickly. We have to keep encouraging them to call in regional officers to actually... We know effective dialogue with the trade unions will actually help us and we don't get effective dialogue with them. And so as of last year, things started to move when we brought in the local official who focused.... I would say here the main union officers are the ones who were put in that position to help preserve their jobs, because they get a remission. So they're in vulnerable departments, so they themselves feel vulnerable and they get a remission to help the resources of that

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department, so they're not chosen on ability

→ So in general then it is just nationally-negotiated things that are adopted here?

**trade unions**

Yes. <u>We have very few local agreements. That's always been our policy.</u> It's been the policy of the Board of Governors principally because, not the previous one, but the previous Board of Governors, the Chair was the Bishop who had the role of liaising with what's called the Chair of the World of Work Committee of trade unions. So he was actually very supportive of trade unions and was very much, 'oh, we stick to national agreements' as a strategy. Also, in terms of our size, <u>we're</u>

**size**

<u>too small to enter much into local bargaining. The quality of the unions here are not effective enough to engage in local bargaining and to be quite honest, it saves us in those terms in resources for leaving it to UCEA</u>

**trade unions**

<u>and national bargaining. Also it can distance us from it - it's not us, UCEA and NATFHE come to the agreement, not us.</u> We didn't really feel part of it until ... so there we are then. And that can actually help at the local level which is why I was saying that London weighting was a little bit different because it was a little bit more personal.

→ Is there anything else you would like to

add to the discussion?

There is. I don't know how far it might be across the sector. I've been thinking since I read what you sent me, and I wonder whether

**other**  there is an element that Personnel departments in my experience are normally staffed more by women than by men? And I wonder if that may reflect; I wonder if it may be an issue. In the private sector, the majority of senior

**other**  jobs are held by men and not by HR professionals. It is complex. Even if you go through... and it reflects in the remuneration structure, because you are always now

**other**  looking at equal pay for work of equal value. But here, the Finance Director earns more than the head of Personnel. But you only need to flick through any of the national papers and when we looked at it, the gap pro rata reflected ... there was one looking for a Finance Director and a Personnel Director. The gap matched to almost one percentage point the difference here, which I thought was interesting

**professionalism**  I think that there's also a perception comparing it to Finance that it's easier to get a professional qualification in Personnel than it is in Finance. And I think from my knowledge of them, that's probably true. To become a chartered accountant is more difficult and more demanding intellectually and timewise than to get IPD.

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That's purely based on friends and relations of mine who have done both.

Of course, as somebody once said to me many years ago, it was the Chairman of British Aerospace: the problem with business in America is it's all run by lawyers, the problem with business in this country is it's all run by accountants.

other