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## 2. THE PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE

### INTRODUCTION

In the light of significant national and international policy<sup>1</sup> change impacting institutions of higher education and higher education's role in the emerging world economy (Friedman, 2005), it is unsurprising that new interest in the doctoral education field has prompted changing conceptualisations of what doctoral work is. At the level of programme development and provision, universities are increasing the range of practices and number of doctorates on offer. In different countries and in different ways, there are lively ongoing debates about the research doctorate. In a seminal text on the changing practices of doctoral education, Boud and Lee (2009) examine new and emerging forms of doctoral programmes in the UK, Australia and the US, ending with a call to readdress the general neglect of the students' perspective of doing doctoral work. Given the domain of academic practice that was traditionally thought of as most characteristically the purview of universities, the research doctorate in general, and the professional doctorate in particular, is now the focus of public policy and the gaze of governments (Costley & Stephenson, 2009).

The growing numbers of doctorate programmes has seen the emergence of a body of research and inquiry into new and different kinds of doctoral programmes (Boud & Lee, 2009) alongside the traditional doctorate, or PhD (Storey, 2013). The distinction relates to several principles of the professional doctorate researcher at the junction of practice and theory and is a central tenet of their coming to an understanding of their professional workplace or context. These principles can be summarized as identifying the professional doctorate researcher: (a) as a researching professional, and (b) as the research instrument, with significant implications for positioning and critical reflexivity (Lunt, 2002; Fink, 2006).

Current debates and contestations about the range and practices of professional and traditional doctorates are well documented (Scott, Brown, Lunt, & Thorne, 2009; Storey, 2013). Heath's (2006) research with Doctorates of Education suggests that how they are constructed relates to different values placed on knowledge which affect matters such as supervision. Studies have also explored the connection with professional contexts. A generic work-based professional doctorate featured the study of capability including its development and experience by Doncaster and Lester (2002). The importance, interaction and distinctive relationship between the three different settings – the university, the profession and the workplace – centrally

involved in the professional doctorate, was examined in a study of the role of environments by Malfroy and Yates (2003). In Australia, Maxwell (2003) explored the emergence of what was coined the ‘second generation’ of professional doctorates. Several studies in Australia, the UK and the US have compared professional and traditional doctorates (see for example Fink, 2006; Malfroy, 2005; Thorne & Francis, 2001; Boud & Lee, 2009; Streitwieser & Ogden, 2016). The research on professional doctorates (as the term is used in this chapter and across the volume) is understood as providing two insights: firstly, that there is a considerable growth of literature concerning professional doctorates and secondly, that how they are constructed related to different values placed on knowledge and the new knowledge economy.

There are powerful implications for the production and legitimation of *knowledge* within the doctorate worldwide (McWilliam, 2009); in this chapter, as with the book, we are not offering a critique or promoting an essentialist comparison as a kind of shortcut to highlight the dualities of EdD and PhD doctorates. Rather, the central purpose of this chapter, as with the other chapters in this book, and particularly those of Part 1, is to express the range, diversity and fluidity of different perspectives relating to, supporting and redefining the professional doctorate. In doing this, I will argue for a more nuanced view of ‘professional doctorate’ practices; an interconnected space and journeying between the researcher and the researched that can lead to a dialectical construction of knowledge and a relational stance that becomes transformative for ‘researching professionals’ (a term which is discussed later).

The increasing internationalization of higher education has also facilitated and encouraged the mobility of doctoral students and, with this, the expansion of traditional (PhD) doctoral programmes. The doctoral education literature is heavily weighted towards the traditional doctorate, in the sense of doctoral education meaning the ‘PhD’ path. There is a rich and growing field of research on doctoral writing pedagogies: from early work by Connell (1985) to recent studies (Kamler & Thomson, 2014); collections of narratives of PhD doctoral experiences (Lee, Blackmore, & Seal, 2013); and accounts of becoming and being a PhD doctoral student and the implementation and facilitation of doctoral education (Thomson & Walker, 2010). In all cases it is the traditional doctorate that receives most attention. Drawing from US and UK contexts, Storey (2013) illustrates a range of roles and settings that implement innovative approaches to the redesign of professional doctorate programmes and practices that differ “from a typical PhD programme” (p. xv). The rethink involves the adoption of ‘Critical Friends’ as advisors, facilitators and confidants, who reflect on questions and challenges that emerge during the EdD journeying. A range of EdDs are drawn and charted including online EdD programmes, scholarly practitioner doctoral programmes, EdDs in Educational Leadership and EdDs in principalship. I see this as especially pertinent in rapidly changing times where traditional conceptualisations of doctorates are increasingly being questioned.