A STUDY OF THE ROLES OF ACADEMIC MIDDLE MANAGERS OF COLLEGE-BASED HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THEIR ROLE ENACTMENT

By JACQUELINE ALLISON ECOEUR

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School of Education

College of Social Sciences

University of Birmingham

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Abstract

A study of the roles of academic middle managers of college-based higher education and the factors that influence their role enactment

College-based higher education (HE) is a sector within further education (FE). The FE environment is in a constant state of policy and priority change, coupled with substantial reforms and expansion for the inclusion of HE provision in the FE setting. In this demanding and challenging environment, academic middle managers in FE colleges lead diverse multi-disciplinary teams that frequently comprise CHE teachers and FE teachers from different vocational backgrounds. Research into the CHE context recognises its uniqueness and its contribution to widening participation in HE for under-represented, non-traditional students. However, research into the leadership of CHE teaching teams is limited and management of CHE is not a significant feature of middle management career development programmes. The role is complex and the diversity of teaching teams, creates tensions and challenges. For example, for CHE teachers, the expectation is that professional learning takes the form of scholarship, however in FE colleges, scholarship is not such a high priority. In addition, academic middle managers have an important role in the development of expansive learning environments where teachers can continue their professional learning. However, many of the academic middle managers lack a background both in teaching at HE level and personal scholarship. In addition, CHE is often overshadowed by their FE provision.

Based on multiple case study of five FE colleges in England, this thesis produces a detailed typology of academic middle managers' roles using data collected across their role set (senior managers, middle managers and teachers) by the use of semi-structured interviews and a survey supported by relevant documents produced by each college. Theories drawn from literature of organisational role theory, professional learning and leadership, particularly leadership for learning, are important in gaining insight into how middle managers approach their roles and how different factors shape their approach to working with their teams.

The thesis presents findings in two key areas. First, middle managers have both leadership and management roles which intersect and influence each other to shape the way that managers work with their teams. Second, two sets of factors impact on the decisions middle managers make in relation to their behaviours. The first set is made up of environmental factors such as national policy, college and HE cultures and the people involved. The second set comprises personal factors; values and beliefs; identities; experience and knowledge; and skills and qualities which guide how managers interpret their environment, develop collaborative cultures and promote an expansive learning environment for CHE teachers.

This thesis presents a rich, theoretically and empirically-grounded picture of these factors across the five case study colleges. The thesis highlights the importance of leadership by middle managers and advances understanding of the unique demands of the context and challenges of making an expansive learning environment for CHE teachers to participate in scholarship. This insight can inform policy makers who construct professional standards and the content of development and professional learning for academic middle managers in CHE. The study also emphasises the need for further research into the impact different vocational cultures can have on leadership approaches and the identity of middle managers in CHE, along with how their values and beliefs change over time.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my husband and family for their patience and support during my studies. I would like to dedicate the thesis to Evelyn Gillan whose commitment and enthusiasm for her own studies inspired me.

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full term
AoC	Association of Colleges
BERA	British Educational Research Association
BIS	Department of Business, Innovation and Skills
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council
CHE	College-based higher education
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
ETF	Education and Training Foundation
FE	Further Education
FENTO	Further Education National Training Organisation
HMIE	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council of England
HEI	Higher Education institution
HER	Higher Education Review
IfL	Institute for Learning
LEA	Local Education Authority
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LLS	Lifelong Learning Sector
LSIS	Learning and Skills Improvement Service
MM	Academic middle managers
MEG	Mixed Economy Group
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
OfS	Office for Students

Ofsted	Office for standards in education
ORT	Organisational role theory
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SET	Society for Education and Training
SMT	Senior Management Team
SoTL	Scholarship of teaching and learning
TEF	Teaching Excellence framework
UKPSF	United Kingdom Professional Standards Framework

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The central focus of this thesis is the leader for learning roles of academic middle managers (MMs) in colleges of further education (FE). Its emphasis is on MMs' leadership of teams of college-based higher education (CHE) teachers, the roles these managers enact and factors that impact on their enactment. It can be hard to understand the constantly changing, complex environment of FE, with its range and variety of courses, major reforms and differing, ever-increasing demands (Briggs, 2001). Government policy drives the expectation for colleges to respond to the specific needs of their local context (Widdowson and King, 2018) and widen participation for under-represented groups in CHE (Bathmaker, 2016). MMs have a pivotal role in colleges and are consequently useful to study because they need the skills to respond to these challenges and demands while at the same time fostering good teaching and learning (Widdowson and King, 2018). Because effective teaching and learning are the central objectives of colleges, it is paramount that colleges provide the conditions in which teachers can teach successfully (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2010). However, the quality of teaching in colleges has been questioned, with Foster (2005) describing FE as the 'neglected middle child'. Foster highlights the need to continuously drive improved standards and a capacity to improve. Teachers' professional learning improves their capacity to teach students (Simmons and Lea, 2013; Healey *et al.,* 2014); therefore, the provision of the correct conditions for teacher learning is an important part of MMs' roles (Fitzgerald and Gunter, 2006).

This study investigates the connection between learning and leadership. Leadership of CHE by MMs has not been extensively researched (Widdowson and King, 2018). The question as to how MMs promote teacher learning in a sector in which they may have neither direct teaching experience, nor direct experience of the scholarly activity expected of HE-level teachers, instigated the study. This investigation aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the roles of MMs in curriculum subject areas and in particular, the roles and responsibilities involved in the development, and promotion of teachers' professional learning. MMs' roles are affected by different factors, such as their own values and beliefs and college culture, and these factors impact on how these roles are enacted in leading CHE teams. The perspectives of MMs are key in this, but senior leaders and teachers also have their own perceptions of the practices and approaches used by MMs to support their CHE teaching teams, and their own perceptions of the factors that affect these roles.

This chapter outlines the study (Table 1.1).

Section	Content
1.1	Aims of the study
1.2	Context of the research
1.3	Introduction to MMs and the need for further research into their roles in CHE
1.4	Research questions
1.5	Rationale for the study
1.6	Brief overview of the contents of each thesis chapter
1.7	Outline of the research approach, methodology and methods
1.8	Description of the ethical conduct
1.9	The range of audiences: MMs to college senior leaders, who require insight into the connection between leading and professional learning and will be interested in the findings of the study

Table 1.1 Outline of the contents of Chapter 1

1.1 Aims of this study

This research is an in-depth critical study that aims to define the roles (functions, behaviours, and activities) of MMs who lead teams of teachers delivering CHE within FE colleges, and to determine what factors shape these roles. MMs occupy a central position in the increasingly complex environment of FE colleges (Collinson, 2009), leading diverse teams of teachers to offer high quality vocational and technical qualifications at both FE and HE level (Briggs, 2001). FE is in a constant state of change and the leadership role of MMs has evolved (Briggs, 2001); demands on all MMs in FE have increased (Briggs, 2004, 2007); it involves a fluidity that results in the role being difficult to define (Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2018). Learning is central to FE (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2010) and leadership has been shown to affect learning (Hallinger and

Heck, 1996). Much of the research carried out in FE is linked to leadership by a college principal and focuses on the issues arising from the increased external demands that followed incorporation in 1992 and the subsequent policy reforms (Lambert, 2013). In the context of CHE, there is additional research literature that explores widening participation (Bathmaker, 2016), curriculum development (Healey *et al.*, 2014) and scholarship that improves learning (Hobley, 2018; Lawrence and Hall, 2019; Lea and Thinnesen, 2014; Feather, 2012). More research is needed on leadership experiences in FE (Lumby and Tomlinson, 2000; Widdowson and King, 2018). There is a gap in the available literature about academic middle management of CHE and how MMs connect with, and influence, teacher professional learning; this gap concerns how managerial practices, processes and leadership contribute to MMs' ability to enhance teacher professional learning across CHE teams. This study questions what, and how, different personal and contextual factors influence these roles. My research aims to fill this gap and discover how MMs' leadership behaviours can alleviate 'a possible lack of "scholarship" skills and opportunities for research within the FE community that an academic in HE can acquire though participation within a research-based environment' (Hobley, 2018, p.58).

Leadership influences learning through strategic messages about sociocultural, structural and procedural factors in the complex, ever-changing environment of an institution (Hallinger and Heck, 2010). Since incorporation in 1992, when colleges became independent of local education authorities (LEAs), there has been continued pressures on college leadership, especially as further reforms are made in the FE and

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skills sector (Maynard, 1994; Coffield *et al.*, 2008; Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2018). These 'shaping' factors within a context make up the landscape in which MMs work. They impact on leadership and pose challenges to MMs in their role.

Managers lead their diverse teams of vocational tutors by interpreting the strategic messages into operational terms, actions and procedures that enable the successful implementation of college strategy (Briggs, 2001). MMs' interpretation of strategic messages is coloured by their values, beliefs, knowledge and experience within the culture of their departments (Hallinger and Heck, 2011). MMs, therefore, have an influential position (Burton and Brundrett, 2005) within the organisation. This position is the layer that provides an interface between the senior management team (SMT), and teaching staff (Briggs, 2001). Their importance is confirmed by policy and review documents that focus on how colleges succeed and can improve (Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) 2012a, 2014; Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), 2012).

Teacher professional learning increases teachers' capacity to teach effectively (Healey *et al.,* 2014). The aim of this study is to extend the understanding of leadership approaches, with a view to enhancing teachers' professional learning, and gain an understanding of what (and how) factors influence MMs' ability to carry out their roles under conditions that may be contradictory; for example, the differing evaluative parameters for FE, produced by Ofsted and HE, produced by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). Consequently, this study provides insight into how, by identifying the skills, knowledge and qualities needed to be effective leaders of learning, the talent

management of MMs can be developed, and effective MMs can be recruited. The study will be of interest to policymakers and practitioners who are increasingly interested in the means by which leadership impacts learning.

The research has produced a typology of the different roles that MMs enact. An outline of this typology is found in Table 1.2:

Role	Example functions
Leader for learning (Section 4.11)	Learner, advocate for professional learning, cultural developer, provider of professional learning opportunities, mentor, professional learning deliverer, quality improver
Leader (Subsection 5.2.1)	Role model, strategic planner and developer, people influencer, decision maker, inspiration, distributor of leadership
Liaison (Subsection 5.2.2)	External college representative, internal link, relationship builder, communicator, networker, collaborator
Team leader (Subsection 5.2.3)	Line manager, staff recruiter, team planner, team facilitator, performance manager, motivator
Curriculum manager (Subsection 5.2.4)	Quality controller, curriculum development supporter, marketeer, industry expert
Resource manager (Subsection 5.2.5)	Resource planner, budget monitor
Student manager (Subsection 5.2.6)	Problem solver, student recruiter, quality monitor

Table 1.2 Outline summary of key roles found in the study

An outline of the shaping factors and their different origins is presented in Table 1.3:

Factors	Examples of section or subsection of factors
College culture (Section 4.7)	Priorities and drivers
	Attitude to CHE
	Subcultures
	Attitude to professional learning
Academic structures and processes (Section 4.8)	National quality assurance processes
	Awarding body quality processes
	College processes
Contextual and environmental factors (Section 4.9)	Turbulence – constant change and reforms
	Government decisions and agendas
	Development of technology
People (Section 4.10)	Senior manager
	University links
	Other middle managers
	Teachers
Roles (Subsection 5.3.1)	See Table 1.2
Antecedents (Subsection 5.3.2)	Values and beliefs
	Knowledge and experience
	Skills and qualities

Table 1.3 Outline summary of the key shaping factors emerging from the research

The roles and factors interact, and models produced demonstrate how the interrelationship between them can inhibit or catalyse teacher professional learning in the context (Chapters 4 and 5). The context of the research is detailed in Section 1.2.

1.2 Context of the research

Context has an influence on leadership and management and so it is important to understand the factors within the context (Morgenson *et al.*, 2010). CHE has distinctive characteristics - which includes policy history, students, courses, and teachers - within the Life-long Learning Sector (LLS). These shape leaders' behaviour and decisions (Hallinger and Heck, 2010), and are developed in this section. CHE is less studied than other portions of the FE sector and is consequently a less well understood context (Widdowson and King, 2018).

The LLS in the UK is large, varied, and extensive, with 1,290 providers (Ofsted, 2015). Within this sector, there are 257 general FE colleges, which provide ever-diversifying academic, professional, and vocational qualifications taken after post-16 education by 2.2 million people in the academic year 2018-19 (Association of Colleges (AoC), 2019). These qualifications include HE level qualifications. A traditional view was that HE courses were provided by HE institutions (HEIs) – universities. In fact, FE colleges have been delivering HE courses since the early 1950s (Feather, 2010). In CHE, the two sectors – HE and FE – have merged to form a new college-based hybrid that focuses on the needs of local students and local employers (Widdowson and King, 2018). The term 'dual sector' or 'mixed economy' is used for CHE (Bathmaker *et al.*, 2008; Mixed Economy Group (MEG), 2019), and it is affected by the dual influences of both FE and HE (Simmons and Lea, 2013). Of the 257 colleges recognised by the AoC, 204 provide undergraduate

and postgraduate HE courses for 149,000 students, alongside other students, and courses. This represented approximately 11% of the undergraduate population. A desire to increase diversity and the number of higher-level skilled workers, coupled with increased competition as a result of the removal of the number restrictions for HE, have led to more colleges delivering CHE courses (Lea, 2014a). This has attracted more students from non-traditional backgrounds to HE.

The students are usually recruited within the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) that is within a 15-mile radius of a college. CHE students are significantly more likely to study part-time (approximately 50% compared with only 25% of those in HEIs) and usually have commitments outside their studies, such as families and work. CHE students tend to be older; 50% are aged 25 plus compared with 29% in HEIs. CHE students are more likely to be first generation participants in HE (Education and Training Foundation (ETF), 2016). The CHE population has been influenced by policy change.

Since 1992, there has been a steady stream of policy documents that have moulded the FE sector. Some of them highlighted a commitment to widening participation and were driven by an employability agenda in HE, for example the Dearing Report (1997) and *The Future of Higher Education* White Paper (Department for Education and Skill (DfES), 2003). The contribution of FE to the widening participation in HE through collaboration and partnership with HEIs was recognised (Parry and Thompson, 2002; Bathmaker, 2016). In 2007, the Learning and Skills Act enabled colleges to apply for the power to award degrees. 'A dual mandate for adult vocational education' (BIS, 2015) aimed to help achieve parity between academic and vocational routes. Higher and degree

apprenticeships were highlighted in the 2017 Higher Education and Research Act (Government legislation, 2017).

Some of the key influential policy shifts since incorporation in 1993 are briefly described below. The Further and Higher Education Act in 1992 resulted in the incorporation of FE colleges in 1993. In 1997, the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education Dearing Report referred to FE colleges' special mission to provide sub-degree qualifications (Dearing, 1997). Following the Dearing Report (1997), tuition fees were introduced, and HE was expanded with a focus on widening participation. The profile of CHE was expected to increase with a growing demand for flexible and part-time delivery, and demands for a skilled work force (Rapley, 2012). These all have an influence on the leadership and management of colleges (Hallinger and Heck, 2010) and are thus important for this study.

In 2010, the then coalition government set out their vision for skills in a reform plan for FE and the skills sector. This plan, *Skills for Sustainable Growth: Strategy document* (BIS, 2010) indicated the need for colleges to be able to respond flexibly to the needs of business and learners while improving quality and tackling underperformance. These policy changes point towards a perceived change in views about the purpose of education. *New Challenges, New Changes* (BIS, 2011) emphasised the sector's accountability to the taxpayer and its responsibility to contribute to the recovery of the national economy. The Lingfield Report (2012) reviewed professionalism in FE, commenting on the diversity of the sector while identifying its five aims (see Table 1.4).

Aims for the FE sector
Remedial FE, redressing the shortcomings of schooling (described in the Wolf Report and elsewhere)
Community FE, offering lifelong learning opportunities to local people, with benefits to their health, longevity, and well-being, as well as continuing education
Vocational FE, teaching occupational skills
Academic courses up to level 3 taught in some colleges
HE studies

Table 1.4 Summary of Lingfield's five aims for the FE sector (Lingfield 2012, p.2)

In September 2013, the legislative requirement for FE teachers to be qualified in teaching as well as their vocational area was revoked (LSIS, 2013). FE teaching qualifications were retained but reviewed and renamed at the same time as their revocation. Retaining but revoking these qualifications are contradictory actions and potentially caused confusion and reinforced Coates *et al.*'s (2013) assertion that leadership is required to be capable of responding to change in ambiguous environments.

The provision of CHE differs from that of universities. The emphasis is on higher technical skills. CHE qualifications have some unique characteristics in terms of delivery; for example, they involve short cycles, are employer-influenced and have work-based assessments with an application of theory to practice (AoC, 2010). When deciding which courses to offer, local needs are considered, with the college working in partnership with the LEP and employers. The profile of subject areas studied for FE colleges and HEIs is different. Compared to HEIs, colleges deliver a higher proportion of courses in business,

education and training, arts, media and publishing, engineering and manufacturing technologies, and construction, planning and the built environment (ETF, 2016). Each of these characteristics affects professional learning content for teachers.

To deliver these courses, appropriately skilled staff need to be available who can develop students' skills and knowledge for HE qualifications such as HNDs and foundation degrees. The CHE teachers come from within the industries mentioned above and their identity is characterised by the knowledge, practice and occupational culture associated with the industry (Gilpin, 2007). They can have several identities – one from industry and another from teaching (Fuller and Unwin, 2008). This is important, as professional experience, beliefs and practice accumulate in learning and performing roles (Stronach *et al.*, 2004). These occupational traits and personalities are played out in decisions made in teaching and learning. Consequently, the nature of the subject and its professional culture, in addition to the students, influence the pedagogical approach for CHE (Simmons and Lea, 2013).

Within each industrial sector, there is a professional standards framework that determines skills and expectations. In educational settings, there are several standards frameworks that regulate the sectors. These frameworks set out expectations; for example, the UK professional standards framework (UKPSF) formalised what needs to be learned and demonstrated in professional practice in HE. CHE teachers should have up-to-date knowledge of their subject and have opportunities for continued access to their subject workplace (QAA, 2013). The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) determines policy and cultural norms for foundation and bachelor's degrees

(Widdowson and King, 2018). In 2007, colleges were given the ability to gain awarding power for their foundation degrees, and this has driven them to ensure courses reach the standards required by partner universities (King *et al*., 2014). However, CHE is often a small proportion of FE colleges' provision and many colleges use Ofsted quality criteria that may not consider the need to develop the level of skills required at HE levels (Simmons and Lea, 2013).

In summary, within this wide-ranging diversity of curriculums, students and frameworks, there have been three constants since 1992. These are outlined in Table 1.5:

Constant	Example publications
The centrality of teaching, learning and assessment	Rhodes and Brundrett (2010)
Focus on continuous improvement	*New Challenges, New Changes* (BIS, 2011); *Skills for Sustainable Growth: Strategy document* (BIS, 2010); Foster (2005); Wolf (2010); BIS (2011); Lingfield (2012)
Change	Policy changes (Coffield *et al.*, 2007): These have taken a variety of forms and with differing foci: amendments to organisation and structure; accountability (Further and Higher Education Act, 1992); policy; funding; initiatives (Dearing, 1997); standards; inspection regimes (Sheerman, 2006); and qualification reforms (Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS), 2013).

Table 1.5 The three constants since 1992

Changing governments and national initiatives challenge the FE sector (Coffield *et al.*, 2008; Briggs, 2006) with policies being produced at a rapid pace (policy 'busyness') – at times, it seems, with a lack of reference to past policies (policy amnesia) (Coffield *et al.*, 2008). As seen in Table 1.5, several policies and acts have shaped the FE sector and influenced HE provision in the UK. The policy history of FE and CHE provides evidence of change being constant.

Other changes also impact on teaching and learning. The fast pace of evolution in technology has changed the provision of education with an expectation that the understanding and pedagogical use of technology should maintain pace with the evolutionary rate of technological development (ETF, 2014). Against this background of policy change and potential confusion, FE college leaders are under sustained pressure to demonstrate high quality of education (Ofsted, 2019).

The increase in accountability within FE has seen a rise in external scrutiny and internal observations (O'Leary, 2013). Accountability is overseen by Ofsted for the central business of FE college learning, while awarding bodies such as the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) monitor the quality of their qualifications, and quality assurance bodies such as the QAA and Office for Students (OfS) monitor the quality of HE provision. In addition, with an emphasis on self-evaluation and continuous improvement, the necessity for sustainability and resilience are demonstrated (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006). For the purposes of funding, and the consequent continued existence of colleges, these changes must be managed with expected high standards.

The issues raised thus far by no means comprise an exhaustive list of forces acting on FE colleges. They do, however, exemplify the existence of constant change.

It is argued that there is both a need for continued improvement in teaching and learning and leaders need to be able to adapt to change. The identification of those factors that can enhance teaching and learning, and develop the talent of the people who influence teaching and learning, would be beneficial for the sector, and this is the aim of this study within the context of CHE. The position and leadership skills of MMs can help enhance a college's capacity to adapt to the changes in the sector, focusing on ensuring positive teaching and learning opportunities for both students and teachers. This is explored in Section 1.3.

1.3 Middle managers

Improvements to colleges and their success are influenced by leadership and management (Leithwood *et al.*, 2010; Ofsted, 2012a; Wallace, 2002). There has been interest in characterising and identifying those elements that create effective leaders (Lambert, 2013; Gronn, 1999). Senior leaders have been described in business and education (Gronn, 1999; Day and Bakioglu, 1996). In specific areas of education, senior leaders have been scrutinised in schools (Gronn, 1999; Southworth, 2004; Cliffe, 2011), FE colleges (Lambert, 2013) and HE (Marshall, 2012; Branson *et al.,* 2016). Middle management also features in some studies, but the emphasis is on MMs in mainstream schools (Busher, 2005; Hargreaves, 2007; Mulford and Silins, 2003; MacBeath *et al.*, 2006) and in HE (Mercer, 2009). A limited number of studies examine the diverse setting of FE colleges (Briggs, 2001, 2005, 2007; Gleeson and Shain, 1999; Gleeson and Knights, 2008; Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2018). It seems that not only is FE a neglected

middle child, positioned between the school sector and HE, and sometimes suffering

focus and funding neglect as a consequence (Foster, 2005) but also, from a research

point of view, there are fewer studies of FE – particularly CHE – and middle management

in FE than those in other contexts and leadership levels. Academic leadership in HE has

been studied (Bolden *et al.,* 2012), however, FE colleges were not represented. It is

unclear whether research in other sectors is applicable to MMs in CHE. Consequently,

the applicability of previous research findings used in this study is examined during the

research.

This study is interested in leadership and management approaches that influence

teaching and learning. The influence that senior leaders have on learners' outcomes is

indirect, facilitating learning through the provision of, for example, an appropriate

environment (Leithwood *et al.*, 2010). MMs have a pivotal role in facilitating both

teacher and student learning because of their relative proximity to the teaching teams

and students, compared with senior leaders (Briggs, 2006). In order to investigate

leadership, the research questions outlined in Section 1.4 are addressed.

1.4 Research questions
This research seeks to gain insight into the role of the curriculum area managers by

addressing the following questions. The first two questions focus on what MMs do:

- What roles do MMs in FE perform for CHE courses?

- How do these roles contribute to the professional learning environment of

  CHE teachers?

The third and fourth questions consider the impact of different factors within the environment and MMs from analysis of the data:

- What factors impeded or facilitated MMs' role performance in CHE?

- How do these factors interact and influence MMs' role enactment?

The final two questions then consider the impact through modelling the factors emerging from the data. I analyse perspectives of participants in case studies and adapt models that have been used elsewhere (detailed in Section 2.5) and discuss their interpretation and the value these have on the enhancement of the approach MMs take in enacting their roles.

1.5 Justification for the research

There has been national and international research into the transformation and improvement of schools (Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2009; Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE), 2002; Timperley, 2011) and some, although less, into the improvement and transformation of colleges (Briggs, 2001; Coffield *et al.*, 2008; James and Biesta, 2007). Likewise, as mentioned in the previous section, senior leadership has been scrutinised but middle management less so. MMs are well placed in respect of transformation having responsibility for their teams and improvement within their curriculum area.

A key personal motivating factor is my interest and involvement in teacher development and professional learning. This comes from my role as an MM working with other MMs and SMs in several FE colleges to improve and develop teaching and learning throughout the colleges, leading teams of coaches and mentors in addition to SMs and other MMs

who formed the team observing teaching and learning. Mentors and coaches are recruited for their enthusiasm, understanding and skills in supporting teachers' professional learning. However, MMs are recruited for their experience in specific industries and their ability to manage teams rather than their ability to develop teams. From a professional perspective, knowing how and what the MMs do to facilitate professional learning will enable college teams to develop and utilise more effective strategies to catalyse adaptation to the ever-changing FE sector. Consequently, improved teaching will improve learning and help raise the skills levels of future workers. As the FE sector is very diverse, and this study is a small study of five general FE colleges, it may not be possible to generalise the processes and practices found throughout the sector. However, there may be skills, practices and processes that can be explored with MMs to boost effectiveness in other FE colleges.

1.6 Summary of chapters

This thesis is presented over six chapters. This first chapter provides an overview of the study. The literature review, in Chapter 2, establishes the current knowledge of five principal concepts for the project outlined in Table 1.6:

Chapter	Summary	Section	Contents
2	Key concepts - Establishes the current knowledge of five principal concepts for the study	2.1	Investigates organisational role theory to provide a conceptualisation of role and a set of terminology that is pertinent for the study and helpful in identifying factors influencing roles (Biddle, 1986)
		2.2	The distinction between middle managers and middle leaders helps prepare the background for determining those MMs' roles that have been researched in the context of schools, FE colleges and HEIs. The position and roles of MMs in FE colleges are discussed for clarity for the study
		2.3	MMs' role behaviours, and factors that affect these both positively and negatively are identified. This enables their potential relation to, and influence on teachers' professional learning to be explored
		2.4	The concept of professional learning for teachers and how the distinct context of CHE can influence the nature of professional learning and the factors that can enhance or inhibit it.
		2.5	Leadership approaches are discussed, to reach a typology of leadership for learning approaches and factors that determine how approaches are chosen and enacted. Leadership approaches are acknowledged as an influence on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment (Ofsted, 2012b; Leithwood *et al.*, 2019)

Table 1.6 Outline of the five principal concepts presented in Chapter 2

Pervasive contextual culture in an organisation impacts on learning in that organisation

(James and Biesta, 2007; Hallinger and Heck, 2010). These pieces of research categorise

necessary activities and roles to be completed in order that learning can be fostered.

This literature was analysed to identify essential roles, behaviours and activities for MMs, so the study investigated: a) who fulfils these roles within a leadership responsibility; and b) an approach to leadership that promotes professional learning, and c) factors that have an influence on how leaders behave in their role.

In Chapter 3, the research design, introduced in Section 1.7, is detailed. Chapter 4 begins the analysis of data collected focusing on the case colleges and leader for learning roles of MMs and their interaction. In Chapter 5, data analysis continues with a focus on the overall role of MMs and the characteristics of MM themselves. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the interaction between the leader for learning roles from Chapter 4, and how the characteristics influence the MMs' role enactment. In Chapter 6, the key findings are summarised and recommendations for provided for further study.

1.7 Research strategy, methodology and methods

Chapter 3 details the research design for the thesis. A qualitative stance is adopted for this study. The literature demonstrates that learning and leadership are socially constructed concepts with a multitude of interrelated factors influencing each other (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2010); for example, values and beliefs influence the leadership approaches used (Briggs, 2004). This phenomenon of interactional impact falls within the interpretivist paradigm (Thomas, 2009), where it is acknowledged that different people interpret situations differently. Interpreting the perceptions MMs have of their social processes and practices in the context of CHE in FE colleges, and their influence on each other's practice, roots this firmly in the humanistic domain (Ribbins and Gunter, 2002) because the MMs are presenting their experience of leadership in the context.

The main aim of this project is to gain knowledge-for-understanding (Wallace and Poulson, 2003).

The methodological approach is a multiple case study. Five FE colleges provide the sample cases. The colleges chosen for the project represent five distinct organisations and they were chosen using publicly accessible information about the quality of education such as Ofsted reports. All five were graded as overall good by Ofsted. Leadership and management for all five colleges were deemed good or better by Ofsted. Two colleges had received a silver standard in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The final three colleges had not attempted to gain a level on the TEF. These different gradings were used as indicators to select colleges. The commentary from the colleges' QAA Higher Education Reviews (HER) indicated that staff development is a strong feature in all five colleges. This sampling is discussed more fully in Subsection 3.4.2.

1.8 Ethics
The researcher adheres to the guidelines provided by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011) to ensure confidentiality. These are detailed in Section 3.5.

1.9 Audience
The findings of this research project will be of interest to college SMTs, policy makers and MMs. With the continued need to encourage professional learning in organisations (Ofsted, 2012a) that are under constantly restrictive resourcing pressures (Lambert, 2013) and experiencing increased diversification and competition within the sector (Collinson, 2009), to recruit teachers and potential MMs who can positively promote and enable professional learning may be of interest to college management and governors. The unique contribution of this thesis is that it offers a detailed presentation

of the different roles performed by MMs of CHE, and models that represent the influence of different factors on catalysing or inhibiting MMs' role in promoting teacher professional learning in the context.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

This investigation focuses on those academic middle managers (MMs) who are responsible for curriculum areas in which CHE courses are embedded. The chapter prioritises how this group of managers enacts leadership to promote teachers' professional learning in CHE teaching teams. It identifies and examines the factors that can either catalyse or inhibit the role and impact teachers' professional learning. This review of the existing literature develops a conceptualisation of MMs and subsequently investigates the enactment of their leader for learning roles. The five sections in this chapter begin to answer the research questions presented in Section 1.4, and prepare the foundation for the study by establishing the concepts and conceptual tools for the analysis of the data collected for this study.

For this literature review, I accessed online peer-review journals, publications from government and educational associations and books, searching for literature on research and policy relating to leadership and the management of learning roles of MMs in schools, FE, CHE and HE. During the literature review, tables help illustrate and structure different academic perspective in the theoretical areas under study. Tabulating literature in this way facilitated my analysis and synthesis of numerous studies drawn from the same conceptual area. This resonates to how Briggs (2004) tabulated typologies of MM from various research papers (see Table 2.10). This initial review revealed that both context and role are complex, and five key conceptual, theoretical areas were identified: organisational role theory (ORT); leadership versus management; MMs and their roles; professional learning for CHE teachers; and leadership for learning. This chapter is organised around these five foundational

concepts and each is addressed in turn. A summary of the contents of each section is

presented in Table 2.1:

Section	Concept	Importance for this study
2.1	ORT	This helps to clarify the different aspects of role and their inter-relationship, and provides terminology useful in clarifying influential factors and the way in which they shape perceptions of role (Biddle, 1986).
2.2	The distinction between middle managers and middle leaders	The two terms are used for the middle level of management and leadership, sometimes interchangeably, so it is beneficial to determine the relevance of each term. Literature shows that both are integrated into the role of MMs (Gleeson and Shain, 1999; De Nobile, 2018).
2.3	Current conceptualisation of MMs	Much of the literature is situated in the context of schools but some is based in general FE management (e.g. Briggs, 2002, 2006; Lumby, 2001; Fitzgerald, 2009) and some in the management of HE institutions (HEIs) (e.g. Mercer, 2009; Floyd, 2016; Marshall, 2012; Bolden *et al.,* 2012). As little research has taken place in the leadership of CHE (Widdowson and King, 2018), information is drawn from the different educational contexts studied to formulate an understanding of MMs in educational contexts. This understanding is used as a basis for initial analysis of the data.
2.4	The concept of professional learning	The distinct characteristics of CHE and expectations of professional learning, scholarship, at this level shape teachers'

		professional learning (Bathmaker, 2016; Feather, 2016; QAA, 2013). Knowledge of the processes, learning environments and approaches to HE professional learning informs leadership behaviours that nurture and support professional learning (Trotter, 2006; Timperley *et al.,* 2009; Lucas and Unwin, 2009; Fanghanel *et al*., 2016).
2.5	Leadership for Learning	The connection between leadership approaches and professional learning; examining literature produced by studies into leadership linked to learning and professional learning (Hallinger and Heck, 2010; Leithwood *et al*., 2010; Robinson *et al*., 2008). The intention is to provide a model of leader for learning and an insight into the factors that influence leadership behaviours.
2.6	Summary of the chapter	

Table 2.1 Outline of the contents of Chapter 2

These five sections provide insight into each of the key concepts for this study, and identify strands, themes and factors that are relevant in developing a construction of MMs as leaders of professional learning.

As noted in Chapter 1, most of the literature on leadership for learning is based in the context of school improvement, with a few studies in the context of general FE in the UK and overseas but, again, few in the context of CHE in the UK.

2.1 Organisational role theory

This section describes ORT, its definitions and concepts and how they apply in this study.

ORT examines how people behave in roles that are socially constructed within an organisation (Fellows, 2013). This is distinct from other perspectives of role theory such as functional, and symbolic interactionist, which differ in their views on where and how roles develop (Biddle, 1986) and pertain less to workplace environments (Wickham and Parker, 2007) that are the focus of this research. For example, functional role theory suggests that expectations are solely externally prescribed (Mantere, 2008). This contrasts with the view that roles evolve (Giddens, 1984) and adapt, for example, to changing workplace demands and conditions (Wickham and Parker 2007; Bezuidenhout, 2015). Another example is symbolic interactionist role theory, which does not take much consideration of constraints within the environment (Biddle, 1986). These constraints have been identified as dominant mediating factors in leader behaviours in educational settings (Hallinger and Heck, 1996, 2011), and so need consideration. In Subsection 2.1.1, the definition of role is discussed in more detail.

ORT, with its focus on behaviour and role formation in the context of an organisation, is highly applicable to this study. ORT has been implemented effectively to investigate roles in the changing demands of educational environments and how organisational factors influence roles in other, similar empirical research in schools (Somech and Oplatka, 2009), universities (Bezuidenhout, 2015) and in FE (Briggs, 2005). In Subsections 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.3, I apply ORT to the context of CHE to identify the relevant factors at play. Before addressing this, it is worth noting limitations where ORT

does not ideally fit the study focus or raises complications that are discussed at greater length in the relevant sections.

As a theoretical framework for understanding the role of the MM in CHE, ORT has three main limitations. First, in ORT, roles are associated with identified social positions within a hierarchy. This is problematic as not all roles are associated with positions in a hierarchy (Biddle, 1986) and some roles are spread through different levels in the hierarchy (Thomas and Linstead, 2002). Second, ORT assumes a normative element to expectations in much the same way as functional role theory (Biddle, 1986). Any organisation, such as an FE college, has expectations of how people should behave in order to achieve the organisation's objectives (Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2018). The issue here is that norms are not always shared (Somech, 2016). For example, in FE, senior managers' (SMs) expectations of MMs may differ from teachers' expectations of MMs (Gleeson and Shain, 1999). In CHE, there are further stakeholders who also have expectations of the MM, including university partners (Simmons and Lea, 2013). While ORT acknowledges these multiple sources of expectations, it does not acknowledge that these sources can result in differently perceived norms and that this can cause crucial conflicts (Biddle, 1986), something that will be examined in Subsection 2.1.2, drawing on the concept of role conflict (Kahn *et al.,* 1964). ORT's third limitation is that the theory also assumes that organisations are stable, unchanging entities (Biddle, 1986). Yet, as discussed in Chapter 1, FE colleges undergo persistent change (Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2018) which impacts on roles and will be examined in Subsection 2.5.3.

To examine the roles of CHE MMs, it is important to work with a framework that allows multiple overlapping and conflicting roles to be examined. More traditional approaches to role theory can be adapted for a more contemporary organisational environment (Wickham and Parker, 2007), presenting ORT as a framework for investigating multiple roles taken on by employees in the workplace. Wickham and Parker (2007) also acknowledge, however, that roles outside the workplace can impact on role enactment at work for example family roles. This study will not explore these influences which are beyond its scope. The core focus – accounting for the limitations noted above – will be the application of ORT and surrounding literature to examine the workplace roles of MM in CHE and the impact of various workplace factors on that performance.

2.1.1 Definition of role

As a key concept in this research the term 'role' needs discussion. Several definitions of the term are available. Examples are presented in Table 2.2:

Publication	Definition
Jackson (1972, p. 3)	A 'defined social position'
Biddle and Thomas (1979)	A pattern of characteristic social behaviours
Bates and Harvey (1975)	A set of expectations of behaviours

Table 2.2 Examples of definitions of the term 'role'

These are relevant to this study because the MMs have a social position (Briggs, 2003a). There are expectations of their behaviours in their role, and characteristic behaviours have been identified (Briggs, 2003a; Mhlanga, 2017). However, none of these three definitions explicitly considers the context in which the role is enacted, and how it impacts on their role (Morgenson et al., 2010).

A definition can retain elements of all three of these different definitions in Table 2.2, adding an emphasis on context and teasing out 'activity', to provide a set of concepts and terms that facilitate an analysis of complex roles (Jones and Holdaway, 1996). These are summarised in Table 2.3:

Term	Definition	Example
Position	A designation familiar to those in a given context	Senior manager, middle manager, teacher
Role	A pattern of behaviours within a role	In general business, middle managers have information-processing roles (Mintzberg, 1973)
Function	A category of behaviours within a role	Information-processing roles; includes function of disseminator of information and monitor of information (Mintzberg, 1973)
Activity	A specific behaviour that can be visible in different roles	The activities associated with the disseminator function include transmitting information to subordinates and interpreting and editing information (Mintzberg, 1973)

T**able 2.3** Summary of terms (Jones and Holdaway, 1996), with examples from literature (Mintzberg, 1973) discussed in Section 2.3

The terms in Table 2.3 facilitate the analysis of the roles and behaviours of the position of MMs in the context of CHE to gain a typology of the role as exemplified by Jones and Holdaway's (1996) study of heads of department. The terminology is extended in Subsection 2.1.2.

When a role is conceptualised as a triad (comprising social position, function and behaviour), expectations in terms of behaviours/activities within a particular context present opportunities to understand issues and the terminology associated with them. People experience issues as part of their work role (Minocha *et al.,* 2011). Six such issues that are relevant to this study are discussed in Subsection 2.1.2. Examples are role conflict (Biddle, 1986) or role incongruity (Berger, 2014).

2.1.2 Role theory terminology

Role theory is useful in analysing how roles are related to other people in a system (Briggs, 2002). The terms outlined in Subsection 2.1.1 relate to *individual* roles. In this section, other associated terms are introduced that facilitate analysis, such as role set. People who work together affect each other (Briggs, 2003a), and these people form the role set (Katz and Kahn, 1966). The members of the role set have different but interdependent and interrelated roles (Langan-Fox and Cooper, 2013); when an individual assumes a role, others respond accordingly (Shivers-Blackwell, 2006).

The MMs in this study do not work in isolation within a single context in FE but interact with other members of their role set. Their role set (see Table 2.4) influences and adds complexity to the role (ETF, 2016; Widdowson and King, 2018):

Term	Description	Examples for this study
Role set	People who influence a role through their interactions and interdependency	Senior managers, middle managers, university partners, teachers, external employers (Briggs, 2005)
Role sender	Someone who communicates the set of expectations of the role: beliefs, values and activities	Senior managers and university partners define the expectations of roles and communicate for a middle manager (Widdowson and King, 2018)

Table 2.4 Summary of role terms (Katz and Kahn, 1966), with examples from the study context of CHE (Briggs, 2005; Widdowson and King, 2018)

In addition to the role set and role sender, the literature indicates that several factors influence roles, including perceptions of context. These include: organisational politics (Ferris *et al.*, 1996); organisational structure and culture (Shivers-Blackwell, 2004); and individuals' personalities (Shivers-Blackwell, 2006). ORT focuses on the reciprocal influence of the social environment, structure and individual behaviour in an organisation (Wickham and Parker, 2007). This consideration of how context shapes and creates roles is apparent in Hallinger and Heck (2011), another key paper in this research. Hallinger and Heck's (2011) full model of leadership for learning presents how various factors, such as values and beliefs, academic processes and structures, are shown to shape and be shaped by leadership behaviours (Figure 2.5). These are discussed in Subsection 2.5.3 both in their own right, and in relation to key ideas from ORT from this section.

These factors can have a positive and/or negative impact. Those influences that have a negative, inhibitory, impact can cause problems for role enactment. ORT draws on several concepts resulting from role dependency and perceptual differences (Biddle, 1986) and provides a terminology for these different tensions that is useful for this study and will be used throughout. Table 2.5 summarises the different tensions that have a detrimental impact on the enactment of a role (Wickham and Parker, 2007) and that are most relevant for this study:

Term	Definition	Example
Role conflict (Biddle, 1986); **Role incongruity** (Berger, 2014)	The concurrent appearance of two or more incompatible expectations for the behaviour of a person (Biddle, 1986, p.82).	Different requirements of FE and HE partners as role senders, for example having different expectations in terms of quality processes and roles (Simmons and Lea, 2013). Uncertain and conflicting expectations can originate from a person's previous experience (Orr and Simmons, 2010; Biddle and Thomas, 1979; Busher, 2005). For example, many of the academic managers and teachers working in FE colleges gained experience in their subject specialist area industries before moving on to teach their specialism. They have therefore already developed professional roles in industry (Page, 2013).

		MMs may also struggle with tensions between their different professional identities (as subject specialist, teacher in FE, teacher in CHE and manager), and the variety of expectations associated with these identities (Briggs, 2007).
		The MMs' position, located between senior managers and teachers, is a source of role conflict in cases where the demands of teachers and those of senior managers are in conflict (Gleeson and Shain, 1999).
Role overload; Role strain	The person is faced with too many expectations (Biddle, 1986, p.83).	Additional roles are not formally recognised as part of the teacher's pedagogical and administrative responsibilities and the social position of the educator (Minocha *et al.,* 2011).
		Contextual conditions are too demanding for successful enactment (Goode, 1960). Conditions reach a point where there are insufficient resources or time to fulfil a role (Smith, 2002).

Role ambiguity	Expectations are incomplete or insufficient to guide behaviour; a lack of clarity (Biddle, 1986, p.83).	An organisation has a responsibility as role sender to define a role by a job title (position) and a description of expected behaviours (role) (Stewart, 1982). However, the role set can also define a role, and this can contrast with organisational expectations (Smith, 2002). Can also result from a disparity between the level of authority and the level of responsibility (Briggs, 2003b).
Role mal-integration	When roles do not fit well together (Biddle, 1986, p.83). Role functions or behaviours are not aligned (Madden, 2013)	Perceived move from expectations for an autonomous professional (teacher) to a 'new managerial' culture of audit and accountability (middle manager) (Randle and Brady, 1997; Gleeson, 2001; Deem, 1998). Teachers have expectations placed upon them to complete a range of roles (academic, social, administrative, basic needs) that are difficult to accommodate simultaneously, and that may even be counterproductive to some degree (Dinham and Scott, 2004).
Role discontinuity	When the person must perform a sequence of mal-integrated roles (Biddle, 1986, p.83).	The roles of teacher and manager may not be continuous because they lack commonalities (Tondra and Spillane, 2005).

Table 2.5 Terms in role theory from Biddle (1986), with examples from other literature

These conflicts cause stress, and negatively impact job performance (Madden, 2013).

For example, managers' perception of the organisational context can be adversely

influenced (Kahn *et al.,* 1964). When sets of expectations are not aligned and negatively

interfere with each other, it results in feelings of difficulty in fulfilling a role (Goode

1960). Additionally, poor job performance is linked to people not having the skills and

knowledge needed to accomplish the role (Harris, 1998).

To summarise, ORT, as presented in this section, provides a framework and terminology

that is useful when exploring the behaviours, activities and influences encompassed in

the complex role of MMs in an organisation. By conceptualising the role as a multi-

dimensional concept, ORT helps to analyse and explain patterns of behaviour and

possible sources of role ambiguity, role conflict, role discontinuity and role overload.

In Subsection 2.3, these different roles, functions and activities (using Jones and

Holdaway's terminology introduced in Subsection 2.1.1) are discussed to determine a

typology of the MMs' role. Perceptions of behaviour can influence the choice of

leadership style adopted by managers (Brigg, 2005; Hallinger and Heck, 2011). The

different perceptions of leadership and management are discussed in Section 2.2.

2.2 Definitions of middle managers or middle leaders

This section discusses five main contentious terms as we examine the definition of MMs

and their position and purpose within an organisation. These terms are: manager and

management; leader and leadership; and the notion of 'middle' or 'middleness'. Some

believe that leader/leadership and manager/management are mutually exclusive

(Bennis and Nanus, 2005). Others suggest that they are different functions with sets of

characteristic behaviours (Kanter *et al.*, 2005). In some educational research, it has been

noted that the term 'educational management' has been relabelled as 'educational

leadership' (Gunter, 2004; Bush *et al.*, 2010) and MMs have been replaced by 'middle

leaders', but this is under-theorised and thus causes ambiguity (De Nobile, 2018).

Developing an understanding of the terms and applying them to CHE is a key focus of

this study and so the distinction needs to be addressed before looking at MMs' roles in

more detail, in Section 2.3. This study investigates the leader for learning roles of MMs.

So, an examination of whether MMs can be involved in leadership, and do not solely

manage, as their title might suggest, is key, and is discussed in Subsection 2.2.1. This

draws on the different terminology in Table 2.5, presented in Subsection 2.1.2, to

examine how the different expectations in roles impact either positively or negatively,

and consequently inhibit or catalyse the accomplishment of the role. The notion of

'middleness' is also an issue (Jones and Holdaway, 1996) because of a lack of consensus

over the definition and boundaries of 'middle' (De Nobile, 2018). This will be discussed

in Subsection 2.2.2.

2.2.1 Distinction between leadership and management

In their attempts to define leadership and management, researchers have sought to

identify traits, behaviours, patterns of interaction and influence, and role relationships

(Yukl, 2013). In some literature, leadership has, as its core responsibility, policy

formulation, organisational transformation (Bolam, 1999), people development (Kotter,

1990; Cuban, 1988), providing a clear vision with values and purpose, which drives the

direction of change (Bush, 1998). In contrast, management focuses on maintenance

(Cuban, 1988), the use of effective systems and paperwork (Day *et al.,* 2010),

predictability and order through planning, organising staff and problem solving (Kotter, 1990).

Much of the literature focuses on managerial roles being an executive function for implementing formulated strategies and policies (Bolam, 1999) and overcoming technical issues (Bush, 1998). There is a consensus in literature that leaders exercise influence on followers (Leithwood *et al.*, 2010; Kotter, 2012). Other research, for example Rost (1991), discusses the relationship aspect; management involves an authority relationship and not the influence relationship attributed to leaders (Kotter, 2012). However, those managers who can influence without formal authority demonstrate leadership (Bennis and Nanus, 2005). In CHE, MMs implement strategies both from the FE college SMT and from the HEIs with which they are partnered, while attempting to overcome any tensions and issues between the two different systems (Widdowson and King, 2018). These will be discussed in this section.

Leadership has a positive connotation to be aspired to (Rogers, 2005). The terms management and manager, on the other hand, are sometimes viewed as pejorative stereotypes (Yukl, 2013). The focus of the management role is seen as efficiency, and not driven by the aims of education (Gunter, 1997). However, the importance of both leadership and management (Bolman and Deal, 2013) and their equal prominence (Bush, 1998) are highlighted; management is not a poor relation but a combination of leadership and administration (Handy and Aitken, 1986). In these views, unlike that of Bennis (2009), leadership and management are not mutually exclusive (Gleeson and Shain, 1999). The distinction between the two concepts is not position, skills or task but

mindset, intentionality and context (De Nobile, 2018). Both aspects can be integrated into roles because these are not exclusive roles (Yukl, 2013). This study will not treat leadership and management roles as mutually exclusive, while recognising the distinctive emphasis each provides. The different emphasis provided by these concepts will be of special importance regarding the discussion of the diversity within the role of MMs in CHE (Subsection 2.3.2) and the tensions that exist between functions in the role.

Potential role tensions, conflicts and ambiguities have been noted between the roles, identities and perceptions linked to the MMs' role (Table 2.5). For example, the proportion of time available to complete some expected activities detracts from the MMs' key influence on learning and the learning environment (Gurr and Drysdale, 2013): managerial tasks outweigh the time needed for leadership activity (Fitzgerald, 2009). Lack of time contributes negatively to an expansive learning environment (Subsection 2.4.5) and causes role overload (Kahn *et al.*, 1964). Another example is an expectation for MMs to develop entrepreneurial capabilities (Beresford and Michels, 2014). This is associated with role ambiguity (defined in Subsection 2.1.2), as the expectations are not clearly focused on teaching (Kahn *et al.*, 1964).

Tensions exist between the expectations of the MMs associated with monitoring, accountability, and auditing (Bennet *et al.,* 2007). These three activities are viewed negatively by teachers and seen as a hindrance to expectations of collegiality, professionalism, and expertise (Bennet *et al.*, 2007; Ewens and Orr, 2002). The positive nature of the role has been diluted (Katzenbach, 1996) through the perception that MMs are simply transmitters of information, compliers, and administrators, and that there is

little value to their work (Fitzgerald, 2009). The MMs act as both masters and slaves (Lapp and Carr, 2006). The intention of the role is evaluative and positive; however, interpretation of the role as being policing and judgemental can inhibit the development of a positive culture (Katzenbach, 1996); however, teachers acknowledge that performance management is a legitimate function of a manager and, as such, should not inhibit a developmental environment (Busher, 2005).

Mintzberg (1990) provides a typology of managerial roles (Table 2.9). These are discussed in detail in Subsection 2.3.1, but within this typology, leadership is one of the ten roles of a manager. Successful management involves leading (Yukl and Lepsinger, 2005). SMs, too, have both leadership and management roles (Hallinger, 2003a). The two dimensions are symbiotic, but require balancing (Briggs, 2003a). Studies of leadership connected to learning, which are discussed in Section 2.5, hold shared leadership across an organisation as a founding principle for leadership for learning (Waterhouse and Møller, 2009).

As is discussed in Section 2.3, the rapid rate of change and uncertainty following incorporation, the current area reviews and consequent mergers of FE colleges (Thomas and Linstead, 2002); the new professionalism that focuses on high performance (Briggs, 2004); and an increased focus on improvement and standards (Coffield and Edward, 2009) have all tended to foreground those leadership qualities of the MMs' role that help promote teacher learning and improvement (Bangs and Frost, 2016). MMs continue to have managerial roles alongside leader roles. The MMs managing CHE teams must navigate between FE and CHE expectations. An example of this is to provide

opportunities for professional learning (Hoekstra and Newton, 2017) this includes the expectations of scholarship at HE level (Healey *et al.*, 2014). This adds to the picture of the complex nature of the MMs' role (Briggs, 2007).

2.2.2 Middle/middleness

The term 'middle' in middle management is problematic because it fixes the title-holder in a particular position (Jones and Holdaway, 1996). Part of the problem is a traditional notion that leadership is synonymous with the highest ranked manager in the organisation, which precludes MMs from being leaders (De Nobile, 2018). The implications are that there are no leaders in lower managerial positions and that leadership is only a position in a hierarchy, and consequently it requires no further definition (Senge *et al*., 1999). 'Middle' can extend through several different levels in an organisation and has great breadth and depth (Briggs, 2006), but can thus make it difficult to identify boundaries as layers of management are removed and MMs move more closely to strategy formation, which was once held in the realms of senior leaders (Thomas and Linstead, 2002). The retention of the term 'middle' is an indication of the position within the organisation's management structure, not necessarily the approach to leadership or management that is adopted (Briggs, 2006). Leadership at every level in education can facilitate professional learning and promote a professional culture. Professional culture is key to developing work environments where collaboration is fostered and self-efficacy is promoted (Leithwood *et al.*, 2006). This culture is characterised by leadership being distributed at all levels, including teacher leaders (Bangs and Frost, 2015). Studies into the influence that teachers have on their colleagues provide evidence that teacher leaders influence their colleagues, building trusting,

respectful relationships through leadership strategies demonstrating non-positional leadership (Harris, 2008; Leithwood *et al.*, 2019; Bennett *et al.,* 2003). That is, leadership by those who are not in formal leadership positions (Bands and Frost, 2015). However, the teacher leaders themselves did not identify as leaders and felt a tension between their improvement work and the notion of being leaders (Fairman and Mackenzie, 2015).

In summary, there is a distinction between management and leadership. Leadership is an integral part of the management role (Mintzberg, 1973) and vice versa. Elements of this distinction related to MMs will be discussed in Sections 2.3 and 2.5. By investigating existing literature that focuses on middle leaders, the limits of the role can be identified. MMs can influence those they interact with. It is seen that the role is complex and influenced by several factors. The 'middleness' of the managers' position in the FE college hierarchy and their own perception of their position are seen to have an impact on their leadership (Briggs, 2005). Other influences will be discussed during the exploration of current conceptualisations of MMs in Section 2.3.

2.3 The roles of middle managers
In this section, the roles and associated behaviours of MMs are discussed, using existing empirical studies of typologies of MMs (e.g. Briggs, 2002; Gleeson and Shain, 1999; Mhlanga, 2017) and concepts from ORT introduced in Section 2.1 such as role, functions and activities (Jones and Holdaway, 1996). The aim is to determine the current conceptualisation of the MM and to identify different factors that impact the role within the organisational context. This study focuses on MMs' role in FE, managing/leading teams of teachers who deliver CHE, and these managers' perceptions of their role in

improving teaching and learning within the context of CHE. It is acknowledged that organisational structure is a socially-constructed entity that influences approaches to management and leadership, resulting in roles that differ in different contexts (Ogawa and Bossert, 1995); however, literature from a variety of contexts will be included to consider any parallels within MMs' role in schools, FE colleges and HEIs (e.g. Mintzberg, 1990; Smith 2002; Bolden *et al.*, 2012).

The starting point is to understand: the various roles of the MM; the different patterns of behaviours in the role; the functions the role entails; and the different activities that are expected from a MM. There are four subsections outlined in Table 2.6:

Subsection	Contents and relevance to this study
2.3.1	Existing literature (for example, Mintzberg, 1990; Brown and Rutherford, 1998; Smith 2002; Bolden *et al.*, 2012) is discussed to gather typologies of the functions of MMs and the expected behaviours.
2.3.2	The two differing paradigms of professionalism and new managerialism are compared and their impact on MMs explored. These are important because the role of the MM has changed since incorporation, introduced in Chapter 1 (Lumby and Tomlinson, 2000), and this has had an impact on the expectations and perceptions of MMs, which have changed from them being professionals to being managers (Randle and Brady, 1997; Gleeson and Shain, 1999).
2.3.3	Review of the literature referring to MMs' self-perceptions, identities and connected values (Robson *et al.,* 2004; Page, 2013). These identities and values have an influence on the MMs' role (Briggs, 2006).

| 2.3.4 | Using this insight into MMs' roles (Subsection 2.3.1), this subsection investigates the skills and knowledge that are needed for MMs to lead and manage effectively. They include for example, decision-making and effective communications skills (Briggs, 2007; Katzenbach *et al.,* 1996). |

Table 2.6 Summary of the subsections in 2.3 and the relevance for this study

Subsequently, in Subsection 2.5.3, different factors that cause tensions or ease performance of the role, such as identity and values (Subsection 2.3.3) are identified and compared with the factors presented in Hallinger and Heck's (2011) full model of leadership for learning that influence leadership behaviours. This comparison enables us to find factors that can catalyse or inhibit the effectiveness of the MMs' role in the context of the model.

2.3.1 Typologies of middle managers

The roles of MMs have been studied to produce typologies (e.g. Briggs, 2002; Gleeson and Shain, 1999; Mhlanga, 2017). In this subsection, these typologies will be discussed. The following functions (categories of behaviours within a role; see Table 2.7) are the key aspects found in the literature review (Jones and Holdaway, 1996):

Roles	Author	Examples of behaviours
Leader	Mintzberg (1990); Bolden *et al.* (2012)	Interpreter of strategy; representative of core academic values
Leader of teaching teams	Briggs (2004):	Solution-finder and motivator
Curriculum manager	James and Biesta (2007); Dhillon and Bentley (2016)	Design and planning – curriculum management
Resources manager	Peeke (1997); Smith (2002); Mintzberg (1990)	Organising resources
Liaison	Briggs (2004); Mintzberg (1990)	Meetings with non-academic managers
Learner	James and Biesta (2007); Robinson *et al. (*2008); Bolden *et al.* (2012)	Taking opportunities for professional development

Table 2.7 Examples of typologies of middle managers from literature, with examples of behaviours

These typologies will be compared with those identified in the leadership theories examined in Section 2.5, to determine any parallels within roles or gaps in approaches to leading that focus on learning (Subsection 2.5.2).

Different studies of role highlight different key aspects, see Table 2.8:

Author	Highlighted key aspects
Brown and Rutherford (1998) **Bennet _et al._ (2007)**	The nature of values and social agency and how they manifest in roles
Busher _et al. (_2007) **Somech and Naamneh (2019).**	Interaction and the developmental nature of the role

Table 2.8 Examples of studies and their different highlighted aspects of leadership

Mintzberg's study identifies behaviours within three roles and provides a taxonomy of ten managerial functions, in a general business setting, all of which are component functions of the entire role with associated activities or behaviours (Mintzberg, 1990) (Table 2.9):

Role	Function	Behaviour/activity
Information-processing roles	Disseminator	Transmitting information to subordinates
		Interpreting and editing information
	Monitor	Seeking information
		Analysing information
		Identifying problems
		Understanding external events
	Spokesperson	Transmitting information to outsiders
		Acting as lobbyist/representative

		Reporting to superiors
Decision-making roles	Entrepreneur	Designing and initiating change plans for improvement
	Disturbance handler	Crisis management
	Resource allocator	Preparing budgets
		Allocating and coordinating resources (facilities, time)
	Negotiator	Resource negotiations
		Supplier negotiations
		Staffing negotiations
Interpersonal roles	Liaison	Establishing and maintaining relationships external to the organisation
	Figurehead	Formal authority
		Symbolic duties
		Chairing and participating in meetings and ceremonies
		Receiving official visitors
	Leader	Responsible for organisational sub-unit
		Advising and guiding subordinates
		Motivating
		Creating favourable conditions for doing work

		Hiring, training, directing, praising, criticising, promoting and dismissing

Table 2.9 Mintzberg's managerial roles

There are several other studies that provide analogous typologies that can be compared with Mintzberg's model. While these often concern different contexts, it is possible to draw parallels to tease out common aspects of MM role typologies. In HE, the head of department role has been investigated (Peeke, 1997; Smith, 2002; Bolden *et al.,* 2012). While there are fewer empirical studies of academic leadership in FE, there are some examples that provide the basis for this study. Briggs (2004), for example, focused on both general managers and academic MMs, producing a typology of managers and their activities and linking them to Mintzberg's 1990 typology and others in different educational contexts (see Table 2.10). Other studies have focused on the origin of FE MMs as classroom teachers, and their subsequent assumption of managerial responsibilities for the coordination of courses, and people and generation of budgets and income (Gleeson and Shain, 1999). As in schools, academic managers in FE perform a dual role, maintaining their teaching role while adding management responsibilities (Lumby, 1997).

	Brown and Rutherford (1998)	Busher and Harris (1999)	Peeke (1997)	Smith (2002)	Briggs (2004)
Context of the study	School	School	HE	HE – heads of department	FE – middle managers
Function	Organisational architect		Servicing college bureaucracy	Preparing for quality assurance	Corporate Agent
Function	Organisational architect		Personal Research	Personal Research	Corporate Agent
Function	Organisational architect	Translation: bridging and brokering	Leading curriculum development	Governing the department	Implementor
Function	Leading professional	Improving staff and student performance	Managing resources	Managing resources	Implementor
Function	Leading professional	Improving staff and student performance	Managing resources	Teaching/ supervision	Implementor
Function	Leading professional	Improving staff and student performance	Managing resources	Student issues	Implementor
Function	Servant leader	Improving staff and student performance	Managing people	Managing personnel	Staff manager
Function	Leading professional	Fostering collegiality/ shaping and establishing shared vision	Managing people	Managing personnel	Staff manager
Function		Liaison/ representative role	External liaison	Representing the department	Liaison
Function		Translation: bridging and brokering	External liaison	Representing the department	Liaison
Function		Translation: bridging and brokering	External liaison	Representing the department	Liaison
Function	Servant leader		Development activity – academic leadership		Leader
Function	Leading professional		Development activity – academic leadership		Leader

Table 2.10 Typology of middle managers (Briggs, 2004)

Table 2.10 shows that there are similarities between the roles, both leadership and management, within the different contexts. More recent research in general FE colleges has focused on the MMs' role, examining how social, occupational and organisational cultures have shaped their identity and their behaviour towards their role (Page, 2011) – for example, where they are converts who have embraced managerialism (Gleeson and Shain, 1999) or principled mutineers who challenge policies they felt were disadvantageous to students' learning experience (Mhlanga, 2017). The functions feature those from both the professional and managerial paradigms discussed in Subsection 2.3.2. This supports research that indicates that both leadership and management functions are integral to the roles of MMs (Gleeson and Shain, 1999) discussed in Subsection 2.2.1. Further interest in defining the role of MMs in the FE sector led to a consultation in 2001. The Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO, 2001) standards, produced within this consultation, are a strong starting point for considering the role of MMs in the sector and show some similarities with those found in schools and HE (see Table 2.10). These standards identify four areas of managerial activity presented in Table 2.11 and relate to typologies already cited:

Managerial activity	MMs' activity
Developing strategic practice	MMs develop practice linked to the implementation of strategy (Briggs, 2001); MMs interpret strategy and negotiating information (Briggs, 2001; 2004; Mintzberg, 1990)
Developing and sustaining learning and the learning environment	All MMs, not just those who are leading curriculum areas, each contributing their particular field of expertise to maintaining the learning environment (Briggs, 2006)
Leading teams and the individual	MMs are 'working leaders' characterised as: demonstrating concern and interest in solving problems (Adair, 1983); being able to communicate effectively (Glover *et al.*, 1999); and being responsive, approachable and available (Briggs, 2006; Sayles, 1993); representing core values to their teams (Kotter, 1996; Busher, 2005); providing professional leadership for a subject to secure high-quality teaching and effective use of resources, and ensure improved standards of achievement' (TTA, 1998, p.3); MMs manage very diverse teams and do not have the same subject knowledge as many of their team members (Briggs, 2006); MMs perform a 'bridging and brokering' role (Glover *et al.,* 1998, p.281)
Managing resources	Organising and timetabling (Peeke, 1997; Smith, 2002); the organisation and co-ordination of a sustained, good working environment for a team involves resourcing teachers and students in terms of facilities and time and, in education, providing teaching resources (BIS, 2012: King *et al.,* 2014); resources play a significant role in providing effective development for teachers (Cordingley *et al.,* 2018)

Table 2.11 Summary of managerial activities linked to FENTO professional standards (FENTO, 2001)

The focus on learning, in the second standard, is central to linking management and leadership to learning and will be discussed in depth in Section 2.5. The focus of these studies presented is on student learning (Chapman and Harris, 2004; Hargreaves and Fink, 2006) as opposed to teacher learning (Leithwood *et al*., 2010). The evidence on the impact of leadership behaviours suggests that this final area has the most impact for student outcomes. In line with James and Biesta's activities (James and Biesta, 2007), Robinson and her colleagues' (2008) meta-analysis of 27 studies focused on the effect of different leadership approaches on student outcomes. It identified the five leadership functions that had the most impact on student outcomes in Table 2.12 (Robinson *et al.*, 2008):

Activities	Studies
establishing organisational requirements; identifying capability gaps; establishing goals and expectations	Robinson *et al.* (2008); James and Biesta (2007)
determining the learning and development priorities	James and Biesta (2007)
measuring the effectiveness of learning and development and ensuring objectives are met; planning, coordinating and evaluating teaching and curriculum	Robinson *et al.* (2008); James and Biesta (2007)
designing effective and resource-efficient ways to meet the learning objectives; resourcing strategically	Robinson *et al.* (2008); James and Biesta (2007)
ensuring an orderly and supportive environment	Robinson *et al.* (2008)
ensuring the capability of the learning and development function through continued professional development	Robinson *et al.* (2008); James and Biesta (2007)

Table 2.12 Summary of the activities for enabling professional learning (James and Biesta, 2007; Robinson *et al.,* 2008)

The final activity listed above recognises the need for MMs to focus on teacher learning and development within their role. Robinson *et al.* (2008) systematically compared each leadership practice taken from all the significant research studies included in the analysis and produced a standardised measure of the magnitude of their effect on student outcomes by calculating an effect size statistic (Field, 2005) that provides a representation of the level of impact an activity can have (Robinson *et al.,* 2008). One practice in particular was found to have a strong effect on improving student outcomes (see Table 2.13):

Activity	Effect size
Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development	0.84
Ensuring an orderly and supportive environment	0.27
Planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum, and establishing goals and expectations	0.42

Table 2.13 Summary of the activity and effect sizes presented by Robinson *et al.* (2008)

The effect size of 0.84 has the largest impact and demonstrates the importance of leadership that focuses on teacher learning and development.

The creation of a good working environment, promotion of motivation and encouragement of teamwork are highlighted for middle managers in general organisational settings (Adair, 1997; Fear *et al.*, 2003). However, it is also their role to effectively eliminate those who are underperforming to ensure a good working environment is maintained (Katzenbach, 1996). This relates to the leader aspect of roles proposed by Mintzberg (1990), which demonstrates the integration of leadership with

management functions discussed in Section 2.2 (De Nobile, 2018). It also relates to the fundamental need for quality assurance and a significant focus on teaching and learning in an MM's role in FE (Naylor, *et al*., 2006), an area found to lack focus (Gunter and Ribbins, 2005). However, a working environment and culture in which teachers can develop needs to be created (James and Biesta, 2007) and this has a positive impact on student outcomes (Robinson *et al.,* 2008).

Resourcing the team, the environment and students underpins many of the other aspects of the role because these contribute to student academic achievement (Decman *et al*., 2018), but can be problematic, particularly when resources such as finance (Lawrence and Hall, 2019), time (Feather, 2017) and qualified teachers (King *et al.,* 2014) are limited. In their role as both team leader and resource manager, MMs must often resolve problems and find solutions within these constraints to enable teachers to do their job (Briggs, 2003a). In summary, MMs need to create an environment and culture in which everyone can do, and demonstrate doing, their jobs effectively. In Subsection 2.4.2, these activities are discussed in relation to a model for professional learning to see how activities promote learning for the teachers. Tensions can be caused by perceptions about the focus and motivations of MMs (Gleeson, 2001). For example, new managerial outlooks impact on managers' roles, and this is studied in Subsection 2.3.2.

2.3.2 Professionalism versus new managerialism

Managers' roles are perceived both negatively and positively. Prior to incorporation in 1992, MMs in FE functioned as professional experts (Briggs, 2004). Professional roles and values were perceived as more positive than those of management (Yukl, 2013). Post incorporation, leadership and management roles changed dramatically to reflect

the new autonomy given to FE colleges (Gleeson, 2001). Senior teachers in professional roles changed as new managerialism came into play with its culture of audit and accountability (Randle and Brady, 1997). These were associated with managerial values that emphasised efficiency, compliance, and flexibility (Gleeson, 2001; Gunter, 1997). These are ostensibly in conflict with a focus on teaching, learning, and improving outcomes (Coffield *et al.,* 2007) and academic professional values about student learning, academic standards, and autonomy (Gleeson, 2001; Simkins and Lumby, 2002). The new managerial imperatives diverge from educational professionalism to those of business, responding to market demands, financial controls, extensive use of performance criteria and managerial control (Lumby and Tomlinson, 2000). There is even the notion that new managers and academic managers come from different sides of a cultural divide and are separated by 'oppositional cultures' – the different values of managerialism and professionalism (Randle and Brady, 1997) (see Table 2.14):

Professional paradigm	Managerial paradigm
Primacy of student learning and changes in the teaching process	Primacy of student throughput and income generation
Resources deployed on the basis of educational need	Resources deployed on the basis of market demand and value for taxpayers' money
Professional autonomy/the trust principle	Management of performance indicators and surveillance

Table 2.14 Professional and managerial paradigms (Randle and Brady, 1997, p.128)

This dichotomy indicates conflict between the values of business and those of academic endeavours. Gleeson and Shain (1999, p.1) believe that new managerialism is 'driving a wedge' between the interests of teachers and those of senior management. They highlight teachers' focus on professionalism and pedagogic values, compared with SMs' focus on the bottom line. In CHE, teachers feel that managers drive large class numbers and tuition margin and not, for example, the development of new teaching practices (Feather, 2012). These different discourses need not be antagonistic nor polar opposites (see Subsection 2.3.3 for examples); however, they appear to present conflicting messages (Randle and Brady, 1997). Both interests are valid preoccupations; money is not limitless, and education needs appropriate values and pedagogic-based decisions, but it must be 'managed' in such a way that teaching and learning are optimised within financial limitations (Gleeson and Shain, 1999).

In HE, stakeholders' perceptions identified the importance of autonomy for MMs to effectively maintain influence and to exercise authority in their departments (Jones and Holdaway, 1996). However, MMs hold inconsistent views of the levels of their own professional autonomy (Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2018). These perceptions and those of their role set (described in Subsection 2.1.2) influence their self-expectations and ability to accomplish their role (Jones and Holdaway, 1996).

There are three main areas of contention: what constitutes high performance; accountability; and values. In the current situation, with changes to FE policies driving changes in priorities in the FE context, MMs' roles evolve continuously to accommodate these changes (Briggs, 2002). High performance and continuous improvement are

emphasised (Ofsted, 2014; BIS, 2011; Coffield and Edward, 2009), but the perception of what constitutes high and improving performance is not consistently held (Mhlanga, 2017). For some, high performance is aligned with new professionalism (defined in Subsection 2.2.1) and patterns of good practice that have permeated the FE sector since incorporation (Briggs, 2004). However, as a metric of quality, emphasis is placed on the achievement of qualifications and developing a student who contributes to the economy of the community (Briggs, 2006). This reflects a more economically-driven education system. 'Fundamentalists' are sceptical of this view of high performance that has prevailed in FE since incorporation and want teaching to be prioritised over management activities (Page, 2011). Briggs argues that MMs cross the managerial/professional divide, combining an ability to respond to marketisation and accountability while retaining the potentially contrasting values needed to pursue high quality academic leadership (Briggs, 2004). However, the distinction between corporate management and curriculum area leadership can cause tensions for the MMs within their various roles (Briggs, 2001). An illustration is the tension between the time needed for college bureaucracy (Peeke, 1997) and preparation of quality assurance as part of college systems and processes (Smith, 2002), detracting from teaching and learning and quality improvement (Gurr and Drysdale, 2013). These differences reflect Randle and Brady's (1997) view of the 'professionalism versus managerial' paradigm shown in Table 2.14. The attitudes, driven by values and beliefs, towards these different aspects of MMs' roles can cause tensions and influence how the MMs perceive the value of tasks (Robson, 1998; Briggs, 2007). In HEIs, managerial tasks 'squeeze' academic activity (Bolden *et al.,* 2012, p.36).

Continued turbulence of recent area reviews and college mergers has driven the evolution of MMs' roles (AoC, 2016). The perceptions of management shift with the continued change, the identity and values of the MMs are challenged (Briggs, 2007). The identity and values are discussed in Subsection 2.3.3.

2.3.3 Identity and values

Identity and values are important concepts; they are influential since the values someone holds affects the identity they create and can affect how comfortable that person may feel in fulfilling some functions within a role (Floyd, 2012). Identity is both constructed by, and influential in, socially-constructed systems and processes through interaction with other people (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010; Bolden e*t al.,* 2012) and builds on core values and beliefs (Floyd, 2012). However, there seems to be a lack of clarity regarding FE MMs' identity (Maxwell, 2014; Galley and Savage, 2014). Studies into the implications of educational reforms identified three key concepts – professional values, location and role – that relate to the professional identity of MMs in FE in England (Briggs, 2007). Different individuals and organisations interpret these concepts differently.

The MMs' values and beliefs influence how they achieve their objectives. Briggs highlights the 'old barons of industry', whose vocational cultural beliefs resulted in them 'going off in their own direction in their own department' (Ainley and Bailey, 1997, p.59) rather than adhering to leadership direction and college culture (Briggs, 2006) as unwilling compliers to the new economically driven priorities of education (Gleeson and Shain, 1999). Professional values and beliefs act as filters through which proposed changes and actions are interpreted and these can be in conflict (Page, 2013; Maxwell,

2014). For example, different language and learning outcomes are differently interpreted (Galley and Savage, 2014), and the Ofsted ethos is negatively interpreted to be lacking in a duty of care (Mhlanga, 2017). Managers also develop skills and knowledge related to their different identities, which can help or hinder the efficacy of their actions (Page, 2013). These skills are explored in more detail in Subsection 2.3.4.

Professional values and beliefs can originate from two possible sources to give a dual identity: first, the occupational, vocational area (Robson *et al.,* 2004; Maxwell, 2014); and second, the teaching profession (Institute for Learning (IfL), 2014; Orr and Simmons, 2010). The dual identity may impact on MMs' values, beliefs, and consequent methods of influence because the different elements of identity, vocational area and teaching may have different or contrasting cultural norms, for example expectations of different behaviours for men and women (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). The teaching profession is an emotional endeavour, in contrast with the 'hypermasculinity' of construction workers (Page, 2013). Identity is essential to an individual's perception of agency (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). Furthermore, values and beliefs that developed earlier in a MM's lifetime can still impact on their leadership identity, either because the manager chooses to retain a previous identity or because they subconsciously retain these values (Busher, 2002). In schools, teacher leadership is seen to empower teachers (Muijs and Harris, 2007), however, school MMs' self-perceptions indicate that they identify themselves as teacher leaders more than MMs (Bush and Glover, 2014). Concern is voiced that, as they are situated in the middle, they may be 'passive recipients' of the senior leaders' vision (Fitzgerald, 2009, p.60) and this may compromise MMs' agency where their actions are

compromised on occasions when the top-down, strategic vision conflicts with the values and beliefs of their teams (Earley and Fletcher Campbell, 1989).

Some research focuses on the identities of MMs and how their values guide their approach to managing colleagues and developing culture (Busher, 2005). Shared social and professional values facilitate cohesion, and collegiality can result in improved practice (MacBeath and MacDonald, 2000). MMs work with their teams but also, for example, interact with HE partners and employers, where different cultures and values can conflict with values found in the CHE context (Somech and Naamneh, 2019). An example of this conflict is the value and consequent priority given to research; in HEIs, scholarship of discovery has a higher status than the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) that is a greater focus in FE colleges (Simmons and Lea, 2013; Boyer, 1990) (see Subsection 2.4.3). These external influences need to be negotiated and managed, and indicate that having an external focus developing external partnerships, is key to maintaining an understanding of national issues and their implications, while at the same time focusing on internal matters that are key to keeping close to staff and managing the detail of the curriculum (Lumby, 2001).

2.3.4 Skills and knowledge

MMs require skills and knowledge to be able to perform each of the activities and practices in the typology (Briggs, 2007). Areas of knowledge that are essential for effective middle leadership and for good operations include an understanding of the roles of others in the role set (Briggs, 2007). Other essentials are presented in Table 2.15:

Essential knowledge and skills for MMs
knowledge and expertise - For example: pedagogic expertise (Briggs, 2001)
identification with a profession
personal values
ability to relate college function to its national context
ability to relate own professional role to its college context
understanding of college systems
understanding of college needs

Table 2.15 Essential skills and knowledge for MM (Briggs, 2007)

Some of these areas of knowledge presented by Briggs (2007) are detailed below, with key areas identified in the literature where gaps in knowledge and skills can impair MMs' ability to fulfil their role (see Table 2.16):

Origin of the issues	Examples
The identities and associated values held by teachers and MMs	Many academic managers were often teachers before becoming managers and retain their identity as teachers together with the associated values (Gleeson and Shain, 1999) (Subsection 2.3.3).
	The perception of management can be negative (Randle and Brady, 1997) and contradict the view of teachers as professional experts (Briggs, 2004), so retaining a teacher identity with a negative perception of management can be detrimental to the learning environment (Mhlanga, 2017).

Skills developed in teaching and understanding of learning are not being transferred to a professional learning environment	MMs develop skills in providing an environment that is conducive to learning for their students, which motivates their students' professional growth and development (Wolf, 2010; ETF, 2014; Cordingley *et al*., 2015)). However, MMs may have the value that learners need an effective learning environment, but this does not always translate into their teaching team's learning environment as many professional learning designs are found to be ineffective (Darling-Hammond *et al.,* 2017).
The lack of experience and knowledge in an educational setting	The best managers are those who have the skills and mindset to fit with patterns of change within the context (Katzenbach *et al.,* 1996). There is a need for the MM to have a holistic understanding of the organisation, interacting and engaging with SMs and teachers (Busher, 2005). Senior leaders misunderstand the nature of teaching and learning. Increasing numbers of senior leaders originate from business environments as opposed to teaching ones, bringing with them preconceived ideas of education from their own experience and not from an experience of learning enablement (Southworth, 2002). MMs who were originally teachers in FE possess vital pedagogical know-how and the skills from FE needed to facilitate improved learning in FE (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017) but many do not have first-hand experience of either HE teaching or learning.
The lack of subject content knowledge	MMs lead multidisciplinary teams in subject areas where they have no expertise (Briggs, 2006; 2001)

	(Subsection 2.3.1). This highlights the potential loss of credibility and, therefore, agency (Orr and Simmons, 2010).

Table 2.16 Examples of the issues identified related to skills and knowledge that inhibit MMs' role enactment

MMs are seen to have a unique position of proximity to their team and the classroom (Burton and Brundrett, 2005) and they play an essential part in creating high-performance organisations (Briggs, 2004) by influencing their team members (Briggs, 2006); however, where managers lead multidisciplinary teams, the efficacy of their advocacy may be questioned because of their lack of specific subject knowledge and skills in subjects that are not their vocational areas (Orr and Simmons, 2010). This contradicts the notion of closeness to their team (Briggs, 2004). It also links back to the identity of the MM, where managers identify more closely with one vocation and can work more effectively and confidently within that area (Subsection 2.3.3), and to the tension between academic and managerial roles where the manager identifies more with the teaching role and has a negative perception of the managerial one (Subsection 2.3.2).

2.4 Professional learning
For MMs to promote professional learning within their leadership role, they need to have a good understanding of the nature of what it is they are nurturing and supporting (Trotter, 2006). This section reviews: what is involved in professional learning in CHE; what facilitates it; and what inhibits it. This review draws on studies from both FE and CHE to draw together common threads in teacher professional learning (e.g. King *et al.*, 2014; Healey *et al.,* 2014). Reviewing literature from both contexts acknowledges the

diverse nature of CHE and the fact that a high proportion of teachers in FE colleges teach across both FE and HE courses (AoC, 2010) and that this impacts on their professional learning (Eaton, 2015; Galley and Savage, 2014). An outline of the subsections in this section is presented in Table 2.17:

Subsection	Content
2.4.1	A definition of professional learning in educational settings is discussed.
2.4.2	Key aspects of the process of professional learning are summarised which provides a more general understanding of the nature of teacher learning.
2.4.3	Scholarship as an activity for professional learning in CHE is conceptualised.
2.4.4	Literature related to the content of professional learning and factors that drive the content are discussed.
2.4.5	The learning environment and key factors that contribute to catalyse or inhibit professional learning are identified.
2.4.6	The influence of identity on professional learning is investigated.

Table 2.17 Outline of subsections in Section 2.4

A knowledge of what constitutes effective professional learning for CHE teachers, and the environment that best enables it, are essential for MMs to be able to provide opportunities and conditions for professional learning to happen, and to evaluate the impact of professional learning (King *et al.,* 2014; Widdowson and King, 2018). However, clarifying what constitutes effective professional learning for CHE teachers is problematic (Widdowson and King, 2018; Eaton, 2015) and is often subsumed into the general melee of continuous professional development for FE (Simmons and Lea, 2013). Lack of understanding of professional learning within CHE has been cited as a barrier to teachers' learning (Simmons and Lea, 2013; King *et al.,* 2014). The expectation of teaching in HE, for example the content level and skills students need to develop, adds

to the demand on professional learning (Tummons *et al*., 2013). Literature pertaining to these different elements and concepts is discussed in this section. The first concept is professional learning.

2.4.1 Towards a definition of professional learning

In order to construct an understanding of professional learning for CHE teachers, this section reviews literature concerning general teacher learning (Cordingley *et al.*, 2018; Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017) and focuses on professional learning that is expected for CHE learners (Simmons and Lea, 2013; Healey *et al.,* 2014).

The key to teacher professional learning is through changes in practice that improve teaching and learning and, ultimately, have a positive impact on student achievement (Meissel *et al.,* 2016; Johnson and Fargo, 2014). Different studies present the view of professional learning in different ways. These are summarised with examples in Table 2.18:

View of professional learning	Influencing factors	Examples
To become socialised into a profession - developing a professional identity with the discourse, competences and knowledge needed to perform that	Occupational culture (Subsection 2.4.5) - 'a medium through which many innovations and reforms must pass' (Hargreaves, 2012, p.125) Identity - especially pertinent in the CHE context because teachers	In the field of construction, workers move from a culture of 'hypermasculinity' to the culture of 'emotional labour and caring' associated with the teaching profession, where they face administrative, academic and

profession (Appleby and Hillier,2012; Lave, 1996; Wenger,1998; Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012; 2013)	come from vocational professions with professional identities (Galley and Savage, 2014) New teachers are moving into a different professional sphere that can challenge their preconceptions of practice (Timperley *et al.,* 2009).	pedagogical challenges (Page, 2013, p.1). CHE teachers are usually both FE teachers and HE teachers they also have dual identities, which can cause conflict because of the distinctive nature of each (Eaton, 2015; Simmons and Lea, 2013; AoC, 2010). (Subsection 2.4.5)
Continuous development of their personal capacity to adapt to a changing environment (Fullan, 1993; MacBeath, 2009)	Teachers having and taking opportunities to learn from everyone and everything around them and to apply their learning to new situations in an ever-changing context (Campbell *et al.*, 2013; Earl and Hannay, 2011; Stoll *et al.*, 2003)	The importance of sustained learning reflects the complex and constantly changing context characterised, most recently, by area reviews and mergers that produce a challenging work environment (AoC, 2016; Hargreaves and Fink, 2006; Timperley, 2011; Fullan, 2005).
Increasing capacity - to improve teaching and learning and impact on student learning (Darling-Hammond *et al.*,2017;	Access to new knowledge (Coffield *et al.*, 2008)	'significant changes in capability, understanding, knowledge, practices, attitudes and values' (Coffield *et al.*, 2008, p.7).

Timperley *et al.,* 2007; Ingvarson *et al.,*2005)		New knowledge and understanding are integrated with a resulting change in behaviour (King *et al.,* 2014; Timperley, 2011; Colquhoun and Kelly, 2014).
A cognitive process with conscious and unconscious learning resulting in micro-level development (Evans, 2011)	What is *considered to be its/their superiority, displace(s) and replace(s) previously held professional work-related knowledge and/or understanding and/or attitude and/or skills and/or competence (*Evans 2011, p.864).	

Table 2.18 Summary of different views of professional learning, with examples

Learning is a life-long process (Hillier, 2006) that continues after a person gains initial, formal qualifications and is introduced to a profession (Lucas and Unwin, 2009; Eraut, 2000). In this study, capacity is viewed as an increased ability to teach and improve student learning. Thus, it is not solely about adapting to changing contexts but also about changing practice and building teacher capacity and professional culture (Ingvarson et al., 2005).

In CHE, the purpose of professional learning would be to increase professional vocational knowledge and develop updated skills. The different opportunities for learning that have been studied are summarised in Table 2.19:

Example studies	Opportunities for learning
Murray *et al*. (2014); Eraut (2014)	work-based learning in industrial settings
McNiff (2014)	carrying out action research
Crowley (2014); Porritt (2014)	professional dialogue
Crowley (2014)	sharing good practice

Table 2.19 Summary of studies focusing on opportunities for professional learning for teachers

These examples (socialisation as a professional; learning in industrial settings; dialogue and sharing good practice) begin to emphasise the social nature of learning and to identify the different functions of a profession that should be learned (Fenwick and Nerland, 2014). A social theory of learning holds a key position in literature that discusses professional learning (Jensen and Bennett, 2016; Lucas and Unwin, 2009; Lave, 1996) and how it is reflected in studies about learning environments and learning cultures (James and Biesta, 2007; Walker, 2010), is discussed in Subsection 2.4.5. The aspects of learning required for CHE are detailed in Subsection 2.4.3. In Subsection 2.4.2, models of professional learning are investigated to discuss a process of learning – the internalisation and application of what someone is exposed to. The section looks at how decisions are taken regarding what should be internalised and applied in practice. This implies an ability to evaluate new situations, new knowledge and new skills.

2.4.2 A model of professional learning

There is a consensus in literature that learning is a cyclical, iterative process of practice, evaluation and intervention (Kolb, 2014; Greatbatch and Tate, 2018; IfL, 2005). The

cyclical process evolved into a spiral process to acknowledge forward movement and

the sustained nature of change through learning (Timperley *et al.*, 2009) (Figure 2.1):

Figure 2.1 Spiral of professional learning (Timperley *et al.*, 2009)

Timperley's model stipulates that there are five principles underpinning the process

(summarised in Table 2.20):

Principle	Relevant examples from literature	Subsection
A focus on professional learning, not professional development	Learning is viewed as change that results from a serious challenge to one's own practice and values. This change is a consequence of meaning-making, knowledge creation (Timperley, 2008; Argyris, 1996). Double-loop learning as part of the spiral process - questioning any underlying assumptions and permanently changing values and beliefs during the learning process connects with Argyris's (1996) (Figure 2.2) (Argyris, 1996)	2.4.1 2.4.2 (below)
Students' learning needs to be centre stage	Students are the primary indicator of what needs to be learnt for teachers; the need to concentrate on the students who are the final recipients of professional learning (Lea, 2014b; Healey *et al.,* 2014)	2.4.4
A focus on learning knowledge and skills	Work-based learning in an industrial setting (Eraut, 2014); Significant changes in knowledge and practices (Coffield *et al*., 2008); Content knowledge (Greenfield *et al*., 2011)	2.4.1 2.4.4
Systematic enquiry	Scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) (Boyer, 1990) ; The Scholarship Framework (2020)	2.4.3
Practice is underpinned by theory	Scholarship of application (Boyer, 1990); The Scholarship Framework (2020)	2.4.3

Table 2.20 Principles of professional learning, with relevant samples from literature

The iterative nature of the spiral means that learning can be sustainable and continuous (Timperley *et al.,* 2007). One issue is that anyone starting on this cycle needs

prerequisite skills and time to reflect and challenge current practices and new ideas put into practice (Moon, 2004). Reflective practice has emerged as a professional standard for teachers in all sectors (Cordingley *et al.,* 2018; Darling-Hammond *et al.,* 2017) and appears as a prerequisite skill for many models of professional learning (Shortland, 2004). Reflection fits into a spiral model in isolated parts of the process – the critical evaluative stage and in planning the intervention or action stage. However, there are two issues: the representation isolates, in that it refers to individual reflection as a diagnostic analysis tool; being able to develop an awareness of one's own strengths and weaknesses and build on prior knowledge involves reflection (Bruner, 1966; Vygotsky, 1978); it does not represent the social nature of learning. It does, however, acknowledge students' needs as an important driver for professional learning (Timperley *et al.*,2009).

Double loop learning (Argyris, 1992) is important here because of its focus on changing beliefs and values. Argyris (1992) discusses two forms of learning, single-loop and double-loop learning. In contrast to single-loop learning, where practice is not necessarily learnt and adopted, double-loop learning is an extended process that involves the learner reflecting on and questioning any underlying assumptions they hold and consequently altering these assumptions permanently, potentially changing previously held values and beliefs (Argyris, 1996) (Figure 2.2):
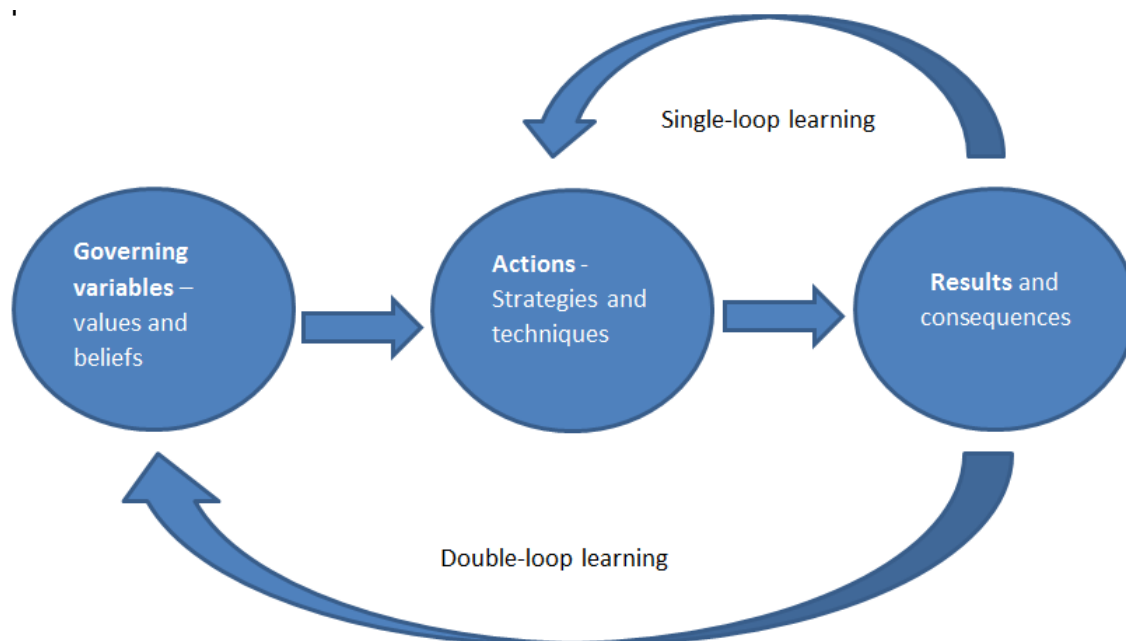
Figure 2.2 Model of single and double-looped learning (adapted from Argyris, 1996)

What causes a change in belief or values has been questioned (Opfer and Pedder, 2011). Often, it is seeing the impact of interventions that results in beliefs being questioned and changed (Guskey, 2000). In CHE, leaders and the learning environment are key components in making teacher learning effective (Widdowson and King, 2018; Briggs, 2006) and could both be catalysing factors acting as facilitators in the learning process (Timperley *et al.,* 2009). Creating an environment where teachers and MMs have the confidence to question their values and beliefs would facilitate sustained professional learning (Fear *et al.*, 2003) and this is explored in Subsection 2.4.5.

For this study, I shall use Timperley *et al.*'s spiral of professional enquiry as a model for professional learning to identify what MMs need to know and how they contribute to professional learning through their roles and other factors discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. In this model, the focus is on systematic enquiry to develop teacher knowledge and skills. This principle fits comfortably with: studies of professional learning in CHE about

appropriate scholarship (Boyer, 1990); the expectations of higher-level teachers (Lea, 2014b). However, Simmons and Lea's (2013) research concluded that there was no clear picture of a typical CHE teacher, and this may cause problems when trying to characterise favourable professional learning for the sector. Research is a core activity in HEIs and is the type of professional learning expected for teachers of HE courses (Bradley *et al.*, 2008; QAA, 2013). The terms 'scholarship' and 'scholarly activity' are both used in reference to research (Waters *et al.,* 2015). The nature of scholarship and how it applies to the CHE sector is discussed in Subsection 2.4.3.

2.4.3 Professional learning in CHE (scholarship)

A broad conceptualisation of scholarship identifying four types of scholarship (scholarship of discovery, application, integration and teaching) was put forward by Boyer (1990) with a suggestion that the different types were not hierarchical but had similar weighting (Figure 2.3):
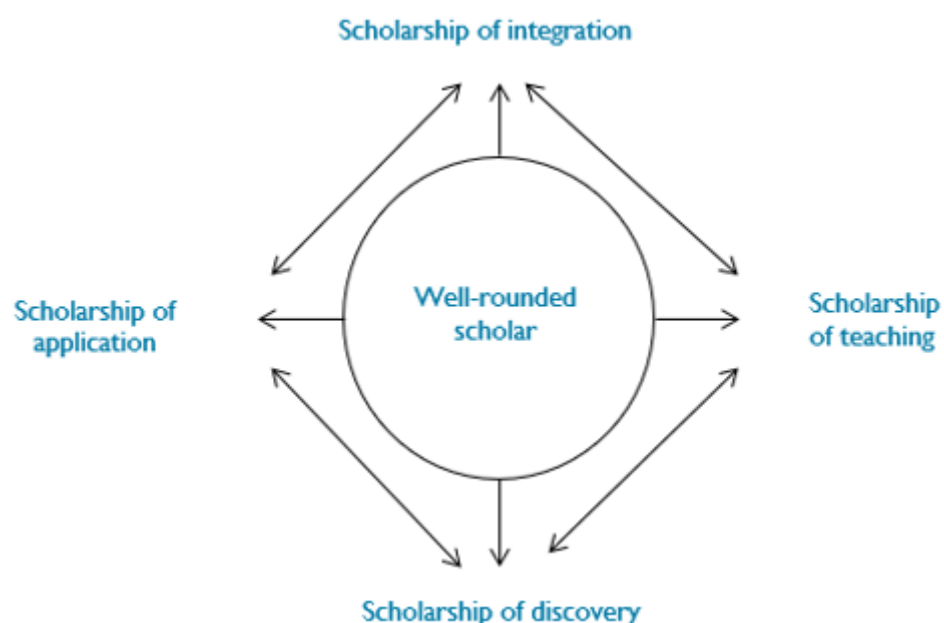
Figure 2.3 Boyer's four scholarships (from Healey *et al.,* 2014)

The four different types of scholarship are summarised in Table 2.21 with examples in research based in CHE:

Type of scholarship	Definition	Relevance
Scholarship of application	The use of knowledge in practical expertise (Eaton, 2015).	The vocational, work-based theme within CHE courses means that practice is underpinned by academic theory related to work practices. Application is at the forefront of FE (Eaton, 2015). Using current industry practice, CHE teachers are ideally equipped to integrate industry knowledge and understanding into the curriculum; an understanding of CHE students' needs helps to design the curriculum, particularly in consideration of those students, the local setting of the college and industry updating (Simmons and Lea, 2013).
Scholarship of integration	The synthesis of knowledge across disciplinary fields over time (Fanghanel *et al.*, 2016)	Issues arising from the different cultures in the different vocational areas hampering synthesis across disciplines (Galley and Savage, 2014; Churches, 2008)
Scholarship of Teaching and learning (SoTL)	The systematic enquiry into the processes of teaching and learning to	Teachers in CHE focus on inquiry into their subject content and their pedagogic practice; in other words, research-informed teaching, SoTL

	develop pedagogy (Eaton, 2015).	(Gray *et al.*, 2014; Healey *et al.*, 2014; The Scholarship Framework, 2020).
Scholarship of discovery	The investigation into and the creation of knowledge (Boyer, 1990).	The scholarship of discovery is the least accessible type of scholarship for CHE teachers. FE colleges have fewer resources for this than HEIs and, for example, they do not have access to funding (Waters *et al.,* 2015) or to peer networks (Simmons and Lea, 2013) and the scholarship of discovery is not prioritised in FE colleges (Lawrence and Hall, 2019).

Table 2.21 Summary of different types of scholarship

Boyer's (1990) conceptualisation of scholarship was identified as being suitable for the context of CHE (The Scholarship Framework, 2020) and contributed to an idea of a well-rounded scholar (Figure 2.3) (Healey *et al.,* 2014). There was a belief that HEIs were obsessed with knowledge for knowledge's sake – scholarship of discovery - with little connection to pedagogy which detracted from their teaching and learning (Boyer, 1990). Boyer's (1990) model of scholarship is particularly well suited to this study and aligns because of the lack of hierarchy attributed to the different types of scholarship identified. This confers equal value on the different scholarship types summarised in Table 2.21. There is no priority given to scholarship of discovery, a scholarship that college-based HE teachers have less access to. In contrast, CHE teachers engage with teaching activities and systematically reflect on those activities to evaluate the impact pedagogy has on their students' learning (Healey *et al.*, 2014). This demonstrates the

relevance of SoTL in CHE; SoTL provides evidence of pedagogy that is effective for learning and incorporates literature for teaching and learning that can be shared with other practitioners (Kern *et al.*, 2015). Boyer's (1990) model underpins the Scholarship Framework which demonstrates that the different types of scholarship are adopted in CHE research and scholarship culture (Lea *et al.*, 2020).

Some CHE teachers have had experience of scholarship of discovery – that is research that leads to the discovery of new knowledge while studying towards HE degrees (Eaton, 2015) but others are less familiar with the term scholarship, which results in an uneasiness and confusion as to its meaning and purpose, inhibiting their engagement with it (Feather, 2012; Young, 2002).

The multidisciplinary settings in CHE lend themselves to embedding Boyer's (1990) scholarship of integration into this context. However, the integration highlights the hinderance to progress that common terms with different meanings can have because of with the distinct cultures and ethos of vocational areas (Galley and Savage, 2014). One example, drawing on work by Churches (2008), is a confusion over the word 'evaluate'. A group of civil engineers, who had an objective understanding of the word, gave definitions of 'evaluate' that contrasted with those from practitioners with an early-years background who took a more subjective approach (Galley and Savage, 2014; Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). Practice as research is therefore influenced by the nature of the discipline. McKinney (2012) finds that SoTL has the capacity to work across disciplines (Kreber, 2009; Shulman, 2005).

In FE, the focus moves away from direct research to forms of scholarship that promote the teaching and learning of students (King and Widdowson, 2012), for example undertaking action research in the classroom (Harris, 2003). In Boyer's (1990) terms, there is more emphasis on the value of SoTL and less on that of the scholarship of discovery.

Drawing on case studies in CHE, King and Widdowson (2009) demonstrated that the teachers were engaging in research and scholarly activity, resulting in sustained change in practice. More college-based, HE-specific professional learning is needed (King and Widdowson, 2012). Students and teachers need to develop their research skills for their HE studies (Gray *et al.*, 2014). Teachers participating in research projects gain increased confidence in their own research capacity and share this experience with their CHE students (Dutton and Rapley, 2014). There is evidence of emerging research cultures in the shape of research clusters, seminars and internal conferences during which research findings are exchanged (Simmons and Lea, 2013; King *et al.,* 2014). There is a call for widespread recognition of the value of vocational scholarly activity (King *et al.,* 2014). However, some of activities are quite alien to teachers in FE and their managers (Feather, 2012), for example, research publications (Widdowson and King, 2018). Literature discussed in Section 2.5, suggests MMs should have knowledge of, and provide these opportunities within their leadership for learning role (Subsection 2.3.4). Support for managers and teachers alike need to be developed and nurtured in a CHE context (Simmons and Lea, 2013).

CHE teachers' self-perceptions relate to their strong association to industry in FE (Galley and Savage, 2014). The focus of these teachers is on being vocational experts and teachers, not researchers, and, as such, they focus on the students and their progress. Some teachers are members of professional associations and communities of practice, valuing strong links with employers, where they develop their practice alongside their teaching and/or vocational peers to develop teaching skills and vocational knowledge (Fuller and Unwin, 2008; Simmons and Lea, 2013). The research element adds a third identity as scholar to the dual identity (IfL, 2005) already ascribed to them, and highlights the need for colleges to think more strategically about professional learning (Widdowson and King, 2018) in order to develop accessible collaborative frameworks within which to develop competence (Fanghanel *et al.*, 2016). It is beneficial to consider the process of research as well as the product, to develop research structures that enable teachers to access the process (Davies, 2009) and identify the content of professional learning (Lea, 2014a). As part of this strategy, the content of professional learning needs to consider the subject knowledge and skills needed by students at that level of study, for example: research skills (Timperley *et al.,* 2007; Cordingley *et al.,* 2015; IfL, 2010); the pedagogical knowledge needed by teachers (IfL, 2010); and the pedagogical content knowledge needed to make choices about the best 'tools' to use to support students' learning (Cordingley *et al.,* 2015; IfL, 2010). The nature of the content of professional learning in Subsection 2.4.4.

2.4.4 Content of professional learning

Professional learning is a process which improves the capacity and/or effectiveness of professionals in their role by gaining increased, differing knowledge, and skills that can

shape practice, as introduced in Subsection 2.4.1. The nature of the subject matter and skills assimilated during the learning process are as relevant as the process itself (Gilpin, 2007; Darling-Hammond *et al.,* 2017) and are context specific (Healey *et al.,* 2014). The content of professional learning is driven by multiple factors which include the content of the courses, the diversity of students and the skills and knowledge students need to develop at this course level (Widdowson and King, 2018). Decisions affecting the practice of skills and knowledge can be linked to the leadership of professional learning (Lawrence and Hall, 2019). These are investigated in this section and are linked to the types of knowledge that teachers and MMs require for their roles in CHE.

Teachers must have three fundamental types of knowledge: content knowledge; pedagogical knowledge; and pedagogical content knowledge of learning (Greenleaf *et al.,* 2011). These are defined in Table 2.22:

Category of knowledge	Definition	Examples from CHE where available
Content knowledge	Knowledge and skills related to the subject taught (Cordingley *et al.,* 2015; IfL, 2010)	Teachers bring their industry experience and knowledge to the classroom (Simmons and Lea, 2013). With industries evolving, these skills and knowledge need to be updated in the industrial workplace (Murray *et al.,* 2014; Eraut, 2014).
Pedagogical knowledge	The categories of skills and knowledge are associated with teaching skills (Greenleaf *et al.,*	This includes understanding how students learn and knowing how students' needs define the strategies and techniques that are needed, for example, to encourage students to

	2011; Cordingley *et al.,* 2015)	approach knowledge more critically and analytically by promoting the students' confidence in questioning and exploration (Greenleaf *et al.,* 2011) adapting to students' needs such as developing research skills (Gray *et al.,* 2014);
Pedagogic content knowledge	Teaching skills specific to the subject content (Greenleaf *et al.,* 2011; Cordingley *et al.,* 2015).	

Table 2.22 Categories of knowledge (Greenleaf *et al.,* 2011)

MMs must have the same knowledge about professional learning to be able to support teacher learning. This is the case both in general (Shulman, 1987) and in subject specificity (Cordingley *et al.,* 2018). Research studies of professional learning that has a positive impact on student outcomes provide examples of what teachers need to know in order to decide which pedagogic strategies to use effectively for students (Timperley *et al.,* 2007). A synthesis of 97 studies identified professional strategies for effective teaching (Timperley *et al.,* 2007). These can be adapted to students of CHE, and include: developing students as independent learners (QAA, 2012); and an ability to understand knowledge barriers and how to implement solutions to overcome these barriers (Timperley *et al.,* 2007).

Approaches to effective professional learning have been identified. These include: active learning where new practices are modelled by experts who can provide feedback and support in the form of coaching to show and share expertise as teachers put new

knowledge into practice (Darling-Hammond *et al.,* 2017). Research and scholarship feature in CHE and students and teachers need to develop the required skills (Lea, 2014b). They need to understand research and research-informed teaching, as students' learning increasingly involves research-led professional development characterised by systematic enquiry that needs to be flexible enough to address institutional and disciplinary diversity (Lea, 2014b). In addition to theory-situated content and related academic skills, the wider curriculum broadens areas of teaching to soft-skills content (Parry, 2012). This involves the development of students' skills and knowledge for their practical employability (Simmons, 2014).

Contrasts are made between deep approaches and surface approaches to learning, and between active and passive learning methods. These contrasts are made to ensure knowledge not only has meaning but is also shaped in some way while developing the students as autonomous learners, independent of the teacher (Lea, 2014b). Such situated skills consist of, for example, the ability to develop skills in others, and the ability to develop confidence through peer-assessment and self-assessment (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Hattie, 2009). These are also skills that are outlined in standards for teachers in, for example, the General Teaching Council of Scotland (2012) and the Society of Education and Training (2014). These publications do not, however, reflect CHE specifically as they are based within the school context and FE, respectively.

As mentioned in Subsection 2.4.3, colleges need to think strategically about promoting systematic enquiry and scholarly activity to focus on the knowledge needs of CHE teachers. This includes providing and maintaining a positive learning environment,

which is seen as an element of the MM's role (Subsection 2.5.1). The nature of learning

environments is discussed in Subsection 2.4.5.

2.4.5 Learning environment and its contribution to professional learning

In addition to exploring who and what is involved in professional learning and whether

it is an individual or social activity, the conditions that encourage professional learning

are a feature of research (Fenwick and Nerland, 2014; Bathmaker and Avis, 2005).

Knowledge creation, skills development and change through learning can be very

demanding because they cause people to challenge their own assumptions about

practice (Timperley *et al.,* 2009). The social theory of learning relates to learning

processes as a social process, influencing and influenced by social features such as the

work environment. The inseparability of learning from the workplace highlights the

importance of the working environment, where its rules, tools and social relations act

as the setting for professional learning (Fenwick and Nerland, 2014). A review of

literature that examines the conditions of professional learning in the workplace and

work environment is needed in order to identify potential inhibitors or catalysts of the

working environment. The working environment can inhibit or catalyse professional

learning (Fuller and Unwin, 2003; Jephcote *et al*., 2008).

The creation and maintenance of a positive learning environment is vital, if the aim is to

improve learning (Fear *et al.*, 2003; Tagg and Barr, 1995) and, for CHE, a culture of 'HE-

ness' (Simmons and Lea, 2013; King *et al.,* 2014; Williams *et al.*, 2013). Employees need

to feel confident enough to question their fundamental values and beliefs and to try out

new strategies (Fear *et al.*, 2003). A positive working environment is the emphasis in

research from Fuller and Unwin (2004), who provide characteristics on the

expansive/restrictive continuum, shown in Table 2.23. An organisational environment

needs to be expansive for work-based learning to be productive (Fuller and Unwin,

2004):

Expansive	Restrictive
Participation in multiple communities of practice inside and outside the workplace	Restricted participation in multiple communities of practice
Primary community of practice has shared 'participatory memory'; culture inheritance of apprenticeship	Primary community of practice little 'participatory memory': no or little tradition of apprenticeships
Breadth: access to learning fostered by cross-company experience built into programme	Narrow: access to learning restricted in terms of tasks/knowledge/location
Access to range of qualifications including knowledge-based vocational qualifications	Access to competence-based qualification only
Planned time off-the-job including college attendance and for reflection	Virtually all on-job: limited opportunities for reflection
Gradual transition to full participation, Apprenticeship aim: round expert/full participant	Fast transition as quick as possible; Apprenticeship aim: partial expert/partial participant
Post-apprenticeship vision: progression for career	Post-apprenticeship vision: static in job
Explicit institutional recognition of, and support for apprentice status as a learning	Ambivalent institutional recognition of and support for apprentice as a learner
Named individual act as dedicated support for apprentices	No dedicated individual, ad-hoc support
Apprenticeship is used as a vehicle for aligning goals of developing the individual and organisational capability	Apprenticeship is used to tailor individual capability to organisational need
Apprenticeship design fosters opportunity to extend identity through boundary crossing	Apprenticeship design limits opportunity to extend identity; little boundary crossing experienced
Reification of apprenticeship highly developed e.g. through documents, symbols, language, tools, and accessible to apprentices	Limited reification of apprenticeship patchy access to reificatory aspects of practice

Table 2.23 Characteristics on the expansive/restrictive continuum (Fuller and Unwin, 2004)

Fuller and Unwin's research is based on apprenticeships and acknowledges both formal and informal learning. They highlight three interrelated themes for professional learning: participation in communities of practice; personal development; and institutional arrangements. When focusing on the FE sector, MMs and teachers lack time to engage with expansive learning (Fuller and Unwin, 2006, 2008), as noted in Subsection 2.2.1. This is an issue for MMs, whose responsibilities are time-consuming and take their attention away from supporting teaching and learning (Gurr and Drysdale, 2013). Expansive learning encourages deep, long-term learning by offering more than individual opportunities and moving the focus beyond a specific organisation (Fuller and Unwin, 2003). This assists in developing a wider-ranging understanding of practices, and facilitates new approaches to working that can be applied to the learning environment for CHE teachers and used to identify restrictive (inhibitory) and expansive (catalytic) characteristics from data collected from colleges in this study. This is analysed in Sections 4.3-4.13 and Sections 5.1-5.3.

An important theme cutting across Fuller and Unwin's (2004) expansive and restrictive continuum is that of work-based culture. Culture is a very important variable in learning (James and Biesta, 2007; Eaton, 2015; Widdowson and King, 2018). There are several 'layers' of culture discussed in literature summarised in Table 2.24. Generally, culture is 'a social phenomenon; it is what a society, or a people share, and which enables us to live as a society' (Jarvis, 2007, p.24). This social nature reflects the social nature of learning and the norms and expectations shared within an organisation such as an FE college.

Level of culture	Definition
Organisational culture	a socially-constructed phenomenon and comprises the acceptable values, beliefs and practices held as norms by stakeholders in the organisation (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010).
Occupational culture	part of the socialisation process involved in learning a profession (Appleby and Hillier, 2012; Lave, 1996), as discussed in Subsection 2.4.1.

Table 2.24 Summary of organisational and occupational culture

The prevailing culture depends on the interplay between different factors, norms and values, at a national level, an organisational level and an occupational level (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010), and impacts on the type of learning that occurs through interaction and communication with others in the context (Hodkinson *et al.*, 2007).

Appropriate cultural values are a prerequisite for professional learning to happen, and to promote both individual and organisational learning (Yeo, 2002). Appropriate values are needed in order to overcome resistance and benefit from sharing good practice and sustainable improvement (Wang and Ahmed, 2003). If the norms are counterproductive this could inhibit the contribution of a member of staff to learning (Trowler, 2008). Professional learning can challenge established cultural values (Timperley *et al.*, 2007). Some attitudes of management within FE colleges result in certain types of development going unnoticed and unrecognised (Feather, 2011). This includes a lack of focus by management on scholarship in FE (Lawrence and Hall, 2019). Suggestions made are that

FE needs a cultural shift to acknowledge the uniqueness of CHE teachers (Simmons and Lea, 2013), who are expected to participate in scholarly research (QAA, 2013), defined in 2.4.3, that improve teaching and learning (King and Widdowson, 2009).

Cultural values can extend beyond, for example, a single organisation (Simmons and Lea, 2013). In the context of CHE, this may be with a partner university. Other organisations in the HE partnership can be involved, such as other partner colleges or employers who can contribute to curriculum design (BIS, 2012). Sharing different practices means people can learn from colleagues whose work practices are influenced by contrasting theories of learning and who have different occupational cultures. Complexity arises from collaborative learning between students and faculties with different cultural characteristics (Furco and Moelly, 2012). Some exchanges of practice can lead to new practices being incorporated into the professional's 'toolkit' during the learning process in, for example, double-loop learning (Argyris, 1996) as discussed in Subsection 2.4.2. Leaders of learning need to be able to navigate these complexities; if the different cultural values and norms are not navigated effectively, resistance can be encountered (Trowler, 2008).

The culture at national level also impacts decisions made about professional learning in organisations (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010). FE is highly mediated by the requirements of the state and cannot be de-contextualised from broader current and historic social, economic and political forces (Keep, 2006). This can drive the expected content of professional learning because of national priorities, such as literacy and mathematics and the 'broader' curriculum (Ofsted, 2019), discussed in Subsection 2.4.4.

2.4.6 The influence of identity on professional learning

The aim of FE colleges is to provide highly skilled workers for local employers (King and Widdowson, 2009). This aim informs the message transmitted within the college as it influences the culture of the college (discussed in Section 1.2). Colleges have a distinct nature and host a range of different vocations with different professional identities (Feather, 2010) (see Subsection 2.3.3). These professional areas each has its associated ethos and culture, which manifest themselves in the inter-relationships, dress codes, and patterns and hours of work traditional in workplaces (Hofstede *et al.*, 2010; Galley and Savage, 2014) and shape attitudes towards, for example scholarship (see Subsection 2.4.3).

Identity, as part of cultural practice, influences the process of learning (Reid *et al*., 2008). The complexity of numerous identities in the social context is a key factor in several research studies (Feather, 2010; Blackmore, 2007; Becher and Trowler, 2001). Learning and the knowledge gained can cause changes in behaviour and attitudes as a person's identity evolves or changes; a reciprocal impact where changes to practice or situations, and the impact resulting from these changes, results in changes to identity or vice versa (King *et al.,* 2014; Lave, 1996).

The context, its environment and culture, and the identities of the employees clearly emerge as factors influencing professional learning (Galley and Savage, 2014; Darling-Hammond *et al.,* 2017). An ability to understand and steer teams of teachers through environmental influences is essential for leaders of learning (Briggs, 2004). Effective professional learning needs to be collaborative and supported, providing models and constructive feedback to facilitate improvements in practice (Darling-Hammond *et al.,*

2017; IfL, 2010). These themes have an impact on the approach to leadership that promotes professional learning, discussed in Section 2.5.

2.5 Leadership theories

This section reviews literature that connects leadership to teacher professional learning, discussed in Section 2.4. It investigates the purpose of leadership connected to learning and pertinent themes that emerge from empirical research. The intention is to gain insight into the concept of leadership for learning, and how leadership, the environment and other factors can inhibit or catalyse professional learning. Consequently, knowledge of how MMs' contribution to sustainable teacher professional learning in a leadership for learning role in CHE is developed.

Leadership is a contested notion (Southworth, 2002). In addition to discussions that address who leaders are, there are questions around whether leadership is a skill set, a pattern of behaviours, a quality or an approach. Leadership linked to behaviours corresponds to what constitutes a role, as discussed in Section 2.1. Leadership in an organisation in which different variables influence behaviour is a 'dynamic process in a group' (Cole, 1996, p.51). Leaders influence the deeds and thoughts of other colleagues (Gronn, 2003). Leadership is part of what managers do (Mintzberg, 1990; Gleeson and Shain, 1999); there is not one single leader in an organisation but, rather, leadership is a shared endeavour (Gronn, 2000; Wallace, 2002; Leithwood *et al.,* 1992). Student involvement in leadership also appears in studies that focus on CHE improvement (Lea, 2014a). Leadership within an organisation is a socially-constructed structure, with patterns of action and communications throughout the organisation (Ogawa and

Bossert, 1995). Leadership is a form of social influence in context (Brown and Rutherford, 1998).

There are numerous leadership approaches, involving different behaviours. In this section, three different approaches to leadership, and their associated behaviours, have been chosen for scrutiny because of their link to effective learning, improvement and change. These are: transformational leadership; instructional leadership; and leadership for learning (Bass, 1985; Rhodes and Brundrett, 2010; Leithwood *et al.*, 2010; Southworth, 2002). An overview of the three different subsections is presented in Table 2.25:

Subsection	Content and relevance
2.5.1	Instructional and transformational leadership are discussed. Both approaches lead to change; one is based in general business, the other in educational settings
2.5.2	Leadership for learning is discussed, with its central focus on learning.
2.5.3	Factors identified in Subsection 2.3.1 (For example, conflicting and complementary expectations in their roles) and in Subsection 2.3.3 (for example, professional identities) are developed further.

Table 2.25 Overview of the subsections in Section 2.5

The aim is to gain insight into the different behaviours associated with the functions of leading learning and to identify the functions enacted by MMs in their leadership roles to contribute to teacher professional learning.

Both roles (discussed in Section 2.3) and learning (discussed in Section 2.4) should be viewed in specific contexts in order to reach more accurate interpretations (Ogawa and Bossert, 1995; Eaton, 2015). For this study, the context is CHE. However, much of the literature about leadership for learning is based on and in school improvement (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2010; Leithwood *et al.,* 2010; Southworth, 2002). Models from the school context include MacBeath's (2012) three-tiered model (Figure 2.4) and Hallinger and Heck's (2011) full model of leadership for learning (Figure 2.5). Bolden *et al.* (2012) provides a characterisation of academic leadership in HEIs. However, a lack of models within the context of CHE is evident (Potter and Devecchi, 2020). For this reason, the majority of selected literature included features of school-based research which focused on teachers rather than on lecturers in HE. Thus by drawing from a base of literature regarding the leadership of school improvement and the enhancement of teaching and learning in the contexts of FE (IfL, 2012) and HE (Blackmore and Blackwell, 2006; Potter and Devecchi, 2020) in addition to CHE (Lea, 2014a; Widdowson and King, 2018; Lea *et al.,* 2020), the aim is to develop a better overall understanding of the concept of leadership for learning and what and whom this involves. The breadth of literature also acknowledges the diversity of CHE and its teachers (AoC, 2010). It will be compared to the typologies of the MM's role presented in Subsection 2.3.1 to determine whether there are parallels with or additions to the typologies when leadership theories are considered.

2.5.1 Transformational and instructional leadership

This section considers two main approaches and how they relate to MMs. These are summarised in Table 2.26:

Aspect	Transformational leadership	Instructional leadership
Context of studies	General organisations (Bass, 1985)	Educational organisations (Southworth, 2002)
Purpose of approach	To create change with the aim of transforming an organisation (Bass, 1985)	Improving instruction in education (Robinson *et al.,* 2008)
Highlighted aspects of the approach	Vision, mission and empowerment (Bass, 1985; Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood and Jantzi, 1999, 2000; Silins, 1994)	Educational and pedagogical leadership, introducing a pluralistic approach where leadership is socially constructed (Hallinger, 2011; Hallinger *et al*., 1996; Heck *et al*., 1990; Kleine-Kracht, 1993; Leitner, 1994; Wiley, 2001)
Focus	The qualities and actions of a senior leader that motives employees (Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood and Jantzi, 1999, 2000; Silins, 1994)	The actions of senior leaders (Southworth, 2002)

Table 2.26 Comparison between transformational and instructional leadership approaches

Transformational leadership is less relevant than instructional leadership as the change is not specifically related to learning or improvement and does not include any reference to the MMs' contribution. The meta-analysis, introduced and discussed in Subsection 2.3.1, carried out by Robinson *et al.* (2008) focuses on instructional leadership. It identifies leadership actions to improve instruction through frequent interaction and engagement with teachers. These include the development, through professional

learning, of the skills of problem-solving, updating possible curricular knowledge and giving instruction. However, a criticism concluded that more emphasis was needed on evidence of the impact on student outcomes, learning rather than on teaching (Southworth, 2002; Robinson *et al.,* 2008). In addition, Southworth (2002) argues for more inclusive, differentiated, holistic and learning-centred approaches, and highlights the importance of leaders being reflective practitioners while creating and maintaining a culture and an environment conducive to learning (Southworth, 2002).

Different leadership approaches have been documented that contribute to enhanced learning and acknowledge the involvement of MMs (Bass, 1985; Leithwood *et al.*, 2010; MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). Three different routes by which leaders can have an impact on learning have been identified (Hallinger and Heck, 1999): the first is directly through personal interventions; the second is by working with teachers; and the third is indirectly by creating an environment and structure that provides the space required for creativity and innovation (IfL, 2012; Hallinger and Heck, 1999). It is through this third, indirect route that senior leaders influence students' outcomes (Leithwood *et al.,* 2010). However, Southworth points out that some senior leaders in FE colleges no longer come from a teaching and learning background, and so they may not influence the professional learning of their teaching teams (Southworth, 2002). Leadership permeates organisations, including the middle layer of management (Gurr and Drysdale, 2013). MMs' influence can penetrate different layers in education settings (Thomas and Linstead, 2002; Frost, 2012), and leadership is an integral part of their role (Gleeson and Shain, 1999; De Nobile, 2018). MMs contribute to leadership of learning in education (Gleeson and Shain, 1999).

Approaches that refocus leadership on improving both teaching and learning are dealt with in the remainder of this chapter. There are some commonalities between instructional leadership and leadership for learning, and these are discussed. Research focusing on leadership for learning embedded within primary and secondary school improvement is built on the concept of instructional leadership, but this changes the emphasis from teaching onto learning.

2.5.2 Leadership for learning

Leadership for learning approaches have learning as their central focus. 'Leadership for learning' has come to subsume features of instructional leadership, transformational leadership and shared leadership, discussed above (Hallinger, 2003b; Heck and Hallinger, 2009) but their principles differ, as is presented in this section. The school context has been the focus of research on leadership for learning (MacBeath, 2006; Mulford and Silins, 2009). School leaders employ such approaches to achieve important school outcomes, with a focus on student learning (Leithwood *et al*., 2010; Mulford and Silins, 2003).

This section focuses on the notion of leadership for learning (MacBeath, 2006; Swaffield, 2008; Townsend and MacBeath, 2012; Townsend, 2011), in order to identify those characteristics of this approach to leadership that align with improving teaching and learning. This approach has a persistent focus on enhancing improvement and learning through building sustainable capacity (Timperley, 2011; Fullan, 2005). Initial attempts to define the practices of those people who lead schools came from researchers investigating the qualities, actions and characteristics of more effective school SMs (Sammons *et al.*, 1994; Leithwood *et al.*, 2006), and how senior leadership affects

students' learning (see, for example, Heck and Hallinger, 2009; Robinson *et al*., 2008). The effectiveness of the different characteristics is discussed to identify which characteristics have the most impact on learning (Hallinger and Heck, 2010). Various analyses have explored the degree to which leadership behaviours influence learning directly or indirectly (Robinson *et al.,* 2008; Leithwood *et al.*, 2006). Participation in teacher learning is one of the greatest leadership strategies identified for improvement (Robinson *et al.,* 2008).

A meta-analysis of five reports on large leadership for learning studies from different countries was produced (Dempster, 2009). The synthesis is summarised in Table 2.27:

Leadership fundamentals	Examples of evidence supporting the fundamentals	Links to other sections or subsections
A focus on improving the lives of students through achievement	A focus on student learning (Hallinger, 2003b; Day *et al.*, 2010; Leithwood *et al.*, 2006, 2010; MacBeath and Cheng, 2008; Mulford and Silins, 2003; Robinson *et al.*, 2008; Hargreaves and Fink, 2006;Chapman and Harris, 2004; Dempster, 2009).	This informed decision-making can be linked to the process of understanding the context and the roles within an organisation that are advocated for effective MMs (Mintzberg, 1990), Subsection 2.3.1 (Table 2.9)
Context	Learning is situated in a context (Eaton, 2015) A leader needs to be able to read the context and make informed decisions with that understanding in mind, in order to channel capacity and support the school in its endeavour (Dempster, 2009)	Context shapes and creates roles (Hallinger and Heck, 2011); Subsection 2.1.1; (Ogawa and Bossert, 1995) in Section 2.3
Human agency	A move away from individual leadership to a shared view of leadership, which includes middle leaders (Dempster, 2009)	Shared leadership across an organisation in Subsection 2.5.2 (Waterhouse and Møller, 2009); Subsection 2.5.1 (Hallinger, 2003b; Heck and Hallinger, 2009; MacBeath and Cheng, 2008; Marks and Printy, 2003; Mulford and Silins, 2009)

Table 2.27 Summary of leadership for learning fundamentals (Dempster, 2009)

These fundamentals appear in different proposed models of leadership for learning. For example, MacBeath (2012) produced a three-tier model (Figure 2.4) incorporating contributions by teachers, leaders and international research projects. It is based on

four key words: agency, activity, leadership and learning. The definitions of these key

aspects are found in Table 2.28:

Concept	Definition
Agency	the ability to make decisions and act
Activity	describes what is done
Leadership	influential and directive actions of leaders of learning at all levels of the organisation
Learning	development and sustained improvement of skills and knowledge by everyone associated with the organisation students and staff

Table 2.28 Definitions of key terms in the three-tiered model (MacBeath, 2012)

The model reveals the complexity involved in bringing leadership and learning together,

with many different aspects in operation (MacBeath, 2012).

Figure 2.4 The wedding cake, or three-tier model (MacBeath, 2012)

The focus on learning is the first of five key principles, identified by MacBeath and his co-researchers, which filter through all three tiers. The centrality of the focus on learning is a constant theme in different studies, for example Hargreaves and Fink (2006). The second principle is the provision of conditions for learning; that is, enhancing the emotional, physical and social environment so that learning is optimised (DfES, 2004). The promotion of good relationships between the various players and resourcing the environment appropriately enhance learning (Chapman and Harris, 2004). The aspects of a learning environment that could inhibit learning are identified and diminished, while

those that catalyse learning are heightened (DfES, 2004). The third principle is dialogue, which challenges and extends practice with a view to improving learning (Timperley *et al.*, 2007). The sources of dialogue and expertise can be internal (Chapman and Harris, 2004) or external. These can reduce the perpetuation of the status quo (known as morphostasis), which is held as a potential inhibitor of learning (Lumby, 2001). The fourth principle is shared leadership, with each level of leadership working in synergy and collaborating, with a focus on learning. With shared leadership comes shared accountability, the fifth principle. In addition, a positive culture with high expectations and the development of learning communities with all members working in collaboration is important (Fitzgerald and Gunter, 2006). Motivation and good morale in an atmosphere that nurtures honesty, trust and openness is at the core of the community to ensure sustained performance (Chapman and Harris, 2004).

There are some criticisms of this model. The first is the exclusion of the wider societal and cultural influence indicated as important in studies discussed in Subsection 2.5.3. There is a need to add another dimension to MacBeath's model in order to incorporate an outer shell of cultural/social factors with bidirectional arrows that indicate the movement of influence (Widdowson and King, 2018; Hallinger and Heck, 2011). Bolden *et al.* (2012) produced a model of academic leadership in HE. This model also omits the wider societal pressures on leadership. These pressures add more complexity to the models. The sustainability of learning is an additional emphasis (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006). Actions related to sustained learning are radical in their implications for practice, as their adoption by participating schools exemplifies slow but deep learning (Claxton, 1997; Entwistle, 1987; Hargreaves and Fink, 2006).

The notion of sustainable leadership is developed in this section. This focus on sustainability in leadership for learning is expressed as capacity building (Byrne-Jimenez and Orr, 2012). That is, sustained leadership over time, and the development of the skills and knowledge of individuals in the organisation, are integral to the improvement of schools (Cordingley *et al.,* 2015; IfL, 2010). Sustainable leadership models have been proposed that concentrate on developing the capacity of staff in the secondary sector (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006; Davies, 2009). However, these were deemed inappropriate for the specific operational environments in the post-16 sector (Lambert, 2011) because of context-specific subject matter and skills needed (Healey *et al.,* 2014; Darling-Hammond *et al.,* 2017; QAA, 2013). Lambert (2011) produced a model that was more applicable to the FE sector, and this was extended by Lambert (2012, 2013) in order to resolve several current issues arising in FE colleges. These issues include the documented decline in the number of sufficiently well-skilled people going into principal roles (Fearson, 2003; Clancy, 2005) and a shift away from an academic approach towards a managerial approach under the pressures of accountability and efficiency as noted by Randle and Brady (1997), discussed in Subsection 2.3.2.

The notion of sustainability in leadership at all levels is appealing because it indicates longevity or an ability to adapt to the constant change evident in all educational sectors (Hargreaves and, Fink, 2006; Davies, 2009). In fact, leadership for learning is one of the principles in Hargreaves and Fink's seven-principle model of sustainable leadership (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006). In Davies's model (2009), the element of development at all levels is also a feature and this is retained in Lambert's proposed model (Lambert, 2011). There is reference to the building of staff capacity in Lambert's model with the

objective of producing leaders, but his second principle also includes explicit orientation to sustainable improvement.

The focus of these models is on developing the skills of SMs and, as such, they may not lend themselves to the question of how MMs improve teaching and learning. However, some elements of the model, such as involvement in creating a vision (Busher and Harris, 1999) or allowing time and space to reflect (Shortland, 2004), could help professional learning and improve teaching and learning if the focus were not on the senior staff but on the middle management (Robinson *et al.,* 2008). Leadership distributed among other members of staff whose responsibility it is to face the challenge of promoting teacher learning and changes in practice would benefit the students (Robinson *et al.,* 2008; Timperley, 2008).

In Timperley's (2008) model, the students' learning is a start point then working back from the outcomes to the teaching practices prevalent in improving schools (Timperley, 2008). In this way, the focus is on leaders having a learner-centred mindset that promotes teacher learning through persistent enquiry (Timperley *et al.,* 2009; Lea, 2015). This differs from other models, as the focal point is not about traits, tasks, and relationships but about the intense moral purpose of promoting deep student learning (Entwistle, 1987). Deep learning also figures in sustainable leadership models (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006; Davies, 2009). The need to create learning-orientated designs that generate appropriate conditions for professional learning is highlighted (Robinson *et al.,* 2008; Timperley*,* 2009). Robinson *et al. (*2008) proposed five leadership dimensions that included leaders promoting and participating in teacher learning and

development, in other words, professional learning. Managers of HE have a difficult role balancing the tensions between quality of research and teaching and learning (Lea, 2015).

School leadership both influences (Day *et al.*, 2016) and is influenced by these school-level conditions (Hallinger and Heck, 1996, 2010; Mulford and Silins, 2009). These studies examine the impact of leadership on student outcomes (Hallinger and Heck, 1996, 2010; Mulford and Silins, 2009). Leadership does not directly impact student learning; rather, its impact is mediated by school-level processes and conditions and demonstrate the complexity of leadership in education as a multi-faceted, multi-directional social concept (Hallinger and Heck, 1996; Leithwood *et al*., 2010; Robinson *et al*., 2008). Many different factors influencing leadership behaviours are detailed in Subsection 2.5.3.

2.5.3 Factors influencing leadership behaviours

In Subsection 2.5.2, in the discussion about leadership, a number of factors were identified that impact on leadership for learning, for example: the social, emotional and physical environment; the relationships between different stakeholders (Chapman and Harris, 2004); and perceptions of the pressures of accountability and audit on college cultures (Randle and Brady, 1997). In this section, Hallinger and Heck's (2010) work is discussed to identify further factors that inhibit and catalyse leadership for learning. They produced a model conceptualising leadership effects on learning that evolved from a direct-effects model of leadership for learning through to a mediated-effects model that identified, for example, school-level processes and conditions, and contextual

influences (Hallinger and Heck, 1996, 2011). The result was the complex full model of

leadership for learning seen in Figure 2.5:
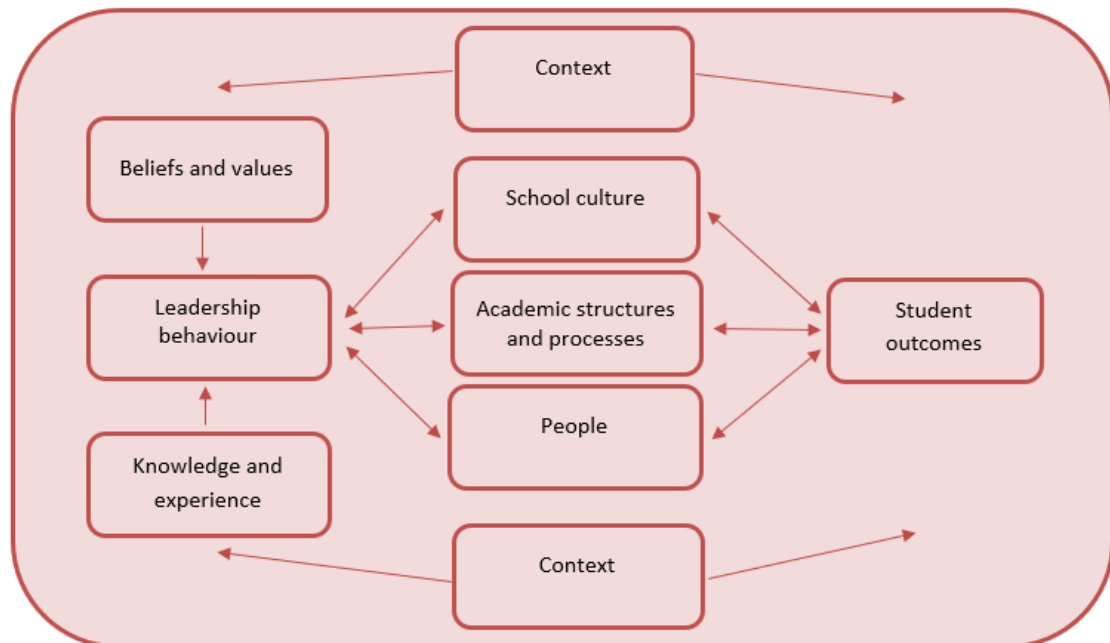
Figure 2.5 Full model of leadership for learning (Hallinger and Heck, 2011)

Hallinger and Heck's model emphasises the considerations for leadership for learning in

the context of the institutional culture and environment, in addition to societal culture.

Leadership for learning is perceived to be a socially-constructed notion influenced by

and influencing external and internal conditions (Widdowson and King, 2018; Lumby,

2001). A model of leadership for learning should, therefore, include reference to the

factors included in this model as an overarching category of influence: context.

This model frames the contribution that leadership makes to school improvement and

student learning (Hallinger and Heck, 2011). It identifies six categories of influence on

leadership behaviours. In this model, the leaders' influence is reciprocally mediated

through four of the different categories: context; school culture; academic structures and processes; and people. Two categories – beliefs and values, and knowledge and experience – influence leadership behaviours and are shown to have a different relationship to leadership behaviours; there is a non-reciprocal impact in that the arrows between them and leadership behaviours are monodirectional. It is these last two categories and potential issues with the model related to these categories and their monodirectional, non-reciprocal influence, which are explored first. The beliefs and values elements are explored second.

The non-reciprocal influence of leadership behaviours on values and beliefs, and experience and knowledge, is a potential concern. There is a focus on learning in each of the leadership for learning models discussed in Subsection 2.5.2. Leaders, in this case the MMs, are also learners; as they perform their role and learn, there should be a reciprocal effect in terms of a continued development of their skills and knowledge and, as depicted in double-loop learning, on their values and beliefs (Figure 2.2) (Argyris, 1996). This is not represented in Hallinger and Heck's model and may come out in the data analysis undertaken during the study.

The personality of the leader, with his or her personal values, beliefs, knowledge, and experience, gives rise to variations in leadership practice (Shivers-Blackwell, 2006). The leader's values, beliefs and practices could come from different areas of influence, including their occupation; in FE, for example, they come from being a teacher and a vocational expert (Page, 2013) (discussed in Subsection 2.3.3). MMs in CHE come into FE with antecedents in the shape of values and beliefs from their previous roles in

industry (Robson *et al.,* 2004; Maxwell, 2014; Galley and Savage, 2014). In their industry-based roles, the MMs will have developed skills that they bring into FE colleges (Galley and Savage, 2014). As was considered in Subsection 2.3.4, skills and knowledge are recognised as essential; any lack of these can result in issues around a person's ability to achieve credibility in a leadership role (Orr and Simmons, 2010). This highlights an issue with the full model, as it does not include skills or, indeed, qualities that leaders may have that influence their enactment of leadership behaviours. The analysis of data from this study may confirm the need for the addition of another category.

The next category for discussion is that of college culture. A college itself, as an organisation, has values that shape, and are shaped by, the culture and behaviour of those learning and working there. It is an inter-related concept (Hofstede *et al*., 2010). The importance of providing excellent learning opportunities and keeping up to date with subject matter and pedagogy is vital in an ever-changing world (Darling-Hammond *et al.,* 2017). However, there are conditions that can catalyse learning and there are those that inhibit it. It is critical to discover what these conditions are, and this would assist in enabling effective leadership. School culture has an impact on effective leadership, as does college culture. For example, research in Australian schools questioned whether leadership practices could promote both professional learning and student learning, and consequently contribute to improved outcomes for students (Mulford and Silins, 2009). Their findings suggested that reforms failed in the face of cultural resistance in schools. Another element to consider when choosing an appropriate approach in an organisation is that of the different stages of development of the organisation and its culture, thus highlighting the need for a differentiated

approach and an ability to make choices (Mulford and Silins, 2009). Leadership approaches, and so behaviours, need to be differentiated depending on the context, culture and stage of improvement; each stage of development may need a different leadership focus and style (Kotter, 1996).

The fourth category in the model is people. As reviewed in Subsection 2.3.1, one of the functions of the MM is to take on a team management role, and teams are diverse (Briggs, 2006). Curriculum and teaching are also influenced by external partners, including employers and HE partners (Somech and Naamneh, 2019). Students and their needs also influence leadership (Tummons *et al.,* 2013; Jensen and Bennett, 2016). When people are involved in the design of change, they hold the same shared, monitored vision and values (Busher and Harris, 1999) while being supported by appropriate and relevant opportunities to learn (Fuller and Unwin, 2003). Staff and student involvement in learning is important (Jensen and Bennett, 2016). It ensures commitment and ownership of it (Fuller and Unwin, 2004).

Finally, academic processes and structures mediate leadership behaviours and student outcomes (Leithwood *et al.*, 1992; Hallinger and Heck, 1996). Positive cultures, teamwork and learning are achieved though congruent structures (Fowler, 2003; Fear *et al.*, 2003). The academic structures include, for example, patterns of instructional organisation, emphasis on skills and knowledge development (Leithwood *et al.*, 1992) and school policies (including school mission and opportunities for students to learn) as variables through which leadership influences outcomes (Hallinger and Heck, 1996).

For this study, leadership for learning can be described as leadership that connects to learning that improves the effectiveness of education organisations (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2013). Both learning and leadership are activities with moral purpose and democratic values (Alexandrou and Swaffield, 2012; MacBeath, 2012). Learning takes place in all layers of the school: students; teachers; organisation. Some classifications of leadership seem to describe who has the onus of responsibility. There is a move away from the single 'charismatic' leader to a collective accountability with distributed leadership (Gronn, 2003; Spillane, 2006) and shared leadership with leaders at all levels (Hallinger and Heck, 2010; Heck and Hallinger, 2009; Marks and Printy, 2003: Bush, 2013). This shared accountability, or distributed leadership, supports the proposition that MMs are influential in improving teaching and learning. Behavioural expectations of leaders of learning emerged from the literature. These were behaviours that were found to have larger effect sizes than other approaches (Robinson *et al.*, 2008; Hoekstra and Newton, 2017), and could be used in the leadership behaviour element in Hallinger and Heck's (2011) model. These behaviours are presented in Table 2.29:

Expected leadership for learning behaviours
Providing system-level support to enable the professional development of teachers
Designing and developing professional learning and realistic approaches
Providing opportunities and encouragement for teacher-led professional learning connected to institutional goals and students' needs
Organising conditions for learning – developing genuine collaboration and open communication
Facilitating, enabling and engaging a culture, routines and experiences that value, support and share teachers' individual and collaborative professional learning.

Table 2.29 Expected leadership for learning behaviours (Robinson *et al*., 2008; Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)

An additional typology for MMs is add to those typologies identified in Section 2.3; that of learner.

2.6 Summary

In this review of literature, five main areas have been explored: organisational role theory; leadership versus management; MMs and their roles; professional learning for CHE teachers; and leadership for learning. Each of these areas provides concepts and frameworks used to inform the research design (Chapter 3) and investigate college-based MMs' leadership of learning role in catalysing and inhibiting teachers' professional learning.

ORT provides a framework and terminology, presented in Section 2.1, that is used in data analysis (Chapters 4 and 5) to analyse and explain the patterns of behaviours, activities and influences involved in the multi-dimensional role of MMs in CHE and possible sources of role ambiguity, role conflict, role discontinuity, role mal-integration and role overload. In Section 2.2, MMs were established as leaders. The role includes

functions and behaviours of both leadership and management. A typology of their role was proposed in Section 2.3.

This typology was extended to include leader of learning, following an examination of literature about professional learning and leadership of learning in Sections 2.4 and 2.5. This literature linked leadership to learning to promote and nurture professional learning for teacher and provides key activities for leaders of learning that are seen see Table 2.30:

Roles	Author	Examples of behaviours
Leader	Mintzberg (1990)	interpreter of strategy; representative of core academic values
Leader of teaching teams	Briggs (2004):	solution-finder and motivator
Curriculum manager	James and Biesta (2007); Dhillon and Bentley (2016)	design and planning – curriculum management
Resources manager	Peeke (1997); Smith (2002); Mintzberg (1990)	organising resources
Liaison	Briggs (2004); Mintzberg (1990)	meetings with non-academic managers
Learner	James and Biesta (2007); Robinson *et al. (*2008); Widdowson and King (2018)	taking opportunities for professional development
Leader for Learning	MacBeath (2012); Hallinger and Heck (2011); Lambert (2011)	facilitating, enabling and engaging a culture, routines and experiences that value, support and share teachers' individual and collaborative professional learning (Hoekstra and Newton, 2017); develop research structures (Davies, 2009)

Table 2.30 Typology of MM's role including leader for learning

In order to produce a conceptualisation of the MMs in CHE's role in leadership for learning, the key activities seen to promote professional learning are used as sensitising themes (Bowen, 2006) in the data analysis in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, the functions identified in Subsection 2.3.1 are used for data analysis. The reason for using the two sets of typology and not just those connected to leaders for learning is to capture any conflicts, incongruity, ambiguity, overload or mal-integration (inhibitors) (Subsection 2.1.2), or synergies (catalysts), between the different behaviours and expectations.

In addition to the impact that different functions within the typology have on each other, variables that mediate the influence of MMs were identified in Sections 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5. Section 2.4 reviewed literature about professional learning with a conceptualisation of professional learning in CHE and highlighted variables that influence teachers' professional learning both positively and negatively. Three key factors were shown to be significant influences. These were: effective learning approaches and expectations in CHE (scholarship); the creation of a positive and effective learning environment; and the influence of identity on professional learning. In relation to the MMs in this study, these key factors affect the knowledge, skills and qualities a MM needs, and influence their role. From the literature in Subsections 2.3.3 and 2.3.4, identities, values, skills and knowledge were discussed with reference to the roles of MMs. More variables were identified in Subsection 2.5.3, linked to the mediated-effects model proposed by Hallinger and Heck (2011) that included values and beliefs and knowledge, but not skills. Skills may emerge from the data.

Hallinger and Heck's (2011) model (Figure 2.5) provides a conceptual model to aid the analysis of data from the CHE context (Chapters 4 and 5). When the data collected are viewed through concepts within the model, the variables for the context of CHE can be compared and contrasted and a conceptualisation within the context formed. One of the typologies of MMs already gained from the literature is that of learner. Data may show that, rather than being monodirectional arrows between antecedent personal variables (for instance, knowledge), there is a bidirectional arrow, as enacting leadership behaviours and learning from the impact of different behaviours will change and impact the knowledge and behaviour of the leader.

A fundamental factor for professional learning was highlighted in the literature in Subsection 2.4.5: the learning environment. Organising 'conditions for learning' was highlighted in Subsection 2.5.2 as an activity for leaders of learning. As this is a fundamental factor, the environmental factors found in the data will be analysed using the expansive/restrictive continuum put forward by Fuller and Unwin (2004) (Table 2.23) to determine how CHE MMs produce, or not, an expansive learning environment that promotes professional learning. These results are presented in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 3, the decisions made about research design are outlined. These take into consideration the literature reviewed in this chapter and the research questions in order to design an effective methodology to gather enough appropriate data to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

This chapter sets out the research design chosen to address the research questions. The purpose of this research is to develop knowledge in the field of educational leadership. The aim is to develop a comprehensive understanding of how academic middle managers (MMs) enact leadership for learning roles to facilitate or inhibit the professional learning of their CHE teaching teams. Several different research designs and methodologies, data collection and analysis methods are available to answer the research questions in Section 3.1. The aim is to present the possibilities and provide a rationale for the chosen research design. The factors considered to provide a justification of the research approach used in this study are summarised in Table 3.1:

Section	Subsection	Factor
Chapter 2		Existing knowledge and theories
3.1		**Overview of aims, and findings from the literature**
3.2		**Fundamental philosophical underpinnings**
	3.2.1	Nature of realities (ontological assumptions) relating to the nature of the social world in which the research is situated and the nature of the topic itself
	3.2.2	Nature of knowledge (epistemological assumptions)
3.3		**Methodological choices**
	3.3.1	A case study approach
	3.3.2	Defining the case: The sample
3.4		**Methods**
	3.4.1	Data collection
	3.4.2	The sample and sampling
	3.4.3	Data analysis
3.5		**Ethical methods**
3.6		**Chapter summary**

Table 3.1 Summary of the factors considered in the research design

The basis for this study is a sincere interest in, and respect for, the MMs at the centre of this study. It is also an acknowledgement of the impact that CHE can have on those students studying in this context. The research questions recognise that MMs who lead CHE often also lead FE courses in multi-subject areas. The focus is the leadership

approaches that MMs choose and how these approaches can facilitate or inhibit the improvement of the teaching and learning. Additionally, a number of complex factors are at play in FE colleges. These influence the role that these managers enact. With a better understanding of how and why MMs influence improvement and how these factors in colleges influence leadership, this could help increase positive influence, and better teaching and learning. The research questions aim to extend this understanding.

3.1 Overview of aims, and findings from the literature

The literature reviewed provides the current thinking about the role of MMs. This includes the different functions and behaviours associated with their role. The literature highlights the complex nature of the interrelations between MMs, their teams and their environment (Mulford and Silins, 2003; Marshall, 2012). It discusses how patterns of influence can develop, and how the patterns are affected and shaped by the everyday goings on in FE colleges at different levels in the organisation, and by MMs' beliefs and values (Hallinger and Heck, 2011). It is still unclear, however, what these interrelations are and how they impact on MMs as they enact their role in CHE. The literature on leadership for learning, discussed in Subsections 2.2.1 and 2.5.2, allows MMs to be acknowledged as leaders, while also providing some understanding of how leadership for learning roles are enacted throughout an organisation. The literature in Section 2.3 that discusses the role of MMs and their role in promoting improvement, focuses on learning at all levels of an organisation (Briggs, 2003a; 2005), highlighting the need for MMs to support the learning of their teams. Work on professional learning for CHE teachers discussed in Section 2.4 provides a focus on the learning these MMs need to support. One of the outstanding issues is the role MMs have in supporting professional

learning for CHE teachers. All of these notions influence the design and analysis of the research going forward, as discussed in this chapter. My intention is to extend this knowledge and understanding within the context of CHE through the collection and analysis of data.

In Chapter 2, the literature review provided some insight into MMs and their environment, answering some of the research questions and enabling questions to be refined to those found in Table 3.2. These research questions explore how MMs perform their leadership for learning roles, with a focus on their influence on the enhancement of the professional learning of CHE teachers.

What roles do academic MMs in FE perform for CHE courses?
How do these roles contribute to the professional learning environment of CHE teachers?
What factors impede or facilitate MMs' role performance in CHE?
How do these factors influence and interact with MMs' role enactment?

Table 3.2 Research questions

3.2 Philosophical fundamentals

In order to design an effective research methodology, fundamental philosophical assumptions need to be clarified. In this section, the nature of the research questions asked and the types of research that are deemed important are discussed in terms of the fundamental philosophical assumptions that provide a view on reality (ontology, Subsection 3.2.1) and knowledge (epistemology, Subsection 3.2.2), and that reflect the decisions about the approach to the study (Saunders *et al*., 2015).

3.2.1 Ontology

In this instance, the nature of reality is complex and rich, as seen in Table 3.3. The aim here is to understand the way participants interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live. For an interpretivist viewpoint, each person interprets meaning through the lens of their own understanding and experience, resulting in layers of interpretations and multiple meanings (Creswell, 2013). In this study, the participants (MMs, SMs and teachers) answered questions specifically designed so that the resultant data represented each participant's interpretation of their reality; an indication of how they interpreted their roles and how different factors impacted on how they undertook their roles. For this study, the subsequent interpretation of this data resulted in construction of knowledge (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). The developed model is influenced by the understanding and viewpoint of both the researcher and the participants.

Example of the complex nature of reality in this study	Implications for this study
Leadership roles are socially constructed through interactions between the various levels of leadership (Section 2.3), the teams of teachers and the role set in colleges (introduced in Subsection 2.1.2)	The members of the role set are included as participants
The environment in which they are situated (Subsection 2.5.3)	Contextual factors were examined in five colleges used as case studies
The multiple realities of the relationships between the people involved. Perceptions of, for example, identity, influence and learning (Subsection 2.3.3)	Each participant contributed their perception of what the different concepts meant to them

Table 3.3 Examples of the complex social reality of the study

The resultant data represented the reality for each participant. It provided an indication of how they interpreted their roles and how different factors impacted on how they undertook their roles. There was evidence of shared realities where there was consensus in the data. Additionally, each iteration of analysis produced new understanding of the concepts used to adapt the reality of the concepts as they were discussed in Chapter 2 and their interrelationship in the context of CHE. Contextual factors that make up the contextual reality for the participants emerged from the data. Some of these factors shaped the perception of the MMs' role and are examined in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.2.2 Epistemology

There are two contrasting views of enquiry into the nature of knowledge (Easterby-Smith *et al*., 2012). The first is positivist, where the enquirer is independent of what is studied and measures clearly defined concepts by hypotheses and deduction. The second views knowledge as socially constructed within a particular context. To answer the research questions posed, the literature in Chapter 2 provides a picture of the multifaceted nature of social situations within teaching teams and interactions between teachers, their MMs and the environment in which they work, and the impact each has on professional learning, discussed in Section 2.4. Examples are presented in Table 3.4:

Example of types of knowledge	Example of implications for this study
Each person involved has their own experiences, knowledge and beliefs – the participants have different constructions of the concepts based on their experience and the fact that the researcher is part of the study	Knowledge is gained from each participant
	The knowledge of the researcher is acknowledged
MMs and teachers come from different industries and backgrounds and respond differently to the environment of an FE college and to being involved with CHE	Knowledge is gained from each participant
	The knowledge of the researcher is acknowledged
Knowledge of leadership roles seems, therefore, socially constructed and value-laden	Review of the research literature provides initial data that has been constructed from previous empirical studies
	Interpretation by the researcher is acknowledged

Table 3.4 Types of knowledge in the study and their implications for research design

This is a constructivist view and contrasts with a positivist epistemological stance that assumes knowledge is acquired through value-free, objective analysis (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). This affects the conduct of the research. A positivist view does not lend itself to interpretations of perceptions (Bryman, 2016). When testing their model of leadership for learning, Hallinger and Heck (2010) used a longitudinal, quantitative approach using student achievement data to evaluate the models derived from surveys of teachers' perceptions of leadership. In this study, the effect size of each of the factors

is not being measured. A constructivist view has been used to successfully create a typology and modelling of MMs' role (Briggs, 2003b). It seems that a constructivist approach would be more appropriate for this study as MM are interpreters of their leadership role.

A constructivist approach is appropriate for this study; a constructivist stance would recognise the ontological perspective of this study (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). People's knowledge is not value-free; it is constructed through the individual's own lens of how the world works, their feelings and subjectivity (Creswell, 2013). This research focuses on the perceptions of MMs and their colleagues, in order to uncover their interpretations of the roles in the study in this CHE. This rich source of data containing behaviours and influential factors is analysed to identify what the participants perceive their roles to be and what factors they find impact either positively or negatively on their approach. Each person is influenced by, and contributes to, the socio-economic environment and organisational culture in which they work. Various factors influence how each person interprets their reality; some are internal to the person and some external; a wide range of interrelated factors impacts the ebb and flow of college life. The ideas induced from these interpretations are incorporated into the concepts in the study (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012) and develop new understandings of the roles and influential factors. For these reasons, it is an interpretive approach and qualitative research that are the correct choice for this study.

The data collected assists in identifying any regularities of meaning. The process of gathering data and analysing it was inductive, building towards themes and creating a

descriptive framework for academic MMs for learning roles. In Subsection 3.4.3, the

iterative approach to data analysis involved in gaining meaning from the data is

described. The next decision was that of the appropriate methodology to gather and

analyse the data.

3.3 Methodology

Based on the assumption that social reality is constructed by the participants in that reality, the ontological perspective is interpretive (Gall *et al.*, 2007). As each part of the study informed the other parts, it was a recursive process, moving backwards and forwards (Wellington *et al.,* 2005). Where a theme emerges from the data, this can influence, for example, the questions asked, or the construction of the data collection tool to find whether that theme is relevant elsewhere in the study. The case study approach is introduced in Subsection 3.3.1. In Subsection 3.3.1.1, the definition of a case study is discussed. In Subsection 3.3.1.2, the principles of quality for an interpretive approach are outlined.

3.3.1 A case study approach

This section presents the reasoning for using a case study approach to develop knowledge and understanding of the topic. The use of case studies can capture the complexity of teaching and learning and the surrounding communities (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier, 2013). The discussion so far suggests that the case study may be an appropriate methodology to adopt. This method has been used in other empirical research studies on professional learning (Li *et al*., 2009; Mulford and Silins, 2009) and for research into MMs' roles (Briggs, 2003a; Mhlanga, 2017). In fact, in both these latter studies, a multiple case study approach was used. 'Using multiple case studies is analogous to multiple experiments' (Eisenhardt, 1989, p.542). Multiple cases can allow emergent relationships to be verified with evidence from each case and this verification could indicate an extent of generalisability. Generalisability is one of the potential limitations of case studies (Thomas, 2011) so it is useful to define and discuss it here.

Different definitions highlight elements that needed clarification to guarantee that the design resulted in appropriate and useful data.

3.3.1.1 Definition of case study

Some phenomena exceed the sum of their parts, as the interaction between the different parts and situations is affected by the environment around them. Interpretivists view the social world as being constructed by different people with different views that result in different views of realities (Thomas, 2011). A case study aims to gain a rich analytical insight within the boundaries of the case, consequently increasing the researcher's sensitivity to underlying factors and patterns in context, and providing a greater opportunity to examine operations in contrasting or similar contexts (Ackroyd, 2009). Each research author has a different perspective of case study methodology and its implementation. Different aspects are emphasised, which need further characterisation to help make the most appropriate decisions for a project (for example: Bryman, 2016; Thomas, 2011; Yin, 2009). These are summarised in Table 3.5:

Author	A case study is…	Focus	Example
Thomas (2011)	an approach suitable for research that concentrates on one thing, looks at it in detail and does not seek to generalise from it. An interpretivist view.	Purpose of the study; limited possibility of generalisability	*Explanatory*, aimed at in-depth understanding and potential explanations of the interrelationships of multi-faceted cases. *Exploratory*, investigates what is happening and why.
Yin (2009; 1984)	an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1984, p.23).	The choice of unit of study; the purpose of the study; different sources of evidence	A *representative* or *typical* case that aims to choose an example of a broader category in order to encapsulate the circumstances and conditions of an ordinary situation.
Simons (2009)	'an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program or system in a "real-life" context' (Simons, 2009, p.21).	A case study that illuminates real life to gain an in-depth understanding of its complexity	MMs of CHE in FE colleges
Bryman's (2016)	a general research methodology that entails detailed and	A detailed exploration of a case, for example,	MMs, FE colleges

	recursive analysis of one single case.	an organisation or a person	
Stake (2005)	not a methodological choice, but denotes the subject of study.	Demarcation of the subject of the study	An FE college
Hammersley and Gomm (2000)	all research – all research is a case study, as research always investigates a unit or set of units.	Units and sets of units	MMs, FE colleges

Table 3.5 Summary of definitions of case study, with examples

A case study is a recursive analysis of a single unit (Bryman, 2016). This means multiple iterations of analysis in order to probe the data to extract salient themes such as contextual factors and details of college culture. 'Multiple-case study' is a more common term for the examination of two or more delineated cases for comparative purposes. With five colleges acting as cases in my study, there may be a possibility of generalisability to some extent, if the emergent relationships between role and factors are verified in all the cases involved. The rationale for using a multiple case study was reinforced. The notion, or quality, of generalisability is considered in more detail in Subsection 3.3.1.2.3. Whatever the subject of analysis, it should be studied holistically by one or more methods. The case should be 'marked out', its dimensions made explicit.

My interest is in a specific thing in itself, a real-life group of people – MMs, the focus of the research – in order to aid greater understanding of the complex influences of their roles. FE colleges formed the cases in which the roles of MMs were studied. The advantage of studying this group of people in their colleges is that it allows the context to be considered in the MMs' real-life work context of CHE. This also aligns with Simons'

(2005) insistence on exploring complexity in a real-life context. Thomas's exploratory case study could be used with the intention of exploring what happens between MMs and their teams in CHE, and why. The factors that shape their roles are also explored (Thomas, 2011). However, an explanatory study, used to develop better insight and explanation (Thomas, 2011), could also fit. This is because answers to the questions about why and how the factors influence the roles are explanatory, and modelling provides a representation of roles and influential factors that explains the impact. In fact, the boundary between these two typologies is fluid, in that exploring what happens and why provides potential explanations, particularly as literature has described the complex interrelationships that exist in CHE teams (Subsection 2.4.5).

The cases involved in my research would probably best be described as representative cases (Yin, 2009). However, considering the importance of the context, it may be difficult to find a case that is wholly representative (Bronfenbrenner, 1981). The national government agenda is similar for all FE colleges. However, the local socio-economic environment shapes each college. FE colleges contain many variables, exemplified in Table 3.6:

Factors	Examples in FE colleges
Management structure	Different hierarchies
Management model	Discrete HE provision managed separately; CHE courses embedded in subject departments
Modes of delivery	Part-time, full-time, blended
Accreditation of courses	Accredited by the college itself, some accredited by a partnership HEI and others being non-prescribed courses

Table 3.6 Variables found in FE colleges, with examples

These were detailed in the discussion about the context of CHE in Chapter 1, Section 1.2, and highlight the difficulty of identifying representative cases. The best method to use when choosing a case that fulfils the quality and criteria of research is examined in Subsection 3.3.1.2.3.

3.3.1.2 Principles of quality

Alongside justifying a case study approach and identifying the type of case study, other key considerations were addressed that underpin the notion of the 'fitness for purpose' of the research approach. Many of the criteria are linked to quantitative research modes: reliability, replicability and validity. There is some debate as to their relevance for qualitative modes of research. Qualitative research has been criticised for having the potential to be unfocused and, as such, requires greater codification to give greater transparency (Bryman, 2016). Strategies are needed to provide rigour. In this study, specific research questions focus attention.

If we consider the properties of reliability and validity in implementing the case studies, both of these terms have links to positivist views, but could be construed as being

pertinent to an interpretivist paradigm, particularly if they enhance the *trustworthiness*

of a project (Bassey, 1999). Trustworthiness (Subsection 3.3.1.2.1) and authenticity

(Subsection 3.3.1.2.2) are measures of rigour in qualitative research (Guba and Lincoln,

1985). Generalisability is discussed in Subsection 3.3.1.2.3. These concepts of principles

of quality have characteristics that have parallels in quantitative research and are

explored in this section.

3.3.1.2.1 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a set of four elements that are advocated for assessing the quality of

qualitative research (Guba and Lincoln, 1985): credibility, transferability, dependability,

and confirmability. These criteria are outlined and considered in Table 3.7, with the

action that was taken in the study to fulfil the quality criteria:

Element – qualitative	Definition (parallel qualitative criteria)	Example of action taken that ensured the criterion was met in this study
Credibility of findings	The characteristic required to ensure that the findings are believable; that they are acceptable to others (Internal validity)	The findings were shared with the respondents to give confirmation that the findings and interpretation were accurate.
Transferability	Measure the applicability of the findings to other contexts or cases (External validity)	Numerous data sources were used. This also helped to triangulate the findings – participants represented different members of the role set (defined in Subsection 2.1.2). Documentation and websites from the college was also accessed.
Dependability	The findings are likely to apply at other times (Reliability)	Multiple case studies were carried out over a three-year period and gave similar responses.
Confirmability	The degree to which the researcher allows her values to influence that interpretation Minimise the impact that the study has on the participants' answer (Objectivity)	The findings were shared with the respondents to give confirmation that the findings and interpretation were accurate. Participants were in familiar surroundings at a time convenient for them It is acknowledged that the researcher's values are used in the interpretation of the data.

		Flexibility in questions: participants answered

Table 3.7 Outline of the elements of trustworthiness (Guba and Lincoln, 1985)

Validity is defined as 'the degree to which a method, a test or a research tool actually measures what it is supposed to' (Wellington, 2000, p.201). Validity is an indication of the integrity of the findings and conclusions of a research project. Numerous aspects of validity are proposed, which add to the credibility of the study and need consideration to ensure the research design has integrity and can be trusted (Lichtman, 2013). Measurement validity interrogates the research methods and sampling as to whether they provide comprehensive and appropriate data from which conclusions can be drawn (Thomas, 2013), in this case, about the concept of leader for learning and the roles MMs play.

Construct validity includes a few elements that are important in operationalising the method and is summarised in Table 3.8:

Element of validity	The study…	Implications
Face validity	must look like it explores what it should.	The questionnaires and survey were piloted and amended where necessary to ensure it was an appropriate instrument.
Content validity	needs the appropriate depth and breadth of the content of the specific case.	As many members of the role set in each college as possible were in the sample.

Predictive validity	should be able to provide a prediction of what it is required to predict.	The questionnaires and survey were piloted and amended where necessary to ensure it was an appropriate instrument; as many members of the role set in each college as possible were in the sample; as themes emerged the tools were adapted.
Ecological validity	has patterns of behaviour gathered that represent, to a degree, those occurring naturally in the same context (relates to generalisability).	The sample included SMs, MMs and teachers working in CHE, identified in Subsection 2.1.2; five different FE colleges were used as cases.
Population validity	relates to how well the sample of the study reflects the whole population from which the sample is taken. A set of *typical* individuals who can provide relevant information within an applicable setting (Cohen *et al*., 2007).	SMs, MMs and teachers working in CHE, identified in Subsection 2.1.2; As many MMs were interviewed as possible to ensure credibility, as smaller numbers would give less validity to the data.
Experimental validity	needs to identify and eliminate the pitfalls.	The questionnaires and survey were piloted and amended where necessary to ensure it was an appropriate instrument.

Instrument-based validity (Thomas, 2013)	the instrument of measurement measures what it should, but also measures the validity of the construct.	The questionnaires and survey were piloted and amended where necessary to ensure it was an appropriate instrument.

Table 3.8 A summary of the elements of validity, with examples from the study

As each aspect increases the credibility of the study results, strategies to ensure validity are noted in the relevant sections of the project design.

Interpretive research explores people's experiences and perspectives. For population validity, the sample of participants needs to be representative of the population of the role set. Full access to the knowledge and meanings of the people involved is requisite (Lichtman, 2013). It is important too that the participants belong to a real setting (ecological validity). Four key factors are highlighted: sample size; the representativeness and parameters of the sample; access to the sample; and the sampling strategy used. The sample for this study will be examined in Subsection 3.4.2, taking into consideration the factors discussed above and ensuring trustworthiness is built into the design (Bassey, 1999).

The other criteria of trustworthiness are summarised in Table 3.9. Each of these criteria is considered in the research design:

Criterion	Definition	Quantitative counterpart
Transferability	A measure of the applicability of the findings to other contexts. Providing a rich and detailed description of the context and participants' views helps to ensure that possible information could be used by others in their context	External validity
Dependability	A measure of whether the findings would apply at other times	Reliability: results in confidence built through consistency of, for example, conditions (Bell, 1999; Bryman, 2016); needed in case studies to 'minimise the errors and biases in a study' (Yin, 2003)
Confirmability	A measure of whether researcher bias is intruding into the data analysis	Objectivity

Table 3.9 A summary of the criteria of quality, with an indication of the counterpart criteria in quantitative studies (Guba and Lincoln, 1985)

Dependability relies on a detailed trail of the process of research. Records of different aspects of the research process were kept, and these records were discussed in supervisor meetings and presented in conferences to gain feedback as to whether the resulting findings were dependable.

3.3.1.2.2 Authenticity

We now turn to the second of Guba and Lincoln's primary criteria for measuring rigour in qualitative research: authenticity. This highlights the wider impact of research. The aim of the study was to represent fairly the viewpoints of the participants (Bush, 2002). The study can help participants to understand their context and the influences within

that context that, in turn, can motivate or indeed empower them to change. However, these would provide some focus for further study to evaluate the impact of the results.

3.3.1.2.3 Other criteria

There is some debate as to whether the findings of a case study are generalisable. This restricts an external validity view because of the uniqueness of a case. The need for generalisation is questioned, as a particular case is the phenomenon of interest (Thomas, 2011). However, examining an example can inform the general concept (Denscombe, 2007). As a case study is an intensive analysis, it has its own quality criteria in ensuring the quality of the theoretical reasoning, argumentation and how well the evidence supports the analysis generated (Yin, 2009). It is understood that a certain open-mindedness is appropriate as the findings help refine the research and adaptation. It is recognised that the aim of a case study is not to generalise to other contexts.

For this study, a question arises as to whether the results of this study can be applied to other cases of MMs in CHE. The MMs in CHE, and the uniqueness of their interactions with CHE teachers, are my focus. CHE is also unique as it is neither FE nor HE. If it is an inductive process it could give a hypothesis for further investigation to confirm its generalisability (Bryman, 2016). Multiple case studies are recommended to improve theory-building (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2009). Studying more than one case better establishes circumstances in which findings hold true or not. However, extracting data from multiple cases causes concern as it reduces the attention paid to the specific context, and could detract from contextual insight (Dyer and Wilkins, 1991).

The number of cases for inclusion in the study needs careful consideration. Human reality is produced through making sense of other people's actions, so each of us constructs the world differently (Bronfenbrenner, 1981). A detailed description of the context is necessary in order to understand social behaviour (Bryman, 2016); understanding belief systems in the context gives reasons for social behaviour. The context can involve linguistic, cultural, legal and physical environments. It is useful to acknowledge the multi-directional and multi-stranded nature of the social environment and the variation of influences that impact on the components of the environment (Flyvbjerg, 2003). Behaviours can be categorised into static patterns, or by dynamic interrelations between people and groups within a context. These all interact and impact on the people interacting within them, and these, in turn, change our experience and perceptions (Blumer, 1962). In this study, there were different departments in which CHE had different cultures, and each college was situated in a local socio-economic environment as well as a national educational context.

For internal validity, the data must validate conclusions drawn from the data. Inferential validity refers to a measure of whether the inferences made from the data collected are valid. The results must show how MMs' roles are characterised, and whether they can impede (as an inhibitor) or enhance (as a catalyst) the professional learning of teaching teams. Confirmability links to objectivity and is a measure of how much the researcher's values and beliefs influence the results (Bryman, 2016). For each of these types of validity the quality of theoretical engagement needs to be assured.

Case studies can ask simple questions to develop thick descriptions through thought and analysis of cases in context; that is, describing and evaluating the behaviour and the context of the case in enough detail to gain a deeper understanding (Flyvbjerg, 2003). For these reasons, a multiple case study approach was appropriate to gain understanding of the roles of MMs in a specific context.

3.3.2 Defining the case: The sample

The case is the subject of analysis. It will be an instance of a phenomenon – an object within which the study is conducted. It has uniqueness, singleness and completeness, and is particular rather than general (Thomas, 2011). The case can be a community, organisation or person (Bryman, 2016); it is a study of real people in a real situation (Scaife, 2004), setting and time (context) (Stake, 1995). Defining the edges marks out the particular people and situation, and demarcates the case of focused interest. The context of a case is important, because of the influence it has on the reality within it. In this instance, what is being studied are five general FE colleges (the cases) and the context within the colleges is CHE. This means that, within the cases, MMs who line-manage CHE teachers need to be identified.

A decision was made about the number of cases that could participate in the study, based on determining the pros and cons of multiple instances of a subject. As discussed in Subsection 3.3.1.2.3, multiple instances are beneficial and are recommended in order to improve theory building (Eisenhardt, 1989). This implies that the study of five colleges is an advantage. FE colleges vary greatly in size, composition and culture, which influences the context of CHE. However, a multiple-case design is advantageous if the cases selected could be predicted to produce contrasting results (Yin, 2003). Choosing

contrasting colleges or contrasting departments could help in identifying catalytic and

inhibitory factors, since the rich diversity of colleges and their constituent departments

may have different approaches to structuring CHE and promoting professional learning.

Scaife (2004, p.74) emphasises the need for a case study to be meticulously prepared

and data collection *systematically* undertaken.

3.4 Methods

This section outlines the data collection methods that were used, and the approaches

that were taken to sampling and data analysis.

3.4.1 Data collection

The research method is the technique for collecting good data (Bryman, 2016; Thomas,

2011). The evidence collected enables the researcher to explore the relationship

between a variety of different factors. Using different methods can draw out rich,

interconnected information from a single focus to derive unique insight from the

analysis, developing *thickening* information and consequently description around the

idea. Whatever the methods used, Thomas (2011) highlights the focus on the case

through analysis without prescribing single or mixed methods.

Measures need to be taken to reduce the impact that data collection methods have on

data. The conditions used to collect data should allow for respondents to answer

naturally, and so give an authentic version of their everyday perceptions of the MMs'

roles; the responses cannot be influenced by the study itself. Answering questions in a

semi-structured interview or a questionnaire is not an everyday occurrence and so

responses may be influenced by the questionnaire itself. Confirmability requires the use

of strategies to minimise the impact that participating in the research project has on the

participants' responses, and therefore the data gained (Bryman, 2016). This project strove to gather data from naturally occurring perspectives of the samples, by using semi-structured interviews that allowed the respondents to elaborate on answers and take them in their own direction. This decreased misinterpretations by the interviewer and increased the confirmability of the design. Furthermore, the interviews were held in the participants' workplace, so familiar surroundings.

There is a range of different methods of data collection that belong to qualitative research. There are advantages and disadvantages to each method. This study seemed to fit with a multiple case study approach using semi-structured interviews to produce more accurate, appropriate data more effectively than other approaches. Alternative approaches were considered, such as observation, documentary analysis, survey and action research approaches. An action research approach was not appropriate as the research does not involve implementing and evaluating new approaches to leadership. MMs' job descriptions were studied; however, these provided a list of the expectations and not the actual roles MMs fulfilled. Often, the job descriptions were not accurate representations of current roles as changes had taken place, but the documents were not reviewed so documentary analysis was not appropriate.

Interviews give a better contextualisation and appreciation than a survey (Bryman, 2016). A survey limits insight into the complexity the context of this study afforded and required. Furthermore, using semi-structured interviews covering a list of questions that are adapted by the interviewer gives an interviewee leeway in how to answer, thus increasing confirmability, as mentioned above. There is flexibility in the order in which

the questions are asked; the order may change depending on the responses given, and allows for useful probing and elaborations.

Using the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, an initial interview schedule was constructed to address the research questions. This was piloted at a college not participating in the study. Where interviewees found the questions ambiguous or difficult to understand, the questions were clarified. During questioning, themes emerged and there were patterns of responses that needed probing further to help ensure understanding and relevance. Any emerging and valuable points of interest were incorporated into subsequent interviews, so this resulted in an evolution of the questions. The process meant that the schedule was initially informed by the theory from previous empirical studies, then blended with the research coming out of the questions. Thereby, a deductive approach was blended with an inductive approach as the research progressed. A final, semi-structured interview schedule was drawn up to gain rich information from the participants. The questions in the interview aimed to answer different research questions (Table 3.10):

Research questions	Semi-structured interview questions
What roles do academic MMs in FE perform for CHE courses?	Please could you tell me about your role as a middle manager? How does it fit in with the college structure? How does your structure help facilitate professional learning?

	What is the college's strategy for improving teaching and learning in CHE? How were/are middle managers prepared to lead CHE? What skills and qualities do you need to have as a middle manager?
How do these roles contribute to the professional learning environment of CHE teachers?	What leadership approaches do you use to influence professional learning? Who has the greatest influence on professional learning, and why? Who else has responsibility for improving teaching and learning? What impact do you think you have, and why? How are you involved in the decision-making process about who and how CHE teaching and learning is improved? How do you improve teaching and learning in CHE at this college? How do you create an environment in which the teachers can continue their professional learning? How are you involved in the decision-making process about how CHE teaching and learning is improved and who is involved in this? What has the greatest influence on the professional learning of CHE teachers? What impact do you think you have, and why?

	What expectations do you have of the middle manager for improving teaching and learning through professional learning?
	How do you improve teaching and learning in CHE at this college?
	How do you create an environment in which the teachers can continue their professional learning?
What factors impede or facilitate MMs' role performance in CHE?	What expectations do you have for your teachers for professional learning?
	What challenges or tensions do you face with regards to improving the professional learning of the CHE teachers?
	What factors facilitate the professional learning of CHE teachers? (Internal and external.)
	What impact do you think you have, and why?
	What might you do differently to have a positive impact on professional learning for improving teaching and learning?
	What impact do you think you have, and why?
How do these factors influence and interact with MMs' role enactment?	What challenges or tensions do you face with regards to improving the professional learning of the CHE teachers?
	What factors facilitate the professional learning of CHE teachers? (Internal and external.)
	What impact do you think you have, and why?
	What might you do differently to have a positive impact on professional learning for improving teaching and learning?

	What impact do you think you have, and why?

Table 3.10 Outline of how the research questions were addressed in the semi-structured interviews

Within each organisation, samples of the different subgroups, with their own perceptions, in the role set were invited to take part: SMs, MMs and teachers. MMs were interviewed as the main subject of the research. However, the limitations of investigating solely the view of the main subject of study are noted (Bryman, 2016). A semi-structured interview was used to collect data from the MMs (Appendix one) and from SMs, but with a different interview schedule (Appendix two). The schedules differed in that the MMs were asked about their perceptions of their own role while SMs were asked for their perceptions of the MMs' role. In total, 9 SMs and 16 MMs were interviewed. A profile of each participant is provided in Appendices eight to twelve. Each participant was interviewed once in their workplace during the working day when it was convenient for them. The take-up of possible follow-up interviews as themes developed was limited as ten interviewees moved onto new roles

The time needed to conduct semi-structured interviews with a large number of teachers was prohibitive, so a survey approach was used to gain contributions from a larger number of participants (Appendix three). Some teachers provided email addresses and were happy to comment on the responses and provide greater depth of understanding. Involving different participants aimed to gain a greater breadth of understanding from different perspectives and provide evidence (Thomas, 2011) to provide a more rounded, richer balanced picture of the subject. This also increased the trustworthiness of the research.

Credibility was increased further using multiple data collection methods. Using different forms of data helps to support findings (Atkinson and Coffey, 2011) and the theoretical arguments generated (Bryman, 2016). Relevant documents are useful in gleaning a view of the reality of the organisation, its culture and its ethos (Sharp, 2012). So, in addition to semi-structured interviews, documents (college websites, QAA reports, Ofsted reports, college prospectuses and strategic plans, self-assessment reports and quality improvement plans) were scrutinised to help verify the verbal data and cross-reference college-wide evidence with that of participating individuals. Where available, their TEF submission was studied. This provided insight into the quality specifically for HE. The documents used also offered information regarding strategy for improving teaching and learning, and thus provided more details of the expectations held by the college and contextual details to help defining dimensions of the case itself.

We need to be cognisant of the status of some documents and the degree to which they portray reality; they are produced for a purpose and with a particular audience in mind, painting a particular picture of that context. They should also be read in relation to other documents to which they are linked, to develop an intertextual understanding (Atkinson and Coffey, 2011).

Data collection was completed between 2015 and 2018. During this period and since, continual changes and reforms in the wider context (see Section 1.2) occurred. Any subsequent reforms (post 2018) are not reflected in the participants' voice or college profiles which reflects the time of the study visits. For example, at the time of the

research three of the colleges had not made a submission for the TEF, but have subsequently received awards.

3.4.2 The sample and sampling

The sample chosen must be relevant to the research questions. Sampling must be strategic and purposeful (Bryman, 2016). This relates to the cases to be studied and the elements within the college that are relevant to the study. In this project, this was the MMs who lead CHE. Different types of purposeful sampling were employed. Sampling categories are summarised in Table 3.11:

Sampling category	Definition
Typical case	Exemplifies a dimension of interest
Opportunistic	Capitalises on opportunities to collect data from certain individuals
Stratified	Usually typical cases or individuals with subgroups of interest

Table 3.11 Categories of different types of sampling (Bryman, 2016)

The research questions name a specific group of people and, therefore, bind a population within a specific context. This indicates that purposeful, non-random sampling of people who are relevant to the group identified is possible. The criteria for selection would be MMs who lead CHE teams in FE colleges. The nature of organisations and the external pressures to which they are subjected made sampling more complex. It should be noted that an element of opportunistic sampling was employed, connecting with vice principals, as gatekeepers, using social media sites.

Colleges are all different, but the indicators used helped identify my choice of colleges. Initially, sampling involved identifying organisations that, on paper, seemed to exemplify

the area of interest. There were 204 FECs offering CHE courses in 2018-2019 (AoC, 2019). Some were not included because the CHE courses were managed separately from the FE courses. The colleges were chosen because they had integrated HE courses where the MMs led both FE teaching teams and CHE courses, and provided an apt example of the context of interest. Multiple factors were involved in gaining access to the colleges studied. The first factor was knowing a network of 'gatekeepers' through which access to college teams could be gained. The second was the most recent Ofsted and QAA reports, which gave an indication that the enhancement procedures within the colleges were good. Not all of the colleges contacted responded to the request to be involved in the study. Others were unable to be involved because of mergers or restructuring, which were their priorities at the time of the study.

The project was presented to SMTs at six colleges. All found the topic relevant and useful to their aims for their HE teams. Each accepted the opportunity to contribute to the study. There was an element of randomness because colleges could either agree to be included in the study or disagree. One initially accepted the opportunity but then withdrew owing to pressures exerted by policy changes. This brought greater constraints on MMs' availability, and reduced their motivation to participate at a time of uncertainty about their job security. For this study, five colleges participated. The institutions participated in the study for two main reasons. The first was their commitment to CHE and interest in good practice in their CHE provision. This was demonstrated by three of the colleges which had invested in discrete resources for CHE students and teachers in the form of quiet rooms which contrasts with colleges where the CHE students had access to exactly the same areas as the FE students. The second

was a concern about the consistency of approach to CHE and a desire to understand the potential barriers to quality as the colleges grew their CHE provision. Colleges' key comparative statistics are set out in Table 3.12. Grades for inspection reports and for the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) are included in order to provide insight into the external quality perceptions of the colleges as a whole, and of their higher education provision.

Characteristic	A	B	C	D	E
Location	Inner city	Suburban	Inner city	Rural	Rural and inner city
Number of campuses	4	2	3	3	3
Total number of teaching staff (FTE)	400	295	250	162	404
Total income	£49.5m	£33.1m	£23.6m	£15.5m	£32.8m
HE income	£2.6m	£2.4m	£1.2m	£0.8m	£3.8m
Total number of learners	9340	5512	4857	4876	9893
Number of undergraduate students	335	430	180	225	528
Proportion of HE	3.5%	7%	3.6%	4.4%	5.1%
Part-time	20%	13%	41%	5%	Not known
Full-time	80%	87%	59%	95%	Not known
TEF grade (year awarded)	Silver (2017)	Silver (2017)	Silver (2017)	Silver (2018)	None
Ofsted grade	2	2	2	2	2
University centre status	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Number of partner universities	2	4	1	2	3
CHE courses delivered	Bachelor's degrees, top-up, foundation, PGCE	HNC, HND, foundation, top-up, bachelor's and master's degrees, higher apprenticeships	HNC, HND, foundation, top-up, professional qualifications, higher apprenticeships	HNC, HND, foundation, professional qualifications higher apprenticeships	HNC, HND, foundation, top-up, bachelor's degrees, professional qualifications, higher apprenticeships

Table 3.12 Case study colleges: comparison statistics

One similarity to acknowledge is that where SMTs self-selected for participation in the

study it was an indication of a positive research culture and attitude to the HE courses

in their colleges. The reluctance of some organisations to participate could impact on the data, as organisations with less confidence in CHE did not provide influential data. At the end of the study, the models were evaluated by SMs and MMs in two organisations that were not involved, to assess the extent to which the managers at these other colleges agreed with the findings.

Within the organisations, individuals were selected to represent the different subgroups impacted and who had a perception of their roles: SMs, MMs and CHE teachers (stratified purposive sampling). The sample comprised managers with different subject disciplines, seniority of role, experience in role and of CHE (see Table 3.13). A summary of the managers interviewed is presented in Table 3.13:

College A – 2 SMs and 1MM						
Title	Department	Subject background	Highest level qualification	Years in FE	Years in role	Years' experience in CHE
SM1 Director of Curriculum	Senior Management Team (SMT)	IT/Business	PGCE	15	3	0
SM9 Head of College	SMT	Psychology	MA Psychology	23	0.5	0
MM10 Head of Learning	Creative Industries	Furniture making	Level 6 - Leadership	21	17	21
College B – 2 SMs and 3 MMs						
Title	Department	Subject background	Highest level qualification	Years in FE	Years in role	Years' experience in CHE
SM11 Dean of HE	SMT	Not known	Level 6	40	4	40
SM12 Assistant Principal	SMT	Business studies	BA	18	1	0
MM13	Health	Nursing	BSc Nursing	10	2	4

Title	Department	Subject background	Highest level qualification	Years in FE	Years in role	Years' experience in CHE
Head of department						
MM14 Head of Department	Public Forces, sports	Outdoor leadership	BSc Sports science	14	4	13
MM15 Head of Programme	International Management	International management	MA International management	17	17	17
College C – 1 SM and 4 MMs						

Title	Department	Subject background	Highest level qualification	Years in FE	Years in role	Years' experience in CHE
MM24 Head of School	Sports, Uniformed Public Services and Travel and Tourism	Physical education and outdoor leadership	BA Sport	12	1.5	0
MM25 Head of School	Business and IT	Business	BA Business	10	5	0
MM26 Head of School	Science	Biology	Level 5	10	4	8
SM27 Quality Manager HE	SMT	IT	PGCHE	13	2	12
MM28 HE Manager	Quality	Sociology	MA Sociology	11	6	9
College D – 2 SMs and 3 MMs						

Title	Department	Subject background	Highest level qualification	Years in FE	Years in role	Years' experience in CHE
MM19 Team Leader	Teacher Training and Professional Studies	Business administration	Level 6	30	15	8
MM20 Team Leader	Engineering and Technology	Engineering	Level 4	25	3	15
SM21 Deputy Principal	SMT	Sports science and business	MA	18	0.25	8
MM22 Team Leader and HE Manager	Health and Social Care, Early Years, Public	Health	BSc	13	8	0

Title	Department	Subject background	Highest level qualification	Years in FE	Years in role	Years' experience in CHE
	Services, Sports					
SM23 Assistant Principal	SMT	Maths and ICT	MA	22	4	6
College E – 1 SM and 5 MMs						
Title	**Department**	**Subject background**	**Highest level qualification**	**Years in FE**	**Years in role**	**Years' experience in CHE**
MM1 Head of Department	Health and Social Care, Early Years	Early Years	Level 3	19	3	0
MM2 HE Manager	Quality	Beauty Therapy	Level 3	20	1	0
MM3 Head of Department	Construction	Gas and Heating	Level 3	8	0.5	0
MM4 Head of Department	Commercial and Retail	Physical education	Level 3	16	8	4
SM5 Director of Quality and Performance	SMT	Unknown	MA	25	15	0
MM6 Head of Department	Teacher Education and Professional Studies	Teacher training	MA	13	4	8

Table 3.13 Outline of the profile of each participant interviewed for each college

MMs and teachers from several departments contributed to the data, thus tapping into the richness and variety of participants. All of the colleges involved in the study used the term teacher for staff teaching both HE and FE programmes of study. Two colleges referred to lecturers when discussing colleagues from HEIs or guest lecturers coming into the college. Only two colleges referred to its own CHE teachers as lecturers. This was done interchangeably with teacher. For consistency, the term teacher is used throughout this study for all including CHE teachers.

3.4.3 Data analysis

Data analysis consists of examining, categorising, tabulating or otherwise recombining the evidence to address the initial propositions of the study. (Yin, 1994, p.105)

Data was collected using the three methods described above: semi-structured interviews; a survey; and reviewing documents. The data was analysed using two methods: thematic analysis and modelling. These are discussed in the next two sections.

3.4.3.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is a method of approaching data, in which broad themes within data are identified, analysed and reported (Braun and Clark, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) contrast inductive with theoretical thematic analysis. Inductive analysis is data-driven, not linked to a pre-existing coding frame. In contrast, theoretical thematic analysis is more explicitly analyst-driven, mapping onto specific research questions. It is this theoretical thematic approach to data analysis that is initially used in this study, linking data to the research questions and topics derived from the literature review in Chapter 2.

Prevalent topics revealed in leadership for learning research literature act as lenses for analysing data. The aim is to describe themes that are explicit in the data but also to interpret patterns to theorise their significance, meanings and implications (Patton, 1990). In the first instance, the overall role enacted by MMs was considered, to identify the behaviours within the leadership behaviours in Hallinger and Heck's (2011) full model of leadership for learning. The most common topic found in the literature review was a focus on learning, for this project probes what MMs perceive their role to be regarding teachers' professional learning. With 'leading teacher professional learning'

as an overall topic, the related code-guiding subtopics, which emerged from literature

discussed in Chapter 2, are presented in Table 3.14, and were used as sensitising themes

in analysis (Bowen, 2006):

Activities
Providing system-level support to enable the professional development of teachers
Designing and developing professional learning and realistic approaches
Providing opportunities and encouragement for teacher-led professional learning connected to institutional goals and students' needs
Organising conditions for learning; developing genuine collaboration and open communication
Facilitating, enabling, and engaging a culture, routines, and experiences that value, support and share teachers' individual and collaborative professional learning

Table 3.14 Summary of activities that MMs carry out in leading for learning roles
emerging from literature in Chapter 2

These subtopics were used to produce a high-level coding regime, examples of which

can be found in Appendix four. This was added to and refined during the analysis

process. The framework for analysis is presented in Section 4.1.

To make sense of the interview data, the Braun and Clarke (2006) six-phase process for

the thematic analysis of data was followed. The analysis process is recursive, revisiting

phases when needed during the analysis. The intention is to produce a report of the

content and meaning of themes related to the research questions. The analysis process

is complex as there are cultures within cultures, and each may have several contrasting

and/or similar assumptions (Thomas, 2011). Appreciating the potential multitude of

cultures facilitates analysis. By gaining a greater understanding, new ideas may develop

that can be integrated within current ideas using personal experience, both to make sense of data and to learn (Flyvbjerg, 2003).

For clarity of presentation in this chapter, all data collected for research is named the data *corpus*. In this instance, the data corpus includes semi-structured interviews with MMs and SMs, relevant documents from the colleges contributing to the study and questionnaire responses from CHE teachers. Data sets are relevant sections of data examined in analysis. For example, semi-structured interviews of MMs from one college constitute a data set within one case study; those of the SMs constitute a second data set. Each individual significant 'utterance' in data collected, for example a sentence or a word, is referred to as a data item, and collectively these make up the data set or corpus. For the analysis within each case study, each participant's discrete set of data was scrutinised by following the six-stage process. This progressed to a comparison of themes that had emerged for each participant, to build a framework of the themes within each case study college thus the analysis progressed stakeholder by stakeholder. The final comparison was between case study colleges to investigate any consensus or difficulties. The first step, following transcription of interviews, was to read and label data items from each interviewee to produce data in a manageable format. See Table 3.15 for an example from the SM data set:

Coll	Role	Question	Item	Data
	R	Q1		Thank you very much for agreeing to do this.
				could you tell me a little bit about your senior leadership role?
			1	OK. So, my title is Director of Quality and Performance,
			2	So, I've always had responsibility and…, for quality of HE,
			3	I used to work closely with, the then Director of HE,
A	SM1	Q1	4	who was also responsible for Adult and Community Learning, and other parts in his remit.

Table 3.15 Example of senior manager's semi-structured interview transcript

This first reading and listening enabled an initial familiarisation with and accuracy check of the data corpus, looking for patterns of meaning, allowing initial ideas to be noted (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The transcripts were read and listened to for thoroughness of transcription during this first stage. Punctuation had been added and some of the non-verbal aspects were lost, but this was not felt to detract from the accounts produced.

The coding process is part of the analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994) and helps organise the data into significant clusters (Tuckett, 2005). The second step took the systematic generation and use of codes to the next stage to identify features of interest in the data and the collation of data relevant to each of the codes. The example shown

in Table 3.17 illustrates this step. The initial, high-level codes were linked to topics highlighted in the literature review as salient in MMs' roles, and related to the research questions (Appendix four). This included looking for potential coding schemes for use throughout the entire analysis process.

The systematic approach to data was taken to ensure that attention was given to each data item. Extracts were manually coded using the high-level codes mentioned above. Once coded, all extracts were collated together within each high-level code. Any un-coded extracts were retained, as these may be significant in adding to the understanding of the MM role. They were returned to (in the fourth step, which is covered below), in order to find emerging themes that had not been evident in literature and so were not in the initial coding. Some extracts were multi-coded and were shown to fit within different thematic areas, and indicated some overlapping of themes. Codes were refined to highlight different aspects of the initial units of analysis, see Table 3.16. Table 3.17 presents an example systematic coding in the data:

Level of code	Example code	Meaning
High-level code	O	Providing opportunities for learning
Refinement	E	External
Collated	Oe	Opportunity – external

Table 3.16 Examples of code

				I'm developing now. As I said previously, in the meeting alongside that, we've now, through MEG and other opportunities, got involved in other	
G	SM1	Q3	97	external projects…	Oe

Table 3.17 Example of a systematic coding of features of interest in the data

In the third step, codes were sorted into potential 'candidate' themes under each of the aspects above to gather all data items relevant to each potential theme, but with a view to seeing how understanding of the case evolved and took shape. A case draws not from the theoretical tools used to analyse it, but from the way it takes shape (Wieviorka, 1992). It is open to being shaped by developing ideas coming from the various perspectives illustrated in the data collected. All the relevant codes were organised within overarching themes using tables in an Excel spreadsheet. Brief descriptions of the themes were produced to assist analysis and consequent mapping of relationships.

The fourth step was the review and refinement of themes. This involved rereading all extracts within a specific code, to confirm if they formed a coherent pattern. Those deemed to be coherent went to the next level of review. Where coherence was very limited, the descriptions, themes and subthemes were revisited to diagnose the problems and to isolate the source of the problem. Ultimately, some themes or subthemes needed to be reworked or a new theme created. Newly created themes or extracts were appropriately coded and 'rehomed'. Some were discarded. Some extracts that were found not to fit within the initial high-level coding presented themselves as themes or subthemes. However, it was important to recognise relationships that substantiated stand-alone themes even if they did not occur in many responses. In the second phase of this step, the entire data set was used to determine whether the

'candidate' themes worked in relation to the whole data set, and to code any data that had been missed out in earlier steps of the process. Where the theme did not hold with the whole data set, coding was further reviewed and refined. Once the different themes and their relationships were confirmed, the analysis continued to the fifth step.

The fifth step involved defining, refining and naming identified themes. At this stage, each theme was linked to research questions and a detailed analysis was written to describe the scope and content of each theme, to show how they related to and helped answer research questions.

The sixth and final step was the final analysis, in which compelling examples were selected and quotes were identified to help illustrate themes well and give voice to the participants. These quotes provide evidence with a view to extending the reader's understanding (Corden and Sainsbury, 2006) and were pertinent to developing an understanding of the research questions and thus the role of the MMs in leading professional learning. I use tables in the data analysis chapter to present quotations and link them to specific colleges. In the chapters that follow, the findings of the analysis are discussed.

3.4.3.2 Modelling
The aim of this study is to gain insight into the role of the MMs and the influence the surrounding environment has on the enactment of their role within the situation of CHE. By using a modelled representation of the role of the MM in CHE and depicting the nature of the influence of the context in the model, the complex organisational and

social structure, and the impact on the MMs' role, are better understood. Table 3.18

outlines the process of analysis and modelling:

Stages	Outcomes
Initial reading of literature	Study design and identification of current understanding of the underpinning concepts
First case study semi-structured interview with senior managers	Initial impression of the context, and the expectations and priorities of the college
First case study semi-structured interviews with middle managers	Initial impressions of characteristics of role and factors
First reading of college documentation	Feature of college as a whole and of CBHE within the college – college profiles
Adjusted semi-structured interview schedules	More focused perceptions of roles – activities undertaken
Understanding of literature	Dimensions of the role and influencing environmental factors
Impressions gained from semi-structured interviews	Perceptions of role and college environment
Analysis of transcripts and surveys using thematic analysis	Aspects of the role and influencing factors, college environment
	Possible aspects of role
	Possible features of environment
	Possible catalysts and inhibitors
Analysis of transcripts, surveys and college documentation – using thematic analysis	Adjusted aspects of role
	Adjusted catalysts and inhibitors
Modelling	Influential factors and impact

Table 3.18 Process of iterative analysis and modelling

Modelling facilitates the analysis of a phenomenon studied (Brigg, 2007), such as intricate organisational environments (Fowler, 2003). The context of this study is CHE – a part of the intricate dynamics in the colleges studied. The modelling approach has been used infrequently but effectively in educational management studies, with qualitative data to promote the theorisation of interrelationships between factors within a modelled system involving MMs (Briggs, 2007). Visual representations (models) have been used effectively in qualitative analysis within social science (Adair, 1983). Data display, or modelling, is a method of summarising data, identifying themes, groupings and patterns to investigate relationships and explanations (Fowler, 2003). Modelling has been used effectively in research into school improvement (Schreerens, 1997) and is used to produce a simplified version of a real-life situation (Gass and Harris, 1996).

Models have two functions (David, 2001, p.462). The first is 'abstraction, based on reality', so taking real data to construct a model. The second is a developmental function, a 'means of action' that moves from the model findings to reality. The former is the principal aim of this study: to gain a cognitive understanding of its reality. David (2001) proposes three further sequential functions for models: predictive; decision-making; and normative. The model produced during this study may have potential to fulfil these other functions; to help predict the impact of changes in such a way that informed decisions can be made that are of help during a change process. It might also help to theorise the optimal relations between factors to enable the optimum enactment of the MM's role in improving the teaching and learning of CHE. It is acknowledged, however, that the initial objective is to use a model as an analytical tool.

The rationale given in Subsection 3.3.1 for the use of a multiple case study approach for data collection is to investigate and gain insight into a case. The reasons for studying the role of MMs and the factors that influence them, is to discover what catalyses and impedes their efficacy within the organisational systems of which they form part. The model was constructed from primary data of perceptions and experiences found within each case study. It is acknowledged that the modelled patterns of knowledge will show a reflection of both the researcher's and participants' viewpoints and understanding. Consequently, it will not offer an absolute reality, but a representation of part of reality as interpreted by the researcher.

3.5 Ethics

Research should be thorough, balanced, fair and ethical, with the purpose of finding new knowledge (Thomas, 2013). The potential politics and power related to research need to be acknowledged, since researching people's behaviour and views can increase the vulnerability of participants, and consequently requires scrutiny. Participants' welfare is paramount in educational research and ethical guidelines should be followed (Lichtman, 2013). The participants' views are sought out of respect and genuine interest in their experiences.

The British Education Research Association (BERA) sets out such guidelines (BERA, 2011), which include principles to ensure there is voluntary informed consent, that harm and deception are avoided, and that privacy is respected. The guidelines focus on the responsibilities of the researcher and the participants. An ethics approach form was completed and submitted to the University of Birmingham before commencing data collection (Appendix five). Feedback from the Ethics Panel required amendments and

refinements to ensure rigour of data protection, particularly in the storage and accessibility of the data collected. More detail clarified the data collection methods and the conditions under which the data would be collected. The materials used for identifying, recruiting and selecting gatekeepers and participants required more thought. On final review of ethical considerations and strategies, the University's Ethics Panel granted full ethical approval. The ethical considerations and strategies were accepted, and these are exemplified in Table 3.19:

Strategies employed	Appendix
Consent was requested from the principal of each of the case study colleges	Six
Data was solicited only from participants who agreed to their own involvement, having been provided with information pertinent to the purpose of research	Six
Each was advised of their right to withdraw at any time; interviewees were asked to sign a consent form confirming that their interview would be recorded and transcribed	Seven

Table 3.19 Examples of strategies used to ensure compliance to ethical guidelines

The transcripts were provided so that amendments could be made if participants so wished. This helps increase the credibility mentioned in Subsection 3.3.1.2.1. All efforts were made to assure participants of data confidentiality.

MMs were from colleges at which the researcher has no involvement. The intention was to alleviate any potential problems of power relationships, as there should not be any positions of authority in play. Interviews were conducted in a location in which both

interviewer and participant felt safe. Maintaining anonymity is essential when conducting interviews, as contributions can be linked to individuals. The names of the participants were removed from documentation, and any potentially damaging information was maintained as confidential. Questionnaires were anonymous, apart from asking for the teachers' departments in order to improve understanding of differences in perception between departments; it is the collective departmental data that is of interest. All the individuals were professional adults, and so informed consent was considered to be valid. None of the groups of professionals involved was felt to be vulnerable.

3.6 Summary

This chapter explored the research design for the study. An initial clarification of the philosophical assumptions in terms of values and beliefs helped illuminate more precisely the nature of the research. The complexity of socially constructed relationships and an understanding of how leadership works were acknowledged. Consequently, a multiple case study was identified as the most useful approach to study the behaviours, relationships and roles of MMs of CHE. Criteria and strategies for ensuring rigour in qualitative research were considered and implemented in order to increase the trustworthiness of the project. These quality-enhancing strategies and practical considerations were applied to the different data collection methods. In order to secure perceptions from members of the role set within the case colleges, semi-structured interviews were used with SMs and MMs. A survey was included to gather teachers' perceptions. A third data source – documents – was used to reinforce the data from the participants. Once these different facets of research design were completed and the

appropriate methods devised, the ethical lens was applied to safeguard the participants'

confidentiality. On ethical approval, the data collection methods were put into practice.

Analysis of data and findings is discussed in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 4 COLLEGE ENVIRONMENTS AND LEADER FOR LEARNING

The five colleges in this study have individual contexts that shape the manager role. Each has CHE courses embedded within curriculum areas. In this chapter, the distinctive college environments are investigated, with analysis of the college systems, culture, and contextual and environmental factors known to influence behaviours (Hallinger and Heck, 2011) (see Figure 2.5) and the professional learning environment (Fuller and Unwin, 2004) (see Table 2.7, Subsection 2.4.5). A systematic approach is taken, applying a common framework, described in Section 4.1, to present and interrogate key characteristics of each case study site. Initial analysis of the raw data from semi-structured interviews with SMs, MMs and teacher questionnaires revealed contextual factors, external to the college and specific to CHE, that impact on MMs' roles (see Figure 4.1). During iterations of analysis, in Sections 4.2 to 4.10, the complexity of the picture emerged from the data, showing factors in CHE that influence the leader for learning role. These are shown in Figure 4.2.

In Sections 4.2 to 4.6, college cultures are presented. In Table 4.1, the comparative statistics for each of the colleges are summarised. The college profile and management structures are described in Appendices thirteen to seventeen, to help situate the position of MMs in the management structure. The key aspects of culture investigated were: focus on learning; presence of shared leadership; encouragement of professional dialogue; accountability; and creating conditions for learning that are linked to principles of leadership for learning (Subsection 2.5.2). These are summarised in Section 4.7.

Characteristic	A	B	C	D	E
Location	Inner city	Suburban	Inner city	Rural	Rural and inner city
Number of campuses	4	2	3	3	3
Total number of teaching staff (FTE)	400	295	250	162	404
Total income	£49.5m	£33.1m	£23.6m	£15.5m	£32.8m
HE income	£2.6m	£2.4m	£1.2m	£0.8m	£3.8m
Total number of learners	9340	5512	4857	4876	9893
Number of undergraduate students	335	430	180	225	528
Proportion of HE	3.5%	7%	3.6%	4.4%	5.1%
Part-time	20%	13%	41%	5%	Not known
Full-time	80%	87%	59%	95%	Not known
TEF grade (year awarded)	Silver (2017)	Silver (2017)	Silver (2017)	Silver (2018)	None
Ofsted grade	2	2	2	2	2
University centre status	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Number of partner universities	2	4	1	2	3
CHE courses delivered	Bachelor's degrees, top-up, foundation, PGCE	HNC, HND, foundation, top-up, bachelor's and master's degrees, higher apprenticeships	HNC, HND, foundation, top-up, professional qualifications, higher apprenticeships	HNC, HND, foundation, professional qualifications higher apprenticeships	HNC, HND, foundation, top-up, bachelor's degrees, professional qualifications, higher apprenticeships

Table 4.1 Copy of Table 3.12 Case Study: comparison statistics

Other key elements that emerged from the data were the attitudes towards CHE and

whether these contrasted with attitudes towards FE. This included: views on pedagogy;

subcultures within the college culture in the form of vocational and departmental cultures; and an externality of view – some colleges were very proactive in liaising externally where others were more internally facing. These are introduced in each college profile in this chapter. Where factors such as people, academic systems and processes, and contextual and environmental factors, were similar from one college to the next, they are discussed in Sections 4.8 to 4.10. Analysis of these is included in this chapter to help develop insight into the range of conditions in the environment of each case study in which MMs work, and to investigate how these factors affect MMs' leader for learning role enactment. In addition to role set data from each case study, the following are used to describe key aspects of college: information from regulatory bodies such as Ofsted; QAA reports for each college; college websites; and college documents current at the time of the case study visits.

In Section 4.11, analysis focuses on the leader for learning roles to produce a summary of the functions and activities associated with the role. For each role, impact on the learning environment is discussed to determine which behaviours contribute to an expansive learning environment and how some of these produce a restrictive environment (Fuller and Unwin, 2004). In Section 4.12, the analysis is drawn together to model leader for learning against college cultural and environmental factors, and to explore how these factors influence the role and vice versa. Case study analysis continues in Chapter 5. The framework for analysis for case studies is put forward in Section 4.1.

4.1 Framework for analysis

The aim of this analysis is to explore the leadership for learning role of MMs in CHE and factors that impact on that role. The promotion of teacher learning has been shown to have the greatest effect on improving student outcomes (Robinson *et al.*, 2008) (see Subsection 2.5.2). The key focus here is the connection between the leader behaviours of MMs and teacher learning to improve teaching and learning within the context of CHE. This section presents the frameworks/models applied for the data analysis.

A model represents a simplified version of the real-world situation (Gass and Harris, 1996; Pidd, 1996). Hallinger and Heck's 2011 model represents a simplified version of leadership for learning from the school context. Insight from the literature review highlighted four factors to be presented in this chapter. These are: college culture (James and Biesta, 2007; Hallinger and Heck, 2010); college systems (Widdowson and King, 2018); contextual and environmental factors (Hallinger and Heck, 1996, 2011); and people (Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2018; Gleeson and Shain, 1999) (Figure 4.1). By using it as a start point for analysis and interpretation of the data from the context of the study, a model of CHE is produced (Figure 4.2). The use of modelling for analysis is detailed in Subsection 3.4.3.2.
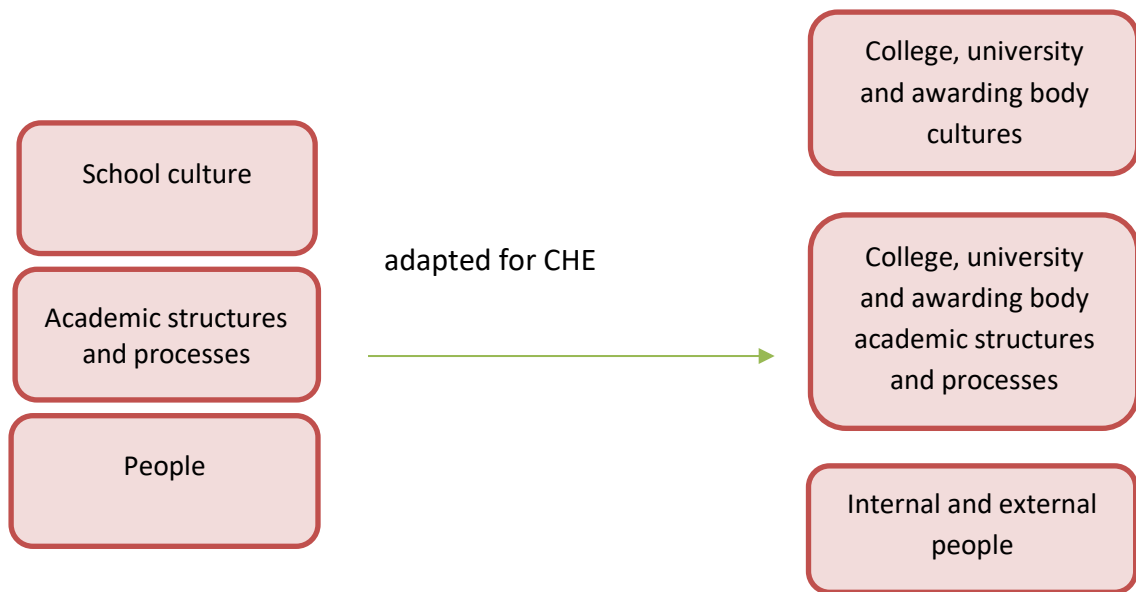
Figure 4.1 A model showing the different contextual factors from school context those in colleges (adapted from Hallinger and Heck's 2011 framework)

Figure 4.2 indicates the first area of the framework that is discussed in this chapter and draws on the data to produce a model that represents the contextual factors for colleges in the study. The second area is the focus of Chapter 5.
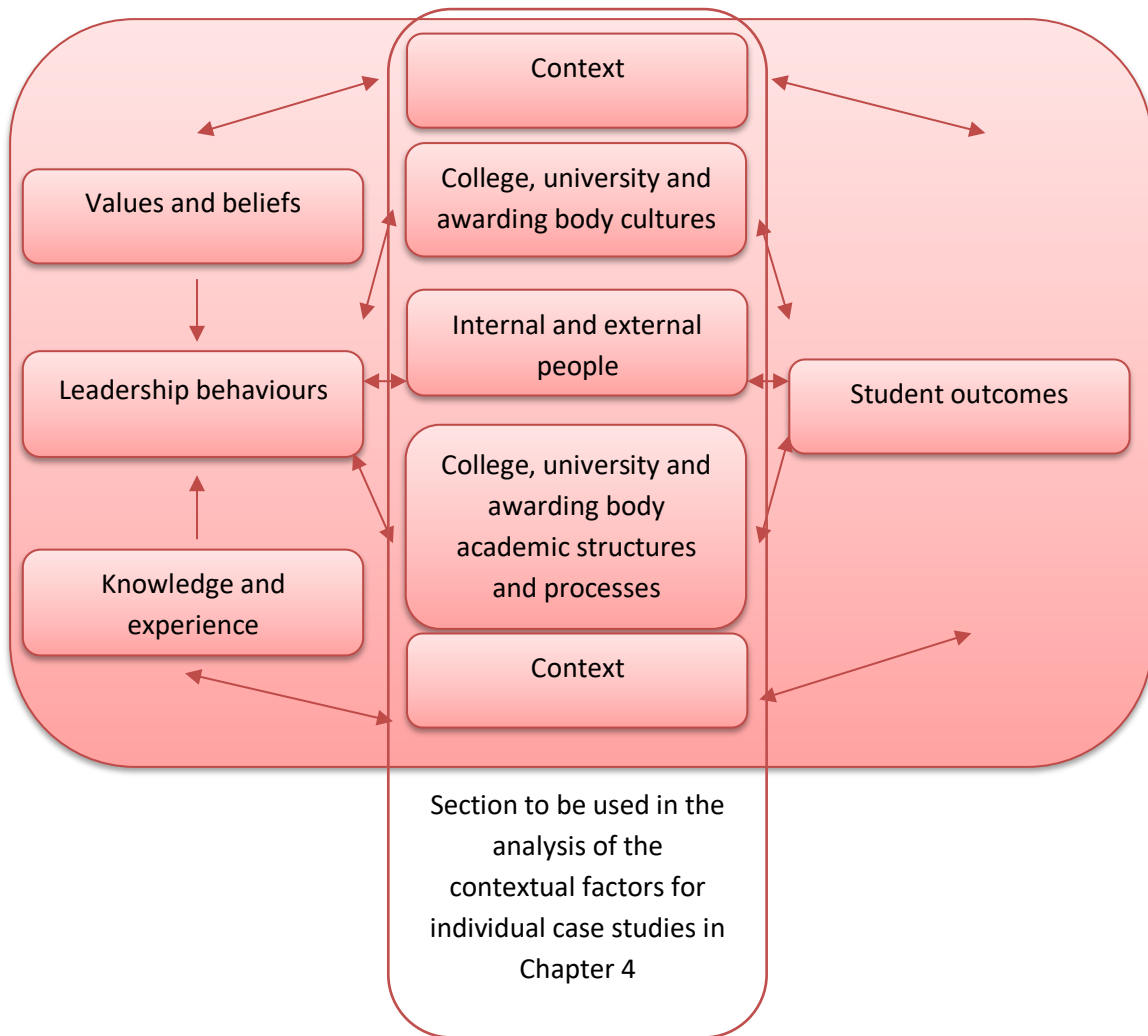
Figure 4.2 Full model of leadership for learning (Hallinger and Heck, 2011) adapted for CHE indicating the section for consideration in Chapter 4

An outline of the content of Chapter 4 is presented in Table 4.2:

Section	Content
4.2–4.6	Each college culture - their priorities and drivers; their attitudes to CHE; subcultures; and attitudes towards professional learning
4.7	A summary of college cultures
4.8	Academic systems and processes
4.9	National context
4.10	Influential people
4.11	Leadership for learning roles
4.12	Using modelling to investigate the impact of leader for learning functions against cultural and environmental factors

Table 4.2 Outline of the sections and content in Chapter 4

The ways in which factors in Sections 4.2-4.10 contributed to perceptions of learning environments and whether they were more or less expansive or restrictive differed from college to college. Factors emerging from the data are analysed using Fuller and Unwin's (2004) framework for expansive and restrictive learning environments (Table 2.23, Subsection 2.4.5). An expansive learning environment has the conditions for facilitating learning, whereas a restrictive environment impedes learning (Fuller and Unwin, 2004).

In Section 4.11, the MMs' role in improving teaching and learning through leading teachers' professional learning is explored. Different behaviours as a leader for learning that are specifically relevant to leading professional learning, identified in the literature (Subsection 2.5.3), were used as sensitising themes (Bowen, 2006) for initial analysis. These are presented in Table 4.3:

Subsection	Theme
4.11.1	Providing systems-level support to enable teacher professional development (Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)
4.11.2	Designing and developing professional learning and realistic approaches (Robinson *et al*., 2008; Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)
4.11.3	Providing opportunities and encouragement for teacher-led professional learning connected to institutional goals and students' needs (Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)
4.11.4	Organising conditions for learning and developing genuine collaboration and open communication (Robinson *et al*., 2008; Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)
4.11.5	Facilitating, enabling, and engaging a culture, routines, and experiences that value, support and share teachers' individual and collaborative professional learning (Davies, 2009; Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)
4.11.6	Being a learner (James and Biesta, 2007; Widdowson and King, 2018)

Table 4.3 Summary of the sensitising themes (Bowen, 2006), with corresponding subsections in Chapter 4

These behaviours are introduced in this chapter as they are integral to influencing the culture, systems, and conditions in the organisation (Hoekstra and Newton, 2017). Terminology taken from ORT (Section 2.1) is used to categorise the roles, functions, and activities of MMs. A detailed analysis of other MM roles and how these and personal factors influence the leader for learning role is presented in Chapter 5.

To ensure the 'trustworthiness' (Bassey, 1999) of the research, quotations from the raw data support statements that are based on data analysis. Each quotation referenced is coded to enable reference to the data set. The coding used is exemplified in Table 4.4:

Managers	Code	Meaning
Senior managers	*SM5:108*	The 5th senior manager interviewed and the 108th line of the interview transcript
Middle managers	*MM13:10*	The 13th middle manager interviewed and the 10th line of the interview transcript
CHE middle managers	*HEMM1:15*	The 1st CHE middle manager interviewed and the 15th line of the interview transcript

Table 4.4 Examples of coding used for interviewees

All MMs interviewed were academic MMs. However, three of them had CHE-specific roles and these are coded to identify them as academic, cross-college HE middle managers (HEMMs) whose role contributed to leadership for learning, but in a different way to the other MMs.

At the end of each section in 4.2-4.6, a summary of examples of factors which are found to be expansive and/or restrictive are presented. There are examples of both dimensions. Where areas are blank, no mention of factors relating to this aspect were found in the raw data. This identifies elements that can be changed and what and how to change them to improve the environment. Blank areas in the expansive column indicate where elements could be introduced to increase the expansiveness of the learning environment.

4.2 College A – College culture

Culture is a difficult thing to change and shift (SM9:147)

At the time of my visit, SMs described an ongoing, radical restructure that aimed to change the culture and produce a more flat management structure in which everyone was expected to take responsibility and be accountable for their role to enhance learning at the college. A second objective of the restructure was to increase cost efficiency by centralising business services, such as human resources, for all the colleges in the group. The restructure also demonstrates the turbulence experienced in the sector at the time of the study (AoC, 2016). The result was considerable confusion and instability; one MM questioned which individuals were MMs and which were SMs; a source of role mal-integration (Madden, 2013) and role ambiguity (Biddle, 1986). One SMT member could articulate the new structure (SM8:26–28) but a newly 'formed' MM interviewed was unclear about the boundaries of his responsibilities:

> *I have changed role so I'm still not completely clear, middle or senior level.* (MM10:03)

The radical restructure impacted on cultural development in college. This will be explored in more detail in Chapter 5.

At this college, I interviewed two SMs and one MM. SMs in College A had a vision of a very distinctive culture that focused on learning being at the heart of all they did:

> *Culture comes in a number of strands, for me personally, ALWAYS at the centre of every decision I make, is what is best for our students, and how can we support them in teaching and learning, every decision is driven by the learner, what is best for them.* (SM9:146)

Participants described the college as a pioneering and innovative institution with a clear approach to learning devised in consultation with students and employers to ensure that course content was relevant to the needs of local industry:

> *We have to make sure that staff are updated, connected with the industry, and doing CPD activities themselves, whether that be having a conversations out in the industry, exhibiting work and getting feedback from industry.* (MM10:32)

> *On every programme, employers are fed back, where sometimes you've got to a bit of a mismatch between a qualification, and what actually industry expects. So, we adapt.* (SM8:152)

The vision of the college focused on preparing students for careers, and courses structured around career pathways. Teaching and learning were 'hugely supported' and the college was in the business of 'growing people' (SM9:15,105). However, the turbulence in the sector prohibited this vision:

> *If we didn't have churn we had stability, you can work with those people, and grow them, and keep them, rather than, all too often we're growing somebody new, and then somebody new.* (SM8:215)

The culture encouraged teachers to continue learning and to influence development using a 'bottom up' development model (SM9:167). SMs described an encouraging and supportive climate at the college where teachers had access to resources to facilitate learning. SMs felt the environment was safe and supported innovation and creativity:

> *The culture's so important, I see MY role, creating the environment, for staff to feel secure, safe, and to have a go, to try things out, to innovate, to not fear of failing, that something might not work on the first attempt, but we're going to have another go, and reflect.* (SM9:146)

One SM regarded the college as a learning organisation 'on a journey'. SMs thought the college to be aspirational, where it was understood that learning was both an ongoing process and a necessity for survival (SM8:178). All members of staff were given

dedicated weekly continuous development time (SM9:05). Within the open culture and new structure, responsibilities were shared out, indicating a move to shared leadership that promoted collaboration, a founding principle of leadership for learning (Waterhouse and Møller, 2009), with an expectation of professional dialogue between team members and partners:

> *Staff also encourage themselves, and if they see an opportunity, and it's something that they feel will be beneficial for us, to voice it, it's an open culture. (MM10:54)*

Teachers had access to multiple communities of practice, both in FE and HE within the college, a feature of expansive learning environments (Fuller and Unwin, 2004). External networks with partner universities and industry were well established and provided opportunities for teachers to develop, with a focus on research and access to university training days and conferences with university partners (SM8:98; MM10:12). Professional learning for CHE was differentiated from that for FE with scholarship and, for example, time was set aside for reflection (SM8:98; SM9:11–12; MM10:3).

Together, this created an image of an expansive learning environment (see Table 4.5). This was supported by a regulatory report that highlighted the strategic commitment to development as an area of good practice. However, it was a nascent culture in the early stages of development (MM10:106).

Strategic commitment needed to be implemented effectively to enhance teacher development. There was no differentiation between terms and conditions for CHE teachers and FE teachers. Most teachers taught across both FE and CHE courses (SM8:71; MM10:22). Development was 'non-negotiable'; a rather more top-down

approach contradicted the desired bottom-up strategy stated by SMs (SM8:121; SM9:5).

It also indicated a negatively perceived 'new managerialist' approach to leading (Randle

and Brady, 1997). The lack of autonomy in decisions with regards to relevant

development indicated a less expansive learning environment (Jones and Holdaway,

1996). Additionally, the proportion of FE to CHE had a detrimental impact on CHE

professional learning:

> *It (CPD) kind of falls in line and piggybacks a lot off FE, which can be a tension, because, with so much talk about Study Programmes and English and maths, and with being the bulk of the work here, the HE teaching and learning almost fits in around, in some ways that has probably strengthened what we do in HE.* (MM10:17)

College systems and structures should demonstrate the implementation of a cultural

vision of continued learning for all members of staff and the student body (James and

Biesta, 2007). These are discussed in Subsection 4.2.1.

4.2.1 Summary – Examples of expansive and restrictive elements of the environment for College A

A summary of examples of factors discussed in the profile above, indicating whether the

learning environment in College A is restrictive or expansive, is presented in Table 4.5.

The structure of the table is explained in the conclusion of Section 4.1. There are

examples of both dimensions from Fuller and Unwin's (2004) research (see Table 2.23,

Subsection 2.4.5).

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Planned time off teaching	Dedicated weekly teacher development time	
Reification of CHE	Professional development was differentiated for FE and CHE	Perceived lack of shared understanding of the nature of HE because of the lack of differentiation between FE and CHE teaching conditions
Recognition of teachers being learners and dedicated support provided	Teachers had a status as learners	Positive attitude to learning opportunities had not yet filtered through to the teachers
		The mandatory nature of learning opportunities challenged autonomy for CHE teachers
Participation in multiple communities of practice inside and outside the workplace	Opportunities for professional learning inside the organisation and within the partner universities and industries	
Progression for career		Confusion with job roles meant that identities were strained and opportunities for career development lacked clarity
Goals aligned to CHE professional learning	HE development goals of the college were influence by the development needs of teachers	Development needs were linked to FE requirements, not CHE teachers' needs

Table 4.5 Summary of examples of factors that are restrictive and expansive from College A's environment

A summary of the factors found in the different colleges is included at the end of each

profile, using the same framework for analysis.

4.3 College B – College culture

The College strives to continuous improvement, and that's embedded in the culture, and so I think by nature, with the staff within the College, no matter what their role. (SM4:87)

College B's priority was teaching and learning, and the SMT strived for continuous improvement. As with College A, learning was at the heart of what they did:

Our teaching and learning is something that we take very seriously. (MM1:10)

There is a strategy for improving teaching, learning and assessment across the whole College. (SM3:17)

An element of shared leadership was expressed, with a supportive team approach to teaching and learning:

So, when you empower staff, you need to do less of it, you know, I've just got to tell them how to get their way through, don't I? (SM3:337)

I think everyone has responsibility for it in the organisation, teaching and learning is the bread and butter of what we do. (MM14:18)

There was a 'deep' focus on HE; there was a new university centre and investment in CHE teachers' development. MMs and SMs expressed a clear understanding of the demands of CHE:

Staff want to teach HE, and they know that they've got to put the work into it. (SM3:79)

The expectation of professional learning, it's the institution's expectation of their, lecturers in HE and the external standards governing this. (MM3:213)

This was the college with the largest number and highest proportion of HE students, and a strategic objective for further growth. The Dean of HE drove HE provision and situated herself well within the SMT to influence the decision-making process:

> *I asked if Deputy Principal, would line manage me, she is Resources and Planning, and I felt that if I moved HE under her, we'd got a better chance of growing. Whereas with faculties, it's harder to get decisions and things done.* (SM11:7–8)

The SMs' attitude towards CHE was that it was aspirational for the teachers and this helped to make the learning environment expansive for the teachers, however the need to work hard was recognised but not rewarded:

> *But, what we're not recognising, and what we need to recognise is that actually, preparing for a Level 5 session or a Level 6 session is quite hard.* (SM12:92)

Most teachers taught across both FE and HE. Both MMs and SMs acknowledged that there were challenges specific to HE teaching and that the pay there was lower than that in HEIs. Thus, although there was a culture of growth and investment in HE development and expectations for high standards, there was no differentiation in conditions of employment for HE teachers and FE teachers:

> *We don't want to be sort of second rate to a university, we want them to have the same the same opportunities.* (SM4:71)

> *So, I think the College is very invested in its HE development, and obviously the University Centre is something that we want to grow and be able to deliver more.* (MM13:14)

Teachers translated this as a lack of understanding about the nature of HE teaching and this reduced the expansiveness of the learning environment:

> *Managers who fail to comprehend HE and the differences from FE. (T10)*

It was felt that the greater proportion of FE drove priorities for professional learning, reducing the opportunities to learn from other HE communities (SM11:52):

> *Ofsted was coming, so, that's going to impact on development time, and some of the drivers that come from the FE sector, to say, "These are the things that you have got to do"* (MM14:109)

However, the college provided an expansive environment (Fuller and Unwin, 2004) with opportunities for teachers to attend its internal research conference in recognition of the need for scholarly activity (Lea *et al.,* 2020) and shared practice in the CHE community (SM4:63, 67). Researchers from universities were invited to conference, to increase the breadth of participation outside the college community (MM1:41).

4.3.1 Summary – Examples of expansive and restrictive elements of the environment in College B

Some examples of factors that indicate whether the learning environment in College B is restrictive or expansive are presented in Table 4.6. The table structure is explained in the conclusion of Section 4.1.

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Participation in a community of practice	CHE was recognised as a community of practice	Limited access to external communities of practice
Reification of CHE	Recognition that CHE had a distinct character	Terms and conditions of employment not differentiated for CHE teachers and FE teachers, which led to a perceived lack of understanding of CHE
Recognition of teachers being learners	Teachers were recognised as learning	
		Teachers felt they were the only ones to have the knowledge required to develop so lacked support
Dedicated individual to support CHE teacher learning	Support driven by a dedicated Dean of HE	
Breadth of professional learning opportunities	Wide opportunities to participate with research communities, with a dedicated research conference with guest speakers from university partners	
Professional learning goals not aligned to CHE needs		Most development opportunities were driven by FE agendas and not tailored to CHE teachers' needs and expectations of scholarship

Table 4.6 Summary of examples of factors that are restrictive and expansive from College B's environment

4.4 College C – College culture

College C had a strategy for improving teaching and learning, and consequently supported teacher development with constant encouragement:

> *We really want people to do staff development externally for HE, We find there are constraints though, because there is a…, a constraint between, I suppose HE staff going to Development Sessions externally. And then what happens with their FE teaching on those days that they're out doing HE development.* (MM28:81)

However, the tensions between FE and CHE needs were evident and reduced the expansiveness of the culture.

Documents showed an expectation of high standards within an organisation with a caring and supportive sense of community. A collaborative, supportive learning environment for staff is emphasised for an expansive environment (Fuller and Unwin, 2004). The college emphasised its excellent learner experience. It was the smallest of the colleges with the lowest number of HE students, but it had a strategy to grow the provision. HE courses had recently been integrated into curriculum areas to prevent isolation:

> *CHE kind of operated in isolation So, we've brought it back into the area.* (MM25:27)

A building was dedicated to HE so students could thrive and teacher morale could remain high:

> *I think they can see the College prioritizes HE here, you know, we've got an HE facility with a HE building which is dedicated to the HE learners, and it's a mature learning environment.* (MM25:296)

However, MMs described a lack of any further differentiation for CHE, stating that teachers retained an FE mentality (MM24:505) and little emphasis was put on the

documentation and language of HE, apart from the SMs and MMs who were specifically

focused on HE:

> *CTMs don't see HE as important as FE, and It's not because it's not a conscious thing at all, it's that CTMs' priority is FE Because they're in an FE, we're in an FE, setting. So, HE is very often additional to the procedural.* (MM28:94)

> *It's only really the Course Leaders that identify themselves as "I'm HE, I'm in HE". It's quite a barrier really.* (MM28:203)

Two out of three MMs explained they 'left HE teachers to it':

> *My understanding of HE, it is very much, HE Course Leaders are given the autonomy to make decisions. (MM24:392)*

There was some contradiction here, as teachers with leadership responsibility for HE

courses had remission for this role and shadowing was arranged to facilitate course

leaders' uptake of the role (MM28:141, 145). FE provision was MMs' priority because of

the number of FE students; it was 'their bread and butter' (SM27:266). As such, the

culture indicated a restrictive for the CHE community (Fuller and Unwin, 2004).

4.4.1 Summary – Example of expansive and restrictive elements of the environment in College C

Some examples of factors that indicate whether the learning environment in College C

is restrictive or expansive are presented in Table 4.7. The structure of the table is

explained in the conclusion of Section 4.1.

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Reification of CHE	HE-dedicated facilities in recognition of the different ethos in CHE	
	Remitted time given to those teachers with course leader responsibility	
		Lack of emphasis on documentation and language of HE
		MM left CHE to it
Cultural inheritance of CHE		Recent integration of CHE into departments resulted in teachers' perceived lack of understanding of the challenges of CHE
Recognition of teachers as learners		Time was focused on process and systems, not teacher professional learning
Extension of identity		Teachers retained an FE mentality and their identity was not extended beyond that of FE

Table 4.7 Summary of examples of factors that are restrictive and expansive from College C's environment

4.5 College D – College culture

College D valued teaching and learning for both students and staff. Professional dialogue

and a collaborative approach were facilitated, with teachers and MMs located together

in multi-departmental staff rooms (SM23:137; MM19:208). The teams were encouraged

to work together with open and honest communications and MMs had an open-door

policy, making themselves accessible to their teams. Some MMs believed they were supportive. SMs reinforced the MMs' supportive and motivational approach. One MM felt teachers were less well supported. For example, not all CHE teams were located in the same room (MM20); some teachers were based in more remote locations, and strategies and mechanisms were in place to prevent those teachers feeling isolated and ensure open communication channels (MM22:59; SM21:151).

The college had a dedicated HE room, which provided quieter conditions for students and teaching (SM23:121). Differentiated terms and conditions of employment existed; CHE teachers were paid higher salaries and had HE teaching hours weighted by 0.2 for each hour. Thus, the college facilitated marking time and acknowledged the workload needed for attending the university boards and committees (MM19:48). Many of the teachers taught solely on CHE courses and were not involved in FE. Most had FE teaching experience but had progressed in their careers to teach the higher-level courses. These features in College D implied the promotion of an ethos of HEness (Simmons and Lea, 2013). However, there was a perception from one newly appointed SM and teachers that the college was 'stuck in FE mode' in terms of the frameworks used for quality assurance and improvement (T1; SM21:108).

In terms of professional learning, there was an emphasis on new staff and the importance of introducing them supportively to the world of CHE. A new induction process was being formulated to make their transition from FE to HE smoother (MM19:17). The college had also recently appointed a dedicated HE manager whose role was split between HE and the FE team. Dedicated CHE mentors had also been

established in recognition of the different needs of CHE teachers (SM21:240). The college's strategic growth plan included increasing the CHE provision, and thus there was a skills gap identified that was driving staff development to prepare more teachers for HE teaching. There was a recognition of both MMs and teachers as learners. MMs encouraged and delivered staff development (MM19:124). The supportive culture and focus on learning at all levels of the organisation indicate that fundamental principles of leadership for learn are adhered to (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). However, financial constraints limited development with formal higher-level qualifications which were the main opportunity identified by the HEMM:

> *Because we are not very well off, we have to keep the books balanced, so, staff development now is scrutinized very very very carefully indeed, and there is NOT the support there once was for higher education and Teachers, along with further education Teachers…(MM19:89)*

Many of the development days were driven by the needs of FE legislation and FE compliance regimes (T1), reducing for CHE teachers' participation in multiple communities of CHE practice (Eaton, 2015; Galley and Savage, 2014) and access to scholarship (Widdowson and King, 2018). In one remote department, the range of opportunities for professional learning focused very much on industry-driven needs, for example new technology and equipment, which demonstrated a different vocational perspective in that department:

> *So, we're doing a lot currently, with, robotics, from a digital point of view as well, and, virtual realities were a big thing, and the cyber securities, so they're probably the three areas that we're expanding into. (MM20:21)*

Some of the processes and systems that were deemed bureaucratic in other colleges were seen as opportunities for learning by MM19.

4.5.1 Summary – Example of expansive and restrictive elements of the environment in College D

Some examples of factors that indicate whether the learning environment in College D is restrictive or expansive are presented in Table 4.8. The structure of the table is explained in the conclusion of Section 4.1.

Aspects of the learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Reification of CHE	Dedicated HE facilities	
Support for professional learning; dedicated named individual to support	Dedicated CHE support in the form of mentors	
Gradual development into full role	Induction and shadowing for new course leads	
Alignment of learning needs		Professional learning needs driven by FE legislation
Recognition of teachers as learners	Recognition of teachers and MMs learning, and developing skills and knowledge for CHE	
Extended identity across boundaries		Perception that CHE teachers had not developed their own CHE identity
Participation in community of practice	Recognition of CHE as a community of practice in its own right	

Table 4.8. Summary of examples of factors that are restrictive and expansive from College D's environment

4.6 College E – College culture

> *There's no end to learning.* (MM3:71)

College E was described by the SM as an ambitious college where a passion for learning was a necessity. A recent restructure aimed to improve the quality of teaching and learning, and to emphasise a culture focusing on a more developmental mind-set (SM5:500). SM felt that the management structure was more flat than previously and that this would break down silos and facilitate collaborative teams across the college. The focus was on creating a joined-up community with space to work and reflect (SM5:115). However, it was noted that the restructure had put a strain on the organisation:

> *We've been going through BIG change of personnel, and is under-resourced at the moment.* (SM5:591)

An open-door policy aimed to encourage professional conversations and ensure teachers were supported. Staff development had a big profile (SM5:195). The focus on professional learning and an environment conducive to learning suggest a leadership for learning approach (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). However, it was highlighted that the vocational cultures within different departments influenced college and departmental culture (Gilpin, 2007) and did not always embrace professional learning (MM3:320). This college had developed many external partnerships to help produce diverse development opportunities for CHE teachers aligned to leadership for learning roles (Hoekstra and Newton, 2017) and development of an expansive learning environment (Fuller and Unwin, 2004). The HE strategy had resulted in a strategic alliance with other colleges and universities. As part of a college federation, the HEMM

was developing a network of CHE practitioners as a community of practice in the South West of England (MM2:191) to enhance shared learning (Lave, 1996). However, the presence of this network had not yet developed into a community of practice:

We don't have that community of HE practice, we're just trying to come at it from all different angles, because it's really needed. (SM5:714)

The college also had good relationships with employers (MM2:127; MM3:177).

CHE was a key element of the college provision:

We've (SMT) GOT to invest. We've got to value them (CHE teachers), we've got to recognise and support them, and drive it, so that's all positive. (SM5:69;79;81)

However, the perception of MMs differed from this view:

They're (SMT) dedicated to HE, they want to improve HE, they want to grow HE, but they've not necessarily got the resource to enable them to do that. (MM6:461)

In response to the QAA recommendation for more consistent management of CHE, a new HEMM role had been created to manage the processes and requirements of the university courses. The terms and conditions of employment for HE were not differentiated from those of FE. Both managers and teachers highlighted the fact that their contracts were not differentiated, so terms and conditions were not conducive to enabling professional learning. Terms and conditions were perceived as being better in HEIs, so staff tended to 'get good' and then move to jobs in universities where there was a greater emphasis on scholarship (Widdowson and King, 2018). From the staff point of view, time was a restricting factor:

They [the teachers] just don't have the time to research, and that's one thing about being in FE, because they can't do that scholarly activity. (MM2:314)

Much teaching spanned both FE and CHE courses. One of the main issues was seen to be the amount of time needed for marking longer HE assignments. Teachers did not have allocated blocks of time for marking or preparation of higher-level courses. Teachers explained that there were tensions caused by weekly FE administration tasks inhibiting their attendance on HE continuous development days. The conflicts between the values of FE and CHE are present (Somech and Naamneh, 2019). MMs expressed a desire to recognise the differences and facilitate professional learning by changing the terms and conditions of employment to allow time for scholarship (MM4:388; MM6:474). The lack of differentiation and the priority given to FE inhibited an HE ethos (Simmons and Lea, 2013).

However, the SM was supportive of teachers and drove opportunities for college-based teachers to participate in projects outside the college, including international ones. Investment in HE teacher development was a priority; one college SM and HEMM was actively researching external opportunities and networking with people to influence projects and aspirational activities by securing funding: 'a pot for the HE teachers to pick up and run with' (SM5:160). Much like College A, new aspirations had not embedded fully throughout the college as MMs did not know about these new projects and some felt that the restructure had had detrimental repercussions on the teachers' morale, as they felt devalued (MM1:249; MM3:234). The departments had a much larger FE provision than HE (MM1:24; MM3:7). The higher proportion of FE affected the culture, identity and professional development needs within the department (Healey *et al.,* 2014).

4.6.1 Summary – Example of expansive and restrictive elements of the environment in College E

Some examples of factors that indicate whether the learning environment in College E

is restrictive or expansive are presented in Table 4.9. The structure of the table is

explained in the conclusion of Section 4.1.

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Reification of CHE	Good reification of CHE with specific documents and processes	CHE teachers do not feel valued
		Departmental cultures focused on FE environment and little difference was seen between FE and college-based HR, so teachers did not feel valued
Named individual to support	Dedicated HE manager	
	SM identifying funding to support ambitious projects	
Participation in communities of practice; recognition of teachers as learners	Projects for CHE teacher to participate in wide external communities	
Shared participatory memory		Departmental and vocational cultures deterred teachers form participating in opportunities
Extended identity across boundaries		Limited confidence in extended identity to CHE – a challenge too far

Table 4.9 Summary of examples of factors that are restrictive and expansive from College E's environment

4.7 Summary/overview – college culture and CHE context within college culture

The five colleges had different cultures and attitudes, but four main themes emerged

from the data relating to culture for all colleges, which revealed tensions and synergies

between college culture and CHE culture. The four areas were: priorities and drivers; attitude to CHE; dominant cultures and subcultures; and attitude toward professional learning. Each of these will be discussed in this section, with examples of where tensions and synergies impact on CHE.

4.7.1 Priorities and drivers

The most frequently mentioned driver for college priorities was finance and funding. There were two elements to this. First was the reduction in funding (Foster, 2005) resulting from government priorities and agendas (Coffield *et al.*, 2007) and a lack of access to funding (Waters *et al.,* 2015). Second was mergers and restructuring, and ensuing issues (AoC, 2016; Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2018). Consequences and examples of these are shown in Table 4.10:

Element of finance and funding	Consequence	Example from data	Impact on CHE from data
Reduction in funding (AoC, 2016)	Perceived to be a reduction or redirection of resources into priority projects	Colleges' priority was students aged 16–18; large number of students in that provision type; the amount of funding derived from it; FE students influential	One SM noted that CHE students brought in funds almost equivalent to their FE counterparts; had limited influence: *We aren't large enough to have a valid argument in terms of numbers of students we've got, and the provision size. (SM5:386); We're getting less money coming in (SM23:276)*
Mergers and restructures	Staff attrition	Some MMs did not share that commitment when it came to restructure and had left the organisation	Participating SMs were very focused on, and committed to, improving CHE, and acted as driving forces to raise the profile of CHE
	Culture shifts	Rebuilding of culture	Some staff had not yet realised the centrality of teaching and learning: *I'm not sure the message has really sunk in enough for us as a sector, for FE and HE things have to be radically different. (SM5:505)*
	Redundancies	CHE had recently become integrated into departments	*Some roles had disappeared and not replaced. Some teachers had 'lost the love' of teaching and learning and were no longer motivated by being in the classroom. (MM3:207)*

Table 4.10 Consequences and examples of finance and funding drivers

Among MMs in colleges there was a sense of being disenfranchised and they complained of a prolonged decision-making time that did not ease their work and led them to question SMs' priorities. Factors from priorities and drivers that produce either an expansive or a restrictive learning environment were identified, and these are summarised in Table 4.11:

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Reification of CHE	SM commitment and attention to raising the profile of CHE	
Alignment of learning needs		Students aged 16–18 prioritised over CHE students
Participation in communities of practice; access to professional learning		Teachers losing motivation to learn
		Staff attrition as a result of restructuring and changes in culture
Emerging		Prolonged decision-making time
		Lack of commitment by MMs to the need for restructuring

Table 4.11 Expansive and restrictive priorities and drivers

4.7.2 Attitude to CHE

The attitude to CHE was inconsistent. HEMMs, MMs and teachers had different attitudes (See Table 4.12):

College	Attitudes expressed
A	*It feels like there's a divide between FE and HE, and that sort of HE there's so much more academic, higher level maybe because it's also been, in the past there's been such a focus on research, rather than maybe, teaching and learning, I'm not saying that's across the piece on this, in fact, as Practitioners are really…, are, you know, have fabulous skills in the craft of TLA, and I don't think It's been anything like the emphasis that's been on further education.* (SM9:80) *Almost to the Premier League, that definitely, many Teachers aspire to teach HE, probably because of the kind of the hierarchy, I think a little bit of snobbery, from their colleagues, it puts some people off, some people might not want to be part and part of that.* (SM8:103) *And there is still a tension at HE about those regulatory and targets. there's still, a sort of tension between scholarly activity, and, I think it will change, and I think it will change because of what's happening with the focus of HE going back into to teaching.* (SM9:64)
B	*Because essentially, CPD would have been influenced by research, so you see what people are really doing on the coalface, and you give the people the skill sets, and I think that's why HE and FE is different to university, we're not driven by periodicals and up-to-date research, we're driven by employment needs and skills gaps, and the shortage of that, so, my focus will be to steer people to what people need to go and do a particular role that requires a level of training, the entire education.* (MM14:63) *It provides aspirations for people working, in the College, so, Teachers want to teach our higher education programmes, and feel they're…, they're being stretched by working at a higher level,* (MM14:118) *You will not find members of the teaching team here that are ONLY dedicated to HE, there are only few, and these few realise that for…, for their own career success, that they need to progress, in order to grow in HE teaching. So, it comes from the putting career characteristics more than.* (MM15:22) *It's recognizing that if you want to add HE to your Portfolio, you need to accept and understand that it is completely different than FE.* (MM15:204)

C	*Because actually, it's very challenging to teach HE in an FE environment, some of our teachers are teaching 26 hours a week, with a HE load.* (MM28:466)
	There's no differentiation (between FE and HE) I think there's a lot of cross-over. (MM25:77)
D	*HE is treated in the same way as FE Is treated, and that's actually not quite right, it's different, the students are different, they should be treated differently, and yet, for example, we give them the same questionnaires, we give them the same things that we give the FE students, and actually, if we're having HE students here, I think they should be treated in a slightly different way, they…, they're learning in a different way, they're being taught in a different way, and yet, for instance, we measure the Teachers who are teaching on a HE programme in the same way that we measure the FE Teachers.* (MM19:56)
	And that building is the HE building, now I know some people would say, "Ahhh, but that sets it apart, and the FE students will feel they're a LESSER being, and they're NOT lesser at all, it's just that the HE students are doing HIGHER level study, where they need, to do higher level research, they need to approach their studies differently, and I think if they were housed in a different area that was separate, and the Teachers were based there, even if some of them did go back and forward into FE, I think that would be good to see. (MM19:199)
	I don't think there is tension between the two in my area, although I do have a lot of HE in my area, I think there's a tension between how we treat HE in this college, and how we treat FE, and I think we try to do both, and that's always difficult. (MM19:50)
	the things that we report on in FE are not the things that are important…In HE… And they can't cross over. (MM22:34)
E	*It's (CHE) kind of left to its own devices, so to speak.* (MM2:114)
	It's really difficult being HE and FE, because there's so much work, you know, and it goes on, in terms of the…, the monitoring, the tracking, the paperwork. (MM4:223)
	CHE, was completely different from working with the University, they've got some real key strengths in some of the areas. Around, well, in FE here,

| | *we are a bit more touchy-feely, and yes, at the University, you are going to sit in a lecture theatre with 100 other people, and maybe get a different experience, because they're a much smaller group here, than they are when they go out there.* (MM4:251)

The flip between the two of those things was mind boggling, and one of the things she became very aware of was their language register, so, words that she could use in Level 3, moving into Level 4 / Level 5, and the language that she used in Level 1 and Level 2, you know, the…, the…, the words to describe things, she…, she found that the brain flip for that was absolutely…, she found it very tiring doing that. (MM1:96-98)

It's quite a hard pill to swallow, when you sit somebody down here, and you say, "Do you realise this isn't a 9:00 to 5:00 job, it's a…, it's a way of life?" (MM3:296)

So, it's quite interesting, the higher level stuff is kind of left on its own. (MM3:168)

The marking, it's phenomenal, and just the preparation, it's just very different, isn't it? It needs to be more involved. (MM2:209-210) |

Table 4.12 Examples of the different attitude expressed about CHE

Most MMs showed an appreciation of the workload, and highlighted terms and conditions and time spent marking as inhibitors to professional learning. There was a recognition that, although teaching across the levels could be beneficial because of student knowledge, this crossover between FE and HE could cause problems. Teachers, however, believed that MMs did not appear to fully grasp their workload:

> *Comments of 'work sharper' are frequent, rather than addressing the volume of work given. So, adding additional learning/training becomes one more thing. This is not checked or followed through with support and acknowledgement of the time and effort given. For example, I am currently completing my BA top-up, which included a detailed module on safeguarding. My manager asked about my CPD hours and suggested I complete a level 2 safeguarding course! This is a clear example of lack of understanding. (T31)*

Teachers felt that the focus of their managers seemed to be 'ticking a box' (SM5:254) they had been asked to satisfy, rather than looking at reality:

> *My manager actually says, 'I don't understand HE'. (T16)*

SMs also questioned how well MMs supported CHE teachers:

> *There are top-down dictates about development and changes to be made which are not followed up so the teachers sometimes feel let down. (SM5:566)*

The dissonance between the views of teachers about MMs and what MMs believe may be an inhibitor to both the MMs' role and professional learning for CHE as an example of role ambiguity (Biddle, 1986) and foregrounded the lack of experience and knowledge of CHE (Orr and Simmons, 2010).

The organisation of CHE provision was raised. From the MMs' point of view, HEMMs wanted to isolate CHE, while others saw the benefits of embedded CHE. In three colleges, quiet facilities were provided for college-based students and teachers to work in. These CHE-designated facilities were considered good, adding value.

The data from SMs interviewed seemed to reveal that senior members of staff who were experienced in CHE were pro-CHE, and drove CHE. This was in colleges where there were plans developed by HEMMs and SMs about developing strategic alliances, investment and differentiation for CHE; but, evidently, these messages did not reach MMs. In two colleges, there was no named SM involved in HE. There was little participatory memory (Fuller and Unwin, 2004) and limited promotion of CHE (Widdowson and King, 2018). Here, the feeling expressed was that senior leaders did not see the value of HE.

The need for an SMT member to focus on CHE and recognise that the students were

different and needed different things were reinforced in four colleges. Attitudes to CHE

can produce either an expansive or a restrictive learning environment were identified,

and these are summarised in Table 4.13:

Aspects of learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Reification of CHE		Teachers believed MMs did not appear to fully grasp their workload
	SMs were experienced in and focused on CHE; they were pro-CHE	
	Provision of quiet facilities for CHE students and teachers	
		SMs developed plans about strategic alliances and investment but the message did not reach the MMs
Support for learning; reification of CHE		Teachers perception that MMs were 'ticking boxes' rather than seeing and responding to what was happening
Extending identity across boundaries	Teaching across the levels in FE and HE can be beneficial because of student knowledge	
Recognition of teachers as learners	Element of learning from a wide/broad practice	
	MMs understand inhibitors to professional learning – workload	Workload cannot be changed, and teachers do not believe that MMs understand

Table 4.13 Expansive and restrictive attitudes to CHE

4.7.3 Subcultures

Emerging differences of opinion within subcultures in colleges influence whether

opportunities for professional learning are accepted or adopted. These differences may

result from vocational culture or departmental make-up, for example subject mix

(Gilpin, 2007). This was positive in some cases, for example in health and social care, and negative in others, notably engineering (See Table 4.14). The use of sessional teachers who are specialists in their areas of expertise also adds different mind-sets.

College	Examples of participants' voices
A	*They (public forces teachers) have the knowledge. We've got some great Teachers in there, great discipline, disciplinarians, that manage their classes well. The areas that have found it difficult, I think because if you teach English to speakers of other languages, you studied English, you became a Teacher, you've never worked anywhere else outside education, it's much harder to, because you've not worked in a sector like that. (SM8:188)* *Some staff have actually done away with our standard issue lanyard, and, even though there's an HE one, they wear the university out, and to introduce themselves on their email signatures as Associate Lecturer at the university, I had a slight uncomfortable feeling about it. (SM8:77)*
B	*I think it's because of my nursing background, you know, whenever you go anywhere in charge of a ward, you look at what skills sets you've got, and I think that's something I've been able to transfer.* (MM13:56) *We went straight from HE Review to Ofsted, we knew we were being Ofsteded and so Ofsted had to take priority, and a HUGE priority, because obviously, the HE Review was important and mattered, but it's not everything. (SM3:52)*
C	*In some departments, some are very open but not in all, by any means… I think in some departments, yes, there is a cultural; "We don't want anything to do with you". (MM19:113-135)* *But I actually don't think that's necessary, because I think a good Manager, you can manage anything, it doesn't really matter what vocational, curriculum areas you have in your area, I think if you're a good Manager you can manage, you can manage anything, and so I don't NECESSARILY think that is something. (MM19:72)*
D	*I think certainly, from D, because her vocational background was nursing. That gives her a 'can do' attitude. (SM23:390)*

	I think my background, SPECIFICALLY in communication, and in empathy, and in observation skills, so I can look at somebody on my team in HE, and think; "Oh, it's…, it's…, you're not happy today" and then I can think through why you're not happy, so that needs another conversation. (MM22:265)
E	*The member of staff's background, for an Architect, when they come in, they tend to pitch it really high, and the students don't understand it, but then we can't find anyone else to teach that level, because the current staff who I've got, have never practiced in architecture, and so it's about the balance of trying to find. (MM3:23)* *It's just about them, within silos, they're not, you know, within even trades, they're not even speaking to each other, so it's just about breaking down those barriers, and finding a…, a system for them to feed back to each other. (MM3:157)* *I've been to different colleges in the same department, and it's the same wherever you go, and it's a strange…, you know, if you say to staff, why did you not just share that around?" "Well, I made that, and I'm not sharing it", a lot of staff here just keep it to themselves. (MM3:217-218)* *If I speak about construction in Engineering, they're regarded from the industry as quite high level, I suppose, how they'll position us within that, so, from somebody comes across and says, "Actually, you're really good with your subject knowledge" it's getting that across to them, "You're not very good at that (teaching)". They find that as a hard pill to swallow and I think that there's just a hierarchy within the industry that they're in.. " (MM3:36)*

Table 4.14 Examples of participants identifying the impact of subcultures

The comments above indicate that such teachers and MMs often bring with them beliefs and values from their industry, and preconceived ideas of what HE teaching looks like – for example, standing in front of a class lecturing. There was a perceived lack of willingness to change:

I think from an HE within FE setting, there's always been this stigma, where we need those teachers more than they need us. (MM3:75)

In some departments, a perceived remoteness and lack of a sense of belonging to a team existed. In contrast, in teacher training where courses are all at higher levels, the team collaborated well and had a good sense of belonging. In all other departments, FE dominance prevailed. There was a focus on preparation for Ofsted inspections and a tension between FE and CHE, where high numbers of FE students overwhelmed CHE and its funding. It was these factors that were felt to drive attitudes to professional learning, discussed in Subsection 4.7.4. Factors from subcultures present in colleges that produce either an expansive or a restrictive learning environment were identified, and these are summarised in Table 4.15:

Aspects of learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Alignment of learning	In departments with high numbers of CHE students – a commitment to scholarly activity and participation in communities of practice	FE student proportions were high in most departments
Participation in a community of practice	Commitment to communities of practice	
		Perceived remoteness and a lack of sense of belonging to a community of practice (team)
		Departmental subcultures deter teachers from participating in learning opportunities
Reification of CHE		Dominance of FE culture and regimes
		Departmental focus is on study programme students so CHE teachers do not feel valued
Participatory memory – tradition of CHE		Perceived ideas of what HE teaching looks like that diverge from reality; resistance to change
Emerging		Beliefs and values derived from industry diverge from those of teaching and CHE

Table 4.15 Expansive and restrictive factors from subcultures

4.7.4 Attitude towards professional learning

Overall, staff development had a high profile and was important. However, national agendas, focused on FE, often drove college development needs. National themes for FE were dictated to colleges in terms of maths and English; so, HE themes got buried and both managers and teachers perceived staff development days as *irrelevant* and others felt it improved CHE teaching,

> *It (CPD) kind of falls in line and piggybacks a lot off FE, which can be a tension, because, with so much talk about Study Programmes and English and maths, and with being the bulk of the work here, the HE teaching and learning almost fits in around, in some ways that has probably strengthened what we do in HE. (*MM10:17)

The perceived 'David and Goliath' FE dominance seemed to drive different priorities, away from CHE. However, SMs had earmarked budget funding for professional learning:

> *We've got to invest, we've got the money, we've got to use it. (SM5:67)*

MMs talked mainly about informal sharing or formal qualifications and less about research and scholarship. This demonstrated limited knowledge of scholarly activities which limits opportunities (Lawrence and Hall, 2019). The attitude to the content of, driven by industry (Murray *et al.,* 2014; Eraut, 2014), course design, course delivery using technology, knowledge and skills gaps (Widdowson and King, 2018), and approaches to professional learning emerged as a theme and were catalysts for professional learning.

SMs and HEMM expressed a concern that curriculum MMs needed to look outside the college to identify opportunities. The HEMMs were bringing in funding for research projects:

What I am trying to get off the ground. Nobody has grabbed it yet. Now, I'm going to go direct to them this year, and say, 'Look, this is a fund, a pot of funding that is available all-year round'. (MM2:321)

This lack of 'grabbing' opportunities was an emerging theme from the SMs' data. There was an inconsistent take-up of opportunities by teachers and MMs alike. However, it was not felt to be 'wilful, deliberate resistance':

So, there's people that I know can just tell you they mean well, and they want to do well, but have just kind of lost that love for it, and trying to get that back into it is quite difficult, and day-to-day, they're just doing worse and worse, in that lesson. (MM3:220)

Factors from attitudes towards professional learning in colleges that produce either an expansive or a restrictive learning environment were identified, and these are summarised in Table 4.16:

Aspects of learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Recognition of teachers as learners	Staff development has a high profile and is important	
Alignment of learning needs	Professional learning drivers are catalysts – technology, course design that introduces skills gaps	
		National themes for FE drive college professional learning; HE themes get buried
Participatory memory in CHE		MMs demonstrate a lack of knowledge of scholarly activity
Breadth of professional learning opportunities; participation in communities of learning		MM are not looking for a breadth of opportunity for professional learning for their teachers
		Inconsistent take-up of opportunities to learn

Table 4.16 Expansive and restrictive attitudes towards professional learning

4.8 Academic structures and processes

MMs were affected by the academic structures and processes of their organisation and awarding bodies. These included, for example, appraisals, observations, learner voice and verification, and moderation. The issues derived from the data are summarised in Table 4.17:

Issues with academic structure and processes from data relate to:
quality assurance versus quality improvement
FE versus HE specifications
ownership of quality
consistency of processes and their implementation

Table 4.17 Summary of issues relating to academic structure and processes

These could shape the leadership behaviours of managers (Hallinger and Heck, 2011). Some systems were transparent, and easy to implement, provided tracking of progress and success. However, the range of HE awarding bodies resulted in a variety of reporting processes for courses, assessment approaches and teacher engagement:

> *In terms of weaknesses, I think our weaknesses still, not fully understanding the policies of our Partner University that we work with. I think it's because they're different.* (MM22:240)

The range of processes to perform similar tasks sometimes resulted in confusion. Their influence on shaping leadership behaviours and professional learning are discussed in this section.

Quality processes caused some consternation. All the participating MMs were involved in quality processes that were driven by data collection and analysis. In their role as line managers, they cited quality processes; for example, learner voice and observations led to discussions about strengths and areas for improvement and action plans in appraisals. Formal observations were steered by MMs who had teaching and learning teams to support, as well as responsibility for monitoring the impact of improvement activities. MMs frequently felt that quality processes were more about quality assurance than improvement (Randle and Brady, 1997). Quality processes both shaped decisions about

professional learning and caused anxiety. This did not aid a developmental collaborative culture:

> *You're observed by a manager, and it's quite scary and not very supportive.*
> *(MM19:10)*

Various participants highlighted that the processes for observations followed Ofsted-orientated procedures and criteria. Not many teachers were teaching solely in CHE, and they more often taught in both CHE, where Ofsted criteria were not felt to be appropriate, and in FE. A question was raised about the composition of the observation team and the focus on HE. HEMMs were not involved in observations but were involved in self-assessment, with a focus on processes and procedures. The lack of participation in teaching and learning monitoring activities hindered one HEMM, who would have preferred a holistic view of what was happening in order to better support the teams and help focused networking with HEIs. HEMMs were sometimes not involved with partners and this could act as an inhibitor to learning as a result of remoteness:

> *HE is a bit removed, it's almost over here, whereas actually, for HE staff I probably*
> *should have more involvement in the development of their teaching and learning,*
> *or development of their HE identities. (MM28:267–269)*

One MM talked only of improving professional learning through her role as a mentor, not as an MM (MM19:124). Some MMs felt that they were inhibited in their role because they were not included in decision-making processes. This resulted in an impression of no ownership or empowerment, and a feeling that they did not have a holistic picture but were nevertheless held accountable:

There's probably a bit of a gap there, you know, we don't really, truly know, how a HE Teacher is teaching HE. (MM28:209)

SMs voiced the need for MMs to take ownership of all processes and for consistency in monitoring improvements (SM5:233). Meetings that would lead to the development of a community were held inconsistently and, because of the small numbers of students involved, the learner voice was too small to be subject-specific, resulting in CHE becoming buried in FE.

Both internal and external verification and moderation contributed to the quality of courses. External examiners' reports provided rich comments about assessment and feedback. At one college, a calendar planning academic events provided information about the cycle of academic procedures. This provided some clarity about systems in place, committees and boards. Training for new course leaders was available in the form of shadowing an incumbent course leader and provision of detailed handovers were seen to assist in understanding academic processes and ease leadership of courses. This induction was not always specific to CHE.

An emerging theme was that of the processes and structures within the different awarding bodies. The different institutions had different cultures and routines, using different terminology and processes:

There are lots of hoops, which are all different for different universities. (SM23:374)

I have now got to get a map in my head of, and for that, it's entirely different to FE, and very formal. (MM1:81)

There were no consistent requirements in terms of assessment and style, and the bureaucracy was felt to be overly burdensome. HEI academic processes for quality seemed less concerned with teaching and learning. Some HEIs were not involved while others were very supportive and provided good opportunities and guest lecturers. Data referring to the context of college-based education and college culture are included in Section 4.9. Factors were identified from academic structure and processes in colleges that produce either an expansive or a restrictive learning environment, and these are summarised in Table 4.18. Academic structures and processes are also discussed through a different lens in Subsection 4.11.1, exploring the leader for learning role of MMs.

Aspects of learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Dedicated support for learning	Dedicated CHE mentors in place	
		HEMM not involved in teaching and learning
		Teachers left to their own devices
Reification of CHE		Processes shaped by FE regulatory regimes, not CHE
		Inconsistency of approach to processes
		Top down decisions made about processes – HE teachers' autonomy eroded; MMs no sense of ownership
	HE criteria used in HE processes and systems	
Recognition of teachers as learners	Processes used to indicate learning objectives for CHE teachers	
Emerging		Quality assurance rather than quality improvement
		CHE quality processes more focused on paper-based evidence, not on teaching and learning

Table 4.18 Expansive and restrictive factors in academic structures and processes

4.9 Contextual and environmental factors

FE colleges are complex organisations that operate within both national and local

contexts (AoC, 2019) . These contextual and environmental factors influence operations

of colleges and can be both beneficial and detrimental to CHE (Widdowson and King, 2018). For example, they can cause a sense of constant upheaval or contradictory demands on curriculum offers and roles (Briggs, 2001). The environment of the colleges themselves differs from region to region (ETF, 2016). They vary in terms of size, complexity and the curriculum they offer (See Table 4.1). Perceived differences between FE and HE contexts can cause confusion when both are embedded together in a curriculum area. These are discussed below.

In a national context, colleges are influenced by government decisions and agendas (For example: Coffield *et al.,* 2008; Lingfield, 2012; BIS, 2011; 2015). These agendas drive much of the development and consequently professional learning. Constant changes in government policy and funding priorities result in a sense of 'turbulence' that is not conducive to consistent learning (AoC, 2016). The local context drives the curriculum (King and Widdowson, 2009). Courses need to reflect local employers' needs (King and Widdowson, 2009). For example, a college needs to understand what the local need and uptake is for apprenticeships. With government changes, the local context changes too. Restructuring following mergers have led to inconsistencies in management structures and status (AoC, 2016). Different managers call themselves different things, leading to role ambiguity (Biddle, 1986). Differences in perception as to who has responsibility for teaching and learning for CHE may result in a role incongruity (Berger, 2014).

MMs and SMs identified four emerging factors summarised in Table 4.19:

Factors	Examples
The make-up of colleges	FE courses were seen as the 'Goliath' to CHE courses' 'David'. Location and number of campuses; Differing cultures
Pedagogy	Differed traditional expectations for HEI; Influenced by the mixed levels of teaching in FE colleges ranging from pre-entry to level 7
Technology	Develops at a faster pace than colleges can evolve
Scholarly activity	Not a priority as it is in HEIs; Time needed not acknowledged

Table 4.19 Four emerging themes in contextual and environmental factors in colleges

The make-up of colleges varies in terms of size and number of sites. The location of teachers can be inhibiting for professional learning and for MMs enacting their role. In huge, complex organisations bringing teachers together can be problematic. Where there are multiple campuses, one site may be deemed more important than another, which impacts on the sense of belonging felt by teachers and MMs. Cultures within different campuses can also differ.

Developing and managing a community of learning can be difficult where teachers are located distances apart. MMs can lose sight of those teachers who are in distant locations. These distances can be partially overcome by use of technology. Technology

is also a driver for professional learning to support innovation in pedagogy (ETF, 2014). Technology moves at a fast pace and FE colleges cannot always keep up with the speed of development. SMs recognise that some teachers do not embrace technology, and some teachers and MMs do not have the skills or knowledge to do so. Skills and knowledge are two factors that influence MMs' leadership behaviours, and these are discussed in Subsection 5.3.2, together with further factors: values and beliefs, experience and qualities. Contextual and environmental factors influencing the creation of either an expansive or a restrictive learning environment are summarised in Table 4.20. Part of the MM leader for learning role is organising the environment for learning, and this is explored in Subsection 4.11.4:

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Reification of CHE	Recognition that CHE pedagogy differs from traditional expectations for HE	
Tradition of CHE; participatory memory		No recognition of a difference between FE and HE pedagogy
		FE teaching and learning a priority (lack of scholarship restricts the HE view of development)
Alignment of learning needs	Teaching and learning a priority, not scholarship – this is positive as it is a focus on learning	Teaching and learning a priority, not scholarship – this is restrictive because it does not focus on scholarship
Participation in communities of practice		Teacher spread in different locations inhibits the development of communities of practice
Emerging		Sense of turbulence

Table 4.20 Expansive and restrictive contextual and environmental factors

4.10 People

The categories of people identified from the data were similar for each college. Their influence shaped learning in the colleges. Examples of the influential groups of people are outlined in Table 4.21. Each of the emerging people categories shaped the data and their areas of influence are explored in this section.

Group of people	Location	Examples of areas of influence
Employer	External	Curriculum content
Students	Internal	Pedagogical choices
SMs	Internal	MMs' role set (as defined in Subsection 2.1.2), setting expectations for their behaviour
HE partners	External	Formats for delivery and academic systems
Teachers	Internal	Perception of what HE is

Table 4.21 Examples of influential groups of people and their areas of influence

The first category is employers.

Table 4.22 provides examples of the comments made by the participants about employers:

College	Examples of participants' voices
A	*We're linked up with associations, and various companies, so, for this area here, we're linked to a network of employers, and educators, marketing industry experts, who are the movers and shakers of the industry.* (MM10:46) *Our curriculum is co-created with employers* (SM9:109) *Our expectations now are much more project based, so our client comes in and sets the brief, they then have Business Mentors laying out, present it, and the clients are there.* (SM8:163)
C	*The employers, we're seeing that more and more now, as they influence course content.* (MM28:763) *Employers probably influences what units we teach, obviously on the HNC.* (MM26:213)
D	*The industry was quite good in terms of keeping you up-to-date in THAT respect, and those individuals do lots of online learning actually, to…, to keep up-to-date.* (MM20:122)
E	*What I've found with the employers you get a lot of employed, they're people who are paying to upskill themselves through HE and even the employers, I asked if employers give any feedback, or if they came into the lessons, but nothing happens in that respect.* (MM3:177)

Table 4.22 Examples of the comments made by the participants about employers and their influence

Their influence ranged from informing curriculum design, and providing industry updates for teachers and learning opportunities for students to develop the skills for work. In terms of professional learning, employers emerged as drivers of need for updating subject areas, particularly in subject areas where innovation was continuous, such as engineering and computing. This drove curriculum design and the identification of consequent skills gaps that needed to be filled. Students on work placements and in

employment learned much from their work in industry, but employers did not always

take much interest in what was being delivered or its quality (MM3:181). This reduced

their influence on courses.

The second external group is HEIs and awarding bodies. HEIs provided link tutors or co-

ordinators to support CHE teams. HEI links and external examiners delivered feedback

reports, visited teachers and students and provided professional learning opportunities,

and were mainly seen as approachable and helpful. Discrepancies were found, however,

with each university having its own 'road map' of expectations (MM1:81).

>*They (university links) don't talk to each other*. (MM2:352)

Where a college had multiple partners, it could be unclear and could present difficulties

for the MMs in the roles, impacting, for example, consistency in the implementation of

the processes, introduced in Section 4.8, and role conflict (Simmons and Lea, 2013).

Within colleges, the first group of people who influence aspects of CHE is students.

>*The students can see that, we have many meetings with the students, there are times when they are asked their opinions, and talk about certain things, I think it's important that they have the opportunity to feed back at the end of a lesson,* (MM4:260:286)

Students featured frequently in the data influencing CHE pedagogy. One SM suggested

that in CHE there was too much handholding for the students and that, in fact, activities

were needed to build their resilience to enable them to flourish in the outside world and

in HEIs (SM5:306). HEI feedback was sought using several methods, and the college's

response to this feedback had to be demonstrated to college leadership and the

awarding bodies. Some MMs noted that teachers did not always ask the students for

feedback, and did not respond effectively to what was said. The students were also found to drive innovation because of their age. It was found that students influenced delivery format and sequencing too; for example, when they were in employment, courses were often held at the weekend and/or electronically (MM1:21:255):

> *I've had feedback regarding timetables, saying, "We'll do Legal and Ethical followed by research, and then give them study time in the afternoon, "That's good, they'll get in and do that," the students didn't like it, the students wanted the Legal and Ethical and then time, because they felt they were getting mixed up in the subjects.* (MM13:115)

The second internal group is SMT, who influenced other peoples' priorities (Widdowson and King, 2018).

> *SMTs don't see HE as important as FE, and It's not because it's not a conscious thing at all, it's that SMTs' priority is FE Because they're in an FE, we're in an FE setting.* (MM28:94)

Generally, others' priorities, agendas and 'important things' could get in the way and inhibit improvement. However, a good relationship with the SM for CHE was important (MM28:381). In one case, sharing an office facilitated the relationship and conversations about CHE. This was incidental rather than a strategic decision. Some SMT members had very close links with CHE teachers and drove CHE with MMs in a supportive way to positive effect. However, some MMs felt that they were not kept in the loop:

> *The Principal and the Deputy Principal didn't report back, so there were some key issues that came up in that strategic meeting that I wasn't informed of* (MM22:16)

Teachers also influence various elements in colleges in several ways. Their interests, knowledge and experience in industry influence professional learning, curriculum design and views on pedagogy (Gilpin, 2007; Reid *et al.,* 2008):

> *I'm now a Doctor, Professor X, I'm gonna sit and talk, because I'm not gonna do anything that's practical, or make you, I'm gonna make you THINK, but you're just gonna have to just hear me. My content might be superb, my delivery might be completely out-of-date".* (MM10:19)

An emerging factor was the teacher's background and their preconceptions of what HE is. Teachers' knowledge of subject areas influenced the courses:

> *Very often, courses are driven, development courses are driven through the expertise we have.* (MM28:548)

The MMs thought that the teachers were sometimes oblivious to an issue with their teaching and not always open to support:

> *They know everything about that subject, they find it hard to just say, 'Okay, I'll accept this training if it helps teaching'.* (MM3:45)

> *They're regarded from the industry as quite high level, so, if somebody comes across and says, 'Actually, you're really good with your subject knowledge', it's getting that across to them; 'You're not very good at that', they find that as a hard pill to swallow, and I think that there's just a hierarchy within the industry that they're in.* (MM3:36)

Teachers' age and length of service sometimes influenced their willingness to improve: 'I've only got a couple of years left, so …' (T23). Some teachers were resistant, or not able to improve or have self-esteem issues. The teacher's stage of development in their role influenced the ways they learned (Reid *et al.,* 2008). Teachers with greater longevity of service were less ready to take suggestions on board compared to younger members of staff, who embraced suggestions and got involved .

The final internal group of people are MMs, who influence each other. SM acknowledged that MMs acted as a catalyst to professional learning, as they were imbued in CHE and in daily contact with their teams; however, MMs could also inhibit cultural change, perpetuating out-of-date practices (Ainley and Bailey, 1997).. SMs in one college mentioned that there was a need for a complete mind-set change. This was a college that had just gone through a merger and restructuring. MMs were seen to be the glue (MM1), and they interacted with general MMs, for example to set up mark books for all the courses to facilitate MMs' data retrieval and report writing. MMs had professional development programmes to help with changes to mind-set and working patterns. Where people's mind set was against change it was difficult to encourage an expansive learning environment (Fuller and Unwin, 2004). Factors from people in colleges were identified that produce either an expansive or a restrictive learning environment. These are summarised in Table 4.23:

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Participation in communities of learning; access to broad learning opportunities	Industry provided learning opportunities for teachers	
	SM networking to build communities of practice	
Access to broad learning opportunities	SM seeking funding for developmental projects	Lack of time to take up opportunities
Alignment of needs for professional learning	Employers drive professional learning, with the evolution of technology and curriculum design that contributes to skills gaps	
	Students drive professional learning by providing feedback on their expectations of pedagogy and use of technology	
Progression for career		Teachers have self-esteem issues and do not have the confidence to work for HE
Support for learning; participation in communities of learning	Teachers support each other in course teams	

Table 4.23 Restrictive and expansive factors from people

The influence that MMs have on learning is the key focus of this study. The data provides evidence that MMs have both a positive and a negative influence on professional learning in the college environment. The way they approach their roles within the environment is important.

4.11 Leader for learning roles

In this section, the MMs' role in improving teaching and learning through leading teachers' professional learning is discussed. Different behaviours as a leader for learning that are specifically relevant to leading professional learning, identified in the literature (Subsection 2.5.3), were used as sensitising themes (Bowen, 2006) for initial analysis. These are shown in Table 4.24:

Sensitising themes	Subsection
Providing systems-level support to enable teacher professional development (Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)	4.11.1 linked to Section 4.8
Designing and developing professional learning and realistic approaches (Robinson *et al*., 2008; Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)	4.11.2
Providing opportunities and encouragement for teacher-led professional learning connected to institutional goals and students' needs (Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)	4.11.3
Organising conditions for learning and developing genuine collaboration and open communication (Robinson *et al*., 2008; Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)	4.11.4 linked to Subsection 4.7.3
Facilitating, enabling and engaging a culture, routines and experiences that value, support and share teachers' individual and collaborative professional learning (Davies, 2009; Hoekstra and Newton, 2017)	4.11.5 linked to Section 4.7

Table 4.24 Sensitising themes and their related subsections in the study

These themes focus on the role of promoting and enabling the professional learning of CHE teachers. Another function that will be added to these is that of MMs taking

opportunities to be learners themselves (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009). In this study, MMs' learning is found to influence, and be influenced by their leadership behaviours (Stronach *et al.,* 2004) and is discussed in Section 4.12.6.

4.11.1 Systems-level support for professional learning

Systems existed that were led both internally, in the college, and externally, by HEIs and awarding bodies. These were introduced in Section 4.8, and were found to be similar for each college.

> *We are all involved in Quality Assurance of teaching, we will observe attitudes of staff, we will have open doors to students who want to give feedback about how things are going, we'll step in if we think that things aren't being done in the way we think it should be done, and we'll support staff to…, to model their behaviour in a different way, if that's necessary.* (MM14:26)

The data indicated that the way MMs enacted this function took different shapes within different colleges; three had CHE-specific systems but two did not. It was acknowledged by both SMs and MMs that FE systems and process were the dominant force. In fact, the MM who had the largest proportion of FE did not differentiate between college-based FE and HE. These factors are discussed further in this section.

SMs placed the responsibility for monitoring the quality assurance and supporting improvement firmly within the MMs' role. One SM described MMs as the 'gatekeepers' who saw what was going on and what was needed in terms of professional development (SM5:97). Teachers also had a responsibility: 'Let's empower the teachers' (SM5:108). This attitude fits with the view of autonomy and ownership ascribed at HE level (Simmons and Lea, 2013). For quality assurance and improvement systems, MMs collected data through different processes described in Section 4.8. In addition,

systematic internal verification examined marked assignments to provide an opportunity to evaluate the accuracy of the marking and effectiveness of feedback that fed into quality improvement plans. Several data sources were used, which meant that rich, triangulated evidence for professional learning needs was produced. The ensuing action plans informed the design and delivery of professional learning. However, there was no consistency in the criteria used for evaluation:

> *Consistency is a challenge. Not that everybody is doing the same, but every student has the same entitlement, the same offer, and that can be done in different ways.* (SM21:227)

> '*Quality is quality. You look for the same things even when it's HE*' (MM1:37).

Some MMs believed CHE pedagogy was the same as for FE and others believe it is different:

> *I think the sort of learning that takes place, when you can harness a lot of your teaching skills with some of the lower level groups. And you can tailor it and adapt it to some of the higher level learners.* (MM25:198)

> *It's easy to get stuck in an FE mode of delivery, which is much more spoon-fed, to use that expression, than it would be in HE.* (MM20:97)

Individual colleges' academic structures and processes were discussed in Section 4.8 The impact of different beliefs is explored in Section 5.3.

All MMs contributed to the quality processes, but with differing roles. One HEMM focused solely on the processes and procedures (MM2:23,29). This participant had scrutinised all the external examiners' reports and analysed the strengths and areas for improvement to be communicated to MMs. This new initiative aimed to use the reports more systematically for improvement. Regular meetings between MMs facilitated the

communication of processes and resulting data. It was not clear whether this was subsequently communicated to teachers as teaching commitments inhibited regular team meetings. The composition of meetings was often a combination of FE and HE teachers. A higher proportion of FE teachers caused meeting agendas to focus mainly on FE rather than HE. However, most SMs felt that there was clear compliance with CHE frameworks in standardisation meetings and exam boards, although whole CHE teams did not attend these meetings. It was difficult to put together a holistic view across the whole team. Where HEMMs were in place their aim was to collate information across the board to produce a picture of developmental needs for CHE communities across the colleges. However, the information collected was not in participating in observations:

> *I don't participate in…, in, you know, I don't go out and Observe all of the HE, you know. and I definitely think that would be a positive thing if I could do that because then that would feed into my understanding of what's happening.* (MM28:189)

Two colleges had CHE-specific observers. One college had introduced this system to build a full picture of what was happening in CHE in the college. MMs had more confidence in undertaking observations when courses were within their subject areas. Doubts were raised by both SMs and teachers about MMs' ability to outside their subject areas and in HE because a lack of experience and knowledge of HE and some subjects. Teachers further expressed doubts that MMs influenced their professional learning because 'No-one else has the same level of knowledge or the knowledge needed to support me …' (T1).

A lack of consistency in the criteria used to identify learning needs was apparent:

We have a real tension between what is good teaching in HE and what is good teaching in FE, yeah? and, you know, the Ofsted, QAA, and the approaches of what they expect are very different. (SM3:229)

What people are looking for, because I think in terms of HE, it's slightly different to what you're looking for in the pedagogies CAN be different to the FE, because looking for British values, and embedding maths and things may not be as appropriate in an HE session as it may be as important in an FE Level 2 session for example, I think potentially, a piece of work needs to be done around that. (SM21:112)

SMs felt that quality codes provided clear descriptors of expectations around responsibilities, support and what needed to be done for CHE. It was only HEMMs who referenced the quality code; others used the Ofsted framework. Teachers were not involved in the annual review of operations and standards. For changes and strategies for improvement to be more HE-specific to provide an expansive learning environment recognising CHE, its characteristics and professional learning needs a CHE culture is needed (Lea *et al.,* 2020). Instability caused by changes in staffing or priorities driven by external regimes caused disruption to the CHE systems (Thompson and Wolstencroft, 2018).

Three colleges had dedicated improvement teams to support professional learning. This took the form of teaching and learning teams or mentoring teams that did not include all MMs. MMs implemented an appraisal cycle that resulted in improvement team deployment. Teachers perceived that these systems were not supportive of professional learning but were driven by accountability and audit cultures (O'Leary, 2013). These systems were construed as managerial and not actually leading learning. On the other hand, the learning process indicates a need to identify learning needs by evaluating teaching as part of the learning cycle (Timperley, 2011). More participation by teachers

in teaching evaluation would ameliorate the perception of how supportive quality processes are, and drive up the amount of autonomy for teachers and increase the developmental profile (Gleeson, 2001).

Different forces that drive FE agendas and priorities were recognised as being different to CHE drivers. Consequently, the separation of CHE from FE results and attendance – indicators of quality – was suggested to help focus on the different provision types. Specific SMs seemed to drive this awareness and focus, so, unfortunately, when some managers left, the driving force was lost and the domination of FE continued when CHE did not have a SM to champion the provision type.

> *One thing that I've REALLY been pushing since I got this post, and drive it, so that' all positive*. *But I am leaving soon.* (SM5:81)

Table 4.25 summarises the activities in systems-level support for professional learning:

Function	Examples of activities
Cultural Influencer	Driving FE agenda and system
Quality assurer	Observations
	Learning walks
	Scrutiny of students' work
	Collation and analysis of student feedback
	Triangulation of data
Quality improver	Identification of professional learning needs
	Developing action plans
Mentor	Systematic support for development

Table 4.25 Summary of systems-level support for professional learning

Factors within this role that catalyse or inhibit an expansive or restrictive learning environment are summarised in Table 4.26:

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Reification of CHE		Agenda focussed on FE
		Ofsted-driven criteria for quality
	Quality code driven criteria for quality	Quality code focuses on paperwork, processes and systems, not teaching and learning
		Belief that CHE is the same as FE pedagogy
Access to a breadth of learning opportunities	Developmental culture	Audit culture – management
		Lack of subject knowledge
		Inappropriate professional learning activities
Dedicates support for professional learning	Dedicated teaching and learning mentor team	
		Staff changes – focus away from CHE
Recognition as a learner	Regular meetings for communication about learning	No time to attend meetings
	Action plans used to inform professional learning	

Table 4.26 Summary of factors that are restrictive and expansive from systems-level support for professional learning role

FE culture's domination over CHE in FE colleges is explored in Section 4.7.3. The factors summarised in Table 4.26 are used to demonstrate how modelling can be used to promote theorisation of the interrelationship between factors within the system and guide decision-making (Subsection 3.4.3.2) (Briggs, 2007).

4.11.2 Design and delivery of realistic professional learning with realistic approaches

Different colleges were at different stages of development in terms of CHE professional learning opportunities, and had different approaches to design and delivery of professional learning, see Table 4.27.

College	Examples of participants' voices
A	*They will then develop resources, training materials, offer bite-sized sessions, on-line training, to help with the development of those staff.* (SM9:22) *And for two weeks, where…, where staff plan, there's a whole raft of different activities, programmes, we have a Teacher and Learning Conference, at one of our campuses, and they sit down together with their Line Manager and plan what CPD they're going to undertake, that might, as I say, might not just involve internal or external conferences, but they would also work placements as well.* (SM9:16)
B	*Our awarding bodies, in the research conferences, and we're updated with the latest ideas and development that is happening in the field, and we use that back in teaching and in updating our teaching materials.* (SM3:34) *If I meet people who are of a relevant, , skill set, I'll try and sort of pass contact details across people, and then encourage that dialogue to happen, and if people come along, to introduce them, and those sorts of things. For example, I created a link between our Laboratory Manager and Laboratory Manager at Oxford the University to give him someone who he can talk to about the practical requirements of the course.* (MM13:39)

C	*We try and make a session that is HE specific. People don't always attend; we can't always facilitate it.* (MM28:71)
D	*Across the College, and change the culture, and that has started to happen, because our first Staff Development session started this year, the feedback was that they really liked them, because they were done by Teachers.* (MM19:127) *I did, on one of the INSET sessions, we added a brief, micro-teach I suppose you could call it, where, you know, I did a session with no questioning at all, which would be like the worst examples I'd seen, and then turn that around into what I would regard as one of the BEST sessions I'd seen, where there was lots of questioning and lots of interaction, etcetera. So, we do that OCCASSIONALLY.* (MM20:70) *Now, both universities do offer CPD for staff, and sometimes it's the staffs' own fault if they don't take it up, so, you know, at X. for instance, because you can go to X. and maybe it's all free, so they're very good.* (MM19:98)
E	*Approaching big companies that have had a lot of contact with the college, and a good relationship with us, and we're asking them to swap employees, so they give us an employee, and we give them a Lecturer, and that's CPD for the teacher in industry, for a lot of the longstanding members of staff, they have not been in industry for 15, 20 years, so I don't think they know the changes.* (MM3:163)

Table 4.27 Examples of comments made regarding designing and delivery of realistic professional learning with realistic approaches

These differences included frequency of opportunities and format of delivery. Another

emerging theme was the difference across departments within individual colleges. The

mix of subjects, and so the mix of vocational background and industry jobs, had a bearing

on approaches adopted, as did the experience of teachers and MMs. Staff development

was an important part of college life, but the main thrust was driven by FE and

development needs focusing on nationally instigated priorities (for example, in

safeguarding, maths and English (Ofsted, 2019)) rather than on locally identified and CHE needs.

All colleges had a focus on new staff and new course leaders. However, approaches to induction and CHE varied. In fact, in one college, handbooks provided were not HE-specific and in other colleges CHE handbooks were given to new CHE staff. These CHE handbooks set out information about the courses and expectations of standardisation for CHE. Some, but not all, partner universities contributed to inductions with shadowing for new course leaders. HEIs partnered with colleges provided external delivery and design of more formal opportunities not available in colleges. However, some opportunities for staff development were lost.

In terms of approaches to and responsibilities for delivering professional learning internally, some MMs delivered sessions during college staff development days, again these days were mainly driven by the needs of FE and varied in frequency from weekly to annually. Not all managers were involved with delivery. In College D, a MM prepared 'short and sweet sessions which hit the spot' (MM4:301). This particular manager's background was in teacher training and he therefore had knowledge and experience of teacher professional learning methodology. Others involved had roles as mentors in two colleges where CHE mentors had been identified. MMs provided examples of some responsibility for actively contributing to professional learning in terms of subject knowledge currency, but these had little to do with pedagogy, which was deemed the responsibility of mentoring teams where they existed. There was a contradiction in the rhetoric used in colleges. When discussing pedagogy for students, the focus was on

active learning and development of independent learning skills; in contrast, the focus for teachers' learning was on dissemination from managers to teams not independent scholarly activity. Descriptions of delivery highlighted dissemination to teaching teams by course leaders following meetings with SMs or with HEI partners (SM5:566). This indicated a rather top-down approach to professional learning, and one that was not teacher-led (O'Leary, 2013; Randle and Brady, 1997). The provision of opportunities including teacher-led development will be explored in Subsection 4.11.3.

The role of designing and delivering realistic professional learning opportunities is summarised in Table 4.28:

Function	Activities
Mentor	Support for professional learning
	Discussion about teaching, learning and assessment at meetings
Professional learning deliverer	Designing and delivering short sessions
	Delivery of professional learning opportunities
Disseminator	Passing on information from meetings to teachers

Table 4.28 A summary of functions and activities for designing and delivering professional learning

Factors within this role that catalyse or inhibit an expansive or restrictive learning environment are summarised in Table 4.29:

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Cultural sharing of CHE	Knowledge and experience of professional learning pedagogy	No knowledge of subject
		Vocational culture does not value professional learning
Provision of a broad professional learning	All MMs involved in professional learning delivery	No MM involved in professional learning delivery
		Dissemination of information from meetings – not independent study
Gradual progression into role	Induction of new staff	
	Shadowing experienced teachers	
Reification of CHE	CHE handbook	Top-down approach to professional learning
		National agendas driving professional learning – FE dominance
Dedicated support	CHE mentor	

Table 4.29 Summary of factors that are expansive or restrictive for the design and delivery of the professional learning role

4.11.3 Providing opportunities including teacher-led professional learning

MMs identified both a wide range of opportunities for professional learning and a wide range of providers. Few MMs discussed scholarship directly. Opportunities were located within colleges and at HEIs or awarding bodies, among other places. For example, a

course teaching team was invited to the university to share their assignments, marking and assessments. University teams also participated, to provide a teacher-led, sharing opportunity where the CHE team leader felt that there was an element of bravery involved in everyone showing everything, including the university, which would help develop collaboration. There was always a question of whether professional learning opportunities were appropriate (SM5:99).

Different drivers for learning were identified. Employers and industry featured as clear influencers of learning needs. Thus, each participating MM mentioned the need to foster close links with employers and industry (Subsection 5.2.2), and to have the right industry contacts to facilitate new skills, needs and potential work, in order to keep teachers updated. Many teachers were also working in industry:

> *It keeps them current they've got the contact with the industry. It charges and refuels their purpose. (MM10:35)*

One manager referred to students taking apprenticeships in industry as a good source of up-to-date industry knowledge. Several managers indicated that it was they who drove professional learning:

> *I steer people to what they need to do. (MM14:63)*

> *Middle managers discuss and agree what the teachers should do in terms of professional learning during their eight staff development days during the year. (SM13:12:17)*

SMs were much more externally focused. The SMs identified funds and were the driving force for external projects. One SM bid for external sources of funding as well as internal 'pots' (SM5:160). Her role included the development of strategic alliances that could be

exploited for professional learning. Two colleges participated in a peer confederation, drawing on expertise from several colleges around the country (Colleges C and D). A CHE group had been assembled to facilitate networking but only one of the colleges referred to this group; changes in personnel meant that at the other college the confederation had lost its profile. MMs had a narrower lens, looking externally at local employers and partners for innovative projects rather than further afield. This related to a lack of experience, knowledge, or confidence. SMs were more knowledgeable about external events that needed to be publicised. However, one SM appreciated that there was a lot going on that needed to be collated and that the MMs were very involved with developing the conditions that would facilitate learning. These are discussed in Subsection 4.11.4.

Opportunities ranged from formal qualifications to informal dialogues in staffrooms. Double observations and peer observations were cited in all colleges, not only to identify areas for improvement but also to identify expert teachers who could share good practice and skills. MMs steered teachers to have dialogues with other teachers to help share the skills:

> *At the heart of it is a digital resource bank, a Google site, FULL of resources, activities, covering a range of different themes, and there's one for FE and there's one for HE, so, a good practice is shared through that site.* (SM9:29)

Revalidation of assignments allowed learning to be applied, but there was some concern about the need for knowledge, to be able to understand mistakes in order to rectify them. Here, there was a reliance on HE partners. Cross-moderation and standardisation facilitated understanding and learning across teaching teams. For SMs, staff

development needs to be 'bite-sized' to be effective so that teachers can see that it is manageable (SM5:104). Scholarship and scholarly activity were mentioned directly by only one of the MMs as an opportunity for professional learning (MM14:234). However, different forms of research – such as action research – and formal research-based qualifications were logged at three of the five colleges. SMs with HE responsibilities arranged research-sharing days for those teachers working towards PhDs and master's degrees (SM11:57). MMs felt that one of the ways professional learning could be improved was by splitting teams into courses and differentiating the learning for FE and CHE. This was not happening at any of the colleges except College B, where a conference was planned specifically for CHE teachers. SMs noted the need for learning within the classroom as well as outside. Ambiguity as to whether professional development was FE-focused or CHE-orientated was an issue. One college provided HE-specific mentoring (College D).

It is questionable whether, in fact, these opportunities were teacher-led. Many seemed to arise from quality and performance monitoring systems rather than CHE teachers' own reflections on their practice (O'Leary, 2013). Student feedback was referenced as a driver for professional learning more than the teachers' professional reflection and research interests. Teachers' responsiveness and mind-set influenced uptake. The vocational background of teachers also had an impact on what was adopted, and this is discussed in Section 5.3. A summary of the functions and activities of MMs in providing opportunities for teacher-led professional learning is found in Table 4.30:

Function	Behaviours
Provider of professional learning opportunities	Identifying and recognising professional development opportunities
	Communicating opportunities to teachers
	Providing arrangements for professional dialogues
Networkers	Building partnerships

Table 4.30 Summary of functions and behaviours for providing opportunities for teacher-led professional learning

This role shapes aspects of the learning environment, and this is presented in Table 4.31:

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Participation in multiple communities of practice	Universities, other colleges, other teams, industry and employers all involved in professional learning	No networking available
Breadth of professional learning opportunities	Broad involvement in multiple opportunities	Narrow – short and sweet workshops
	Formal qualifications, peer observations, professional dialogues, cross-team standardisation	Only formal qualifications
Breadth of access to professional learning	Understanding different types of scholarly activity	No knowledge and experience of scholarly activity
Reification of CHE		Contradictory drivers for professional learning
Dedicated support for professional learning	Project funding	No funding
	Teacher-led opportunities	Top-down approach to professional learning
		Audit culture – quality assurance

Table 4.31 Summary of factors that are expansive and restrictive in providing opportunities for teacher-led professional learning opportunities

4.11.4 Organising the conditions for learning – the environment

The analysis of the college environment began in Section 4.9. The conditions needed for an environment that is conducive to learning were a high priority for MMs. The knowledge of their teams and their ability to support and motivate them were key to the MMs' encouragement of teachers to engage with and benefit from professional learning. Several issues emerged from the data gathered. Time, location and attitude were three of the issues highlighted by MMs and SMs, see Table 4.32.

College	Examples of participants' voices
B	*My brokerage, my budget, facilitates it (professional learning) Yes, so I have things that I can throw at them, which I sit and negotiate quite hard to get in the first place.* (SM3:189) *The biggest problem we've got some staff that are doing a Teaching and Learning Masters on a Friday, and the number of staff that are turning up now, is hardly any, because they've been timetabled to teach .(SM3:99)* *We're not rolling in money, but we do have a…, we have enough money that we have a decent Staff Development Budget.* (SM4:69) *Nobody's noticed that they're drowning a bit. Long term staff sickness has not been well managed, so, not necessarily from the person that's neglecting it, but they've been perhaps budging it up too long. We've got a situation in Early Years, where somebody has left.* (SM3:283)
C	*I would want the ideal world for HE where staff were having opportunities to be able to have time to develop and learn.* (MM28:410) *I think people find time as a constraint.* (MM25:121) *My goal is to kind of make the staff's life as easy as possible, by removing as many of the challenges.* (MM25:308)

	In terms of proportion, HE courses are a much smaller part of what we offer within our whole curriculum area, I dedicate my time accordingly as well. (MM25:277)
	I support them in terms of, I'd encourage it (formal qualifications), I'd encourage it if they wanted to do that, I wouldn't stand in the way of it. (MM25:349)
D	*I think, once you go into that area, where the Managers are either TOO busy to do that, or they have employed a Manager that does NOT have that empathetic style, then I think you will see the teaching affected. (MM19:62)*
	I don't like to set up meetings for meetings sake, but I think we are probably missing an HE Tutors' Group, that would be very useful for each campus. (MM19:108)
	In HEI, you are given MASSES more time, and so if you're given something to do, you will be given time to assimilate that information, to get to know it, to understand it, to research it, in FE, you do not have that luxury. (MM19:179)
	I have to say, to constantly improve, and to keep current, so it is very much dependent on them to do that themselves. (MM19:90)
	I suppose it always comes back to time, it's having the time, you know, if somebody said; "For the next month, we want you JUST to concentrate on teaching and learning in your area" that would be wonderful, but that NEVER happens, we are constantly fire fighting to get the work done, and it's a shame, sometimes you have so little time to reflect, and perhaps do something a little bit more. (MM19:117)
E	*Time is a barrier. For HE, and we think those assignments take…, we think at the beginning, they take an hour, we've talked about this a lot, we think at the beginning, an assignment can take you an hour, and you can get it down to 40 minutes, but you've got to do it properly, and if you're doing, marking 25…, we've had 28 in a group as well, 28 assignments. (MM11:02)*
	So, you know, it's working as a team, and acknowledging that, and I have asked people, I've said, "Could you just cover so-and-so's lesson,

| | *so that they can have, you know, some marking time for doing something?" and we've cancelled a couple of things as well, we've cancelled meetings so that we could get all that stuff marked and done properly.* (MM1:109)

I don't actually get involved much in the teaching and learning side of things, surprisingly, but I think Observations and things at the moment, are really done, and I don't hear much about what's going on in the classroom in HE funnily enough. (MM2:74)

Because, you know, budgets aren't great. (MM2:179)

The Teachers just don't have the time to research, and that's one thing about being in FE, because they can't do that scholarly. (MM2:313) |

Table 4.32 Example of issues highlighted for organising conditions for learning

Both SMs and teachers raised MMs' understanding of CHE as an issue.

As team leaders (Briggs, 2004), all MMs said they knew their teams, and understood when a situation arose that needed improvement. However, some MM were very 'hands off' with their HE teachers. They planned to be supportive, with a focus on preparing new members of staff to teach CHE courses in line with the university and awarding body requirements. By knowing their teachers, they could 'read' them and know when they needed help. They could guide them and build confidence. MMs who had a background in caring vocations like health and social care highlighted the need to talk and listen to what staff needed, and support and develop the members of the team by facilitating sharing (MM22:352) highlighting the influence of vocational culture (Gilpin, 2007). These vocationally-linked qualities are discussed in Subsection 5.3.2. By fighting battles for their teachers and students, and identifying, removing or reducing challenges, they felt that they facilitated learning. Their supportive role included facilitating sharing in meetings and arranging cover to enable teachers to complete

qualifications or attend events and, thus promote a learning environment (Fuller and Unwin, 2004).

The creation of college-based learning communities emerged as a priority for SMs. SMs attributed this role to HEMMs. Two HEMMs identified their role in the development of external communities of learning; others did not. MMs wanted to support teachers to respond to learners' voices, and to make necessary changes by encouraging professional learning and the maintenance of industry standards. One MM noted that the early planning of timetables and schedules enabled teachers to work together and create an internal community; the timetable needed to work for the teachers. However, the number of contact hours caused a problem. In addition to this, in colleges with multiple campuses the distance between teachers and their MMs hindered their sense of belonging and their ability to work together.

Autonomy was felt to be a quality that HE teachers and managers should be allowed to develop in line with their HEI counterparts. However, learning was monitored closely and audited, in an approach that could be seen as too top-down:

> *This is what you need to do, we're supporting you, now come in and show us your plans. (SM5:277)*

Observations were an integral part of each college's quality system. The purpose of observations, and whether they were judgemental or developmental, had an impact on the perceptions of teachers (O'Leary, 2013). Fear of observations was felt to be detrimental to the learning environment for teachers. Consequently, in two colleges, graded observations had been replaced by developmental, ungraded ones for CHE

teachers. In one of these, mentors were used to observe new teachers in a supportive way. It was seen that teachers needed to be treated as professionals in order to be motivated (Trowler, 2008). A clear focus on motivating and encouraging staff emerged, as did the need to develop cultures that promoted learning and development (James and Biesta, 2007; Walker, 2010). Table 4.33 provides a summary of the functions and behaviours for organising conditions for learning:

Function	Behaviours
Team leader	See Subsection 5.2.3; for example, knowledge of team, motivator
Resources manager	See Subsection 5.2.5; for example, early timetabling and planning
Advocate for professional learning	Promoting professional learning
	Encouraging industrial updating
	Reducing and removing barriers for learning
Creator of communities of practice	Liaison with other colleges and teams (see Subsection 5.2.2)
	Facilitating networking between teachers
	Talking and listening to teachers

Table 4.33 Summary of functions and behaviours for organising conditions for learning

The influences from this role that impact on the learning environment and contribute to either an expansive or a restrictive environment are presented in Table 4.34:

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Gradual transition in career	Induction of new staff	'Thrown in at the deep end'
Learning needs, dedicated support	Vocational background (see Subsections 5.3.2.1 and 5.3.2.3)	Vocational background (see Subsections 5.3.2.1 and 5.3.2.3)
Participation in communities of learning; access to professional learning		Terms and conditions of employment reduce access to professional learning
Recognition as learning	Taking opportunities to learn	
	Developmental culture	Judgemental, audit culture

Table 4.34 Summary of factors that are expansive and restrictive in organising conditions for learning

4.11.5 Facilitating CHE culture, routines and experiences that value the sharing of good practice

College cultures were explored in each college profile in Sections 4.2–4.6 and summarised in Section 4.7. In this section, information gathered from the data about the role of MMs in facilitating a CHE culture for learning is discussed. The development of a CHE culture, promoted by Simmons and Lea (2013), featured in the responses of the SMs interviewed. Both SMs and MMs mentioned providing teachers with a clear vision of CHE. This was seen to be the objective of HEMMs; making sure teachers had a clear understanding of their role and clear expectations of a team approach in which everyone was 'essentially on the same page' (MM14:25). SMs questioned whether some

MMs had enough knowledge and experience of HE to understand and communicate this vision effectively.

Part of CHE culture was the connection between colleges and their HEI or awarding body partners. Developing close relationships with partners, going to HEIs for development and discussing courses with HEI staff were highlighted (Sections 4.10 and 5.2.2). This contrasted with awarding bodies and HNCs and HNDs, which, although providing some learning opportunities for teachers, were not identified as being as active as some HEIs, who also formed communities of practice. There was also variation between different HEIs. Some MMs had less robust links with HEIs because these MMs were less 'hands on' with CHE courses: 'I leave the HE teachers to get on with it. They manage themselves' (MM25:235). In one college, there was a real sense of team working and being able to go to the partner university to share its knowledge and good practice. This was exemplified by the cross-moderation development opportunity discussed in Subsection 4.11.3. There was a sense that university partners were approachable and that assignments could be revalidated to adapt more to students' needs.

The MMs' role in creating a CHE culture related to their own learning (Subsection 4.11.6). The development of role-modelling and reflection was identified by most of the MMs interviewed. In two colleges, MMs had completed HEA fellowship submissions. Three other colleges did not know about these fellowships. Where fellowships had been completed it was felt that MMs had the knowledge and skills to facilitate submissions for other teachers. One college had put aside money to fund applications although this had not been communicated to MMs. Having HE-focused qualifications was felt to

contribute to building teachers' HE identity but also led to staff attrition, as good teachers were lured away from FE into jobs in HEIs (MM4:46). By celebrating teams' successes in terms of their own qualifications and those of their students, it showed that teams were valued. Some MMs felt that SMs did not do this enough:

> *There's a lack of reward DEFINITELY in HE, but also, it's not just the reward, it's the lack of support in order to progress, so in order to, improve our teaching and learning.* (MM22:341)

Where there were SMs with focused HE roles, the need to invest and reward HE teams was emphasised as a cultural driver. These SMs felt they were driving quality and raising the profile of CHE:

> *I'm Mrs 'Oh and what about HE?' (SM5:778)*

The MMs modelled good practice, but not always for HE and did not adhere to consistent processes (Subsection 5.2.1). Modelling, as expected of leader (Brown and Rutherford, 1998), took the form of MMs sharing their own research through teaching or mentoring. MMs promoted reflection and discussed mistakes supportively as a team to encourage new practices. MMs demonstrated being devoted committee members representing their teaching teams. This provided the teachers with a voice and involvement. The aim was to develop an open and honest culture. The impact of this on CHE was questioned by SMs.

The instability of staffing at all colleges meant that there were concerns that, as senior management left, the push for a CHE culture would reduce. The need for HE-specific learning activities and understanding was acknowledged as part of a CHE culture throughout, and aligns with the need for an HE ethos discussed by Simmons and Lea

(2013), but the range and content of scholarly activity varied from college to college and from MM to SM. The functions and behaviours within this role are summarised in Table 4.35:

Function	Behaviours
Leader	See Subsection 5.2.1; for example, communicating a clear vision and high expectations; role model
Team leader	See Subsection 5.2.3; for example, induction of new teachers to support understanding of role
Liaison	See Subsection 5.2.2; for example, developing links with HEI and awarding bodies
Advocate for professional learning	Promoting reflection
	Discussing mistakes and learning
	Reflection
Representative of CHE	Raising the profile of CHE
Cultural developer	Open, honest, and focused on developmental learning for improvement

Table 4.35 Summary of functions and behaviours for facilitating CHE culture

The factors from this role that impact on the learning environment and contribute to either an expansive or a restrictive environment are presented in Table 4.36:

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Cultural inheritance shared		MMs no knowledge or experience of HE (see Subsection 5.3.2.2)
Recognition as learner	Learning from mistakes	
		Lack of knowledge of what constitutes scholarly activity (see Subsection 5.3.2.2)
	Acknowledging and celebrating learning	
Support for learning; recognition as learners	Involved in teaching and learning, and understanding CHE	Focus on systems and processes
Reification of CHE; support for learning	Hands-off approach	Hands-off approach
		Instability of staffing

Table 4.36 Summary of factors that are expansive and restrictive in developing a culture for CHE

4.11.6 Leaders as learner

MMs are learners:

> *I see myself as a learner, I never stopped learning, and developing, and I think it's creating like a professional learning community where everybody is involved, and then that becomes part of what we're about.* (MM9:148)

Each MM presented different opportunities that they had taken, from which they had developed as: a vocational expert; a teacher; and an MM. SMs identified MMs as learners:

> *Middle managers also have to continue their learning and demonstrate their planning of this. (SM5:367)*

MMs had taken opportunities in both formal qualifications and informal opportunities. One MM stated that she 'liked her mistakes' because she could learn from them and improve the course (MM23:156). MMs who had not been in industry kept up to date by using professional associations, for example. In two colleges, HEMMs and SMs had achieved fellowship of the HEA; others had completed MAs and BAs from HEIs. Some had not been exposed to HEIs but had completed HNDs at college. A leadership programme for MMs in two of the colleges was empowering and engaging the MMs to increase their understanding of the role. This was a general course and was not focused on CHE. It proved that SMs were committed to the MMs' learning. However, the MMs felt they were not prepared to take on CHE. They highlighted learning knowledge and skills on the job. Where they had not been involved with CHE during their own studies, three MMs said that, with experience of managing CHE courses, their attitude had developed and changed towards pedagogy, understanding of assessment levels and the skills that needed to be developed for HE. These were the MMs who were self-professed to be more 'hands on' and invested in CHE. MMs' attitude and degree of commitment towards CHE are two factors that influenced their behaviours in leading their teams and whether they facilitated their own learning or that of the teaching team. Influential

factors related to the inhibitors and catalysts for the MMs' role, and for professional

learning of teachers, are explored in Section 5.3.

Table 4.37 summarises the functions and activities of a leader as a learner:

Function	Activities
Learner	Using experience in industry to learn
	Using experience as a teacher to learn
	Developing skills and knowledge on the job
	Taking internal and external opportunities to learn
Reflector	Learning from mistakes

Table 4.37 Summary of the functions and activities for a leader as learner

Factors from being a learner impact on the learning environment.

These are presented in Table 4.38:

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Reification of CHE	Completing HE-linked qualifications, for example HEA fellowship	
		Focusing solely on FE targeted opportunities
Breadth of opportunity	Using different experiences in different roles	
	Taking opportunities in and outside college	Not taking opportunities
Gradual progress in role	Learning on the job	

Table 4.38 Summary of factors that are expansive and restrictive in being a leader as learner

This chapter looks at each participating college to begin an analysis of the factors that influence the college context. The context involves variables external to the organisation in terms of national and local socio-economic and political influences (Keep, 2006). The college culture is also multi-layered, and comprises organisational culture, departmental culture, and vocational culture (Page, 2011; Ferris *et al.*, 1996; Shivers-Blackwell, 2006). An emerging factor is the influence of the culture of the HEIs that partner colleges for some CHE courses. The HEIs and exam boards influence the academic structures and processes. Consequently, MMs deal with, and are influenced by, for example, different quality regimes: QAA, Ofsted, and exam board assessment verification processes. The

overriding force of FE course structures and processes also drives managers. The data

identified a number of people who were involved. Students influence how a course is

taught and therefore effect the pedagogy and so the SoTL element of professional

learning. Employers play a large part in the content of delivery, particularly industrial

updating, which shapes subject content learning. It was seen that each college had an

environment that had elements of expansive and restrictive learning environments.

4.12 Using modelling to investigate the impact of leader for learning functions against cultural and environmental factors

In the section below, the leader for learning functions from data in Section 4.11 are

examined through modelling. The model investigates the influence of factors that

emerged from the data in previous sections of this chapter and that are at a college and

national level (see Table 4.39):

Factor	Sub-factors	Section or Subsection
College culture	Priorities and drivers	4.7.1
	Attitude towards CHE	4.7.2
	Subcultures	4.7.3
	Attitudes towards professional learning	4.7.4
Academic structures and processes		4.8
Contextual and environmental factors		4.9
People		4.10

Table 4.39 Summary of the content of Sections 4.7–4.10

The first of these, a model of college culture, is represented in Figure 4.3, in Subsection 4.12.1. In Subsection 4.11.2, the factors which were found to impact on the function of systems-level support for professional development are summarised as an example of how the data produced by the study can provide valuable information related to enhancing MMs' enactment of their roles to promote professional learning.

4.12.1 Modelling college culture

Figure 4.3 provides a model of the influence of key elements of college culture on the learning environment. As in the other three models (Appendices eighteen to twenty), the key aspects are positioned in the central column. Their interaction is depicted by the double-headed arrows used to represent the complex interrelationship, while adding some simplicity and clarity to the interaction. Where there are single-headed

arrows, these factors influence the next one and cause an impact that stems from the

other factors.
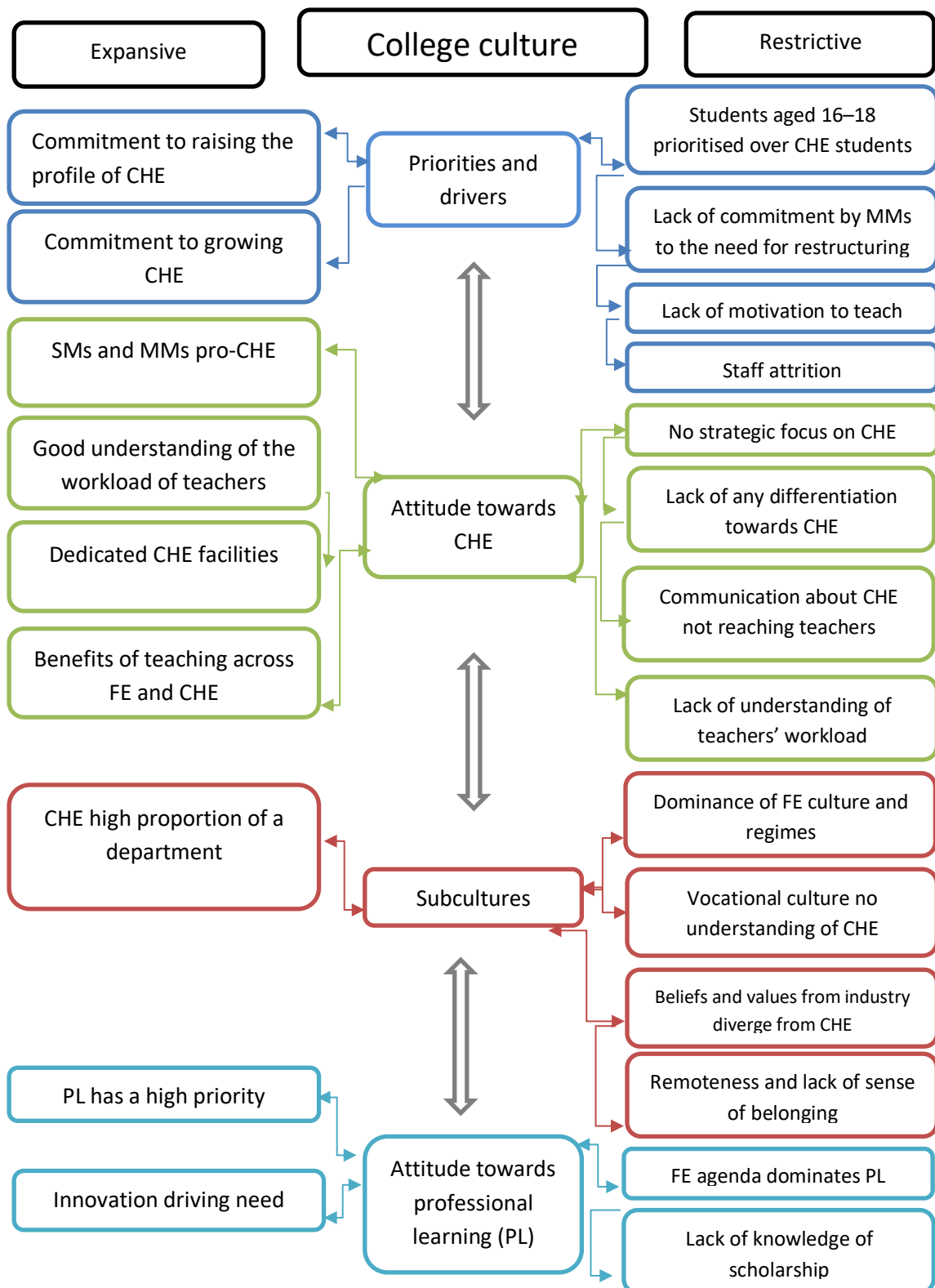
Figure 4.3 Overview model of college culture and expansive and restrictive factors related to the culture from case studies

To take priorities and drivers as an example, when 16–18-year olds are prioritised over CHE students (see Figure 4.4), this results in a lack of commitment to the need for restructuring and leads to demotivation for teaching, and consequently to staff attrition. It could follow that, to reduce staff attrition, more emphasis on CHE students would increase motivation.
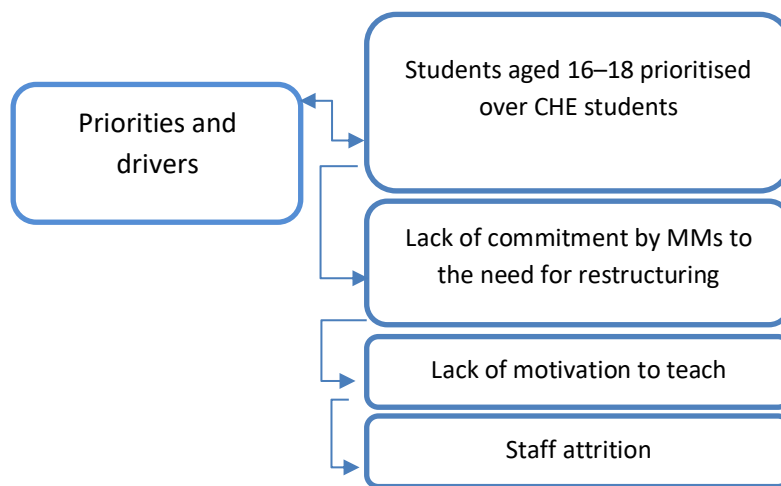
Figure 4.4 Example of the result of the interaction of factors shown in Figure 4.3

For example, the analysis of college culture in Section 4.7 identified four characteristics: priorities and drivers; attitudes towards CHE; subcultures; and attitudes towards professional learning. Where these characteristics positively contribute to an expansive learning environment for CHE teachers, they would be situated in the left-hand column. Those that are restrictive would be placed in the right-hand column. The arrows represent the direction of influence. For example, looking at attitude towards professional learning, in colleges where professional learning for CHE was a high priority, the environment is expansive. Where the focus was predominantly on FE professional learning, this led to the MMs being deficient in their knowledge of scholarship and resulted in them not enacting their role for leading for learning for CHE (see Figure 4.5):
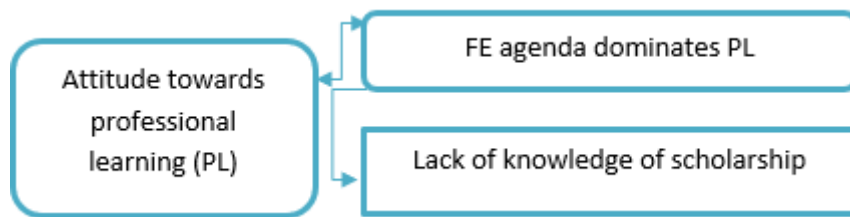
Figure 4.5 Example of the impact of FE dominance of professional learning

Interpreting the model in this way helps to identify potential issues. For example, in College A, professional learning had a high profile with time dedicated for it. The predominant focus of the college was FE. So, while the learning environment initially presents as expansive, on closer inspection, with CHE in mind, the environment is revealed to be restrictive for CHE (see Table 4.5). Interpretation of the model may encourage the managers to evaluate the extent of the focus on CHE and consider the extent of MMs' knowledge of scholarship. To support an evaluation of this kind, a manager can refer to the features representing the leader for learning function of systems-level support for professional learning (Table 4.22) and review the factors that catalyse and inhibit the function.

Models that represent academic structures and processes, contextual and environmental factors, and people, are found in Appendices eighteen to twenty. Data analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 show that not all elements of each of these have significant impact on the leader for learning functions discussed in Section 4.11. Where they are not significant, they are not included in the model for the function.

The leadership for learning roles are influenced by the factors identified in each of the sections in this chapter. In Subsection 4.12.2, the factors which directly impact on systems-level support for professional learning are synthesised to produce a table of

those factors which facilitate an expansive and those you would want to reduce in a

college because of their restrictive impact.

4.12.2 Modelling systems-level support for professional learning

The systems-level support for professional learning was presented in Subsection 4.11.1.

Analysis indicated that this role is influenced by four elements of college culture:

priorities and drivers; attitudes towards CHE; subcultures; and attitudes towards

professional learning (see Section 4.9). It is also shaped by academic structure and

processes, contextual and environmental factors, and people, some to a more significant

degree than others. The way these factors influence this role is explored in this section

using modelling and discussion. Figure 4.5 shows the elements of college culture in the

central column. In the data analysis in Subsection 4.7.1, aspects of these elements were

identified as contributing to an expansive or restrictive learning environment (Fuller and

Unwin, 2004). Where the aspect contributes to an expansive learning environment then

it can influence the role as a catalyst. Table 4.40 presents the features identified in data

that influence the systems-level support role summarised in the table. Interpretation

can assist in finding which catalytic elements are present in a college environment and

which could be improved to improve the environment, so improving the professional

learning (David, 2001).

Expansive	Systems-level support for professional learning	Restrictive
College culture		
SM commitment and attention to raising the profile of CHE	Priorities and drivers	SM commitment and attention are solely on FE
		Systems in place are not robust in developing CHE professional learning
CHE meetings planned	Attitude towards CHE	Meetings dominated by FE agenda
Regular meetings		Too much teaching commitment (cannot attend regular meetings)
CHE-specific systems	Subcultures	Non-specific systems – driven by FE
Differentiation for CBHE	Attitude towards professional learning	No differentiation
Autonomy and ownership	Academic structures and processes	Audit and accountability
Processes in place to identify the professional learning needs of teachers		
CHE criteria		Inconsistency of approach
Teachers collaborate with MMs to agree action plans	Expansive and restrictive contextual and environmental factors	Teachers not involved in processes – just recipients of judgements
People		
MMs have good levels of subject knowledge	MM	MMs do not have level of knowledge of the subject

MMs have good knowledge of HE		MMs do not have the level of knowledge of HE
MMs have good knowledge of quality code		MMs lack knowledge of quality code
Professional learning aligned to CHE needs		Professional learning not aligned to needs
	SM	Staff attrition
CHE SM		Changes in staffing
CHE champions in SMT		Loss of driving forces

Table 4.40 Overview of college factors influencing systems-level support for professional learning that can be used for modelling

To provide an example of interpretation of the model, there are factors relating to the MMs that are identified in the table. Three of these are linked to knowledge, of which two are knowledge about HE. The data showed that MMs who have knowledge about HE and its expectations in terms of levels and skills required, help to support CHE teachers' professional learning. Those who do not have knowledge of the quality code are less able to support teachers. Making changes to the MMs' levels of knowledge can change the ability to provide systems-level support for teachers.

The college environment is one area that can be modelled against leader for learning roles. The overall role of MMs, the final element of people (Appendix 20) and their personal characteristics, including knowledge, are also influential. These two areas are explored in Chapter 5 and their influence investigated. Certain factors were perceived by participants to impact on MMs' ability to perform their different functions in the analysis. In Chapter 5, continued analysis of the data produces a typology for MMs' roles who lead CHE teaching teams. The focus is on both the interaction of different roles on

each other and how these and personal factors influence how MMs enact their responsibilities for professional learning for the CHE teachers' functions.

CHAPTER 5 DATA ANALYSIS – MIDDLE MANAGERS' ROLES AND THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONAL FACTORS

This chapter continues the analysis of data that began in Chapter 4. The research approach was a multiple case study based on five individual colleges, each of which had CHE embedded in their curriculum areas. The data was gathered in semi-structured interviews with senior managers (SMs) and middle managers (MMs) and from teacher questionnaires, as explained in Chapter 3. The reiterative, thematic analysis process (Braun and Clarke, 2006) used was outlined in Subsection 3.4.3.1. In Chapter 4, the five colleges forming the multiple case study were explored, and key aspects of their environments were analysed using the expansive-restrictive framework (Fuller and Unwin, 2004). The aim in Chapter 4 was to consider the individuality of each case (Sections 4.2–4.6) and identify key factors that were common to all the colleges (Sections 4.7-4.10) that would provide evidence, from the data, that there was a degree of generalisation in the findings. The data and case study college environments were used to provided detail about the roles of the leader for learning (Section 4.11). Models were developed and used to represent the interaction between multiple environmental factors and leader for learning functions (Fowler, 2003), in order to gain insight into how these could be used to change, manage, or improve the learning environment (Section 4.12).

In this chapter, the focus now turns to the MMs, who are the subject of this study, their roles and the personal factors that influence their behaviours. The key MMs in focus are employed in the colleges investigated in Chapter 4 and who lead teams of CHE teachers

within the environments that have previously been described. The aim in this chapter is

to continue to address each of the following research questions (Table 5.1):

1. What roles do MMs in FE perform for CHE courses?
2. How do these roles contribute to the professional learning environment of CHE teachers?
3. What factors impede or facilitate MMs' role performance in CHE?
4. How do these factors influence and interact with MMs' role enactment?

Table 5.1 Research questions

The aim of the analysis in this chapter is to produce a model of leadership for learning

in CHE that includes a detailed typology of the MMs' role and an examination of how

different factors influence these roles.

The chapter is organised into four sections summarised in Table 5.2:

Section	Content
5.1	The conceptual frameworks (Hallinger and Heck, 2011; Fuller and Unwin, 2004; Hoekstra and Newton, 2017; Briggs, 2004)
5.2	An overview of the role set's (defined in Subsection 2.1.2) perception of the MMs' overall role, based on MMs' responses in semi-structured interviews.
5.3	The catalysts and inhibitors of the MM role that relate to the third and fourth research questions
5.4	A phase of analysis that involves an analytical process of modelling (David, 2001) (as outlined in Subsection 3.4.3.2)

Table 5.2 Summary of the sections and contents in Chapter 5

The conceptual frameworks are used to assist thematic data analysis (Braun and Clark, 2006), in order to provide: 1) a typology of MMs' overall role within the colleges (this includes higher education middle managers (HEMMs), a MM role that emerged from the analysis); 2) an examination of the personal factors that influence the enactment of those roles; and 3) an exploration of factors relating to each college that were presented in Chapter 4. The literature indicates that MMs have a complex and varied role with wide-ranging functions (Briggs, 2004). The data shows that different functions within the typology of the MM's role overlap and influence each other. Although the core focus of the study is leader for learning behaviours of those who support CHE teacher professional learning, including scholarship, by contributing (or not) to an expansive

learning environment discussed in Chapter 4, a holistic understanding of all functions of the role of MMs helps to position the leader for learning function within the overall role and to explore how they influence other leadership behaviours. Those factors that are identified as influential inhibitors or catalysts are linked to how MMs' enactment of their role may have catalysing and/or inhibiting effects in the following four areas: MMs' other roles; the learning environment; improving teaching and learning; and influencing teacher professional learning.

The use of modelling, as was done in Section 4.12, allows to further analyse and draw together the results from Chapters 4 and 5, in order to produce a visual representation of the data collected on MMs' roles and the factors that influence them. A better understanding of the complexity of reality has the potential to facilitate action within that reality (David, 2001). The aim of this analysis is to explore the reality of roles of MMs in CHE and the factors that influence those roles.

5.1 Conceptual basis for analysis

The aim of the analysis was to gain insight into the conceptualisation of the leader for learning role enacted by MMs from the data collected, with the key emphasis on the improvement of teaching and learning through their influence on teachers' professional learning within the context of CHE (Section 4.11). As seen in Chapter 2, the promotion of teacher learning has been shown to have the greatest effect on improving student outcomes (Robinson *et al*., 2008) (Subsection 2.5.2). In the review of current literature in Chapter 2, the central role held by MMs in complex organisations can also be seen, in which they lead their curriculum area teams to implement college strategies.

I began the identification of different functions of this crucial role in Section 2.3. Six key frameworks summarised in Table 2.5 were discussed in the literature review. Examples of these are: Briggs (2004), who focuses on MMs in a further education context; and Smith's (2002) and Bolden *et al.* (2012) works on the roles of departmental heads in institutions of HE. More recent studies, such as various authors in Hoekstra and Newton (2017) and Mhlanga (2017), further augment a notion of the complexity of the MM's role. The activities described by participants were coded and attributed to different dimensions of the role highlighted in Subsection 2.3.1. The functions are explored in Section 5.2 (Table 5.3):

Subsection	Function
5.2.1	Leader (Mintzberg, 1990; Briggs, 2004)
5.2.2	Liaison (Briggs, 2004)
5.2.3	Team leader (Briggs, 2004)
5.2.4	Curriculum manager (James and Biesta, 2007)
5.2.5	Resources manager Peeke, 1997; Smith, 2002)
5.2.6	Student manager (data)

Table 5.3 Summary of the functions and subsections in Section 5.2

The leader for learning role was explored in Section 4.11 because several of its functions relate directly to shaping the environment and conditions for learning. Several concepts and personal antecedents influence and shape the behaviours of leaders, as indicated by Hallinger and Heck's (2011) full model of leadership for learning model (Figure 2.5). These include the leader's knowledge and experience, and their values and beliefs, which are explored in Section 5.4 (see Figure 5.1).
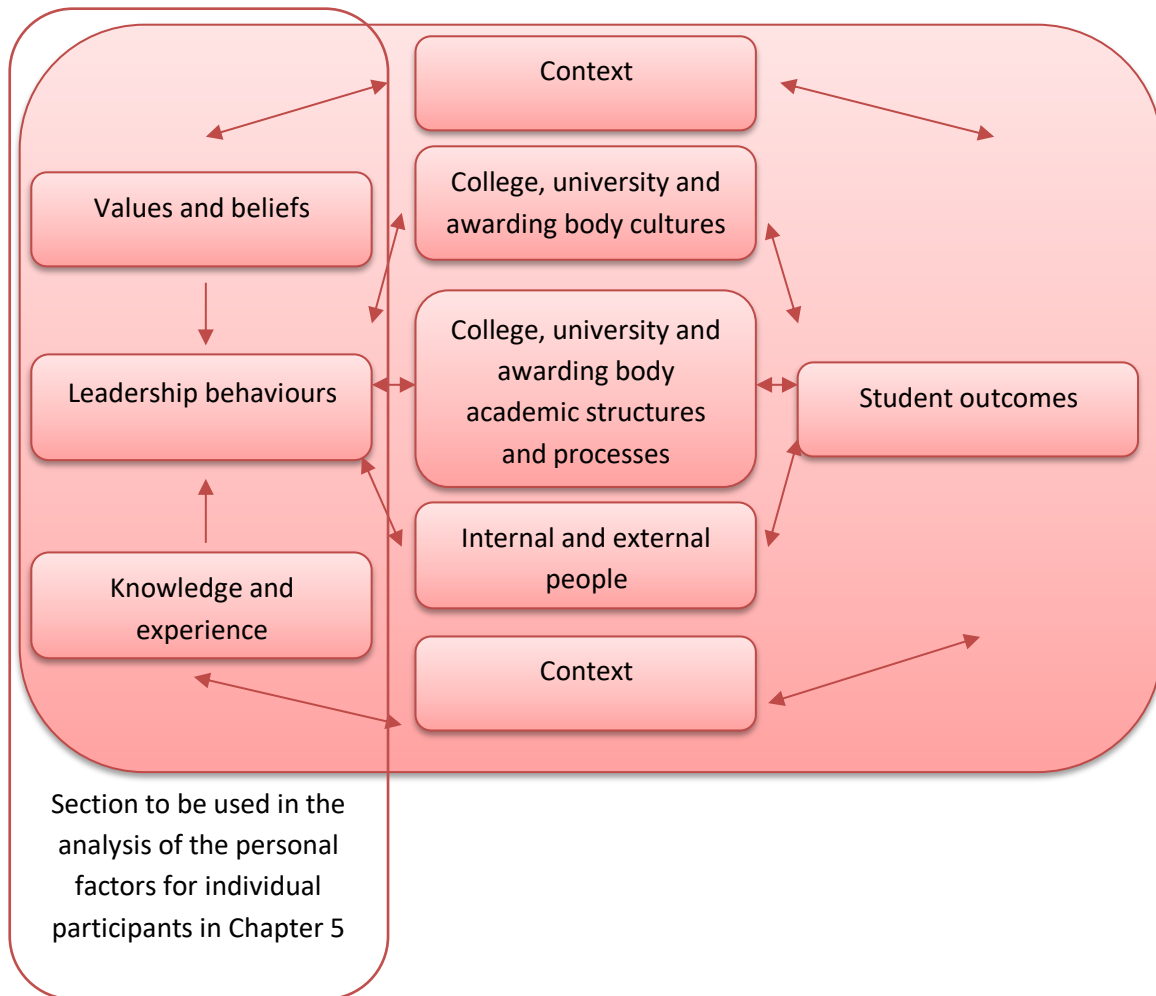
Figure 5.1 Full model of leadership for learning (Hallinger and Heck's, 2011) indicating the section for consideration in Chapter 5

The three concepts indicated in Figure 5.1, are used to initialise the analysis of the catalysts and inhibitors of different behaviours of the MM's role for this chapter (Bowen, 2006). From an initial analysis of the raw data, additional personal factors emerged that affect the way MMs approach their role. These include identities, which are strongly linked to values and beliefs (Floyd, 2012), and the skills and qualities linked to knowledge and experience (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017). Figure 5.2 presents an adapted version of the area of the framework in which additional factors found in the data, are represented for analysis in this chapter. These are discussed in Section 5.3. Factors that inhibit and catalyse the professional learning of teachers are studied, to augment the

environmental factors that were identified and discussed in Chapter 4. The catalysing or inhibiting influences of MMs' different roles are also explored in Section 5.3.

Indicates the adaptation for CHE
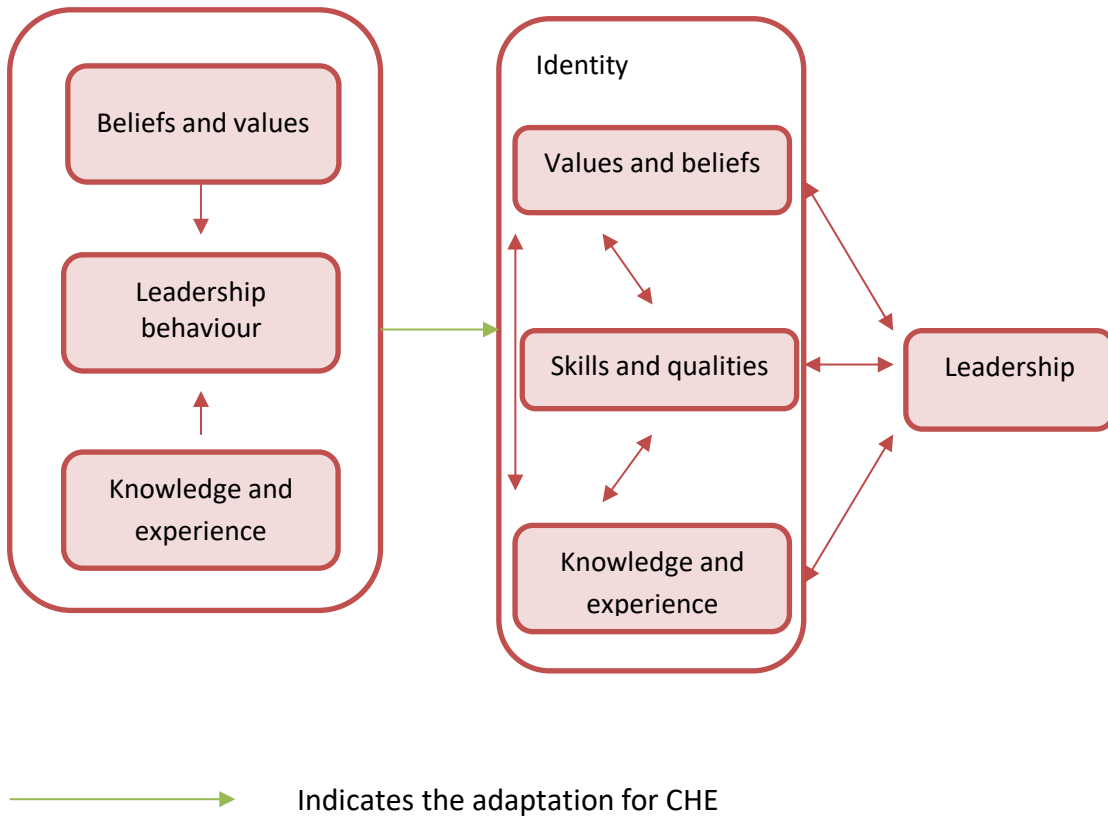
Figure 5.2 Model to show additional factors emerging from data analysis (adapted from Hallinger and Heck's 2011 framework)

In Section 5.2, the behaviours and activities of CHE middle leaders are investigated in contrast to the leader for learning roles presented in 4.11. Terminology taken from ORT discussed in Section 2.1 is used here to describe MMs' roles, functions, and behaviours (Jones and Holdaway, 1996). Terminology presented in Table 2.3, such as role conflict and role ambiguity (Biddle, 1986), is used in analysis when these concepts emerged from the data to describe the impact different roles have on each other. A full discussion of the adapted model is presented in Section 5.4 once an analysis that contributes to the adaptation has been provided in the preceding sections. The final representation is

produced and used in Section 5.4, during the modelling of roles and the factors that interact with them that are personal to the MMs themselves.

5.2 Typology of academic middle managers' roles

In this section, the different functions of the MMs' roles are explored in more detail. Using the types of MMs' roles highlighted in the literature review and in Section 5.1, the perceptions of SMs, MMs and teachers were analysed to produce an overall typology for MMs for each college. The overall role is analysed to categorise different roles, functions and activities (Jones and Holdaway, 1996). Each of the categories is discussed individually to provide a more detailed insight into the functions and behaviours associated with each of them. These are also analysed to discover whether they contribute to an expansive or restrictive learning environment (Fuller and Unwin, 2004). Each MM led diverse curriculum areas but had a subject background within just one vocation in the area. In general, when MMs described their roles, they used phrases that indicated the challenging nature of the role from their perspective. These included: 'big and varied' (MM19); 'fire-fighting' (MM19;MM22;MM24); 'jack of all trades' (MM13); 'juggling' (MM13;MM22); 'adapting and balancing' (MM24); 'not being rash' (MM14); and 'my day is filled and I'm under pressure' (MM3). The first type within this challenging role is that of leader.

5.2.1 Leader

In this section, data provided by participants relating to being a leader in college is discussed. Examples of the constituent functions of a leader role are found in Table 5.4:

Constituent functions	Research
Interpreter of strategy	Mintzberg (1990)
Representative of core academic values	Brown and Rutherford (1998)
Influencer of others	Kotter (2012)

Table 5.4 Examples from literature of constituent functions of the role of leader

MMs did not self-identify as leaders but more as managers or their vocational identity

(See Table 5.5).

College	Participants' voice
B	*So, every area, so I'm quite far down, in the hierarchy not a leader.* (MM13:8)
C	*So, I identify with, Middle Manager.* (MM25:314) *When someone asks me what I do, I say I'm a Teacher.* (MM26:216) *I'm a Sociologist, I've done an MA Sociology.* (MM28:422)
D	*I identity most with, I think that would probably, being a Manager, given the demands of my role.* (MM25:253) *I always talk about the Health and Social Care students as mine, because that was my vocational area, and I always used to teach that, both at A Level and at FE, I'm a nurse.* (MM22:409)

Table 5.5 Examples of the participants' identities

However, They did, in fact, take on leader functions and traits. These were reinforced

by SMs who attributed leader roles to MMs (See Table 5.6).

College	MM leadership traits from the SMs' viewpoint
A	*They (MMs) model what they believe in, and what is good practice.* (SM9:182)
B	*The staff know that she also gets involved in Validation, and you know, at that level, it is real leadership because she is role modelling that.* (SM4:35) *They will be pushing for updating, as well as doing things themselves, as role models.* (SM4:57)
D	*There is their professional conduct, in terms of punctuality, you know, timekeeping, meeting deadlines, and, you know, being a role model, in that respect.* (SM21:72) *More than anything else, their ability (MMs') as an individual, to manage and lead successfully, and to create inspiration and aspiration not just for their staff and their students.* (SM21:258)
E	*Middle managers are responsible for developing and leading their teaching and learn.* (SM5:184) *They've really got to be committed to and lead and drive the vision.* (SM5:512)

Table 5.6 Examples of SMs' views of MMs' leadership traits

Another example is one SM who felt that it was the MMs' responsibility to inspire students and teachers by nurturing passion and enthusiasm and this was an expected skill needed for MM. All regarded it as very important to model good practice and lead by example, and saw this as a source of credibility as a leader. At college B and C, the two SMs identified MMs as leaders; that is, there was an expectation for the MMs to lead by example and enforce high standards:

> *And she has very high expectations as a manager, but herself as well, and everyone knows that she will do things to the highest level. (SM4:37)*

Leadership is defined as the act of being influential (Leithwood *et al.*, 2010; Kotter, 2012) (Section 2.2). SMs fixed their own SM roles, (not MMs' roles), firmly in a strategic planning sphere of influence (See Table 5.7):

College	Senior Leaders' views
B	*It's probably not my Boss's priority as well, hers is strateg*y. (SM11:300) *The Dean of HE, her role is more sort of, it's not operation, it's more strategic, you know, and curriculum development.* (MM4:24)
D	*My role, MAINLY leading on the curriculum and quality strategy and planning.* (MM21:4)

Table 5.7 Examples of SMs' views on their influence on strategic planning

When answering questions about their influence on and contribution to decision-making, those MMs with cross-college roles felt they influenced some strategic planning in relation to teaching and learning strategy.

One cross-college HEMM contributed to leadership related to strategic curriculum development. However, few MMs felt involved in strategic planning and goal-setting at a college level. When MMs could communicate with SMs about their ideas and suggestions to influence curriculum design and development, for example, the force of that influence was questionable (MM22:245). SMs who directly line managed MMs were more likely to highlight leadership qualities than other SMs who did not directly manage MMs. In addition, designated CHE SMs had reduced contact with MMs because the SMs contacted the CHE course leaders directly, by-passing the MMs. A theme emerged regarding the perceived influence that students and employers had on developments in pedagogy and course content, respectively. This indicates some

distribution of leadership, which is one of the principles of leadership for learning (MacBeath and Dempster, 2009) (Subsection 2.5.2). Nevertheless, this perception was garnered from the responses of MMs, and was not a formalised, stated approach which could lead to role mal-integration (Madden, 2013).

The role, function and example behaviours related to the role of leader are presented in Table 5.8:

Function	Examples of behaviours	Contribution to learning environment
Role model	Sharing good practice	Expansive
Strategic planner and developer	Engaging with students and employers	Expansive
People influencer	Nurturing passion and enthusiasm	Expansive
Decision maker	Making evidence-based judgements	Expansive
	Identifying and valuing strengths	Expansive
Inspiration	Driving high expectation	Expansive
	Raising aspirations	Expansive
Distributor of leadership	Involving students and employers	Expansive

Table 5.8 Summary of the functions and behaviours of the leader role emerging from the data

Each of the behaviours is expansive; however, there is a caveat. In Table 5.9, the behaviours are placed under the 'expansive' heading if they facilitate the learning environment and under the 'restrictive' heading where they have a negative, inhibitory affect. When some behaviours are not directly focused and targeted at CHE and are not developed specifically for that sector, the impact is negative. They are also positive, however, when they overlap with the leader for learning role presented in Section 4.11 and discussed in Subsection 5.3.1.

Aspects of a learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Cultural inheritance of CHE	MMs act as good role models for CHE	Good role model solely for FE
Participatory memory	MMs line manage CHE teachers	MMs have no direct line management of CHE
	Distributor of leadership within CHE involving teacher is leadership – autonomy	No leadership granted to teachers
Reification of college-based HE	Strategic planner and developer for CHE	Strategic planner and developer – little focus on CHE
	MMs are involved in goal setting for CHE	No involvement in goal setting
All elements of the learning environment	Decision maker based on all elements of an expansive learning environment for CHE	Decision maker. Little reference to CHE learning environment
	Behaviours are linked to improvement in college-based HR	Behaviours are link solely to improving FE
Recognition that CHE teachers are learners	Inspiration of CHE promoted	Inspiration not appropriate for CHE

Table 5.9 Summary of the expansive and restrictive influences of the MMs' leader role emerging from the data

Leading involves an ability to communicate and develop relationships (Mintzberg, 1990).

Liaising effectively with various stakeholders is a key role for MMs (Briggs, 2004). This

liaison role is analysed in Subsection 5.2.2.

5.2.2 Liaison
Liaison has a significant place within the overall role of MMs (Briggs, 2004). Maintaining

internal and external links with industry and employers emerged as a key liaison

function. All MMs had internal stakeholders that extended beyond MMs' own curriculum area teams (Subsection 5.2.3) and students (Subsection 5.2.6) to include other middle managers (in, for example, human resources, observation teams and leading CHE teams), course leaders and SMs (Section 4.10), for example. Good working relationships need to be brokered and maintained with this range of stakeholders from different backgrounds and associated cultures (Page, 2011) and linguistic styles (Galley and Savage, 2014), all of which need to be navigated by MMs. Evidence from the data showed that the liaison role varied, depending on the responsibilities allocated to the MM. Each relationship had a different format and purpose. These are discussed in more detail below with examples of participants' voice in Table 5.10.

College	Examples of participants' voices
A	*MM's great at managing, the higher level partnership with universities.* (SM8:103) *There were some things which are through us as Middle Managers, which would be, working with departments in a university, at the same level, to smooth you know, unblock anything we need to, for a validation.* (MM10:56) *It's all about collaboration, and having that external view, the last thing we want is for them to just focus internally on what we do, because, I strongly believe, if you can get that external voice and profile, with your reputation, then, life's good and it's pretty easy.* (MM10:52)
B	*I'm responsible for the employer engagement side, the liaison with awarding bodies institutions, higher education institutions.* (MM13:4) *In the sector, to do that element, we have, and we foster strong links with employers, who are aware of what is current practice.* (MM14:32)

	*You will have an Examiner, who comes in from the awarding body and tells you how to do it, whereas when you're working with the University who is Validating the Foundation Degree, essentially, someone you can get on the phone to, or you go and visit. (*MM14:139)
C	*I've always spent quite a lot of time with, with staff at universities that are not just Course Leaders. (MM28:581)* *or whether it's setting up a new partnership with a university. (MM28:627)*
D	*It's dealing with the Awarding Bodies, it's dealing with quality visits, t's making sure that your own teaching, marking is still going OK, it's sorting out student retention issues, student achievement issues. It's just SO varied and so big now. (MM19:47)* *It's mainly familiarizing yourself about the different universities, the different ways that they all work, because they are all very different, the different ways in which they want their students taught and assessed. (MM19:181)* *Go there, so we've got a good working relationship with those employers. (MM20:30)* *Which then they would communicate to their Curriculum Team Leaders, who will then communicate to their Course Leaders, and things would go down that route. There's the HE specific meetings, so, B chairs the Operation of Higher Education Committee, so there are things that she will be aware of, that she will transmit down, and then with the Strategic Higher Education Committee, the same would happen. (SM21:34)* *At HE, so you have to make even…, you have to work harder in my opinion, to make them forge relationships, it's really important that you do. (MM22:394)* *And I liked that fact, because I'd been involved in HE delivery myself, I wasn't surprised by the nuances and the kind of hoops you have to jump through for university, because they create systems that we don't know why, but they just do. (SM23:375)*

E	*I used to work closely with the then HE Director*. (SM5:6)
	Communicating between the colleges, they KNOW each other. (MM6:271)
	I communicate with the Course Leaders, primarily about systems and processes. (MM2:260)
	Now, in Engineering, there is a Manager down there, who is out all of the time, linking, connecting, working, and he is out all the time connecting. (SM5:575)

Table 5.10 Examples of the liaison role as described by the participants

In the study, three colleges had MMs with cross-college, CHE-designated responsibilities (HEMMs). All three had a liaison role. This included liaison with the SMs for CHE, and these MMs also emphasised the need for good working relations with their links with HE institutions (HEIs) and awarding bodies. One MM expressed this as engaging with partner HEIs and knowing their expectations and the language they speak: 'It's like having a map in my head of each university' (MM1:81). These HEMMs attended HE committees within colleges, HEIs and awarding bodies that facilitated college-wide discussions relating to the operational functions of their role and collaboration between MMs. CHE policies and procedures released by the HEIs were identified as key documents to disseminate (MM2; MM22; MM28) but there was no mention of HNC/D processes.

In two colleges, the chairs (both HEMMs) of operational level meetings reported to strategic HE committees during which suggestions and ideas were communicated to SMs via HEMMs. Two HEMMs expressed the need to give the students a voice and thus some influence (MM22:327; MM28:728, 743). However, this liaison between HEMMs

and SMs resulted in the expression of distance between SMs and non-HEMM MMs and suggested a perceived limit to other MMs' influence. In colleges where HEMM positions did not exist, MMs also expressed limited influence in CHE decisions because SMs liaised directly with HE course leaders, not with MMs.

The purpose of liaison varied. For example, communications with human resources teams involved MMs seeking approval for training, and negotiating hours for remission to allow their teachers to attend training (MM20:83). In addition, they were asking for advice and guidance for their problem-solving role. They also sought advice and guidance externally, from awarding bodies as well as employers. These roles cross over with improving teaching and learning, promoting professional learning and MMs' own professional learning. The liaison role can facilitate the leader of learning role (Subsections 4.11.3 and 4.11.5).

In each college, MMs emphasised the importance of fostering links with industry. There was little mention of employer engagement by SMs. However, MMs highlighted those relationships that fed into different areas: curriculum design; updating of professional knowledge; and resource development. Several MMs tried to nurture their relationships with employers by inviting them either as guest speakers or to observe lessons. However, the invitations were rarely taken up (MM3:161). It is important for MMs not only to invite industry specialists into colleges, but also to go out into industry themselves to forge key links. This ensures they have the right communication networks with industry to provide potential work placements for students and allow teachers to retain current industry knowledge. One manager recognised that he had not been

employed in industry and that he should make liaison with industry 'a priority', in order to maintain his own credibility as a MM (MM10:32). The influential link between liaison and leadership for learning in providing opportunities for professional learning is noted here; good relationships forged through liaison facilitate the provision of professional learning, as do relationships with other colleges and networking with other MMs (MM2:191).

In one college, collaborative relationships with other colleges were the highest priority of the CHEMM. The goal was to break down silos and develop a community of practice, including a network of collaborative CHE professionals, in order to provide a forum for discussion and professional learning. This goal was close to being completed but the HEMM and SM who were the driving forces behind the initiative left the college, as did other individuals who supported it, and it was uncertain who would now drive it forward (MM2:97). Much of the MMs' time was dedicated, and therefore restricted, to building relationships only with their validating partners (MM28:626-627).

The HEMMs highlighted their role in developing external liaison with partnership universities. This association with universities came with responsibilities (MM2; MM22; MM28). It was the HEMMs who were more involved in producing reports and validation documents, and presenting this information to HEIs. The relationship between 'link tutors', 'co-ordinators' and 'nominated leads' had an impact on the operation of courses. Good communication and good relations were observed to help in creating effective, well-assessed courses and facilitating the learning of both teachers and students. For one HEMM, her SM expected her to focus on curriculum development,

and interact with potential partner universities (MM28). (This is linked with curriculum management and is thus further discussed in Subsection 5.2.4). However, SMs in other colleges saw it being their own responsibility to link with universities and develop partnerships, which contrasts with the view of MMs themselves. This indicates role ambiguity. Both SMs and MMs felt the MMs involvement with partners is in quality and monitoring-based communications in the form of exam boards and annual monitoring committees, and with individual link tutors (SM21).

The liaison function included MMs' communication to their teams. This overlap between the liaison function and the team leader function is discussed in Subsection 5.2.3. Difficulties involved in liaison with staff in remote locations was felt to hamper teachers' sense of belonging, and MMs who had staff in this situation were tasked with ensuring that all communications were effective:

> *I think our geography is an issue, slightly, in that there are travel distances to see Teachers.* (SM21:160, 166)
>
> *Our HE teachers, they're employed by us, but they go native, …(SM8:760)*

Two of the cross-college HEMMs did not have any line management responsibilities but liaised with SMs and were focused on processes and procedures, but this distances the HEMM from teaching (MM2; MM28). They therefore felt they had little impact on teaching and learning but did influence curriculum development and systems. The CHEMM in college C had a dual role of HEMM and MM, and felt that both strands of the role had an impact on teaching and learning. This is discussed further in Section 5.3. A summary of the liaison role, its functions and examples of associated behaviours is

presented in Table 5.11. In colleges where a HEMM exists and he/she takes on a role

that a MM does in colleges without HEMMs, this is denoted by (HEMM).

Function	Examples of behaviours	Impact on learning environment
External college representation (HEMM)	Attending boards, committees, and forums	Expansive
	Inviting employers as guests	Expansive
	Communications with employers in industry	Expansive
	Communication with partner HEIs and awarding bodies	Expansive
Internal link person	Working with HR specialist to gain remission for teachers to attend development sessions	Expansive
Relationship builder	Developing an understanding of the cultures and languages used by partners (HEMM)	Expansive/restrictive (only HEMM)
	Developing an understanding of teaching teams (not HEMM)	Expansive/restrictive (not HEMM)
Communicator	Giving the team a voice	Expansive
	Requesting and listening to suggestions	Expansive/restrictive (need to make an impact on CHE)
Networker (HEMM)	Developing peer networks between colleges	Expansive
Collaborator	Breaking down silos	Expansive

Table 5.11 Summary of the liaison role emerging from the data

Table 5.12 gives an overview of the expansive and restrictive elements of the liaison

role, together with an indication of how in some circumstances the behaviours can have

a negative, inhibitory impact and in others can overlap and catalyse the leader for learning role.

Aspects of the learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Named individual to support CHE	External college representative (HEMM)	HEMM not directly involved with CHE teachers
Access to multiple communities of practice	Developing peer networks between colleges	Losing the driving force for networking projects
Extending identity through boundary crossing	Breaking down silos	Limited communication between departments and locations
Reification of CHE	Developing an understanding of cultures and languages used by partners	Other MMs do not understand the cultures and languages used by HE partners
Learning needs alignment to teachers' needs	MMs developing an understanding of teaching teams	HEMM does not develop an understanding of teaching teams
Recognition of CHE teachers as learners	MM requesting and listening to suggestions	Suggestions are not acted on

Table 5.12 Summary of expansive and restrictive influence of MMs' liaison role emerging from the data

Liaison between the MMs and their teams is a dominant feature in the liaison role. It extends beyond liaison. Team leadership is explored in Subsection 5.2.3.

5.2.3 Team leader

> *My role is to be the glue that keeps it together.* (MM6:15)

High on the list of the MMs' priorities were: being a team leader and facilitating collaborative teamwork; breaking down barriers between silos (MM3:157); and bringing together existing and new teachers (MM2:112).

> I *have a handle on how the new team are embedding themselves within the College, and how they're managing teaching and learning.* (MM22:148)

At all colleges, the SMs pinpointed team-leading and a collaborative approach as important for MMs (SM9:116).

> *It is about the staff working together (MM4:399)*

> *Doing it in a collaborative manner, coming up with strategies, particularly useful.* (MM4:432)

Many of these skills and traits are important influences in leading for learning, in addition to the everyday leadership of the curriculum area, and consequently they are explored in Section 4.11. The MMs highlighted the importance of setting and talking about high expectations:

> *We'll step in if we think that things aren't being done in the way we think it should be done, and we'll support staff to…, to model their behaviour in a different way, if that's necessary.* (MM14:26)

None of the HEMMs had team leadership as part of their HEMM role as their priorities were liaison and process.

A large component of the MMs' role was staff management:

> *The Line Manager would then identify that, to support the member of staff, and then through Staff Development, because they have a greater overview of their courses.* (SM27:145)

I am responsible for the direct line management of the curriculum within the area, the management of staffing, teaching, and co-ordinating those programmes. (MM14:3)

A clear theme emerging from the interviews with both SMs and MMs was the need to develop a good team rapport in which MMs worked with teachers to develop a culture and mind-set of collaboration (MM10:54):

The art of being a Manager or being a Teacher is, you know, persuading them, isn't it, and…, and, you know, I don't mean forcing them into doing that, but, you know, but if you put a reasoned viewpoint over to somebody, and…, and make them stop and think about it, INVARIABLY, they will, you know, come to agree with that point of view. (MM20:211)

If you are moulded as a Manager to look at the bottom line, they're moulded as a Manager to look at the cost implications, then they will always be looking at that with a sort of a spreadsheet mentality. As opposed to a Manager who, you know, values the teaching and learning, and values the integrity and improvement within their department. (MM19:66)

Not be autocratic, so it's not; "You will do this" it's, "What can I do to help you?" (MM22:197)

The MMs were involved with every part of a teacher's career in the college, from recruitment to development (MM6:32).

My role's to appoint teaching staff, to make sure the teaching staff who are appointed within the team, have a clear understanding of what is required of them within the role. (MM13:22)

Inherent in this function of team leader was the recruitment of new staff to fill any skills gaps identified.

Staff recruitment in HE was not always easy (MM22:67). To accomplish this, teachers, their location and their working environment needed to be considered.

Across the group, we geographically spread, and our furthest point is 60 miles, technology has to be of the key. (SM9:30)

From the perspective of MMs, the subsequent induction and integration of new teachers was high on the agenda (MM19:10). For new course leaders, induction and development included work with HEMMs who had a clear understanding of 'the language the university talked' but did not manage the teachers (SM23:162). The line management of new staff included the continued monitoring of the teachers who were fulfilling those roles and reflected the need to develop an expansive learning environment; teachers were recognised as learners and new teachers gradually developed into their roles, needing more support at the beginning of their tenure:

My managing my team of staff, so, anything associated with line management, so things like Staff Appraisals, dealing with any staff issues. (MM24:28)

Tensions connected to role expectations were expressed (See Table 5.13):

College	Examples of participants' voices
A	*Their own teaching and practice is good, but it is kind of a good question actually, that's probably, you're on the knub of an area we're probably less comfortable with, the Teachers are all at different stages in their own development, and some of them are newly recruited someone with recruitment experience, but somebody who experienced team can be out of date, and things have changed, the expectations of Teachers has change so significantly.* (SM8:51) *They are all at different stages in their own development, and some of them are very newly recruited someone with recruitment experience, and things have changed, the expectations of Teachers has change so significantly.* (SM8:51)
B	*And I think that's difficult, that…, that's a challenge for the Managers, because they're trying to motivate everybody, without it being divisive, and I think that they appreciate that if things were different for HE, because it might be more divisive, in terms of the teams, and that would be quite difficult to manage, but it's difficult that they appreciate that they've got, you know, a lot of work to do, and so the challenge they get, is trying to support them to do all of that.* (SM4:97)
C	*It's been very challenging, because cover seems to consume my entire life.* (MM24:28) *I will do a Skills Audit, at the moment, looking at development, not allowing anyone to escape, doing an Audit, But it's that constant reminder, and providing information about what I need from them, And reminding them they haven't done their Action Points on the Audits.* (MM24:440) *MM struggle because they have vast teams. But because their teams are so huge, I think that it is very difficult for them.* (MM19:25)
D	*They (CHE teachers) usually DON'T need a lot of HELP and leadership, but they do interestingly, need management.* (SM23:62)

E	*To have those difficult conversations when they are required, but also, not to be a hawk that looks over them all the time, and actually trust them as professionals, to do what is required.* (MM4:453)

Table 5.13 Examples of the tensions expressed by participants in terms of role expectations

Other elements in team leadership were aligned to an expansive learning environment. The main function in this typology was the line management of teachers. This involved the evaluation of teachers' work both inside and outside the classroom, using learning walks, observations and scrutiny of assessments, and carrying out appraisals to identify their skills and strengths, and any gaps in their subject knowledge and pedagogical skills (MM6:416). This allowed them to play to the strengths of their team and recognise where professional development was needed, discuss consequent action-planning for the improvement and set targets and goals ensuring these aligned with the organisational requirements. These activities relate to, and are interconnected with, academic structures and processes, as discussed in Section 4.8, and systems-level support, discussed in Subsection 4.11.1. The operational nature of the role included planning, organising, timetabling teaching teams and making judgements about who could do what (MM1:71). This links to the resource management role covered in Subsection 5.2.5. There was an understanding that time needed to be dedicated proportionally among staff in CHE and FE. For SMs and teachers, MMs were support for teachers, and act as a conduit to their teams:

> *MM play an essential role in the role of the college – they are the interface between tutors and senior management – 'bridges and brokers'.* (T42)

SMs expected each curriculum area MM to have a good knowledge of every member of their team and to motivate teachers in an environment in which they could work effectively. The MMs wanted to encourage teachers to be outwardly facing, able to voice their opinions, and should feel they are valued and being invested in (MM13:111). For many managers, meetings enabled the dissemination of data analysis and good practice. MMs worked closely with their teaching teams and course leaders, communicating relevant information to these teams from committee meetings, for example in terms of policy change. This demonstrates a clear link to the communicator function identified in Subsection 5.2.2. There was a clear understanding among SMs that MMs led their teaching teams and built effective, inspiring relationships with them. Sharing offices with their teams seemed to be perceived as something positive that facilitated relationship-building and knowing 'where their team was at' (MM1:72).

HEMMs prioritised university processes and procedures and liaison with other MMs about these procedures. An exception existed in college C, where the MM had a dual role – HEMM in parallel with curriculum responsibilities. Here there was some confusion about line management where the 'lines are blurred' (MM22:11). A tension had developed, with expectations from two different line managers; one SM had an expectation that the HEMM would bring together the teams from other departments to make a more cohesive CHE community, while the other SM explained that the MMs' role was to concentrate on their own curriculum areas. The HEMM did not acknowledge this issue; however, another MM in the college said there was less access to HEMM because of the location of his team (MM20).

Facilitating collaborative teamwork was an important theme for MMs. While acknowledging the need to audit teachers' teaching and paperwork, it was recognised that leaders had a duty to show empathy, understand the pressures the teachers were under and motivate them to perform at their best. A team approach, through the organisation of meetings to convey information and keep team members 'on the same page', was highlighted (MM2:25). Two colleges had remote campuses following mergers with other colleges, and MMs travelled long distances to ensure that teachers from all campuses felt they belonged to a team. However, distance had an impact on whether teachers identified with the college or with the university – one of the many issues that MMs dealt with (MM22; MM28).

Other issues were perceived to be part of the day-to-day management of a curriculum area. Problem-solving and firefighting were notions mentioned by all MMs.

They needed to adapt quickly to different situations with different teachers by identifying the causes of problems: 'I deal constantly with staff issues' (MM21:14). The need to give constant reminders and chase people to check tasks had been completed were daily occurrences. This seems to indicate that MMs had a negative attitude towards their teams (MM3:269) but, on the positive side, they recognised the need to celebrate the success of staff, ensure this was communicated to appropriate SM groups and help to build confidence in teams and their work (MM15:133). There was a real sense of pride in CHE and the progress that students made on these 'life-changing' courses.

Another issue raised was about MMs' approach to their responsibilities. SMs expected MMs to investigate any complaints made about teachers and to deal with complaints, prioritise need and support their reports. There were some concerns voiced by SMs at colleges A and C about the consistency of approach and MMs' capability to appraise and deal with some of the issues and development needs that arose. This role has links to academic systems (Section 4.8) and systems-level support (Subsection 4.11.1). In colleges A and D, a question surfaced as to whether MMs had the breadth of knowledge about the development activities, such as different types of scholarship that benefit CHE teachers and that were expected in HE. This will be investigated further in Subsection 5.3.2.2 as it directly relates to the professional learning of teachers and the knowledge of MMs.

A summary of the functions involved in the role of team leader and examples of associated behaviours is presented in Table 5.14:

Functions	Examples of behaviours	Impact on the learning environment
Line manager	Monitoring and evaluating performance	Expansive/restrictive
	Identifying areas for improvement	Expansive
Staff recruiter	Identifying skills gaps and recruiting new teachers	
Team planner	Timetabling and organising teaching	Expansive/restrictive
Team facilitator	Organising meetings	Expansive/restrictive
	Travelling to distant campuses	Expansive
Performance manager	Auditing paperwork	Restrictive
	Investigating complaints	Restrictive
Motivator	Showing empathy	Expansive
	Celebrating success	Expansive
	Giving teachers support or autonomy depending on their needs	Expansive/restrictive

Table 5.14 Summary of the team leader role emerging from the data

The impact is presented in Table 5.15, which shows a summary of the expansive and restrictive effects the team leader role can have on the learning environment:

Aspects of the learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Recognition of CHE teachers as learners	Monitoring and evaluating performance with the objective of improvement	Monitoring and evaluating performance with the objective of quality assurance
	Identifying areas for improvement for CHE	Identifying areas for improvement for FE
	Timetabling and organising teaching to allow for dedicated time for professional learning	Timetabling and organising teaching
	Auditing paperwork leads to developing learning aims	Auditing paperwork to judge quality assurance
	Investigating complaints leads to learning aims	Investigating complaints with a punitive outcome
Participation in multiple communities of practice	Organising meetings to increase participation in CHE communities of practice	Organising meetings focused on FE
Dedicated support for CHE teachers	Traveling to distant campuses to dedicate support	Teachers are at a distance and have no sense of belonging
	Showing empathy	Little recognition of CHE teachers
Gradual transition	Celebrating success	Little recognition of the development needed to CHE teachers (scholarly activity)
	Giving teachers support or autonomy depending on their needs (scaffolded autonomy	Course leaders left to their own devices (inflicted autonomy)

Table 5.15 Summary of expansive and restrictive influence of MMs' team leader role emerging from the data

5.2.4 Curriculum manager

It emerged that breadth of this role varied from college to college. The involvement of MMs in the process of curriculum development ranged from strategic responsibilities in one college to hands-on development and validation in others. SMs and MMs had contrasting views about who took on the responsibilities. The attitude to CHE development also differed from MM to MM. However, the drivers for development were similar for each college and reflected local needs.

> *My role really is organising the Curriculum, and developing the Curriculum. Making sure it's responsive to local needs.* (MM6:28)

These themes are discussed in this section.

The MMs were aware of pertinent drivers they needed to respond to in curriculum development. The main driver was local needs; however, creating new and relevant programmes in line with government policy decisions was also deemed 'a heavy part of the job' (MM4:45). All five colleges had a strategic objective to grow and develop the CHE curriculum. The strategic element of this business planning and direction of growth was mainly the responsibility of SMs with support from HEMMs, who liaised and developed links with new universities and employers and consulted on new pathways, as discussed in Subsection 5.2.2, and with people, discussed in Section 4.10.

SMs had a college-wide view of CHE. However, as subject specialists, some MMs highlighted their contribution to finding growth areas in the curriculum and for curriculum development. They had very specific access to potential new developments in vocational areas.

> *So, I'd be working with the curriculum for that strategic view, to make sure that everything lines up, in particular, when we're running parallel courses across sites.* (MM10:4)

In the SMs' view, however, the MMs' role was mainly organisation and co-ordination of the curriculum.

> *I am the Curriculum Team Leader for Engineering and I timetable all the courses involved in that. I consult, along with the Course Tutors on the unit offers, so we will make within those courses themselves, and I assist, in terms of organising, anything in relation to the teaching of that.* (MM20:3)

> *My role in the department is to make sure the curriculum is set up and teachers are available for that.* (MM6:9)

Writing new courses was the responsibility of course leaders, supported by their line manager if they had knowledge of the course subject matter. Two respondents, from college C, acknowledged that they were quite 'hands off' when it came to developing CHE courses and left this to course leaders, who were supported by HEMMs who knew about how courses were developed and the requirements of validation.

This contrasted with the SMs' perspective that MMs had the role of adapting courses to students' needs, and overseeing the needs of CHE courses and capturing feedback for SMs. This contrast between different perspectives caused role conflict and influenced the enactment of the role.

MMs who were more 'hands-on' could talk extensively about curriculum development. Some retained the course leadership of CHE programmes in their area; some taught on these courses as well as providing staff management for teams. One manager observed that by being intrinsically involved with the CHE courses she was able to achieve two things simultaneously: first, in order to teach on the course she had to keep up with the

vocational area and innovations within it; second, she was able to look at trends by doing market analysis and keeping an eye out for 'the next big thing' (MM28). MMs who were actively involved with CHE courses, or had recently integrated CHE into their curriculum areas following restructuring, were excited about developing this area and consequently were vigilant about innovations and creativity in their curriculum area. It was MMs who had spent time in industry who conveyed a willingness and excitement about collaborating with their teams to develop their vocational areas within CHE:

> *We're linked up with associations, and various companies, so, for this area here, we're linked to a network of employers, and educators, marketing industry experts, who are the movers and shakers of the industry.* (MM10:46)

Once the courses were validated, courses were also monitored for quality and responses were made to feedback about the programmes. Each manager accepted there was a need to have a good overview of the whole of their curriculum area and to provide value for money. Seven managers, however, felt that CHE was such a small proportion of their area that they spent little time on it:

> *HE courses are a much smaller part of what we offer within our whole curriculum area, I dedicate my time accordingly as well.* (MM25:277)

These managers believed that teachers on these courses could effectively work autonomously to provide quality programmes. The managers' main input was to provide cover for teaching if needed.

An emerging theme was the responsibility for promoting and marketing courses:

> *Curriculum development in, and that's a heavy the job, the whole sort of development of new courses and marketing new courses, but also, quite heavy.* (MM4:43)

This included ensuring that teachers were promoting CHE as a good route for progression once students had finished their level 3 courses. The MMs had a responsibility to look out for patterns where student recruitment was not good and identify how to improve this. A summary of the curriculum manager role with functions and example behaviours is presented in Table 5.16:

Function	Examples of behaviours	Impact on the learning environment
Quality controller	Responding to feedback about the courses	Expansive/restrictive
Development supporter	Proving cover for teachers to develop new courses	Expansive
Marketeer	Market research e.g. finding the next big thing	
Industry expert	Looking out for and identifying innovations	Expansive

Table 5.16 A summary of the curriculum manager role emerging from the data

The impact is presented in Table 5.17, which shows a summary of the expansive and restrictive effects the curriculum manager role can have on the learning environment:

Aspects of learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Dedicated acts of support	Providing cover for teachers to develop new courses	Timetabling allows limited time for teachers to learn
Aligning needs	Responding to feedback	Responses are focused on quality assurance
Progress in career	Market research – the next big thing	Market research focused on FE priorities
	Looking out for and identifying innovation	Limited funding for innovation
Participatory knowledge	MMs are very involved with developing CHE courses	Little knowledge of HE – hands off – leaving it to the teachers
Recognition of teachers as learners	Teachers learn from their teaching	Teaching is not seen as an opportunity to learn

Table 5.17 Summary of expansive and restrictive influence of MMs' curriculum manager role emerging from the data

The teaching teams are one of college's resources that MMs manage. There are

others. These are explored in Subsection 5.2.5.

5.2.5 Resources manager

Managing resources is closely linked with the planning and management of the

curriculum and staff (Subsection 5.2.2). The co-ordination of resources focuses on time,

room planning, co-ordination and budgeting (Mintzberg, 1990). This function of the MMs' role includes ensuring that equipment is up-to-date and safe. This involves planning, to ensure that budgeting takes into consideration any new equipment procured, and so that resources can be easily shared when they are scarce and in demand.

In areas that are in constant evolution, such as engineering, IT and robotics, new equipment and skills need to be developed (MM20; MM25):

Learning how to use lots and lots of different evolving technology. (MM25:433)

In the Engineering areas, of what current and what the latest technologies are, and how we can incorporate those into our offer. (MM20:4)

I*n the digital technologies in particular, possibly due to the nature of the subject, they're really forward thinking about where they are in terms of what their knowledge base is, and jumping on the latest trends. So, we're doing a lot currently, with, robotics, from a digital point of view as well, and, virtual realities were a big thing, and the cyber securities, so they're probably the three areas that we're expanding into.* (MM20:21)

The MMs who led such areas felt that resourcing was very important and required the development of relationships with universities that conducted research in these fields and employers who could identify the new skills required in qualifications. New equipment and new skills drive teacher learning requirements in terms of vocational skills and knowledge. Two SMs at two different colleges briefly mentioned resources. However, their emphasis was on timetabling, the monitoring of teachers' contact hours, and the allocation of resources and cover where necessary (SM4; SM2). They did not mention the development of new resources for new courses; this was far outweighed by other functions of the role, particularly staff management and the development of a

culture of community, quality and improvement. A summary of the resource manager

role, functions and associated behaviours is presented in Table 5.18:

Function	Examples of behaviour	Impact on the learning environment
Resource planner	Organising classrooms and equipment	Expansive
	Planning staff timetables	Expansive/restrictive
	Organising cover	Expansive/restrictive
Budget monitor	Procuring new equipment	Expansive
	Maintaining staff utilisation	Restrictive

Table 5.18 Summary of the resource manager role emerging from the data

The impact is presented in Table 5.19, which shows a summary of the expansive and

restrictive effects the resource manager role can have on the learning environment:

Aspects of the learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Reification of CHE	Providing and making accessible the resources/tools needed	Little investment into resources needed for CHE courses
	Procuring new equipment	
Gradual transition and needs alignment	Training provided for new tools and equipment	Limited training provided for CHE
Recognition of the college-based teacher as a learning	Planning time for learning in the timetable	No dedicated time to learn (maintaining staff utilisation to a maximum)

Table 5.19 Summary of expansive and restrictive influence of MMs' resource manager role emerging from the data

The MMs identified student management as part of their role. This typology included recruiting students, involving students in quality processes and dealing with student issues. The nature of the CHE students (for example, age, motivation, mental health) influenced the nature of the management and the issues that the MMs needed to deal with. Student management featured very little in the SMs' interviews. Where they did make comments, these focused on investigating complaints, addressing students' issues and putting support in place where needed:

> *They would be dealing with any complaints about the Teachers, it's very rare, but if there was a complaint.* (SM3:75)
>
> *The Middle Managers and the Head of School would be the first point of contact for all complaints, so, they would address any issues with the Tutor.* (SM4:30)

One SM focused on safeguarding and attendance. The lack of focus on student management may be explained by the newness of one SM and their priority was building relationships with staff teams; also, in two colleges, restructures focused SMs on ensuring the new teams integrated well.

The profile of CHE students drove the nature of student management in this context. It was not 'crowd control', as one manager described the FE classes; the problems were not disciplinary issues. Mental health issues were a concern for older students, and MMs felt teachers needed training for this. These students also came with difficulties in work/life balance, and needed support in this area. MMs explained that they were only involved with students when an issue was escalated to a formal process (MM19:45); a rare occurrence because of these students' positive motivation and drive:

We will have open doors to students who want to give feedback about how things are going, we'll step in if we think that things aren't being done in the way we think it should be done. (MM14:26)

MMs manage students in a supportive capacity, by discussing any issues and possible resolutions with the teachers of CHE students.

Student management also included encouraging the students to participate in evaluative feedback in the form of focus groups and student surveys, and to act as student reps for annual monitoring (MM1:91; MM3:245). In college B, a student parliament was a medium through which students could voice their opinions.

I think student feedback plays a big role [in quality]. (MM4:289)

In all colleges, MMs listened to students and responded to their contributions. In terms of monitoring, MMs gathered and analysed data about attendance and retention, which fed into course reviews and some quality processes.

The theme of talking to students and recruiting them for courses emerged (MM20:84; MM24:385). MMs had an advantage in knowing which students were progressing and ensuring that they knew their options, whether these involved joining CHE courses or taking up alternatives. Therefore, marketing and recruitment featured in the MMs' role. A summary of the student manager role with associated functions and examples of behaviours is set out in Table 5.20:

Function	Examples of behaviour	Impact on the learning environment
Problem solver	Discussing student issues and finding resolution	
	Supporting students	
Careers advisor	Discussing progression routes with students	
Quality monitoring	Gaining student feedback	Expansive/restrictive
	Analysing retention data	Expansive/restrictive
	Investigating student complaints	Expansive/restrictive
	Analysing attendance data	Expansive/restrictive
Marketeer	Promoting student progression onto college courses	

Table 5.20 Summary of functions and behaviours of the student manager role emerging from the data

Some of the functions of student managers impact on the learning environment. Table 5.21 summarises this impact:

Aspects of the learning environment	Expansive	Restrictive
Alignment of needs	All quality processes are used to identify improvement needs	All quality processes are used without developing and action plan
Recognition of CHE teachers as learner	All quality processes are used to identify improvement needs that translate into learning opportunities for teachers	All quality processes are used without an action plan that details learning opportunities for CHE teachers

Table 5.21 Summary of expansive and restrictive influence of MMs' student manager role emerging from the data

5.2.7 Summary: Typology of academic middle managers' roles

The functions and behaviours considered in Section 5.2 are roles that participants discussed in their interviews. For the most part, MMs and SMs put forward similar typologies, functions, and activities. There were contradictions between priorities and the proportion of focus for each typology. For example, SMs did not isolate student management as part of the MMs' role. There were some overlaps across different typologies; for example, in staff, curriculum and student management there was an element of quality and performance management. The examination of roles in Section 5.2 indicates overlaps between those roles and leadership for professional learning. There is a crossover between the management activities that respondents identified above (Mintzberg, 1990), and the behaviours that support and encourage an expansive environment for professional learning (Fuller and Unwin, 2004). The leader for learning roles discussed in Section 4.11 have clear links to professional learning. This reinforces

the connections and interactions between different people influencing different roles, as identified in Section 4.10. The interaction between different behaviours and their impact on each other is discussed further in Subsection 5.3.1. The different roles discussed in section 4.11 make up part of the MMs' overall role. The behaviours and activities sometimes facilitate other roles, but they can also inhibit other roles as they interact. Some roles support each other, resulting in a catalytic effect, and others diverge and are inhibitory. Figure 5.3 depicts the overlap of management behaviours that facilitate leader for learning behaviours. The ones not overlapping are neutral or inhibitory.
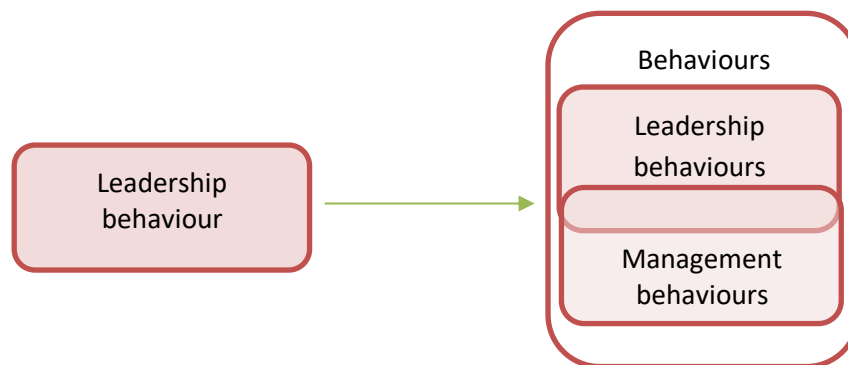
Indicates the adaptation of the original model to CHE

Figure 5.3 Diagram of the adaptation of the model of leadership for learning, showing the interaction between behaviours

The next analytical phase investigates further the interaction and influence of roles (Subsection 5.3.1). The impact of MMs' personal factors on MMs' approach to leading learning is then investigated (Subsection 5.3.2).

5.3 Role inhibitors and catalysts

Data indicated many factors that influence MMs in CHE. These categories are adapted from Hallinger and Heck's (2011) full model of leadership for learning (Figure 2.5):

contextual and environmental factors; college culture; people; and academic structures and processes (Figure 4.2). As is shown in Figure 5.1, some factors originate from the work context and environment of MMs. In addition to the culture of the college, the CHE has a cultural uniqueness (Simmons and Lea, 2014), as do the departments in which CHE are embedded (Galley and Savage, 2014). Each of these subcultures has an influence. There are people, both internal and external to the organisation, who exert degrees of impact on the organisation, and consequently on the MMs discussed in Chapter 4. There are personal factors attributed to MMs – values and beliefs, knowledge and experience. In this section, factors that originate from the MMs themselves and the interaction and impact of different leadership behaviours are studied. In Subsection 5.3.1, management and leadership behaviours from the typology of the MM (Section 5.2) are isolated and their influence on the leader for learning role (Section 4.11) is investigated.

The SMs who were interviewed either line managed the MMs interviewed or were designated CHE SMs. The designated SMs line managed HEMMs. This meant that in one college the designated CHEMM had two line managers; this led to role ambiguity, defined in Subsection 2.1.2, 'the lines are blurred' (MM22:11). The HEMMs had no line management responsibility but, as discussed in Subsections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3, their focus was on, for example, quality processes and procedures, and curriculum development (MM2:260; MM28:5).

Another antecedent category emerged from the literature and data – skills and qualities. In Subsection 5.3.2, influencing factors are examined under these headings to indicate their source. Each MM is influenced by their own values and beliefs. Their experience

and knowledge guide them in their approach to leading learning. These different influences are presented in Subsections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2.

5.3.1 Roles as inhibitors and catalysts

In Subsections 5.2.1–5.2.6, each of the roles within the typology were analysed to identify behaviours that influence the leader for learning behaviours. In this section, the behaviours are colour coded to indicate their influence summarised in Table 5.22:

Colour	Interpretation
Green	Behaviours overlap with the leadership for learning behaviour and facilitate leadership for learning
Amber	Behaviours that would facilitate leadership for learning in certain situations and inhibit it in others
Red	Behaviours that have the potential to inhibit leadership for learning and are represented as more managerial functions

Table 5.22 Summary of the colour coding for typologies of MMs

The matrix in Table 5.23 indicates where the roles catalyse the leader for learning role and summarises the impact of each role in the MMs' role typology. However, teachers perceive the intention or purpose of all the behaviours of MMs differently. This results in leader for learning functions being construed negatively at times, and consequently well-intentioned activities can have a negative impact on professional learning. This was considered in Sections 4.11 and 4.12.

Role	Catalytic role	Neutral	Inhibitor
Leader for learning	✓		
Leader	✓		
Liaison	✓		✓
Team leader	✓		✓
Curriculum manager	✓	✓	
Resource manager	✓		✓
Student manager		✓	✓

Table 5.23 Matrix of role influences

5.3.1.1 Leader

Table 5.24 replicates Table 5.8 and shows the functions and example behaviours of a leader, collected from the data analysis in Subsection 5.2.1. Here the behaviours that are highlighted overlap with learning behaviours. For example, sharing good practice focuses on learning and provides an opportunity for teachers to learn. Breaking down silos helps in communication and facilitates professional dialogues. Both behaviours also contribute to an expansive environment. In Chapter 4, employers and students were shown to influence professional learning, thus engaging with these groups of people for strategic planning and development drives curriculum design and so the needs for professional learning.

Function	Examples of behaviour
Role model	Sharing good practice
Strategic planner and developer	Engaging with students and employers
People influencer	Nurturing passion and enthusiasm
Decision maker	Making evidence-based judgements
	Identifying and valuing strengths
Inspiration	Driving high expectations
	Raising aspirations
Team leader	Involving students and employers
	Requesting and listening to suggestions

Table 5.24 Functions and behaviours of the leader role

Most of the behaviours found in the leader role have synergies with the leader for learning role and catalyse professional learning. However, if the examples of behaviours are FE-centric and do not have a CHE focus, they would have a restrictive impact (see Table 5.9). The liaison role is discussed next.

5.3.1.2 Liaison

The liaison role supports the leader for learning role. It contributes to an expansive learning environment by broadening the opportunities for professional learning, understanding the language of CHE and multiplying the number of communities of practice available to the teachers. The different influences are presented in Table 5.25:

Function	Examples of behaviour
External college representative	Attending boards, committees, and forums
	Inviting employers as guest speakers
	Communications with employers in industry
	Communications with partner HEIs and awarding bodies
Internal link person	Working with HR specialist to gain remission for teachers to attend CHE development sessions
Relationship builder	Developing an understanding of the cultures and languages used by partners (HEMM)
Communication facilitator	Giving the team a voice
	Requesting and listening to suggestions
Networker	Developing peer networks between colleges
Collaborator	Breaking down silos

Table 5.25 Functions and behaviours for liaison

Ensuring MMs enact this role effectively with a focus on CHE would enhance the learning environment and aid leading for learning. The next role examined is the team leader.

5.3.1.3 Team leader

The team leader role includes behaviours that can both inhibit and catalyse leader for learning roles. The line management functions can have a negative effect because of their link to an audit culture and potential to be perceived as judgemental not developmental. Timetabling and organising teaching can be negative if time is limited for reflection and participation in professional learning – two aspects of an expansive environment. However, if timetables are planned well in advance and necessary cover is provided, a more expansive environment develops. These are presented in Table 5.26:

Functions	Examples of behaviours
Line manager	Monitoring and evaluating performance
	Identifying areas for improvement
Staff recruiter	Identifying skills gaps and recruiting new teachers
Team planner	Timetabling and organising teaching
Team facilitator	Organising meetings
	Travelling to distant campuses
Performance manager	Auditing paperwork
	Investigating complaints
Motivator	Showing empathy
	Celebrating success

Table 5.26 Functions and behaviours of a team leader

The coding indicates that team leading can have both an inhibitory and a catalytic impact on the leader for learning role. The inhibitory nature of some factors results from teachers' perceptions; for example, teachers found that auditing paperwork was managerial quality assurance and eroded their professionalism and a question was raised by teachers regarding the attitudes to standards and consistency of approach. Where standards were not HE-focused and approaches were inconsistent, the impact was detrimental to the learning environment. The negativity towards quality control

highlights the need for managers to know how to respond to feedback and communicate constructively with teachers. These skill areas are explored further in Subsection 5.3.2.3.

5.3.1.4 Curriculum manager

This role was shown to drive professional learning, as innovation in the curriculum results in the need for teachers to develop new skills and knowledge in order to remain current. Table 5.27 shows the influences of the curriculum manager on leader for learning roles:

Function	Example of behaviours
Quality controller	Responding to feedback
Development driver	Providing cover for teachers to develop new courses
Marketeer	Promoting student recruitment
	Market research (finding the next big thing)
Industry expert	Looking out for and identifying innovations

Table 5.27 Functions and behaviours of a curriculum manager

The marketeer function was felt to be neutral. However, the learning environment expanded when innovation drove skills development. Thus, the identification of innovation has a positive impact on the learning environment and contributes to leading for learning more as a result of expanding the needs of skills development than in design and delivery. In addition, the curriculum manager role drives resource management in that curriculum development requires new resources to be acquired. This is discussed in Subsection 5.3.1.5.

5.3.1.5 Resource manager

A resource manager is attached to operational logistics. The associated behaviours are perceived as managerial by both teachers and managers. However, data also indicates that MMs who approve and procure equipment drive professional learning when new skills and knowledge are needed to operate new equipment. This is represented in Table 5.28:

Function	Example of behaviours
Resource planner	Organising classrooms and equipment
	Planning staff timetables
	Organising cover
Budget	Approving equipment and resource acquisition
	Maintaining staff utilisation

Table 5.28 Functions and behaviours of a resource manager

'Approving equipment and resource acquisition' is coded in green because of its influence on the need for professional learning. In the same way that curriculum development can produce skills gaps, new equipment and resources require training in their use.

5.3.1.6 Student manager

The student manager role does not seem to have much influence on professional learning. Discussions about student issues can be catalytic because the solutions can be linked to professional learning needs. If this is not the case, then professional learning is not influenced. The influences are summarised in Table 5.29:

Function	Examples of behaviour
Problem solver	Discussing student issues and finding resolution
Student recruiter	Discussing progression routes with students
Quality monitor	Gaining student feedback
	Analysing attendance data
	Analysing retention data
	Investigating of student complaints

Table 5.29 Functions and behaviours of a student manager

The rationale for the amber coding for the quality monitor function is relevant here, as in other sections. Where actions resulting from quality monitoring are construed as judgmental and development and support are not put into place, they restrict the learning environment by decreasing the recognition that college-based teachers are learners and able to improve professionally.

5.3.1.7 Summary: modelling the leader for learning role against other MM roles

Drawing together the influences of each function on the leader for learning role, it is possible to model the impact of MMs' different roles on their leader for learning role. Figure 5.4 shows those functions that can have a catalytic effect and those that can be inhibitors. In Figure 5.4, the key roles of MMs, for example leader for learning, are placed in the central column. The model represents the whole MM role typology that influences the leader for learning role. This allows key functions that support the leader for learning to be identified. The left-hand column of the model lists the functions that support the leader for learning – catalytic functions. The modelling shows that a pattern of cause

and effect can be identified for effective leader for learning behaviours. For example, MMs who are good role models, exemplifying being a learner and promoting good practice, will enhance the leader for learning role when this is underpinned with the leader being a people influencer.
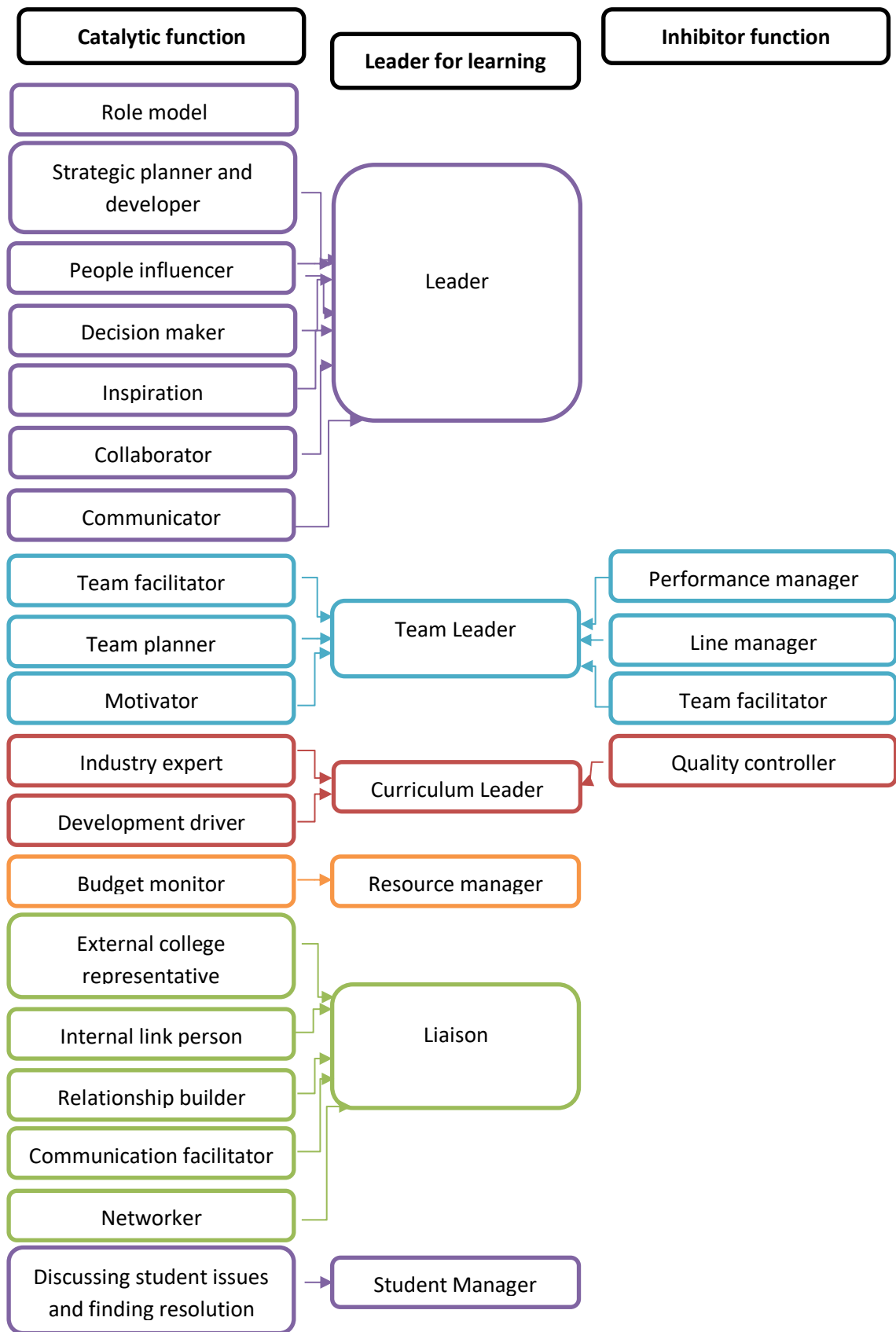
Figure 5.4 Modelling leader for learning role against other MM roles

This interaction between roles can be presented in the full model as originally having been leadership behaviours but in fact it is an interaction between leader roles and managerial roles, as shown in Figure 5.5. Those that are neutral and do not influence each other are external to the overlap. Those that have an influence are within the overlap.
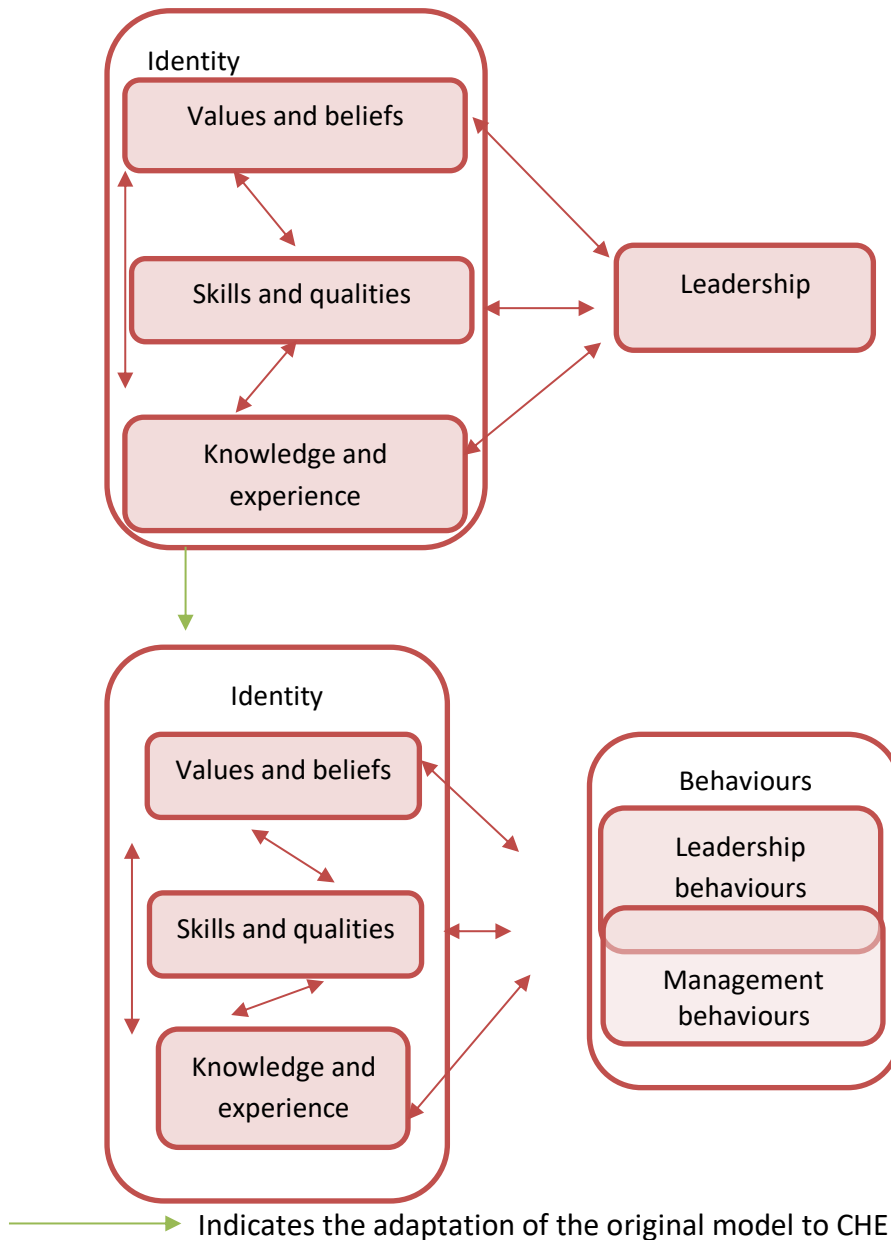
Figure 5.5 Diagram showing the adaptation from leader behaviours to the interaction between leader roles and managerial roles

This study focuses on college improvement through teacher professional learning in CHE, and the interaction between MMs and influencing factors. Modelling these interactions explores the dynamics between behaviours and changes to circumstances and can provide a way to analyse college professional learning environments and solve problems (Fowler, 2003).

5.3.2 Antecedents

This section looks at the antecedent factors that MMs bring with them. Raw data from the data collection show that, in fact, MMs do not only bring antecedent factors with them but also learn in role. As they learn, they change their behaviours (Argyris, 1996). This reinforces MMs as learners (Subsection 4.11.6) and shows that, during their incumbency and continued development, they modify their values, beliefs, experience and knowledge, and develop skills and qualities.

5.3.2.1 Values and beliefs

Values are taken to mean cultural traditions, vision and institutional practices (Hofstede *et al*., 2010; Fenwick and Nerland, 2014) (Subsection 2.4.5). Each MM had their own values and beliefs about CHE and its teaching and learning. These values and beliefs had different origins, for example the individual's vocation and industrial background (Hargreaves, 2012; Gilpin, 2007). Their values and beliefs shaped their perceptions of obligations and priorities. Consequently, each was influenced by different drivers and prioritised differently, depending on the weighting of importance of, for example, quality or student satisfaction. The influence of values and beliefs are explored in this section.

Overall, MMs and SMs valued the role of CHE in widening participation:

I think having HE and FE is a really important thing, if this College didn't have HE, I don't think that it would be as good a College, quite simply. (MM14:116)

This value was reflected in the belief that teaching on CHE was a career progression for FE teachers:

If you want to engage and if you want to motivate Teachers, it's nice if there's some kind of reward for teaching HE. That you're aspiring to become a Teacher in Higher Education. (MM6:533)

Almost to the Premier League, that definitely, many Teachers aspire to teach HE, probably because of the kind of the hierarchy, I think a little bit of snobbery, from their colleagues, it puts some people off, some people might not want to be part and part of that. (SM8:103)

MMs were passionate about their students doing well and the need for teachers to be appropriately qualified and experienced to teach courses (MM6:289). For SMs, passion for the subject and qualifications gave teachers credibility:

If they've done that in the industry, everyone, you know, respects that, and I think they've got to have more credibility. (SM4:48)

They need to have a Masters, because a lot of it is about credibility. You need somebody with a certain amount of kudos. (MM6:214)

However, there was a contradiction in that two MMs felt that the teachers were only one step in front of the students because they were learning the subject as they went along:

I *used to sit in my car while my son was doing football on a Monday night, reading my biochemistry book trying to remember this stuff, Zwitter ions, and all that stuff, to teach at the next day.* (MM26:172).

Four SMs mentioned that MMs needed to embrace CHE. SMs acknowledged that HE was not always MMs' natural affinity, many of them having not experienced HE (SM5:26; SM21:256). The MMs have multiple identities as teachers and managers, and have a

further identity in their vocational role (MM3:211–212; MM13:144). The vocational background influences their leadership behaviours; for example, nurses have a 'can do' attitude and are compassionate and empathetic (MM22:270).

Beliefs about effective pedagogy for CHE differed. The MMs held a belief in the quality of teaching and learning. MMs had a sense of obligation and duty towards students and their progress and towards teachers and the need to support their activities. MMs wanted to guarantee good provision. Three MMs explained that most CHE lessons were approached in a similar way to FE. In fact, there was a belief that HEI teachers could learn from their college-based counterparts:

> *They (HE) don't have kind of interactive group activity, and they'll have the professional discussions and group work, and things like that, but it's very much a professional level.* (MM2:123)

They believed that CHE pedagogy responded more effectively to students' needs than traditional pedagogy in HEIs. Others thought that pedagogy in CHE should be different to that of FE, but MMs and teachers had a preconceived idea that HE was about lecturing – standing in front of students and telling them (MM28:224) – and did not include knowledge application activities.

An emerging theme from the data is this discrepancy between views about effective pedagogy for CHE. Most students had been successful in completing FE courses, and consequently responded similarly well in their CHE courses because teachers used similar pedagogical approaches. However, one SM highlighted the differences in pedagogies (SM22:135). There was no agreement within any of the colleges as to what teaching worked best for learning. This could therefore be an inhibitor for improvement.

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With no agreement over what pedagogy looks like, the expectation of communicating a vision for CHE might be problematic. The disagreement as to the nature of CHE extended to professional learning for the sector, with the view of scholarship not being fully understood. Some respondents expressed a lack of knowledge and experience of HE as the issue (MM25:24). Table 5.30 gives a summary of the positive and negative influences derived from MMs' values and beliefs:

Positive influence	Negative influence
Belief in the value of CHE	Hierarchy and status attributed in vocational areas
	Multiple identities with negative beliefs about professional learning
	Identity: no natural affinity with HE
Teaching on CHE courses is career progression	
MMs wanting teachers to be well qualified for the courses they teach	
Vocational background that has a 'can do' attitude	
	Inconsistent beliefs in the nature of CHE pedagogy
	Inconsistent beliefs about the nature of CHE professional learning

Table 5.30 Summary of the positive and negative influences derived from MMs' values and beliefs

A model of the influence of values and beliefs on the learning environment is presented in Figure 5.6:
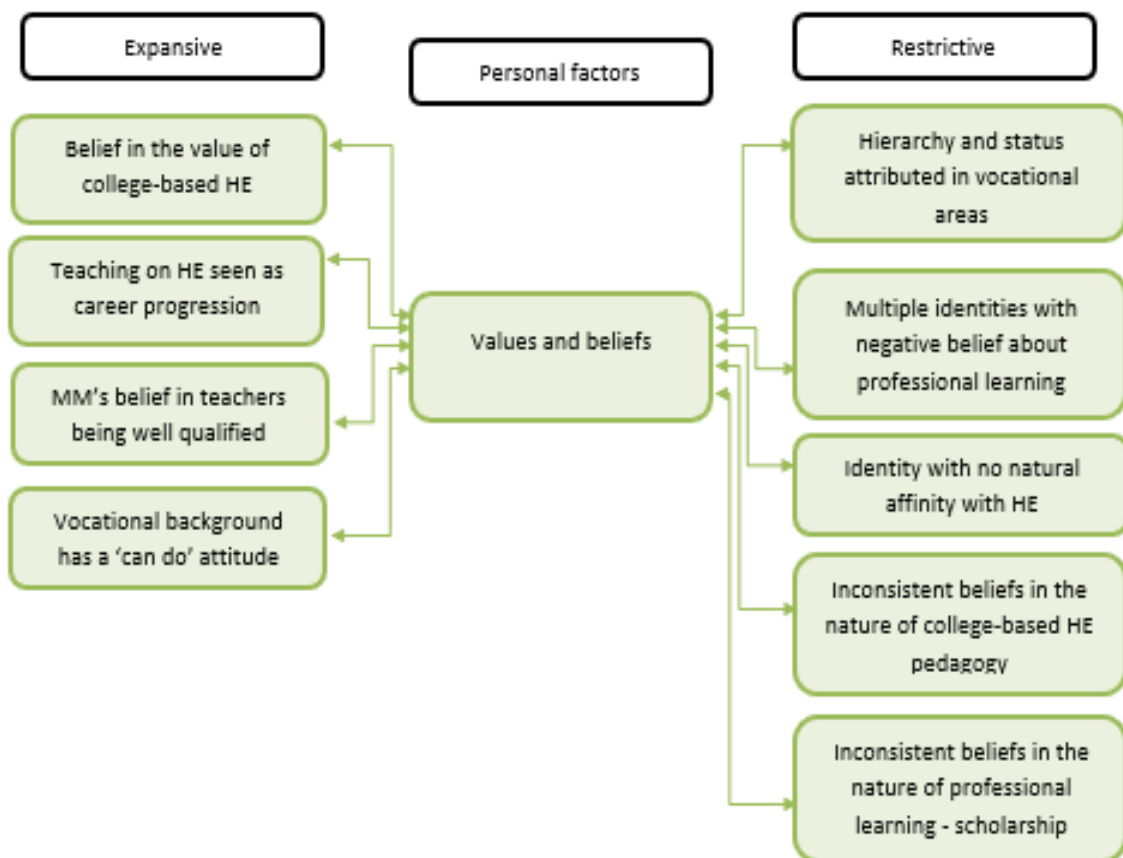
Figure 5.6 Model of the influence of values and beliefs on the learning environment

5.3.2.2 Knowledge and experience

MMs in CHE need to have a wide range of knowledge. As mentioned in the previous section, a knowledge of HE pedagogy and scholarship help in leaders' learning. It is through the lens of prior experience in industry and education and knowledge gained that they make decisions about effective leadership approaches in response to diverse situations. The way in which these shape leadership approaches is discussed in this section.

Each MM described their vocational background, for example, health and social care, or engineering. Experience in these areas influenced the way MMs work and their decision-making:

Workers in early years and health and social care, are reflective practitioners. Because that's the way that the profession needs them to be, so they've got heightened awareness. (MM1:34)

At times, MMs saw the hierarchy, status and silos involved in vocational culture as barriers to be broken down. All MMs had teachers with different vocational subject areas within their curriculum teams. Their prior knowledge and experience enabled some of them to manage their teams more easily; however, line management was found to be a more difficult area MMs encountered on taking leader roles because of their lack of experience and knowledge of what line management entailed:

In my experience, those who've had the experience of management of some kind in their vocational area, tend to be better, because they have got the management experience. (SM4:144)

They are managing HE, then they have not taught on it, they will have more limited understanding, and it's ones that have taught on it really, that will have the best understanding, I don't think that they're all at the same level. (SM4:131)

Having industry and university experience facilitated MMs' leadership. Their industrial knowledge increased credibility with the external partnerships upon which they drew for professional learning. University experience helped their understanding of expectations, processes and systems.

I've worked at a university, and I've developed HE and FE, in terms of collaborating with developing the Foundation Degree courses, so I have a STRONG knowledge of HE, And that benefits my team, because I know exactly what they're doing, I know the procedures around HE and FE. (MM6:70-72)

However, this was a focus of learning for new course leaders because their experience was from a student's point of view, not that of a teacher or MM.

Different areas of knowledge were identified: subject knowledge; knowledge of the learning process; and knowledge of HE processes:

> *If you've not been through higher education yourself, you might be conned by the style of writing. If it's written well, you tend to be more positive about it.* (SM5:360)

In terms of professional learning, SMs highlighted the importance of knowledge of the scope professional learning. SM were concerned by the limited knowledge of professional learning activities and of support mechanisms for teachers in professional learning. An increased repertoire of knowledge emerged as being an area for potential improvement for MMs. In addition, knowledge of the quality code and HE regimes was also identified as a potential issue:

> *To observe going in with the UK code in mind, and the QAA focus, but I have not done any of that recently, so I really want to get my teeth back into that.* (MM2:302)

An understanding of what higher levels of learning look like and how autonomy is developed in learners, alongside the different demands and challenges of CHE, were vital. Knowledge of CHE terminology and acronyms was questioned, mainly because of the predominance of Ofsted criteria used in FE. Validation required a knowledge of the awarding body's rules and regulations, each body having different nuances and language.

> *Our weaknesses are still, fully understanding the policies of our partner university that we work with.* (MM22:240)

Knowledge and experience were therefore significant. A lack of knowledge and experience raises concerns, as could preconceived knowledge and experience that was not interpreted and transferred appropriately into the CHE context:

The positive and negative impact of knowledge and experience on professional learning is summarised in Table 5.31:

Positive influence	Negative Influence
Experience of learning in HE that informs the role positively	Little experience of HE or HE experience informs role negatively
Knowledge of skills levels needed for students in CHE	Limited knowledge of student skills for HE
Good vocational subject understanding – credibility	Little or no subject area knowledge – lack of credibility
Experience of leading teams in industry	Little experience of leading teams
Knowledge of the nature of scholarship	Little or no experience of the nature of professional learning for CHE (scholarship)
Good knowledge of support mechanisms for professional learning and scholarship	Limited knowledge of appropriate support systems for professional learning and scholarship
Knowledge of appropriate levels of autonomy to allow CHE teachers in their work	Lack of knowledge of autonomy - 'leaving them to it'
Knowledge of HE quality systems and requirements	Dominance of FE regimes
Extensive knowledge of CHE needs	Limited knowledge of CHE needs

Table 5.31 Summary of the positive and negative influences derived from MMs' knowledge and experience

A model of the influence of knowledge and experience on the learning environment is presented in Figure 5.7:
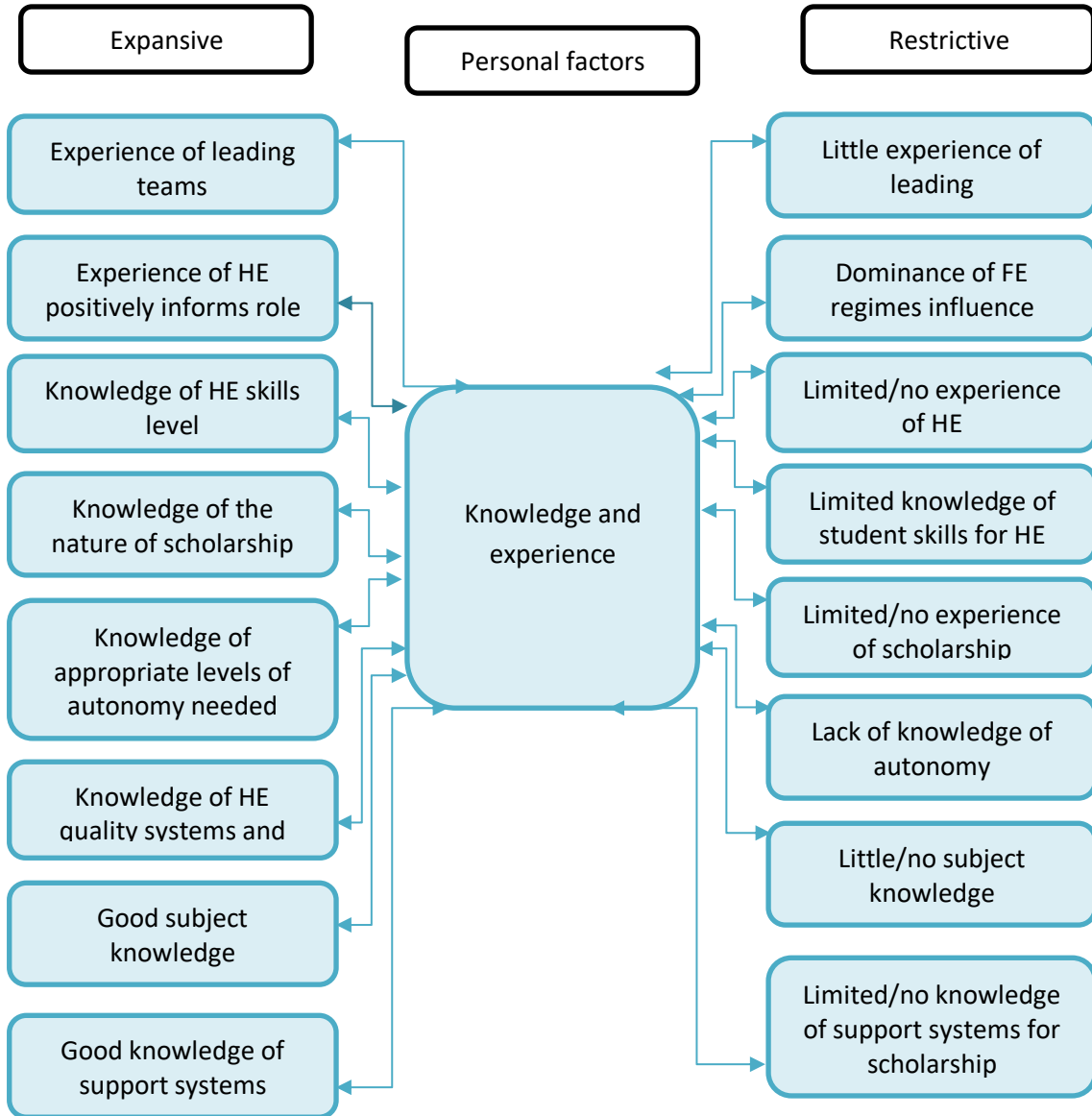
Figure 5.7 Model of the influence of knowledge and experience on the learning environment

As is examined in Subsection 5.3.2.3, MMs' skills and qualities also shape their behaviours and their implementation of knowledge and interpretation of experience in a new context.

5.3.2.3 Skills and qualities – emerging theme from the data

Skills and qualities in leading and management emerged as mediating factors. This was not just about knowledge but an ability to apply this knowledge effectively for example to:

- motivate and encourage teams to work cohesively together and for improvement

- navigate a range of cultures associated with stakeholders from different internal departments, university partners and employers

- adapt quickly to different situations with different teachers.

The different skills and qualities needed for leading learning and their influence on the roles are discussed in this section.

For team leaders, two skills were mentioned in Subsection 5.3.1.3. These skills are the ability to organise and communicate effectively and approach difficult situations such as complaints sympathetically. Where teams are particularly small, MMs must be able to motivate every single teacher to work well and not in isolation. Noted in Subsection 5.3.1.3, the qualities of people in the caring vocational areas include empathy and an ability to read people and recognise their barriers; team leaders need to be able to reduce these barriers in order to enable learning.

> *I try and listen to what the staff need, and try and respond proactively if I can, if it's something that we can do, and I see the value in it for the students and the staff member, then it's something that I would support, I think it's important to support and develop people, because the more development they have, the more enthusiastic they are about subjects, and then sometimes people can get stale if*

they're just delivering the same thing without being revitalized, but I think the more you develop your staff, the better the team is. (MM13:19)

The MMs surveyed wanted to be approachable, available and hands-on in order to support their teachers. The SMs wanted MMs to be able to distinguish between FE and the needs specific to CHE, and use this ability to identify strengths and areas for professional learning:

> *They've got to be able to be able to assess so accurately, or judge accurately, whether learning is taking place, I think that's just a skill that some of them need to work on.* (SM8:33)

An ability to analyse data and see trends helped MMs in the analysis of professional learning needs.

An ability to learn was essential for MMs. This ability can be broken down into two skills: recognising mistakes and finding solutions through reflection. Critical evaluation skills were emphasised by the respondents. However, SMs expressed their concern that MMs were not outwardly facing or critical enough. They felt MMs needed to be out and about, researching what was coming next in industry (SM3:55). The participants acknowledged that in their previous employment they had developed transferable skills that were useful in leading their teaching teams, such as team leadership, time management, organisational and planning skills:

> *Whether it be managing people, or whether it be managing a process or a product, we're a combination of both. They need to sort of know how to problem solve, and you get the strategic vision, when you've managed something, those are the sort of skills that you develop, and I think that people that have done THAT before, are better Heads of School.* (SM4:150)

Table 5.32 provides a summary of positive and negative influences derived from MMs' skills and qualities:

Positive influence	Negative influence
Ability to motivate and encourage teamwork	Unable to motivate and encourage teamwork
Externally facing	Too internally facing
Able to encourage improvement	
Empathy	
Able to identify barriers to learning	
Able to reduce barriers to learning	
Be available	Not available
Have a 'hands on' approach	'Hands off' approach
Able to distinguish between needs of FE and HE	
Able to identify strengths and areas for development	
Able to recognise mistakes	
Able to reflect	
Critical evaluation skills	
Organisation skills	

Table 5.32 Summary of the positive and negative influences derived from skills and qualities

For each of the abilities that are identified in Table 5.32, the inability results in a restrictive approach.

5.4 Summary model

The factors that influence leadership behaviours can be seen in Figure 5.8. The personal factors of the middle managers are:

- beliefs and values

- skills and qualities

- knowledge and experience

- identity.
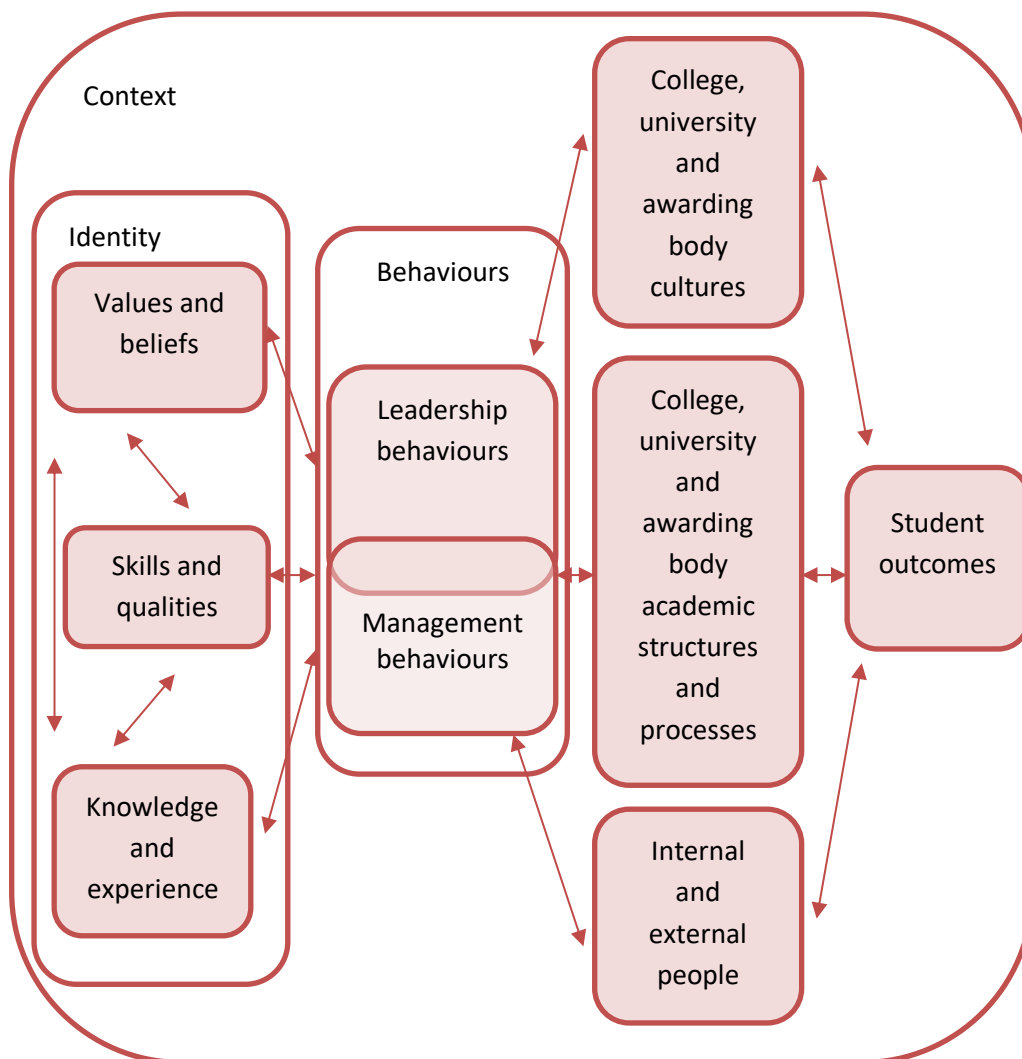
Figure 5.8 Leadership for learning in CHE (adapted from Hallinger and Heck's (2011) full model of leadership for learning)

This differs from the original model (Figure 2.5) as it now includes themes that emerged from the data analysis in Chapters 4 and 5. One such theme is that of skills, qualities and identities that impact on leadership behaviours. Different managers from different vocational areas have different qualities and skills that they have transferred from previous roles. The factors that influence leadership behaviours are not just the factors that MMs bring with them from previous experience. Further elements were added to their identities; for example, an individual might have moved from vocational practitioner to teacher to manager, and some took on the identity of leader. Another difference from the original model in Figure 2.5 involves one of the principles of MacBeath *et al.*'s (2006) leadership for learning model: the focus on learning and the fact that learning is at each level. Each MM interviewed highlighted their own learning, different leadership behaviours learned during their incumbency as leaders of CHE. Their knowledge had increased with their experience of the context. With increased knowledge and learning, skills and qualities changed. They also indicated that beliefs and values about CHE had evolved from those they previously held about HE. This was particularly emphasised in discussions about the pedagogy they had experienced in HE. The learning that impacts on behaviours and that influences values and beliefs links to Argyris and Schön's (1978) double-loop learning (Subsection 2.4.2). There seems to be a reciprocal effect between the leadership behaviours and the antecedents that evolve as MMs learn through their experience in their role. In Figure 5.8, double-headed arrows replace single-headed arrows to indicate that MMs develop further through learning, while enacting roles on the job.

The factors external to the MMs include the context, college culture, academic structures and processes, and people, as presented in Chapter 4. The context involves variables external to the organisation in terms of national and local socio-economic and political influences. The college culture is also multi-layered, and comprises organisational culture, departmental culture, and vocational culture, as discussed in Chapter 4. An emerging factor is the influence of the culture of HE institutions, which partner colleges for some CHE courses. The HE institutions and exam boards influence the academic structures and processes. This means MMs deal with, and are influenced by, for example, different quality regimes (QAA, Ofsted, and exam board assessment verification processes). The overriding force of FE course structures and processes also drives managers. The data identified that several people are involved. For example, students influence the pedagogy and thus the scholarship of teaching and learning element of professional learning; and employers play a large part in the content of delivery, particularly industrial updating, which shapes subject content learning.

A further adaptation to the model is needed. In Subsection 3.2.1 the nature of reality was discussed in relation to the research design. For this study, the understanding is that each person interprets meaning through their lens of understanding and experience, knowledge, values, and beliefs (Creswell, 2013). The data provided evidence that these different personal factors act like a stained-glass lens through which the MMs view aspects of their environment and make decisions about their role. The model needs to represent this mediation. Figure 5.9 shows a fully adapted model; the personal factors are placed between the leadership and management behaviours to represent the lens

through which MMs perceive other aspects that emerged from analysis. The personal

factors mediate how MMs respond, for example, to the college culture and subcultures.
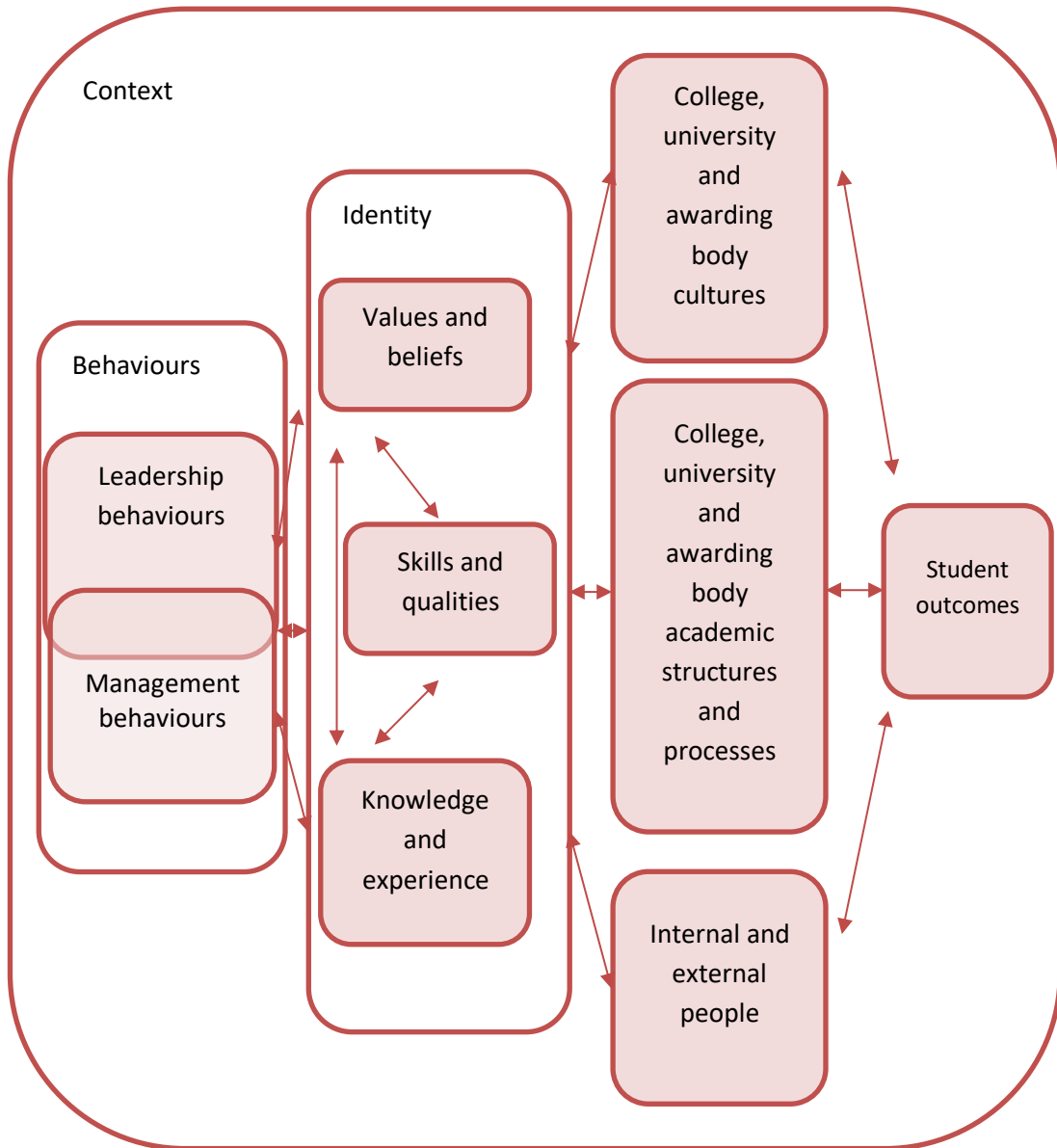
Figure 5.9 Fully adapted model of leadership for learning in CHE

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This final chapter concludes this thesis. This study has investigated the connection between teacher professional learning and MMs' leadership in the context of CHE. The study is important because the leadership of CHE by MMs has not been extensively researched (Widdowson and King, 2018) and teacher professional learning is important for the improvement of teaching and learning (Healey *et al.,* 2014). In Section 6.1, the purpose and rationale for the study are revisited. Section 6.2 evaluates the research design and demonstrates the certainty of answers to the research questions, in light of the findings and experience using my theoretical framework and methods. In Section 6.3, the implications of the overall findings are discussed, and Section 6.4 summarises the recommendations for the different audiences and details new questions arising as a result of the evidence gathered during the study.

6.1 Purpose and rationale of the study

The available research had identified that there was a lack of institutional support and/or availability of HE-specific academic development (time, resources and opportunities) at all stages of the HE teaching career in CHE (Lawrence and Hall, 2019). The question that prompted this enquiry was: How can MMs support academic enquiry in a sector in which they may have neither direct teaching experience nor direct experience of the scholarly activity expected of HE-level teachers in CHE? There was a paucity of information in the available literature about academic middle management of CHE and how MMs connect with, and influence, teacher professional learning. This gap concerns how managerial practices, processes and leadership contribute to MMs' ability to enhance teacher professional learning within and across CHE teams. More

research was needed on leadership experiences in FE (Widdowson and King, 2018). There are empirical studies that investigate what managers do in further education (Briggs, 2004; Mhlanga, 2017) but there has been limited research into CHE and into the approach to leadership that connects professional learning and leadership. Findings from two empirical studies highlighted the need for a greater understanding of the roles MM play in leading college-based education and supporting CHE teachers in their own learning.

The purpose of this study has been to gain insight into the roles MMs enact in leading teams of CHE teachers, and the interaction between the roles, factors in the college environment and the personal factors relating to MMs themselves. The focus of this study was to produce a typology of MMs' overall role within the colleges (this includes higher education middle managers (HEMMs), a MM role that emerged from the analysis), and also to identify the personal factors and factors relating to each college that influence the enactment of those roles.

The research questions presented in Table 6.1 were:

1. What roles do MMs in FE perform for CHE courses?

2. How do these roles contribute to the professional learning environment of CHE teachers?

3. What factors impede or facilitate MMs' role performance in CHE?

4. How do these factors influence and interact with MMs' role enactment?

Table 6.1 Research questions

The findings of these research questions are significant, owing to the lack of empirical research focused on the leadership of CHE. Approaching the investigation using a multiple case study of five FE colleges allowed a detailed analysis of the complexity of the MMs' roles.

6.2 Evaluation of the research design and certainty of the findings for each question

There were three quality criteria for the research: trustworthiness, authenticity and transferability. The research design needed to satisfy these criteria to increase the credibility of the findings. Any limitations also needed acknowledgement. There were numerous sources of evidence, including perspectives from different members of the role set and documentation, which resulted in a richness of data and triangulated evidence. The sample included MMs, SMs and teachers involved with CHE. Not all MMs and SMs in the colleges participated, however, which limited the extent to which the sample was wholly representative. The findings and interpretations were shared with participants, where possible, to verify and confirm their accuracy. The findings were also used to adapt the research following an inductive approach on which theory can be based (Bryman, 2016).

The use of a multiple case study allowed a comparison to be made between findings from the different colleges, which evidenced the similarities between MMs' roles in each college and consistencies with the factors identified. The five colleges used in the study were similar in that the CHE teams were managed by MMs who also led their FE curriculum teams. There were many consistencies among the five colleges and their expectations of the roles of MMs. However, the extent to which each MM enacted the different roles depended on the individual college's culture and priorities. Consistencies

were found in the influence that MMs' experience, knowledge and skills contributed to their enactment of the roles.

From the very beginning of the study, the pace and continuity of change in the FE sector was acknowledged. Data collection began three years before this final thesis. During that time, change continued; colleges changed and developed, shaped by government changes and priorities. The applicability of the responses cannot be guaranteed to be durable. In some colleges, different managers were asked the questions at different times and their priorities may have been different in different interviews. Each of the colleges was undergoing changes in structure and personnel, and so personal focus, organisational focus and stages of development were influential at the time of the investigation. However, recent research continues to acknowledge the challenges of leading CHE and the need for the leadership of CHE to be scrutinised. The detailed findings from this research can be used as a starting point for any further studies into similar concepts. Interviewing multiple participants in five different cases helps mitigate this with an understanding that colleges will change over time, particularly as the national environment impacts on colleges. Multiple cases and participants allow for theory to be built. In order to investigate the possibility of generalisation, the findings were shared with MMs and SMs at two colleges that had not been involved in the research. They felt that the findings related to their colleges and could be used to develop a leadership development programme to augment the leadership of CHE and the quality of teaching and learning at their colleges. Further testing back of the findings at the five colleges to check their trustworthiness, and further testing in other contexts, would verify the transferability of the findings.

6.3 Implications of the findings

Evidence from the data demonstrated that leadership traverses senior management layers to include MMs and students. This tallies with previous research (Bangs and Frost, 2015). MMs have roles as leaders and managers, and FE responsibilities alongside their CHE roles. These different sets of roles can overlap and influence how effective a MM is, either in FE or in CHE. Personal factors/identities produce a lens through which MMs view/interpret their interactions with their environment and inform their choice of approach. MMs need to understand and respond to their environment within the college but also meet the demands and the challenges of other people in the organisation.

Research question 1: What roles do MMs in FE perform for CHE courses?
Research question 2: How do these roles contribute to the professional learning environment of CHE teachers?

This study has produced detail about six functions that constitute the leader of learning role (Section 4.11) and six other roles in the typology of MMs in CHE (Section 5.6). MMs are involved in curriculum management, developing the curriculum and responding to the needs of local employers. The MMs manage teaching teams, resources and students, on FE courses and CHE courses. Liaison with university partners, in addition to teachers and other members of the college workforce, is a significant role that they play. Many do not identify themselves as leaders, but a leader role is evident in the data. Additionally, there is a clear leader for learning role. Here, the MMs provide the environment and opportunities for teachers to practise and learn. The development of an expansive learning environment is critical in this aspect of the MMs' role. Knowledge

of scholarship and its constituent parts is also necessary, to ensure that CHE teachers have the opportunities needed and expected at HE level.

The leader for learning role focuses on both teachers as learners and the MMs as learners. The MMs need to create a culture that supports professional learning, with systems in place to assist in this endeavour. Care is required to ensure that the systems are recognised as developmental and professional, not auditing and managerial. Part of the MMs' leader role is good role modelling, enforcing the requirement for MMs to demonstrate and be transparent about their own learning. Being a learner influences the MM's development as a leader and complements their contribution to their team's professional learning.

Research question 3: What factors impede or facilitate MMs' role performance in CHE? Research question 4: How do these factors influence and interact with MMs' role enactment?

This study has provided a detailed typology of MMs' role in CHE. Both leader and manager functions were evident, and these intersect. Conflicting functions and perceptions of the role can be detrimental to the impact that MMs can have on the learning environment; where behaviours within a function are construed as managerial and not professional, for example when quality assurance behaviours are perceived as policing rather than developmental, then the behaviours have an inhibitory influence. Synergistic effects can come from an intersection of the manager and leader functions and these enhance an expansive learning environment.

Identity shapes the MMs' roles. The values and beliefs held by MMs as part of these identities influenced their approach to leading their teams. However, many of the MMs

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did not identify as leaders. They were more predisposed to identifying as a vocational expert, a teacher and a manager. Inexperience of the HE culture proved to influence identity. Scholarship and scholarly activity were not part of these identities. Experience of occupational and college culture was prevalent in forming approaches to professional learning and leader behaviours. The established aspects of college culture were: college priorities and drivers; attitudes to CHE and professional learning; and subcultures. This last aspect linked to the identities and cultures that differ from department to department.

The MMs' perception of people, both internal and external to the college, guided their behaviour. This was true of different people to different extents, depending on their agency. Close working relationships with university partners positively influenced professional learning. Some MMs were distanced from the partner links, however, as HEMMs attended to the expectations of this group. Perceived distance from the teachers had some bearing on how MMs could enhance professional learning. Those MMs who were focused on the processes and procedures – usually HEMMs – tended to feel a lack of involvement and, consequently, a lack of impact on enhancing teaching and learning.

These factors influenced and interacted with the MMs' enactment of their role. Consequently, they influenced the learning environment, and whether they developed a learning environment that was expansive or restrictive. In addition, issues of role ambiguity and conflict were evident. Divergent priorities and different perspectives from SMs who are focused on FE or restructuring can produce tensions around the focus

for MMs. Knowledge and skills were significant factors. Autonomy is often regarded as a criterion for professionalism. However, autonomy is sometimes inflicted on HE rather than scaffolded, and it may not always be genuine autonomy. A lack of knowledge of HE and a lack of the skills for developing a learning environment conducive to scholarship and scholarly activity led to MMs appearing less supportive and, in some cases completely 'hands off'. These differing approaches are a feature in the study and help highlight the importance of the findings.

6.4 Recommendations and further study

This thesis will be of interest to a diversity of people from MMs to college senior leaders, for whom an insight into the connection between leading and professional learning in CHE will be of value. During the study, SMs highlighted inconsistencies in the approach and knowledge of MMs. The models can be used to assess the college staffing and resource capacity needed to offer high-quality CHE and enhance the professional learning environment. They can offer a diagnostic basis for the development of leadership development programmes and staff induction into CHE roles. They can also be used to help ensure that arrangements for the management and governance of CHE are robust and informed, an identified need (Widdowson and King, 2018).

The findings from this study are important as they fill a gap in research that needs to be filled, given the findings (Lawrence and Hall, 2019) and recommendations (Widdowson and King, 2018) noted in Section 6.1. The approach, based on the multiple case study of five FE colleges, produced evidence that MMs contribute to the professional learning of CHE teachers. Much as Hallinger and Heck's (2011) model showed, MMs' contribution is mediated by national, college and personal factors. Some of the factors that shape the

contribution are positive, acting as catalysts; others are negative, inhibiting professional learning. The overall model produced in this study is an adaptation of Hallinger and Heck's (2011) model for CHE (Figure 5.9) to include a representation of the impact of the learning MMs carry out while enacting their roles, during which they develop skills and knowledge that in turn influence their approach to leading their teams. Not only can MMs enhance the environment and provide opportunities for their teams to develop their professional practice, but they can also improve their leadership and management through their own professional development. Additionally, the model gives an insight into how the factors act as a stained-glass lens through which MMs interpret the environment and the behaviour of others when deciding on their own behaviours. Further investigation into the types of development that cause the most positive learning experience for MMs would be useful, as would a study of the effect of each different factor on leadership approaches. The applications of the final adapted model and the models of influence of each element on learning environments are numerous. They complement existing models of educational leadership such as the UKPSF Descriptor 3 (Senior Fellow) and the Society for Education and Training Professional Standards. As the models emerge from the context of CHE they can be used to identify, evaluate, and promote effective approaches and influential factors for leadership for learning in CHE and CHE professional leadership programmes which support learning in CHE teams and in the learning of their students (Lea *et al.,* 2020). In addition, senior leaders can draw on the findings to create and implement scholarship policies and practice for CHE context and remove barriers to academic development needs.

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Appendices

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. This interview focuses on improving teaching, learning and assessment in college-based HE courses, particularly focusing on professional learning. It should take about 45 minutes to complete. The interview will be recorded; please let me know at any point if you want me to stop recording. All information you give will be anonymous.

Please could you tell me about your role as a middle manager? How does it fit in with the college structure?

What is the college's strategy for improving teaching and learning in college-based HE?

What leadership approaches do you use to influence professional learning?

Who has the greatest influence on professional learning, and why?

How do you improve teaching and learning in college-based HE at this college? How do you create an environment in which the teachers can continue their professional learning?

How are you involved in the decision-making process about who is involved in improving teaching and learning and how college-based HE teaching and learning is improved?

What expectations do you have for your teachers for professional learning?

Who else has responsibility for improving teaching and learning?

What challenges or tensions do you face with regards to improving the professional learning of the college-based HE to improve teaching and learning?

What factors facilitate the professional learning of college-based HE teachers? (Internal and external)

What has the greatest influence on the professional learning of college-based HE teachers?

What impact do you think you have, and why?

How were/are middle managers prepared to lead college-based HE teaching and learning HE? What skills and qualities do you need to have as a middle manager?

What might you do differently to have a positive impact on professional learning for improving teaching and learning?

That is the end of the interview. Before I stop the recording, is there anything else you feel would be relevant, that you have not had the chance to say?

Thank you.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project. This interview focuses on improving teaching, learning and assessment in college-based HE courses, particularly focusing on professional learning. It should take about 45 minutes to complete. The interview will be recorded; please let me know at any point if you want me to stop recording. All information you give will be anonymous.

Please could you tell me about your role as a senior manager? How does it fit in with the college structure?

What is the college's strategy for improving teaching and learning in college-based HE?

What leadership approaches do you use to influence professional learning?

How does your structure help facilitate professional learning?

Who has the greatest influence on professional learning, and why?

What expectations do you have of the middle manager for improving teaching and learning through professional learning? And the teachers…?

Who else has responsibility for improving teaching and learning?

How are the people and approaches supported for professional learning?

How do you improve teaching and learning in college-based HE at this college? How do you create an environment in which the teachers can continue their professional learning?

How are you involved in the decision-making process about who is involved in improving teaching and learning and how college-based HE teaching and learning is improved?

What challenges or tensions do you face with regards to improving the professional learning of the college-based HE teachers?

What factors facilitate the professional learning of college-based HE teachers? (Internal and external.)

What has the greatest influence on the professional learning of college-based HE teachers?

What impact do you think you have, and why?

What impact do you think the middle managers have, and why?

How are middle managers prepared to lead college-based HE? What skills and qualities do you need to have as a middle manager?

What might you do differently to have a positive impact on professional learning for improving teaching and learning?

That is the end of the interview. Before I stop the recording, is there anything else you feel would be relevant, that you have not had the chance to say?

Thank you.

Teacher questionnaire

Leadership for learning questionnaire

This research is exploring the role of middle managers, who are curriculum managers, in enhancing teaching and learning in college-based higher education.

About you

Job role	Teacher	Academic middle manager	Senior manager	Other (please specify)
How long have you taught at the college?		How long have you taught college-based higher education?		
What is your highest qualification? In what subject?		What courses do you teach on?		

About college-based higher education at your college

Who is responsible for deciding what is needed to improve teaching and learning?	
How does this happen and what are the criteria used?	

About your college

Please read the following statements and rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the statement with respect to your college and the college-based higher education.

1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = not sure; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Everyone at college is encouraged to be a professional learner.					
Members of the middle management team consider themselves learners.					
Teachers consider themselves learners.					
Classroom practice in the college reflects the recognition that learning is an emotional and social process as well as a cognitive one.					
Middle managers in college recognise that my feelings and sense of well-being affect the way I am able to carry out my professional duties.					
Middle managers ask me about the ways I prefer to learn.					
It is middle managers who provide different kinds of activities to suit the different ways I learn professionally.					

The professional learning opportunities provided help develop my capacity to improve the students' learning.					
Professional learning opportunities have a powerful effect on one's ability to lead.					
I have opportunities to express my views and influence the professional learning opportunities of the college.					
Middle managers ask me what professional learning opportunities I want.					
It is the middle managers who are responsible for my professional learning.					
Middle managers give me opportunities to influence my professional learning.					
The culture of the college nurtures the learning of everyone.					
The professional learning opportunities present the right level of challenge for the teachers.					
Everyone has the opportunity to reflect on the nature, skills and processes of learning.					
The middle managers provide feedback that helps me improve my teaching.					
The physical and social spaces at college stimulate and celebrate professional learning.					
The college is an environment in which I feel safe to take risks and innovate my practice.					
I respond positively when I am challenged by middle managers.					

1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = not sure; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
In college, I use tools and strategies that enhance thinking about professional learning.					
In college, I use tools and strategies that support professional learning.					

I discuss how I learn and how I can influence things in college.					
I am encouraged to share our professional learning with colleagues outside our immediate group.					
I am supported to investigate problems so that I improve the way I teach.					
I discuss what is important to me and how this affects our professional learning and teaching.					
I have opportunities to discuss things that help or hinder me in improving my professional learning					
I have opportunities to discuss how my college-based HE courses are run.					
I explore practice through links with researchers.					
I network with other practitioners in other colleges.					
Everyone has an opportunity to play a part in developing the college as a learning community.					
I am encouraged to express my opinion about my professional learning activities.					
I am encouraged to take responsibility for my own professional learning.					
I am encouraged to work together with other people across the college regardless of subject specialism.					
I am encouraged to take a systematic approach to self-evaluation at classroom, college and community levels.					
It is the middle managers' responsibility to carry out systematic self-evaluation at classroom, college and community levels.					
Everyone takes responsibility for self-evaluation.					
Self-evaluation is evidence-based.					
Self-evaluation reflects our shared core values.					
In our college we are firstly accountable to each other.					
I do my best to portray the college well to external stakeholders and authorities.					

I make systematic efforts to ensure that the college has the capacity to improve and be successful in the future.					

About the factors influencing your professional learning

What do you do to improve your teaching and learning?	
What factors support your own professional learning?	
What factors impede your professional learning?	

Do you have any comments about middle managers' role in professional learning that leads to enhancing teaching and learning?

If you are interested in being interviewed as part of the research, please put your email contact details here:

Name: _____

Email:_____

Thank you very much for your time and help with this research. Any information provided will be kept anonymised. If you wish to contact me please send an email to JAE229@bham.ac.uk.

Jacqui Ecoeur

Appendix four: Table of example constructs and coding

Construct	Coding	Sub role	Coding	Subdivision	Coding
Role	1	Leader	R1		
		Team leader	R2		
		Curriculum manager	R3		
		Resource manager	R4		
		Liaison	R5		
		Student manager	R6		
		Quality manager	R7		
		Learner	R8	Professional membership	8M
				Driver	8D
				Experience in industry	E8D
		Design and development	R9		
		Conditions for learning	R10		
		Opportunities for professional learning (PL)	R11		
		Systems level support	R12		
		Building a culture	R13		
		Collaboration	R14		
Position	2				
Behaviour	10 (red)	Role model	100		
		High expectations	101		
		Line management	102		
		Staff recruitment	103		

Staff induction	104		
Dealing with staff issues	105		
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Appendix five: Ethical approach

Following a presentation, the investigator will send an outline of the research (Appendix six) to the participants with information outlining the project and its aims, including the ethical considerations. Inclusion will be by informed consent. The participants will sign a consent form to confirm they agree to take part (Appendix seven). It will be up to the individual middle manager to decide whether he/she wants to be involved with the project. He/she will indicate this decision by completing the consent form, including email addresses so that the researcher can contact him/her individually to confirm that he/she wishes to continue to participate and also to arrange a time and date for interview. Data will be collected using three research tools (Appendix one, two or three).

All participants will be offered the opportunity to read through the transcript of their interview. They will also be able to read through the finished project if they wish. A seminar/workshop will be offered to the participating FE colleges on completion of the project.

The participants will have the right to withdraw up to the point of the interview. That is, they may sign the consent form but then decide not to be interviewed and so withdraw as a participant from the research. This will be explained in the consent form (Appendix seven). If they wish to withdraw they will be asked what information can be retained and used for the report. If a participant decides to withdraw the data, the data will be destroyed and not used in the findings of the project unless the participant gives permission.

Confidentiality:

- No names will be used during the write-up of the project. The transcripts of the interviews will be anonymised.
- The data will be kept in a secure filing cabinet and/or stored on a password-protected computer.
- Data will not be available to anyone except for the investigator and supervisor.
- All names and data that may enable identification of the college and participants will be removed.

Storage:

- The data will be stored in secure filing cabinets at the investigator's home. Any electronic or online copies of data will be password protected to ensure anonymity of participants. Only the investigator and supervisor will have access to the data. The data will be kept until the thesis has been passed and then will be destroyed by shredding.
- The investigator has an enhanced DBS, which is necessary for her current job role, and will adhere to the participating cases safeguarding policy.

Risks:

- There is a risk that a college management team will feel that the research may be intrusive and that specific individuals may be under scrutiny. The choice of colleges will mean that the research is into colleges that have good reputations and inspection grades, and this will lower the concern of scrutiny. The purpose of the research will be made very clear in the information sheet.
- All information will be made anonymous to avoid the risk of any incriminating data being available.

- Participants may feel under pressure to participate, as the gatekeepers are senior managers in the colleges. To resolve this, participants will be asked if they are participating of their own free will. Their participation will not be signalled to the senior managers. The anonymity of the participants will be kept at all times.
- The participants will all be adults.

Appendix six: Recruitment information – outline of the research

Requests for recruitment will be made through the college gatekeeper. The participants will be identified by their job role within the colleges. There will be no known relationship between the researcher and participants. A briefing meeting will be held to explain the nature and objective of the research so that participants can make an informed decision about their involvement.

The gatekeepers will initially be contacted and the information about the project will be communicated in an individual meeting. If they agree to allow research to take part in the organisation, they will arrange a meeting with all the middle managers involved in college-based HE and the researcher. A PowerPoint presentation will be used at this meeting to recruit potential participants for interviews. Each attendee at the presentation will be given a copy of the presentation slides, the participant information sheets and the consent forms.

During the interviews other potential sources may be revealed who could provide more insight into what middle managers do and how teaching and learning enhancement is supported. In their initial consent the gatekeepers will be asked to agree that further participants can be recruited if necessary. The gatekeepers will not be informed of who has been interviewed or who has not come forward to be involved. No participant should feel under pressure to participate.

How Can Academic Curriculum Managers Improve Professional Learning in Higher Education Courses in Further Education College?

A study of professional learning in higher education in further education

Further education colleges (FECs) have the responsibility to provide quality learning opportunities for a wide range and variety of students. One of these areas is higher education courses delivered in colleges as opposed to higher education institutions. These include HNC/Ds, foundation degrees, higher level apprenticeships, degrees and initial teacher training. The courses are often integrated within vocational departments alongside other levels of courses managed by academic middle managers. There is an expectation for all teachers to continue their professional development, improving their teaching, learning and assessment skills. The aim of this project is to find out what role the academic middle manager plays in helping his or her team to improve their teaching, learning and assessment of college-based HE courses.

What does the research involve?

Detailed studies of practice in five FE colleges will look at:

- what the academic middle managers do to help improve teaching, learning and assessment
- what types of professional learning are taking place
- what helps professional learning
- what hinders professional learning
- how the academic middle managers can support professional learning
- how middle managers can promote learning across the college for college-based HE teachers.

The research will involve: talking to senior managers in each FEC; talking to the academic middle managers who have college-based HE courses in their department; a short questionnaire to teachers; gathering information about the quality assurance and improvement policies and plans; joining some meetings for college-based HE teams; joining some staff development days; and making notes about what the staff development involves.

Although the study will aim to understand the role of the academic middle managers in each FEC, the two institutions in the study will remain anonymous in any reporting and no individuals (academic middle managers, teachers, other participants) or locations will be identified by name.

The final report will be written for practitioners and policymakers with an interest in the development of improving teaching, learning and assessment of college-based HE courses. A seminar/workshop will be offered at each participating FEC to talk about what has been learned.

For more information, contact Jacqui Ecoeur, University of Birmingham.

Email JAE229@bham.ac.uk

Supervisor: Ann-Marie Bathmaker, University of Birmingham.
Email

RESEARCH PROJECT

How Can Academic Curriculum Managers Improve Professional Learning for Higher Education Teachers in Further Education College?

A study of professional learning for higher education in further education teachers

What does the research involve?

The research will be finding out about professional learning for college-based HE teachers and how teaching, learning and assessment can be improved, focusing on the role of academic middle managers. This will include:

- a focus group with teachers discussing professional learning for college-based HE teachers; the focus group will take place in the participants' workplace and a time convenient to them and should take one hour
- asking teachers to complete a short questionnaire; the questionnaire will be provided online so that the participant can complete it at a time convenient to them, and should take 15 minutes to complete
- talking to senior and academic middle managers; the interviews will be arranged at a time and place at the participants' convenience and will take 45 minutes
- joining some staff development sessions
- looking at the documents linked to quality improvement and improving teaching, learning and assessment.

Who will know about the research?

I will be talking about the research at conferences, and it will form my final report for my professional doctorate (EdD) and articles for journals. I will also offer a seminar/workshop at your FEC to talk about what I have learned.

Your rights

- You are invited to join the research, but you are not required by anyone to participate in the project.
- No participant in the research will be identified by name, and data will be anonymised so that you cannot be identified.
- You may leave the research project at any time during the project, up until you have completed an interview or submitted your questionnaire. If you leave the project, I will ask what information (if any) about you I can include in my report. The withdrawal deadline will be the end of the interview or on submission of a questionnaire.

Your signature below confirms that you have been informed about the project, and have agreed to participate:

Signature …………………………………. Email address: ………………………………..

Date …………………………………………..

Contact: Jacqui Ecoeur, University of Birmingham. email JAE229@bham.ac.uk
Supervisor: Ann-Marie Bathmaker, University of Birmingham. Email

SM1

Department	Senior Leadership Team
Position	Director of Curriculum
Own subject background	IT/Business
Reports	All 7 heads of learning who lead 24 departments
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	3
Highest qualification	Degree / PGCE
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	15
FE courses taught	N/A
Number of years teaching CBHE	N/A
CBHE courses taught	N/A

SM9

Department	Senior Leadership team
Position	Head of College
Own subject background	Psychology
Reports	All senior leaders for two college campuses and direct reports with teacher training,

	learning and development team and lead practitioners; both HE and FE teachers
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	0.5
Highest qualification	MA in psychology
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	23
FE courses taught	GCSE, A levels, Access to HE, and Health and Social Care
Number of years teaching CBHE	N/A
CBHE courses taught	N/A

MM10

Department	Crafts
Position	Head of Learning
Own subject background	Furniture making
Reports	Departmental learning managers
Course delivery in the department	BA, HNC, HND, higher apprenticeships,
Number of years in current role	17
Highest qualification	Degree – Leadership
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	21

FE courses taught	Level 1–3 furniture and wood occupations
Number of years teaching CBHE	21
CBHE courses taught	Foundation degree

Appendix nine: Interviewed sample profile College B

SM11

Department	Senior Leadership Team
Position	Dean of HE
Own subject background	N/A
Reports	N/A
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	4
Highest qualification	Level 6
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	40
FE courses taught	N/A
Number of years teaching CBHE	40
CBHE courses taught	N/A

SM12

Department	Senior Leadership Team
Position	Assistant Principal
Own subject background	Business studies
Reports	Heads of learning

Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	1
Highest qualification	Degree
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	18
FE course taught	N/A
Number of years teaching CBHE	N/A
CBHE courses taught	N/A

MM13

Department	Health
Position	Head of Department
Own subject background	Nursing
Partner university	N/A
Proportions of students	N/A
Reports	N/A
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	2
Highest qualification	Degree

Number of years' experience teaching in FE	10
FE courses taught	Level 1–3 Health and Social Care
Number of years teaching CBHE	4
CBHE courses taught	FD Health and Social Care

MM15

Department	International Management
Position	Head of Programme
Own subject background	International management
Partner university	Open University, Coventry University, Sheffield University and Oxford Brookes University
Proportions of students	N/A
Reports	N/A
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	17
Highest qualification	MA International Management
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	17
FE courses taught	N/A

Number of years teaching CBHE	17
CBHE courses taught	Degree in International Management

MM14

Department	N/A
Position	Head of School
Own subject background	Outdoor leadership
Reports	Teachers
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	4
Highest qualification	BSc (Hons) Sports Science
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	14
FE courses taught	N/A
Number of years teaching CBHE	13
CBHE courses taught	HND Sports Science and Exercise

Appendix ten: Interviewed sample profile College C

MM24

Department	Sports, Uniformed Public Services and Travel and Tourism
Position	Head of School
Own subject background	Physical education and outdoor leadership
Reports	Course leaders and departmental teachers
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	1.5
Highest qualification	BA (Hons) Sport
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	12
FE courses taught	BTEC level 1 Sport, OCR Level 1 and 2 Sport
Number of years teaching CBHE	N/A
BHE courses taught	N/A

MM25

Department	Business and IT
Position	Head of Department
Own subject background	Business
Reports	Course leaders and departmental teachers

Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	5
Highest qualification	BA (Hons) Business
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	10
FE courses taught	A level, Level 2 and 3 BTEC Business
Number of years teaching CBHE	N/A
CBHE courses taught	N/A

MM26

Department	Science
Own subject background	Biology
Reports	Departmental teachers
Course delivery in the department	GCSE, A level, BTEC Level 2 and 3, HNC and HND Science
Number of years in current role	4
Highest qualification	Level 5 Management
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	10 years
FE courses taught	N/A
Number of years teaching CBHE	8 years

BHE courses taught	HNC Applied Science

Department	Senior Leadership Team – HE
Position	N/A
Own subject background	IT
Reports	None
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	2
Highest qualification	PG Certificate in Learning and Teaching in HE
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	13
FE courses taught	Level 2 OCR IT
Number of years teaching CBHE	12
CBHE courses taught	Certificate and Diploma in Education and Training

Department	N/A
Position	HE Manager
Own subject background	Sociology

Reports	None
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	6
Highest qualification	MA Sociology
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	11
FE courses taught	Education, Health and Social Care
Number of years teaching CBHE	9
CBHE courses taught	Teacher Training, Health and Social Care

Appendix eleven: Interviewed sample profile College D

MMD19

Department	Teacher Training and Professional Studies
Position	Team Leader and Lead College Mentor
Own subject background	Business administration
Reports	Departmental teachers, college mentors
Course delivery in the department	Teacher training, access to HE, teaching assistant courses
Number of years in current role	15
Highest qualification	Degree
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	30
FE courses taught	Business Administration and Management
Number of years teaching CBHE	8
CBHE courses taught	Teacher Education and Management

MM20

Department	Engineering and Technology
Position	Team Leader
Own subject background	Engineering
Reports	Departmental teachers

Course delivery in the department	Engineering, IT, music technology
Number of years in current role	3
Highest qualification	HND
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	25
FE courses taught	Level 1–3 Engineering
Number of years teaching CBHE	15
CBHE courses taught	Level 4 Engineering

SM21

Department	Senior Leadership Team
Position	Deputy Principal
Own subject background	Sports science and business
Reports	Team leaders
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	0.25
Highest qualification	MSc
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	18
FE courses taught	Levels 1–3 Sports Science and Business
Number of years teaching CBHE	8

CBHE courses taught	FD Sports Performance, BA (Hons) Business Management and IT

MM22

Department	Health and Social Care, Early Years, Public Services, Sports
Position	Team Leader and HE Manager
Own subject background	Health
Partner university	University of Worcester
Course delivery in the department	Health and Social Care, Early Years, Outdoor Leadership, Public Services
Number of years in current role	8
Highest qualification	Degree
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	13
Number of years teaching CBHE	N/A
CBHE courses taught	N/A

SM23

Department	Senior Leadership Team
Position	Assistant Principal
Own subject background	Maths and ICT

Reports	7 team leaders
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	4
Highest qualification	MA Leadership and Management (FE)
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	22
FE courses taught	GCSE maths, key skills maths and ICT
Number of years teaching CBHE	6
CBHE courses taught	HNC/D Business and HNC/D Exercise Science and Business

Appendix twelve: Interviewed sample profile College E

MM1

Department	Health and Social Care, Early Years
Position	Head of Department
Own subject background	Early years
Reports	Course leaders and departmental teachers
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	3
Highest qualification	Level 3
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	19
FE courses taught	N/A
Number of years teaching CBHE	N/A
CBHE courses taught	N/A

MM2

Department	N/A
Position	HE Manager (part-time 0.5 fractional role put into place at management level focusing on quality – processes and procedures)
Own subject background	Beauty therapy

Reports	N/A
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	1
Highest qualification	Level 3
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	20
FE courses taught	N/A
Number of years teaching CBHE	None
CBHE courses taught	None

MM3

Department	Construction
Position	Head of Department
Own subject background	Heating
Reports	Teachers
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	0.5
Highest qualification	Level 3
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	8
FE courses taught	N/A

Number of years teaching CBHE	N/A
CBHE courses taught	N/A

Department	Commercial and Retail
Position	Head of Department
Own subject background	Physical education
Reports	Course leaders and departmental teachers
Course delivery in the department	Public Services, Sports, Travel and Tourism, Business
Number of years in current role	8
Highest qualification	Level 3
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	16
FE courses taught	Level 1–3 Sports, Level 1–3 Uniformed Public Services and Level 3 Travel and Tourism
Number of years teaching CBHE	4
CBHE courses taught	Travel and Tourism HND, Uniformed Public Services HND

SM5

Department	Senior Leadership Team

Position	Director of Quality and Performance
Own subject background	Unknown
Reports	HE Manager
Course delivery in the department	N/A
Number of years in current role	15
Highest qualification	MA Education
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	N/A
FE courses taught	N/A
Number of years teaching CBHE	N/A
CBHE courses taught	N/A

MM6

Department	Teacher Education and Professional Studies
Position	Head of Department
Own Subject background	Initial teacher training
Reports	Course leaders and departmental teachers
Course delivery in the department	Initial Teacher Training, Access to Higher Education, Accountancy, Leadership and Management, CIPD

Number of years in current role	4
Highest qualification	MA Education
Number of years' experience teaching in FE	13
FE course taught	N/A
Number of years teaching CBHE	8
CBHE courses taught	Initial Teacher Training

Appendix thirteen: College A profile

When founded, this general FE college had two inner city campuses. Subsequently, a third college merged resulting in a third campus located 30 miles from the initial campuses. Later, a fourth campus was created, and a second merger followed resulting in the group having five geographically dispersed college sites. Each college in the group provides a variety of educational and vocational training courses, primarily for the post-16 sector, for both school leavers and adults. A summary of subjects and HE programmes in shown in Table A13.1.

| College-based HE	Examples
Subjects	Art and design, business, care, computing, engineering, furniture, motorsports, policing and sports coaching, teaching and training qualifications
Programmes	HNDs, foundation degrees and honours degrees. PGCE

Table A13.1 Summary of HE subjects and programme types for College A

The college is partnered with two universities in the South East of England. The group has an enterprise-focused, employer-oriented approach to its teaching and learning at all levels, with a very clear vision and approach to learning based on academic research and consultation with

students, staff, employers and wider communities. The college that participated in the study has two campuses, both located within a city in which 25% of children live in households with incomes below the poverty line; in the most deprived areas approximately 50% of children live in poverty.

At the time of my visits, this college did not have any TEF grading but it subsequently received a silver award. Its QAA review judged it as meeting UK expectations with good practice in its strategic commitment to develop and enhance student employability. Recommendations included a focus on strengthening contextualisation in learning outcomes, developing stronger systems and processes, for example course approval and student representation in the quality cycle.

A13.1 Management structure: College A
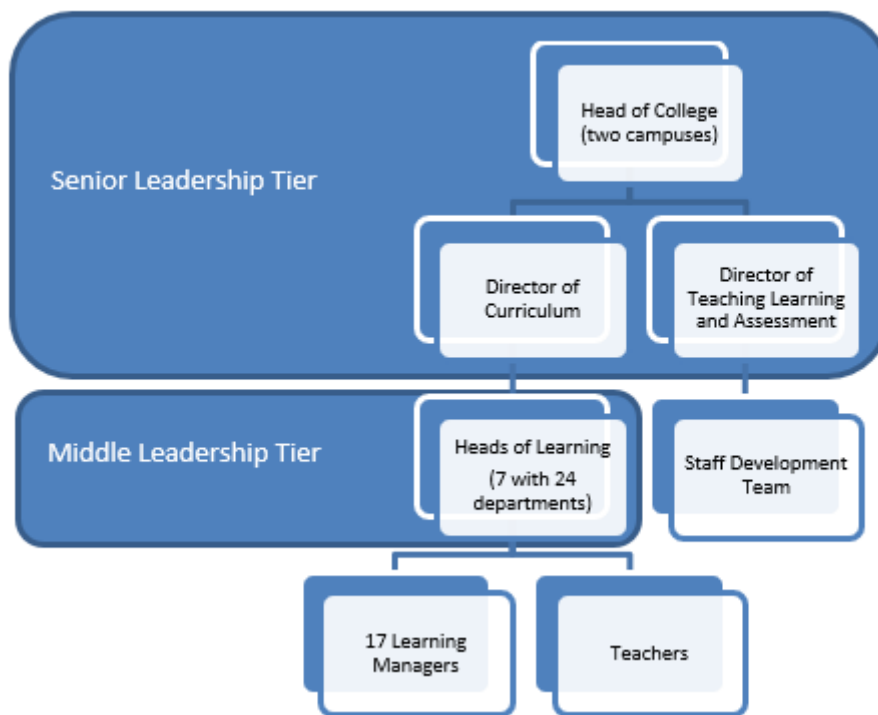
Figure A13.1 Management structure for College A

The management structure is shown in Figure A13.1. Both tiers were described by SMs as leadership tiers this indicates that MMs were expected to act as leaders. In the study, senior leadership was represented by the Head of College and the Director of Teaching, Learning and Assessment. Middle leadership was represented by a newly created Head of Learning. Pen

portraits of interviewed individuals can be found in Appendix eight. The college did not have a MM dedicated to college-based HE.

Appendix fourteen: College B profile

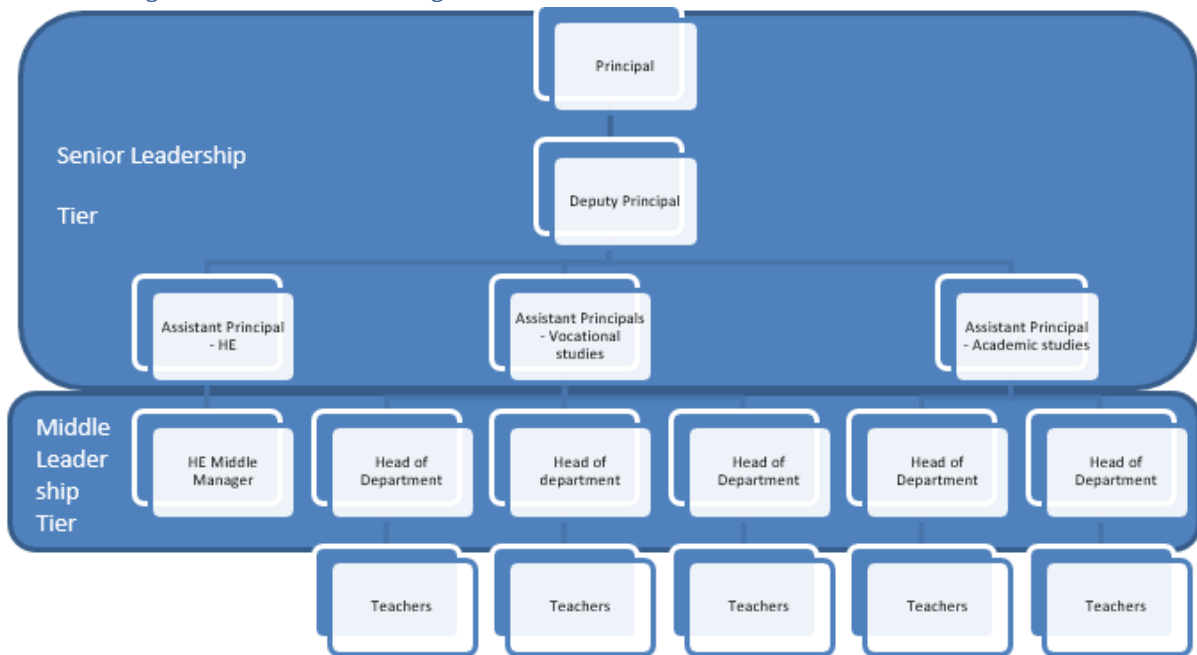College B is a large, general FE college in the West Midlands of England with two campuses. The college offers full-time and part-time higher education courses, apprenticeships and bespoke employment training. Facilities distributed over the two campuses include an animal care centre, virtual reality lab, an aircraft hangar, flight simulators, and motor vehicle and construction workshops. The course offer is varied and includes vocational courses ranging from foundation-level programmes to apprenticeships. The college also offers a variety of college-based HE qualifications and is partnered with two universities in the West Midlands. The subjects and college-based HE programmes are summarised in Table A14.1.

College-based HE	Examples
Subjects	Health and social care, engineering, animal care, business and accountancy
Programmes	HNCs and HNDs, foundation degrees, top-up degrees, master's degrees and full bachelor's degrees

Table A14.1 Summary of HE subjects and programme types for College B

At a local authority level, the area surrounding the college is ranked among the least deprived 35% local authorities in the country as measured with the range of indicators in the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).

At the time of the study, the college had been awarded a silver TEF grading. Its QAA indicated confidence that academic standards were reliable and met UK requirements. Two areas of good practice were identified. The first was the internal course design, development and approval processes that demonstrated rigour of college oversight and responsiveness to local and regional need. The second praised the HE peer observation system that enhanced approaches to teaching and learning and built staff confidence. This was positive in terms of an expansive learning environment. Two recommendations focused on consideration of accreditation for prior learning and consistency of information on the college website.

Figure A14.1 Management structure for College B

The management structure for College B is presented in Figure A14.1. SMs described the top tier as the Senior Leadership Team and the second tier as middle management. In the study, senior management was represented by the Dean of HE and a Vice Principal. Middle management was represented by three heads of department. Pen portraits of the individuals interviewed can be found in Appendix nine. The college did not have a middle manager dedicated to college-based HE.

Appendix fifteen: College C profile

College C is a medium-sized general FE college in the West Midlands with three campuses. Facilities include a refectory, maths and science hub, computer suite, hair and beauty salon and an animal care centre. The courses offered include vocational courses from level 1 up to college-based HE. A summary of subjects and programmes is shown in Table A15.1

College-based HE	Examples
Subjects	Animal management, applied biology and chemistry, business and creative media, accounting and teaching
Programmes	HNCs and HNDs and professional qualifications

Table A15.1 Summary of college-based HE subjects and programmes

At the time of the case study visit, the college had not been involved with the TEF but was subsequently awarded silver status. The QAA reported courses in scope met UK expectations with two areas of good practice: their strategic approach to implementation of HE staff development; and investment in technology and facilities to contribute to the quality of students' learning opportunities. Continued monitoring of the use of and access to HE resources was recommended.

Figure A15.1 Management structure for College C
The management structure for College C is represented in Figure A15.1. Both the middle and senior tiers were named leadership teams. In the study, senior leadership was represented by the Assistant Principal HE. Middle leadership was represented by three heads of department and one HE manager. Pen portraits of the individuals can be found in Appendix ten. The college had a MM dedicated to college-based HE (HEMM).
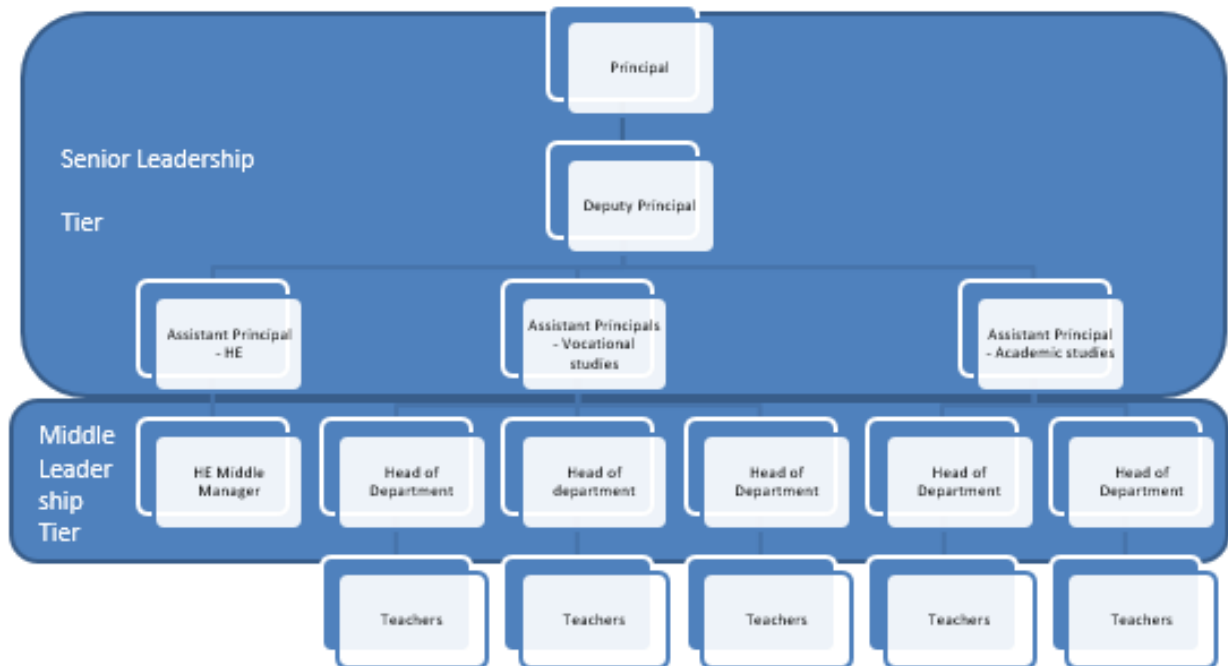
College D is a medium sized general FE college situated over three campuses in the West Midlands resulting from two mergers. The distance between campuses is approximately 30 miles. The facilities include a land-based campus with a working commercial farm, and a technical site with specialist workshops and an IT suite. A summary of college-based HE subjects and courses are presented in Table A16.1.

College-based HE	Examples
Subjects	Health, public services and care, preparation for life and work, and business administration
Programmes	HNCs, HNDs, foundation degrees, bachelor's degrees and higher apprenticeships

Table A16.1 Summary of college-based HE subjects and programmes for college D

At the time of the case study, the college had not made a submission for the TEF process, but it was awarded a silver grading in 2018 following the appointment of a new Deputy Principal in 2017 whose experience included college-based HE. The QAA report indicated that the courses in scope met UK expectations, with four areas of good practice: the design of programmes, which enabled students to acquire additional vocationally relevant accreditations; the effective preparation of students for higher level study; the utilisation of a dynamic register, which enabled the monitoring and support of students at risk; and finally, the effectiveness of the extensive embedded academic and pastoral support systems. Recommendations included: increasing the appropriate use of external expertise to design and deliver its higher national programmes; and further developing and implementing its quality assurance procedures and reviews.

Figure A16.1 Management structure for College D

The management structure is presented in Figure A16.1. Both senior and middle tiers were described as leadership. In the study, senior management was represented by the Vice Principal and an Assistant Principal. Middle management was represented by two team leaders and the HE Manager. Pen portraits of the individuals can be found in Appendix eleven.

**Appendix seventeen:** College E profile

College E is a large general FE college in the South West of England, dispersed over three campuses; two are inner city and one rural, with 25 miles between campuses. It was founded in 1980 from the merger of four county colleges. The college has a wide range of part and full-time professional courses. Facilities include: a business hub; a theatre; a commercial salon and spa; a coffee shop; a nursery; dance, TV, photography and recording studios; an enterprise lab; a purpose-built flight room; a sports hall; a library; and workshops for engineering, construction and motor vehicles. A summary of college-based HE subjects, and programmes is presented in Table A17.1.

College-based HE	Examples
Subjects	Accounting, creative art production and early years, to construction and fashion.
Programmes	HNCs, HNDs, foundation degrees, degrees, higher apprenticeships and post-graduate qualifications

Table A17.1 Summary of college-based HE subjects and programmes for College E

At the time of the study, the college catered mainly for students in the 16–18 age bracket. The college had just completed a restructure with several changes in staffing, with several key players in college-based HE leaving. The college did not have a TEF status but its QAA report indicated that it met UK expectations for threshold standards with features of good practice: its systematic use of the HE Peer Observation Scheme for the improvement of student learning opportunities; and the support offered to staff to undertake higher-level qualifications and staff development opportunities, resulting in a consequent input of research into the student learning experience. The recommendations focused on the consistency of management of HE programmes and provision, and the use of external expertise to develop new programmes.

A17.1 Management structure: College E
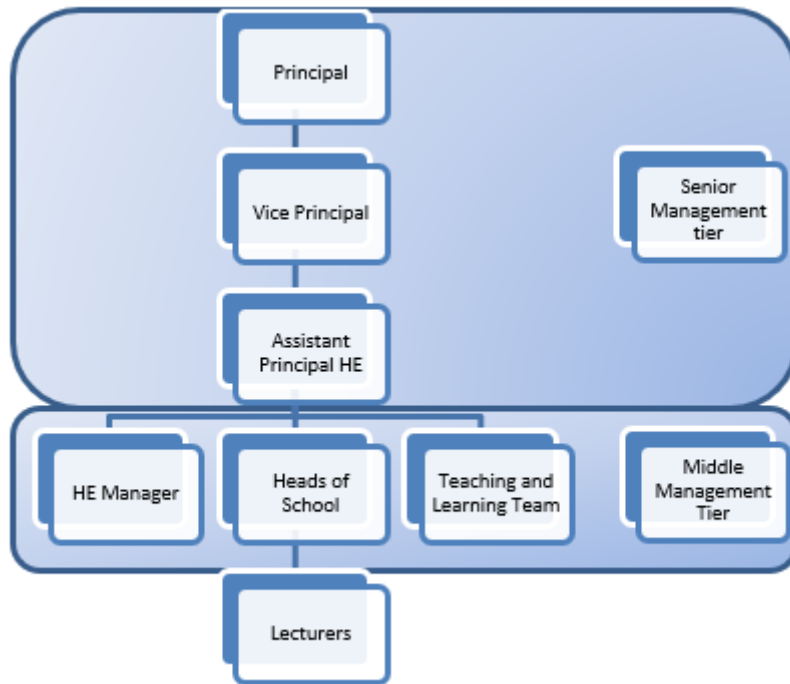
Figure A17.1 Management structure for College E

The management structure for College E is presented in Figure A17.1. Both Tiers were described as management teams. In the study, senior management was represented by the Assistant Principal HE. Middle management was represented by three heads of school and the HE Manager. Pen portraits of the individuals can be found in Appendix twelve.

Appendix eighteen: Overview model of expansive and restrictive factors in academic structures and processes from case studies
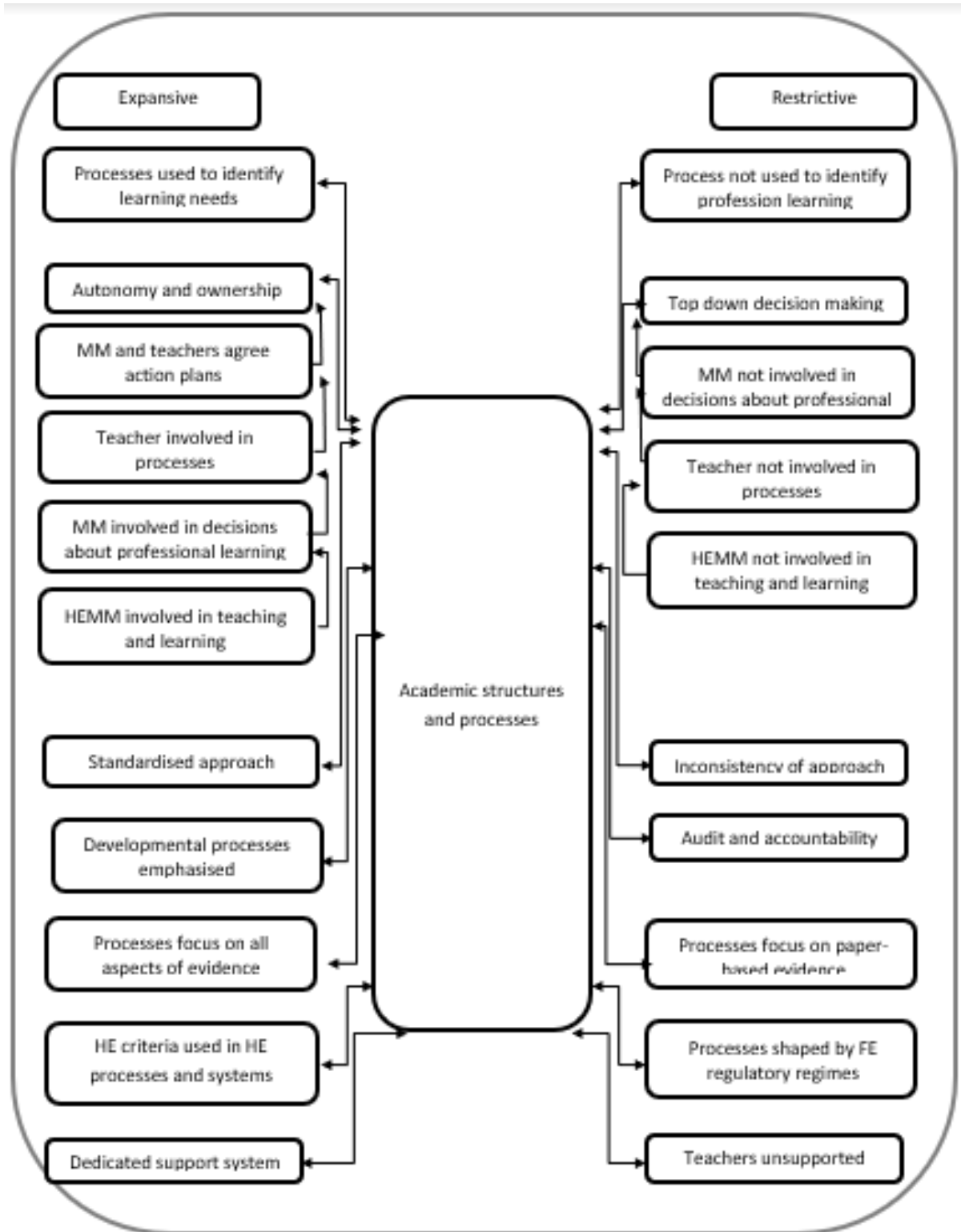
Appendix nineteen: Overview model summarising expansive and restrictive contextual and environmental factors found in the case studies
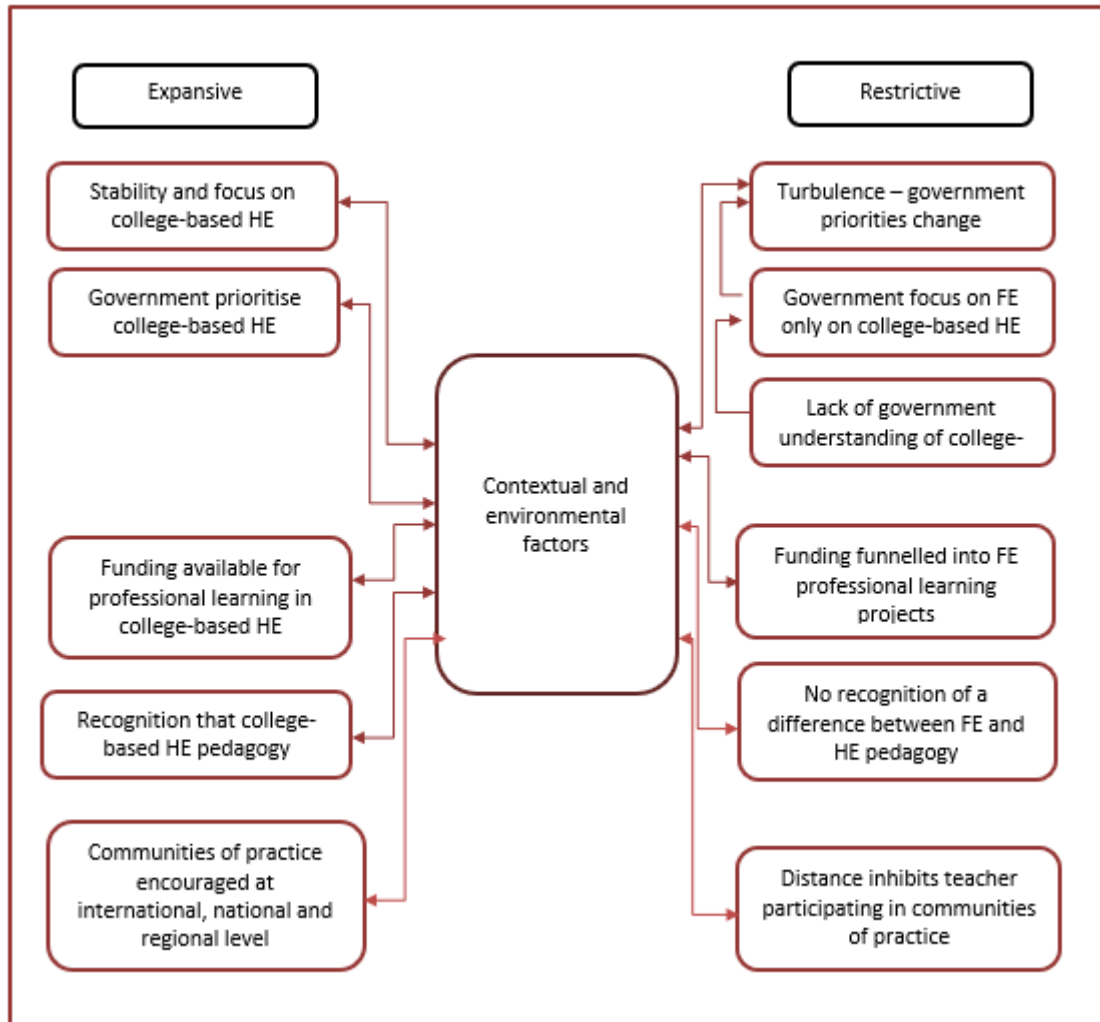
Appendix twenty: Overview model summarising expansive and restrictive factors of people's influence found in case studies.