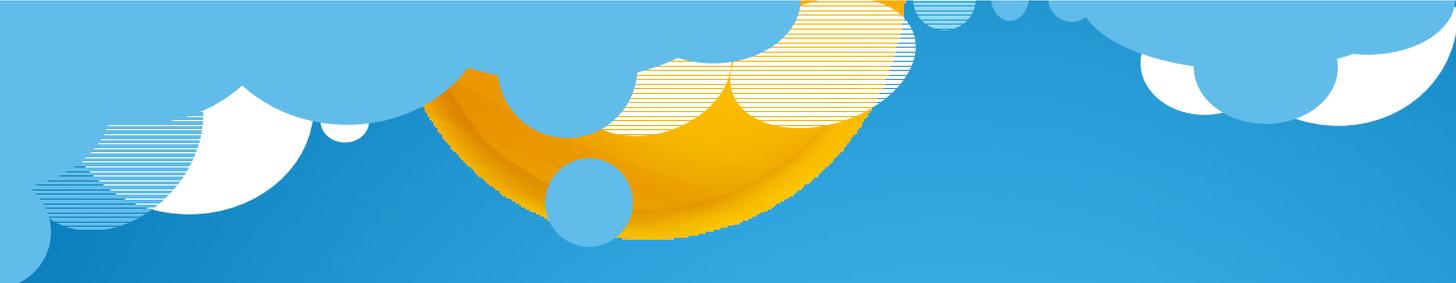




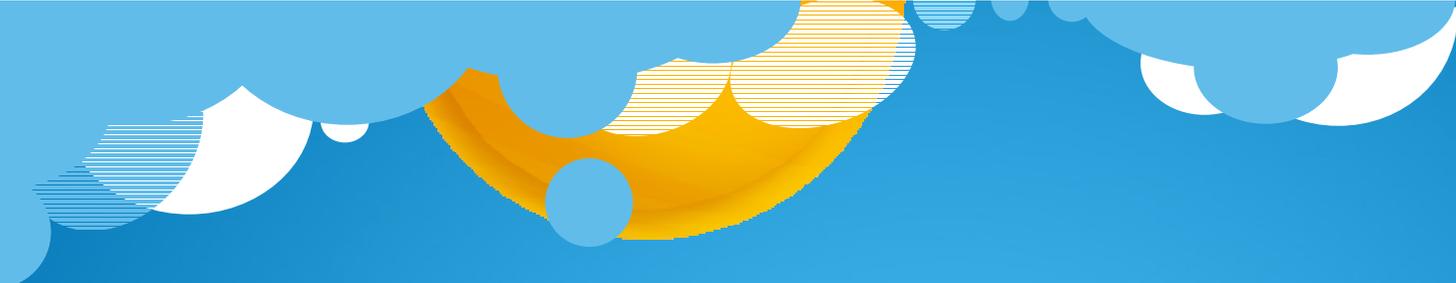
**Leadership and
leadership development
in UK publicly-funded
higher education
organisations: local,
national or global?**

Rosemary Deem, Royal Holloway, University
of London



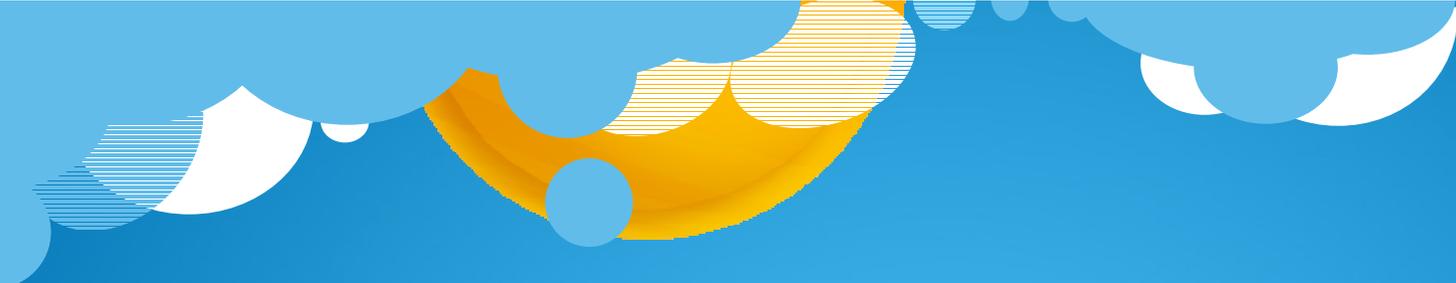
Introduction

- The paper explores the biographies & careers of a small group of UK-based academic leaders
- A major focus is whether the major influences on these university leaders are local or global ?
- Compared with other public service organisations such as schools or hospitals, universities have a more global perspective (international students, research)
- Is this reflected in how leaders learn to lead?



What might constitute a global outlook on HE leadership?

- Awareness of how other HE systems are organised and run
- Biographical experience of working abroad (Kim 2007, 2010)
- A role focused on internationalisation of HE (Scott 1998; Al-Youssef 2009)
- Having undertaken leadership development in an international setting
- Knowledge of international literature on leadership
- Thinking and acting globally (Kenway & Fahey 2008)



Theoretical framing

- Bourdieu (1988) emphasises the extent to which academics operate in contested fields using symbolic, cultural and economic capital
- Academics may pursue a scientific career or one more focused upon administration & professional gatekeeping (editing journals, sitting on research selectivity or funding panels, assessing or interviewing job candidates)
- Neo- institutionalism asserts that there is a trend towards organisations facing similar environmental pressures becoming the same (isomorphism)



Data sources & methodology

- Draws on 30 interviews in 2007 with senior teams in 6 UK universities (50% teaching intensive & 50% research intensive) & some 2nd interviews in 2008
- Focus of ESRC funded Change Agent project (2006-9 with Cardiff Business School) was on New Labour's public service modernisation project (especially emphasis on leadership), views of leaders in education & health on autonomy & change & impact on leaders of national leadership development bodies



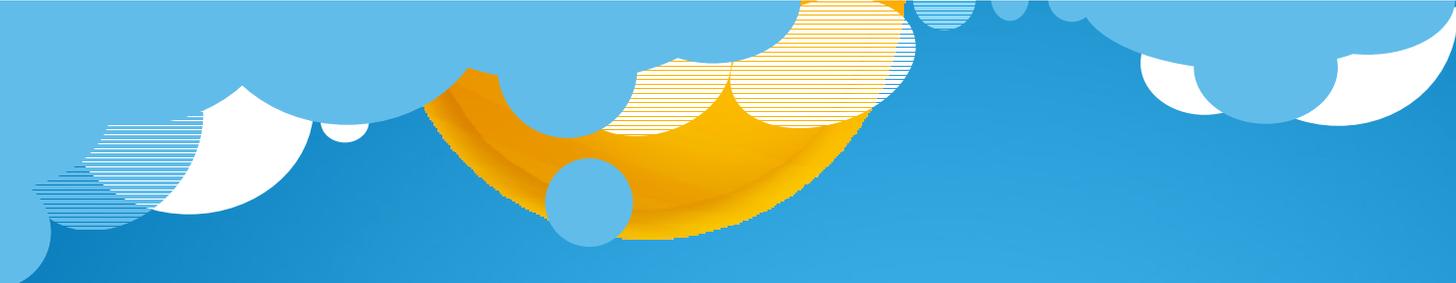
A serendipitous leadership career?

- o I've got a PhD in Political Philosophy, and then I trained to be a children's nurse ... I then decided to do an MA at the [university], and while I was this is in [English city], to help them in terms of curriculum development, so I did that ... and then I went to [Scottish city], and I was a senior lecturer at [Scottish city] ... I felt that was a lovely university, quite traditional in lots of ways... so I went into being a principal lecturer at [area of English city], and then to the Acting Head of School, the Head of School went on secondment ... and from there I went to be Dean at [another Scottish city] for four or five years, and then I ... went to be Dean of Health at [university], which I did for nearly six years, and then I've come here as PVC Academic (PVC Academic Affairs, LittleOaks)

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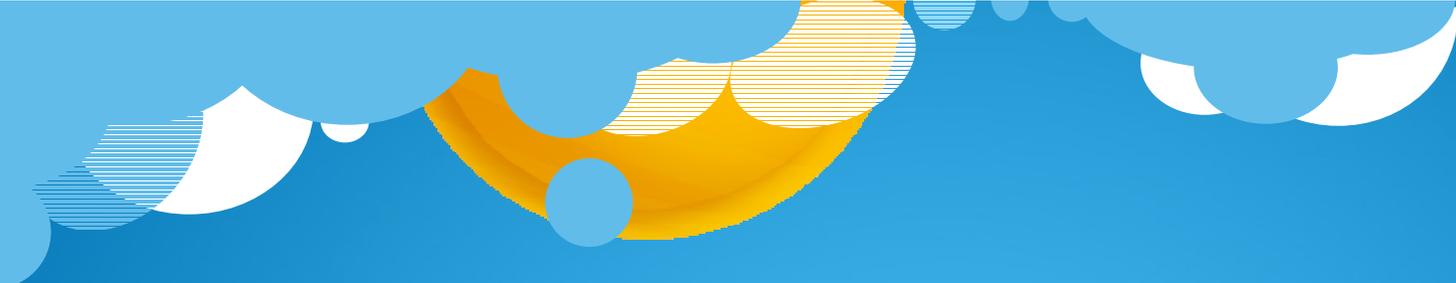
Ambition or chance?

- o I began life in America as a post-doc, for a couple of years, and then went back to [English HEI], as a lecturer ... was trained as a physicist, and stayed there for thirty years, working my way up through to professor, and then I became Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering, and then I became Pro-Rector for Research ... and then after a year or so of that I became Pro-Rector of resources as well, not instead, and then finally Deputy Rector as well When [a new rector] came and then I started thinking ... why should I be second string to somebody when I could be first string, and for the first time I looked at maybe moving Now, the point I want to make about all that, in every step of thatb ... I was not deliberately seeking career advancement, just I was right place, right time, possibly competent enough (VC, Furzedown)



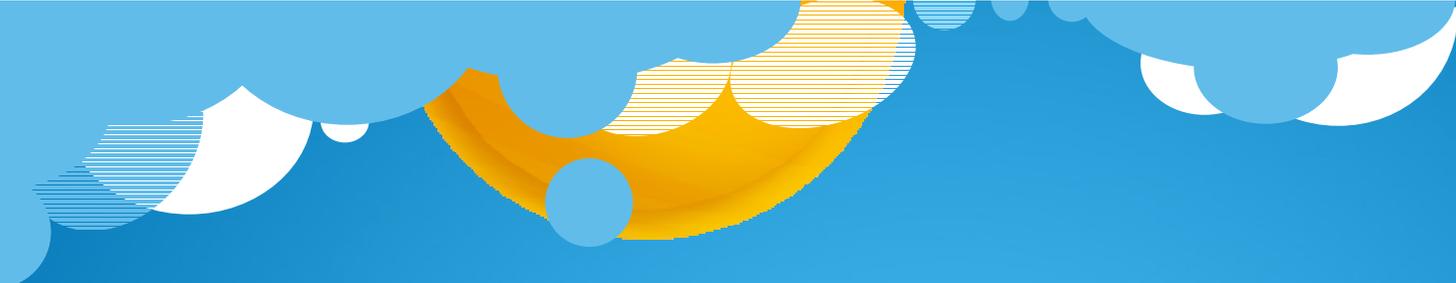
Getting to enjoy leadership?

- o I had trained as a teacher before I took a degree ... then I got an opportunity after a year to go back to take a PhD ... I got a lectureship at the University of [English city], and I always remember thinking this was a probably a three or four year affair ... twenty-five years later I came here ... [English city] gave me the opportunity to do a whole range of jobs, I {was} Head of Department ... from 1985 to 1988, in 1988 I became a Professor ... I was director of a research centre ... 1991 I got offered the opportunity to set up the ... Graduate School... did that through to '95, when I became Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor .. I didn't sit down ... in 1984 thinking, right, now, once I become head {of department}, this is my royal road to becoming a Vice Chancellor ... I found I enjoyed it ... it was something that I could still combine with doing research and teaching ... (VC Hopton)



Features of these leadership careers

- Unplanned
- Ambition devalued; preference for tap on shoulder
- Often UK focused
- Some move a lot to gain experience, others get a lot of experience in the same organisation (local/national influences)
- Little evidence of training or only UK focused training



Becoming an HE leader in the UK

- Though some VCs, DVCs, PVCs are appointed from abroad, most are from the UK and few have even worked outside HE (Breakwell 2008)
- UKBA restrictions on non EU appointments can be overcome for top posts but means fewer international academics will come to UK in future, so reducing pool of potential VCs
- Headhunters not as good at enticing international candidates as they claim
- Increasing rate of change to the UK system means those from outside are not familiar with REF, NSS etc



Philosophy of LFHE

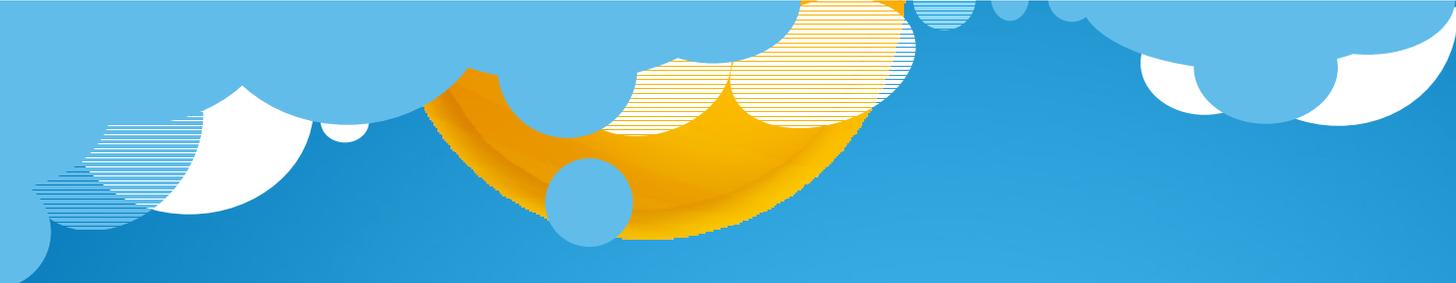
- we have made a major difference already, we know, in the use of things like 360 degree feedback, which was hardly used at all when we came on the scene, it's now very substantially used. It's not the only tool {self awareness} ... , a quite different one ... is putting in front of them evidence from research and other processes which enable their, the choices they make as leaders to be more balanced or at least more thought through, and then I mean there's lots of other things. One of the bits of more modern thinking about leaders is that leadership is less about competencies, come back to competencies, as opposed to confidence, and a confident leader is one who has that self-assurance from just knowing they have a better grasp of options of understanding of the impact of their actions, all those things.
(LFHE officer)



LFHE – looking inwards?

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- o one of the issues that the Leadership Foundation had which was about how you open the sector up, so all of the programmes are just for people from higher education, which is fine, whereas a lot of the LF's competitors run programmes across sectors so you get a broader perspective, and I don't think the LF has really got its head around, well, should we partner, you know, should we have an alliance with, you know, Ashridge, or Cranfield or someone. So, it's got, you know, again it's that double-edged sword ... They've got this kind of brilliant knowledge of the sector, but it kind of brings its own weaknesses in that they've just got that brilliant knowledge of the sector (LFHE trainer 2)



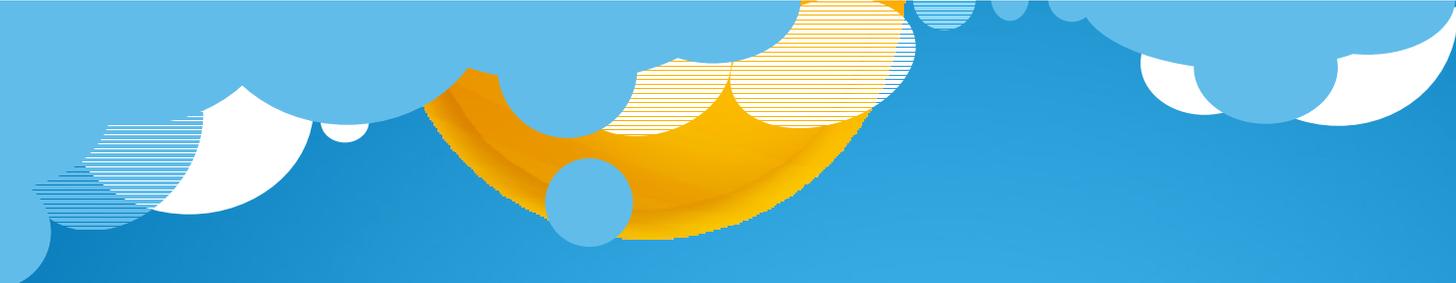
LFHE development courses

- Only concerned with HE
- Participants drawn from UK only
- Minimal preparation needed, though some practical projects
- Those taking TMP, SSLs, PSL do no assessed work
- Little time or attention paid to reading literature
- Valued most as 'rite of passage' & networking
- Contributor to normative isomorphism?



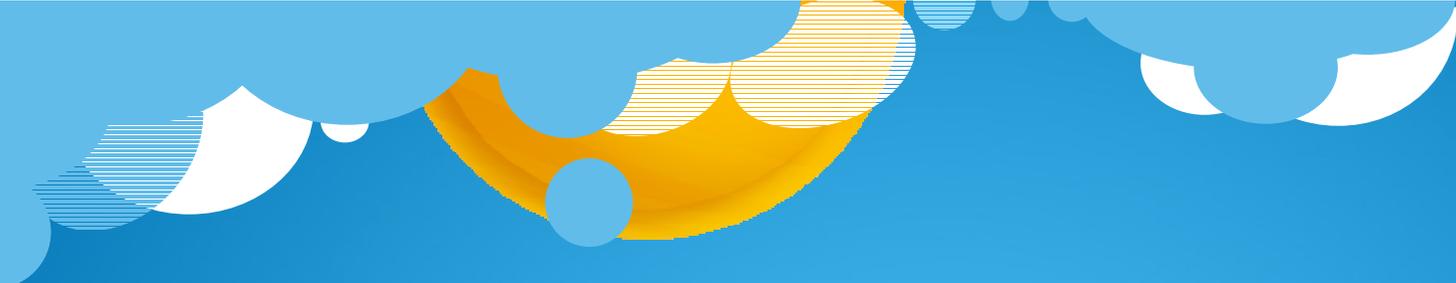
A global or local outlook?

- Awareness of other HE systems (most)
- Substantial experience of working abroad (a few)
- A role focused on internationalisation (a few)
- leadership development in international setting (most had done UK based programmes)
- Knowledge of international literature on leadership (if had done TMP or similar)
- Thinking/acting globally (most claimed this; league tables close to their hearts but conversations dominated by UK referents)



Conclusion

- UK HE leaders may operate in a global context but their outlook is not always globally influenced
- As the most reformed HE system in the western world, the UK system is also one of the most inward looking: its leaders' symbolic & cultural capital is internally-focused
- Yet the organisations in the system do not always demonstrate isomorphism



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