PROGRAMME DESIGN PRACTICE IN A POLYTECHNIC IN AOTEAROA/NEW ZEALAND: A CASE FOR COMPLEXITY

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ABSTRACT

A programme is an instrument for education. Through educational programmes we help shape our society. Programme design includes decisions on what society finds valuable for people to learn, and how this should be structured and organised. In this way it influences teaching and learning. Therefore understanding how and on what basis programme design decisions are made is vital for the improvement of teaching and learning. Yet, there is a dearth of research that provides this understanding in the context of tertiary education. This thesis alleviates this scarcity by describing the theorising of design practice of certificate and diploma programmes in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The research presented in this thesis consists of an interpretive case study of a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The study included embedded case studies of programme design practice at institutional level and of design practice of five certificate and diploma programmes across the polytechnic. Data were analysed from 32 interviews with representatives of the six embedded cases, from documents including the institution's Academic Statute, its Quality Management system and approved programme documents, and from observation of one meeting.

The findings show that programme design practice can be observed through various lenses. For this case study the following seven lenses were identified:

1) The teaching and learning lens shows how language shapes the conceptualisations of a programme and how these conceptualisations relate to views on teaching and learning;

2) The rational lens shows how models and frameworks influence programmes, how these models and frameworks become rationalisations that are often used unconsciously, and what the implications of this are;

3) The cultural lens allows exploring what is considered normal within programme design practice and indicates how differences from the norm are being approached;

4) The personal experience lens highlights how the personal experiences of people involved contribute to programme design considerations and decision-making;

5) The ethical lens investigates how people's moral and professional responsibilities influence their programme design practice;

6) The business lens illustrates the contribution of business considerations to programme design; and,

7) The social-political lens highlights how people's formally and informally assigned roles and responsibilities, their political responsibilities, and their negotiations between multiple responsibilities impact on programme design practice.

The images of these lenses are interrelated. To create a comprehensive understanding of the images and their interrelationship, a programme has been theorised as a complex system. The constituents of this system are people's considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships. These constituents only concern those aspects of education that are assigned to the concept of 'programme'. For the current case study these aspects were found to consist of six components: consultation for and development of a programme; intentions; structure and instruction; administration and management; assessment; and evaluation of a programme, including elements within these components. The people who create the considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships were found in this case study to be people within the polytechnic.

The complex programme system interacts with the outside world. Programme design practice then is the programme system's adaptation to influences from outside. Ideological discourses are shown to form the power structures that shape the direction of adaptation of the programme system. For this case study the analysis of the images of the seven lenses and their interconnections shows neo-liberalist discourses as the prevailing ideological discourses determining the direction of adaptation of the complex programme system.

The findings of this study have three major implications for practice. Firstly, the effects of a programme on the world around it cannot be predicted or controlled but emerge from the programme system. Secondly, the findings imply that if a programme is to survive or continue to develop, it needs diversification. Further strengthening of the already dominant ideological discourses directing programme systems in the context of this case study risks the death of these systems. And thirdly, acknowledging ideological discourses as the power structures that shape the direction of the adaptation of complex programme systems requires practitioners to be responsible in deciding which discourses to follow and to be mindful of the possible implications of their decisions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEO	Chief Executive Officer of the institution
EFTS	Equivalent Full-Time Student
ITO	Industry Training Organisation
ITPQ	Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality
Moodle	Learning management system used at the institution
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
QMS	The institution's quality management system
Register	New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications
SAC	Student Achievement Component of government funding
Statute	The institution's Academic Statute
TEC	Tertiary Education Commission
TES-I	Tertiary Education Strategy 2002-2007
TES-II	Tertiary Education Strategy 2007-2012
TES-III	Tertiary Education Strategy 2010-2015

CHAPTER 1:   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Aim of this Study

This study aims to develop an understanding of the design practice of educational programmes leading to provider certificate or diploma qualifications in the context of an institute of technology/polytechnic (referred to in this thesis as 'polytechnic') in Aotearoa/New Zealand, expressed in the form of a comprehensive theory. This theory is intended to stimulate further debate on programme design so as to improve tertiary education.

The aim needs various clarifications. Firstly, *programme design* in this context refers to the consideration and decision-making process around intentions, instructional planning, assessment, evaluation, resourcing, administration, consultation and development of an educational programme, which usually leads to a qualification, and normally consists of a number of distinctive units, which will be referred to as "courses". The details of each programme design component are explored further in Chapter 2.

Secondly, this study is about *understanding.* It seeks to attain what Weber (1968) called *verstehen*, an "empathic understanding of what people's subjective meanings are" (Collins & Makowsky, 2010, p. 112). This implies that it acknowledges the people involved in programme design and the many perspectives they have on this practice. It also acknowledges the construction of people's perspectives through their interaction with the world, highlighting programme design as a social practice. Thirdly, *theorising* is the search for this understanding (Cherryholmes, 1985). The resulting *theory* takes the form of a "coherent structure of interrelated concepts" (Anyon, 2009, p. 3) that portrays the social practice of programme design and provides a model that describes how this practice works. The programme design theory that is developed will not be value-neutral, because it describes and explains social practice, which is underpinned by ideology, power and interests (Cherryholmes, 1982). The model provided by the theory is also

intended to inform practice, by offering opportunities for developing awareness of what is and what could be, for reflection on practice, and for taking action (McCutcheon, 1982). Therefore it is hoped it will help improve programme design practice. Fourthly, I refer to the development of a *comprehensive theory* to indicate that this study searches for an understanding that encompasses and integrates the multiple facets that make up programme design practice.

Finally, *polytechnics* are a particular type of post-compulsory or tertiary education institution. Tertiary education in Aotearoa/New Zealand consists of different types of institutions, including, but not limited to, universities, polytechnics, wānanga (institutions educating in a Māori context), and private training establishments. Polytechnics typically teach a wide range of vocationally oriented study programmes to people aged 16 and over, most of which lead to a formal qualification. The length of most programmes varies from twelve weeks to three years. Programmes tend to be named after the qualifications they lead to. Most programmes in polytechnics lead to sub-degree *certificate* or *diploma* qualifications. There is a distinction between *provider* and national certificate and diploma qualifications. The former are governed by tertiary institutions themselves, while the latter are governed nationally. Polytechnics also offer undergraduate and in some cases postgraduate degree programmes. The requirements for each type of programme are grounded in national government policies.

To support the reader in her/his understanding of the national context in which polytechnics operate and this study was conducted, the next section outlines tertiary education and curriculum policy development in Aotearoa/New Zealand since 1989, in so far as it impacts on programme design practice in polytechnics. It shows how tertiary education and curriculum policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand set boundaries around what polytechnics can or are expected to do, and what they cannot do, with respect to programme design. It also explains how these policies are strongly grounded in the neo-liberalist ideology that has influenced education (Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004) and public management in general (Boston, Martin,

Pallot, & P.Walsh, 1996) in Aotearoa/New Zealand since 1989. This highlights the importance of ideology in studying programme design practice.

It should be noted that the national context is dynamic. The context described in the following section relates to government policies as they were in place when the data for this study were generated, which was in 2007 and 2008. These policies were also the context in which the data were analysed. The discussion chapter of this thesis will reflect on policy developments since 2009 and how they relate to the findings from this study.

1.2 Programme Design and Polytechnics in the Aotearoa/New Zealand Government Policy Context

1.2.1. The Tertiary Education Policy Context for Programme Design in Polytechnics

As in many other countries, Aotearoa/New Zealand's tertiary education has undergone major reforms since the late 1980s. To increase economic productivity and improve social equity, a new tertiary education system was introduced in 1989 (New Zealand Government, 1989). This system was based on: decentralised decision-making; the role of the government as policy maker; a bulk funding system based on student numbers; accountability and effectiveness of research and scholarship; the establishment of a national qualifications authority; increased participation; and encouragement of excellence. The 1989 reforms had drastic consequences for polytechnics. Previously these had been highly government-controlled institutions, focused on vocational and community courses and programmes within their own region (Dougherty, 1999). The reforms made them into autonomous institutions governed by their own councils, and funded on the basis of student enrolments (Abbott & Doucouliagos, 2004; McNae, 2002). The purpose of the changes was to make polytechnics "more market orientated and more responsive to the needs of industry" (Abbott & Doucouliagos, 2004, n.p.). This was expected to have a

positive impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of education (McNae, 2002; Winder, 1996).

The market approach promoted in the neo-liberalist ideology that underpinned the 1989 reforms (Olssen, et al., 2004) allowed polytechnics to extend their programme and qualification portfolios, including development of degree programmes, of programmes outside the traditional trades, as well as full-time, part-time and distance learning programmes across the country and abroad. At the same time polytechnics were forced to compete for students with private training establishments, with universities and with each other, on the basis of student fees (Winder, 1996). This idea of students paying fees is based on human capital theory, a view within the neo-liberalist ideology that investment in education and training can raise the productivity of the workforce and thus support the economy, but that the person who benefits from the education should pay for it (Abbott & Doucouliagos, 2004). As both the individual student and society are perceived to benefit from the student's education, the tertiary funding system in Aotearoa/New Zealand is based on partial funding from the students themselves and partial funding from the Government on behalf of Aotearoa/New Zealand society. By perceiving students in tertiary education as customers who pay for educational services, it is assumed that their having free choice in deciding which institution they wish to study with will increase the efficiency of education across the nation (Winder, 1996).

Tertiary education policies have developed since 1989, but the neo-liberalist ideology underpinning the 1989 reforms has remained a strong influence (Olssen, et al., 2004). In 1999 a change in government led to recognition that the state needed to strengthen its involvement in tertiary education, because Aotearoa/New Zealand lacked essential skills for the labour market. It was acknowledged that the market model had not succeeded in achieving social equity. It took until 2002 to develop the Tertiary Education Strategy 2002-2007 (TES-I) (Ministry of Education, 2002). The TES-I strategy contained some social goals, for instance with respect to the development of Māori and Pasifika people. However, it also continued to emphasise government

commitment to the development of people for the purpose of the economy, economic competitiveness and participation in the process of globalisation. Roberts provides examples of how the main discourse in TES-I continued to be neo-liberalist:

> The Tertiary Education Strategy (…) contains references to 'providers', 'consumers', 'users' (and 'end-users'), 'stakeholders' (and 'stakeholder groups'), 'rationalism', 'outcomes', 'performance indicators', 'competencies', 'capability building', 'adding value', 'missions', 'strategic visions', and 'strategic planning'. Talk of the need for accountability, efficiency and skill development continues to figure prominently.
>
> (Roberts, 2005, p. 44)

He also observes that the neo-liberalist terminology has become common language not only by politicians but also within educational institutions. "Education continues to be viewed as a commodity to be sold, traded, franchised and consumed" (Roberts, 2005, p. 44). Education even has its own currency: the credit (Strathdee, 2003).

The business approach to tertiary education made financial viability an important concern for tertiary institutions (McNae, 2002). From 1989 to 2008, the funding system was primarily based on student enrolments, which encouraged institutions to find innovative ways to attract more students. The increase in student numbers in tertiary education put government funding under pressure. As a result the total available government funding was not able to follow the large increase in student enrolments, which effectively resulted in a decline in government subsidy per student (Abbott, 2006). To keep their programmes viable, many institutions put considerable effort into attracting full-fee paying overseas students, which is not only key to "producing the new global citizen, but is also becoming a major component of economic globalisation as a billion dollar export industry" (Codd, 2005a, p. 10).

The pressure on government funding combined with relatively low retention and pass rates raised questions as to whether the system provided "value for money" (D. Scott, 2005, p. 16). This contributed to the development of a second Tertiary Education Strategy 2007-2012 (TES-II) and an accompanying funding system, implemented in 2008 (Ministry of Education,

2007; Tertiary Education Commission, 2007, 2008a). Both put a greater emphasis on performance in terms of outcomes. Thus, in TES-II, the government expected tertiary education in general to contribute to national goals to transform Aotearoa/New Zealand into a knowledge economy and society. According to TES-II, each type of tertiary education organisation was expected to contribute in its own distinctive way. Polytechnics played a specific part in the key national priority of "economic transformation to a high skill, high productivity, and high wage economy that is internationally competitive" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 14).

TES-II explicitly spoke of the expected contribution of tertiary education to "success for all New Zealanders through lifelong learning" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 14), but with a focus on encouragement of formal learning, on increasing access, and on supporting economic development. TES-II assumed that this seemingly narrow focus would lead to the good of society: "the kinds of knowledge, skills and competencies that enable people to succeed in a knowledge-based economy are increasingly similar to those that enable people to enjoy and contribute positively to their families and communities" (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 21). This view is apparently not unique to Aotearoa/New Zealand. Walters et al.'s comment on the two approaches to the introduction of competence-based curricula in European vocational education: "Both approaches assume that the skills required for success in the market economy are the same skills necessary for active citizenship" (Walters, Borg, Mayo, & Foley, 2004, p. 147). TES-II also emphasised the importance of the development of Māori and Pasifika peoples. The goals for these peoples as defined in TES-II were identical to the goals for other people in Aotearoa/New Zealand, but TES-II highlighted that it would seek specific evidence in tertiary institutions' plans and through the quality assurance system that Māori and Pasifika students achieved these goals.

Separate from TES-I and TES-II, the Government has recognised the importance of e-learning. The 2004 Interim Tertiary Framework sets out a vision of "A networked, flexible education system offering **accessible,**

relevant, high quality learning opportunities for all New Zealanders" (Ministry of Education, 2006, bold in original). Although collaboration between institutions is seen as essential for the development of e-learning, the primary advantage of this development is presented as an economic one, as it increases not only access, but also competitiveness in the international education market place.

The identified economic need to increase the productivity of the workforce was translated in 2008 into the Skills Strategy, which was not a new strategy, but an integration of initiatives across different government departments to build human capital (New Zealand Government, 2008). Two actions related to programme or qualification design were proposed in this strategy, addressing the TES-II target areas for polytechnics around foundation education and productivity oriented qualifications: 1) To increase the amount of literacy and numeracy that is explicitly taught in certificate programmes at levels 1 to 3; and, 2) to review the qualifications system in order to describe the qualifications and the system more precisely for the purpose of communication to employers and job seekers.

The performance-based funding system aimed to ensure that tertiary institutions focused on the priorities in TES-II. Each institution was only funded if their Investment Plan was approved, meaning it met detailed requirements aligned with TES-II (Tertiary Education Commission, 2007). Government appointed investment and stakeholder engagement managers ensured that an institution's plan met the requirements, and was created with sufficient involvement of their primary stakeholders - particularly industry and the local community. The following features of the funding system are relevant for this study (Tertiary Education Commission, 2008a): 1) Funding is allocated on the basis of domestic student enrolments, and increasingly on the basis of the institution meeting educational performance criteria related to student retention, completion and progression. The total number of domestic equivalent full-time students for which each institution can receive funding is capped. This does not apply to unfunded full-fee paying foreign students; 2) There is a maximum to the fees institutions can ask from

domestic students; 3) Funding is allocated per course, and depends on the specific subject area and the course's EFTS (Equivalent Full-Time Student) factor, a number generally related to the credit value of the course; 4) Each institution must offer programmes across a pre-defined range of levels with approximate percentages of students enrolling at each level (the so-called "Mix of Provision"); and, 5) Special funding is available until 2011 as an incentive to integrate literacy and numeracy into lower level programmes.

In support of students, a loans and allowances system is available for tertiary students who need support with the costs of study and life. Eligibility is dependent on the student's personal financial position, as well as on certain design characteristics of the programme, including its length and its EFTS factor (Tertiary Education Commission, 2008c).

Summarising, this section has highlighted how tertiary education policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand since 1989 have been influenced by a primarily neo-liberalist ideology. The implication for polytechnics is that they have become quasi-autonomous institutions that are subject to competitive market forces. Polytechnics are expected to serve the long-term good of society through serving the labour market. Control is exercised through funding and performance measures set by the government.

1.2.2. The Tertiary Curriculum Policy Context for Programme Design in Polytechnics

The neo-liberalist views on education in Aotearoa/New Zealand, as described in the previous section, are also reflected in the governments' tertiary curriculum policies. These policies promote a system of "outcomes based education" (Hall, 2005). In such a system the product of education is what matters; the process becomes a matter of implementation. The 1989 tertiary education reforms led to the establishment of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), which was made responsible for approval and accreditation of all qualifications in Aotearoa/New Zealand. NZQA develops outcomes, known as 'standards', for national qualifications. The choice of a system based on standards is closely linked to the view of education as a

marketable service. Standards allow customers to be informed about the product they buy. These customers are (Barker, 1995): students as purchasing consumers; the government as an indirect consumer purchasing for society; and, employers as end-users of qualifications who have a purchasing interest in the system.

The original intent of the government was to develop a single national qualifications framework, which would include all secondary and tertiary qualifications in Aotearoa/New Zealand, each with a similar standard-based structure built on so-called unit standards (NZQA, 1991b). The advantage would be the ease of credit transfer, a common approach to qualifications setting and registration, the end of distinction between academic and vocational education, and open-endedness at the entry level (Philips, 2003). Resistance from several bodies against the standard-based structure and the bureaucracy and inflexibility of NZQA resulted in a system that includes both national and provider (i.e. governed by institutions themselves) qualifications (Viskovic, 2000). Provided they have NZQA accreditation, it is up to polytechnics to decide towards which national qualifications or individual unit standards they wish to teach. If they decide to develop programmes leading to provider qualifications, they have to meet NZQA's standards for approval and accreditation (NZQA, 1991a, 2008). Understanding how these NZQA standards influence the programme design decisions that people make seems important for this study, considering its aim of understanding the design of programmes leading to provider certificate and diploma qualifications. Particularly regarding Certificate qualifications, it must be noted that the future of provider qualifications came under threat in TES-II (Ministry of Education, 2007), where it referred to a preference for national certificate qualifications.

All approved qualifications are registered centrally. At the time of the data generation for this study there were two registers: the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications (NZQA, 2006a), containing all qualifications, and the National Qualifications Framework (NZQA, 2006b), containing the national qualifications. The merger of the two registers at the end of 2010

will be discussed in Chapter 12. Each qualification has been assigned a level (1 to 10, with 1 equivalent to Year 11 of secondary school, and 10 equivalent to a doctorate degree), and a number of credits. Typical qualifications awarded by polytechnics are Bachelor degrees (level 7, 360 credits), Diplomas (level 5-6, minimum 120 credits), and Certificates (any level, minimum 40 credits). The level of the qualification is defined by the levels of its individual building blocks, which may be unit standards or courses (NZQA, 2006a). This requirement of levels and credits has implications and limitations for the way in which polytechnics structure their programmes, particularly because the funding of courses and programmes depends on their credit value (Tertiary Education Commission, 2008a).

NZQA has delegated some of the standard-setting to other organisations. Industry focused national qualifications are usually developed and maintained by Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) whose statutory role as standard-setting body and leader within their industry on skill and training matters is legislatively defined (New Zealand Government, 2006). Until the end of 2010 the Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics Quality (ITPQ), accredited, approved and monitored provider qualifications on behalf of NZQA (ITP Quality, 2010). The discontinuation of this delegated authority from 2011 will be reflected on in Chapter 12.

To support public accountability all polytechnics have developed quality assurance systems which must specify criteria on programme design. Where criteria have not been set by external bodies such as NZQA or ITPQ, the institutions themselves have developed requirements. In 1999 ITPQ developed very specific academic standards that polytechnics were required to meet. These have been made less prescriptive since, providing institutions with more autonomy (ITP Quality, 2006). The first of these standards requires polytechnics to have a quality management system in place.

All new programmes within a polytechnic must go through an internal approval process and be approved by the polytechnic's Academic Board before they are sent to ITPQ for external academic approval and to the Tertiary Education Commission for funding approval. All programmes must

also be reviewed on a regular basis (ITP Quality, 2006). While NZQA sets the national qualification standards, the Academic Freedom clause of the Education Act 1989 (New Zealand Government, 2006) allows the tertiary institutions to choose the content, and how to teach and assess programmes leading to those qualifications.

In short, this section has highlighted how national tertiary curriculum policies set external requirements regarding level, credits and standards that influence the structure of programmes and qualifications in polytechnics. It has also indicated the potential importance of accreditation and approval requirements, set externally by NZQA and/or its delegates or internally by a polytechnic's quality assurance system, for the aim of this study.

1.3 Personal Motivation for this Inquiry

I have had an interest in designing educational programmes for many years. This seems to align with my interest in mathematics and my initial education as a physicist, because programme design is like a complicated puzzle: it has logic and there are multiple factors to take into account, including meeting the many requirements, needs and desires of all those involved, such as those of the government, as explained in the previous section.

I thought I had a good grasp of programme design, until I came to Aotearoa/New Zealand in 2003 and started working in a polytechnic as academic advisor, particularly in the field of programme design. The approach to designing programmes in Aotearoa/New Zealand was very different from what I had experienced in my home country, the Netherlands. I was used to having a primary concern for teaching methods and learning processes, and here I was confronted with what I experienced as an obsession with assessment and qualifications. But there was more: the cultural, age and social diversity of students in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand is enormous, and many students study part-time, while I was used to designing programmes for very homogeneous monocultural groups who are all full-time students. I could go on, but the purpose of this thesis is not to elaborate on the differences between

education in Aotearoa/New Zealand and the Netherlands. What my cultural experience led to was a desire to understand more about why programmes in tertiary education in Aotearoa/New Zealand are designed the way they are, which made me embark on this research project. It has been an intense personal cultural journey, which has confronted me deeply with my own values and beliefs about education. But this research project does not only serve my personal learning, as the description of the research problem in the next section explains.

1.4 The Research Problem

Education "directs the kind of learning that takes place"; it "purposely shapes the subjectivity of those being educated" (Osberg & Biesta, 2008, p. 314). A programme is an instrument for education. Through educational programmes we help shape our society. Programme design includes decisions on what society finds valuable for people to learn, and how this should be structured and organised.

However, society in the 21st century is complex. The industrialisation era from the late 19th and 20th century has been superseded by an age of computer and communication technologies, globalisation, migration, concerns for climate change, social equity, public health, the seemingly increasing divide between rich and poor, and so forth, with all their uncertainties. All of these influence educational programmes, but how? How do the many views that people hold on these matters come together into design practice of these programmes? How are decisions made? And within this complex society, what does improvement of educational programmes mean?

By including decisions on how education should be structured and organised, programme design sets the boundaries for teaching and learning and in this way influences teaching and learning (Horsburgh, 1999; Lambert, Terenzini, & Lattuca, 2007). There is an increased interest in teaching and learning in tertiary education. In Aotearoa/New Zealand this is demonstrated, for example, by the establishment in 2007 of Ako Aotearoa, or the National

Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence (Ako Aotearoa, n.d.). However, most scholarly interest related to teaching and learning seems to go into teaching practice and the student experience. Programme design scarcely receives attention in the literature or in educational practice. This is not only an observation for Aotearoa/New Zealand; Barnett and Coate (2005) also refer to curriculum design as a neglected area of study in the university context, at least in the United Kingdom. It seems odd, as well as narrow, to try and improve teaching and learning practice while remaining silent about the boundaries of this practice.

The above questions and the dearth of research on their answers have been the main driver for this study, from the viewpoint that, in order to improve practice, we must first understand it, with all its interrelated facets. I have chosen to focus on design practice of provider Certificate and Diploma programmes in a polytechnic, that is, programmes leading to Level 1 to 6 provider qualifications on the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications (NZQA, 2006a), because they are my special interest. Provider programmes interest me because they allow me to study how people in a polytechnic use the maximum amount of autonomy available within the government policy framework to make their decisions regarding programme design. The choice for Certificate and Diploma programmes is based on my concern for people in Aotearoa/New Zealand who seem to miss out on education. Over the period 2002-2009 the majority of school leavers in Aotearoa/New Zealand, including in the region where this research was conducted, did not meet the requirements for university entry (Ministry of Education, n.d.). Furthermore, 25% of people in Aotearoa/New Zealand aged 15 or over, as indicated in the 2006 census, do not have a formal qualification (Statistics New Zealand, n.d.). In the region where this study was conducted this figure was slightly higher. For many of these people Certificate and Diploma programmes form the first steps to engage with tertiary education and so to further develop themselves and our society. I firmly believe that as educators we have the professional responsibility to support them. Understanding what we do when designing programmes and why we do this

is crucial for our decision-making on how to do it better. The case study in this project is a first step.

1.5   Overview of the Thesis

The structure of this thesis is as follows. The second chapter provides a review of literature on programme design from the three different angles that are relevant to the aim of this study. Firstly, it identifies the components and elements of programme design according to the literature. Secondly, it reviews existing theories of programme design for post-compulsory education and explores potentially useful theories from other educational contexts. This includes a description of the influences of ideologies on programme design as referred to in the literature. And finally, it reflects on existing research literature on programme design in the context of Aotearoa/New Zealand tertiary education. This incorporates critiques from educators on the policy developments that were described in Section 1.2 as far as they are relevant to programme design. Chapter 2 finishes with the research questions that were used to guide this study. The methodology that was used for this study is outlined in Chapter 3. Chapter 3 explains and justifies how an interpretive case study of one polytechnic was used to answer the research questions. The case study involved six embedded case studies that focused on programme design practice at the institutional level and in five programmes across the polytechnic. Data were generated through semi-structured interviews, document collection and some observation. Chapter 3 also discusses quality and ethics matters that were considered during this study. These include the implications of my involvement in the study as researcher and as employee in this polytechnic.

Chapters 4 to 11 present the analysis of the data. Chapter 4 uses the data to reflect on the components and elements of programme design that were found in the literature review to find out how they apply to the context of this study, thus setting boundaries around what is included in 'programme design' in this study. It also shows that just categorising the data within these components does not provide an explanation why programme design

decisions and considerations are made. Therefore this categorising is insufficient to develop a theory. The analysis of the 'why' is presented in Chapters 5 to 11, which are represented as the images of seven different lenses through which programme design practice can be observed: a teaching and learning; rational; cultural; personal experience; ethical; business; and social-political lens, respectively. Each chapter describes the image of a lens, supported by the data, and finishes with an explanation of the image in terms of ideologies where possible. This explanation is supported by scholarly literature and by findings from relevant previous chapters.

Chapter 12 pulls the findings from Chapters 4 to 11 together into a theory for programme design, and provides a critical discussion of the findings in relation to the methodology, existing theories, and recent national education policy developments in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The final chapter, Chapter 13, summarises the conclusion of this study and provides recommendations for practice as well as for further research.

CHAPTER 2:   LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

Over thirty years ago, Goodlad (1979) concluded the book *Curriculum Inquiry* with the following statement:

> The critical question to ask of a conceptual system designed for inquiry into practice is whether it draws attention to the "proper" phenomena to be studied. The critical question to ask of a conceptual system designed to guide practice is whether it draws attention to the "proper" questions to be answered. The former use is designed to tell us what now exists. The latter is designed to help us decide what should be. Curriculum planning, development, and improvement require both. (Goodlad, 1979, p. 363)

This study focuses on "inquiry into practice". For this reason, this chapter focuses on reviewing literature that can help us understand "what now exists", which has been summarised in three questions:

- *What embodies programme design according to the literature?*

- *Which educational and curriculum design theories in the literature have the potential to help understand and theorise programme design practice in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand?*

- *What research on programme design practice in polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand can assist in understanding and theorising this practice?*

The purpose of the first question is to identify which aspects of educational practice are generally considered to fall within programme design practice. This will set boundaries around programme design practice as it is studied in this inquiry, and will help, using Goodlad's (1979) words, in studying the "proper phenomena". The second question aims to scope ideas for understanding programme design practice that might be useful to build on during this inquiry. Simultaneously, it intends to identify gaps in existing literature on programme design theory for tertiary education that will help to frame the research questions for this study. The third question serves to find out what is already known about the research topic in the Aotearoa/New

Zealand context. Again, this will contribute to formulating the research questions, as well as help scope the ideas on which to build.

It is important to note that, in addition to 'design', the literature uses terms like 'planning' or 'development'. These terms are used interchangeably in this chapter. Additionally, many publications write about 'curriculum', instead of 'programme', but if they are considered valuable for the purpose of this chapter they are included. The interpretation of 'curriculum' tends to be narrower than that of 'programme', as it is often limited to the areas of intentions, teaching, learning, and assessment only.

This chapter will seek the answers to each of the three questions above in Sections 2.2 to 2.4. Section 2.5 summarises the answers and defines the research questions for this study.

2.2 What Embodies Programme Design According to the Literature?

2.2.1. Introduction

This section identifies the aspects of educational practice that, according to the literature, are considered to be part of programme design practice, for the purpose of being able to study "the proper phenomena", as explained in the previous section. As a consequence, this part of the literature review is more an inventory than a review. It does not discuss literature with regards to "what should be", that is, how authors think the aspects should be implemented in practice. It only lists and groups the aspects, and briefly explains how they are defined or interpreted. During the review I found that often different studies or models in the literature cover similar aspects. Where such redundancy occurred, I limited the number of literature references. Considering that this study would be about polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand, I only selected literature that was potentially applicable to this context, guided by my personal experience with programme design in tertiary education and in this context, as referred to in Section 1.3. Some literature references are relatively old, but I considered them relevant,

because they are still referred to frequently. The following types of literature were used for this inventory:

- *Programme design models for adult education* (Boone, Safrit, & Jones, 2002; Bradshaw, 1995; Caffarella, 2002; Dean, 1994; Hubball, Gold, Mighty, & Britnell, 2007; Meyer & Bushney, 2008; Sork, 1997, 2001; Sork & Newman, 2004).
  All but two of these models are primarily focused on relatively short courses, and therefore lack reference to a programme and how this fits into the context of an institution.

- *Programme or curriculum design models mainly targeted at compulsory youth education* (Eisner, 1985; Eraut, 1991a, 1991b; McGee, 1997; Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 1995; Pratt, 1980, 1994; Romiszowski, 1981; Schubert, 1986; Taba, 1962; Tyler, 1949; Wiles & Bondi, 1989, 2007).
  While these models lack reference to adult education, they cover a broad range of questions to ask or issues to consider when developing programmes.

- *Programme change processes in higher education* (Browne, 2005; Jones, 2002).

- *Course design in higher education* (Diamond, 1998; Fedorowicz & Gogan, 2001; J. Heywood, 2000; Jackson, 1994; Macfarlane, 2001; Rowntree, 1981; Toohey, 1999).
  This group of studies is concerned with a particular focus on course design, taking the programme and institutional contexts as given. The studies are mainly focused at universities and/or undergraduate or post-graduate degree programmes.

- *Components of programme design in higher education* (Barrie, 2006; Benn, 1998; Broadfoot & Black, 2004; Flint & Frey, 2003; Further Education Unit, 1994; Garii & Petersen, 2006; Grier, 2005; R. Harris, Guthrie, Hobart, & Lundberg, 1995; Hubball & Burt, 2004; Igbineweka & Princes, 1996; Lidsky, 2002; Madaus & Kellaghan, 1992, (note: refers to compulsory education); Menix, 2007; Ruijter, 1997; Sambell &

McDowell, 1998; Smuling, Brants, & Pilot, 1990; Soney, 2003; Taras, 2005, 2009, 2010; Wonacott, 2002; Younger, McGury, & Fiddler, 2001). These studies discuss specific components of design, for example intentions, administrative, assessment, or instructional design components.

- *Specific focus on who has an interest in programme design in higher education* (Olesinski, 1995; Preece, 2000; Quehl, Bergquist, & Subbiondo, 1999; D. Scott, 2005).

  This group views programme design from the perspective of people with a particular interest, for example, students or politicians.

- *Specific focus on design aspects of flexible learning* (Costello, 1994; de Boer & Collis, 2005; Hodgkinson, 1994; Masterman, 1991; Stables, 1997; Stanton, 1995; Van Meel, 1993; Vaughan, 2007).

  Flexible learning has become its own area of study in adult education, but can be considered as an aspect of design, as it appears to focus to a large extent on teaching methods and resources.

- *Specific focus on course design for different cultures* (Bruch, Jehangit, Jacobs, & Ghere, 2004; Jiwani & Regan, 1998; Kidman, 1995; Sparks, 2001/2002; Zepke & Leach, 2002).

  This is again an area which can be considered as an aspect of programme design, but with its specific range of literature. The focus of this area tends to be on student diversity and how design of, for example, teaching methods and assessment can be informed by this diversity.

It is appropriate to start with acknowledging the work of Ralph Tyler (1949), because no author seems to have had a greater impact on programme design practice for adult education. The so-called Tyler Rationale consists of answering four questions:

1. What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
2. What learning experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?

3. How can these educational experiences be effectively organized?
4. How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

(Tyler, 1949, p. 1)

Approaches based on these four questions are often referred to as Tylerian. Although Tyler developed this approach for compulsory education, it has been embraced in adult education. Tylerian approaches are characterised by a number of steps that should be considered. These steps consist of answering the four questions in the Tyler Rationale, or a slight variation of these. For example, some Tylerian approaches include a step to analyse the context or conduct a needs analysis (e.g. Diamond, 1998), before they answer the question what educational purposes to attain. In other approaches, two questions are combined into one (e.g. Boone, et al., 2002, combine questions 2 and 3). Another characteristic of the Tyler Rationale and Tylerian approaches is the internal consistency of the questions or steps: questions 2 and 4 in the Rationale refer to question 1 through "these purposes"; question 3 refers to question 2 through "these experiences". This means that the questions or steps cannot be considered independently.

The Tylerian approaches provide a guide on 'how to' design a programme and 'what' issues to consider. They suggest who to involve (e.g. teachers, managers, students, community groups, academic developers), which issues to address within each step, and in which order to take the steps. The assumptions, values and beliefs underpinning the guidelines the approaches provide do not tend to be up for debate. The wide-spread adoption of Tylerian approaches is clearly visible in the analysis by Boone, Safrit and Jones (2002) of thirteen programme planning approaches in adult education. Using a Tylerian framework of three stages for this analysis - Planning; Design and Implementation; and Evaluation and Accountability – they conclude that all approaches follow a Tylerian structure. Sork and Newman (2004) confirm the dominance of Tylerian thinking after analysing ten programme development approaches in adult education, most of which are common to those discussed by Boone et al. (2002).

I used the components of the Tyler Rationale, and particularly a model developed by Sork (Sork, 1997, 2001; Sork & Newman, 2004) as inspiration

for a framework to organise the large number of elements from the literature that embody programme design. The framework consists of six components, and is visualised in Figure 1. The elements within each component are described in Sections 2.2.2 to 2.2.8. Each section presents the identified elements and sub-elements – or 'elements-within-elements' - accompanied by a brief explanation using relevant literature sources. The elements and sub-elements are shown in italics in the text. I have further assumed, based on my own experience with programme and course design, that elements applying to programmes could equally apply to courses, and that this study would point out to what extent this assumption was correct. For this reason, any reference to programmes needs to be read as applying to courses as well.
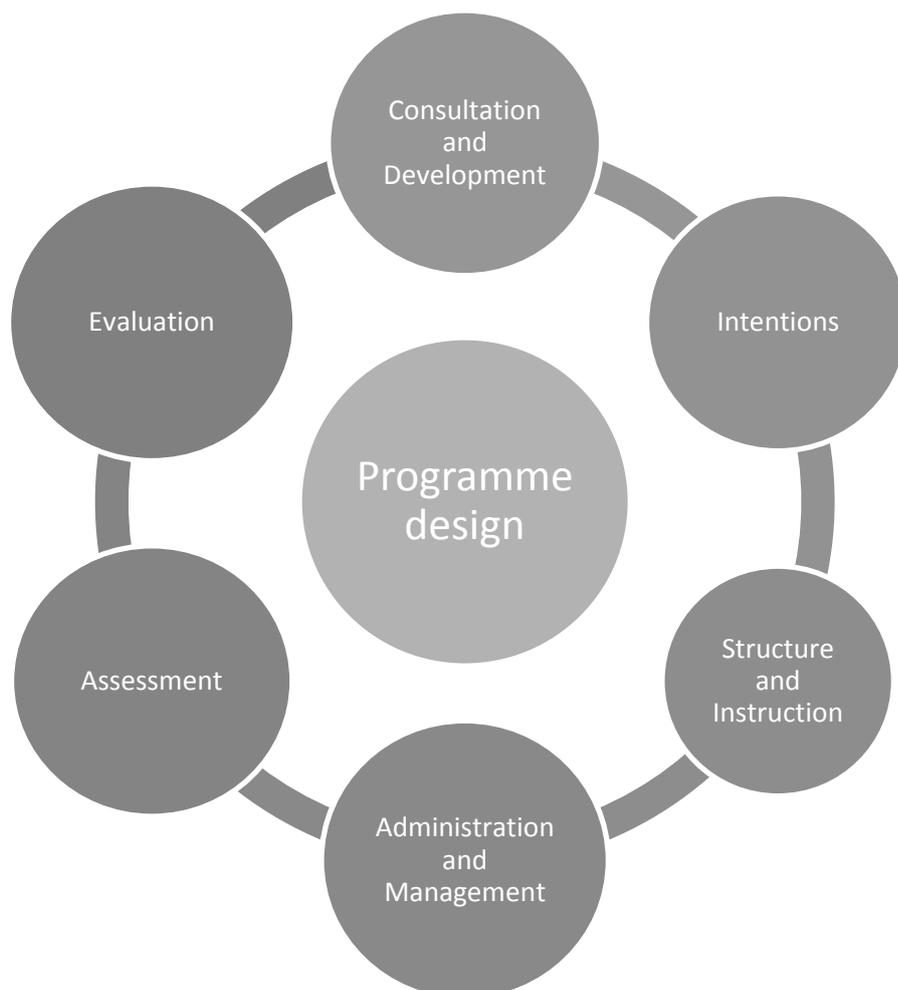
Figure 1: Components of programme design

2.2.2. Consultation and Development

The first component, consultation and development, includes decisions on who has a voice in programme design and how this voice is being heard and used. The identified elements and sub-elements are shown in Figure 2.
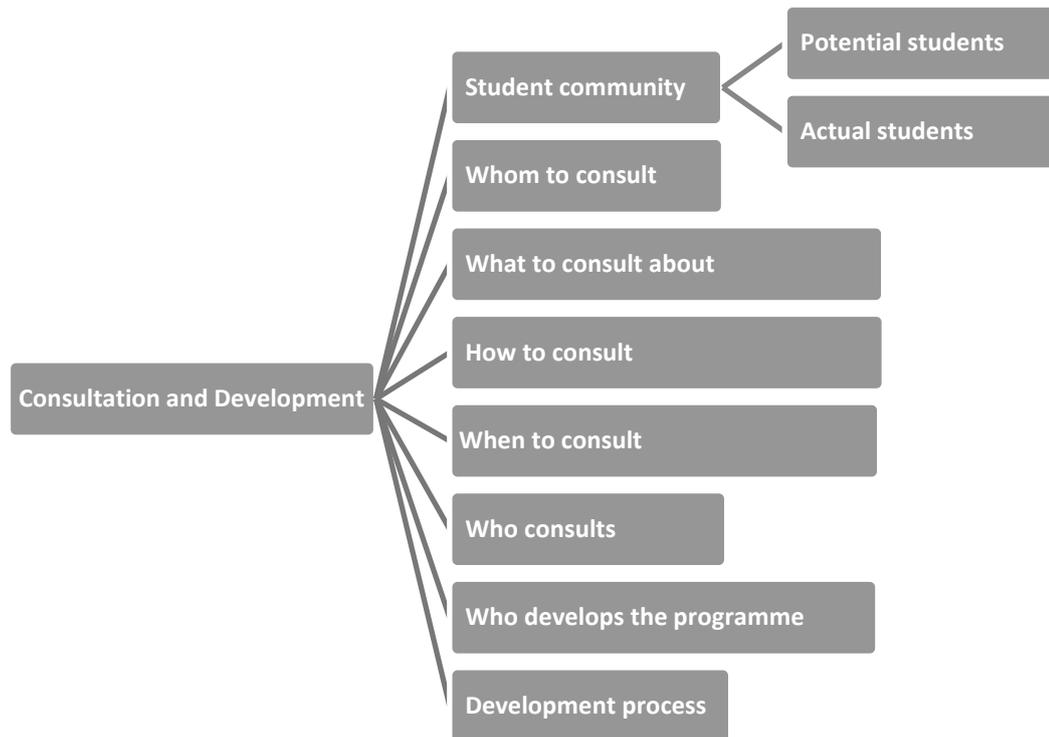
Figure 2: Elements and sub-elements in the consultation and development component of programme design

An important voice to consider is the *potential student community*, which may be wider than the immediate target group for the programme (Sork, 2001). For (re-)design of an existing programme, it should also include the *actual participating students*. What is to be considered is why students would enrol or are enrolled in a programme and what their expectations might be (Rowntree, 1981). *People who could or should be consulted* are (Meyer & Bushney, 2008; Pratt, 1980) the following, but no indication was found who decides this:

- People who have a right to be consulted: parents, taxpayers, students;

- People who may have to be consulted for political reasons, including: politically influential individuals and groups, government departments, other tertiary institutions, quality assurance organisations, the institution's managers, political groups with special interests; and,

- People with special insight or expertise, including: students, teachers, mentors, assessors and moderators, academic and social specialists, employers, industry and professional organisations, advisory bodies, alumni, withdrawn students, community organisations, research institutions, leading thinkers.

People can be consulted about any of the following: the intentions; the instructional strategies; the instructional materials; the professional staff; the assessment; the evaluation; or, the physical environment and facilities (Taba, 1962; Wiles & Bondi, 2007). It is important to consider *how people are consulted* and which data are collected (Wiles & Bondi, 2007). In this regard, the assessment of stakeholder needs is often referred to as an important way to justify and focus the design of a programme (Sork, 2001). Needs assessment could also be an integral part of a programme's ongoing development, to allow for change (Grier, 2005; Wiles & Bondi, 2007). These needs for change are likely to arise from informal or formal evaluation (e.g. Browne, 2005; Fedorowicz & Gogan, 2001). Considering *when consultation occurs*, this suggests that this can occur at any time, not just during the initial programme design process. The question of *who consults* (Dean, 1994) or *who develops* the programme (Pratt, 1994) is of importance, as well as the *development process*. For a new course, Diamond (1998) describes the latter as collecting and analysing the following 'essential data': student characteristics; society desires and needs; educational priorities of the institution, school or department; requirements of the knowledge field and of accrediting agencies; and, relevant research results. Most of these are also found within the Intentions component, described in the next section. On the other hand, creation of new courses can also follow a much less

comprehensive process, when "someone has decided that the new or revised course is a good idea and should go ahead" (Toohey, 1999, p.21-22).

2.2.3. Intentions

Intentions, the second component of programme design, addresses what may be one of the oldest curriculum questions: 'What knowledge is of most worth?' (Schuyler, 1998; Spencer, 1911), or in other words: what is most valuable for students to learn? Intentions include purposes, aims, goals, objectives, outcomes, and probably other terms exist as well. Some authors differentiate between these terms, others use them interchangeably. I will use 'intention' in a generic sense, to allow inclusion of all terms. The list of identified elements is shown in Figure 3.

The *purpose of a programme* explains why the programme exists, or why it is important to devote money and time to a programme (Pratt, 1994; Sork, 2001). Two perspectives are found in the literature:

- An *internal perspective*, describing the purpose in the context of the mission, the values, the norms and the attitudes of the institution (Dean, 1994); and,

- An *external perspective*, describing the purpose of the programme for the benefit of students (e.g. to gain knowledge for its own sake, to train the mind, to find employment,…), or for the benefit of others (Pratt, 1994).

Intentions can be defined at a national *level*, as in the Tertiary Education Strategies in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2002, 2007), at institutional level (e.g. Barrie, 2006), at programme level, at course level, and at the level of an individual session. Inspiration for intentions can be drawn from social and cultural needs, the disciplines, student needs (Jackson, 1994; Schubert, 1986; Taba, 1962), political-economic needs (Hubball, et al., 2007; Meyer & Bushney, 2008), as well as from educational ideas, including values,
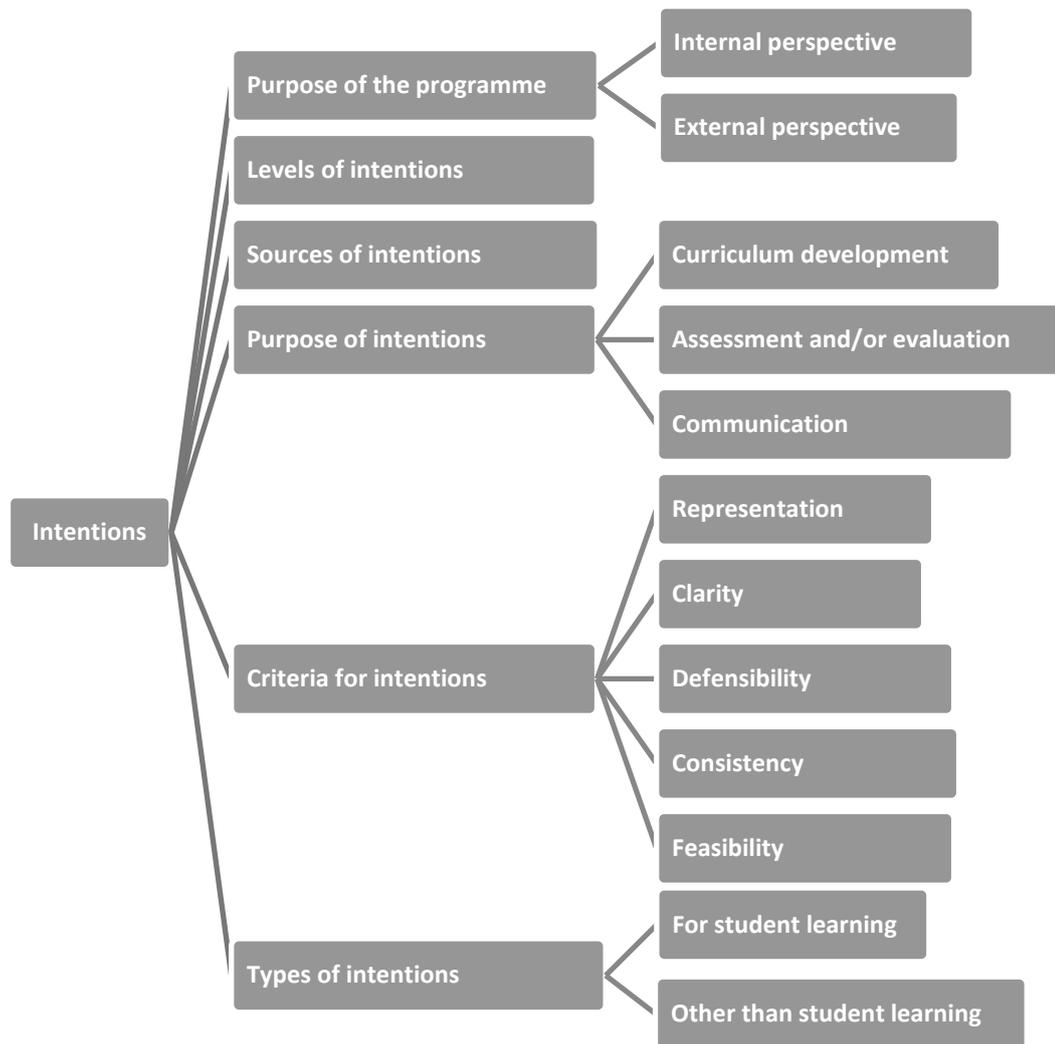
Figure 3: Elements and sub-elements in the intentions component of programme design

beliefs and learning theories (Benn, 1998; McGee, 1997). Curriculum statements and school intentions can also be added to this list of *sources of intentions* (McGee, 1997), which could, in the context of this study, be compared to national and institutional curriculum policy, respectively. Furthermore, current practice and well-known curriculum traditions are often important sources of intentions (Eraut, 1991b).

Three *purposes for defining intentions* can be identified (Eraut, 1991a; Taba, 1962): While Taba strongly argues for a thorough approach to ensure intentions are used for these purposes, Eraut raises awareness of problems with interpretation and with people's commitments to the intentions.

- *Curriculum development*: to guide decisions on selection of content and learning experiences and to provide criteria on what to teach and how to teach it;

- *Assessment and/or evaluation*: to measure the realisation of intentions. While Taba states that "The often-referred to intangibility of some objectives is nothing but a smoke screen for lack of clarity" (Taba, 1962, p.199), Eraut argues that absolute clarity is impossible to achieve: "statements of objectives [...] are not absolute criteria but indications of people's attempts to express their intentions" (Eraut, 1991a, p.315).

- *Communication* to students, that is, to explain to students what they are expected to learn (Eraut, 1991a); to students, industry and government to explain what they are purchasing (Barker, 1995), and to other people involved, so consistency across the curriculum can be ensured (Taba, 1962).

Various *criteria* may help decide on and select intentions (Schubert, 1986):

- *Representation*, which involves considerations around who is involved in defining the intentions and what the balance between the sources should be. Choosing between priorities is a problem, however (Eraut, 1991b). For example, how could one choose between intentions that are more feasible, more enjoyable, more immediately useful or more important for development of advanced thinking?

- *Clarity*, which considers whether the intentions are unambiguous. However, some argue that complete clarity is impossible as people perceive language in different ways (Eraut, 1991a; Schubert, 1986).

- *Defensibility* (or Desirability (Eraut, 1991b)), asking why the intention is worthwhile. Intentions are worthwhile when they represent occupational practice; roles as member of society, the local community

or the family; cultural and academic knowledge; and/or what students are claimed to be interested in, or what is in their interest (Eraut, 1991b). Along the same lines, Schubert (1986) identifies four orientations of intentions, each carrying an implicit message of defensibility:

- ◆ Socialisation: the intent to introduce students into the ways of living in a society or culture;

- ◆ Achievement: the intent to provide defensible claims of progress in a manageable and efficient way;

- ◆ Personal growth: fostering of self-realisation; and,

- ◆ Social change: leading the way to social improvement.

Justifying objectives is not without problems, as the argument depends on who justifies the objective and the evidence they choose for justification (Eraut, 1991b; Schubert, 1986). Schubert's advice to deal with this is as follows:

> assert a purpose and follow it up by asking openly and honestly, "Why is that worthwhile?" When you have an answer that satisfies you on that question, ask again: "Why is that worthwhile?" Continue this process two or three more times, and you should arrive close to the level of basic assumptions.
>
> (Schubert, 1986, p.201)

- • *Consistency,* considering if intentions are consistent across different levels of the programme, for example between the programme and its courses. Alternatively, consistency is to be considered between the intentions and the learning experiences, the organisation and the evaluation of the programme (Tyler, 1949).

- • *Feasibility.* This criterion asks if finances, resources, attitudes, personnel, community, and institution support the intentions. Additionally, considering the student population, is achievement of the intentions feasible (Eraut, 1991b)?

Almost all discussion on intentions in the literature relates to intentions *for student learning*. Many authors (e.g. Boone, et al., 2002; Romiszowski, 1981; Taba, 1962; Tyler, 1949), show a preference for behavioural intentions, to

provide a clear, unambiguous and measurable statement of the student's behaviour after completion of the learning process. Eisner (1985) disputes this, saying that "language is [...] a surrogate for experience. We try to articulate in words what we know in non-linguistic ways." (p.115). He proposes open-ended expressive objectives, aimed at giving room to personal purpose and experience. In addition, intentions can be global and evolving (Schubert, 1986). Global intentions are broad, and allow for implementation that can vary according to the particular context in which learning occurs. The evolving intention is focused on growth. It is based on where the student wants to go and can therefore not be pre-determined. *Intentions* may also *not* be *focused on student learning* but relate to operational aspects of the programme. Making these intentions explicit may improve the quality and efficiency of the programme (Caffarella, 2002).

2.2.4. Structure and Instruction

The third component of programme design is that of Structure and Instruction. The elements within this component possibly vary between programmes and courses. At programme level they may be more structure related, while at course level they could be more focused on teaching methods. To avoid pre-judging this matter I have included all elements for each level. The identified elements and sub-elements are shown in Figure 4.

The element of *entry requirements* is not without its difficulties: how can the prerequisite knowledge be known, and what evidence exists for the need of prerequisites (Pratt, 1980)? What needs to happen if an applicant does not meet the requirements and/or the expectations: are counselling, re-entry advice, pre-admission courses available (Flint & Frey, 2003)?

Credits were introduced to increase flexibility of access (Masterman, 1991). One could argue why a certain number of credits is chosen for a programme or course (Stanton, 1995).
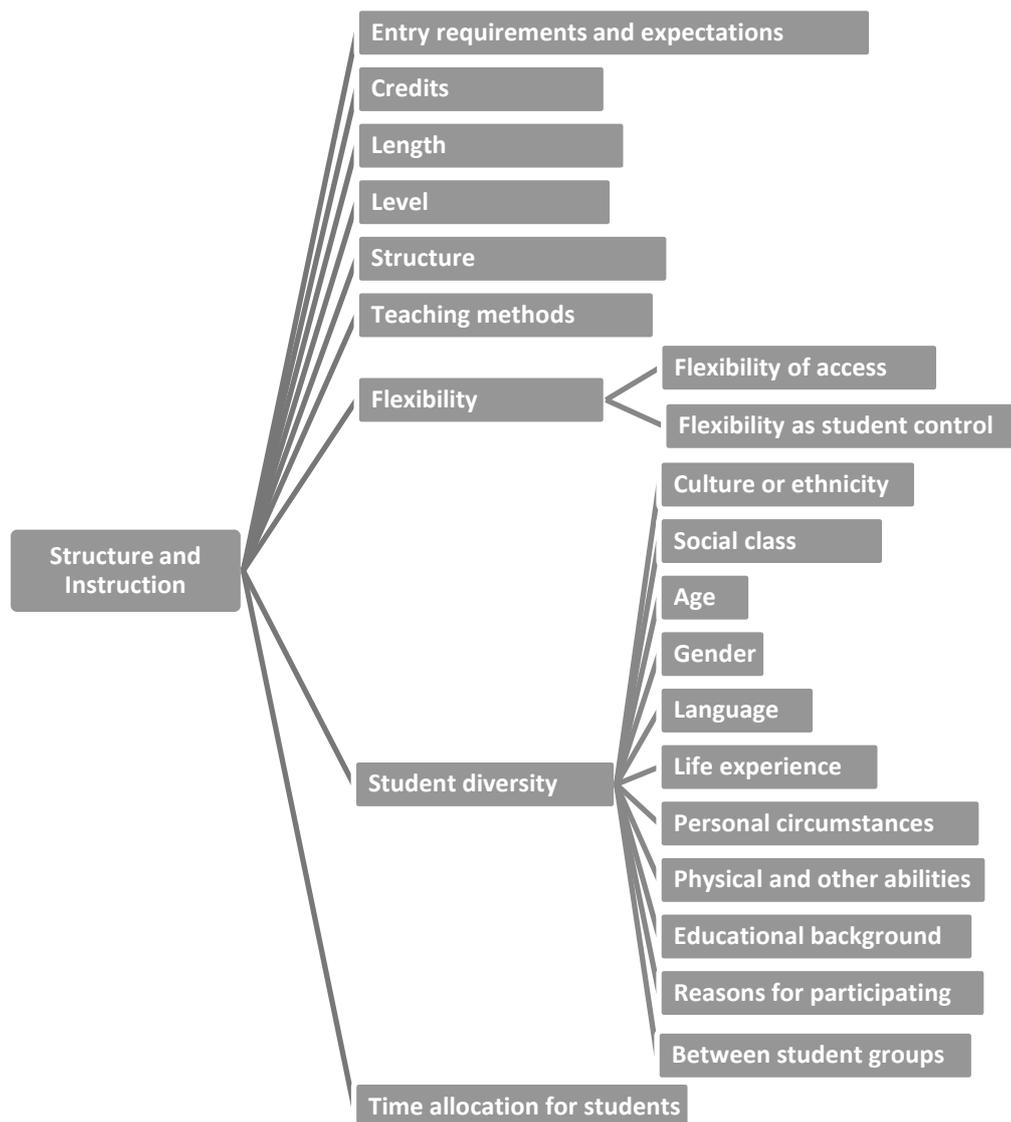
Figure 4: Elements and sub-elements in the structure and instruction component of programme design

The *length* of a programme is referred to by Masterman (1991), and the *level* by Stanton (1995)- in terms of the levels 1-10 as specified on the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications (NZQA, 2006a).

The *structure* of a programme depends on the initiating points for design. Table I shows the variety of initiating points found in the literature and the structuring options for programmes that follow from these points. A chosen structure defines the sequence of study in the programme and sets boundaries around the opportunities for *teaching methods*.

The element of *flexibility* can be understood as *flexibility of access* or as *flexibility of student control* (Toohey, 1999). Flexibility of access includes:

- Flexibility of entry and exit (Toohey, 1999);
- Opportunities to study full-time or part-time (Hodgkinson, 1994; Stanton, 1995; Toohey, 1999);
- Staircasing opportunities into other programmes, including the availability of bridging courses (Toohey, 1999);
- The availability of recognition of prior learning (Pratt, 1994; Toohey, 1999);
- Opportunities to study in the workplace (Wonacott, 2002); and,
- The availability of programmes at different locations, as well as by distance (Stanton, 1995; Toohey, 1999), for example, on-campus learning, off-campus learning (e.g. field sites, community venues), media-based learning, temporary setting and international learning (Quehl, et al., 1999).

The second form of flexibility, that is, increased student control of what and how they learn, includes:

- Choice: in courses of students' own interest (Olesinski, 1995; Toohey, 1999); in the sequence of study (Toohey, 1999); in the timeframe in which to complete their study (Toohey, 1999); in learning activities (de Boer & Collis, 2005; Dean, 1994); in how to be assessed (Dean, 1994); and, in when to be assessed (de Boer & Collis, 2005);
- Self-assessment (Taras, 2010): the opportunity for students to decide on the quality of their own work;
- Use of credit transfer mechanisms (Toohey, 1999); and,
- Availability of counselling in making these choices (Flint & Frey, 2003; Olesinski, 1995; Stables, 1997; Toohey, 1999).

Table I: Structuring options of programmes according to different authors

Source	Initiating points	Structuring options
Toohey (1999)	Different philosophies	Logic or subject matter based Competency, role or performance based Project, inquiry or problem based Key overarching concept, themes or intellectual ability based
Smuling et al. (1990)	Teaching methods	Lecture-tutorial based Individual study based Project based Block based Module based Problem based
Wiles and Bondi (2007)	Relationship between courses	Building blocks design Branching design Spiral design Specific tasks design Process-pattern design
(Saylor, Alexander and Lewis (1981), cited in Pinar, et al., 1995)	What defines the objectives	Discipline based Instructional design based Process based Community activity based Independent learning based
Rowntree (1981)	Structuring of ideas	Element by element Problem centred Chronological Causal Structural logic Spiral Backward chaining
Van Meel (1993)	Distance learning modules	Study unit model Textbook-workbook Textbook-sources material Textbook-question book Study task model Case study model Dissertation model Apprenticeship model

Student diversity could arguably be placed under one of the other components. I have decided to include it in this section because of the many implications for instruction. Student diversity can be found in their *culture*, *ethnicity* (Jiwani & Regan, 1998; Kidman, 1995; Sparks, 2001/2002), *social class, age, gender*, native *language* and language abilities, *life experience, personal circumstances* (employment status, area of residence, income), *physical and other abilities, educational background*, and *reasons for participating* (Bradshaw, 1995; Preece, 2000). Student diversity is not only found within a group of students, but also *between groups*, e.g. between different student cohorts. Instructional approaches can care for student diversity through considering:

- What students are taught (Bruch, et al., 2004; Zepke & Leach, 2002);
- Which instructional techniques are selected (Bruch, et al., 2004; Caffarella, 2002; Zepke & Leach, 2002);
- Openness towards different concepts of knowledge (Benn, 1998);
- How students are assessed (Bruch, et al., 2004);
- Students' social interaction with peers (Flint & Frey, 2003);
- To which extent the plan is inclusive of students from different social groups (Preece, 2000);
- Where students can learn (Bradshaw, 1995; Flint & Frey, 2003);
- Students' learning styles (Bruch, et al., 2004; Stanton, 1995);
- The language students use for their learning (de Boer & Collis, 2005);
- The way students are grouped (Wiles & Bondi, 2007); and,
- The available support. The argument of justice with respect to differences between students may justify differences in support offered (Macfarlane, 2001).

Considering time is a finite and therefore precious resource in education, a careful planning and evaluation of allocated and used time for all participants is very important (Pratt, 1994). This applies particularly to adult students who have additional time constraints due to other responsibilities in their lives (Soney, 2003). The timetable can easily become a "mechanism for controlling what is possible" (Costello, 1994, p.33). This seems to be related

to the bigger issue of planning of *time for students*, including: expected 'learning time' for a programme; freedom for students to choose when they wish to study and for how long; and, time available for students to complete the programme. Consequently, estimating time needed for learning activities and the spread of student workload over the total duration of the programme seems important (Ruijter, 1997).

2.2.5. Administration and Management

Administration and management is the fourth component of programme design. It contains considerations around facilities, resources, personnel, etcetera. The identified elements and sub-elements are found in Figure 5.
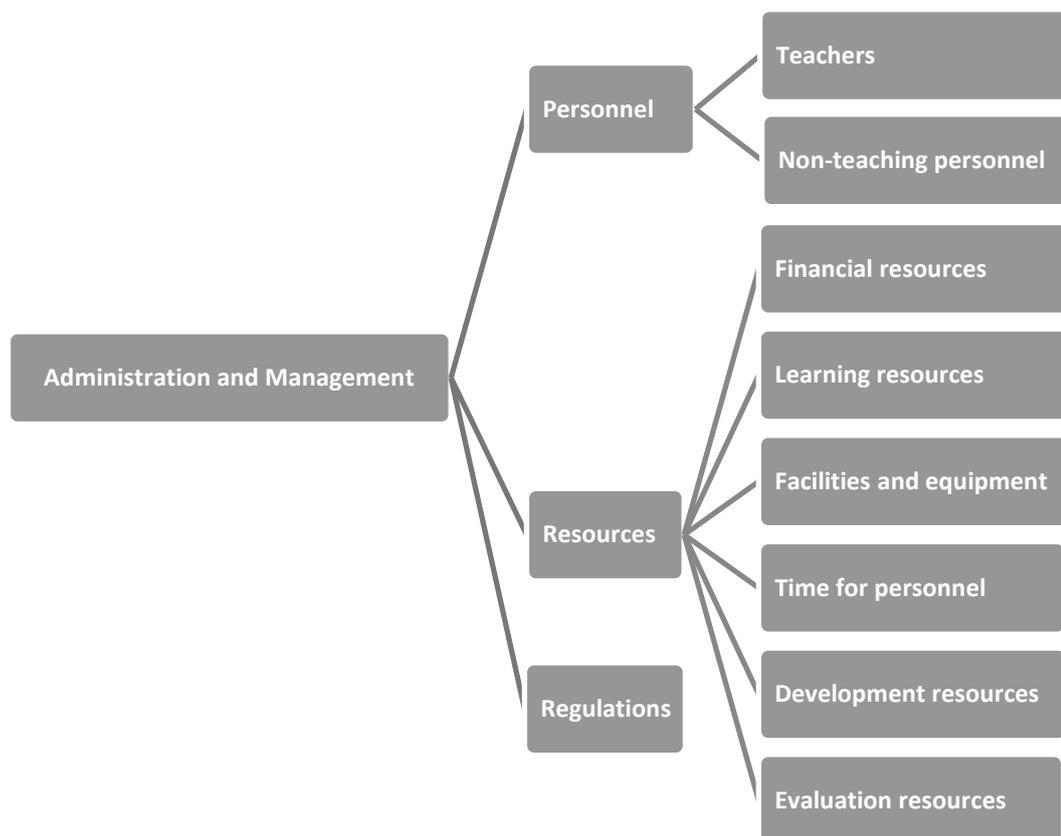
Figure 5: Elements and sub-elements in the administration and management component of programme design

The *personnel* element highlights who is involved in the programme, other than for the previously discussed Consultation and Development component. Two main groups are identified: *teachers* and *non-teaching personnel*, including managers, administrators, teaching assistants, community people (Quehl, et al., 1999), or counselling and study support staff (Flint & Frey, 2003). Teacher qualities need to be acknowledged as an integrated component of curriculum design. They are related to the desired role of the teacher within the philosophy of the programme (Wiles & Bondi, 2007). Employing non-core teachers may be a risk as they may not teach towards the expectations of the institution and the programme (Garii & Petersen, 2006), although they are often highly motivated (Quehl, et al., 1999). Staff development is essential for programme development, to ensure motivation of staff as well as innovation in the curriculum (Further Education Unit, 1994; Jones, 2002). The teacher's role has ethical implications, for example, the duality in the role of both 'friend' and assessor (Macfarlane, 2001). Furthermore, teachers' capabilities as well as their cultural and gender biases can influence the choice of teaching methods (Caffarella, 2002). It could be argued that cultural diversity among curriculum decision-makers should reflect the diversity of students (Igbineweka & Princes, 1996).

Five types of *resources* were identified: financial resources, learning resources, facilities and equipment, time, and other resources.

- With respect to *financial resources*, three types of costs for a programme can be identified: development, delivery and evaluation costs (Caffarella, 2002). On the income side, funding sources include student fees, government funding, organisational profit, sponsorship, targeted funding from external bodies. Obviously, what is funding for the institution is cost for the funding providers, for example, the cost of the programme to students (Pratt, 1994).

- *Learning resources* include audiovisual materials, books, other printed materials, self-study materials, equipment, computers, and software (Wiles & Bondi, 1989). Sources for learning materials include: purchasing from others; creating own materials; and, the internet

(Boone, et al., 2002). Possible criteria for the selection of learning resources are: the relevancy to the activity; the accuracy; and, the appropriateness to needs and interests of students (Wiles & Bondi, 1989).

- Selection of *facilities and equipment* (Caffarella, 2002) may be influenced by the following factors: the specific discipline; the relationship between disciplines; competition with programmes at other institutions; the relationship with industry; potential research activities of staff and students; safety; required instrumentation, computers and media; the chosen pedagogy; and, maintenance requirements (Lidsky, 2002). In addition, affordability of up-to-date facilities and equipment is important as these are considered to relate to quality, implying an advantage for rich institutions (Quehl, et al., 1999).

- In addition to time for students, as identified in the previous section, *time for personnel* must be considered (Pratt, 1994). This includes the allocation of development time (Hubball & Burt, 2004), for example for re-designing courses towards flexible learning (Vaughan, 2007), as well as timeframes that must be met.

- In regards to other resources, *resources for evaluation* and *for development* are elements for consideration (Sork, 2001)

A final element within this component is *regulations*. Rules and regulations define what people involved in the programme can and cannot do and therefore reflect a philosophy (Wiles & Bondi, 2007) and potentially some tensions. For example, a teacher may face ethical dilemmas in relation to regulations, including: fairness and consistency of grading; deciding on plagiarism; dealings with late submission and requests for extension; and, requirements for blind marking (Macfarlane, 2001).

2.2.6. Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment and evaluation are the fifth and sixth components of programme design. They require some explanation to distinguish each from the other the before exploring the elements of each.

Evaluation can have two purposes: to prove learning and to improve learning (Pratt, 1994; Romiszowski, 1981). The function of the first can be to both insiders and outsiders to the teaching and learning process, while the second only targets the insiders. The two purposes are often referred to as summative and formative, respectively (Pratt, 1994). A different distinction made in the literature is between evaluation of what the student has learned and evaluation of programmes and courses, to judge whether learning has been effective (McGee, 1997) and efficient (Diamond, 1998). Most literature refers to these two as assessment and evaluation, respectively (Taras, 2005). The above leads to the distinction of four types of assessment and evaluation:

- *Summative assessment*: To prove what the student has learned to whoever has an interest.

   This purpose allows institutions to award credentials (Dean, 1994), to report on individual student achievement, and to guide decisions about the student (Pratt, 1994). Summative assessment shows students what the learning priorities are and in this respect influences their learning approaches, which can be either positive or negative (Pratt, 1994). Summative assessment "encapsulates all the evidence up to a given point" (Taras, 2005, p. 468). It traditionally occurs at the end of a course or programme and does not influence the course or programme structure or processes (Romiszowski, 1981).

- *Formative assessment*: To improve what the student has learned. Formative assessment is integral to learning, helping students to learn about themselves, to develop self-confidence and commitment to learning (Dean, 1994; Pratt, 1994). It also supports student-teacher communication, adjustment of the learning process (Dean, 1994), diagnosis and consolidation of learning, and improvement of learning approaches (Pratt, 1994). Sometimes formative is distinguished from

diagnostic assessment (McGee, 1997), but I have combined the two, because both aim at improving learning. Formative assessment can occur at any time during a programme (Romiszowski, 1981; Taras, 2005).

What seems to be a black-and-white distinction between summative and formative assessment is grey in practice, because formative assessment requires summative judgements and summative assessments could well assist in improving learning (Taras, 2009).

- *Summative evaluation*: To prove that learning has been effective and efficient to whoever has an interest.

  Summative evaluation provides feedback about the success of the programme (Pratt, 1994). More importantly, it is used for accountability to stakeholders, showing that institutions and programmes impact positively on society (Boone, et al., 2002; Caffarella, 2002; J. Heywood, 2000). Summative evaluation usually occurs at the end of a programme or course.

- *Formative evaluation*: To improve the effectiveness and efficiency of learning.

  Formative evaluation measures outputs or processes with the specific purpose of modifying either the structure of a programme or the processes used in the programme. This form of evaluation can take place at any time (Caffarella, 2002).

Both assessment and evaluation can be analysed by five fundamental but interrelated questions (Rowntree, 1981; Taba, 1962): Why?; What?; How?; Who?; and When? For assessment, Diamond (1998) adds: Where? For both assessment and evaluation, each question will be discussed in more detail below.

2.2.7. Assessment

The elements relating to the assessment component of programme design found in the literature are shown in Figure 6.

Why assess?

Four stakeholders with an interest in assessment can be identified: students, teachers, institutions, and the community (Toohey, 1999). Each stakeholder has different reasons for being interested, which relates the question of 'why assess?' directly to the question 'for whom?' The answer to the 'why' question defines whether assessment can be considered as either *summative* or *formative,* as discussed in the previous section.
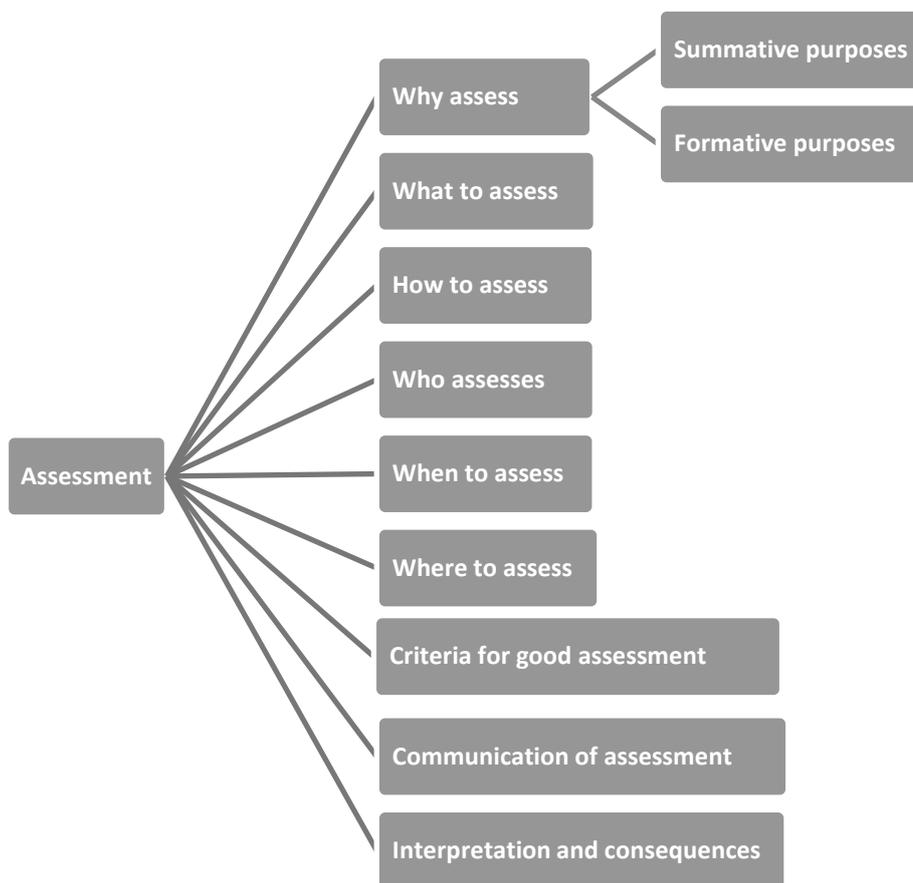
Figure 6: Elements and sub-elements in the assessment component of programme design

What, how, when, where to assess, and who assesses?

Most literature claims that what should be assessed are the intentions of the programme, for example, the graduate profile (Toohey, 1999), or the course intentions (Diamond, 1998). Diamond warns against the pitfall of assessing low level skills only, when assessment methods are not carefully selected, leading to a difference between actual and intended programme outcomes. Such a difference is referred to as the hidden curriculum (Sambell & McDowell, 1998). Actual outcomes are highly influenced by students' typification of assessment, as a result of, among other things, communication about assessment, a student's previous experiences with assessment and their attitude to learning (Sambell & McDowell, 1998). Various authors discuss norm-referenced versus criterion-referenced assessment (e.g. McGee, 1997; Rowntree, 1981), generally leading to the conclusion that criterion-referenced is fairer as it measures the student's knowledge as an individual, irrespective of their peers' results. As a consequence, it is important to know which criteria will be used, who sets these criteria and why and how the grade will be determined (Pratt, 1994).

How to assess, or assessment methods, tends to be related to the purpose of the assessment and to what is assessed (Dean, 1994; Pratt, 1994; Toohey, 1999). Students could be assessed individually or as a group (Diamond, 1998). They could also be asked to develop their own assessments as a method of individualising the learning process (Dean, 1994). While quantitative methods in assessment are often favoured by policymakers, Pinar et al. (1995) argue that qualitative methods have the potential to describe the fine details of what actually happened.

A range of people can be involved in conducting the assessment, including teachers, qualified practitioners or assessors, peer-students, and/or the students themselves (R. Harris, Guthrie, Hobart, & Lundberg, 1995; J. Heywood, 2000; Taras, 2010; Toohey, 1999).

As mentioned in the previous section, formative assessment can occur at any time during the learning process. Traditionally summative assessments were conducted at the end of the course, but increasingly course work completed

during the course is used to count towards the student's final grade (Toohey, 1999). Pratt (1994) distinguishes snapshot and continuous assessment, arguing that the latter may better reflect the measurement of what is to be assessed.

While pointed out by Diamond(1998), the question of where to assess is rarely mentioned in the literature. One identified example relates to vocational education, where it is suggested that the workplace is the preferred place for assessing real-life experiences, while other aspects of learning may be assessed better outside the workplace to avoid pressures from work (R. Harris, et al., 1995).

Other elements

Some additional elements to the six that were highlighted at the end of Section 2.2.6 were found. Firstly, a range of *criteria for good assessment* are referred to across the literature (Broadfoot & Black, 2004; R. Harris, et al., 1995; J. Heywood, 2000; McGee, 1997; Pratt, 1994; Smuling, et al., 1990; Taba, 1962; Toohey, 1999). These include: validity; reliability; efficiency, that is, that the time of students and personnel is used in an efficient way; frequency; transparency; authenticity; flexibility to adapt the assessment approach to different delivery modes, sites and student needs; comprehensiveness, which includes the use of a range of complementary methods; sufficiency; and, humanity or fairness. The latter can be explained in relation to the question whether each student has a fair opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. This includes fairness related to the cultural diversity of students, as well as fairness for students with special needs. Fairness can also be explained, however, in terms of the availability of appeal opportunities, or as the fairness of the time available to complete the assessment.

A further element within assessment is *communication*. For example, how is student progress reported (Wiles & Bondi, 2007)? How are the assessment results reported (Pratt, 1994)? And, how is feedback provided on assessments (Younger, McGury, & Fiddler, 2001)? Following from this are the *interpretation and consequences* of assessment (Romiszowski, 1981). For

example, what are the re-assessment opportunities (Van Meel, 1993)? What does 'completion' of a programme mean? Is it : 1) the student has spent enough time in the system; 2) the individual student's needs have been met; or, 3) the student has mastered the content or objectives (Romiszowski, 1981)?

A special type of assessment is recognition of prior learning (R. Harris, et al., 1995), which links assessment to flexibility as discussed in Section 2.2.4. If this option is available within a programme, all questions as listed in this section are to be considered.

2.2.8. Evaluation

Elements found in the literature for evaluation, the sixth and final component of programme design, are similar to those for assessment. They are shown in Figure 7.
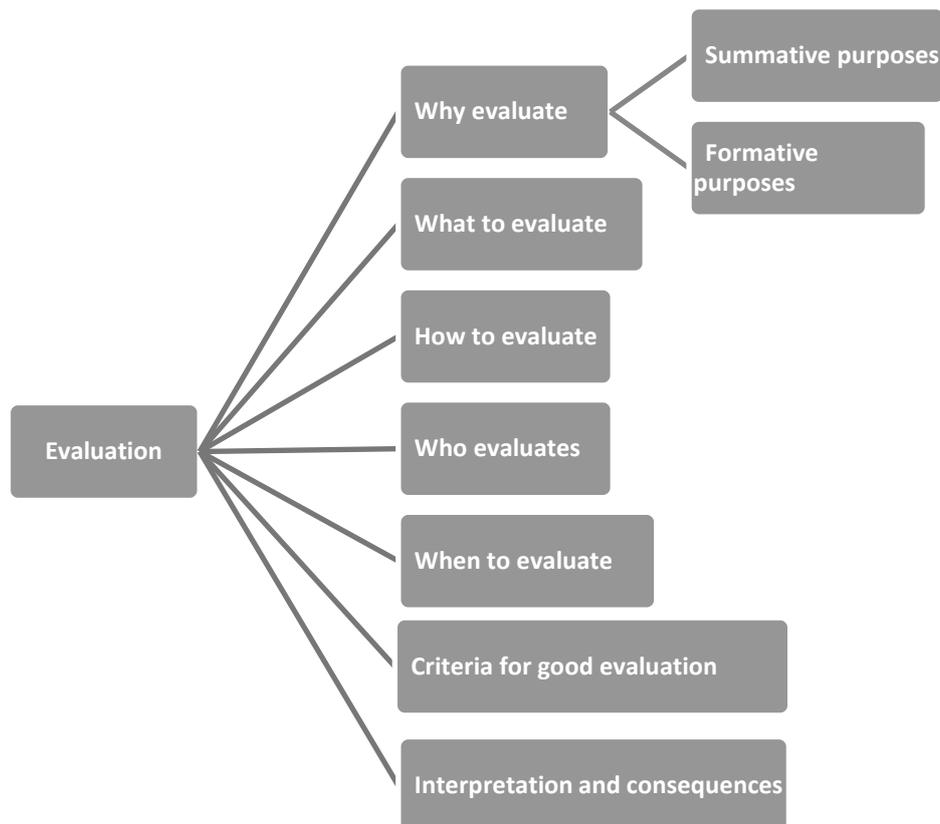
Figure 7: Elements and sub-elements in the evaluation component of programme design

Why evaluation? For whom?

As described in Section 2.2.6, evaluation can have summative or formative purposes (Menix, 2007). Summative evaluation serves to demonstrate the impact of the programme (Hubball, et al., 2007). It is often related to accountability (J. Heywood, 2000), for example demonstrating that the programme provides 'value for money' (D. Scott, 2005). Formative evaluation targets at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme for the benefit of the participants in the programme (Hubball, et al., 2007). Different methods may be used to carry out summative and formative evaluations of programmes, which justifies considering them separately in programme design practice.

What, how, when, to evaluate, and who evaluates?

Evaluation deals with every aspect of a programme (Menix, 2007), and what can be evaluated is therefore directly linked to all components of programme design. In particular, programme objectives are often the foundation for evaluation (Caffarella, 2002). Additionally, it is important to evaluate programme outcomes and interactions between student and teacher, including: student achievement; student experiences; staff experiences; impact on the community; and, impact on the organisation teaching the programme (Madaus & Kellaghan, 1992). Both manifest (immediately observable) and latent (observable after a period of time) outcomes are considered to be important for inclusion in evaluation (Boone, et al., 2002).

The 'how to' question includes which data are collected, how, when and where they are collected, and who provides these data (Caffarella, 2002; Menix, 2007). Student evaluations of teaching is one example of how to conduct evaluation (J. Heywood, 2000). Analysis of assessment results can also be used for evaluation purposes (Jones, 2002).

It is recommended to set the evaluation criteria before the evaluation, and even before the course starts (Menix, 2007; Romiszowski, 1981). However, it is also suggested to allow emergent evaluation criteria, including consideration how these criteria are to be determined (Caffarella, 2002).

The potential importance of who evaluates and who analyses the data is visible in the use of power in national testing as evaluation of school performance (Madaus & Kellaghan, 1992).

Summative evaluation usually occurs at the end of a programme or a learning activity, while formative evaluation occurs throughout a programme (Menix, 2007). Sork (2001) explains that formative evaluation of the programme design process occurs continuously throughout this process.

Other elements

According to Caffarella (2002), the use and possible *consequences of evaluation* should be clear before the evaluation. For example, evaluation can serve to initiate programme changes (e.g. Browne, 2005; Fedorowicz & Gogan, 2001) or for personnel decisions (J. Heywood, 2000). As a *criterion for good evaluation*, Caffarella (2002) emphasises the importance of a planned approach. It is suggested that all people who need to use the information must be involved in the design of the evaluation and the selection of data (Diamond, 1998). Heywood (2000) adds that a good evaluation needs to be valid and unbiased.

2.2.9. Summary

Exploration of the literature has shown that programme design can be considered as a construction of six components. With each of these consisting of a range of elements and sub-elements, it highlights that programme design practice involves considering many, often interdependent, variables. This interdependence implies that programme design practice is not a reductionist process of 'ticking off' the variables one-by-one by making a decision on each independently. Instead, decisions made for one variable will have implications for other variables, or combinations of other variables, creating a much more complex process of decision-making.

While the findings from this section provide a framework to decide which aspects of educational practice can be considered as part of programme practice, and will therefore be studied in this research project, more is needed to understand the decisions that are made for the variables and how these decisions are connected. This is the topic of the next section.

2.3   Which Educational and Curriculum Design Theories in the Literature have the Potential to Help Understand and Theorise Programme Design Practice in a Polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand?

This section aims to scope ideas for understanding programme design practice that might be useful to build on during this inquiry. Simultaneously, it intends to identify gaps in existing literature on programme design theory for tertiary education that will help to frame the research questions for this study. Central to the search in this section is the word 'understanding'. Chapter 1 explained how the understanding of programme design practice that this study seeks is guided by the concept of 'verstehen' (Weber, 1968), which was explained as an "empathic understanding of what people's subjective meanings are" (Collins & Makowsky, 2010, p. 112). Hence in seeking this understanding it is important to find out 'why' people design programmes the way they do, and 'why' they make certain programme design decisions and not others. The Tylerian approaches that were discussed in Section 2.2.1 do not provide this insight into the 'why' of decisions, they only tend to refer to the 'what' and 'how'. While descriptions of Tylerian approaches often provide justifications for the choices that are made, the justifications are hardly ever debated or even up for debate. Therefore the Tylerian approaches are unable, or at least insufficient, to help find the understanding that is sought in this study.

This section describes theories and ideas from the scholarly literature that provide insight or can help to gain insight into the 'why' of programme design practice in formal tertiary education, particularly in the context of polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand, beyond the 'how' or the 'what'. In the following sections I summarise the findings of this literature search.

2.3.1. Programme Design Theories for Adult Education

The main and most comprehensive programme design theory in adult education that can help us to understand programme design practice seems to be the one developed by Cervero and Wilson (1994, 1998, 2001). They argue that programme design decisions can be understood as a result of the negotiation of the power and the interests of the people involved. They identify four concepts that need to be included in planning:

(1) Power, or the socially structured capacity to act, which "is rooted in sets of historically-developing social and organizational relationships" (Cervero & Wilson, 1994, p. 254);

(2) Interests: Each person involved in the planning process uses their power to meet their own interests;

(3) Negotiation: Programme developers "always negotiate *with* their own specific interests and power", and "*between* the interests of other people". They "also *negotiate* the interests and power relations *themselves.*" (Cervero & Wilson, 1994, p. 256, italics in original); and,

(4) Responsibility: "To whom is the adult educator ethically and politically answerable?" (Cervero & Wilson, 1994, p. 258)

In this theory, the centrality of people and their decision-making processes allows Cervero and Wilson to develop an understanding of why decisions are made. This is essentially different from Tylerian approaches, that tend to remain silent about the people involved. In Tylerian approaches, a presumably neutral designer analyses a range of information sources to make 'objective' decisions. On the other hand, Cervero and Wilson (1994) argue that these information sources and the designer are inseparable and linked through power relationships. Design is socially constructed through the negotiations of the different perspectives – including power relations, interests and responsibilities – of the information sources (Rees, Cervero, Moshi, & Wilson, 1997). The designer embodies only one of these perspectives. Design is therefore a dynamic process that affects the

programme that is designed, as well as the designer and the information sources.

Cervero and Wilson's theory does not incorporate what the negotiations of power and interest are about, that is, which aspects of educational practice are considered to be part of programme design practice and which are not. This may explain why Sork integrated the theory developed by Cervero and Wilson with a Tylerian approach (Sork, 1997, 2001; Sork & Newman, 2004). The Tylerian aspect of Sork's framework puts boundaries around what to consider or negotiate, while the aspect of Cervero and Wilson's theory creates space for the negotiation of power and interests. Sork's framework is a six-component Tylerian-like structure, reflected in the pie shape in Figure 8. The six components resemble the components used for the inventory in Section 2.2, because I used the pie shape of Sork's framework as inspiration for the inventory, as I referred to in Section 2.2.1. Sork and Newman (2004) emphasise that each component is not a set of techniques, but a cluster of 'how to' as well as 'who' and 'why' questions, decisions and actions. Each decision or action is to be formatively evaluated and may have consequences for decisions made on other components. The six-component structure exists in three domains. The first is the technical domain, which focuses mostly on 'how to' questions and is virtually the Tyler Rationale. The second domain is the social-political, which asks questions related to interests and power. The third domain is the ethical, relating to the concept of responsibility, with questions using the language of ethics and morality. Hence the second and third domains address questions that were highlighted by Cervero and Wilson's (1994) theory. The importance of these domains is confirmed by McLean (2000), who analyses his own experiences and practices to conclude that programme planning necessarily involves all three domains.

In evaluating the potential usefulness of this framework for the aim of this study, some issues remain unexplained. While Sork and Newman (2004) still give the impression of the involvement of a 'neutral' programme planner, Cervero and Wilson (1994) argue convincingly that there is always more than one person involved. Who decides then which 'why' and 'who' questions

will be asked, who decides who should provide the answers? Secondly, if multiple people are involved, the formative evaluation of decisions suggested in Sork's framework becomes a complex process of social construction. Whose views will prevail in this process and why? Finally, the framework is developed for initial programme design only. What happens to the questions and answers during the implementation process, when even more people become involved and the process of social construction continues as an ongoing result of practice?
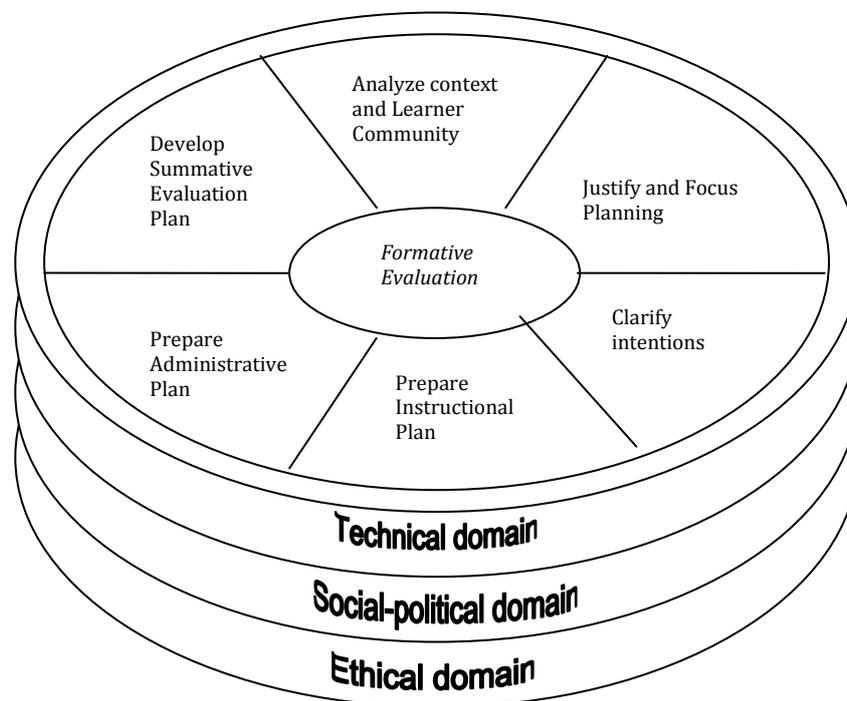
Figure 8: Components and three domains of programme design (Source: Sork, 2001, p. 180 and 185)

These questions point towards a need for a theory that allows for a more complex conceptualisation of programme design practice, that is, a conceptualisation that acknowledges the influence of many interrelated and uncontrollable variables on programme design.

Acknowledging complexity

Literature related to the complexity of programme design practice in tertiary or adult education is emerging, but still limited. A small number of references was found indicating how researchers have been trying to make sense of this complexity. Most of these refer to a university context. All of them demonstrate unease with the lack of useful existing theories.

Slaughter (1997) highlights that programme design is a complex social practice. She draws particular attention to important societal influences to be taken into account when trying to understand programme design practice, including: the state and businesses; sponsors and funders; and culture, in the sense of race, gender, social class, as well as the culture of the discipline. These observations are largely confirmed by Burgess (2004) in the context of the development of a social work degree. Schuyler (1998) confirms this by explaining how the knowledge that is made available to students is constructed through power negotiations among government regulations, approval processes, faculty staff, disciplines and departments, and funding regulations.

A second need for considerations of complexity is experienced through the tension between existing, structure-enforcing, planning models in the literature which have been developed for formal education, and the realities of 'grassroots planning', particularly in the non-formal community education context (Egan, 2005). Egan recommends either broadening the literature to incorporate this more complex approach to planning, or developing a distinct research area focused on grassroots planning. The first recommendation seems to be supported by Sloane-Seale (1997), who proposes a praxis model that acknowledges the complexity and situation-dependency of programme design.

The third and probably most elaborate acknowledgement of complexity, as identified in the literature, is by Barnett and associates (Barnett, 2000; Barnett & Coate, 2005; Barnett, Parry, & Coate, 2001), who explain how curriculum in higher education is shaped by historical and social contexts. Barnett and Coate (2005) explore a range of tacit notions of curriculum that

they identified in the context of university education in the United Kingdom. They summarise this exploration by describing three power structures underlying the higher education curriculum (Barnett & Coate, 2005, pp. 39-40): 1) "The curriculum reflects the social context in which it is located"; 2) "The hidden curriculum is pervasive and powerful"; and, 3) "The power of the knowledge fields". It makes sense to assume that similar power structures operate in a polytechnic context. These power structures strongly suggest that values and beliefs underpin programme design practice.

Barnett and Coate (2005) particularly comment how accountability requirements in university education in the United Kingdom enforce the development of pre-determined curricula which do not allow people to prepare for the complex and uncertain world in which we live. This is endorsed by Hicks (2007) for the Australian university context. Barnett and Coate (2005) propose a curriculum which is fluid, open-ended and allows for risk-taking. This would involve less "design-in-advance" and more "design-in-action", resulting in a curriculum that is always "in process" (Barnett & Coate, 2005, pp. 50-51). This perspective is different from Tylerian approaches, and from the theory and framework described by Cervero and Wilson (1994, 1998, 2001) and by Sork (1997, 2001; Sork & Newman, 2004), respectively, which all suggest a finite planning or design process, after which an implementation process will follow. 'Implementation' refers to everything that happens to the programme after it has been formally approved. However, the distinction between design and implementation disregards my own experience that many design activities (e.g. timetabling of classroom sessions) occur after formal approval. Therefore, one could argue whether the softening that Barnett and Coate propose for their curriculum framework is not something that already occurs in current programme design practices, but perhaps not explicitly. Some deeper understanding of the relationship between design and implementation seems useful for the purpose of this study, but was not found in the adult education literature.

Summarising, this section has shown that the adult education literature that can help provide an understanding of programme design practice is very

limited. However, whatever literature was found showed an emerging acknowledgement of the complexity of programme design practice. Part of this complexity is the negotiation of power and interests, which is very likely to be underpinned by values and beliefs about education. This will be explored further in the next section. This section leaves an open end regarding understanding the relationship between programme design and implementation. I will come back to this in Section 2.3.3.

2.3.2. Ideologies

A second strand of relevant literature that is likely to contribute to understanding programme design practice is that of ideologies. Various suggestions have already been made in this thesis that ideologies influence programme design practice and therefore influence any theories that aim to explain this practice. Particularly, Chapter 1 described how neo-liberalist ideology has influenced tertiary education and curriculum policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand, which in their turn have influenced programme design practice. This section scopes the connections between ideologies and programme design practice in a tertiary education context as identified in the literature.

Before reporting the literature findings on the influences of ideologies on programme design practice, it is important to clarify the concept of ideologies as it will be used in this study. This is not an easy task, as the concept has been intensively debated, and has been called "the most elusive concept in the whole of social science" (McLellan, 1995, p. 1). I have not intended to report this debate; I will only refer to a few examples from the literature to illustrate how the concept of ideologies will be interpreted in this study.

The concern with ideologies originates from the thinking of Marx where ideology was seen as "a philosophical standpoint related to idealism: an account of society which treats ideas and concept as the sources of social change, rather than the material forces in the real world" (Small, 2005, p.71). This concept identifies ideology as an ideal superstructure that exists external to humanity. The false picture of society it creates makes that people are

unable to see the truth, that is, what is actually going on in society, and therefore ideology keeps existing power structures in place (Small, 2005).

A different perspective on ideologies is where they are seen as competing frameworks of shared interpretations and interests that have resulted from people trying to make sense of an increasingly pluralist and information rich world (McLellan, 1995). The following definition from the educational literature seems to fit within such a perspective: ideologies are "cognitive structures containing the interdependent beliefs, views, principles, and myths prevailing in a given social group and reflecting the preferences and interests of that group in the political, social, moral, and religious spheres" (Lamm, 1991, p. 103). This definition is neutral in the sense that it does refer to ideologies as being true or false. Another observation from this definition is that ideologies are seen as attached to given social groups. Lamm (1991) explains two ways in which ideologies can affect educational practice. The first way is where ideology is a powerful restricting factor which interferes with what educators do. Alternatively, ideology can be viewed as a complex social construct of views and ideas from individuals or groups in society, that surface as a philosophy, a theory, or a tradition.

The problem with this viewpoint is that the two ways in which ideologies affect educational practice are difficult to distinguish, as ideologies that are restricting factors are also complex constructs of ideas that have been created by people. Similarly, ideologies that have developed as a complex social construct to surface as, for example, a tradition could well become a restricting factor. It seems to depend on the power relationships between ideologies how ideologies will influence practice, but the definition does not explain how these power relationships come about.

Heywood (2003) provides a more open definition, by referring to ideologies as "more or less coherent sets of ideas that provide the basis for organized political action" (p. 12), which are not necessarily attached to certain groups of people. He explains that what makes ideology so complex is that they balance on the boundaries between what is and what should be, and between thought and action. Furthermore, ideologies are fluid and their boundaries

with other ideologies are blurred. What remains unclear in this explanation however is how ideologies can become so powerful. This is where the concept of discourse may help.

Discourse was presented by Foucault as an alternative to the notion of ideologies (Olssen, et al., 2004), where discourse can be defined as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 54). This concept assumes that all knowledge and thought are socially constructed, and inextricably related to power. The connections between discourse, knowledge and power imply that power is exercised through discourses and practices, rather than possessed by certain (groups of) people (Olssen, et al., 2004). An important example in the context of education showing how power that is exercised through discourse pervades every aspect of our society is found in educational policies:

> In most modern societies, the education system is controlled by the state, but it works to maintain relations of power throughout society as a whole. For this reason, the official discourse of the state relating to educational policies [...] are obvious instances in which discourse becomes the instrument and object of power.
>
> (Olssen, et al., 2004, p. 67)

However discourse and ideology do not need to be seen as mutually exclusive: discourses can become ideological when they reflect "unconscious and taken-for–granted" systems of thought, speech and experience. In other words, ideology can become embedded or "inscribed" in discourse (Olssen, et al., 2004, p. 65). Because people always participate in a range of discourses this would imply that they may adopt the ways of thinking, speaking and experiencing of a range of ideologies.

Such a viewpoint is able to acknowledge ideologies as more or less coherent sets of ideas, and at the same time can explain how ideologies exercise power in society. Thirdly, it is able to account for tensions or struggles between ideologies. Because different types of discourses could have different ideologies embedded, struggles may arise when ideologically different discourse types interact: "What is at stake in such struggles is which

discourse type is to be dominant within the social domain of education, and therefore which practices are to be ideologically maintained or strengthened" (Olssen, et al., 2004, p. 70).

Various critiques on the neo-liberalist tertiary education and curriculum policies that were implemented in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the 1990s (e.g. Olssen, et al., 2004) express the struggles between the policy discourse types and the discourse types that educators often participate in. They will be explored in more detail in Section 2.4. Similar critiques of neo-liberalist or capitalist influences on various other adult education contexts are found in the literature, including university (S. Harris, 2007), vocational education and training (Anderson, Brown, & Rushbrook, 2004), and general adult education contexts (Brookfield, 2005). These critiques are examples of the power negotiation processes referred to by Cervero and Wilson (1994) as discussed in the previous section, but they are generally at a high level.

As a conclusion to the above discussion, the idea of ideologies as embedded in discourses seems to be useful for the further development of this study, for two reasons. Firstly, it shows an inherent connection between ideologies and discourse and therefore between ideologies and practice, that is, programme design practice. Secondly, it is able to account for the struggles that may arise in this practice when different ideologies interact. Therefore, where this thesis refers to ideologies, this idea of ideologies embedded in discourse will be implied.

A literature search for how ideologies potentially influence programme design practice in tertiary education pointed in two directions. One direction showed the influence of political-economic ideologies, which underpin tertiary education policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand and many other countries. Olssen et al. (2004) describe how liberalist and welfare liberalist ideologies were influential in Aotearoa/New Zealand education in the past and may still exercise some influence today. However, since 1989 neo-liberalist discourses have become dominant in education policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand, as was referred to in Chapter 1 (Section 1.2), and therefore this ideology is likely to play an important part in understanding

programme design practice in the context of this study. For this reason, it seems worthwhile to provide a brief overview of some key aspects of neo-liberalist thought here.

Neo-liberalism characterises the individual as a "manipulatable man", who is self-interested by nature, but, to avoid his/her potential 'slackness', is encouraged to be continuously entrepreneurial, responsive and flexible (Olssen, et al., 2004, p.137). Neo-liberalism further claims that social order is able to regulate itself under a system that is completely governed by market forces. Three theories within neo-liberalism are worth mentioning here, considering the context of this study: 1) Public choice theory (Boston, et al., 1996; Olssen, et al., 2004) considers people as self-interested choosers. Public interest is the sum of the self-interests of individuals which are governed by market forces. Therefore politics and public institutions, including educational institutions are governed by the same interests and market forces, which allow the value of education to be decided by consumers, and expect educational institutions to compete for students; 2) Human capital theory (Abbott & Doucouliagos, 2004; Olssen, et al., 2004) considers education as an investment in people and the result of education as a form of capital, which contributes to productivity and the competitive advantage of the nation; 3) New public management, including concepts like agency theory, managerialism and contractualism (Boston, et al., 1996; Olssen, et al., 2004), considers work relations as a series of contracts between a principal and an agent. This provides autonomy to the agent within the boundaries of the contract, and allows the principal to exercise control through mechanisms of accountability. The government exercises devolved management control over education through contracts with educational institutions which are monitored via accountability mechanisms that include purchase agreements, achievement of outcomes, reporting, and quality assurance expectations.

The second direction provided by the literature search for ideologies was that of educational ideologies. This literature identifies six ideologies, which are probably most comprehensively described by Elias and Merriam, who refer to

them as "philosophies": liberalist, behaviourist, progressive, humanist, radical and analytical (Elias & Merriam, 1995). I have only been able to find confirmation in other literature sources for the first five of this list. For example, Sork and Newman (2004) acknowledge liberalist, behaviourist, and radical ideologies, although they use different identifiers for each. They describe progressive and humanist as one. Another example is where Bradshaw (1995) acknowledges behaviourist and radical ideologies, using different identifiers again, but she splits the humanist ideology into self-direction (acknowledging andragogy) and learner-centredness (acknowledging humanism). She does not refer to the liberalist or the progressive ideology. It is worth noting that the origins of this literature resides in western, particularly North-American, traditions, which raises questions to what extent these ideologies would influence the educational discourses in a bicultural nation like Aotearoa/New Zealand.

A brief summary and comparison of the views on education and curriculum according to the five confirmed educational and the three political-economic ideologies identified in the previous two paragraphs is shown in Table II. Both Sork and Newman's (2004) and Bradshaw's (1995) identifications of ideologies have been included in Table II in comparison with those described by Elias and Merriam (1995). A very detailed analysis and description of four ideologies currently influencing curriculum in compulsory education in the United States is provided by Schiro (2008). His analysis is informed by more than a century of literature on educational ideologies, but again, very much embedded in western traditions. Table II shows how these four ideologies confirm the list that was identified from the adult education literature; they appear to overlap with the ones identified by Sork and Newman (2004).

Reflecting on the literature findings and on Table II the following can be noted. Firstly, Table II demonstrates that programmes that are informed by different ideologies will work out very differently in practice, confirming that ideologies influence programme design practice. Secondly, Table II shows that political-economic and educational ideologies are related, implying that political-economic ideologies are not just political or economic: they have

implications for the educational process. Thirdly, Table II does not claim to have identified all ideologies that are at play. I was only able to find the literature that explained how ideologies potentially influence programme design practice. I was unable to find any literature that started with a particular programme design situation and then analysed the multiple ideologies that are at play and how these are negotiated. Doing the latter might reveal many more ideologies that have not been identified in this section.

2.3.3. A Stock Take

So far, two strands from the literature have been discussed: Programme design theories for adult education and Ideologies. The adult education literature that can help provide an understanding of programme design practice appears to be very limited. Nevertheless, the identified literature was found to show an emerging acknowledgement of the complexity of programme design practice as a complex social practice. Part of this complexity is the negotiation of power and interests, which is very likely to be underpinned by values and beliefs about education. Another part seems to be the relationship between design and implementation, which appears blurred. It was suggested that curriculum is dynamic, that is, always in process, but the adult education literature did not provide any further theories around this matter.

There is a strong indication from the literature that ideologies influence programme design practice. Educational and political-economic ideologies were identified that potentially influence this practice in polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand. However, I was unable to find literature that explains how ideologies and their mutual tensions play out within a programme design situation.

The previous sections have left some open ends, which seem important for the development of an understanding of programme design practice in polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand. They are summarised in the following questions:

Table II: Educational and political-economic ideologies (shown in bold italic font) that potentially influence programme design practice in polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Educational ideologies (Elias & Merriam, 1995)	Political-economic ideologies (Olssen, et al., 2004, pp. 180-181)	Purpose of education according to the ideologies (Elias & Merriam, 1995; Olssen, et al., 2004; Schiro, 2008)	Some characteristics of curriculum according to the ideologies (Elias & Merriam, 1995; Olssen, et al., 2004; Schiro, 2008)	Comparison with other ideologies - adult education		Comparison with other ideologies - compulsory education (Schiro, 2008)
				(Sork & Newman, 2004)	(Bradshaw, 1995)	
Liberalist	*Liberalist:* Education is a private good.	• Development of intellectual, moral, spiritual and aesthetic powers; • Support the full realisation of individual's potential.	• Disciplinary study; • Training of minds over job or career demands.	Liberalist		Scholar academic
Behaviourist		• Survival of individuals, human species and society.	• Focus on measurable behaviour through the manipulation of environmental conditions; • Learning of job skills; • Learning how to learn.	Behaviourist	Efficiency	Social efficiency
	Neo-liberalist: Education is publicly provided but privately distributed and accessed.	• Advancement of individuals who have paid for their skills.	• Freedom of choice; • Responsive to the needs of customers; • Performance knowledge and skills of use to employers; • Skills are context-independent.			

Educational ideologies (Elias & Merriam, 1995)	Political-economic ideologies (Olssen, et al., 2004, pp. 180-181)	Purpose of education according to the ideologies (Elias & Merriam, 1995; Olssen, et al., 2004; Schiro, 2008)	Some characteristics of curriculum according to the ideologies (Elias & Merriam, 1995; Olssen, et al., 2004; Schiro, 2008)	Comparison with other ideologies - adult education		Comparison with other ideologies - compulsory education (Schiro, 2008)
				(Sork & Newman, 2004)	(Bradshaw, 1995)	
Progressive	*Welfare liberalist:* Education is a public good.	• Education is lifelong and life-wide; • Instrument of social development; • Learning through experience.	• Experiential learning; • Student centred; • Real-life learning situations.	Learning as lifelong growth		Student centred
Humanist		• Development of self-actualising individuals.	• Teacher is facilitator; • Learning by discovery; • Learning is personal, intrinsically motivated and rewarded.		Learner-centred	
					Self-direction	
Radical		• Vehicle for social change in economic and political spheres.	• Acculturation into the educator's vision of a good society; • Teacher is a guide.	Learning for the purpose of creating a democratic society	Critical analysis and social action	Social reconstruction

- How can the relationship between programme design and implementation be understood?

- How can the acknowledgement of complexity be used to progress the theorising of programme design practice in the context of this study? What is the place of ideologies in the theorising?

Curriculum theories in compulsory education seem to have been developed further than in tertiary education. The following section explores and discusses some theories offered by curriculum design literature in compulsory education that may be helpful in answering the above questions in relation to this research project.

2.3.4. Potentially Useful Curriculum Theories from Compulsory Education

The curriculum theory literature for compulsory education was investigated to develop further thoughts to answer the two questions from the previous section.

How can the relationship between programme design and implementation be understood?

To explain changes to the curriculum as it develops from the initial idea, through a curriculum document, towards being put into practice and experienced by the student, Goodlad and Associates (1979) argue the existence of different levels in curriculum development: societal, institutional, instructional, and personal/experiential. Stark et al. (1997, p. 103) confirm this concept of design levels as they identify "strategic planning at the institutional level" versus "operational planning at the program level", and comment on the general lack of concern with the "concepts, assumptions, influences and processes" that tie the two types of planning together. For programme design practice in polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand this idea of levels can be translated as follows: the national level (e.g. education and curriculum policies), the institutional level (e.g. requirements described

in the institutional quality management system), the formal programme and course level (i.e. the documents for the programme and its courses as they are formally approved by a quality assurance body), the informal programme and course levels, and the level of an individual learning session. These levels are shown in Figure 9.
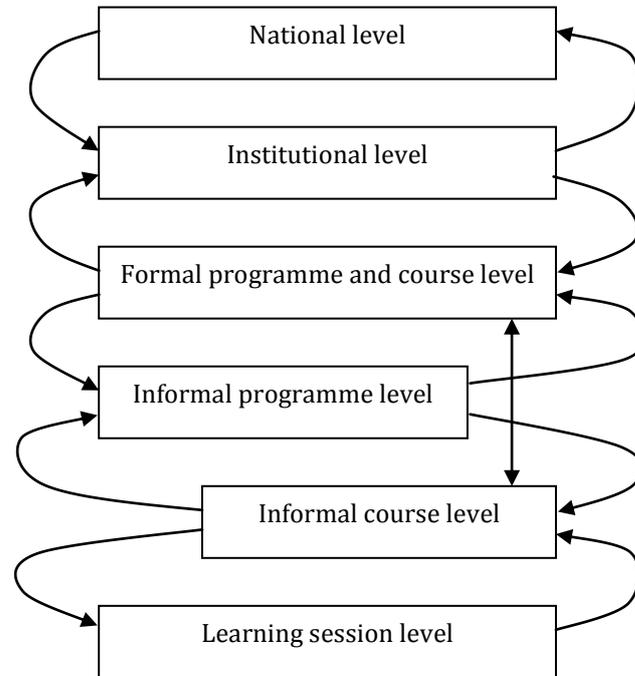
Figure 9: Design levels in a polytechnic according to my personal experience. The arrows represent the process of continuous mutual adaptation of design at each level.

The level at which formal approval of the programme and course documents occurs depends on the context. Polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand are generally characterised by the relatively high autonomy of the institutions, their departments and their teachers. This means that formal approval occurs at a relatively high programme level, leaving the details of the lower levels, called the implementation or delivery, to the departments and teachers. In other contexts, for example those described by Kessels and Plomp (1999) for corporate education, or by Venezky (1992) for compulsory education, formal approval may be situated at the lower course or even learning session level.

The interpretation of 'implementation' or 'delivery' in these contexts will change accordingly.

Three different perspectives on the relationship between formal and implemented curriculum can be identified (Snyder, Bolin, & Zumwalt, 1992). The 'fidelity' perspective sharply distinguishes formal curriculum from the curriculum that is brought into practice by teachers. This viewpoint, demonstrated in, for instance, Kessels and Plomp (1999) and Venezky (1992), considers any differences between what is planned and what is implemented as problems that must be either avoided or resolved. Alternatively, the 'enactment' perspective views curriculum as a joint creation of teacher and student, where formal curriculum materials may or may not be used as tools. This perspective is demonstrated in a study by Shkedi (2009), in which formal materials were largely ignored and 80% of materials were developed by the teachers themselves. The 'mutual adaptation' perspective lies in between, regarding implementation as a re-design process of the formal documents. This process is guided by the interpretations and the situational context of the people working with the formal design. Support for the 'mutual adaptation' perspective is found in the conceptual curriculum model proposed by Goodlad (1979). He describes how each level interacts through interpretation and transaction, and is fed by the interests, values, needs and wants of the people involved, which are, in their turn, inspired by notions of conventional wisdom and accepted knowledge. Support for the mutual adaptation idea from a different angle is provided by Spillane, Reiser and Reimer (2002), who explain why implementation of policy, as the policy maker intends, often fails. They describe implementation as a constructivist sense-making process, situated in a social and organisational context. The implications of the sense-making process have, in their turn, implications for the design of policy and the way in which it is communicated.

The 'mutual adaptation' perspective seems a useful start for studying programme design practice in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The study would confirm to what extent this perspective leans towards either of the other two perspectives and why. Taking the 'mutual adaptation'

perspective as the starting point implies that the national and institutional levels may be subject to change during design at programme level. Likewise, formal programme documents can change as a result of informal programme or course design decisions. The arrows in Figure 9 visualise this process. As each design level will involve different people, negotiations as referred to by Cervero and Wilson (1994, 1998, 2001) will occur continuously at each level and between levels. Therefore, programme design should not be studied as a product that is presented in a document, but must be considered as a complex process where different levels of design are negotiated on an ongoing basis. The implication for this inquiry is that it would have to involve decision-makers at the different levels as well as the formal programme documents.

The above resonates with the 'design-in-advance' and 'design-in-action' concepts (Barnett & Coate, 2005) described in Section 2.3.1, which imply that curriculum is continuously 'in process'. It also resonates with the idea that programme design practice is a complex process, which was already signalled in Section 2.3.1 and will be explored further in the next paragraphs.

How can the acknowledgement of complexity be used to progress the theorising of programme design practice in formal post-compulsory education? What is the place of ideologies in the theorising?

Cherryholmes (1988) offers a contribution to the understanding of the connection between the Tylerian approaches and the dearth of programme design theories based on complexity in terms of structuralist and post-structuralist discourses.

> Structuralism is based, in the first instance, on the realization that if human actions or productions have a meaning there must be an underlying system of conventions which makes this meaning possible...actions are meaningful only with respect to a set of institutional conventions
>
> (Culler (1973) as quoted in Cherryholmes, 1988, p.16).

Structuralism in education assumes certain methods of analysis and operates prescriptively "when preferred structural procedures, interpretations, and organizations are promoted with promise of order and rationality"

(Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 16). Cherryholmes explains further that educational discourses and practices often contain taken-for-granted structural assumptions and arguments about underlying structures and methods of investigation, which are ingrained in people's thinking and seldom discussed. As a consequence, such assumptions are very difficult to influence. Structures are claimed to be ideologically neutral and a-historical, and value and meaning are authoratively located in the relationship between the elements of the structures, external from individuals.

Cherryholmes (1988) demonstrates how the Tyler Rationale meets the characteristics of a structure. Using post-structuralist theories by Foucault and Derrida, he explains how the Rationale does not include value statements. It does not allow discussion of decision-making, politics, ethics, social criticism, social responsibility, or critical reflection. As a result, a programme designed on the basis of the Rationale automatically becomes a reflection of the dominant ideology and power arrangements of the time, and, therefore, will neither be ideologically neutral nor a-historical. The Tyler Rationale is only a rationalist and orderly simplification of a complex process (Cherryholmes, 1988). This simplicity may explain the persistence of Tylerian approaches in programme design, as they provide structure and rationality, having a 'logic' to them that appeals to many people. After sixty years the Tylerian structure has become engrained in many people's thinking, making this thinking very difficult to change.

Doll (2005, 2008) reflects on the idea of 'method', which is similar to that of 'structure', and its dominance in educational thinking. Doll relates 'method' back to theories of Petrus Ramus, Galileo Galilei, Frances Bacon and René Descartes, developed during the Enlightenment: "Historically method has combined the simple with the certain, producing a cross simplicity and superficial certainty. All this was seen over and approved by a mechanical God" (Doll, 2005, p. 47). 'Method', Doll argues, has dominated our thinking of curriculum through the Tyler Rationale until the reconceptualisation of curriculum by William Pinar. It assumes the student 'consumes' the curriculum presented, while the curriculum as reconceptualised by Pinar

reclaims the original meaning of 'currere', or 'to run a course', in its active sense. 'Currere' implies that "the individual is active and engaged in the process of curriculum, rather than as an object to be acted upon, a passive sensibility that now holds sway" (McKnight, 2006, p. 175).

Doll proposes a new sense of 'method' which combines the scientific with the spiritful and the spiritual, to create curriculum that is creative and transformative:

> A reconceptualized curriculum has no pre-set beginning, the beginning is in the existential moment and as the experience, with communal help, plunges into a situation, a matrix of connections (rich, recursive, relational, and rigorous) emerge. In this way, child and curriculum, learner and teacher, self and text, person and culture dance together to form a complex pattern-ever changing, ever stable, ever alive.
>
> (Doll, 2005, p. 55)

Interpreting this description, a programme is never designed and then implemented. A programme <u>is</u>. It has become what it is now as a result of social practice and it is ever changing. This idea may even make the entire concept of an educational programme redundant, as Slabbert and Hattingh (2006, p. 716) indicate: "The post-modern world creates the future. It follows that it is highly problematic, if not well nigh impossible to document/specify/outline curricula for it. It is life itself which becomes the curriculum, and living it becomes education".

As initiator of the reconceptualisation movement, Pinar provides a perspective which may be helpful to theorise programme design practice from this viewpoint that a programme <u>is</u>. Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery and Taubman (1995) describe curriculum as eleven 'texts': eleven different but interrelated perspectives to help understand the complexity of curriculum. Pinar et al.'s focus is on understanding the field of curriculum, rather than on understanding individual curriculum design situations. This implies that the 'texts' cannot be directly translated to the context of this study. However, what Pinar et al. provide is inspiration to study the complexity of programme design practice from different angles. I have used the titles and some ideas of the eleven texts to brainstorm which of these viewpoints have potential

relevance in trying to understand programme design practice in the context of this study.

First of all, three of the texts - curriculum as institutionalised, political, and theological texts – resonate with the technical, social-political and ethical domains of Sork's framework for programme design as discussed in Section 2.3.1. However, referring to Goodlad (1979, p. 363) again, the texts by Pinar et al. (1995) focus on understanding "what now exists", while the domains by Sork aim at "what should be". Nevertheless, the three domains in Sork's framework confirm that the idea of looking at curriculum from an institutionalised (technical), (social-)political, or theological (ethical) perspective is relevant for adult education, and therefore potentially for the context of polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Pinar et al. (1995) describe curriculum both as gender and as racial text. A common aspect of both is the social construction of power exchanges between groups of people, some of which has led to politics of exclusion or marginalisation. Lawler (1996) confirms the relevance of both perspectives for adult education:

> We come to situations of gender and racial equity, not from a neutral stance, but with our own special biases, values, and experiences. As professionals we want to "do the right thing," but as our roles collide, and decision making is imminent, whose "right thing" do we do? (p. 18)

Various concerns regarding marginalisation of certain groups of people with respect to race and gender are found in the adult education literature. For example, Johnson-Bailey (2001) explains how minority groups do not tend to be represented in the subject areas that make up the written curriculum. They also do not necessarily benefit from institutional roles and policies, which are mostly designed to suit the dominant group of people. As a consequence, hidden race and gender issues are likely to exist in the unwritten curriculum. White supremacy is reported as an often hidden component in educational policy priorities, beneficiaries and outcomes (Gillborn, 2005), for example affecting Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand education (Penetito, 2002). In addition, education has become a major export industry in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Codd, 2005a), attracting many students

from countries outside Aotearoa/New Zealand. The consequential phenomenon of the international classroom is referred to by Pinar et al. (1995) as 'curriculum as international text'. This not only has racial implications as described previously, but adds challenges around language and pedagogy (Johnson, 2008; Kuiper & Cameron, 2003).

'Curriculum as historical text' (Pinar, et al., 1995) creates awareness of the history that lies behind programme design practice as it now exists. As an example, the outline in Chapter 1 of the history of tertiary education and curriculum policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand over the last 20 years has shown how this history has helped shape current programme design practice in polytechnics. Another example can be found in Cherryholmes' (1988) argument how the use of the Tyler Rationale continues to reinforce historical values that were in place when the Rationale was first developed. A third example is that certain programme design decisions are made because they have proven themselves over time. Discussing administrative practice in adult education, Price (1996) notes that "Administrative procedures […] that have consequences for others are often performed on the basis of how they've always been done – assumed to be 'right' by tradition" (p. 16).

Students, teachers, and others bring their own experiences to a programme. These experiences are emphasised in 'Curriculum as autobiographical text' (Pinar, et al., 1995). This text is a critique on technical rationalism, with its "reduced world of skilled practice", and on "political text treating "the teacher as an unconscious reproducer of inequitable social structures"" (Pinar, et al., 1995, pp. 564-565).

Finally, both Doll - "child and curriculum, learner and teacher, self and text, person and culture dance together" (2005, p. 55) - and Barnett and Coate - "curriculum as an art form" (2005, p. 49)- refer to curriculum in aesthetic terms, to reinforce their views on curriculum as a process of ongoing creation and creativity. Pinar et al. (1995) identify this as 'curriculum as aesthetic text'.

Two of Pinar et al's (1995) texts have not been included in the above. While Pinar et al. distinguish curriculum as a phenomenological text, they also raise

the point that curriculum cannot be understood other than through people's experiences. This echoes the aim of this study, which is to understand programme design practice through the acknowledgement of peoples' perspectives which are shaped by their interactions with and experiences in the world. Therefore, the phenomenological perspective is inherent to this study. Similarly, 'curriculum as poststructural, deconstructed, postmodern text' overarches this study and is not just one way of looking at programme design. In this literature review, I have come to the conclusion that the understanding of programme design practice is likely to be sought in the direction of post-structuralism and/or post-modernism, which is evident by my reference to the work of Cherryholmes, Doll and Pinar in this section.

Pinar et al. (1995) do not explicitly refer to the influence of ideologies. The above strongly suggests that ideologies are at play, for example through people's personal beliefs, values and experiences; the reinforcement of values and beliefs of particular groups in society; or through the idea of education as an export industry. These examples indicate that ideologies are very likely to underpin the perspectives or 'texts' that were presented.

2.3.5. Summary

Sections 2.3.1 to 2.3.4 have explored existing theories from tertiary and some compulsory education contexts that may be helpful for theorising programme design practice in polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand. While traditional programme design approaches may be useful in examining the different components of a programme, the concept of a programme as a complex and living entity, the design of which is continuously 'in process', would seem to have much more potential to contribute to understanding the wide variety of influences and their mutual interactions on programme design practice. To describe this complexity, the concept of 'texts' identified by Pinar et al. (1995) is a promising way to observe, understand and potentially problematise programme design practice in polytechnics from a range of different viewpoints. Some preliminary steps in this direction can already be found in the post-compulsory education literature (Schuyler, 1998; Slaughter, 1997;

Sork & Newman, 2004). Furthermore, there is a strong indication that ideologies underpin programme design practice and are fundamental to understanding this practice, which is the aim of this study. However, no literature was found to explain how ideologies play out within the complexity of programme design practice. Possibly ideologies can only become evident during the study of specific cases or contexts.

Thus far the literature study has been generic. While it has been conducted with the context of polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand in mind, it has not focused on what is already known in the research literature about understanding programme design practice in this context. The next section makes the connection between the findings about ideologies and programme design theory from Sections 2.2 and 2.3 and the research literature about the Aotearoa/New Zealand context.

2.4 What Research on Programme Design Practice in Aotearoa/New Zealand Polytechnics that can Assist Understanding this Practice?

The third focus of the literature review in this chapter is on scholarly literature specific to Aotearoa/New Zealand that can provide support in understanding programme design practice in a polytechnic. Three types of literature were found:

- *Literature discussing tertiary education and curriculum policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand in general.*
  Studies of this type highlight the power negotiation between the economically focused neo-liberalist ideology in the policies and the welfare liberalist ideology that tends to be supported by educationalists and by research on adult learning. Literature was only included in this review as far as it discusses the potential influence of policies on programme design practice in tertiary education. Sixteen papers were identified.
- *Literature with an explicit focus on the impact of tertiary education and curriculum policies on programme design practice in Aotearoa/New*

Zealand.

Thirteen papers of this type were found, but they tend to be limited to fragments of programme design practice only.

- *Literature that aims at understanding tertiary programme design practice in Aotearoa/New Zealand polytechnics in terms of educational and curriculum theory*

  I can be very brief on this category, as I have found only one study. This seems to confirm the observation by Barnett et al. that curriculum is "a somewhat neglected term within higher education" (Barnett, et al., 2001, p.448). The identified study describes the exploration of the first steps towards the development of an analytical framework for the analysis of learning needs of international students (Kuiper & Cameron, 2003). Although this study is related to a university, it is one that acknowledges the different programme decision-makers and their interests and perspectives, but only for one aspect of design, that is, international students.

Analysis of the twenty-nine studies identified under the first two bullet points indicated five key areas of tension between policy and practice: Accountability; The programme design process; Student-centred learning; Concepts of knowledge; and Cultural diversity. These are described below.

Accountability

Neo-liberalist ideologies in tertiary education in Aotearoa/New Zealand have introduced external or managerial accountability systems. Due to these systems practitioners have come to assume that: 1) "responsibility for a decision or a policy rests with those who have greater authority" and 2) "obedience and conformity to organizational values are sufficient justification for one's actions" (Olssen, et al., 2004, pp. 194-195). This managerial accountability is in tension with internal accountability, also known as professional responsibility, which is maintained by commitment, loyalty and sense of duty. Olssen et al. (2004) and Codd (2005b) argue that a true

democratic society cannot evolve without professional responsibility and trust.

The tension between internal and external accountability is expressed in different ways across the literature. One way is by raising concern about bureaucracy, resulting in high workload and high cost. Tertiary education institutions in Aotearoa/New Zealand have the autonomy to develop their own policies, processes, and programmes, provided they align with nationally defined criteria. An accountability system as described in Chapter 1, Section 1.2, including a quality management system and ongoing audits or evaluations, must ensure the institution meets its agreed outcomes. This filters through to every programme, as the teacher is made accountable to the institution and the student is made accountable to the teacher (Leach, 2001). As a consequence of this external accountability, Viskovic (2000) notes the perception of increased internal bureaucratic systems. Concerns have been raised (Schick, 1996, cited in Olssen, et al., 2004) that the market model has led to high costs associated with meeting all the accountability requirements. Practitioners have experienced increased workloads as a result of the increased requirements, at the cost of student learning (Cook et al., 1997; Sundar, 1999).

A second expression of tension is found in concerns around how NZQA and the ITOs use their power. Viskovic (2000) questions to whom NZQA and the ITOs consider themselves accountable, as different client groups, including industry, students, tertiary institutions, the Minister of Education or society, may have different interests. She also critiques ITOs about using their power to prescribe teaching and assessment methods, which is in conflict with the Academic Freedom clause in the Education Act 1989 (New Zealand Government, 2006).

Thirdly, the literature reports on attempts to increase the importance of internal accountability. In relation to quality management systems and their ability to assure quality, Horsburgh (1999) reports a study at a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand, which concludes that the curriculum, factors that impact on the curriculum, and the teachers have the greatest impact on

student learning, and that quality management systems should emphasise these aspects. At a different polytechnic, Barrow and Curzon-Hobson (2003) trialled a new approach to quality assurance, aiming to change a culture of compliance into one of responsibility and care. One finding is that many lecturers were paralysed by the sudden freedom given to them. "The lesson from this instance is that freedom, by itself, cannot realise empowering transformation. Meeting this goal requires a rigorous structure that reflects the personnel and epistemological nature of the existing culture" (Barrow & Curzon-Hobson, 2003, p. 272).

Summarising, the literature has identified a tension between external and internal accountability. This is experienced through concerns about bureaucracy and the use of power by particular agencies. Some attempts were found to change the balance between the two.

The programme design process

The programme design process is the second area in which educators experience tensions. These relate to three characteristics of NZQA's approach to programme design, including qualification design, which are identified by Viskovic (2000).

The first characteristic is the separation of ends (learning outcomes) from means (pedagogy), resulting in the separation of assessment from teaching and learning, and the separation of programme design, as it is described in a document, from programme delivery. This is in contrast with the experiences of educators that course development is an iterative process which occurs simultaneously with the teaching of the course. The requirements of prescription and approval of learning outcomes also risk delaying the opportunity to teach up-to-date knowledge (Hall, 1995). In addition, the generally assumed objective and value free description of a programme in the programme document has been shown to be a complex mixture of multiple discourses, leading to various difficulties for the people who are to implement the programme (Melles, 2008). A second tension is that the separation of programme design and delivery does not encourage incorporating the

experiences of the teachers at the design stage, particularly where design can be contracted out and delivery services purchased (M. Nash & Munford, 2001). However, Gerbic and Kranenburg (2003) discuss how a broad range of people involved in the programme approval process, including the academic team, encourages deeper consideration of the development decisions, and makes the programme more implementation-ready, as more and different stakeholder interests are taken into account.

The second characteristic of NZQA's programme design approach is the adoption of standards-based assessment for unit standards, which is in tension with providing students with the opportunity to strive for excellence (Hall, 1995; Peddie, 1995). One option is for students to complete qualifications in a shorter timeframe and to strive for higher qualifications (Peddie, 1995). Another option has been adopted in the secondary schooling system, where merits and excellences can be awarded for achievement standards (NZQA, 2001). Many provider programmes have continued to use graded assessments (Viskovic, 2000).

Thirdly, the atomistic approach to programme design, where the parts of the programme are specified before the whole programme, is in tension with educators' views that programmes need to be conherent to ensure sufficient integration and depth of learning (Hall, 1995; Viskovic, 2000). A question is whether "the aim of providing a mechanism for easy transfer within the education system (has) taken precedence over the nature and content of the education that should be provided" (Hall, 1995, p. 160). According to Hall, this specifically applies to programmes with overlapping courses where students can achieve another qualification by just 'topping up' a small number of courses.

In short, tensions related to the programme design process are found in educators' concerns with the government policies that encourage pre-definition of learning outcomes, limited involvement of teachers in the design stage, difficulty for students to strive for excellence, and lack of integration and depth of learning in programmes.

Student-centred learning

The meanings of student-centred learning form a third area of tension between national policies and the values and beliefs of educators. Following the work of some leading adult learning theorists, student-centred adult learning can be summarised as being aimed at transformation, critical reflection, empowerment, pro-activeness, and self-direction. Many of these theorists advocate that adults learn best when they have control over their own learning (e.g. Brookfield, 1986; Candy, 1992; Knowles, 1975; Merriam, 2008; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999; Mezirow, 1991). Several authors (Strathdee, 1994; Viskovic, 2000; Watson, 1996; Zepke, 1997) explain how student autonomy conflicts with the idea of student-centred learning as advocated through tertiary education and curriculum policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The definition for student-centred learning used by NZQA may be summarised as 'access' (Zepke, 1997). It includes opportunity, choice when and where to learn, allowance for credit transfer and recognition of prior learning, and assessment against standards which are the same for everyone. Though students may choose which units to study, they are neither involved in deciding which knowledge is of most value within a unit (Zepke, 1997), nor in negotiating their own learning objectives (Strathdee, 1994; Viskovic, 2000). They may also lack the capability to make learning decisions, as this capability cannot be separated from the level of learning (Young, 1998). Furthermore, the mainly instrumental or operational knowledge promoted in unit standards does not empower students to challenge ideas or oppose hegemonic positions (Zepke, 1997). And finally, the mechanistic approach advocated through the NZQA system does not allow a developmental approach to learning, including post-formal thinking and open-ended learning (Watson, 1996).

The above echoes the tension between external and internal accountability, however related to students. External accountability requirements mean that full student autonomy, and therefore students taking responsibility for their own learning, is unlikely to be attainable. Consequently, the real challenge

may be to find an appropriate balance between all these factors (Leach, 2001).

Concepts of knowledge

Critique of the concept of knowledge in tertiary education and qualifications policies, which is the fourth area of tension found in the literature, concentrates on the interpretation of knowledge as a predefined set of skills as opposed to knowledge that includes critical thinking and learning to deal with unknown situations. Throughout the first Tertiary Education Strategy the concept of knowledge was reduced to a set of skills, and critical thinking disappeared from the discourse altogether (Roberts, 2005). This did not change in the second Strategy, especially where the role of polytechnics is viewed as 'to provide skills for employment and productivity' (Ministry of Education, 2002, 2007). Barnett (2000) discusses the importance of preparing tertiary students for an unknown future in an increasingly complex world, which contradicts the idea of prescribed learning outcomes and standards. In line with this idea Harvey (2003) expresses her concern about the narrow focus of the government on one future for Aotearoa/New Zealand: the knowledge society, or perhaps better, the knowledge economy, and on what may happen if things do not go as planned. Curzon-Hobson (2003) relates Barnett's ideas to the taking of risks. She pleads for quality assurance systems to be redeveloped to allow for this risk-taking.

A second line of critique relates to what is declared as seemingly uncontested 'official knowledge' through the NZQA system. This knowledge is decided unilaterally by industry and professional groups, focused on economic growth and the creation of an appropriately skilled and willing workforce, rather than through a democratic process which allows for progressive educational programmes, political debate, and acknowledgement of different perspectives between and within subject areas (Hall, 1995; Strathdee, 1994). Non-formal education, which has proven to meet the needs of individual students and the community, does not tend to be supported by the system (Watson, 1996). This is endorsed by Tobias (2004), in his analysis of lifelong learning

discourses in tertiary education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The contestability of knowledge is demonstrated by Barrow (2004) and by Carr and Matthews (2004) who describe different situations of tension in their own practice around what is considered as valuable knowledge and who decides this.

Thirdly, it is assumed in qualification frameworks that knowledge can be broken up and put together again in a potentially unlimited number of ways. A concern is that this does not do justice to the idea that "knowledge of certain kinds and for certain purposes has to be structured in certain ways" (Young, 2003, p. 235). There is also an assumption within the system that 'generic skills', such as problem-solving, can be learned independent of the context. This fragmenting of knowledge into isolated components ignores the purpose of higher education programmes which are about integration of knowledge (Hall, 2005). An example is where Flagg (1999) developed authentic learning tasks to encourage deep learning in a single unit standard, with disappointing result. He concludes that long-term objectives like developing deep learning approaches need a programme approach involving all teachers.

Summarising, the tensions related to concepts of knowledge are found in educators' concerns with the lack of openness in the concepts of knowledge, the one-sided view on what knowledge is valued, and the fragmentation of knowledge that are promoted by the tertiary education and curriculum policies.

Cultural diversity

The fifth and final area of tension identified from the literature relates to the education system in Aotearoa/New Zealand which grounded in a fundamentally Eurocentric culture (Bishop, 2003; Penetito, 2002). This has created tensions for students with different cultural identities. It has particularly affected Māori students. Gorinski and Abernethy (2006) put the low retention and pass rates of Māori students in polytechnics down to the use of a deficit approach. They suggest "a need for curricular transformation, discursive pedagogical practices and the development of reciprocal, power

sharing relationships, if we are to begin to address the student retention and success issue" (Gorinski & Abernethy, 2006, p. 10). Programmes designed to allow power-sharing relationships would however be in tension with the requirements for external accountability as discussed earlier. Penetito (2002) argues that the issue lies even deeper, and that improvement of Māori education cannot happen if the underlying philosophical assumptions to the education system are not addressed. A Kaupapa Māori education system, alongside the Pākehā dominated mainstream system, has been successful in allowing Māori to be Māori (Pihama, Cram, & Walker, 2002).

The establishment of education as an export industry (Codd, 2005a) has drawn many overseas students from a wide range of cultures to Aotearoa/New Zealand. The literature indicates that these students need additional support in order to adapt to the programme. Initiatives taken at one polytechnic to support Chinese students include additional language and professional skills courses and support, small class sizes, and staff training to enhance teaching practice (Malcolm, Ling, & Sherry, 2003). No report on the success of these initiatives has been found in the literature. From a study conducted at the same polytechnic, Sherry et al. (2004) discuss the bigger gap between expectations and perceptions of international students in comparison with domestic students relating to the quality of service. Programme-design-related items in this study include what is learned, meeting student needs, and design of assessment. The polytechnic has unsuccessfully experimented with extra academic skills classes for international students. The conclusion of the study is that further research on international student needs is required.

This 'cultural diversity' area has highlighted the tension of students studying in an education system or a programme that is grounded in a culture which the students cannot identify with.

Summary

The literature review in this section has shown that there has been a lot of debate at a high level on education and curriculum policy in Aotearoa/New

Zealand, but there appears to be a dearth of research that analyses how these policies influence actual programme design practice in polytechnics. The few existing studies either relate to development of degree programmes or to issues around unit standards and national qualifications. I have not been able to locate relevant studies on certificate and diploma programmes governed by polytechnics themselves. All studies highlight an aspect of programme design; none of them face the complexity of the total practice. What the literature review has highlighted, however, are five areas of tension between the perspectives of educators and the views promoted by government policies, which are mostly underpinned by neo-liberalism as Chapter 1 has explained. These areas should be incorporated when theorising programme design practice at a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand:

- Accountability: external/managerial versus internal/professional;

- The programme design process: educators' concerns with the government policies that encourage pre-definition of learning outcomes, limited involvement of teachers in the design stage, difficulty for students to strive for excellence, and lack of integration and depth of learning in programmes;

- The meanings of student-centred learning: student access versus student autonomy;

- Concepts of knowledge: educators' concerns with the lack of openness in the concepts of knowledge, the one-sided view on what knowledge is valued, and the fragmentation of knowledge that are promoted by government policies and,

- Cultural diversity: the tension of students studying in an education system or a programme that is grounded in a culture which the students cannot identify with.

This section has strengthened the suggestions from the previous sections that values, beliefs, and therefore ideologies, influence programme design practice. It has also shown how programme design practice, even for the fragments of this practice as reported in the literature, involves a negotiation process between multiple people, which strengthens the suggestion that

understanding programme design practice is likely to be found using notions of complexity.

2.5   Conclusion and Research Questions

This chapter has explored the literature on programme design from different angles. Firstly, it has identified which aspects of educational practice are generally considered to be part of programme design practice. This has resulted in a framework that will be useful in defining the boundaries around programme design for this study. Secondly, this chapter has found indications that programme design in tertiary education can be understood as a complex social practice, but no theories were found that adequately explain programme design in this way. However, some ideas from curriculum theories for compulsory education were identified that seem useful to build on, such as the mutual adaptation concept to study the relationship between programme design and implementation, and the curriculum 'texts' described by Pinar et al. (1995). Thirdly, there is a strong indication from the literature that programme design practice is underpinned by ideologies. This is particularly confirmed by the tensions that were found, in the context of programme design practice in polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand, between the perspectives of educators and the views promoted by government policies, which are mostly underpinned by neo-liberalist ideologies. However, these tensions were mostly described at a high level. I have not been able to find theories that explain how ideologies and their tensions play out in everyday practice.

Considering the results of the literature review and the aim of this project, the following research questions have been formulated to guide this study:

1) For the context of diploma and certificate programmes in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand, how can programme design practice be theorised, acknowledging the complexity of this practice?

2) How can design practice of diploma and certificate programmes in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand be understood in terms of ideologies?

The next chapter will detail the methodology that was used to find the answers to these questions.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter finished with the research questions for this inquiry. This chapter details the methodology for finding answers to these questions, including a justification for the methods used. It also aims to convince the reader of the quality of the research process, as both a scholarly and an ethical endeavour. Section 3.2 explains the interpretive paradigm that forms the foundation of this study. Within this paradigm, Section 3.3 describes how the research project was designed to enable answering the research questions. Sections 3.5 to 3.7 discuss the details of this design, in terms of the data generation, the data analysis and the reporting processes, including the implications of my personal involvement for the process and the outcomes of this study, as well as any ethical considerations that have influenced these processes.

3.2 Research Paradigm

This research project was undertaken within an interpretive paradigm, taking the stance that people create their own individual interpretations of the world through the interactions they have with the world around them (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000; Schwandt, 2000). This paradigm denies the existence of one true reality (Schwandt, 2000). Instead, people are considered to socially construct their own perspectives of programme design practice (Burr, 2003). The perspectives are shaped by people's worlds, as people create their perspectives in the moment through their interactions with the world. Therefore, to understand programme design practice, it is important to understand people's perspectives. The involvement of multiple people in design practice suggests that to understand programme design practice it also important to understand how the perspectives of those multiple people work together (Collins & Makowsky, 2010). This has the following implications for the data generation and analysis process.

People's perspectives are not only shaped by people's worlds, as referred to above, but they also shape the world, as people "talk" their perspectives "into being" (Heritage, 1997, p. 161) when interacting with others, and in doing so they influence the perspectives of others (Bloome & Clark, 2006; Holstein & Gubrium, 2008).

This implies that, what counts as research data, for example in an interview, are not the participant's straight answers to the interview questions, but, more importantly, her/his meanings that account for these answers in the context of her/his world. To unravel these meanings, it is important to take into account how the participant provides the information – for example, what language s/he uses, or what s/he does not say – in addition to what information s/he provides (Baker & Johnson, 1998; Holstein & Gubrium, 2008). Holstein and Gubrium (2008) explain this approach to analysing interpretive practice as a concern with both 'discursive practice' – that is, what perspectives are constructed – and 'discourses-in-action' – that is, how these perspectives are constructed, or which resources people draw on to construct these perspectives. They refer to Foucault's definition of discourse as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak " (Foucault, 1972, p. 54), a definition that highlights the interaction between what is spoken and how it is spoken, and which I have adopted for this study. By analysing the interplay between discursive practices and discourses-in-action, as Holstein and Gubrium (2008) suggest, I was able to unravel which discourses were brought into practice as people constructed their programme design practice perspectives with the resources they had available.

The social constructionist view on the creation of people's perspectives implicitly defines my position as researcher in the process of knowledge creation in this study. Eisenhart (2006) explains: "Both [participants and researchers] speak from their own perspectives, conditioned by the social, cultural, and political conventions they have learned" (p. 579). Hence, my perspectives are also shaped by my interactions with the world, and simultaneously they help shape the world, including the research process

and the creation of knowledge in this study. My influence is found throughout the inquiry, including: (1) in my decision on the research topic; (2) in my interaction with, and interpretation and synthesis of the literature; (3) during interaction between participants and myself, where I lead the interaction, and interpret participants' constructs during the interaction; (4) through interpretation of documentation, for example the institution's quality management system; and (5) through my construction of the connections between these four. As a researcher I also use discursive practices and bring discourses into action, and in doing so, I can only draw on the resources that I have available. The implications of all this for the findings of this study are acknowledged and discussed in Chapter 12.

Summarising, this study was conducted within an interpretive paradigm (Cohen, et al., 2000; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The main aim was aligned with "*understanding and reconstruction* of the constructions that people (including the inquirer) initially hold [...]. Advocacy and activism are also key concepts in this view" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 113, italics in original). Advocacy and activism may result as a follow-up of the recommendations that have arisen from this research, but they are not the focus of this study.

3.3 Research Design

This research project was carried out as a case study of one polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In line with the research questions, it fitted the description of educational case study as "a prime strategy for developing educational theory which illuminates educational policy and enhances educational practice" (Bassey, 1999, p. 57). Particularly, a case study had the potential to acknowledge complexity in programme design practice, which is supported by the following definition of a case: "a unit of human activity embedded in the real world; which can only be studied or understood in context; which exists in the here and now; that merges in with its context so that precise boundaries are difficult to draw" (Gillham, 2000, p. 1). Other strengths of case studies are that they "can represent something of the discrepancies or conflicts between the viewpoints held by participants", and

"are 'a step to action' [...] Their insights may be directly interpreted and put to use"(Cohen, et al., 2000, p. 184). The opportunity to study the interaction of people's viewpoints supported the appropriateness of using a case study within the interpretive paradigm. Because this case study was most likely the first of its kind in Aotearoa/New Zealand it could not be more than exploratory (Cohen, et al., 2000).

The polytechnic selected as the case for this study was the institution that employed me. It is a medium-sized regional polytechnic, which teaches over 90 programmes for approximately 3000 equivalent full-time students. The reason for choosing this polytechnic was first and foremost personal. As advisor on programme design matters within this institution I had a direct stake in the outcomes of this research. An understanding of programme design practice in the institution would help me support the institution better. It was a case from which I felt I could learn the most (Stake, 2008). A second and related reason was accessibility (Stake, 2008). Knowing the institution's processes and people, and having gained a certain amount of trust from these people over the years, gaining access to participants and relevant documentation was much easier than in a different institution. My knowledge of the institution also implied that data generation would not have to be as extensive as otherwise, and that I was in a position to hear implied meanings or positions that outsiders would have remained unaware of (Buttny, 2003). This close relationship with the institution and its people also had risks, which is discussed further in Section 3.4.2.

Figure 10 shows the design of the research project. The right hand column describes the five steps of data generation. The left hand column shows the simultaneous processes of data analysis and theorising. The arrows indicate how the data that were generated contributed to the data analysis and theorising processes and vice versa. The first three steps in Figure 10 are shown as embedded case studies. They are smaller case studies within the larger entire case of the institution to allow more in-depth study of the case (Yin, 2003). For this inquiry I decided to study five programmes as embedded cases (Steps 2 and 3), which gave me access to the details of these

Data analysis and theorising	Data generation process
Recommendations for application of the theory	Step 4: Workshop with participants, further literature study, professional conversations with peers
Theorising	Step 3: Embedded case studies: Programme design practice at programme or course level in four programmes
Finding horizontal patterns in the data	Step 2: Embedded case study: Programme design practice at programme and course level in one programme
Evaluating the findings; Theorising	
Finding vertical patterns in the data	Step 1: Embedded case study: Programme design practice at institutional level

Figure 10: Research design, showing how the data generated in each step in the process have contributed to the data analysis and theorising process and vice versa.

programmes. There is a risk however in losing sight of the holistic aspects of the total case (Yin, 2003). To minimise this risk, I also included the institutional level of programme design practice as an embedded case (Step 1).

This section provides an overall description and justification of the research design and the embedded case studies, before the role of the researcher, and the data generation, analysis, theorising and reporting processes are detailed in Sections 3.5 to 3.7, respectively. The descriptions incorporate considerations on the quality of the research design and process, by using the concepts of trustworthiness and authenticity that helped guide this project. Trustworthiness is the interpretivist alternative to validity, reliability and

objectivity, and includes credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Authenticity can be defined as "the ability of the research to report a situation through the eyes of the participants" (Cohen, et al., 2000, p. 108). Trustworthiness and authenticity seem to be generally accepted quality parameters for interpretive research (e.g., Bassey, 1999; Creswell, 1998).

Step 1: Embedded case study: Programme design practice at the institutional level

and

Step 2: Embedded case study: Programme design practice at programme and course level in one programme

Steps 1 and 2 were two embedded case studies within the case of programme design practice at the selected institution. They were used as the first step in theorising programme design. Step 1 studied programme design practice at the institutional level, incorporating considerations and decisions applying to all certificate and diploma programmes across the institution. I distinguished two 'groups' of decision-makers at this level. The first group of decision-makers were the people in the committees that formally approve programme design matters at an institutional level. These committees were the institution's Academic Board and the senior management team. The second group consisted of the institutional policies, procedures, clauses and guidelines, which are written up in the Academic Statute ('Statute') and the Quality Management System ('QMS'). The importance of studying documents like these is pointed out by Silverman: "written accounts are an important feature of many settings [... They] exemplify certain features of those settings" (Silverman, 1993, p. 60). The Statute and the QMS are important decision-makers in the institution, because, from my own experience, there is an expectation that they will be followed. Their contents have been developed over the years, but they are regularly reviewed. Authority to approve changes to most programme design related aspects of these

documents lies with the institution's Academic Board; for the remaining aspects this authority lies with the senior management team.

Step 2 investigated design practice in one programme, incorporating considerations and decisions for this particular programme and individual courses within this programme. For trustworthiness purposes I selected what I considered a 'typical' programme to be taught at a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The following criteria clarify the selection process.

Criterion 1: The programme was an existing programme leading to an approved qualification, which meant that it was on the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications (NZQA, 2006a) and had a minimum of 40 credits. The vast majority of programmes taught in 2007 by this institution, that is, 82 out of between 90 and 100, met these requirements.

Criterion 2: The programme led to a Certificate or a Diploma qualification between levels 1 and 6 (NZQA, 2006a). 79% of the above 82 programmes in 2007 met this requirement.

Criterion 3: The programme was governed by the institution itself, i.e. it led to a provider qualification. This allowed me to study how the participating institution made its own decisions regarding all design aspects at programme and course level. 84% of the 82 programmes in 2007 led to provider qualifications, 22 of which were Diploma and 30 were Certificate programmes leading to qualifications at level 6 or below.

Criterion 4: The programme was subject to requirements from external organisations, including ITOs, NZQA, other academic institutions, and professional organisations. This allowed study of the complex situation of having to negotiate internal requirements and intentions with external pre-conditions. 67% of the institution's 2007 programmes leading to provider qualifications between levels 1 and 6 had such requirements; 20 of those were Certificate and 15 were Diploma programmes. Possible reasons for the institution to integrate external requirements in a programme are its desire to: embed a national qualification in the programme; embed unit standards that may lead to a national

qualification after completion of the programme (e.g. an apprenticeship); ensure credit transfer to another institution; and/or to meet requirements for entry into a profession.

Overall, 35 programmes met all four criteria, which is 43% of the 82 programmes leading to a formal qualification within the institution in 2007, and 51% of the 69 programmes leading to a provider qualification within the institution in 2007.

The programme selected for Step 2 is referred to as Programme A in this thesis. It was a level 2 Certificate programme, which was one study year (34 weeks) long, and consisted of 120 credits. The programme had an embedded National Certificate qualification, as well as additional unit standards leading to the next level of National Certificate which students could complete during an apprenticeship after completion of the programme. The programme was well-established and had a long history in the institution. It was also one of the bigger certificate programmes in the institution, implying that it had a relatively large teaching team which gave me the opportunity to include the views of a range of teachers in this study. Again, the choice of this embedded case was based on the opportunity to learn the most I could (Stake, 2008).

Step 3: Embedded case studies: Programme design practice at programme or course level in four programmes

It was important to me that the findings of this research project would be accepted and hopefully used by the institution. Programmes are different and potentially provide different insights. Therefore persistent observation by including multiple programmes was expected to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, the study of multiple programmes allowed examination of possible transferability of the findings to other contexts. Transferability is also an aspect of trustworthiness, and "refers to the degree to which the results can be generalised to the wider population, cases or situations" (Cohen, et al., 2000, p. 109). For these reasons, design practice in four additional programmes across the institution was studied. The results were used to strengthen,

amend or add to the theoretical insights provided by the data from Steps 1 and 2. Yin (2003, pp. 32-33) calls this "analytical generalisation": a form of generalisation where "previously developed theory is used as a template with which to compare the empirical studies of the case study".

The four additional embedded case studies were chosen to provide insight in design practice of Diploma as well as Certificate programmes, as intended with the research questions. Having chosen a Certificate programme for Programme A, this implied that at least some of the embedded cases had to be Diploma programmes. Additionally, I expected that studying how the presence or absence of external requirements influenced programme design practice would add to the understanding sought in this study. Therefore, I chose to include a combination of programmes with and without external requirements. And finally, I ensured that the five embedded cases - Programme A and the four additional programmes - were chosen across the five faculties in the institution, because the five faculties not only taught programmes in different disciplines, but, from my experience, also had different cultures, in the sense of 'ways of doing things'. The spread of participating programmes across the institution was also expected to contribute to the credibility of the findings of this study for the people across the institution.

Taking all of this into account, the four additional embedded cases were selected as explained below and summarised in Table III. Considering the limited timeframe available for this inquiry, I chose to study the additional embedded cases at either course or programme level only. All four programmes were selected to meet the first three criteria listed under Step 2.

Table III: Structure of the selection of additional embedded cases

	External requirements	*No external requirements*
Certificate programme	Programme B: Study of course level only	Programme C: Study of programme level only
Diploma programme	Programme D: Study of programme level only	Programme E: Study of course level only

Programme B was selected to be similar to Programme A in being a Certificate programme with external requirements. Study of Programme B involved design practice at course level only.

The programme selected as Programme B was a full-time level 2 Certificate programme, which was 12 weeks and 40 credits long. The programme had unit standards embedded, potentially leading to a national certificate which students could complete during employment after completion of the programme. The programme had been taught by the institution since 2006.

Programme C was selected to be similar to Programme A in being a Certificate programme, but different as it did not have external requirements. Study of Programme C involved design practice at programme level only.

The programme selected as Programme C was a full-time level 4 Certificate programme, which was 17 weeks and 60 credits long. The programme had been taught by the institution since 2006.

Programme D was selected to be similar to Programme A in having external requirements, but different as it was a Diploma programme. Study of Programme D involved design practice at programme level only.

The programme selected as Programme D was a full-time level 5 Diploma programme, which was two years and 240 credits long. The programme had an embedded National Certificate, as well as all requirements to prepare for external examination by an international professional organisation. The programme had been taught by the institution since 2001.

Programme E was selected to be different to Programme A as it was a Diploma programme without external requirements. Study of Programme E involved design practice at course level only.

The programme selected as Programme E was a level 6 Diploma programme, which was one year (34 weeks) and 120 credits long when studied full-time. Although the programme did not have external

requirements, it had internal requirements in the sense that it primarily consisted of courses that were already taught as part of an undergraduate degree programme. The programme had been taught by the institution since 2005.

Step 4: Workshop with participants, further literature study, and professional conversations with peers

Step 4 occurred during and after Steps 2 and 3. The workshops with research participants were partially used as a member check (Bassey, 1999): to share and seek confirmation for the data analysis thus far and to provide an opportunity for participants to express and discuss concerns in a confidential setting. It was also used as an opportunity for participants to raise ideas for possible application of the ideas developed thus far.

In addition to the workshop, further discussion about the findings arose from additional literature study and from peer feedback I received during presentations and professional conversations inside and outside the institution. I used the feedback and ideas not only to strengthen and gain confirmation for the theorising, but also to develop ideas and potential support for advocacy and activism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), that is, for application of the theory to further develop programme design practices.

3.4   Ethical Considerations and the Role of the Researcher

Ethics approval for this study was obtained from the University of Waikato School of Education Ethics Committee on 17 May 2007, and subsequently approval for this project was given by the Research Approvals Committee in the participating institution on 29 June 2007. Ethical considerations taken into account during the data generation, analysis and reporting processes are incorporated in the description of these processes in Sections 3.5 to 3.7. This section explains how my own cultural identity and my dual role as researcher in this study and as academic advisor within the institution have required me

to weave an ethics of care for the participants and the institution as an essential thread through this study (Gibbs & Costley, 2006).

3.4.1. Ethics of Care and my Cultural Identity

I am a relatively recent immigrant to Aotearoa/New Zealand. I am very aware of cultural differences between my home country and Aotearoa/New Zealand. Chapter 1 has already explained how cultural experiences were an important factor in choosing the research topic. During the research I have tried to observe other cultures' conventions as much as possible, knowing from my advisory role that this is essential for gaining people's trust and willingness to work with me. This is where I have considered being an advisor in the institution as an advantage, as most participants knew me and had worked with me before, so they probably were not overly surprised if I communicated in a way that their culture would consider strange. I have closely monitored my relationship with colleagues for signs of tension, but I have not experienced any changes in the relationship as a consequence of their involvement in this research. However, because this is an interpretive study, my own cultural identity has influenced the process and the outcomes of this inquiry. I had a particular experience related to this matter when I presented the findings of Chapter 5 to a group of Māori teachers. They made me aware of a Māori way of understanding the findings which I had overlooked because of my own cultural perspective. I have since incorporated the Māori view in my interpretation.

I hope that the research process as described in this chapter convinces the reader of the trustworthiness and authenticity of this study.

3.4.2. Ethics of Care and my Dual Role

I have actively participated in this inquiry in two ways: 1) I was the researcher: I chose the topic of study, I conducted the literature review, designed the research process, led the data generation process, analysed and interpreted the data, drew the conclusions and wrote the report. My decision

to do these things in one particular way and not another is constructed within my life world, including my experiences with and beliefs about education in general and programme design practice in particular; and, 2) I am a participant in the programme design processes in the institution. I am often consulted during these processes by management and teachers, and I am also a member of some of the decision-making committees. I found I had two options in dealing with my dual role. I could 'interview' myself as a participant, which I would then analyse as I would any of the other interviews, or I would take a relative outsider position and present myself as the researcher. After careful thought I decided on the latter. I realised that my voice would be heard sufficiently through my activities as researcher. Incorporating even more of my views would result in an unbalanced reflection of the perspectives of the range of participants. Any issues that arose from my dual involvement I recorded in a journal.

My role in the institution in combination with my participation in the study had advantages and disadvantages. One advantage was that the prolonged engagement that was needed to make this study credible (Bassey, 1999; Creswell, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) did not require much extra time. Through my role as advisor I knew the programme development processes in the participating institution quite well and I knew most people, in all layers of the organisation. Furthermore, as an insider in the organisation, I did not have to collect as much information as an outsider would have had to do. A disadvantage was that my dual role had ethical implications, which required serious consideration throughout the research process. Firstly, I ensured that I did not get into a position of power with respect to any of the participants. Normally I am not in such a position, but three issues arose during the process which required deliberate action. The first issue was the approval process of a major change in Programme A, by a subcommittee of the Academic Board. Normally I would have participated in this committee, but instead I chose to observe the meeting as part of the data generation process. I explained this to the participants in the information sheet I gave them. A second issue arose when I was asked to teach on an adult education

programme in the institution. Many students in this programme were the institution's own staff. With the programme coordinator I proposed a solution where, if any of the students were participants in my inquiry, I would teach, but she would assess them. The chairperson of the University of Waikato School of Education Ethics Committee approved this proposal on 3 August 2007. Fortunately, no such action was needed. The third issue occurred when I was on a subcommittee of the Academic Board judging a review of Programme D. Before the discussion started I agreed with the meeting participants, including the coordinator and the manager of this programme, that I would participate in the discussion but refrain from voting.

A second area of ethical consideration was that I knew the people in the organisation, which created a risk that participants would be reluctant to disclose certain information because they were unable to oversee the consequences (Gibbs & Costley, 2006). An assurance of confidentiality, and of me doing my level best to not use personal research information for my advisor role, has hopefully taken away this reluctance. I clarified this in research information sheets and in verbal conversations I had with the participants, and I have not experienced any reluctance from participants in answering the questions or providing written documentation as requested.

Another important part of taking care was to clarify to participants that the purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of programme design practice, and not to judge people's individual opinions and practices. What I am trying to offer in this thesis and other publications is the different viewpoints that make up this practice. Hopefully this helps readers within and outside the institution to reflect on the underpinnings of their own practices, which may support them in their commitment to quality education. The advantage of positioning myself as the researcher is that I can present and emphasise the study as my own perspective. Positioning myself as advisor might have resulted in the findings being seen as biased towards a particular perspective.

The study obviously has had benefits for me as it allows me to obtain my doctorate, but it has also further developed my knowledge of programme design practice which has benefited my advisory work in this field. However, by doing the research in my own institution, there was a risk of participants expecting me to choose sides in situations of tension, which could affect relationships within the institution. It was therefore important to be clear to participants about the purpose of the study, my role in it, the potential benefits of the study for them, and to reduce the potential harm as much as possible by careful communication. Sections 3.5 to 3.7 explain how I have provided this clarity during the data generation, analysis and reporting processes. In the case of any criticisms on the findings of the research, I considered it my responsibility to weigh their value and use them to the benefit of the research, keeping in mind my position within the participating institution (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Where participants experienced issues with the research process, they had the opportunity to contact my supervisor, if needed. Her contact details and those of my manager at the institution were provided on the information sheets and/or the introductory letters.

In the case of any problematic situation related to my research, I had resolved that, if necessary to make such a decision, my job would take precedence over my researcher role to protect myself and the institution from potential harm (Fontana & Frey, 2008). Fortunately such a situation has not occurred.

3.5   The Data Generation Process

Data generation methods for case studies are preferably varied, both in terms of people involved and methods selected. Triangulation of the variety of data supports the robustness and credibility of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2006). Typical data generation methods for case studies conducted within an interpretive paradigm include interviews, document analysis, diaries and observation (Cohen, et al., 2000; Gillham, 2000; Stake, 2008; Yin, 2006). Table IV shows how these 'typical' methods were applied in this study,

Table IV: Data generation methods and involvement of research participants

Research design	Research participant	Data Generation Method
Step 1: Embedded case study of institutional level	Institution	Document analysis of Academic Statute and Quality Management System
	Eight Institutional decision makers	One individual interview in up to two parts of max. 1.5 hours each.
Step 2: Embedded case study of Programme A	Three managers	One individual interview in one to three parts of approx. 1 hour each.
	Coordinator	One individual interview in two parts of approx. 1 hour each.
	Three teachers	One individual interview(s) in two to three parts of approx. 1 hour each.
	Relevant programme meeting, i.e. • Programme Approval and Review Committee	Observation, note taking.
	Representative from external body	One individual interview of approx. 1.5 hours.
	Students	Written questionnaire
	Department	Collection of formal programme and course documentation.
Step 3: Four embedded case studies	Five managers	One individual interview of approx. 1 hour.
	Three coordinators	One individual interview of 1- 1.5 hours.
	Six Teachers	One individual interview of 1- 1.5 hours.
	Advisor	One individual interview in of 1-1.5 hours.
	One representative from external body	One individual interview of approx. 1 hour.
	Students	Written questionnaire
Step 4: Workshop with participants, further literature study, and professional conversations with peers	All above research participants; interested peers	Notes from workshops; literature study; Professional conversations.
Entire Research project		
	Researcher	Journal to record any issues that have come up and decisions the researcher has had to make related to tensions in the duality of her role in this study

complemented by professional conversations with peers. This section explains and justifies the data generation process for each step, including potential implications for data analysis. I have included a comprehensive explanation of the use of interviews and document analysis in Step 1. To avoid repetition, where Steps 2 and 3 use these methods, they are only described insofar they were different from Step 1.

The main ethical considerations found across the literature that were relevant to data generation in this study are the provision of informed consent, participants' right to privacy, and protection of participants from harm (e.g. Bassey, 1999; Cohen, et al., 2000; de Vaus, 2002; Fontana & Frey, 1994; New Zealand Association for Research in Education, 1998; Patton, 1990). This section includes how these considerations were taken into account in each step of the data generation process.

3.5.1. Step 1: Programme Design Practice at the Institutional Level

Before undertaking any data collection activity it was important to receive consent for using the selected institution as the case for this project, for approaching the institution's staff as participants and for accessing relevant documents (Cohen, et al., 2000). Additionally, I felt obliged to raise awareness of potential political implications for the institution in case the research outcomes would suggest that the institution did not comply with what was expected of them. Via a letter I explained the above to the institution's senior management team. Written consent was given by the chairman of this team without further questions asked. The consent included the use of the Quality Management System and the Academic Statute for analysis.

In Step 1 data was generated to help understand programme design practice at the institutional level. To find out what programme design decision-makers find important at this level I analysed the Statute and QMS documents and interviewed selected members of the Academic Board and the senior management team.

Analysis of Academic Statute and Quality Management System documents

The Statute and the QMS contain discursive practices on programme design, that is, they construct a particular perspective of programme design practice (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008). The history of these documents has consequences for their analysis (J. Scott, 1990). They have come about as a requirement from NZQA for accountability purposes, as referred to in Chapter 1. They have also been socially constructed by the people within the institution who have been involved in decision-making on the contents over anumber of years (Miller (1997), cited in Patton, 2002). As a consequence, the discursive practices have been compromised, generalised, and all idiosyncrasies of everyday practice have been ironed out, to construct a perspective that ensures that the documents can apply to every situation they have to deal with within the institution. This, and the apparent decision within the institution that not every aspect of programme design practice needs to be formalised through the Statute or QMS, means that many aspects of programme design practice are not found in these documents. They may be referred to as implementation, or simply ignored. The Statute and the QMS are also discourses-in-action, that is, these documents reflect the resources that were drawn on to create the documents (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008). The discourses-in-action are found in the language that is used in the documents and in the way the documents are structured, as well as in their "geography": their roles within the institution and the fact that these documents even exist (Bloome & Clark, 2006, p. 235).

The combination of discursive practice and discourse-in-action within these documents provided useful data to help interpret the discourses that underpin programme design practice at the institutional level. To study the Statute and the QMS, I selected all programme design related policies, procedures, clauses and guidelines from these two documents that were in place on 16 June 2007. However, I did not start analysing until I had received informed consent from the institution.

The limitations of using the QMS and the Statute to answer the research questions are that they are compromises and generalisations, and that they only cover some aspects of programme design practice. They are expected to be followed, but how people use them or what people do in situations that are not reflected in these documents remains unknown. Furthermore, the documents do not make the final decisions on programme design: people do. Including the voices of people was therefore important to complement and triangulate the data and to strengthen this study.

Interviews with institutional decision-makers

Why interviews – strengths and limitations

The reason to decide to listen to people's voices through interviews is nicely put by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009): "If you want to know how people understand their world and their lives, why not talk with them?" (p. xvii). Peräkylä (2008) adds that interviews allow the researcher to "reach areas of reality that would otherwise remain inaccessible such as people's subjective experiences and attitudes" (p. 351). Interviews in this study allowed finding out directly from people who made decisions on programme design practice what their considerations were. Open-ended interviews let people construct their perspectives from their own life world, including all its idiosyncrasies and eventualities (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), on their own terms (Brenner, 2006). Interviewing a range of people in addition to analysing Statute and QMS documents would provide multiple accounts of discursive practices and discourses-in-action, thus strengthening the findings of the research (Stake, 1994).

Interviews are criticised as a data generation method for not providing a valid account of a person's actual practice or a true account what participants really mean (Gillham, 2005). However, the ontology of multiple socially constructed perspectives that underpins this study acknowledges that participants' accounts are created through the interaction with the researcher (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). What is therefore important is whether the account is a valid representation of the interview. This can be

strengthened by using different types of evidence (Gillham, 2005). It is the researcher's role then to do the interpretation (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008), which, in its turn, is validated through the production of knowledge claims that are powerful and convincing in their own right (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Selection of participants

I interviewed members of the institution's Academic Board and senior management team. These people also have other roles within the institution: as senior or middle managers, as lecturers, or as advisors. These other roles were likely to influence their perspectives. For this reason I followed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) suggestion not to stop too soon with the data generation process. To do so, I ensured a maximum spread of these other roles within the selection of interview participants, ending up with eight participants. Five were members of both Academic Board and senior management team. Two participants were Academic Board members only, while one was a senior manager only.

Interviewing requires serious ethical considerations at each stage of the research process (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). To ensure participants were well informed before giving their consent I took a multi-step approach. I first asked each participant during a face-to-face conversation if they were willing to participate. After they had agreed in principle I sent them a letter and an information sheet explaining the project and their potential involvement in more detail. Approximately a week later I contacted them again to discuss any further questions and to ask permission for making interview appointments. All eight people agreed to participate with only a few minor questions asked. At the start of the interview, I asked for their written consent as explained in the information sheet. All consented to participation, and none withdrew. All interviews with institutional decision-makers were held between August and November 2007.

Interview structure

The interpretive paradigm underpinning this study required a type of interview that offered space for participants to talk about those aspects of programme design practice that they want to talk about and in the way they wish to talk about it (Brenner, 2006). Semi-structured interviews were expected to set some boundaries while still allowing participants to construct their own account of programme design practice (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), including making their own connections within the complexity of programme design practice and using their own interpretations of terminology.

Taking this need for space into account, I based the interview questions on the six programme design components identified in Section 2.2. The questions focused on what people found important when considering design decisions at institutional level and why, related to programmes as well as courses, without too much detail. I added some questions about the relationship of people's decision-making to the Statute and QMS. The interview questions are found in Appendix I. The questions were left open-ended to enable participants to respond in their own words (Patton, 2002). This interview structure allowed for capturing the scope and the details of programme design practice from the participants' perspectives, not my own. This was highlighted, for example, when one participant noted that I was asking about something that was not 'design' in her view. Apparently, my perspective of programme design as reflected in the interview questions was broader than the participant's, but the interview was sufficiently open for her to express this. This openness to allow the participants' perspectives to be heard is expected to have contributed to the credibility of the inquiry.

The 'why' questions in the interviews gave me more than just a report of decision-makers' perspectives (Baker & Johnson, 1998). However, they confirmed Kvale and Brinkmann's (2009) warnings, that too many 'why' questions may lead the interviewer beyond what the participant is able to verbalise or self-understand. Therefore, instead of pushing these 'why' questions, I focused on the purpose of the interview to generate descriptive,

reliable and relevant information that would allow me to do the interpretation (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

The openness of the questions also enabled me to balance the breadth of programme design practice with the amount of time I was asking from participants and the potential advantages to them by participating. All have busy jobs, so I was reluctant to ask too much of their time. On the other hand, participation provided them with an opportunity to reflect on their own beliefs and ideas about education which could support their own decision-making. It would also enable them to contribute to a deeper understanding of programme design practice in the institution, which could support their future decision-making as well as future development of institutional practices. After weighing these factors, I decided to interview each Academic Board participant in two parts of a maximum of 1.5 hours each. The first part addressed design practice of new programmes and of changes to existing programmes. The second was similar but focused at courses instead of programmes. The sole non-Academic Board but senior management participant was interviewed once and only with respect to programme design, as the senior management team's involvement in programme design practice normally does not go beyond the programme level.

The questions were sent to participants a few days before the interview to enable them to prepare if they wished, which most of them did, at least for the first interview part, and to avoid them being taken by surprise during the interview. In the questions, and also during the interviews, I used familiar terminology to create "sharedness of meanings" if and where possible and desired (Fontana & Frey, 2008, p. 139). For example, I used the terms 'goals', 'objectives', and 'learning outcomes', instead of 'intentions' used in Section 2.2, because the first three are unlikely to require further explanation while the latter does. While I was aware that participants could still assign meanings to these terms different from mine, I assumed the interpretation and analysis process would pick this up if relevant. I also had to be careful not to put meanings into people's mouths, in order to be able to find out which meanings were not shared.

Conducting the interviews

Conducting interviews is often described as a craft or an art (e.g. Gillham, 2005; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Realising that I was a relatively novice craftswoman when I started interviewing for this study, I conducted a 'dummy' interview with a lecturer at the institution who did not participate in the study. Reflection on this interview made me reduce the number of questions and broaden the scope of each question. I also reviewed the terminology that I was using in the questioning, and reduced my interference with the participants' talk during the 'real' interviews that I conducted subsequently.

After every interview I asked myself if I could have got more out of it, but I realised I had to balance various parameters, and finding this balance was important for being able to answer the research questions:

- Balancing breadth versus time – Wanting to ask about all components of design at programme and course level, as well as about people's relationship with the Statute and the QMS had to be weighed against the time available. I wanted 1.5 hours per interview part to be the absolute maximum. Whenever possible I aimed to limit this to only one hour. Although I risked losing depth, in the actual interviews everything seemed to have been covered sufficiently. I particularly noticed this when I asked further 'why' questions and participants were unable to answer or started to repeat themselves. To make sure, I always asked at the end of each interview part if participants had anything to add; this opportunity was used by some. The length of the interview parts ranged from 46 minutes to 1 hour and 34 minutes.

- Balancing voices of participant and researcher - I could have probed further, but that meant that I had to put words or thoughts in participants' mouths, while I wanted to hear what they found important on their own accord as well as what they did not bring up. For example, none of the institutional decision-makers raised the importance of administration resources in programme design practice. I could have raised this with the participants, and probably they would have had an

opinion about it. Not raising it, however, implied that I did not get their opinion, but it gave me the information that administration resources do not seem to be a top priority when they think about programme design practice, which is valuable information in itself for the interpretation of the data.

- Balancing use of subject knowledge versus listening - Not wanting to put words in participants' mouths forced me to listen, which helped me to force myself into the role of researcher, and not of advisor, which is my usual role within the institution. However, my advisory role plus the knowledge I had gained from the literature review for this study ensured that I was knowledgeable about the subject matter, which contributed to the quality of interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). My knowledge helped me to decide whether to probe further at certain instances and to ensure that all components had been covered to a sufficient depth.

Because I knew each person I interviewed and I had informed them in person of my research, their involvement, and the questions, the settings of the interviews were reasonably relaxed. The interviews were held in participants' own offices, to make the situation as comfortable as possible for them. At the start of the first interview part I asked if the process needed any further clarification, to which all participants responded negatively. Each interview roughly followed the questionnaire, but with ongoing reflection on my part on the knowledge creation process (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This meant that I had to allow flexibility in sequence and terminology, for example for participants to bring up any topic at any time during the interview. When the questionnaire came to a topic that had already been referred to I usually summarised what I had already understood, to avoid repetition and to provide the participant with an opportunity to correct or elaborate (Brenner, 2006).

As mentioned before, I was interested in what participants found important in their programme design practice on their own accord, acknowledging that their construction was situated within the interaction during the interview. Often participants would explain why something was important to them, but

in other situations I had to ask explicitly. On a few occasions I got intrigued by a certain aspect because of answers I had received in other interviews. In these situations I "spiralled backwards" (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 111) by reflecting on those answers and asking more specific questions, or asking the participant's opinion on an opposite view of this aspect. For example, when asking how important the length of a course was, I had noticed that the first two people I interviewed were oblivious of this aspect. On reflection I decided to explore with two subsequent participants how they felt about a course of e.g. 15 credits being taught over four weeks instead of over the usual one semester. I was aware of the risk of leading the participants too much (Brenner, 2006), but I hoped that the more detailed discussion would provide some deeper insight. On other occasions participants were unclear what I meant by a certain term, for example, 'assessment at programme level'. I encouraged them to use their own interpretation, because I was interested in their interpretation of the term as well as their answer to the question. However, if they appeared stuck I would explain what I had in mind. This obviously limited the scope of possible answers, but the shared meaning still gave me an insightful answer to the question.

I had to force myself to accept the views of the participants as they were, and to avoid a discussion with them, which was sometimes difficult if I thoroughly disagreed with what they were saying. In my advisor role I am always in situations of adding my opinion to a discussion, and as these were the same people I normally advise, this put me in an uncomfortable position. I had to succumb to being a researcher in this situation. Compared to being an advisor, this meant I was in a position of power, which implied that the interview conversation could never be more than a pseudo-conversation (Fontana & Frey, 2008). I feel I managed this well, and growing into the role of researcher made the urge to start a discussion slowly fade away as the interview series progressed.

To capture the complexity and the narrative, which was important for the interpretation of particularly the discourses-in-action (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008), I needed to be able to fully concentrate on the interview, so I could ask

probing questions where appropriate. Giving a semi-structure to the interview with a pre-determined list of interview questions as a guide helped me with this (Patton, 2002). Other important help was the audio-recording of all interviews, which allowed me to leave the detailed analysis of the interviews to a later stage (Gillham, 2005). Audio-recording was the first step in transcribing the interviews, which is the topic of the next paragraphs.

Transcription of the interviews

In acknowledging that any form of transcription, including audio-recording, is a form of interpretation (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Ochs, 1979), care had to be taken how the interviews were transcribed. Transcription of the interviews occurred in three steps. The first step was audio-recording. The second step was creating a written transcript of the recording, which I did myself. In this way I could keep participants' involvement in this study confidential which would help protect them from potential harm. It also enabled me to start working on the analysis (Gillham, 2005). Additionally, transcribing provided me with an opportunity during the analysis of the interviews to re-visualise the interview situation and the context in which certain things were said. This supported the interpretation process (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Considering that the transcript needs to serve the research purpose (Ochs, 1979), which was searching for meaning and perception in this study, a denaturalised approach to transcription was considered most appropriate (Oliver, Serovich, & Mason, 2005). This approach had already been adopted implicitly through the selection of audio as a recording mechanism, which excludes all body language from the transcription. It further implied that I transcribed verbatim, but did not include words like 'ehh' or pauses, intonation changes and the like, as these did not seem to add to the meaning (Gillham, 2005). As the third transcription step I followed Gillham's recommended process of editing the transcript as a first step in data reduction, which he claims is a must if the research is to lead to a worthwhile outcome (Gillham, 2005). Editing involved summarising the transcript by identifying the substantive elements that

would contribute to meaning-making, but in the participant's own words, so the summary would retain the meaning as expressed by the participants and continue to validly reflect the actual interview. In creating the summaries, I kept as closely as possible to the verbatim transcript, but removed or completed unfinished sentences, and removed repetition of arguments, stopgaps, and my own questions and interruptions. For a one-hour interview this resulted in a summary of approximately six pages. I retained the full transcripts as well as the audio-recordings, so I could always refer to these if needed. This approach formed an accessible basis for interpretation and facilitated subsequent stages of analysis (Gillham, 2005).

After the first interview part, participants were given the transcript and the summary to comment on and make changes, as a 'member check' to support the credibility of the study (Bassey, 1999; Creswell, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I encouraged them to just give feedback on the summary if they wished, to reduce their time spent checking, and to help ensure that the summaries reflected their meanings, knowing that I would use these summaries for the analysis. If participants wished, the summaries and transcripts also provided opportunity for reflection before the second interview part, which allowed the second part to be used for further clarification of some aspects if necessary. As soon as I received the transcript or summary with proposed changes I deleted the original and only worked with the approved version. All summaries were approved by the participants without major modifications. I did not analyse any summaries until participants had given their approval.

The above transcribing and summarising process created a few practical problems. Firstly, the amount of typing involved for myself resulted in physical symptoms of overuse. After discussing this matter with my supervisor, I decided to not transcribe the interviews in Step 2, but to make comprehensive summaries only, by detailed listening to the recordings. Other than that I took the same approach for these summaries so as to remain as close to the participants' own words as possible. This resulted in a summary of approximately seven pages for a one-hour interview. The summaries were

sent to the participants for checking, following the same process as used in Step 1. I had planned to continue with this approach for Step 3, but unfortunately at the start of the interview process for Step 3 I broke my arm, meaning that I had to reconsider my options. I decided to continue interviewing and contract a transcriber through the University of Waikato. I gave her instructions to transcribe in the same way as I had done for Step 1. While acknowledging the disadvantage of not transcribing myself, I had lost valuable time in the process and I continued using the transcriber for all interviews in Step 3, even after my arm had healed. To partly compensate for this disadvantage I ensured that I carefully checked each transcript against its audio-recording, and as soon as I was able to type again I summarised the transcripts and had them checked by participants as in Step 1. A second practical problem was that approving both a transcript and a summary seemed too much for participants. Despite my encouragement to just approve the summary, it took several reminders and many weeks in some occasions to receive approval. I had hoped that just sending the summaries in Step 2 would resolve this problem, but it did not. Again, after consultation with my supervisor and our agreement that if people did not feed back within a short time they were unlikely to provide feedback at all, I gave the interview participants in Step 3 a maximum of three weeks to approve the summaries. I explained this in the information sheet, and through signing the consent form they gave me the right to consider the summary approved if they had not responded within three weeks. The obvious question is what the consequence may be if participants do not check the summary. The equally obvious answer would be that as a researcher I am never able to control this, and I can only use my integrity to create the summaries to the best of my abilities.

I realise that I have run slightly ahead in this section of what is to come under Steps 2 and 3, but for readability purposes I considered it more useful to tell the full story in this section.

3.5.2. Step 2: Programme Design Practice in Programme A

Data generation in Step 2 was aimed at obtaining meaningful information to help understand design practice within Programme A, both at programme and at course level. Five decision-maker groups were distinguished: 1) People in the department responsible for this programme: managers, the programme coordinator, and teachers; 2) The organisation that sets external requirements for Programme A; 3) The formal programme and course documents, which follow a template provided in the QMS. Where courses are equivalent to unit standards, formal course documentation usually consists of unit standard descriptors found on the National Qualifications Framework (NZQA, 2006b). The documentation is generally developed by the people in groups 1 and 2, before it is formally approved by 4) The people who formally approve the programme document, that is, Academic Board for internal approval and ITPQ or NZQA and TEC for external approval; and, 5) The students in Programme A, who make their own decisions how they participate in the programme.

Within Step 2 I generated data with each group, except with ITPQ and TEC, as their direct influence on Programme A is outside the scope of this study. Their influence on programme design practice in general was discussed in Chapter 1, and I also captured some of their influence through the voices of the other decision-makers. Similarly, data on the Academic Board's influence on programme design practice in general within the institution was generated through Step 1. A fortunate opportunity in Step 2 was that within the period of data generation Programme A underwent major changes which had to be formally approved. This allowed me to observe an Academic Board subcommittee meeting on this particular programme. Regarding the other groups of decision-makers, I interviewed people from groups 1 and 2, collected documentation in group 3, and administered a written questionnaire with students from group 5. Documents, interviews, observations and questionnaires all have their advantages and limitations. However, these data sources together were expected to contribute in a comprehensive manner to the objective of this study (Patton, 2002). This

section explains each data generation method, insofar they are different from those in Step 1.

Interviews with managers, programme coordinator. teachers, and external representative

The reasons for interviewing people involved in design practice of Programme A were identical to those described for Step 1.

Selection of participants

Participants selected for the Programme A interviews included three teachers in the programme, the programme coordinator, and three managers with a direct involvement with this programme. The selection was expected to offer a variety of perspectives on design practice, because of the participants' range of roles in relation to Programme A. As mentioned earlier, Programme A has a long history within the institution. In selecting the teacher participants, I ensured a variety in the length of their involvement with the programme. I also used my experiences as academic advisor in working with the teachers to select three people who I expected to have different views.

Participants were invited in the same way as the institutional decision-makers in Step 1. Again, all agreed to participate without further questions and gave their written consent. Data generation for Programme A occurred from March to June 2008.

Programme A is subject to requirements from an external standard setting body. For this reason a representative from this body was interviewed to provide insight into its perspective on programme design practice in polytechnics and into the background to the requirements it sets for Programme A. I phoned the external representative to ask permission for the interview in principle, after which a similar process of invitation and informed consent was followed as for the participants from the institution. I travelled to the external representative's office to conduct the interview.

I left the option open to interview additional people, in case they would be able to provide some missing information. This allowance is in line with the concept of persistent observation, which adds to the credibility of the study (Bassey, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As persistent observation appeared to have been incorporated sufficiently in the selection of participants, I did not identify a need to use this option.

Structure of the interviews

For the same reasons as with the institutional decision-makers, the interviews were semi-structured. Because the interviews in Step 2 were about a particular programme, I was able to make the interview questions more specific than in Step 1, ensuring that potentially the entire spectrum of design elements identified in Section 2.2 was discussed. Again, I had to find an optimum between the breadth and depth of programme design practice I wanted to cover during the interviews and the time I could reasonably ask from participants, despite the potential benefit of their voices being acknowledged in the outcomes of this study. As with the institutional decision-makers, I decided to limit the interview time to three hours at most. This required some creativity (Patton, 2002), resulting in the following: I sent the programme coordinator and teachers the questions four to five days before the interview and asked them to fill out a table to indicate which aspect of programme or course design was very, reasonably or not so important to them. These questions, including the table, are found in Appendix II. I then focused the interviews on what they had indicated as very or reasonably important, leaving the not-so-important aspects to a brief question at the end why they were considered less important. This approach allowed all aspects to be covered, emphasised the aspects that were most important to the participants, and enabled the interviews to be completed within the planned time-frame. For the managers I took a similar approach. Knowing from my own experience that managers are only involved in decision-making on certain aspects of programme or course design, I changed the table for managers. I asked them to indicate on each aspect

whether they had any influence on the decision-making, and if so, if they made the decision themselves or if someone else did. If no, I asked if they thought they should have any influence or not. These questions, including the table, are also found in Appendix II. Similar to the interviews with the teachers and coordinator, I focused the interviews on the aspects the managers had indicated they influence, and cut short the discussion on the 'No influence and shouldn't have influence' aspects, by asking one overarching question why they were of this opinion. Again, this approach kept the interviews within the planned time-frame and enabled a focus on what participants find particularly important and how they influence this.

The interview questions in Appendix II consist of two sets: one about the design at programme level, and the other one at course level. All participants were interviewed about the programme level. Teachers were asked about the design of one course of their own choice which they were teaching. Managers and the coordinator were asked about the set of three courses selected by the teachers, assuming that their involvement in course design is at a less detailed level than the teachers'. Each questionnaire finished with questions about participants' use of formal documentation in their practice, including the QMS and programme documentation.

The interview with the external representative was slightly different, in that it concentrated on the components of programme design that were relevant to the external organisation's involvement and influence. The questions of this interview are again found in Appendix II.

Conducting the interviews

The people I interviewed are busy. Probably for this reason they did not always take the time to prepare the interviews, including the table I had asked them to complete before the interview. If that happened, I created time at the start of the interview for them to complete it. Participants appeared to be deeply engaged with the programme, which gave me a sense that they were honest and open about what they found important and what their design considerations and concerns were. This was strengthened by

interviewing teachers about courses of their own choice, which were courses that they clearly cared about. It was helpful that I knew the structure of the programme; it made the conversation easier. However, I had the programme document and relevant course documents available during the interviews in case we needed to look something up, which we sometimes did.

As with the institutional decision-makers, participants were not always clear about terminology. I left the interpretation to them, but if this meant that I felt a component was missed I would specifically ask about that component. For example, at one stage a teacher started discussing what I interpret as 'assessment' under the 'evaluation' component, while 'assessment' was also questioned as a separate component. This created the risk of missing out on his views on what I consider 'evaluation', so I decided to intervene.

Again, all interviews were recorded, for the same reason as in Step 1. In Step 1 I have also already explained how I dealt with transcription and member check.

Meeting observation

Observation of meetings was expected to provide opportunities for capturing the social practice of programme design during the interaction of the people involved (Patton, 2002). During the data generation period I was able to observe one relevant meeting, which potentially gave insight into the interaction between the programme and institutional levels of design. This was an Academic Board subcommittee meeting to discuss proposed major changes to Programme A. Normally I would participate in this meeting, but to be able to concentrate on the conversations and the observation I decided to observe only. I had discussed this with the chairperson before the meeting and asked his permission for the observation. At the start of the meeting I explained the details of the observation to the participants. I also gave them an information sheet and asked them to provide their written consent for participation, to which all of them agreed. The observations were overt, semi-structured, and guided but not prescribed by the components and elements from Section 2.2. In order to keep the meeting as natural as possible, it was

not recorded. For dependability (or reliability) purposes, I used an observation schedule to record my notes during the meeting, which I expanded later (Silverman, 1993). This schedule is attached in Appendix II as well. While with this approach I was able to note which items were brought up for discussion, what the discussion was about and which decision was made, capturing further details of the interaction was not possible. As a result, the observation has influenced the findings of this study in a very limited way.

Document collection

Included in the consent provided by one of the managers responsible for Programme A was permission to use the programme and course approval documents for analysis. This permission was given without further discussion. The documents I used were the ones in place at the time when I conducted the interviews (March-June 2008).

Written student questionnaire

To learn about the perspective of students, a written questionnaire was used, for two reasons. First of all, a questionnaire can capture the opinions of all students, thus minimising selection effects (Singleton Jr & Straits, 2002). Secondly, the role of students in programme design practice tends to be limited to boundaries other people have decided. Within these boundaries students decide what is important to them. For this reason, the questions for students could be much more structured and less open ended than with for example the teachers. Therefore, I thought a written questionnaire would be sufficient to capture the students' decisions (de Vaus, 2002). There were no direct personal benefits for students to participate, which is why I designed the questionnaire to take only approximately 15 minutes of students' time. There were no risks to the students participating in the questionnaire. Their contributions were anonymous and I was not involved in student assessment, so a student's participation would not affect their assessment results.

I tailored the questions to Programme A, while retaining a structure that would allow future analysis across the five participating programmes. I incorporated questions about programme and course levels where relevant, and targeted areas where students were able to make their own decisions. Again, the questionnaire is attached in Appendix II.

The programme coordinator kindly made time available for me to do this questionnaire with the students. The questionnaire was held in the same semester as the interviews with the tutors, but close to end of the semester. This meant that the students completing the questionnaire had already been in the programme for several months, and that any students unlikely to complete the programme had already withdrawn. Before I gave students a letter with details about their involvement in the project and the questionnaire, I introduced myself and the project to the students. The letter stated that students had a choice to participate, but all students who were present completed the questionnaire. In the letter I also explained that students would be invited to a workshop to hear the results if they were interested. If they wanted to receive an invitation they were asked to write their contact details on a separate form handed out with the questionnaire. I collated these forms separately from the questionnaires to guard students' anonymity.

In hindsight, the information provided by this questionnaire was of limited use for answering the research questions, as I had structured the questions too much which made them too focused on 'what' and 'how'. Questions asking about the 'why' of students' decisions, possibly through interviews instead of a questionnaire, would have been more worthwhile, but I did not recognise this until I had started analysing the data. I had hoped that the workshop in Step 4 would give me an opportunity to obtain more 'why' answers, but I had to cancel this workshop. I will explain this matter further in Section 3.5.4 and discuss the implications in Chapter 12.

3.5.3. Step 3: Programme Design Practice in Programmes B to E

Section 3.3 explained how Step 3 consisted of four embedded case studies, Programmes B to E, similar to that of Programme A in Step 2. Table III (Page 89) showed how each embedded case in Step 3 was studied at programme or course level only. Data generation occurred in the same way as for Programme A, but in the process of 'getting wiser' (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), fewer data sources were needed and sources were only used if relevant to the level at which the embedded case was studied. Table IV (Page 96) gave an overview of the sources used for the four cases. The explanation below only includes elements of Step 3 that were different from Step 2. Data generation for Programmes B to E occurred from August to October 2008.

Table V: Overview of interview participant numbers in each of Programmes B to E

Role of participant	Programme			
	B – course level only	C – programme level only	D – programme level only	E – course level only
Manager	1	1*	2	1
Coordinator	1	-	1	1
Teacher	1	2	1	2
Advisor	1	-	-	-
External representative	1	-	-	-
Total participants:	5	3	4	4

This person also held the coordinator role

Interviews

The number of interview participants per case is found in Table V. The differences are primarily due to the way the programmes and the departments responsible were structured. For each programme the manager responsible and the programme coordinator, who was also a teacher, were interviewed. If the embedded case was studied at programme level the senior manager responsible was also interviewed. The teachers were selected on the basis that they had taught in the programme for some time, and that, with

the programme coordinator, they were likely to give a comprehensive picture of the programme. In addition, for Programme B, an advisor and a representative of the external standard setting organisation were interviewed. While Programme D is subject to external requirements the organisation setting those requirements was in a process of transition at the time. After interviewing the programme coordinator and the managers for this programme it became clear that interviewing an external representative was unlikely to be useful.

The process of gaining access to and informed consent from participants was explained under Step 1. One interview participant was willing to participate, but wished to rely on mutual trust rather than to sign a consent form. After discussion with my supervisor I gave this participant the introductory letter and the information sheet, and I explained the involvement verbally. I interviewed this participant as agreed and no issues have arisen.

The interviews were structured and conducted in a similar way to those for Programme A, however in one part of 1.5 hours maximum, and only for either courses or programmes. As far as I was able to judge, the participants came to the interviews well-prepared. In programmes B and E, where I interviewed about courses only, I again asked the teachers to choose the courses about which they wished to be interviewed. This choice appeared limited, as often the teachers only taught one course or one subject area in the programme. Subsequently, the coordinators, managers, advisor and/or external representative were interviewed about all selected courses. However, the boundaries between courses, programmes and classroom practice are blurred, and on various occasions the conversation went from course to programme level or from course to classroom level and vice versa. I let this happen, as this seemed to be how people constructed their perspectives. As a result, probably as many views were created on the programme level of programmes B and E as on the course level. Similarly, perspectives were generated on the course level of programmes C and D while the original focus for these programmes was on the programme level.

The interview with the external representative for Programme B occurred in the same way as for Programme A. This participant volunteered to come to the institution for the interview. He commented afterwards that the interview had been an interesting experience for him.

In some interviews participants used Māori words. I do not speak te reo Māori, but I know some words. Fortunately the participants translated for me when they used more than one word or longer sentences. In a few occasions I asked how to spell a word or what it meant. The person who transcribed the interviews seemed very proficient in spelling the relevant words.

Document collection and Student questionnaires

Programme and course documents were obtained with permission in the same way as for Programme A. Also student questionnaires were conducted in the same way, with teachers graciously offering some of their class time for the completion of the questionnaires.

3.5.4. Step 4: Workshop with Participants, Further Literature Study, and Professional Conversations with Peers

After a first analysis of the data, I invited all interview participants to a workshop. I did the same with the students who had indicated they were interested, but I planned a separate workshop for them, to avoid any potential negative effects and protect their anonymity. The purposes of the workshops were: 1) to enhance the credibility of the study by carrying out a 'member check' (e.g. Bassey, 1999), that is, sharing the findings and seeking feedback whether the preliminary findings made sense from the participants' perspectives; and, 2) to hear participants' ideas how the findings could be used to benefit programme design practice at the institution. This would help me to realise one of the, albeit not essential, goals of an interpretive inquiry (Simons, 1989). Hence the workshops were part of the data generation. Because they were not anonymous and I was unsure how people would respond, each workshop participant was asked to give their informed

consent, particularly to keep anything that was said during the workshop confidential. The workshop was recorded, for my future reference, so I did not have to take any notes during the workshop.

Two workshops of 1.5 hours for interview participants were held on two different days in the same week in April 2009. This allowed participants to choose which timeslot suited best. In total, nine people attended. During each workshop I presented the findings in three slots of between 15 and 30 minutes, where people were invited to ask questions if they wished. In between participants were invited to discuss and write down on a form I had given them what had particularly struck them and how they thought the findings could be used in the organisation. I collected all forms at the end of the workshop.

A workshop for student participants was planned in May 2009. Students were sent letters of invitation by post or e-mail, as they had indicated when they completed the questionnaire, with a request to reply by a certain date if they intended to attend. The workshop would have been an opportunity for me to get a deeper understanding of the 'why' of students' decisions, which I had not been able to get through the questionnaires, as explained in Section 3.5.2. Unfortunately no students replied to the invitation and I had to cancel the workshop.

Once I had processed the data I presented and discussed parts of my findings to colleagues within the institution and at conferences. This helped me to develop my thoughts further. It also gave me an opportunity to check the validity of the findings (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

3.5.5. Journal

In my roles as advisor and decision-maker I play a part in programme design practice in the institution. This implies that I have an opinion about the programmes, that I have a work relationship with the participants in this research project, and for some programmes that I have had considerable influence on the content of the programme and course approval documents.

The ethical implications of this personal involvement with the topic and the people within the institution were discussed in Section 3.4.2. To deal with my dual involvement in this project, I answered the interview questions in a journal before I held the very first interview, which helped me reflect on what I find important and why. It reduced the temptation to start discussions with participants, probably because I felt my voice had already been recorded in my journal. I further noted any issues that arose during the data generation process in the journal, but fortunately those issues were minimal. Any issues that occurred are described in this chapter.

3.6   The Data Analysis Process

This study aims to understand programme design practice by unravelling which discourses are brought into practice as people construct their programme design practice perspectives - through speech, documents or otherwise - with the resources they have available, as was explained in Section 3.2. I used Holstein and Gubrium's (2008) approach to analysing interpretive practice by identifying what perspectives are constructed –the 'discursive practice' – and which resources people draw on to construct these perspectives – the 'discourses-in-action'. These resources are found by listening to how people construct their perspectives. They are also referred to in the literature as "repertoire[s] of narratives" (Silverman, 2006, p. 145), or interpretative repertoires (Potter & Wetherell, 1990), that is, "broadly discernible clusters of terms, descriptions, common-places […] and figures of speech" (para. 24). While there is an infinite variety in discursive practices, the number of resources that people draw on is generally limited (Reis & Roth, 2007). Identifying these resources and analysing their interplay with 'discursive practices' enabled me to create an understanding of programme design practice.

This section describes this identification and analysis process. I have used a range of tactics for generating meaning, as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). I will refer to these tactics while describing the process. The process is also akin to the sequence for data analysis in a naturalistic inquiry as

described by Cohen et al. (2000), which, however, I have experienced as much less linear than Cohen et al. seem to suggest.

3.6.1. Prioritising Data

The amount of data generated in this study required me to prioritise the way I would use the various data for analysis. This prioritisation had already been partially incorporated in the research design, as Step 1 and Step 2 involved the two embedded cases that would initially be used for theorising and therefore had the highest priority. Step 3 included the embedded case studies used to study possible generalisation, while Step 4 only served a purpose of confirming the findings. Considering the limited time available for analysis against the quality of some of the data generated in Steps 2 and 3 for the purpose of answering the research questions, I prioritised further, as follows:

- *Primary data:* data used for initial theorising, potentially giving the most insight into programme design practice. The following were used as primary data:
  - ♦ The interview summaries with the Institutional and Programme A decision-makers;
  - ♦ The Academic Statute and Quality Management System documents;
  - ♦ The meeting observation regarding the interaction of Programme A with institutional decision-making, and,
  - ♦ The formal programme documents of Programme A.
- *Secondary data:* data used to find confirmation of or discrepancies with the initial findings, potentially being able to explain discrepancies or confirmations of the findings. The interview summaries with Programme B-E decision-makers were used as secondary data.
- *Reference data*: data used as background information to better understand and triangulate the primary and the secondary data, if needed. Reference data I used were:
  - ♦ The programme and course documents for Programmes B to E. These documents are written following a template in the QMS and will contain the information as required by the QMS. They do not

tend to explain the 'why' of programme design practice. The analysis of the Programme A document had already shown that these documents were unlikely to lead to new insights.

♦ The student questionnaires. As already explained in Section 3.5.2, the student questionnaires appeared to have limited use in understanding 'why' students made certain decisions.

♦ The workshops. These were partly used to check the findings, but also to generate ideas for application of the findings. In a similar way, I used professional conversations, conferences and the literature to find ideas for application.

The following sections describe the data analysis process including how each group of data was used in this process.

3.6.2. Finding Patterns in the Primary Data

Use of a framework

The starting point of the data analysis was a framework developed from the findings in Chapter 2. It provided an initial structure to organise the data, which would help find patterns within programme design practice, using the idea of vertical and horizontal patterns (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Vertical patterns indicate 'what' people find important to be taken into account in programme design practice, while horizontal patterns express 'why' people find something important or 'why' in their view practice occurs as it does. The framework is shown in Figure 11. The columns were used to group the 'what's from the data, according to the components and (sub-) elements identified in Section 2.2 and distinguishing the programme from the course level. These were then analysed to find the vertical patterns. Across programmes and courses and across components, the framework also incorporates perspectives, which have been inspired by the discussion on Pinar et al.'s (1995) concept of 'texts' in Chapter 2. These are the 'why's from the data, which are used to find the horizontal patterns.

	Programme level						Course level					
What	Consultation and Development elements (Figure 2; Page 23)	Intentions elements (Figure 3; Page 26)	Structure and Instruction elements (Figure 4; Page 30)	Administration and Management elements (Figure 5; Page 34)	Assessment elements (Figure 6; Page 39)	Evaluation elements (Figure 7; Page 42)	Consultation and Development elements (Figure 2; Page 23)	Intentions elements (Figure 3; Page 26)	Structure and Instruction elements (Figure 4; Page 30)	Administration and Management elements (Figure 5; Page 34)	Assessment elements (Figure 6; Page 39)	Evaluation elements (Figure 7; Page 42)
Why	Political perspective											
	Theological perspective											
	Historical perspective											
	Institutional perspective											
	Autobiographical perspective											
	Gender perspective											
	Racial perspective											
	International perspective											
	Aesthetic perspective											

Figure 11: Framework for organising and analysing the data. The columns at the top served to group the 'what's, according to the components and (sub-)elements identified in Section 2.2, and distinguishing the programme from the course level. The rows at the bottom serve to organise the 'why's from the data, across programmes, courses and components. The titles of these rows are inspired by Pinar et al. (1995), and were identified in Section 2.3.4.

Finding patterns in the Academic Statute and Quality Management System

From the Academic Statute and the Quality Management System documents, I extracted those clauses, policies, procedures and guidelines that relate to programme design practice, using the framework in Figure 11 as a guide. Each statement expressing a decision criterion (the 'what') was coded to the most appropriate (sub-)element, and each statement expressing a justification for a criterion (the 'why') was coded to the most appropriate perspective. Some statements seemed to fit under more than one (sub-)element or perspective, and were coded as such. Where statements did not fit into any of the elements or perspectives in the framework I created new (sub-)elements or perspectives to capture those statements. It was my personal interpretation that made me assign statements to a certain (sub-)element, but the structuring of the Statute and the QMS around areas that are similar to those in the framework provided confidence that I coded the statements appropriately. While the QMS consists of formal policies and procedures that are expected to be followed, most statements in this system are guidelines. In contrast, the Statute consists solely of rules which must be adhered to. In the analysis, I made no distinction between rules and guidelines, from the viewpoint that all have been considered important enough to be written up in formal organisational documentation.

Finding patterns in the interviews with institutional decision-makers

The summaries of the interviews with institutional decision-makers were coded in a similar way as the Statute and the QMS, but the data contained much more information. To be able to cope with the richness of the data, I analysed the summaries using NVivo®, which has been invaluable. I recreated the framework into NVivo®, with each component, (sub-)element and perspective being a separate category (called 'nodes' in NVivo®), and I created a description of each node, with help from the literature identified in Section 2.2. I read through each interview summary, interpreted statements from the context, and coded them to appropriate nodes. Some statements

were coded to multiple nodes. Each time I coded a statement, I referred back to the node description to ensure consistency in interpretation. On some occasions I had to refine the description to be clearer about what I meant (Cohen, et al., 2000). Having already interpreted the QMS and the Statute in a similar way, be it without NVivo®, was also helpful for consistency in interpretation. Obviously the content of each node still reflected my interpretation of the particular component, (sub-)element or perspective, but where possible, the literature from Section 2.2 supported my interpretation. The first time I went through a summary I was very expansive with coding. After completing the coding of the summary I checked all the coded text: to ensure consistency within a node, which sometimes led to slight modification of the node description; to remove duplications; and to check if I had coded to the most appropriate nodes. This process resulted in some statements being moved to other nodes, and some being deleted. The 'perspectives' nodes were special in that they were assigned statements that referred to the 'why's of decision-makers' considerations and decisions, for example when interview participants:

- had answered explicit questions on why they find certain aspects important;

- had provided spontaneous justifications for what they find important; or,

- were willing to share examples or additional thoughts about a certain aspect they find important.

On many occasions these 'why's were implicit, and I had to interpret from the context what could possibly be the reason for participants saying what they were saying. I coded both the explicit and the implicit statements, as much as I was able and felt confident to detect and interpret the implicit statements. During the process the perspectives evolved, for example, the 'racial', 'gender' and 'international' perspectives merged into the 'cultural' perspective, as all related to cultural norms that people seemed to use in their considerations. Likewise, the 'institutional' and 'historical' perspective merged into the rational perspective, the 'theological' became the ethical, the 'autobiographical' became the personal experience and the political became

the social-political perspective, borrowing the latter term from Sork (1997). I did not find any data that I could assign to the aesthetic perspective, despite suggestions from the literature (Barnett & Coate, 2005; Doll, 2005; Pinar, et al., 1995) that this perspective might have a part to play.

During the interviews about the programme level participants sometimes referred to aspects that in my interpretation related to the course or classroom level, or vice versa. For example, someone talked how they evaluated their classroom sessions when I asked them about the evaluation of the programme. I coded such views to the best fitting level, according to my description of each node. In other cases I had to create completely new nodes, when participants brought up views that did not relate to any existing node. Especially in the early stages of coding I came across new viewpoints in every new summary I started working on, and often I had to go back to documents I had already coded to check for these viewpoints and incorporate them as well. This process stabilised after some time, providing me with confidence that I had been able to get as much out of the summaries as I could and that the observation had been sufficiently persistent (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The biggest advantage of using NVivo® was its flexibility: that it enabled this re-categorising, development of new nodes and altering the nodes during the analysis process, while keeping the coded statements intact, and retaining the connection of the coded statements with the original summary. The latter was helpful for selecting extracts to use as evidence in this thesis, but also for comparing viewpoints of different groups of decision-makers.

Finding patterns in the interviews with Programme A decision-makers

Summaries of the interviews with decision-makers in Programme A were coded in the same way as those with institutional decision-makers. I created a separate tree structure in NVivo® to be able to distinguish the two embedded cases, and to keep the nodes manageable.

While coding the summaries for Programme A, I noticed a variety of words and expressions that participants used when they talked about learning,

teaching, and the approach to programme design. I sensed that these words and expressions could indicate implicit 'why's, or discourses-in-action, of programme design practice, so I created a 'teaching and learning perspective', and coded relevant statements in the summaries to this perspective. This would allow me to further analyse this new node at a later stage. This implied that I had to go back and analyse all interview summaries with institutional decision-makers as well as the Statute and the QMS for this perspective, which is not unusual in interpretive practice (Cohen, et al., 2000).

3.6.3. Seeking Plausibility

After this initial process of finding patterns in the data, I asked myself: What are the patterns telling me about the answer to the research questions? Is this analysis plausible; is it leading me to the answers? (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

On first sight the vertical patterns - the components and (sub-)elements - did not tell me much. They seemed no more than representations of the participants' perspectives described in terms of a structuralist framework (Silverman, 2006), and did not account for the social web in which decision-makers interpret their world (Kitzinger (2004), as cited in Silverman, 2006). A more thorough observation, however, revealed that some (sub-)elements or components had been referred to much more often than others, and that some were hardly referred to or not at all. This seemed to have some potential meaning in relation to the research questions, which made me conduct a numerical analysis of the vertical patterns. From the Statute and QMS coding results, I counted the number of statements for each (sub-)element and for each component, for both the course and programme level (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I did the same for the coded statements from the institutional decision-maker and Programme A coding results. After this I compared the results within groups of decision-makers. These results are presented in Chapter 4. I was aware that this numerical analysis had to be used with great care, as each interview was different, and the statements

were influenced by my personal interaction with the participants. This implied that I was unable to compare groups, which I have explained in Chapter 4. Despite this restriction, some valuable observations resulted from the analysis, which I was able to use as evidence within the next step of the data analysis process. Using this evidence is an example how analysis of the interaction between discursive practice and discourse-in-action can provide some meaningful interpretations (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008).

The horizontal patterns - the perspectives - had evolved during the coding process, as explained in the previous section. Reading and re-reading of these patterns resulted in further refinement of which statements were to be coded to each perspective, including re-grouping of the perspectives and re-assignment of statements to different perspectives. At some stage in this process, I realised that the perspectives came across as if I was looking at programme design practice through different lenses (T. Bruce, personal communication, January 8, 2009). The lens is used here as a metaphor, a "conceptual simile[s] some aspects of which are used, some are not" (Maassen & Weingart, 2000, p. 31). Using this metaphor allowed stepping away from the immediate data and reflecting on them from a more analytical level. At the same time the lens metaphor has formed the bridge that has connected the data to the theorising of programme design practice for this case study (Miles & Huberman, 1994), as the rest of this section will explain. To keep the metaphor useful (Miles & Huberman, 1994), only the following aspects of the lens metaphor are used: A lens is a transparent piece of glass that magnifies an object to study it in more detail. The image is the enlargement. The lens does not just magnify the object; it also shows the immediate surroundings of the object, so it does not take the object out of its context. The object in this study is a group of related 'why's of programme design decision-makers' consideration and decisions. For example the object that is magnified through the ethical lens encompasses all considerations and decisions that are made by decision-makers for ethical reasons. However, the lens keeps the object's connections to other 'why's of decision-makers'

considerations and decisions intact. An illustration of the lens metaphor is shown in Figure 12.

Using the notion of observing programme design practice through different lenses, where each lens would magnify a distinct group of 'why's of programme design decision-makers' considerations and decisions, brought structure to the data, in the sense that it allowed me to study each lens image

Figure 12: Illustration how the metaphor of a lens allows studying details of an object without taking the object out of its context. (Photo: ©2006 Microsoft Corporation)

separately. If I could first theorise each image by identifying the discourses that underpinned them, I would then be able to theorise programme design practice as a whole by bringing the underpinnings together. I also realised that many observations from the numerical analysis presented in Chapter 4 could be explained when considered as part of the image of a particular lens.

I identified seven different lenses. Their images are described in detail in Chapters 5 to 11.

Coding of the meeting observation and the Programme A documents

At this stage I felt confident to analyse the meeting observation notes, which I analysed by identifying which lens each question/answer/comment stated in the notes let me look through. I did the same with the contents of the Programme A documents, which I again analysed using NVivo®.

3.6.4. Finding Patterns in the Images of the Lenses

The next step consisted of finding patterns in the images of each identified lens. Reading and re-reading the statements under each perspective, I looked for patterns or themes, and grouped the statements into these themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Again I used NVivo® for the grouping, except with the Statute and QMS and the meeting observation notes, where I conducted the grouping manually. While going through this process I developed a description for each theme. This process was similar to that used in grounded theory research (Creswell, 2008). In this step of the data analysis I only used the themes to provide a description of the images. In the next step, described in Section 3.6.5, I used them to understand and explain what created these images. In this way, I met the criticism on grounded theory that it can easily remain descriptive rather than leading to a deeper understanding through theorising (Silverman, 1993).

Once I had identified the themes within each image in the primary data, I was ready to bring in the secondary data for triangulation. This process focused on identifying commonalities in the identified lenses and themes, and illuminating any fundamental differences (Patton, 2002), aligned with the idea of analytical generalisation referred to in Section 3.3 (Yin, 2003). Using NVivo® again I read through each interview summary in the secondary data and in the first instance assigned statements to lenses. I made sure that I had coded most appropriately by checking the codings in two ways: firstly, by reading through the summary again and confirming that I had not overlooked anything and that statements had been coded to the most appropriate lens; secondly, by reading through all coded statements under each lens to ensure that the statements had been coded appropriately. The latter check was

conducted more than once: I continued doing this throughout the further analysis process, as my insights developed and the analysis refined. During this entire process I also kept my eyes open for any new lenses to emerge from the data, but I did not identify any.

After this first coding of statements I grouped the statements under each lens into themes in the same way as I had done for the primary data. In a few cases new themes emerged, while existing themes were refined during this process.

After I was fully satisfied that I had captured all themes and all statements that provided evidence for these themes, in the primary as well as the secondary data, I counted the statements per theme and per group of decision-makers (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This provided me with valuable information on the significance of a theme, as well as for identifying similarities and contrasts between the groups of decision-makers (Miles & Huberman, 1994), for the purpose of analytical generalisation as explained in Section 3.3.

3.6.5. Theorising

The data analysis process described in Sections 3.6.1 to 3.6.4 was focused, first, on identifying the 'what' of programme design practice (referred to as the vertical patterns and described in Chapter 4) and, second, on describing and thematising the 'why's of programme design decision-makers' considerations and decisions, from their perspectives (the horizontal patterns; described in Chapters 5 to 11).

To theorise the findings from this process, I used the interpretation of 'theory' as a "coherent structure of interrelated concepts" that "help us to understand and explain discursive and social phenomena" and provide "a model of the way that discourse and social systems work and can be worked upon" (Anyon, 2009, p. 3). To obtain this "coherent structure of interrelated concepts" for the phenomenon of programme design practice within the context of this study, the theorising was carried out as a two-step process.

The first step involved understanding and explaining the themes that had been observed through each individual lens, and the second the development of an understanding and explanation of programme design practice as a whole.

For the first theorising step, I sought to identify the discourses that formed the interconnections within and between the themes observed through each individual lens (Cohen, et al., 2000). Miles and Huberman (1994) refer to this process as "subsuming particulars into the general", as each particular theme was explained in terms of a discourse that underpinned a range of themes.

For each theme I referred back to the findings about ideologies from Chapter 2. I also delved further into the literature on ideological and sometimes other discourses relevant to the particular theme, to explain each identified theme in terms of these discourses and how the discourses collaboratively contributed to the image of each lens. As I went through this process, I included findings from previous lenses as well as from the vertical patterns in Chapter 4 to support findings for subsequent lenses, thus acknowledging the connections between the objects magnified by the lenses. The results from this first step in the theorising process are described in the final sections of each of Chapters 5 to 11, in the form of what could be seen as seven 'mini-theories'.

The second theorising step aimed at creating coherence (Miles & Huberman, 1994) across the findings for each lens to understand and explain programme design practice as a whole, which was the aim of this study. The first theorising step had not only resulted in seven 'mini-theories', but had also shown that these mini-theories were interconnected, as different lens images were able to be explained by related or similar discourses. Furthermore, the development process of the mini-theories had shown various instances where lens images could be understood better if already developed understandings from other lens images were taken into account. This suggested that the mini-theories were part of a bigger scheme, where understanding the total would provide a better insight into programme design practice than just understanding the sum of the mini-theories.

Therefore, I looked for a more comprehensive theory that might be available to provide an answer to the research questions. I found that complexity theory provided a meaningful framework within which to pull the mini-theories together and theorise the total of the findings from Chapters 4 to 11, using the idea of starting with a "grand theory" and working "down" to a specific situation (Delamont, 1992, p. 160). This theorising process is described in Chapter 12. It starts with explaining the particular aspects of the "grand" complexity theory that were used for the purpose of theorising programme design practice, followed by a description how I used complexity theory terminology and insights to "work down" to the specific situation of programme design practice for the context of this study. I then argue how this description is evidenced by the findings from Chapters 4 to 11.

It must be noted here that I have not intended to make any contribution in this study to the advancement of complexity theory, but instead I have applied useful aspects and insights of the 'grand' complexity theory to understand and explain programme design practice in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand, using the specific case studied in this research project.

Chapter 12 further provides a critical reflection on this study as a whole and the implications of the findings for practice. The conclusions from this study, including the answers to the research questions, their implications, and recommendations for practice as well as for further research, are summarised in Chapter 13.

3.6.6. Reflection

Some further reflection is needed regarding the credibility of the data analysis process. An unfortunate aspect of the data analysis process was that I was unable to triangulate by having different researchers involved (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), because this is an individual doctoral project. This means that the data have only been analysed by me, and only reflect my interpretation, which could have consequences for the credibility of the study. To compensate, I have used alternative strategies to include the voices of other

researchers in the analysis. One strategy was to start the analysis with a framework that was based on scholarly literature. A second strategy was to conduct the analysis in stages. This meant that I analysed one aspect and left it while working on another. I would then come back to the first aspect after a few weeks, having a fresh eye and having gained new insights from interaction with the literature and with people. I allowed this process to continue until the completion of this thesis.

I believe that interaction is essential in creating knowledge, so 'peer review' provided opportunities to explore aspects of the research that otherwise might have remained implicit (Bassey, 1999; Creswell, 1998; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) . However, the extent to which I could involve peers was limited. During the data generation process I was only able to involve my supervisor as a peer, because of the confidentiality I had promised to the participants. Once I had analysed the data and was able to present findings in terms of themes rather than people it became easier to involve others. I had to remain careful, however, in how I presented findings and to whom. Examples of peer review opportunities I used included: a workshop for doctoral students at the University of Waikato, which moved me out of an impasse and led me to the direction this study has taken; presentations about the findings to the staff in the institution, followed by discussions; discussions with my personal mentor and other inspiring colleagues and friends; and, presentations and discussions at conferences. These interactions have been invaluable in putting my thoughts together.

3.7   Reporting the Findings of the Study

Reporting this study required ethical considerations to protect the participants and the participating institution from potential harm.

As I work at the institution, it is not possible to hide that this study has been conducted at my own institution. However, I have tried to maximise confidentiality by not naming the institution in this thesis or in any other publication that may result from this study. I have also neither revealed a particular participants' personal involvement nor the involvement of a

particular programme to the public. Participants are only referred to in this thesis through the role they have in programme design practice. People within the institution may be able to trace back certain aspects in this thesis or related publications to individual people. I have tried to take care in the reporting by minimising contextual material that might contribute to this. In the case where it is obvious whose contribution is reported on, I have agreed with this person on the way the particular part of their contribution has been reported.

Possible risks are that this research will expose the institution's or a department's programme design practices. The exposure could be seen as a positive, as an example of the institution's commitment to reflective practice. On the other hand some tensions are highlighted that might affect the institution or a department in a negative way. I have tried to take care in this thesis by highlighting the ideas that participants brought forward, rather than highlighting the people. Additionally, the emphasis of the study is on understanding the practices in terms of discourses from society, not on the practices themselves. It therefore takes the findings beyond the individual institution.

For trustworthiness purposes, I have aimed to report this study in such a way that enables the reader to draw their "own interpretations about significance and meaning" (Patton, 2002, p. 438), and to determine whether a new context is sufficiently similar to the researched context in order to be able to transfer the results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To optimise trustworthiness, I have included a detailed description of the data generation and analysis process, and of the images of each lens and the themes that make up these images. The presentation of the lens images and the themes is supported by extracts from the data that the reader may be able to recognise from their own experience or context. Obviously the choice of extracts was in some degree subjective, but they were chosen carefully on the basis of two criteria. Firstly, in the spirit of 'verstehen' analysis (Weber, 1968), they had to reflect the meanings that the themes intended to express, in a way that would also make sense to the reader. To strengthen this, I have sometimes skipped

words in an extract or inserted clarifying words for the reader in the extracts. This is shown in an extract through the symbols [...] and [inserted words], respectively. To stay within limits of confidentiality, I have also used generic terms between brackets to replace words in extracts that could identify the institution, individual programmes or people, for example [the institution]. As a second criterion, the extracts within any one lens and theme were chosen to represent the voices of the multiple participants and other data sources that contributed to the particular image or theme. To demonstrate that I had done this I would have had to include a unique code for each participant in the numbering of the extracts. However, given the small size of the case institution and the closeness of the relationships within the institution and its departments, this unique code might have enabled a reader to identify individual participants by connecting extracts across the thesis. This would increase the risk that harm might be done to participants because of something they had said as part of this study. I wanted to minimise that risk. For this reason the extract numbers identify the role of a participant (T = teacher, P = programme coordinator, A = advisor, M = manager, E = external representative, ID = institutional decision-maker), but they do not specify which teacher, manager, or other participant, contributed the extract. The extracts from each participant role are numbered sequentially from the beginning to the end of the thesis. As part of the audit trail, which is referred to in the next paragraph, I have kept a file that retraces the extract to individual participants. For documents, the extracts have been coded to identify the document (QMS = Quality Management System, Statute = Academic Statute, ProgDocA = programme document Programme A), while extracts from the meeting observation are coded with Obs. These extracts are also coded sequentially throughout the document.

To assure dependability and confirmability of this study I have set up an audit trail by collecting and retaining the materials I have used in this study (Guba, cited in Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Singleton Jr & Straits, 2002). It can be made available for audit if needed, however within confidentiality limitations as agreed with the research participants. As much as possible and relevant, I

have supported findings with extracts and figures from the data, to enhance confirmability. In addition, I have made an effort to further increase confirmability by developing a report that is internally coherent (Bassey, 1999; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

All interview participants were given the opportunity to inspect the final draft of the thesis and discuss it with me. This allowed them to be reassured that I had treated their contribution confidentially as I had promised them when they consented to participation.

Patton (2002) claims that, because the researcher participates in qualitative research, the report should always include "*any personal and professional information that may have affected data collection, analysis, and interpretation*" (p. 472, italics in original). Throughout this chapter I have tried to incorporate how my own participation in the study has influenced data analysis and interpretation. Ethical issues related to my dual involvement as researcher and programme design decision-maker in the institution have been incorporated in the research design and were explained in Section 3.4.2.

CHAPTER 4:   THE COMPONENTS AND ELEMENTS OF PROGRAMME DESIGN

4.1   Introduction

This chapter describes the results of the first step in the data analysis, that is, the vertical patterns in the primary data, as explained in Section 3.6.2. It analyses what programme design decision-makers in the context of this study found important when considering and making decisions for their practice. This is important because there is no point in trying to understand the 'why' of programme design practice without having some sense of 'what' this practice is about. Using the language of Holstein and Gubrium (2008), understanding comes through interpreting discursive practice (the 'what') in combination with discourses-in-action (the 'why'). Moreover, the analysis of the 'what' in itself could be considered a discourse-in-action, as it provides, for example, an indication of 'what not'.

Section 4.2 describes the vertical patterns that were identified from the data, using Figure 13 as a framework. This figure is a copy of the top part of Figure 11 in Section 3.6.2, and is based on the inventory of components, elements and sub-elements that were identified in Chapter 2 as areas of consideration for programme design. Section 4.3 explains how these patterns alone are insufficient to answer the research questions, demonstrating the need for analysis of the horizontal patterns. However, the vertical patterns provide important data to contribute to the analysis of those horizontal patterns.

	Programme level					
What	Consulta-tion and Develop-ment elements (Figure 2; Page 23)	Intentions elements (Figure 3; Page 26)	Structure and Instruction elements (Figure 4; Page 30)	Administra-tion and Manage-ment elements (Figure 5; Page 34)	Assess-ment elements (Figure 6; Page 39)	Evaluation elements (Figure 7; Page 42)
	Course level					
What	Consulta-tion and Develop-ment elements (Figure 2; Page 23)	Intentions elements (Figure 3; Page 26)	Structure and Instruction elements (Figure 4; Page 30)	Administra-tion and Managemen t elements (Figure 5; Page 34)	Assess-ment elements (Figure 6; Page 39)	Evaluation elements (Figure 7; Page 42)

Figure 13: Framework for organising and analysing the vertical patterns in the data, according to the components and (sub-) elements that were identified in Section 2.2, and distinguishing the programme from the course level.

4.2   Analysing the Vertical Patterns

The primary data were coded to the components and (sub-) elements in the framework in Figure 13, distinguishing programme from course levels. The coded statements were counted for each component, element and sub-element in the framework, and for any new (sub-)elements that had been created during the coding process. To look for patterns, I created pie charts that showed percentages of statements assigned to each component at programme and course level, for each of the Statute/QMS, institutional, and Programme A decision-maker groups. Figure 14 and Figure 15 show the results for the Statute/QMS, Figure 16 and Figure 17 for the institutional decision-makers, and Figure 18 and Figure 19 for the Programme A decision-makers.

Statute and QMS - Programme level

Consultation and Development 12%
Intentions 6%
Structure and Instruction 22%
Administration and Management 12%
Assessment 6%
Evaluation 42%
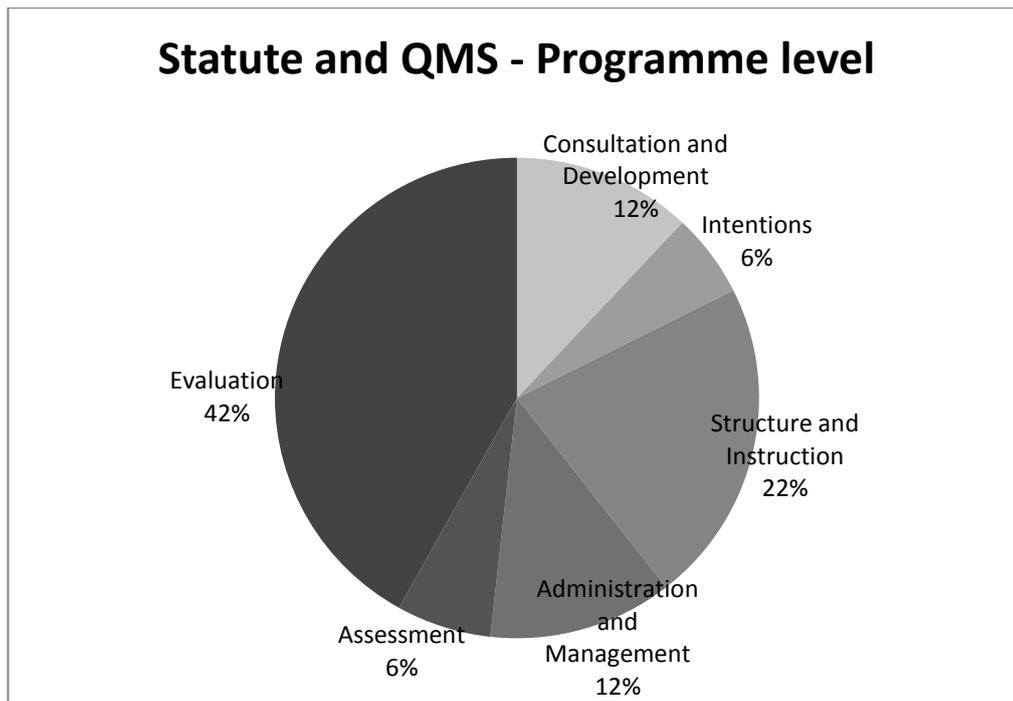
Figure 14: Identified statements on each design component at programme level in the Academic Statute and the Quality Management System, as a percentage of the 284 identified statements on design at programme level in these documents.

Statute and QMS - Course level

Consultation and Development 0.6 %
Intentions 4%
Structure and Instruction 20%
Administration and Management 4%
Assessment 40%
Evaluation 32%
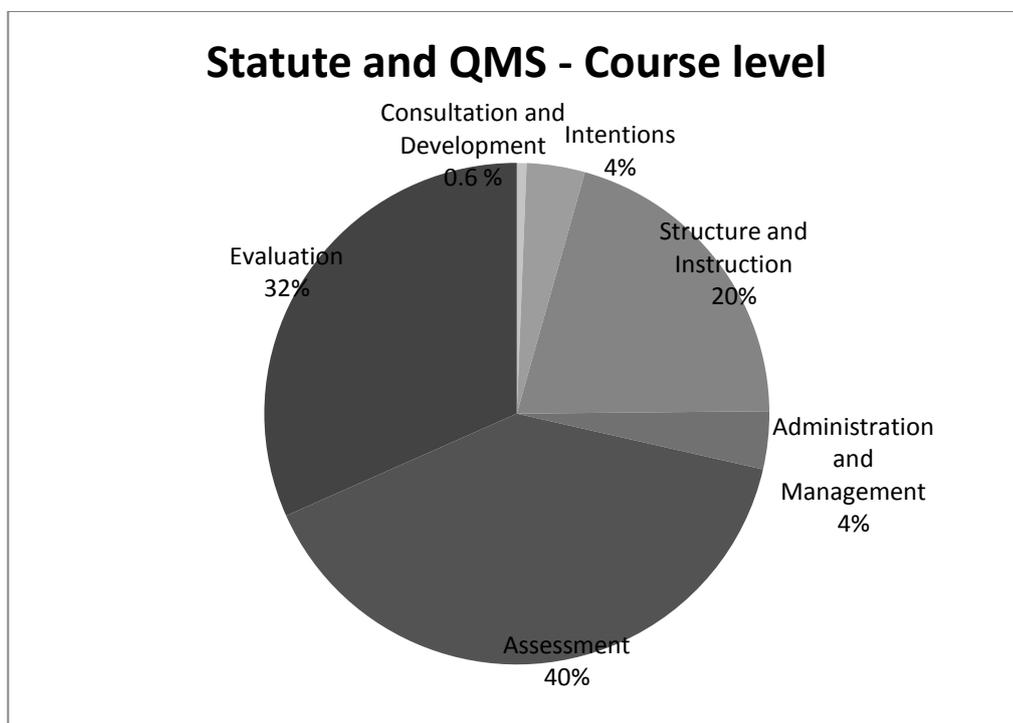
Figure 15: Identified statements on each design component at course level in the Academic Statute and the Quality Management System, as a percentage of the 161 identified statements on design at course level in these documents.

Institutional Decision-makers - Programme level

Evaluation
10%

Assessment
7%

Administration
and Management
17%

Consultation and
Development
22%

Intentions
16%

Structure and
Instruction
28%
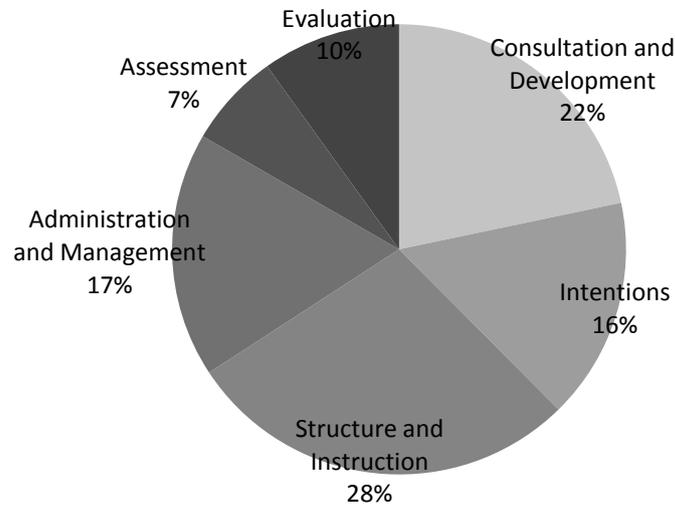
Figure 16: Identified statements on each design component at programme level from the interviews with institutional decision-makers, as a percentage of the total 415 identified statements on design at programme level from these interviews.

Institutional Decision-makers - Course level

Evaluation
14%

Assessment
16%

Administration
and Management
13%

Consultation and
Development
16%

Intentions
13%

Structure and
Instruction
28%
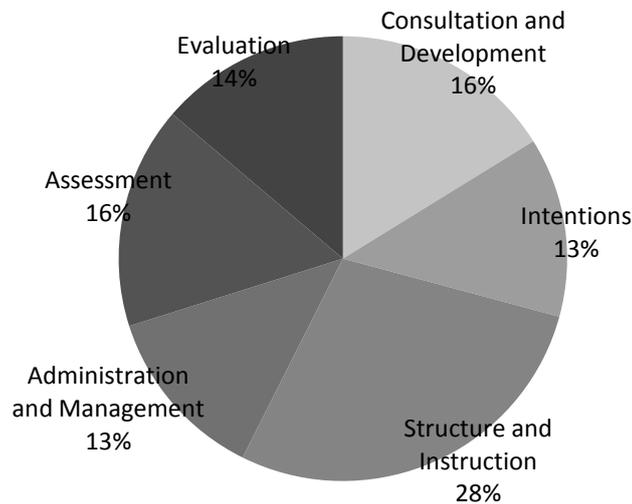
Figure 17: Identified statements on each design component at course level from the interviews with institutional decision-makers, as a percentage of the 291 identified statements on design at course level from these interviews.

Programme A - Programme level
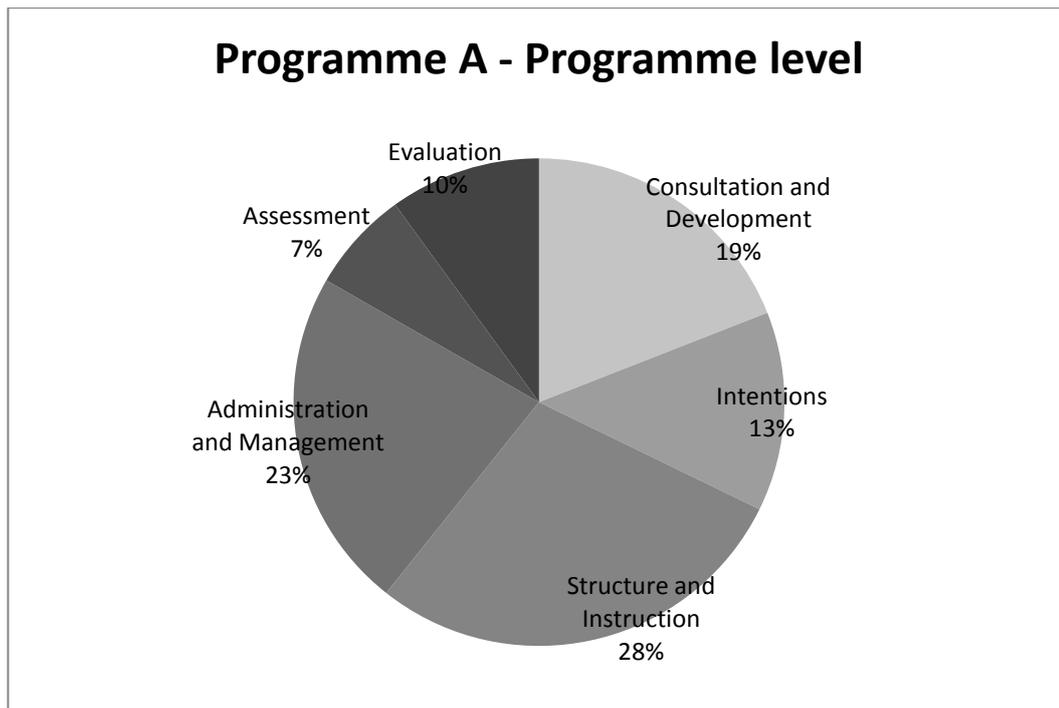
Figure 18: Identified statements on each design component at programme level from the interviews with Programme A decision-makers, as a percentage of the 553 identified statements on design at programme level from these interviews.

Programme A - Course level
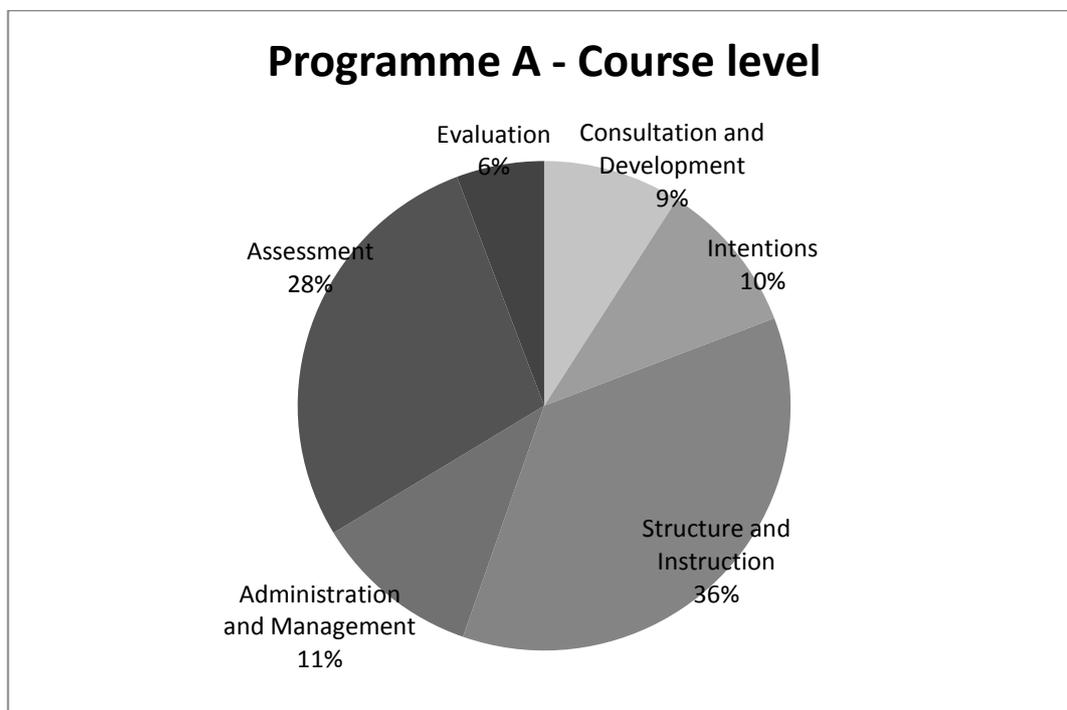
Figure 19: Identified statements on each design component at course level from the interviews with Programme A decision-makers, as a percentage of the 365 identified statements on design at course level from these interviews.

The charts need to be interpreted with great care. The differences in data generation methods and questions between different groups of decision-makers may have emphasised some components more for some groups than for others, thus affecting the number of statements related to those components. As a consequence the charts can only be compared within and not between decision-maker groups. Taking these considerations into account, the two pie charts for each decision-maker group highlight some aspects which seem worth noting. These aspects are listed in Table VI.

The questions that guided the interviews were almost the same at course and at programme level, and in the analysis of the Statute/QMS I did not distinguish between course and programme level either. Therefore, I would have expected to find similar numbers of statements for each decision-maker group at programme and course level. This makes observations 1 and 5 to 11 in Table VI noteworthy, as they go against my expectations. Furthermore, while I did not expect equal numbers of statements for each component within a single decision-maker group, all components of programme design had been shown in the literature review to be of importance. For this reason I had not anticipated the high or low percentages of statements within any one group that are noted in observations 2 to 4 in Table VI.

A similar but more detailed analysis was conducted for the elements and sub-elements within each component, however for the three groups combined. One example for each level is shown in Figure 20 and Figure 21. The full range of charts is found in Appendix III.

Table VI: Noteworthy observations from Figure 14 to Figure 19.

Decision-makers	Observation	Figure(s)
Academic Statute and Quality Management System	1. Many more statements for the programme level than for the course level.	2 and 3
	2. Relatively high number of statements on *Evaluation* at programme level.	2
	3. Relatively high number of statements on *Evaluation* and *Assessment* at course level.	3
	4. Relatively low number of statements on *Consultation and Development* at course level.	3
	5. Relatively more statements on *Administration and Management, Consultation and development, and Evaluation* at programme level than at course level.	2 and 3
	6. Relatively more statements on *Assessment* at course level than at programme level.	2 and 3
Institutional decision-makers	7. Many more statements for the programme level than for the course level.	4 and 5
	8. Relatively more statements on *Assessment* at course level than at programme level.	4 and 5
Programme A decision-makers	9. Many more statements for the programme level than for the course level.	6 and 7
	10. Relatively more statements on *Administration and Management* and *Consultation and Development* at programme level than at course level.	6 and 7
	11. Relatively more statements on *Assessment* and on *Structure and Instruction* at course level than at programme level.	6 and 7
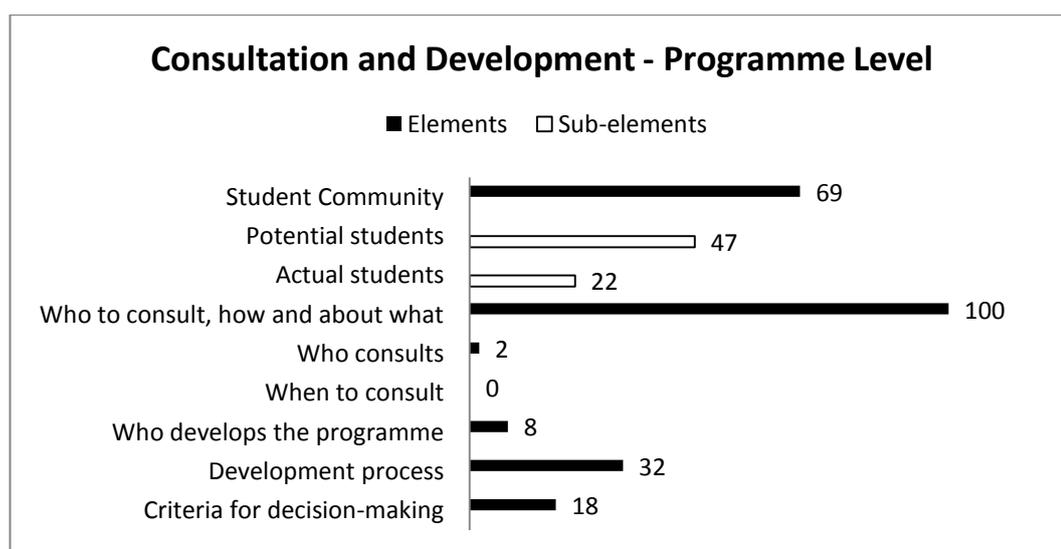
Figure 20: Total number of statements from the Academic Statute, the Quality Management System and the interviews with Institutional and Programme A decision-makers for each (sub-)element within the consultation and development component at programme level.
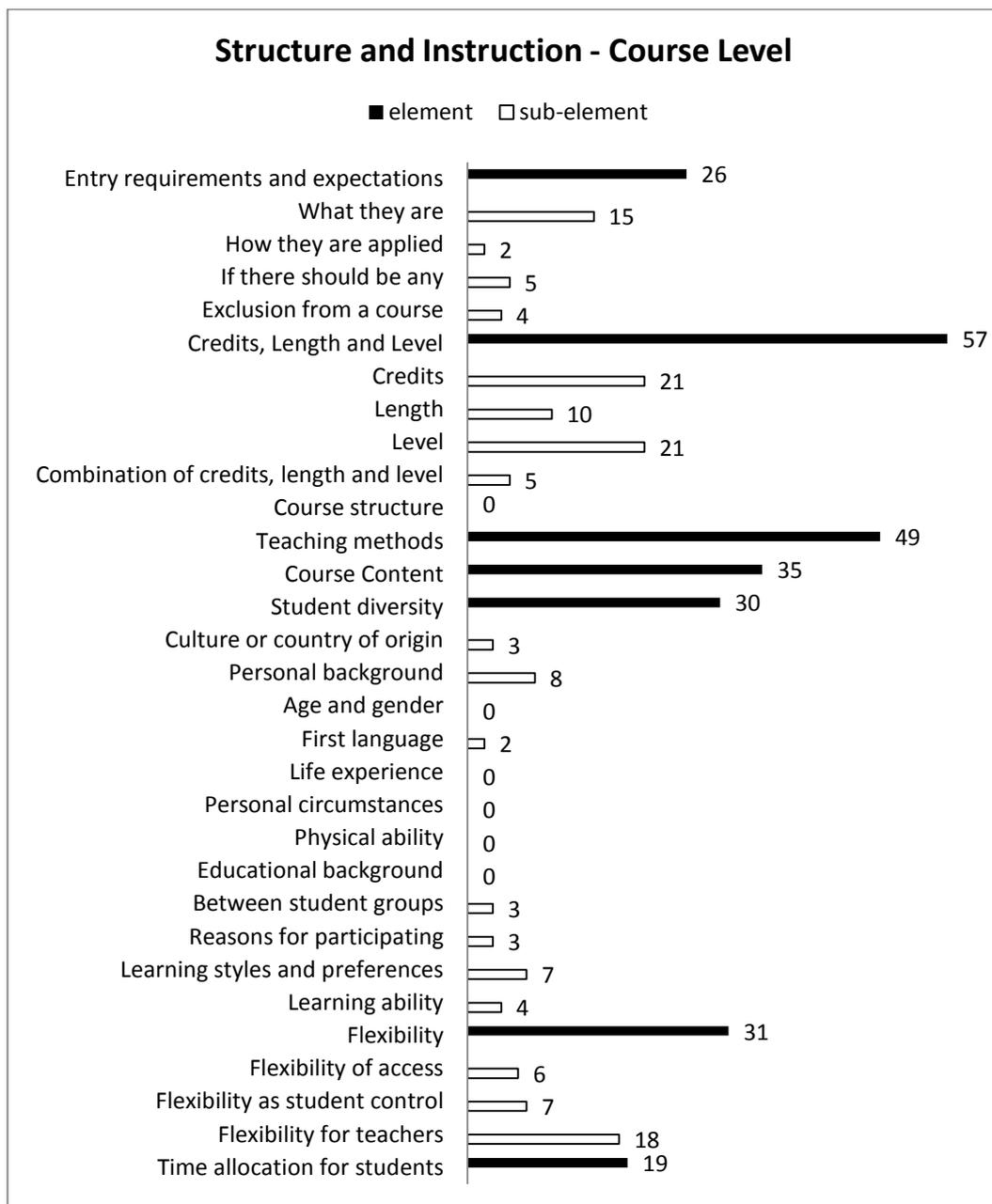
Figure 21: Total number of statements from the Academic Statute, the Quality Management System and the interviews with Institutional and Programme A decision-makers for each (sub-)element within the structure and instruction component at course level.

The charts confirm the assumption made in Section 2.2.1, that the components and elements of design at programme level are almost identical to those at course level. There are differences between the two levels but they are only minor. For instance, the programme level incorporates 'Interpretation of qualification' and 'Structure' as elements, which are not

found at the course level. The charts also show the emergence of new (sub-) elements that were not identified in the literature. Addtionally, some (sub-) elements that were found in the literature were not referred to at all at either programme or course level. These (sub-)elements are listed in Table VII and Table VIII, respectively. To show that many of the newly identified (sub-) elements are not insignificant, I have included their frequencies in Table VII. With regard to Table VIII, it must be noted that the element 'level of intentions' from the framework is not included, because this element has been incorporated by studying the course and programme levels separately. Furthermore, some elements 'stand out' from the charts in Appendix III, in the sense that they appear to have been referred to much more often than other elements within the same component. The same applies for some sub-elements within elements. These elements and sub-elements are listed in Table IX. Some of these observations (marked with an asterisk(*) in Table IX) can be understood through the way the data were generated, because I asked specific questions about these (sub-)elements in the interviews. However, there was no obvious reason why any of the other (sub-)elements would 'stand out' from the rest. Table VII to Table IX are reflected on in the next section.

4.3 Reflection on the Observations

The findings presented in this chapter indicate the boundaries around programme design practice in the context of this study, to distinguish programme design practice from other aspects of educational practice. They show which components, elements and sub-elements can be considered to make up programme design in the context of this study. The findings build on what the literature identifies as components and (sub-)elements of programme design, and have modified some of those (sub-)elements or added new ones. The findings also show that some (sub-)elements from the literature were not found in the data. This does not necessarily mean that they do not apply to this context, but it does raise the question why they were

Table VII: (Sub-)elements and their frequencies that were found in Statute/QMS or interviews with Institutional or Programme A decision-makers, but were absent from the framework identified from the literature.

New element found in the data:	New sub-element found in the data:	Found at level of	
		Programme (frequency)	Course (frequency)
Consultation and Development			
Criteria for decision-making		18	14
Intentions			
	Criteria: Current		4
	Related to level		5
	Differentiating		1
	Teacher independent		1
	Open		1
	Fit in programme		1
Interpretation of course intentions			1
Structure and Instruction			
	Entry requirements: What they are	32	15
	How they are applied	6	2
	If there should be any	9	5
	Exclusion from programme/course	6	4
	Combination of Credits, length and level	14	5
Content		26	35
	Student Diversity: Personal background	7	30
	Learning ability	7	4
	Learning styles and preferences	5	7
	Flexibility for teachers	5	18
Administration and Management			
	Resources: Time allocation for teachers	43	16
	Time allocation for non-teaching personnel	1	1
	Administration resources	1	
	Institutional support resources	2	
	Resources in general	12	3
Assessment			
Interpretation of qualification		26	
Student diversity considerations			4
Formative assessment considerations		1	18
Evaluation			
	Why:		
	For programme/course	18	11
	For institution	9	4
	For others	6	4
Whose input is asked		17	8

Table VIII: Overview of (sub-)elements from the framework that were not found in the Statute/QMS, or in the institutional decision-maker or Programme A interview data.

Element NOT found:	Sub-element NOT found:	NOT Found at level of	
		Programme	Course
Consultation and Development			
When to consult		✓	✓
Intentions			
	Criteria: Feasible for the institution	✓	
	Representative		✓
	Other than student learning		✓
Structure and Instruction			
Course structure			✓
	Student Diversity: Age and gender		✓
	Life Experience	✓	✓
	Personal circumstances		✓
	Physical ability		✓
	Educational background		✓
	Between student groups	✓	
	Social class	✓	✓
Assessment			✓
When to assess		✓	
Where to assess		✓	
Evaluation			
	For summative purposes	✓	✓
	For formative purposes	✓	✓

not found. Only minor differences were found in (sub-)elements between programme and course levels.

This leads to a second way of looking at the findings. Given the framework that was used is a model derived from the scholarly literature, the findings from this chapter could be interpreted as a "gap analysis", showing which components or (sub-)elements are overlooked in the institution's programme design practices and which ones may be considered to receive too much attention. For example, 'Student Diversity in Life Experience' was not found to have been referred to by any of the decision-makers. This could identify this element as being overlooked in programme design practice and needing more attention in the future. Similarly, it could be concluded that the attention given to, for example, 'Evaluation' in the Statute/QMS is too

Table IX: Elements or sub-elements that appear to have been referred to much more often than others within a component or element. An asterisk(*) indicates that the observation can be explained from the way the data were generated.

Element referred to relatively frequently within component:	Sub-element referred to relatively frequently within element:	at level of	
		Programme	Course
Consultation and Development			
Student Community		✓	✓
	Student Community: Potential students	✓	
Who to consult, how and about what		✓	
Intentions			
Purpose of programme/course		✓*	
Types of intentions		✓	✓
	Types of intentions: Related to student learning	✓	✓
Criteria for intentions			✓
Structure and Instruction			
	Entry requirements: What they are	✓	✓
Credits, length and level			✓*
Teaching methods			✓*
	Flexibility for teachers		✓
Administration and Management			
	Personnel: Teachers	✓	✓
Resources		✓*	✓*
	Resources: Time allocation for teachers	✓	✓
Assessment			
	Why assessment: Summative purposes	✓	
Interpretation of qualification		✓	
Evaluation			
What to evaluate		✓	

This was a specific question during the interviews with Institutional and Programme A decision-makers.

high and should be reduced. However, such a reductionist approach to interpreting the findings assumes that components and (sub-)elements can be considered as independent variables that are not connected to other components and (sub-)elements. There is no evidence that such an assumption is valid. Additionally, a gap analysis does not answer the question 'why' decision-makers find these components and (sub-)elements important or not, and is therefore unable to answer the research questions. Instead, the

observations listed in Table VI to Table IX in the previous section should be seen as triggers to stimulate thinking about the 'why'. For example,

- Why did decision-makers refer to some components and (sub-) elements much more often than to others?
- How can the newly identified (sub-)elements be explained?
- Why were some (sub-)elements not referred to at all by decision-makers?

To answer questions like these, a more detailed description of the criteria and (sub-) elements does not suffice, as it would only lead to a collection of representations of the decision-makers' worlds in terms of a structuralist framework (Silverman, 2006). For this reason, I have not taken the description of the vertical patterns any further than I have in this chapter. The answers to the research questions are much more likely to be found if the horizontal patterns are taken into account, as was described in Section 3.6.3. However, the observations made in this chapter offer potentially valuable support in explaining these horizontal patterns, as they have identified *which* components and (sub-)elements are more often referred to than others, *which* are not referred to at all, and *which* (sub-)elements are not found in the literature.

The following chapters describe the horizontal patterns, using, among other data, the observations from this chapter to support these patterns.

CHAPTER 5:
PROGRAMME DESIGN PRACTICE OBSERVED THROUGH A TEACHING AND LEARNING LENS

5.1 Introduction

Programme design practice is intimately connected to teaching and learning. Chapters 2 and 4 have shown that programme design practice embodies considerations and decisions on what should be learned and taught, how this is to be taught, how learning progress is to be measured, who the teacher is, who the students are, and so forth. In short, programme design practice is meaningless without considering teaching and learning. This chapter lets the reader observe programme design practice through a teaching and learning lens. This lens shows how programme design considerations and decisions are connected to views on teaching and learning. Study of the image of this lens shows that the connections appear to be strongly related to views on the purposes of education, which can be understood in terms of ideological discourses from our society.

The image of the teaching and learning lens started to reveal itself while I was analysing the primary data. I noticed that participants used a variety of words and expressions when speaking about programmes, programme design, teaching and learning, and I started grouping these words and expressions. I found a similar variety in the documents I analysed, which I also included in the grouping. This resulted in a picture showing the 'why's of programme design decision-makers' considerations and decisions as articulated through the words and expressions they use. Further analysis revealed that decision-makers appeared to draw on five different interpretative repertoires (Potter & Wetherell, 1990) which linked 'programmes' and 'programme design' to 'teaching' and 'learning'. These repertoires were able to be represented as metaphors, that is, "conceptual

simile[s] some aspects of which are used, some are not" (Maassen & Weingart, 2000, p. 31). Metaphors have the "ability to reduce the strangeness and unfamiliarity of a concept or its referent" (Dann, 2002, p. 12), which I used in this case to clarify five different concepts of a programme. From the primary data the consumable product, the production process, the guided adventure and the guided tour metaphors were identified. A fifth metaphor, called the mission, emerged from the secondary data only and could only be supported by a limited amount of data. Each metaphor showed a unique view on teaching and learning. Each metaphor is described in Section 5.2, using both the primary and secondary data to provide evidence for the descriptions. This is followed in Section 5.3 by a discussion of the patterns across the primary and secondary data sources. Section 5.4 then explains how the metaphors provide insight into the relationship between programmes and courses. The final sections of this chapter, Sections 5.5 and 5.6, describe the first step of the theorising process, as explained in Section 3.6.5, by analysing the discourses in society that can explain the metaphors and their relationships and tensions, and summarises the findings of this chapter in an image of the teaching and learning lens.

5.2   Five Metaphors for a Programme

5.2.1. The Consumable Product Metaphor

 "we've got some customers who are prepared to pay and they've got needs, and we've got to develop some courses and programmes, which are products and services to meet their needs" (ID-1). This example shows how a programme is seen as a consumable product that the institution develops for students-as-customers. The purpose of a programme-as-consumable-product is to have satisfied students-as-customers: "It is that outcome of the satisfied learner, that they're getting what they really paid for; that, if they don't get the service, it's not because we haven't delivered." (M-1).

Learning has two meanings in this metaphor, both of which are found in the following: "We are delivering one area of learning which hopefully they are going to be able to absorb and move forward" (P-1). This suggests learning as a noun ("one area of learning") being equivalent to content. As a verb, learning is presented as a passive process, characterised in this example by "absorbing"; alternative words found in the data include consuming, receiving, taking, and "picking up skills":

> School leavers, in terms of people picking up skills for first employment in [this] area and people returning to learning. [...] they're now possibly looking at being able to work part-time, the hours of the [...] industry work for them, so they're picking up an essential set of skills to be able to go and work for summer. (M-2)

Teaching is seen as "delivering" the product to the customers: "[The teachers] can't be flexible in what they are delivering, but they can be reasonably flexible in how they deliver it." (P-2).

Within this metaphor it is important that the customer has choice in the way the product is delivered to them, as well as in the kind of product they purchase: "I find choice for students important in the programme. It is not just about flexibility of delivery, it is also about flexibility of the way that someone can build the study programme they want to have" (ID-2). The latter, flexibility in building the study programme they want to have, is achieved by splitting the programme into a number of courses, which can be purchased individually and independently: "All programmes should be in discrete courses which should wherever possible be easily adapted to a fully modularised programme structure" (QMS-1). Selection or development of courses for a programme is driven by potential customer demand: "When we decide on the courses that are being selected for a new programme, or for changes to a programme, what is important is that students want to do it" (ID-3). To encourage students to purchase more than one course, they are given a qualification once their purchases add up to a set number of credits at a required level: "For qualification requirements we tend to count the credits and the level and see if it is sufficient" (ID-4).

Design and delivery of a programme-as-a-consumable-product are two separate processes. The teacher has not necessarily been involved in designing the programme, as the following teacher explains:

> I have always expected there is some guideline that the programme is running under but we are just paid to deliver it and we don't have any say. Even if we do have feedback and comments it usually falls a bit on deaf ears anyway, so it is cast in stone. (T-1)

The teacher's primary task is ensuring the student-as-customer gets the learning: "We try to deliver the content to ensure that the students get the full amount of learning within the time given" (P-3), in a way that is palatable to the customer and flexible enough to meet the range of different customer preferences for delivery:

> people seem to think face to face is a mode that people want, we don't always consider other teaching technologies properly [...] We can have a lot more flexibility in how we offer it and when we offer programmes, and in what way, and what we offer. (ID-5)

However, the desire for customer choice needs to be weighed against the financial implications:

> I believe in customer service and making courses as flexible as possible. [...] But as soon as you give students choice of course it means putting in more tutorial staff [...] So really if it's going to compromise the viability of a course or a programme it's not worth it to give students options. (A-1)

The concern for viability is confirmed by concerns for efficiency of programmes. This includes reusing courses from other programmes to create a new programme that attracts an untapped student market:

> the intention, when we developed [this diploma programme], was to pick out just the [relevant] papers from the degree [...] without having to write new courses, and also to pick up new students who had already got some academic background, who weren't looking forward to doing an entire degree [...]. (T-2)

5.2.2. The Production Process Metaphor

The core of a programme-as-a-production-process is the production of graduates:

> The sorts of things we want to see in certificates and diplomas are [...] about having a relevance to very applied areas of bodies of knowledge.

> Because of that applied focus we would be looking at producing work-ready graduates out of the certificates and diplomas. (ID-6)

The institution as manufacturer is accountable to the industry as customers, who are the users of the graduates. The purpose of a programme is to have satisfied customers:

> [Bodies like the local industry] don't care how we put that capability into the student, how the student has achieved competency, they want the finished product. They run their business and care about their own primary concern and they wish us to run our business and produce an end product that suits their needs. (M-3)

From the institutional perspective, the success of the production process also depends on market demand, that is, demand for graduates from the industry: "The strongest evidence that there is a need is where someone has talked to an organisation who have a need and are committed putting some people through a programme". (ID-7)

In a programme-as-a–production-process learning means being taught. The knowledge that is taught is what the industry-as-customer wants: "Once these students go into industry they need to be at a certain standard of skill set before they leave [this institution]" (T-3). It is assumed that students would want the same as the industry:

> The [ITO] qualifications are created by industry and so one would assume that's what industry wants and what students would want because that's what industry wants. It was felt that it would be something in our students' favour, to have those ITO qualifications when they go out looking for jobs. (A-2)

Graduates are sometimes depicted as dehumanised skill sets: "we are looking for people [in the advisory group] who have to deal with those specific skills on a day to day basis" (E-1). Teachers are operators in the production process, moulding the student into the graduate: "with 12 months you have time to work with them, you can see their changes, you can mould their attitudes, the way they address problems, the way they attend" (P-4). The moulding requires a strict sequence of operating procedures with little room to move. The procedures are characterised by constant reinforcement to ensure students will be able to pass the test at the end:

> It has to be really lock-step stuff, getting basic concepts into them. We
> have to get this piece into their head and then step to this piece, and this
> piece, all the way along. You can't teach it generically. It has to be very
> structured along the way. (T-4)

The production process includes in-line quality control, which is regular assessment of the product-in-the-making to ensure that graduates will meet set quality standards, or learning outcomes, when they leave the process: "All assessments for each programme are fair, valid and reliable for the purposes of measuring the learning outcomes; The frequency and number of assessments is realistic and useful in providing objective assessment of student performance" (QMS-2). A strong control of the assessment system ensures that graduates meet the outcomes that the industry-as-customer wants: "The key purpose of moderation [...] is making sure the standard set by the industry is maintained, 'cause it will have no credibility if it's just given out, or somebody buys it for ten dollars or something like that" (E-2). Graduates receive a certificate when the production process is complete, to demonstrate to the customers that they are of required quality:

> we require a measure of the student's learning that has taken place, and
> then that becomes a way of reporting to future employers, or a student
> that they have received a certain level. [...] Somehow the other party has
> to know what they've got or not got in a general sense. (ID-8)

This quality, including tests and standards, is monitored and/or controlled by parties other than the teachers:

> The embedded (national) qualification is important. That is what they
> are going to be working for when they leave. [The ITO] control the
> training in the industry, so it is very important that what we do is tied to
> what [the ITO] does. The importance of the [provider] qualification is
> nearly zero. Nobody looks at it. (T-5)

Because of the above 'output control', the production process has limited capability to deal with differences between students:

> [...] we don't try and be too flexible with the students. In this industry
> there is a lot of rules and regulations and we don't want to set them up
> for failure when they go out to work, so we try and install in them the
> same sort of ethics and boundaries that they will be expected when they
> get out to work, so therefore we can't be too diverse. (P-5)

For this reason students who come onto the production process must meet certain minimum specifications:

> We are training people to get to the level where they are going to work in [the industry]. Our programme in some respects does not cater for someone who cannot. [...] They must at least be able to read and write and do a few calculations. If they can't, there is no place for them in the industry. [...] The entry requirements have to reflect that. (P-6)

Programme design, that is the design of the production process, and programme implementation, that is the operation of the production process, are two independent processes:

> There are a lot of assumptions at the start of developing a course and, until it has been through a cycle of students, you don't really know how valid those assumptions are. So evaluations are used to test these assumptions and improve the course. (ID-9)

Who teaches a programme or course is independent of the design of the course:

> You need to have skilled people offering the course but that's not something that needs to be prescribed in the design of the course itself. Time allocation for staff doesn't need to go into the design of the course, that's part of your contract and what you agree to do as part of your job description. (T-6)

5.2.3. The Guided Tour Metaphor

A programme as a guided tour is a supervised journey towards a destination that is chosen by the institution-as-tour-organiser. The institution's prime interests are for the student-as-customer to reach the destination as promised and to have a good experience during this journey: "Our responsibility is to try and do our bit for the customers. I believe that if they have a great experience that will lead to more customers" (ID-10). The good experience is achieved by selecting destinations the student-as-customer is interested in going to and by making the journey interesting, engaging, and adjusted to the students' preferences: "We are typically dealing with a relatively young student body in the programme, so it has to be quite interactive, and it needs to be engaging to them, emotionally and intellectually" (M-4).

During the tour, students are expected to participate actively in a range of activities. Learning is synonym for doing activities:

> The students are very kinaesthetic type people. They have to be physically doing. You need to be able to demonstrate it and they love to do it. If you have them moving, they are fantastic. Young fellows like that need to be moving, they can't stay still. (T-7)

The teacher guides students with these activities:

> My job is not to stop people from learning, my job is to encourage them, and if students want to race ahead they can, because I give them all the materials that I have available. [...] It stops them being bored [...] And the slow ones stay with me. (T-8)

Teachers provide road maps:

> I use the study guides for the courses as a map how to get to your destination. [...] That's probably the biggest thing: here's where you've got to get to; and that's where that flexibility thing comes in: however you get there is up to you. (T-9)

They also provide support to students when needed: "I think it's really important to accept everyone for who they are and do the best that you can to get your students through the programme" (T-10). Teachers also monitor the student's progress towards the destination: "formative assessment is important, that the learner gets something from teachers about how they're progressing, and at the same time teachers are getting feedback themselves about how the learners are progressing" (ID-11). Participation in activities is the student's choice, but non-participation could result in students not being able to reach the destination. As much as possible, activities have been designed to entice students to participate:

> The programme should be structured in a way that enables the students to have a number of different kinds of activities and different ways of learning, to cater for the different styles. That can be the choice of electives, or other kinds of assessment tools, or use of different technology tools engaging the students in the most effective ways. (ID-12)

Resources are developed to support this enticement: "A lot of the formal teaching resources in this programme need to be re-formatted or re-created, the workbooks or even development of more relevant learning experiences, exercises, assessment activities" (M-5). Additionally, activities must be

aligned to enable students to reach the destination. "If someone does not give the students some clear stepping stones, if they don't know where the other side of the river is, they will just keep walking until suddenly they feel firm ground again" (T-11). This also applies to groups of activities, in the form of courses or shorter programmes, which help students 'staircase' or 'pathway' from one destination to the next: "The foundation type programmes that lead into another qualification should have a clear pathway for people, that they know at the outset what the programme might lead into and what the possibilities are for students when they finish" (ID-13).

The institution-as-tour-organiser ensures potential students can make an informed decision whether to participate in the tour. It is up to the student to decide whether they want to enrol, but support and guidance is available to help them decide:

> I don't actually tell them that it would be better for them to start at level 2; they figure it out by themselves [...]. I will give them a couple of assessments and then I'll show them something and say: 'if you can understand this right now you'll be sweet as. If you can't, well, you better think about what you want to do'. And they make up their own mind, no feelings get hurt or anything like that." (T-12)

Since the decision to enrol is the student's, the students enrolling on the programme are likely to form a diverse group. This diversity is catered for through diversity in available support: "I don't want all the tutors to be the same, I perceive their differences to be a strength, not a weakness. I do want that moderated consistency of student experience" (M-6), as well as variety and choice in activities:

> [The students] may not be all at the same level when they come in, and they learn quite differently, or have access issues that are different to the next person, so it is about being able to provide enough flexibility in the programme that everybody can make the best of it. (ID-14)

When students reach the destination, the tour organiser acknowledges this by rewarding them with a qualification. Its main purpose is to make students feel good about themselves for having reached the destination: "The qualification is important [...] to [the students] because a lot of them like to

know they've got a piece of paper saying they can do something, that's almost a pride thing, that they've done it, they've finished" (P-7).

Finally, evaluation of the programme-as-guided-tour is about finding out if the student-as customer has had a good experience: "It is important to do the programme evaluation because there's not any other chance for students to formally feedback on their experiences in the programme" (M-7).

5.2.4. The Guided Adventure Metaphor

The purpose of a programme as a guided adventure is the personal journey of the student leading to personal growth: "On my side of the fence whatever qualifications the students may achieve at the end of this course I don't even care. What I do care about is their growth personally" (T-13).

The teacher is a travel companion who provides advice and support at the student's request. The teacher is willing to share the knowledge and wisdom they have gained during their lives with the student:

> our analysis as education professionals may not be accurate, and we don't necessarily have the real intimate insight into the students as the students themselves have that. Our role as tutors and managers is to listen to what a student determines they want to learn. Our role should be to encourage and to facilitate also. (ID-15)

For this purpose, trust is an essential part of the student-teacher relationship:

> to be able to get to know the people you have to be aware of who they are, their backgrounds, what's their hopes and dreams and all that sort of thing so I spend a lot of time just talking to them, getting to know them, gaining trust. (T-14)

The teacher has no knowledge of the destination of the student's journey; students judge their own progress: "I don't think it is important that we assess learners. It is us making judgment on them. I think learners are the best judges of themselves" (ID-16). The teacher is expected to adjust themselves to where the students are at any time and what next step they decide to take: "staff have to be as flexible as flexible can be, to accommodate all the things that happen with students internally and externally" (ID-17). The uncertainty about the destination of the programme-as-guided-

adventure implies that the journey may have unforeseen and sometimes unpleasant consequences:

> Literally I let them explore. [...]. They can get stuck in it, and I have had many students lost [...] We do try and keep an eye on them [...] but sometimes they cannot stop. I monitor it in class, and ask how the project is getting on, but a lot of them are secretive too. (T-15)

These consequences affect the student personally:

> I had one of my very good students [...] say to me 'I think I'm having a breakdown'. Her home life is just so pressured that she is not able to cope with what's at home, and it's affecting her performance here. [...] the partner's started to get jealous 'cause she's getting too much attention. I said to her it happens here [...] year in, year out, heaps of couples have broken up, because all of a sudden, the women want to do this and do it. (T-16)

While the student is responsible for the programme-as-guided adventure, the institution is responsible to the student in the sense that they provide care for the student during their journey, particularly by making guides available to support them. Evaluation helps to monitor this responsibility: "[evaluations] give students an opportunity to have a say, and to have an action plan to deal with any concerns hopefully helps towards reaffirmation of trust and obligation to students" (ID-18).

5.2.5. The Mission Metaphor

The purpose of a programme as a mission is to serve the well-being of our society. The intentions are for students to learn what the institution or the teachers find important for this well-being. One example is bringing the Māori and Pākehā cultures together:

> The most important stuff for myself is sharing with these students the beauty of this culture. [...] it is bringing the two people together. Even in this modern day and age we're still, as far as cultures go, relative strangers; understanding how people think, why things are done, it's small things. (T-17)

Another example is ensuring students learn about sustainable practices: "The core [of the programme] should be things like walking the talk, it's about sustainability in terms of environmental practice. Perhaps it's about [...the institution] having a primary focus on its strengths in the region" (M-8).

Various strategies are put in place to work towards these intentions. This includes, for example, zero student fees: "in terms of the philosophy of the programme that says we want to give as many people the opportunity to do this as possible, 'no fees' seems to be a way [...] that's working" (M-9). It also includes flexibility that allows disadvantaged people in our society to be educated:

> Part of our historical education system is that there's so much square-box thinking that huge numbers of people are falling through the cracks. So we really should be as flexible as we possibly can in terms of how we deliver it and even what we have in it. (M-10)

A third example is encouragement of students to think critically:

> Some of my students now are discovering what's happening in the world and how Māori looked at things, disasters that have happened, the pollution of the environment, and just what learning the stories of te ao Māori has given them. [...] I think we need to get back [...] and I say to them, your most powerful weapon is your brain 'cause you can do anything with it and the more you use it, the more potential it will give you. Any machine, it still has to be you that tells the machine what to do. (T-18)

5.2.6. A Summary of the Five Metaphors

Table X provides an overview of the five metaphors that were described in the previous sections. Limited evidence for the programme-as-a-mission prohibits a comprehensive description of this metaphor.

Some aspects of the descriptions in Table X align with observations that were made in Chapter 4. For example, in Chapter 4 new (sub-)elements of programme design emerged from the data that had not been identified in the framework that was developed from the literature (Table VII, page 148). One of these was 'Content'. The emergence of this element resonates with the identification of the consumable product metaphor, in which 'learning' as a noun means 'content'. Another new sub-element was 'Flexibility for teachers', which makes sense within the meaning of flexibility in the production process metaphor as shown in Table X. Thirdly, the new 'Interpretation of qualification' element acknowledges that the meanings of 'qualification' differ across the metaphors. Furthermore, Chapter 4 identified a strong focus on

summative assessment at programme level compared to formative assessment (Table IX, page 150). This resonates with the production process metaphor, where assessment is summative, as it contributes to proving that industry requirements have been met. And finally, the absence of any reference to the importance of the student's life experience in programme design in the analysis in Chapter 4 (Table VIII, page 149) may be connected to programmes as consumable products, production processes or guided tours being designed before any students get involved.

The metaphors and their characteristics will be discussed and interpreted further in the following sections.

5.3   Patterns across Decision-maker Groups

Table XI shows the percentages of identified references to each metaphor per decision-maker group. The aim of this table is to enable identification of patterns across the groups. Section 5.1 explained how the metaphors are representations of interpretative repertoires (Potter & Wetherell, 1990). In line with the literature (Potter & Wetherell, 1990; Reis & Roth, 2007), the table confirms that people draw on a limited number of repertoires, as only five metaphors were found. What is not shown in the table for reasons of confidentiality, but what was visible in the analysis of the data, was that individual people draw on more than one repertoire, and that different people draw on different groups of repertoires. This confirms that people's constructs are person and situation dependent (Potter & Wetherell, 1990; Reis & Roth, 2007). This implies that, had the interviews been about, for example, teaching instead of programme design, the repertoires might have been different.

As explained in Chapter 3, the initial findings were developed from the primary data, that is, the interviews with Institutional and Programme A decision-makers, the analysis of the Statute/QMS and the approved Programme A document, and meeting observation notes. This resulted in the identification of four metaphors, with the production process, guided tour

Table X: Overview of metaphors and their characteristics as described in Section 5.2. Blank cells indicate that no evidence was found in the data for the particular characteristic.

What is the Programme:	Consumable Product	Production Process	Guided Tour	Guided Adventure	Mission
To whom is institution responsible:	Student	Industry	Student	Student	Society
What is the purpose of the programme:	To have a satisfied customer (student)	To have a satisfied customer (industry)	To ensure the customer (student) reaches the destination and has a good experience	For the student to undertake a journey leading to personal growth	To serve the well-being of our society
Who is the student:	Customer and Consumer	Product-in-the-making	Customer and Tour participant	Adventurer	Member of society
Who is the teacher:	Deliverer	Operator	Tour guide	Trusted travel companion	
What is learning:	As noun: content; As verb: Passive: Consuming	Reactive: Being taught	Active: Doing activities	Active: Undertaking the journey and dealing with what happens on the way	
What is valued knowledge:	What the customer wants	What the customer wants	Where the customer wants to go and which activities they want to do	Where the student decides to go	What is needed for well-being of our society
What is the programme structure:	Package of independent courses with predefined content	Series of predefined operating procedures	Series of predefined activities leading to the destination	No predefined structure	
What is the meaning of a qualification:	Reward for purchasing a minimum number of courses	Proof of meeting industry certification requirements	Reward for reaching the destination	No meaning	
Who can enrol in the programme:		Those who meet the minimum specifications	Anyone; guidance and support are available		

What is the Programme:	Consumable Product	Production Process	Guided Tour	Guided Adventure	Mission
What does flexibility mean:	Student choice in which courses to purchase and how they are delivered	Limited flexibility for teacher to adjust the operating procedures	Student choice in which tour they want to join. With limitations: student choice in which activities they do and how they do them.	Students take responsibility for own learning	
How are students' individual differences planned for?	Choice in content and ways of delivery	Not	Variety and choice in activities and how to do the activities; Targeted support	Personal companion for each student	
What is the relationship between programme design and programme implementation?	They are separate processes	They are separate processes	They are separate processes		

Table XI: References to each metaphor per decision-maker group; ID = institutional decision-makers; Prog.A-E = decision-makers Programmes A to E; ProgDocA = Programme A documentation; Obs = meeting observation. 'dominant' metaphors for each group are shaded.

Metaphor	Percentage of references to each metaphor per decision-maker group									
	Primary data					Secondary data				
	ID	Statute / QMS	Obs	Prog DocA	Prog. A	Prog. B	Prog. C	Prog. D	Prog. E	Over all
Consumable Product	27%	25%	33%	7%	29%	13%	2%	8%	16%	20%
Production Process	34%	43%	33%	40%	55%	46%	2%	48%	46%	42%
Guided Tour	32%	26%	33%	53%	16%	39%	44%	40%	35%	31%
Guided Adventure	8%	6%	-	-	-	-	41%	2%	4%	6%
Mission	-	-	-	-	-	2%	12%	1%	-	1%
Total references	209	68	3	15	223	108	59	87	69	841

and consumable product metaphors being dominant, as the shaded areas in Table XI show. Only a few references related to the guided adventure. The subsequent analysis of the interviews with Programme B-E decision-makers confirmed this pattern, however with less emphasis on the consumable product. Programme C findings differed from the others. The Programme C interviews revealed a completely new metaphor, which was not, or only sporadically, referred to by other decision-makers. Table XI does not indicate clear differences between certificate programmes on the one hand (Programmes A, B and C) and diploma programmes on the other (Programmes D and E), other than Programme C being very different from the others. Likewise, there are no obvious differences between programme with external requirements (Programmes A, B, and D) and programmes without, except again for Programme C. The different findings for Programme C compared to the other decision-maker groups may be related to Programme C having been developed and taught from a Māori context, in

contrast to the other programmes, which are primarily based on a western worldview. A further explanation is sought in Section 5.5.

5.4   The Metaphors and the Relationship between Programmes and Courses

Thus far little has been said about the relationship between programmes and courses, other than the conclusion in Chapter 4 that programmes and courses largely consist of the same components and elements. Perhaps for this reason, it appeared difficult to distinguish between courses and programmes when studying the image of this lens, as the words and expressions that decision-makers used were similar for programmes and courses. However, the creation of the metaphors revealed two perspectives on courses in relation to programmes.

- *A course is a component of a programme*

 In the consumable product metaphor, a course is a part of the programme. Purchasing a programme means purchasing all parts/courses that make up the programme. This may explain why, in Chapter 4, 'Structure' is only found as an element at programme level, and not at course level (Table VIII, page 149). In the production process metaphor, however, the concept of a course is somewhat artificial. While individual or combinations of operating procedures could be seen as courses, the total of courses still needs to form a coherent whole to ensure the graduate meets the product requirements as desired by industry:

> Even though the programme is divided into courses, the chunks of
> learning are not independent of each other and it is not intended that the
> students will select a collection of courses and do them independently,
> as you would in a degree or diploma. (M-11)

 For this reason there is no obvious need to create another structural layer between that of 'operating procedure' and that of 'programme'. The guided tour is similar to the production process in this respect, as the total series of activities create the journey towards the destination. However, it might be

meaningful to create stages in the journey, where groups of activities form legs of the tour as it were: "A lot of people set their targets one step at a time, so we need to have shorter stepping stones available" (ID-19). Each leg could be referred to as a course. This idea is supported by the findings in Table VI in Chapter 4 (page 145), where for all three decision-maker groups relatively more statements were found for assessment at course than at programme level, suggesting that student progress is measured on a leg-by-leg basis.

In the guided adventure metaphor courses are meaningless, as there is no pre-organisation in the programme. Courses may have meaning in the mission metaphor, depending on how the mission is connected to the other metaphors. Insufficient indication from the data prohibits any further interpretation of this matter.

- *A course is a mini-programme*

While in the guided tour and the production process a course would be predefined as 'a group of activities' or 'a group of operating procedures', in the consumable product metaphor a course is an independent entity, which can be considered as a mini-programme. In principle, this mini-programme could take the form of any of the five metaphors. This implies that a programme that is conceptualised as consumable product could consist of courses that are individually conceptualised as, for example, production processes.

In whichever way courses are interpreted, they do not appear to be essentially different from programmes, as far as teaching and learning are concerned. This justifies the combining of courses and programmes in the development of the five metaphors.

5.5 Understanding the Metaphors

The metaphors show how programmes can be conceptualised in different ways through the words and expressions that decision-makers use. They also show how programme design is intimately connected with teaching and

learning. This section will start the theorising that this study aims for by developing an understanding of the metaphors in terms of ideological discourses from society. Research literature was used to help explain: (1) how the metaphors reflect beliefs about education that underpin programme design practice; and, (2) why these five metaphors were identified, and not others.

Both the consumable product and production process metaphors can be understood in terms of neo-liberalist discourses, which have influenced tertiary education in Aotearoa/New Zealand since 1989, as discussed in Chapter 1, and are described extensively in the literature (Boston, et al., 1996; Codd & Sullivan, 2005; S. Harris, 2007; Olssen, et al., 2004). Within these discourses, the "worth of an education is judged by consumers, that is, parents and industry, in terms of the marketability of the knowledge" (Olssen, et al., 2004, p. 181), where "parent" would have to read "student" when it comes to tertiary education. The emergence of two distinct metaphors from the data shows the inherent tensions within this ideology, as it appears to be very difficult, if not impossible, to meet the desires and wants of two very different consumers - students and industry - simultaneously. While the consumable product metaphor particularly stresses the competition for students in the education market place as an expression of public choice theory (Boston, et al., 1996), the production process metaphor seems to be predominantly influenced by human capital theory (Abbott & Doucouliagos, 2004). This theory argues that investment in education increases people's knowledge and skills, which increases the productivity of individuals and the workforce, and consequently the competitive advantage of the nation (Olssen, et al., 2004). This explains why industry in this metaphor influences which knowledge is considered worthwhile. The production process metaphor is strengthened by influences from behaviourist discourses in education, with its focus on change in behaviour, prerequisite capabilities, and 'programmed instruction', which is reflected in 'operating procedures' in the metaphor (Schiro, 2008).

The guided adventure metaphor mirrors leading theories of adult learning, characterised by words like transformation, empowerment, critical reflection, and self-direction (e.g. Brookfield, 1986; Candy, 1992; Knowles, 1975; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999; Mezirow, 1991; E. W. Taylor, 2008). Many of these theories have their origins in the humanist philosophy in education, fostering personal growth and self-actualisation (Elias & Merriam, 1995). With the teacher being the travel companion, and probably learning as much as the student, this metaphor also shows alignment with the philosophy of akonga Māori. This Māori concept of teaching and learning "emphasises the interrelationship of teaching and learning, in that they are not understood as separate concepts" (Smith (1987), quoted in Pihama, Smith, Taki, & Lee, 2004, p. 36). However, akonga Māori is essentially different from humanism, as it embeds learning for the benefit of the community, and not for the person as an individual. Akonga Māori possibly explains the high percentage of references to the guided adventure metaphor by Programme C decision-makers.

The fundamental differences between the public choice, human capital theory/behaviourist and humanist/akonga Māori discourses surface as three different metaphors. This may explain the emergence of a guided tour metaphor as a bridge between the dominant political discourses in Aotearoa/New Zealand and the humanism-oriented beliefs and values of many adult educators. This bridge is shown in Figure 22, including some key characteristics of each metaphor. I will explain this claim by providing examples how this bridge reveals itself in compromises between the consumable product, the production process and the guided adventure metaphors.

To whom does the institution feel responsible? What knowledge is valued?
Within the consumable product metaphor the institution expresses responsibility to the student-as-customer, allowing students to choose what they want to learn, and therefore what knowledge is valued. In contrast, the production process metaphor is characterised by an institutional

responsibility to the industry-as-customer, relying on the industry to advise what knowledge is valued. The guided tour is a compromise of the two. On the one hand, it expresses responsibility to the student-as-customer by letting students choose which tour to participate in. On the other, it leaves space for the industry-as-customer to influence the tour and its destination. This allows the institution to define valued knowledge as any desired combination between what the students want and what the industry wants.

Guided Adventure
Responsibility to student
Autonomous student
Flexibility as responsibility for own learning
Qualification has no meaning

Mission
Responsibility to society

Guided Tour
Responsibility to student-as-customer
Active student
Flexibility as customer choice with set destination
Qualification as reward for reaching destination

Consumable Product
Responsibility to student-as-customer
Passive student
Flexibility as customer choice
Qualification as loyal customer reward

Production Process
Responsibility to industry-as-customer
Reactive student
Limited flexibility for teachers only
Qualification as quality certificate

Figure 22: Five metaphors for a programme and their connections

The more influence is exercised by the industry, the more controlled the tour becomes and the more the guided tour starts to resemble a production process.

What is learning? What is teaching?

In the guided tour metaphor learning is active; it is doing activities. These activities are pre-defined by the institution. This is a middle way between the consumable product, where learning is receiving and passive, and the guided adventure, where learning is doing, but students create the activities themselves.

During a guided adventure students are only guided when they ask for it. Conversely, during a production process students only respond when the teacher asks for it. Again, the guided tour sits in between, with the teacher only guiding students when they need it, but monitoring them to avoid them running off-track.

How is flexibility implemented? How is student diversity planned for? Who can enrol?

Within the consumable product metaphor flexibility and diversity are planned for through free choice for students: between the courses on offer and how these are delivered. The guided adventure understands flexibility as students taking full control over their journey, with support available when needed. Although no enrolment related evidence was found in the data for these two metaphors, it makes sense to assume that within both metaphors it is the student's decision to enrol, either as a free-choosing customer (consumable product), or a person taking responsibility for their own learning (guided adventure). Due to the industry requirements the production process does not allow flexibility for students, and is unable to deal with diversity. For this reason enrolment is restricted to those who meet certain criteria to ensure a quality product at the end. The guided tour has characteristics of all three. Everyone can enrol in a tour of their choice. However, information and support is provided to help students select a tour

and the activities that they feel comfortable with. They are also given some choice in activities, during which targeted support is available if they struggle. This choice is limited, as the activities are restrained by a prescribed destination.

What is the meaning of a qualification?
The production process metaphor describes a qualification as a quality indicator for graduates and an accountability instrument towards the industry. Quite differently, a qualification in the consumable product metaphor is a reward for loyal customers who have purchased a certain number of courses. The guided tour metaphor has elements of both, as it explains a qualification as a reward, but for reaching some predetermined standard, i.e. the tour destination. In a guided adventure, only students know their destination, and other people will be unable to tell whether they have reached it. This makes the notion of a qualification redundant.

The total percentage of references to these four metaphors in Table XI seems to indicate that the bond between them leaves hardly any space for alternative discourses. The very limited evidence of only one other metaphor – the mission – demonstrates this. The mission possibly stems from social activist and radical discourses, which aim at changing society (Elias & Merriam, 1995; Schiro, 2008). The mission develops awareness of valuable knowledge for the common good, for example, environmental sustainability, educational technology or multiculturalism, which may never be taught if decision-makers are only concerned with what the student wants or decides to do (consumable product, guided tour, or guided adventure) or what the industry wants (production process). However, considering that the main contributors to this metaphor were decision-makers who educate in a Māori context, the mission may also be related again to akonga Māori, where learning and knowledge are expected to benefit the collective (Pihama, et al., 2004). I found no obvious evidence in the data that indicated how the mission was connected to the other metaphors, which is why it has been kept

separate from the others in Figure 22. However, I have acknowledged the probable connection between the guided adventure and the mission through akonga Māori by putting these metaphors closely together.

5.6 The Image of the Teaching and Learning Lens

The image of the teaching and learning lens that was studied in this chapter shows programme design practice as a construction of people's language, in the sense of the words and expressions they use, that communicates meanings of the connection between programmes, teaching, learning and their purposes. This language has organised itself in five interpretative repertoires, represented as metaphors, that are grounded in ideological discourses in our society, with a dominance of public choice and human capital theory discourses. The image is shown in Figure 23.

The conceptualisations of a programme that are reflected in this image seem to be in sharp contrast with the definition of a programme that was found in the institution's Academic Statute: A programme is "a self-contained block of study or a combination of courses leading to an approved award" (Statute-1). What strikes one in this definition is that it does not contain any of the language discussed in this chapter. It is a technical definition that lacks any connection to teaching, learning or purpose statements for a programme. While the use of the word 'award' suggests that the definition most likely relates to the consumable product, the production process and/or the guided tour metaphors, it leaves the door open for decision-makers to interpret programmes in multiple ways. This definition appears to be a glimpse of the image of the rational lens, which is described in the next chapter.

Humanism

Akonga Māori

Social Change

Guided Adventure

Mission

Guided Tour

Consumable Product

Production Process

Public choice theory

Human capital theory

Behaviourism
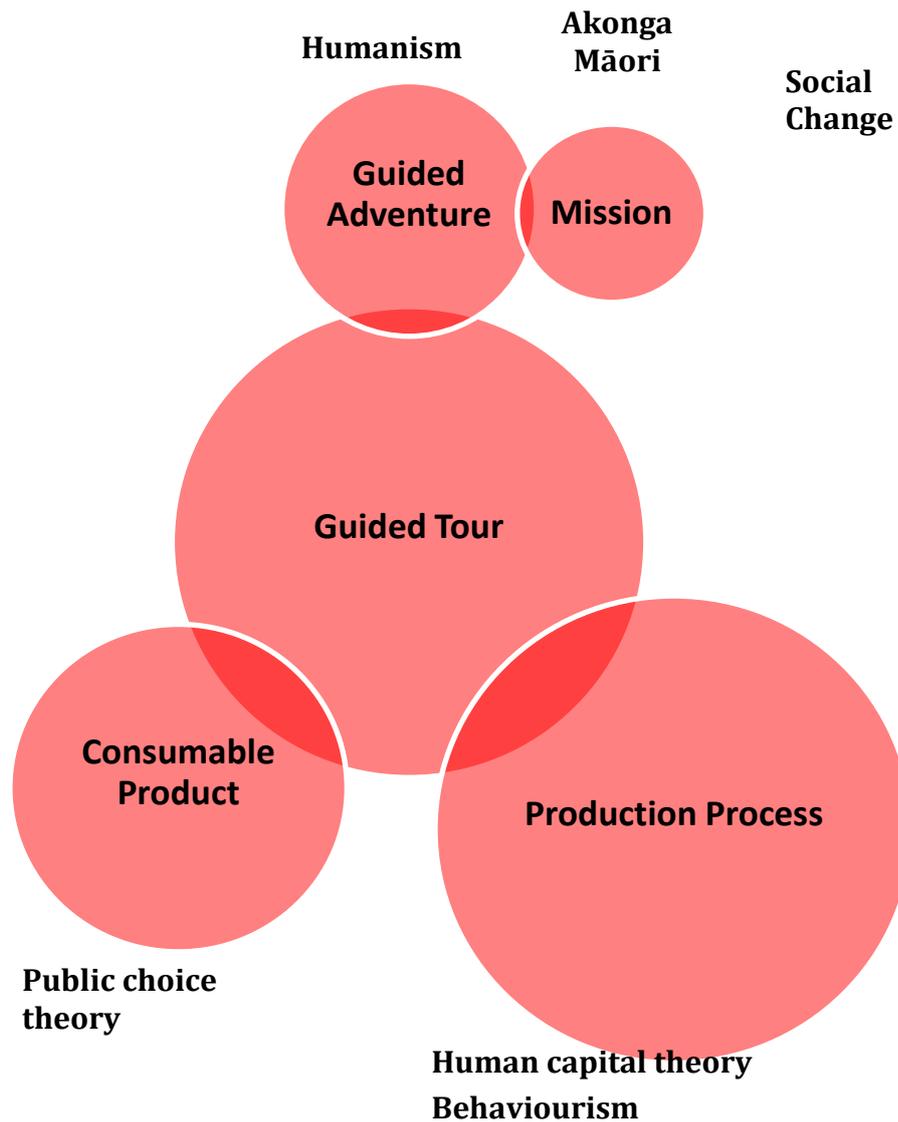
Figure 23: Programme design practice as seen through the teaching and learning lens: five metaphors for a programme in relation to each other and to their underpinning ideological discourses.

CHAPTER 6:
PROGRAMME DESIGN PRACTICE OBSERVED THROUGH A RATIONAL LENS

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter finished by noting the technical manner in which a programme is defined in the Statute, devoid of any language that can point towards one of the metaphors identified through the teaching and learning lens. While I was analysing the Statute/QMS in search for rationales for the criteria and guidelines in these documents, I noticed that many criteria and guidelines were written in a similar technical way. Often no value statements were made in the guidelines, in the sense that the guidelines did not judge the actual decisions that were made. The following example, part of the QMS guidelines for programme approval, illustrates this. It describes criteria for conducting interviews as part of the student's enrolment process: "If interviews are intended, the rationale, objectives and methodology of the interview must be included in programme approval documents approved by Academic Board" (QMS-3). While this example asks for a rationale, it is sufficient to just provide the rationale. The guidelines do not judge the value of the rationale that is provided. A second example from the same set of guidelines confirms these observations. It refers to checklist criteria for the structure of a programme: "List core and optional courses; The list is complete with levels and credits; A reasonable balance exists between core and optional; Justification for the components of the programme is provided" (QMS-4).

These observations seem related to the work by Cherryholmes (1988) on the structuralist characteristics of, for instance, the Tyler Rationale, that I had come across in the literature review. They are examples of the notion of instrumentalist rationality, which refers to, among other things, control of the environment through technical rules (Ewert, 1991). They triggered a search

for the 'why's of programme design decision-makers' considerations and decisions, as they expressed them through referring to, what I have called, rationalisations in programme design practice. The result of this search is presented as the image of the rational lens. As 'rational' has different meanings across the literature I must emphasise here that when I use the word 'rational' or 'rationalisation' I refer to forms of instrumentalist rationality only. Using Cherryholmes' (1988) list of structuralist characteristics as a basis, I have defined a rationalisation as a model, framework or system that:

- Simplifies a complex practice to something that is logical and makes sense;

- Has become the norm and is beyond questioning. Using it requires no explanation;

- Can be self-regulating and assume a life of its own;

- Does not judge the content and value of decisions; the value is located in the model, framework or system; and/or,

- Externalises individuals, including teachers and students.

This chapter describes and explains the image of the rational lens in this case study. Section 6.2 describes which rationalisations were identified and provides a detailed description of each, including: 1) why it was identified as a rationalisation; and, 2) which evidence from the data supports this identification. Section 6.3 describes the theorising of the rationalisations by explaining them in terms of ideological discourses in society. Some rationalisations exercise power as decision-makers. This is explained in Section 6.4. The chapter finishes with a summary of the image of the rational lens in Section 6.5.

Identifying rationalisations appeared relatively easy in situations where the data referred to them explicitly. However, because using rationalisations is so natural and normal, people do not tend to refer to them overtly (Gibson, 1984). This implies that the identification process had its limitations, because: 1) I was only able to identify rationalisations within my own knowledge and experience, meaning that I have most likely not been able to

identify all rationalisations at play; and 2) I may have interpreted the data unjustly as references to rationalisations. I have been cautious in ensuring that I only presented rationalisations if I was confident that the data provided sufficient and convincing evidence to support the interpretation.

6.2 Rationalisations

The rationalisations that were identified from the data are listed in Table XII and Table XIII, including the number of references that were found for each rationalisation per decision-maker group in the primary and secondary data, respectively. The tables show that some rationalisations were more referred to than others. However, because rationalisations are often hidden, this observation does not necessarily mean that these rationalisations are used more often than others. For this reason I have treated each identified rationalisation as equally important, although the more evidence I had for a rationalisation, the stronger its identification. The tables also show that the secondary data confirm the rationalisations identified from the primary data, and that no new rationalisations were found in the secondary data. The patterns across decision-maker groups differ, however. For institutional decision-makers many more references were identified than for the other groups. One reason may be that they were only able to refer to programme design practice in general terms, without having a particular programme in mind, and rationalisations seem suitable for this purpose. Another possible explanation is that their educational role in the organisation is limited. From working with these people I know that some had relatively limited educational experience. Rationalisations provide these (and other) decision-makers with a language that allows them to make unquestioned decisions. On the other hand, relatively few references to rationalisations were found for Programme B and C decision-makers. This might be related to the covert nature of rationalisations, but it is difficult at this stage to provide a convincing reason.

Sections 6.2.1 to 6.2.11 explain each rationalisation in more detail, with supporting evidence from the data.

Table XII: Identified rationalisations and number of identified references for each rationalisation in the primary data. QMS = Academic Statute or QMS; ProgDocA = Programme A documentation; and, Obs = meeting observation notes.

Rationalisation	Number of identified references to the rationalisation for:			
	Institution-al decision-makers	Programme A decision-makers	QMS, ProgDocA or Obs	Total of referen-ces
Academic Statute/Quality Management System	42	18	1 (Obs) 5 (Prog-DocA)	66
Existing programme and course documents	11	16	3 (QMS) 1 (Obs)	31
Aotearoa/New Zealand qualifications system (governed by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority), including systems set by Industry Training Organisations and professional organisations	24	19	10 (QMS) 1 (Obs) 4 (Prog-DocA)	58
Tyler Rationale	33	-	12 (QMS)	45
Bloom's taxonomy	5	-	-	5
Teaching frameworks	15	3	2 (QMS)	20
Organisational system	13	20	3* (QMS)	36
120 credits = 1 year = 34 weeks = 680 contact hours	12	7	1 (QMS) 1 (Prog-DocA)	21
Standardised entry requirements	2	4	-	6
Structure of degrees	5	-	-	5
Consistency	-	3	2 (QMS) 1 (Obs)	6
All rationalisations	162	90	33 (QMS) 4 (Obs) 10 (Prog-DocA)	299

There may be more references to the organisational system as a rationalisation in the QMS (e.g. in human resource management or financial management policies), but this study only included QMS policies that related to programme design.

Table XIII: Identified rationalisations and number of identified references for each rationalisation in the secondary data.

Rationalisation	Number of identified references to the rationalisation for Programme:				Total of references
	B	C	D	E	
Academic Statute/Quality Management System	3	1	8	3	15
Existing programme and course documents	2	-	1	6	9
Aotearoa/NZ qualifications system	10	4	7	6	27
Tyler Rationale	-	-	1	4	5
Bloom's taxonomy	-	-	-	1	1
Teaching frameworks	1	-	1	1	3
Organisational system	2	1	3	2	8
120 credits = etc	2	1	5	1	9
Standardised entry requirements	-	-	1	-	1
Degree structure	-	4	1	8	13
Consistency	1	-	1	2	4
All rationalisations	21	11	29	34	95

6.2.1. The Academic Statute and the Quality Management System

One of the most frequently referred to rationalisations of programme design practice within the institution, as shown in Table XII and Table XIII, was the combined Academic Statute and Quality Management System, the functions of which are described as: "The Academic Statute states the rules for the governance of the [institution] to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and educational requirements" (Statute-2); and, "The QMS will demonstrate [the institution]'s commitment to 'quality', which is defined as continuously improving everything we do to meet agreed standards arising from our clients' stated and implied needs" (QMS-5). The Statute and the QMS can be considered as a single rationalisation of academic decision-making in the institution, because they regulate each other. The Statute regulates the QMS: "From this Statute our management procedures are developed and made available through our Quality Management System"

(Statute-3); while the QMS defines the Academic Statute: "The Academic Statute sets out the composition and function of the Academic Board, and sets out standard academic regulations" (QMS-6). The main difference between Statute and QMS is their content. From my experience in the institution, the Statute contains the 'academic legislation' of the institution, while the QMS consists of policies, procedures and guidelines that are based on common agreements on how things should be done in the institution. The content of the QMS is easier to change, as the authority for final decision-making lies with people in the institution, while the Statute states that changes to the Statute need to be approved by the governing committee of the institution, the Council.

The Statute/QMS contains many rational definitions and criteria for programme design matters. Two examples were shown in Section 6.1. These examples also illustrated how the requirement for justifying a particular decision is often rationalised by only requiring a description of the justification. Furthermore, the Statute/QMS is detached from individuals, for example by being the independent authority when it comes to deciding what is a certificate and what is a diploma: "The rules are within our policies and procedures, to distinguish why it's a certificate and why it's a diploma" (ID-20). Also, as a rationalisation, the QMS provides security and confidence:

> I don't need to go and look for those processes, they are in place and I just follow the rules. There's a reason why they're in place so why go against the stream. They help to improve quality; they help to keep things running smoothly, so why not follow them. (T-19)

The policies, procedures and guidelines in the Statute/QMS are considered to be the norm, as illustrated by the following. During the interviews most participants immediately referred to the institutional evaluation system described in the QMS when I asked what they found important about evaluation, as if the concept of evaluation did not exist outside the QMS. More explicitly, the following statement illustrates how a particular way of evaluation, which is the guideline stated in the QMS, is considered to be normal practice: "We evaluate on a three-yearly cycle, which is standard practice for the institute" (P-8). This is strengthened by observations from

Chapter 4, which are summarised in Table XIV, showing the percentages of references to evaluation by each of the primary decision-maker groups at course and programme level. The much lower frequencies for the Institutional and Programme A decision-maker groups compared to the Statute/QMS may be explained by their use of the Statute/QMS as the norm, which makes having additional views redundant.

Table XIV: Percentage of references to evaluation within each primary decision-maker group and within the programme or course level as identified in Chapter 4. These percentages are extracted from Figure 14 to Figure 19 in Chapter 4.

	References to evaluation at	
Decision-maker group	**Programme level**	**Course level**
Statute and QMS	42%	32%
Institutional decision-makers	10%	14%
Programme A decision-makers	10%	6%

6.2.2. Formally Approved Programme and Course Documents

Formally approved programme and course documents form the second rationalisation identified from the data. Once a programme or a course is formally approved and documented, the documents become the authority or the norm:

> the programme approval document, our handbook is our little bible and we refer to it all the time; mostly for attendance and assessments, regulations. It's very important. It's black and white, there's no room for my opinion or any other staff member's opinion, it's the regulation and students need to understand that that's the way it is. (P-9)

This authority flows on to the adoption, with limited scrutiny, of programme or course documents that have been approved by other institutions:

> If [a partner institution] has a programme in place that we would like to offer, we would [...] look at their programme, and make sure it has the things for our region that we would need, and use that programme instead of reinventing the wheel. (ID-21)

The document(s) protect themselves from change with help from the approval process for changes that is defined in the QMS. This process

requires scrutiny of changes by institutional or faculty decision-makers, who tend to see the existing, previously approved document as the norm, treating any changes that challenge its authority with suspicion: "But I also know that if faculties come up with a new change every year for a programme, that something is wrong" (ID-22). The documents also externalise people involved in the programme, such as the programme coordinator:

> the academic document states that [students] can come in with no entry requirements. We should probably have a bit more depth in it. It is a good idea to make literacy an entry requirement, I don't know why it isn't. (P-10)

Considering that a programme is defined as "a self-contained block of study or a combination of courses leading to an approved award" (Statute-4), the programme document can be seen as an overarching rationalisation for a course. This means that many design decisions for courses naturally follow the programme document. This is demonstrated in: "I find it difficult to separate course from programme regulations. I think of programme regulations as how the programme is managed, how the programme is reviewed, how the programme is assessed" (P-11). The idea that the programme document is an overarching rationalisation for a course is further supported by two observations made during the analysis of vertical patterns in the data in Chapter 4 (Table VI, page 145). Firstly, for the three decision-maker groups considered in Chapter 4 the total number of identified statements about design practice at course level was much lower than at programme level. If decisions for courses automatically follow decisions that apply to an entire programme, the number of decisions that need to be made for courses is indeed expected to be lower than for programmes. Secondly, almost no criteria or guidelines were found in the Statute/QMS on consultation for courses, probably because consultation is dealt with at programme level.

6.2.3. The Aotearoa/New Zealand Qualifications System, Including the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications (the Register), and Systems Set by Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) and Professional Organisations

The third identified rationalisation is the Aotearoa/New Zealand qualifications system. This system was introduced and commented on in Chapters 1 and 2. It rationalises knowledge in two ways: it defines knowledge as being external to individuals; and, it defines knowledge as being decontextualised and able to be broken down into independent blocks (courses or components or unit standards) which can then be put together in an infinite number of ways to make up qualifications. The NQF provides a collection of pre-approved 'knowledge blocks' in the form of unit standards and qualifications that accredited education institutions are allowed choose from. The knowledge students are expected to acquire does not require further discussion when it is selected in the form of unit standards from the NQF, as the following statement illustrates: "I don't really have the understanding of [the subject area] to [...] look at the objectives of each course. In this case they are unit standards, so that is all set for us" (M-12). Simultaneously, this shows how unit standards have externalised this decision-maker.

Alternatively, polytechnics (and other tertiary education institutions) can create their own 'knowledge-blocks', in the form of courses, and put these together, if desired combined with unit standards, to create provider qualifications. The decision of what is important for students to learn is a matter of selecting from the available collection of 'knowledge-blocks'. The system comprising NQF and provider-defined 'knowledge-blocks' and qualifications is what I refer to here as the Aotearoa/New Zealand qualification system.

The complexity of knowledge in this system is measured in terms of so-called levels and credits. The level is a rationalisation of the complexity of the knowledge defined in a particular block; it simplifies this complexity to a

number between 1 and 10. The following example shows how a level number is used to judge what the student is expected to know at the start of a programme:

> The main thing that is important for looking at entry requirements is that there is not too great a leap from where the potential learners might be now, and where the learning starts. So if the objectives are translated into courses and into a diploma, for example, it starts at level 5, 4 maybe on the framework. It is important that the people who come into that diploma have around and about a current qualification of at least level 2, or equivalent. (ID-23)

Between beginning and end of the programme, level numbers assigned to courses give an indication of the knowledge development process during the programme: "I'd be hoping that [programme developers] are picking [courses] like level 1 before level 2 before level 3 for example, but it does not always quite work that way" (ID-24). The concept of 'level' has assumed a life of its own, and is re-interpreted by its users in different ways. For example,

> as you move to higher levels, I think students need to be interacting with each other and the lecturer, and building their knowledge around thinking about implications. Whereas at levels 2 and 3, they are very much learning the theory, learning the nuts and bolts, whereas beyond that they should be learning what does this mean in the real world. (ID-25)

or,

> For me a level 5 paper is something where I am quite directive, [...] As we move to level 6, my belief is that I am starting to back off from the students, [and level 7] is where you are actually developing a project, which could be something that is commercial. You might be working with a client, or with me. (T-20)

The concept of credit has two meanings within the qualifications system:

1) 'Credit' rationalises the amount of time it takes for someone to acquire the knowledge, through its definition of one credit as approximately ten hours of learning time: ""Credit" is the value assigned to a course and or unit standard(s) to reflect the time taken to successfully complete the learning outcomes. Normally 1 credit is 10 hours of learning" (Statute-5). The credit value is determined external to and independent of the students who are expected to acquire the knowledge, as the following shows:

> I think there is some sort of NZQA formula that a credit is worth so many hours, you know, that a credit takes 10 hours of teaching or learning time. [...] I assume it just happens automatically that if the course has been measured to be worth an x amount of credits that the learners, the students get y amount of learning hours. (ID-26);

2) 'Credit' is a reward for students who have acquired the knowledge in the block: "Credits shall be awarded for the successful completion of a course" (Statute-6). The latter meaning is used to rationalise a qualification as a sum of 'knowledge-blocks', by defining it in terms of numbers of credits at specified levels: "The programme is probably level 2 because of the amount of level 2 credits. If there is one extra level 3 credit, it will be a level 3" (P-12). Knowledge blocks are exchangeable between programmes, where credits are use as exchange currency: "Credit Transfer and RPL are available for students who have already met the requirements of a particular course" (ProgDocA-1). The above shows that the meaning of a qualification is located in the meanings of level and credit. It is external to the people awarding or being awarded the qualification.

This rationalisation of programme assessment, which is rewarded through a qualification, as the sum of course assessment, which is rewarded through credits, seems to make course assessment more important than programme assessment. This is supported by findings from Chapter 4, as summarised in Table XV, which show low percentages of identified statements on assessment at the programme level compared to the course level. It is also supported by the finding in Chapter 4 (Table VIII; page 149) that none of the three main primary data sources referred to where and when programmes are assessed, as all of this seems to occur at course level.

Table XV: Percentage of references to assessment within each primary decision-maker group and within the programme or course level as identified in Chapter 4. These percentages are extracted from Figure 14 to Figure 19 in Chapter 4.

	References to assessment at	
Decision-maker group	**Programme level**	**Course level**
Statute and QMS	6%	40%
Institutional decision-makers	7%	16%
Programme A decision-makers	7%	28%

6.2.4. The Tyler Rationale

The Tyler Rationale (Tyler, 1949) is the fourth rationalisation that was identified from the data. It was extensively referred to in the literature review in Chapter 2 as the foundation of current programme design models in tertiary education. As such, its components were used in this study to analyse the vertical patterns in the data, which were presented in Chapter 4. The Rationale promotes alignment between intentions, learning activities, organisation of the learning activities – including structure and resources – and assessment. It does not judge the content and therefore the value of the decisions that are made around each of these four elements (Cherryholmes, 1988). Evidence of the use of the Tyler Rationale as a rationalisation is found in the following examples. They show a judgment on the alignment between intentions and the other elements, as well as the absence of judgment on actual decisions:

- Alignment between intentions and learning activities: "The strategies [are described] that will be adopted to enable students to achieve the stated outcome" (QMS-7);
- Alignment between intentions, learning activities and assessment: "I check that the learning objectives, the purpose statement is clear, that the assessment tasks are covering the learning objectives, that content and context looks appropriate for the learning objectives" (ID-27); and,
- Alignment between intentions, learning activities, organisation and assessment:

> if I was looking at somebody's course descriptor, I'd be looking at that
> they had quite clearly identified what the content of the course was, and
> what would relate to the learning outcomes that they have got. The
> context of how they were going to teach it [...], any requirements that
> they are going to have to meet, and what are the assessments: how do
> they link back through the content, and back to the learning outcomes. It
> should all tie together. (ID-28)

To achieve the alignment, Tyler (1949) argues that intentions are to be written in a behavioural manner to allow them to guide the other elements of curriculum planning. Some participants expressed this by using the acronym SMART:

> An acceptable objective for a programme would be specific, measurable,
> achievable, realistic, and time. If it's not any of those, it's pretty useless. If
> we are going to say that we are going to produce great students, and we
> have got no measure of that, it's a bit of a waste of time. (ID-29)

One participant commented on the Tylerian structure that I was using to guide the interviews as being the fundamentals of curriculum design:

> Anyone who is involved in any teaching and learning needs to be aware
> of some of these fundamental parameters [i.e. the elements of the
> interview questionnaire] of the curriculum. So they could see a logic
> behind why certain things happen. [...] Having been in the curriculum
> field for many years, you probably realise that whatever programme you
> look at, they are designed according to the same fundamentals. (ID-30)

Table XII and Table XIII on pages 182 and 183 show that the Tyler Rationale as a rationalisation was mainly referred to by institutional and Programme E decision-makers and in the Statute/QMS. An explanation is that programmes A, B and D were largely based on unit standards, and therefore decision-makers in these programmes did not need to concern themselves with writing objectives. Additionally, the prescriptive way in which unit standards are often perceived leaves little room for choice in learning activities and assessment. Therefore there was no need to use a framework like the Tyler Rationale explicitly, as it was implied in the use of unit standards. As observed earlier, Programme C decision-makers hardly seemed to refer to rationalisations in general, including the Tyler Rationale.

6.2.5. Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom's "Taxonomy of educational objectives" is a fifth rationalisation found in the data. It provides a framework to develop behavioural objectives in terms of people's development stages in the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains. The cognitive domain was the first to be published (Bloom, Englehart, Furst, & Hill, 1956). This taxonomy appears to be used as a rationalisation to judge the appropriateness of programme and course intentions, by connecting the levels from the Aotearoa/New Zealand qualifications system to verbs that are associated with the different stages of cognitive development in Bloom's taxonomy. For example,

> With respect to the level, I look at the verbs that are used to state the learning outcomes. For level 3 it is more describe something, or understand something, whereas for a degree course, it might more about critique and analyse, for example. (ID-31)

However, the example shows that the rationalisation does not judge the objectives other than on the verbs that are used. One participant expressed his concern that only the cognitive domain of the taxonomy seems to have been adopted:

> Bloom's taxonomy is perhaps one of the better known of the taxonomies in the literature, and [...] it appears that a lot of materials that are available they have all followed the Bloom's taxonomy. Unfortunately people don't give the same emphasis to the psychomotor and the affective domain of learning. It seems that the behaviourist approach to learning has resulted in a number of people thinking that is the only way to go. (ID-32)

The few references to Bloom's taxonomy were made by Institutional and Programme E decision-makers (Table XII and Table XIII on pages 182 and 183). The reasons for its absence for most other decision-makers groups are probably similar to those for the Tyler Rationale. While no references to Bloom's taxonomy were found in the Statute/QMS, these documents did refer to the importance of clear and measurable intentions, which suggests implicit use of this rationalisation.

6.2.6. Teaching Frameworks

Indications were found that people use frameworks as a sixth type of rationalisation to help decision-making on teaching strategies for a course or programme. The evidence is limited, but significant, because it shows that different people use different frameworks which remain undiscussed. Most references to this rationalisation were made by institutional decision-makers.

Most evidence was found referring to a 'learning styles' framework. While many learning style related models/frameworks can be found in the literature (Coffield, Moseley, Hall, & Ecclestone, 2004, identify more than 70), the data in this study do not specify which framework is used and whether decision-makers use a common framework. The rationalisation assigns a student's approach to learning to a certain learning style framework category. The diversity in learning styles across a group of students is then used as an argument for choosing or requiring a variety of teaching methods in the programme. This is illustrated by the following example:

> That range [of teaching strategies] is important because it reflects the kind of learners we have, to cater for everybody's learning styles. And people don't want to necessarily learn in one particular way, or don't learn in one particular way. (ID-33)

Some references were found to other teaching frameworks, with only one or two examples of evidence per framework. For this reason the information about these frameworks is limited. They include the existence of principles that underpin education, for example, assessment principles, or adult learning principles: "You can design the programme to a certain extent to be flexible for learner need but that ongoing flexibility really is around the whole delivery and the awareness that academic staff have about adults and adult learning principles" (ID-34). They also include various teaching models: that contact time is followed by independent study; that contact time decreases as the level of the course or programme increases; and, that theory and practical teaching methods are separate. When decisions do not align with the decision-maker's (unarticulated) framework there is a gap: "There is

a section in the [course document] template on teaching and learning and any obvious gaps I would pick up on there" (ID-35).

6.2.7. The Organisational System

The seventh identified rationalisation is the organisational system. It includes how the institution works: its organisational structure and hierarchy, and the (written or unwritten) processes that are in place, but that are not in the Statute/QMS. I have identified three aspects of the organisational system that support its identification as a rationalisation: the institutional finance system, institutional resources and support services and the workload allocation system.

- *The institutional finance system*

Indicators that the institutional finance system is a part of the organisational system as a rationalisation were the various comments from interview participants about them feeling external to the finance system, particularly when the system sets the budget and the student fees for a programme. For example,

> I don't know what I can use from the 40% overheads for a programme in terms of services like library and learning services. Use of those resources just happen [...] And the new percentage is 27% of the SAC component. [...] that is just declared. (ID-36)

- *Institutional resources and support services*

Decision-makers express no thoughts about what the resources or services should be for a programme; they rely on the system to take care of them: "You certainly have got to have the facilities and equipment, you have got to space and you have got to have facilities. Unless you have got the equipment you should not be running the programme" (ID-37).

Additionally, hardly any reference was found in Chapter 4 to considerations about administrative or institutional support resources, or about non-teaching personnel (Refer to Appendix III: Administration and Management – Programme level and Administration and Management – Course level graphs). This supports the interpretation that the organisational system is

considered to make these resources and support from non-teaching personnel happen automatically.

- *Workload allocation system*

The QMS states that the basic structure for teacher workload allocation in Diploma and Certificate programmes in the institution is a maximum of 825 timetabled teaching hours per full-time teacher per year. It works as a rationalisation, as the following shows.

> Classroom hours generate an automatic time allocation for preparation, marking, moderation and anything else like that, so contact hours are a proxy for the amount of total staff resource for the programme, so certificate and diploma teachers teach 825 contact hours a year, but the actual duty hours are about double that. (ID-38)

6.2.8. 120 Credits = 1 Year = 34 Weeks = 680 Hours Contact Time

This eighth rationalisation was referred to by all decision-maker groups. It provides a simple formula to decide on credits, length and contact hours for a programme. The length of a programme has been rationalised as a multiple or divisor of 120 credits, equivalent to an equal multiple or divisor of years of study, where one year is equivalent to 34 teaching weeks. This is evident in the following: "With the credit system, 60 credits forces us really into a 17 week span" (ID-39). This decision on credits and length is independent of the students, the teachers or what is to be learned:

> we always have to refer to the credits in the courses, and that tells you an indication of the hours obviously. We break that down into what's reasonable and what works with the timetable and that is what we do. That's our plan really, the calculator. (P-13)

In this rationalisation, one year also equates to 680 contact hours, that is, 20 hours per week: "we have about 20 hours of contact a week. At the end of 34 weeks they have had 680 contact hours and that is deemed to be a standard unit of learning" (M-13). Deviating from this rationalisation results in questions being asked:

> ten hours rule of thumb per credit total student learning hours and then mostly timetabled teaching hours is around about half; [...] occasionally it creeps up to twenty-five out of thirty. In those cases I look for the

justifications, and if it's going to be well below, what sorts of subjects or topics they would be researching or doing in work experience. (M-14)

6.2.9. Standardised Entry Requirements

'Standardisation' of entry requirements was identified as the ninth rationalisation because it was referred to by some decision-makers, although no formally agreed standard entry requirements across the institution were found in the Statute/QMS. An example is the following: "The entry requirements are the standard [institutional] diploma entry requirements, plus preferably Science and English" (M-15). Evidence from the data is limited, but the following example suggests entry requirements are seen as a given, and not as a conscious design decision: "The raw academic requirements are straightforward, you just write down what they are" (M-16).

6.2.10. Structure of Degree Programmes

The structure of undergraduate degree programmes has been formally agreed by the institution and is documented in the QMS. Elements of this degree structure have been identified as the tenth type of rationalisation used for design practice in non-degree programmes. This is supported by the following:

> [...] this is inherited from the degree, there are some regulations around assessment and we've just done a cut and paste from out of the degree regulation and plonked it in there. It fits in tidily but it's a whole lot of nonsense from my point of view. Why did we even consider doing that? (M-17)

The following degree structure elements were found to be used for the rationalisation:

- Each course is assigned 15 credits. If courses differ from this norm they are considered a bit odd: "The courses aren't all nice 15-credit courses: some are 20, 21, 14, they zigzag all over the show based on the number of credits they've got in them" (M-18);

- The number of contact hours per course is pre-determined and depends on the level of the course:

  We follow the institute's QMS for degree delivery. The 14-28 (lecture-practical hours) is faculty-led; for level 6 papers we allow three hours in total, and for our practical ones they are always two hours. We don't have a lot of input on that, we are responding to what the faculty is saying we should do [...]. (P-14);

- Each course is taught over 14 weeks, with one additional week for study and two for exams, even if there are no exams:

  for [this] paper the three weeks at the end don't exist. There is no final assessment, so it is taught over 14 weeks. [...] We have never reviewed the three weeks at the end; I don't think the faculty has ever thought about that. (P-15)

Reference to the degree structure as rationalisation was particularly made by institutional, Programme C and Programme E decision-makers. Programmes A, B and D are largely unit-standard based and are more likely to follow the structure as defined by the NQF. The degree structure may provide something to hold on to if the NQF is not applicable.

6.2.11. Consistency across Programmes in the Institution

The eleventh and final identified rationalisation is consistency. What makes this a rationalisation is that consistency overrules and ignores the value and idiosyncrasies of whatever needs to be consistent. No reason has to be provided why consistency is needed; consistency is 'good' in itself: "We need to be consistent because consistency in most things can lead to better quality, that we are doing things in the same way, that we are following guidelines" (M-19). If inconsistency is found, questions are asked, for example: "These entry requirements [for international students] contain maths, but maths is not part of the entry requirements for New Zealand students. Why not?" (Obs-1)

6.3 Understanding the Rationalisations

The rationalisations presented in the previous section raise two questions:

1) Why do people use rationalisations? and,

2) Why do they use the particular rationalisations identified in this chapter?

These questions will guide the theorising of the rationalisations in this section.

A probable answer to the first question is that rationalisation simplifies a complex practice. This offers security to people who are new to, unfamiliar with, or uncertain about the practice and avoids them being questioned. The following supports this answer:

> I use the unit standards pretty strictly. It's a good guide; it just means that I know what I'm doing instead of running to somebody and having to check and ask. (T-21)

Rationalisations are also used when people believe there are underlying structures which define and promise order to particular aspects of programme design practice (Cherryholmes, 1988). Evidence for this answer is found in, for example, this statement about the underlying structure of course design:

> When it comes to individual course design we have some guidelines in terms of the structure that needs to be followed, and this is a structure that has evolved over the years, also a structure that is used widely by many institutions. [...] There is some logical sequence in the structure. (ID-40)

The literature on the worldview that underpins this second reason explains how the structures or rationalisations are concerned with systems, and not with individuals (Gibson, 1984), and how value and meaning is located within those systems, externalising the people involved (Cherryholmes, 1988; Gibson, 1984). Many examples of this were shown in Section 6.2. As a consequence, the structures or rationalisations tend to reinforce the dominant ideological discourses of the time and culture in which they were first developed, as the following participant noted about the QMS: "There are systems that were brilliantly devised and developed by a group and it works brilliantly for that particular group. But also looking at the QMS, I sort of begin to see some of the threads there" (ID-41).

Hence identifying those discourses requires a search into the origins of the particular rationalisation. This is the focus of the remainder of this section.

Chapter 1 described how tertiary curriculum policies in New Zealand are based on a model of outcomes-based education, and how the Aotearoa/New Zealand qualifications system and the Statute/QMS contribute to this model. Both have also been identified in this chapter as rationalisations. The origins of competency- or outcomes-based education relate back to principles of scientific management, introduced by Frederick Taylor in 1911 as an industrial model to increase business efficiency (F. W. Taylor, 1967). This stimulated a political desire to apply similar models to education, and to develop outcomes in a behavioural and measurable form (Tuxworth, 1989). From the 1960s demands for increased accountability in education, for education serving the economy, and for increased input from industry into education laid the basis for outcomes-based vocational education, first in the USA and later in the UK (Tuxworth, 1989). To improve educational programmes a structure was deemed necessary to evaluate against, which resulted in the development of what is now known as the Tyler Rationale (Tyler, 1949). The Tyler Rationale has been widely adopted in programme development models for tertiary education, as the literature review in Chapter 2 of this thesis has shown, and appears to have been fundamental to the development of outcomes-based education (Burke, 1995). The Rationale has also been highly influential in the development of Bloom's taxonomy, which focuses on behavioural objectives to provide guidance to all other questions in the Tyler Rationale: "Curriculum builders should find the taxonomy helps them to specify objectives so that it becomes easier to plan learning experiences and prepare evaluation devices" (Bloom, et al., 1956, p. 2).

Bloom developed his ideas further into the concept of mastery learning, which is based on the beliefs that every person can achieve any learning outcome, provided that 1) they are given sufficient time; and 2) the instruction is appropriate (Bloom, 1971). Bloom defended the need for this concept largely from an economical perspective: "We [...] must provide

enough opportunities that the largest possible proportion of students will acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to sustain the society's growth" (p. 48). He also expressed concern that the lack of success in education discouraged people from further learning, because "Increasingly [...] learning throughout life [...] will be necessary for the largest proportion of the work force" (p. 48). The concept of mastery learning is built on a system of clearly defined objectives and a translation of these objectives into summative assessment procedures, so both teachers and students will know what is expected. Bloom (1971) explains that this implicitly implies a distinction between the teaching and learning and the assessment process. Using discourses of equity, he promotes the use of standards to decide on mastery, so students know they are judged on their performance, in contrast to a norm-referenced system in which students are judged in comparison with their peers.

The focus on performance-based objectives or outcomes is also at the heart of competency-based education and training (R. Harris, et al., 1995), and of standards-based assessment, which is the fundament of the National Qualifications Framework in New Zealand (Barker, 1995). As referred to in Chapter 1, the model of standards- or outcomes-based education has been embraced by tertiary education policy-makers underwriting the neo-liberalist ideology, as a means to measure educational performance, not only of students, but also of teachers and institutions, thus providing valuable information to guide the 'education market' and to allocate resources (Codd, McAlpine, & Poskitt, 1995). The use of rationalisations that are inherent to this concept, including the Tyler Rationale, Bloom's taxonomy, the New Zealand qualifications system and the Statute/QMS, ensures that performativity discourses continue to be reinforced in programme design practice.

While the 'teaching frameworks' rationalisations are not directly related to outcomes-based education, they have similar structuralist characteristics, as they seem to be based on the view that there are principles or structures that ensure good teaching. Learning styles frameworks were most often referred

to in the data. Coffield et al. (2004) provide various reasons for the popularity of the use of learning styles in post-compulsory education, despite disappointing evidence to demonstrate that learning styles influence learning positively. Firstly, learning styles promise a simple solution to dealing with accountability:

> Some of the learning style literature promises practitioners a simple solution to the complex problems of improving the attainment, motivation, attitudes and attendance of students. In an audit culture where professionals and institutions are held responsible for the attainment and behaviour of their students, it is little wonder that teachers and managers are prepared to try new techniques which claim to help them meet their targets more easily. (Coffield, et al., 2004, p. 125)

Secondly, learning styles models are convenient, "because it shifts the responsibility for enhancing the quality of learning *from* management *to* the individual learning styles of teachers and learners" (p. 126). Finally, learning styles models invite teachers to meet the needs of each individual student, and help teacher developers to focus teachers on student learning. Coffield et al. (2004) blame a lack of pedagogical theories in post-compulsory education that are able to deal with the complexity of student learning for the popularity of instrumental models, including learning styles models. A similar explanation might be given to the other teaching frameworks that were found in the data, although the limited evidence in the data makes it difficult to draw any convincing conclusions.

The remaining rationalisations - the organisational system; standardised entry requirements; consistency across the organisation; 120 credits=1 year=34 weeks=680 contact hours; and degree structure - all seem to originate from a desire for 'sameness': across programmes, across staff, and across the organisation. The advantages of this sameness are that it avoids discussion or conflict and is easy to communicate: "When you are allocating those 680 hours it's simple, without debate, really, because we have always done it that way" (ID-42). Therefore 'sameness' saves time and resources, and could be related to a form of organisational efficiency. During a presentation about this research project at the institution someone confirmed this efficiency explanation by clarifying how the 680 hours

rationalisation was introduced for financial reasons many years ago. 'Sameness' discourses also imply that no-one is favoured over another. These discourses are strongly engrained in New Zealand society (Rata et al., 2001). However, no evidence for such an explanation was found from the perspective of the rational lens. The cultural lens in Chapter 7 shines further light on the possible influence of 'sameness'.

6.4   Rationalisations and Power

The rationalisations identified in this chapter can be divided into three groups:

- *Internal formal rationalisations*, including the Statute/QMS, the organisational system and the approved programme and course documents, have come about as documented agreements on certain socially constructed practices, and the institution has been a party in the agreements. These rationalisations are not just rationalisations; they also have formal power as 'decision-makers'. My decision to include two of them as data sources in this study seems to confirm my intuitive recognition of the power they exercise. As internal decision-makers they can, however, be influenced by the institution.

- *External formal rationalisations,* including the New Zealand qualifications system, have come about as documented agreements on certain socially constructed practices, but the institution has not been a party in the agreements. These rationalisations also operate as decision-makers, but they are very difficult to influence by the institution.

- *Informal rationalisations*, including all other identified rationalisations, have not been formally agreed, but they have come into existence as part of everyday social practices to which people feel committed. These rationalisations do not have formal power status and are often unwritten, but their informal power arises from a common agreement on how things should be done.

The rational lens solely shows the formal rationalisations in their role as 'rationalisations', not as decision-makers. However, where rationalisations also operate as decision-makers, they become players in the negotiation of power. This means that they become visible in the image of the social-political lens, which is described in Chapter 11. Additionally, rationalisations operating as decision-makers also need to be asked for their 'opinion' in observing programme design practice through any of the other lenses. This has already been done in Chapter 4, through inclusion of the 'opinion' of the Statute/QMS, and in this and the previous chapter, where the 'opinion' of programme documents was included as well. The external rationalisations are considered as context in this study, and therefore their role as decision-makers is only analysed through the social-political lens in Chapter 11.

The reason for formal rationalisations being formal, either internal or external, can be understood through the government requirement for accountability. Chapter 1 described how quality management systems were introduced for polytechnics to demonstrate how they assure quality, and how an auditing system was set up to ensure the QMS was adhered to. Similarly, programme and course documents have to be adhered to because they can be audited by the government:

> It is important to stick to this [programme] document because I believe that we must do what is in here, this is the document. I know very well that if we are audited, we are audited on what we say we'll do, and this is what we say we'll do. (M-20)

Another view is that the programme document must be adhered to because decision-makers see it as a contract with their customers: "From my point [the programme document] is a contract. You can bend it slightly, in terms of changing the way you deliver a little. Effectively this is the document which determines what we have decided to do" (P-17). The process towards rationalisation occurs through conscious reinforcement through the use of power:

> I don't need to know the QMS. The best example I have is course outlines. They have a particular structure in our faculty, and they have to be followed. If you don't follow them they reject them and we have to do

them again. So it is so much part of what we do that we don't even see that we are doing them. (T-22)

These observations suggest a connection between image of the rational lens and the images of the business and social-political lenses, which are explored in detail in Chapters 10 and 11, respectively.

6.5   The Image of the Rational Lens

The image of the rational lens shows programme design practice as a construction of people's overt and covert considerations that draw on models and frameworks. These models and frameworks, referred to as rationalisations, define relationships between components, elements or other aspects of programme design. They provide security in decision-making and make sense from a logical perspective. They continue to reinforce ideological discourses that were at play when the rationalisations were first introduced. The identified rationalisations and their underpinning ideological discourses are visualised in Figure 24. Some rationalisations have been explained to act as power structures in programme design practice and need to be taken into account as decision-makers in the study of the images of the other lenses.

Rationalisations have been shown to become silent norms that are no longer questioned and therefore they play a part in deciding what is considered to be 'normal' in programme design practice. In this sense, they influence the culture of an organisation, which the following participant's statement on the number of contact hours in a programme confirms:

> The 20 hours per week have just come from growing up with the culture, it has become accepted, and I know internally that staff do a lot more. It is a culture that is grown out of a long period of time that seems to have infiltrated all faculties and all schools. [...] we've fallen into it in this faculty and it has become accepted at management level. We have grown up with this whole culture and we are just reinforcing the culture and the thinking. (ID-43)

There appears, however, to be a wider concept of culture at play within programme design practice, which is visible in the image of the cultural lens and is discussed in the next chapter.
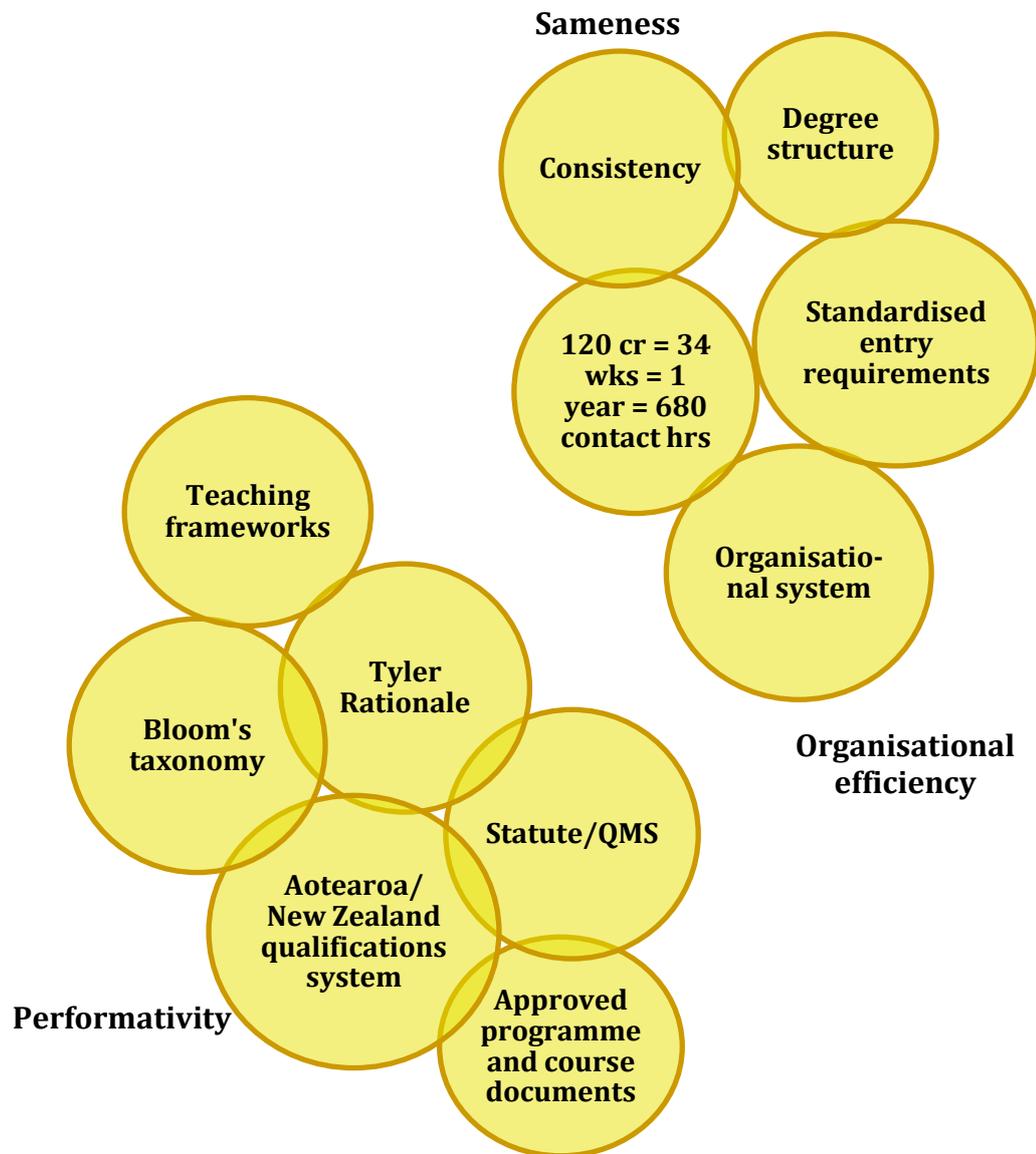
Figure 24: The image of programme design practice as seen through the rational lens: Eleven rationalisations in relation to each other and to their underpinning ideological discourses.

CHAPTER 7: PROGRAMME DESIGN PRACTICE OBSERVED THROUGH A CULTURAL LENS

7.1 Introduction

Two consequences of the process of rationalisation arose from the previous chapter: how rationalisations can eventually become unconscious practice and 'culture'; and how they continue to reinforce the discourses that underpinned the rationalisation when it was first introduced. The emergence of culture from the process of rationalisation is put aptly in the following:

> [The QMS processes or faculty quality processes] are part and parcel of almost everything, from what should be in the handbook to what should be in the course file or the qualifications of staff that we would hire, how we support staff in professional development. Most of the things are second nature because they're part of how [the institution] does things. (M-21)

This example shows how organisational culture is inextricably linked to the 'organisational system' rationalisation described in Chapter 6. However, 'culture', when defined as "the term used for the shared social practices, institutions, values, attitudes and beliefs of people who identify together" (Rata, et al., 2001, p. 192), is much broader than the shared rationalisations. 'Identifying together' can also occur through, for example, ethnicity, disability, or religion (Rata, et al., 2001). Considering that it is almost impossible to find literature about education in Aotearoa/New Zealand that does not touch the relationship between Māori and non-Māori, it is important to explore the make-up of the image of a cultural lens in this study, however without restricting the notion of culture to ethnicity. This exploration is the subject of this chapter.

This chapter is organised as follows. Section 7.2 describes how the dichotomy between what is considered 'normal' and 'not-normal' was used in observing the 'why's of programme design decision-makers' considerations and

decisions through a cultural lens. Section 7.3 lists the themes that were found by doing this. Sections 7.4 to 7.6 describe the themes in more detail. Section 7.7 theorises the themes, by explaining how they can be understood in terms of discourses of difference, using relevant research literature as well as some findings from previous chapters.

7.2   The Normal/Not-normal Dichotomy

 "Culture is elusive and hidden, commonly outside the margins of individual awareness, and embedded in habits that are typically taken for granted" (Finkelstein, Pickert, Mahoney, & Barry, 1998, p. 9). This taken-for-grantedness relates 'culture' to 'normalcy': what people consider normal in their practices. Normalcy, and therefore culture, usually remains invisible and unspoken (Erickson, 2010). Normalcy of practices is maintained through continuous reinforcement of these practices, for example by:

1) Creating an environment that ensures the normalcy is adhered to:

> I tend to lead in a way that staff feel this is how things are done here at [this institution]. If you create the right environment they will automatically do that (ID-44);

2) Ensuring that all teachers are educated in the same environment:

> The staff around here have either been here for a hundred years or come through here as students. It's no mistake that there are no relative strangers in this place here because we're all pretty much learning the same things, doing the same professional development, we go to the same places, learn from the same people, so we're all delivering pretty much even (T-23); or,

3) Not acting, and leaving things as they are:

> My preference is much more flexibility than we currently have at [this institution. ...] If it doesn't happen here I just ignore it probably [...]. I think [this institution] has pretty conservative staff, and not a lot of people here want change either. (ID-45)

When norms are established, they simultaneously define what or who is not normal, that is, different, and how this difference needs to be approached (Adams et al., 2000). This means that, although normalcy tends to be unspoken, it can be revealed through listening to what is considered 'not normal' or to silences and silencing forces (Asher, 2007; Mazzei, 2004).

Therefore, to identify the image of the cultural lens, I looked for signs that allowed recognition of what is normal, which not only included explicit but also silent references to norms. Furthermore, I looked for tensions decision-makers experienced with the norms, notions of difference, as well as ways in which differences from the norm are approached.

7.3 Themes Observed through the Cultural Lens

Seven themes related to 'culture' were found in the data: Organisational culture; Ethnicity; Language; Disability; Gender; Age; and Cultural perspectives of knowledge. Table XVI and Table XVII provide a quantitative overview of the identified references to each theme. They show that the references are relatively few, which may be explained by the understanding that normalcy tends to remain unspoken, as it is engrained in 'how things are done around here'. It often only surfaces in situations that are not normal. As a consequence, I have treated each theme as equally important. However, where I had more evidence, the identification and interpretation are likely to be stronger. The following sections describe the themes in more detail.

Table XVI: Number of identified references to each theme within culture for each group of primary data sources. QMS = Academic Statute or QMS; ProgDocA = Programme A documentation; and, Obs = meeting observation notes.

Theme within culture	Number of identified references to the theme:			Total of references
	Institutional decision-makers	Programme A decision-makers	in QMS, ProgDocA, or Obs	
Organisational culture	8	8	1 (QMS)	17
Ethnicity	17	7	8(QMS) 2 (ProgDocA)	34
Language	2	2	3 (QMS)	7
Disability	2	4	5 (QMS)	11
Gender	3	47	1 (QMS)	51
Age	-	2	-	2
Cultural perspectives of knowledge	6	8	1 (QMS)	15
Total	38	78	19 (QMS) 2 (ProgDocA)	137

Table XVII: Number of identified references to each theme within culture and for each group of secondary data sources.

Theme within culture	Number of identified references to the theme for Programme:				Total of references
	B	C	D	E	
Organisational culture	1	2	1	1	5
Ethnicity	-	6	1	2	9
Language	1	3	2	1	7
Gender	-	-	4	-	4
Disability	-	-	2	-	2
Age	-	-	2	-	2
Cultural perspectives of knowledge	-	4	3	-	7
Total	2	15	15	4	36

7.4   Organisational Culture

Organisational culture encompasses normalcy in terms of expected social and professional behaviour and values in a decision-makers' institution or department, beyond those originating from models and frameworks, which were identified through the rational lens. The following glimpses of the organisational culture were provided by the data. They show how the culture only seems to become visible when people experience tensions with existing culture.

• Face-to-face teaching is the norm:

The Statute/QMS contained an explicit policy for teaching using e-learning technology, but nothing for face-to-face teaching. One participant expressed concern about this normalcy of face-to-face teaching:

> we seem to get locked in semesters, or locked into nine to three teaching times, and we often get locked into particular modes of delivery, people seem to think face to face is a mode that people want, we don't always consider other teaching technologies properly. We can have a lot more flexibility in how we offer it and when we offer programmes, and in what way, and what we offer. (ID-46)

- The departments and teachers within the institution are autonomous:

  There is a big gap at [the institution] that [...] we leave it to lecturers to design their courses. A lot of our design and development seems to happen on the hoof and that we design our course the week before we teach it. I think [the institution]'s culture is that faculties want to do it themselves unless we got external resource support. (ID-47)

- The institution follows the polytechnic tradition:

  the certificates and diplomas in the polytech sector are often quite restrictive in the way they are structured. There is not too much choice for the students, and it has also made them much more stand-alone in terms of their provision. It is less integrated with other things that might be occurring in the institution. That is part of the way the polytechs have developed. (ID-48)

These aspects of normalcy within the organisational culture seem to relate to the historical development of polytechnics as educational institutions. They may have surfaced because they are being challenged. Digital technology is challenging traditional face-to-face teaching, managerial accountability is challenging professional autonomy, as Chapter 2 has discussed, and public choice discourses challenge the traditional structure of polytechnic programmes. However, none of these examples give the impression that the challenge is taken any further than a mere observation of a tension. Lack of (conscious) action continues to reinforce these normalcies.

7.5   Ethnicity, Language, Disability, Gender, and Age

7.5.1. Introduction

The five themes of ethnicity, language, disability, gender and age are heterogeneous, but they all refer to the people involved in programmes. They appear to take a similar approach to classifying certain groups of people involved in programme design practice as normal and others as not normal.

Mainly by 'listening to silence', basing myself on the evidence in the data of what is considered not normal, I have deduced the following description of 'normalcy' related to people involved in programme design practice in the context of this study:

Normalcy in most examples in this section implies that programme design decision-makers are English speaking Pākehā, who design programmes for English speaking, physically and mentally able Pākehā students. For some programmes normalcy includes a particular gender or a particular age.

I have used the title 'Pākehā' to refer to the dominant group in Aotearoa/New Zealand, attempting to name a group that is mainly of European descent and reflects 'western culture', as it serves the purpose of this study. However, the existence of one such a group is contested (Adams, et al., 2000). I provide evidence for this normalcy for each of ethnicity, language, disability, gender and age in Sections 7.5.2 to 7.5.6. I also show approaches to difference that are taken to people who are considered not-normal. Some examples from the data refer to more than one theme, for example, to ethnicity as well as disability, language or gender. To avoid duplications in the text I have used these examples only once. When decision-makers used the word 'cultural' or 'culture' I used the context of the interview or the document text to interpret which theme it referred to, which in all cases appeared to be ethnicity.

7.5.2. Ethnicity

The normalcy related to ethnicity, which is that programme design decision-makers are Pākehā, who design programmes for Pākehā students, confirms the grounding of the Aotearoa/New Zealand education system in a mainstream centric (Banks, 2010) – that is, Eurocentric – culture that was referred to in Chapter 2. It is explicitly shown in the following example:

> I see so many parallels between what some of us as Māori call a Pākehā system that trusts the evidence. If we look at the political system that operates in this country and, historically again, how it works brilliantly for those it is intended to work for. I know that is quite a political statement. (ID-49)

However, most evidence relates to this normalcy by reflecting on what is not normal and how to approach this non-normalcy. Therefore, the examples below serve two purposes. Firstly, they provide evidence for the (mostly

unspoken) normalcy, while secondly, they demonstrate approaches to people with different ethnicities, particularly Māori people, including students, and Pasifika and international students.

One way of approaching students from not-normal ethnicity is to stereotype them. For example, students from other ethnicities prefer group work: "To cater for different cultures I would expect to do some more group work, rather than individual work" (ID6), or international students tend to have problems with using computers: "Everybody uses computers now. Even our international students are usually OK with it" (T-24). Also Māori feel uncomfortable with taking clothing off:

> This year I've found more of a challenge than others in that we have a very traditionally Māori student who is uncomfortable with taking clothing off because that's just been part of your culture. We've worked around that by providing outside models for her partner, so that she doesn't have to take part in that side of it. (T-25)

A second approach is special support or monitoring for these students: "Arrangements [are described] to provide special support to students from underprivileged or underrepresented groups (may include Māori, women, disabled students, students with English as second language)" (QMS-8). This example identifies Māori, women, disabled students and non-native English speakers as potentially not-normal. To allow special monitoring, the programme annual report template in the QMS requires reporting on pass, retention and participation rates for all students, but specifically for Māori, disabled and international students.

Thirdly, special measures, like systems and processes, are put in place to reduce barriers to access for not-normal students:

> The obvious model for diversity is [...] that for all of our programmes we have a similar mix of gender, Māori, Pasifika, students with disabilities, to what is in the overall population. [...] We rely on our systems and processes to make sure that that is going happen. We have our student support areas, and our faculty support areas, and we rely on marketing research to gain information on the wider community. (ID-50)

Other special measures are taken to involve people who are not meeting the norm in design practice. One such measure is ensuring that consultation occurs with representatives from not-normal groups:

> We need to account for the differences that the different cultures bring to the programme. We expect that to happen when you have an advisory group, which should represent the communities. In a number of our consultative documents we at least have Māori participation or Māori input into it. That covers the bicultural aspect but we need to go beyond that and involve other cultures as well. (ID-51)

Another is to deliberately nurture the diversity of teaching staff: "I try and get a cross section of people, of experiences, age, males/females, international and that, so that students get exposed to different people" (ID-52).

Decision-makers who do not identify with the norm try and make things work for the group they identify with, for example by standing up for them:

> I particularly look for the impact on Māori, and whether or not the colonisation is still going on in a sneaky way. But I still don't think that enough people realise that it is actually still happening, that has just become part of how things are done. (ID-53)

The institution also has a special department and programmes in which Māori culture is considered to be normal. The normalcy of Māori ethnicity and the challenges in working with non-Māori students within this department and these programmes are illustrated by the following:

> This programme is not exclusively for Māori people and we've got non-Māori students as well, but [...] it is comfortable for us with Māori students. I don't know whether we're always necessarily comfortable with non-Māori students. [...] We get some real challenging questions about the Māori world and the Māori language from non-Māori students. I think that is good. We just have to get better at dealing with it, not seeing it as being personal [...]. As we grow ourselves as staff I think we get better and the more different ethnic groups we come into contact with we get better at understanding and become more objective in our approach to all students. It's certainly challenging. (M-22)

Another example shows the tension between outside influences and a desire to retain Māori culture at the heart of teaching:

> For me face-to-face is really important and that's why I resist Moodle even though everybody says Moodle is lovely. [...] Maybe that's a personal preference, but from way back Māori culture is face-to-face. You come here and you tell me, don't tell me over the phone where you can hide from me. So there's that sort of relationship that I don't want to be lost and I still want people to be able to front up with one another and talk and not do it through another medium where you can hide from one another. (T-26)

A final approach to not-normal ethnicity is that ethnic differences are acknowledged, but left for others to deal with: "Besides diversity in educational backgrounds, there is a cultural one, and from my past experience there is a difference between part-time and full-time students. I would personally in my role look for the educational sort of things" (ID-54).

7.5.3. Language

New Zealand has three official languages: English, te reo Māori and New Zealand Sign Language (Ministry for Culture and Heritage, n.d.). While programme entry criteria in this case study allow for English or Māori as first language: "Each programme must specify the level of English or Māori that is required for entry; decision to be made at programme level" (QMS-9), the norm is that programme design decision-makers are English speaking and design programmes for students who are proficient in English: "We don't totally cater for [ethnic diversity across the programme] and I don't know how we could, for different types of languages and so" (T-27). Like with the ethnicity normalcy, this confirms the mainstream centric culture underpinning the Aotearoa/New Zealand education system, which uses English as its mainstream language. Students whose first language is not English may receive special support, like "Students who use NZ sign language as their first language will be provided with an interpreter" (QMS-10). Student evaluation forms are in English, but exceptions are made for students who are learning English: "For English language programmes wording may be varied with approval from A&SS Director" (QMS-11). Similarly, students with te reo Māori as their preferred language are supported, however not without barriers:

> Summative assessments may be conducted in Te Reo Māori. Conditions and requirements may apply and these are documented in the QMS or programme regulations. If student wishes to answer assessments in Te Reo Māori this must be communicated to [the programme coordinator] within 4 weeks of start of course. (Statute-7)

Similarly, English as a second language can be a barrier to learning the subject knowledge, causing students to drop out, which reinforces the homogeneity in the programme:

> The English students don't have a problem because they speak well and don't have a problem with the language barrier, but we did have a Chinese student a few years ago who only made it through the first year and that was a real struggle. Her language barrier and the communication skills, she just struggled too much. We turned down a student this year because her English wasn't quite up to speed. For those students it counts them out a lot, so we haven't had to deal with that too much. (P-18)

Decision-makers who do not meet the norm try and make things work for students from the group they identify with:

> I try to adapt it all in te reo. [...] What I tend to do, like with verbs, negatives, subject types, and those things, I have to simplify all those and tell them what it is. [...] The students that I get have a type of language which is a Māori-English; it's not an English-English. [...] Māori have a different understanding of the English- English words. It's like talking past each other. (T-28)

7.5.4. Disability

With 'disability' I refer to students who do not meet the norm as far as physical or mental ability is concerned. These students are considered to be part of an "underprivileged or underrepresented group" (QMS-12), as referred to in Section 7.5.2, needing special support or attention. This is provided through an institutional disability support service, the purpose of which is "To ensure that students with a physical, intellectual or emotional disability are provided with appropriate support to assist them in achieving their educational needs and aspirations" (QMS-13), as well as in individual programmes:

> We've got a student this year who is a below the knee amputee so we've put systems in place that makes it easier for her to work in that as well. I think it's really important to accept everyone for who they are and do the best that you can to get your students through the programme. (T-29)

These examples suggest the influence of rights discourses of disability as reflected in the Education Amendment Act 1989 and the New Zealand Disability Strategy (Ministry of Social Development, 2001; Neilson, 2005).

This strategy speaks of equal opportunities for and inclusiveness of people with disabilities in education. However, it only seems to seek this in teaching approaches and support provided, leaving the major part of the curriculum mainstream-centric.

7.5.5. Gender

This theme was referred to by Programme A and D decision-makers primarily. Male students appear the norm in Programme A, for which over 40 references to students as 'guys' and 'he' were found, for example: "If a guy spends a week doing a job which could take a day there is a bit of an issue. He is obviously doing nothing or he might be struggling" (P-19). Female students appear the norm in Programme D: "They're all females which creates its own set of unique problems: the cattiness and bitchiness that goes on sometimes" (M-23). The latter norm seems safeguarded by implicit barriers for male students:

> There was some talk that there might be a male student, this was a few years ago. [...] The staff have never had that experience, so how would that protect other students' privacy because they practise on each other, [...] and how will we manage that. They eventually got around that, but no male student ever applied so there's no diversity in terms of gender. (M-24)

The normalcy of gender in these two programmes is most likely related to the industry these programmes are associated with, as Programme A prepares students for work in an industry with a traditionally male culture, while for programme D the industry culture is female-based.

7.5.6. Age

Only Programme A and D decision-makers referred to this theme. The evidence suggests that in both programmes young students are the norm. One example was the use of the word 'kids' to identify students: "We have kids who have just come from jail, kids sitting there on their way to jail, drug issues, pregnant females, everything that you could possibly imagine"(T-30). Another showed how students who did not meet this norm had to make themselves fit in:

> The percentage of Caucasian 16-24 year old females in that course must
> be about 90%. [...] And then you get the odd older one in there but they
> always appear very young at heart. They fit right back in, or they're
> forced to fit back in or they want to fit back in. (M-25)

There is insufficient evidence to provide an explanation for the normalcy of age in these cases.

7.6 Cultural Perspectives of Knowledge

'Cultural perspectives of knowledge' refer to the perspectives different cultures have on knowledge, and on which knowledge is valued (Merriam & Young, 2008). The data provide indications of normalcies that theoretical knowledge is universal, and that valued knowledge is formal, non-indigenous discipline or industry knowledge. Only a few references to this theme were found, but they elicit further thinking around the question: what and whose knowledge is of most value?

Some considered theoretical knowledge to be universal:

> When our graduates get jobs, they will deal with people from all over the
> world in one way or the other, so they should be interweaving that into
> the courses. I think the theory part is the same, but when they talk about:
> how does this apply in the world, they should be trying to use examples.
> (ID-55);

and valued knowledge to be equivalent to discipline or industry knowledge:

> Philosophy of the Programme – The basis of the programme and the
> links between the discipline and programme are required.   Explain what
> the programme is about and how it relates to theory and practice of the
> discipline and related areas. (QMS-14)

Informal and indigenous knowledge are seen as less valuable, not only for the purpose of the programme, but for society in general:

> Over the last couple of centuries and still in some cases it has been seen
> as a second-class, unimportant thing; this learning of Māori customs and
> practices having no value. By knowing who you really are, that in itself
> gives you confidence to go off and learn about other things. If you start
> learning about who you aren't first, well the evidence is out there now in
> schools, our people are learning things that still don't suit who they are
> and they don't do well. (T-31)

The valued discipline or industry culture continues to be reinforced, for example where a particular qualification is awarded because employers are familiar with it:

> A lot of employers, especially if they are older [... and] trained before education was all standardised, would look for a name that they knew and [this international qualification] would be one of the few names that every [person in the industry] would recognise. (T-32)

7.7   Understanding the Approaches to Non-normalcy

This chapter has identified seven themes within culture that are visible through the cultural lens. For each theme 'normalcies' were identified, which are summarised in Table XVIII. Suggestions were given on what may have influenced the establishment of these normalcies. Furthermore, examples were shown how these normalcies continue to be reinforced, as well as how non-normalcy is approached. This section aims to theorise the approaches to non-normalcy that were found in the data in terms of discourses of difference. The findings from the previous three chapters as well as some relevant research literature are used to support the explanations.

Table XVIII: Identified normalcies from the data

Normalcy of the organisational culture, including:
        Face-to-face teaching;
        The departments and teachers within the institution are autonomous; and,
        The institution follows the polytechnic tradition.

Normalcies related to ethnicity, language, gender, disability and age: Programme design decision-makers are English speaking 'Pākehā' who design programmes for English speaking, physically and mentally able Pākehā students. For some programmes normalcy includes a particular gender or age.

Normalcies related to cultural perspectives of knowledge
        Valued knowledge is formal, non-indigenous discipline or industry knowledge; and,
        Theoretical knowledge is universal.

Throughout Sections 7.4 to 7.6 a range of approaches was identified to people or situations that differ from the norm. These approaches can be

summarised as follows (the themes they were found in are shown between brackets):

- Students not meeting the norm are stereotyped, e.g. as Māori or as international student. The stereotype guides how the issue of the individual not meeting the norm is to be resolved (ethnicity); or,

- Students not meeting the norm are assumed to need special support (ethnicity, language, disability); or,

- Students not meeting the norm are expected to adapt (age); or,

- Students not meeting the norm are assumed to need special monitoring (ethnicity, disability); or,

- Barriers for students assist in safeguarding the norm (language, gender); or,

- It is assumed that someone else will deal with the cultural diversity of students (ethnicity); or,

- Special measures help to reduce barriers to access for potential students outside the norm (ethnicity); or,

- Special measures are expected to be taken to involve people who are not meeting the norm in design practice, often in the form of consultation (ethnicity); or,

- Decision-makers not meeting the norm try and make things work for the culture they identify with (ethnicity, language); or,

- A special department and programmes have been created where Māori culture is considered normal (ethnicity); or,

- Deliberate action is taken to nurture the diversity of teaching staff (ethnicity, gender, age); or,

- Normalcies are passively or actively reinforced (organisational culture, ethnicity, cultural perspectives of knowledge).

The last bullet point also seems to align with findings from Chapter 4 (Appendix III, Structure and Instruction, Programme and Course levels), where few statements or criteria were found indicating the importance of

considering student diversity in first language, physical disability, age or gender. This suggests reinforcement of the status quo.

To help understand the approaches I have synthesised relevant literature on cultural discourses in education to create a framework for analysing the discourses that underpin this list of approaches. This framework is shown in Table XIX. It describes four discourses as a sequence of increasing acceptance of difference, including their inherent approaches to difference as identified in the literature. The right hand column contains my classification of the above list of approaches towards these discourses. One discourse, referred to as 'Disregard', is my own addition. It emerged from the data and seemed useful to complete the picture.

The framework in Table XIX helps identify the discourses of difference that underpin programme design practice within the context of this study. The analysis shows that approaches to difference seem largely based on deficiency discourses, which do not acknowledge that knowledge is culturally contested. The only exception is the allowance of a separate department in which Māori culture is considered normal, which may be explained as an example of implementing biculturalism in New Zealand education (Openshaw, 2006).

The findings demonstrate consistency with the two dominant themes in the image of the teaching and learning lens, the production process and the guided tour. Chapter 5 explained how a programme-as-a-production-process requires students to fit a predefined 'entry mould', so they can be successfully produced into graduates and the institution can meet its responsibility to the industry. This metaphor therefore considers students who are different as deficient. While the production process metaphor puts up barriers for students to help safeguard the norm, a programme-as-a-guided-tour is responsible to the student-as-customer, and for this reason accepts students who do not meet the norm. In the guided tour metaphor, entry support and guidance help students make the decision whether the tour is for them (i.e. whether they fit the norm), but ultimately it is the student's decision to enrol. This process aligns with the taking of special measures to remove barriers for

Table XIX: Analysis framework to develop understanding of discourses of difference underpinning the data, based on a synthesis from (Adams, et al., 2000; Banks, 2010; Carlson, 1995; R. Nash, 1997; Rata, et al., 2001; Ross, 2009; Tisdell, 1995).

Discourse of Difference	Approach to difference	Approaches to difference identified in this chapter
Disregard: Difference is, consciously or unconsciously, denied or disregarded.	**Reinforcement**: • The norm is actively or passively reinforced.	• The organisational culture and discipline/industry knowledge as valued knowledge are actively or passively reinforced. • It is assumed that someone else will deal with the cultural diversity of students.
Deficiency and deprivation: The student or the group with which the student is associated is the problem (Adams, et al., 2000; R. Nash, 1997; Rata, et al., 2001; Ross, 2009). The programme does not have to change (Tisdell, 1995).	**Assimilation**: • Students must learn what is in the mainstream curriculum; knowledge is neutral (Adams, et al., 2000; Tisdell, 1995). • Special support is provided by specialised people to help students assimilate (Rata, et al., 2001). • Special funding is available to provide special support (Ross, 2009). • Special, often behaviouristic, programmes compensate for the cultural deprivation (Adams, et al., 2000). • Students unable to assimilate are excluded (Rata, et al., 2001).	• Students not meeting the norm are expected to adapt. • Students who do not meet the norm are assumed to need special support. • Barriers for students help safeguard the norm. • Students not meeting the norm are stereotyped. The stereotype guides how the issue of the individual not meeting the norm is to be resolved. • Students who do not meet the norm are assumed to need special monitoring. • Special measures help to reduce barriers to access for potential students outside the norm.

Discourse of Difference	Approach to difference	Approaches to difference identified in this chapter
Content deficiency: Difference is valued and acknowledged as a lack of cultural content in the curriculum (Adams, et al., 2000; Carlson, 1995; Tisdell, 1995).	**Cultural Additions:** • **Incidental attention** for difference in the programme, in the form of acknowledgement of cultural events or artefacts; Knowledge is neutral (Banks, 2010; Carlson, 1995). • **Addition of a course or unit** dealing with the underrepresented group: Cultural content is viewed from the perspective of mainstream scholars; no restructuring of the programme. (Adams, et al., 2000; Banks, 2010). Approach may be taken for underrepresented group only as majority is already catered for (Carlson, 1995).	
Celebration of diversity: Difference is valued for minority groups as well as the nation (Adams, et al., 2000). This may be extended to difference as an opportunity for critical reflection of own life circumstances towards social change (Tisdell, 1995).	• **Development of interpersonal communication:** To create understanding across cultures, without critical questioning of the programme, which is still neutral. It is assumed that people will learn more if they feel safe and well understood (Grant & Sleeter (1993), cited in Tisdell, 1995).	• Special measures are expected to be taken to involve people who are not meeting the norm in the design practice. • Deliberate action is taken to nurture diversity of teaching staff.
	• **Pluralist or transformation approach**: Acknowledgement that valued knowledge is political. Programmes and practices include perspectives of different groups. (Adams, et al., 2000; Banks, 2010; Rata, et al., 2001; Tisdell, 1995)	• Decision-makers who do not meet the norm try and make things work for the culture they identify with. • A special department and programmes have been created where Māori culture is considered normal.
	• **Social reconstruction**: Critical reflection of own life circumstances towards social change. Students are definers, construers and disseminators of knowledge. (Banks, 2010; Tisdell, 1995)	

access as identified in this chapter. Support and guidance systems are in place to support students who are different, but there is still a notion of deficiency, as the analysis in Table XIX illustrates. On the borderline between guided tour and production process are references to culture as a 'skill': "Suggested teaching strategies: [...] Strategies are realistic and flexible to meet learner needs; Strategies account for cultural and language skills of learner" (QMS-15); or an 'issue':

> We require all of our students to work to the same level and demonstrate the same skills. We do make allowances with support services around the side, the periphery, for physical learning disabilities and cultural issues and the tutors actively engage the students on a human level with these things. There is not an academic structure around that. (M-26)

While these references acknowledge difference as in the guided tour, they use production process language by referring to cultural difference as an 'issue' that needs to be - and can be – resolved, and to culture as something that is learnable by calling it a 'skill'.

None of the consumable product, production process or guided tour metaphors acknowledges knowledge as being culturally contested. Their collective dominance in the image of the teaching and learning lens indicates that bi- and multiculturalism are minor concerns in programme design practice within the context of this study. By contrast, the guided adventure is student-controlled and will be strongly guided by the cultural identity of the student, creating space for perspectives of knowledge that are different from the norm.

There also seem to be some connections between the findings in this chapter and the image of the rational lens. One was referred to earlier, where it was explained how the organisational system as a rationalisation can become organisational culture. Another connection is found in the relationship between cultural aspects of knowledge and the rationalisation of the New Zealand qualifications system. This system values formalised and measurable knowledge above non-formalised, non-measurable knowledge, as was concluded from the literature review in Section 2.4. Chapter 6 explained how the New Zealand qualifications system rationalises knowledge and as a

consequence normalises formalised and measurable knowledge. This is further supported by the production process metaphor in the image of the teaching and learning lens. This metaphor reflects the institution's strong responsibility to the industry-as-customer, and with it strengthens the normalcy of industry knowledge as valued knowledge. Furthermore, Chapter 6 suggested that a desire for sameness underpins some of the identified rationalisations. Sameness has its roots in the development of New Zealand as a nation, during which only one option existed for people to become part of the nation: to assimilate (Rata, et al., 2001). To a certain extent, this may explain the high number of deficiency discourses for and assimilation approaches towards difference identified in this chapter.

These connections with findings from previous chapters show that discourses of difference do not stand by themselves and are strongly interwoven with other discourses. In this sense the findings of this chapter are not as tidy as Table XIX may suggest.

7.8   The Image of the Cultural Lens

The image of the cultural lens shows programme design practice as a construction of people's considerations and silences that creates normalcies. These normalcies become visible in approaches to and tensions with situations that are not-normal. Underpinning discourses of difference decide whether normalcies are reinforced or challenged. The image of the cultural lens for the context of this study is visualised in Figure 24. It shows the themes representing the identified normalcies related to organisational culture, ethnicity, language, disability, gender, age and cultural perspectives of knowledge. The positioning of the themes relates to the discourses of difference that were found to guide the approaches to difference within these themes.

The findings have been shown to support and be supported by the images of the teaching and learning and rational lenses and by findings from the literature in Chapter 2. Appelbaum (2002) describes that one of the barriers to adopting pluralist approaches to difference is the re-creation by teachers

of their own educational experiences. The following chapter explores this idea, by describing and discussing how programme design practice is shaped by practitioners' personal life experiences.

**Celebration
of diversity**

Language

Gender

Ethnicity

Cultural
perspec-
tives of
knowledge

Age

Disability

Organisa-
tional
culture

Disregard

**Deficiency/
deprivation**
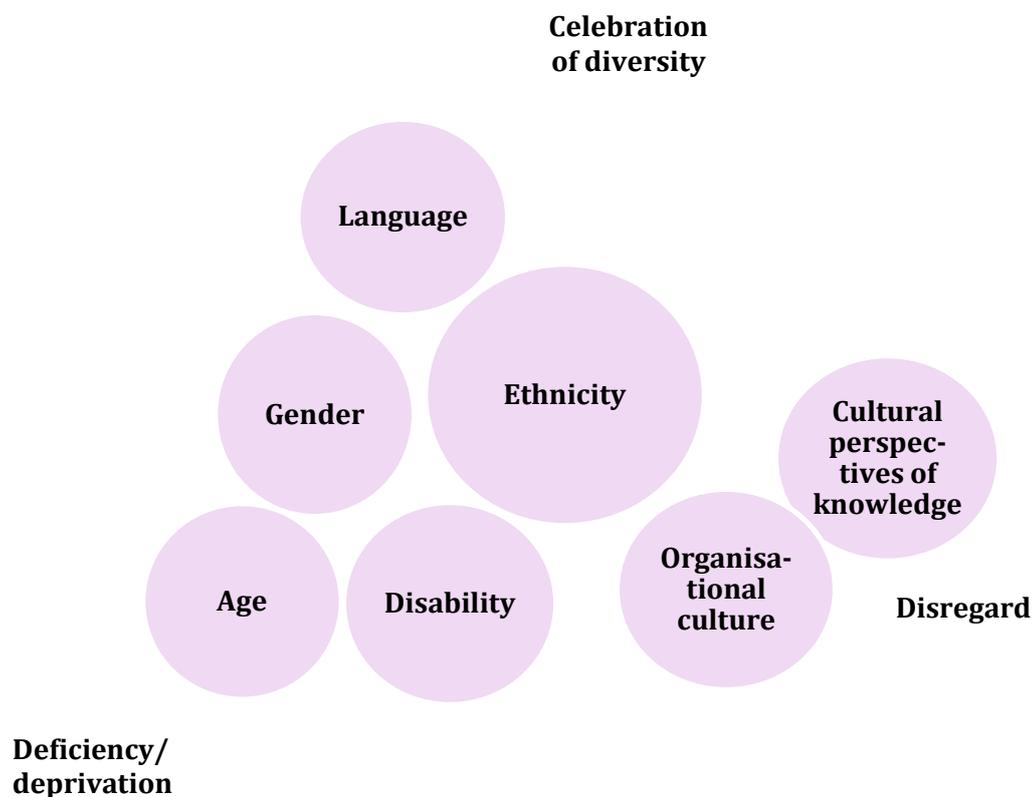
Figure 25: The image of programme design practice as seen through the cultural lens: seven cultural themes in relation to their underpinning discourses of difference. The closer they are positioned to a particular discourse, the more the approaches to difference in the theme were explained by this discourse.

CHAPTER 8:

PROGRAMME DESIGN PRACTICE OBSERVED THROUGH A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE LENS

8.1   Introduction

Many novice teachers tend to recreate their own educational experiences (Lankard Brown, 2003), possibly because these are the only experiences on which they can build their practice (Goodyear, Markauskaite, & Kali, 2009). From my own experience as a 'teacher trainer' at a university, this often results in the ongoing reinforcement of traditional, teacher-centred, approaches to teaching, for example through lectures and tutorials. Statements like the following suggest that not only teachers, but also programme design decision-makers use a similar approach in their practices:

> Assessment is one form of feedback to a student to encourage them to keep on learning, that they have achieved and it is a very tangible thing to get an assessment result. It is probably quite personal to people. It certainly was to me. (ID-56)

This particular example shows how a decision or consideration around the purpose of assessment is supported and confirmed by the decision-maker's personal experience as a student of receiving an assessment result. Many more examples like this one were identified in the data, showing the 'why's of programme design decision-makers' considerations and decisions through a lens of personal experience. To identify the image of this lens I looked for decision-makers' references to personal experiences that they used to justify or explain their practices. In interpreting these references I had to use some knowledge I had about the participants, particularly of other roles they perform in the institution, and of their professional history. For ethical reasons I have not used knowledge about participants related to their private lives.

The themes that emerged from the data when looking through the personal experience lens were the sources of the personal experiences that people drew on. Section 8.2 describes these sources, supported by examples from the data. Section 8.3 interprets the use of the sources to theorise the image of the personal experience lens. This image is presented in Section 8.4.

8.2 Sources of Personal Experience

8.2.1. The Sources

I found six sources of decision-makers' direct experience on which they seem to draw for their programme design considerations. These sources are:

- The role decision-makers were interviewed in;

- Other roles decision-makers have within the institution;

- Design practice in programmes other than those that are the subject of this study;

- Decision-makers' previous professional roles outside the institution;

- Decision-makers' previous lives as a student; and,

- Decision-makers' personal lives.

Table XX and Table XXI provide a quantitative overview of the references to each source, identified in the primary and the secondary data, respectively. I did not use the QMS or any programme documentation as data sources, as these are unable to refer to their own experiences. No references to the image of this lens were found in the observation meeting notes. The tables suggest that institutional decision-makers refer relatively more often to personal experiences to inform their practices than other decision-maker groups. The difference is particularly found in the much higher number of references to experiences from their personal lives and from other roles in the institution. On the other hand, none of them referred to the use of experiences from their role as institutional decision-makers. I will reflect in more detail on these figures in the following sections.

Table XX: Number of identified references to each source of experiences for Institutional and Programme A decision-makers.

Experiences from	Number of identified references to the type of experiences by:		Total of references
	Institutional decision-makers	Programme A decision-makers	
role within this study	-	15	15
other roles in the institution	28	-	28
design practice of other programmes	12	-	12
previous professional roles	15	10	25
lives as a student	3	5	8
personal lives	31	4	35
Total	89	34	123

Table XXI: Number of identified references to each source of experiences for Programme B-E decision-makers.

Experiences from	Number of identified references to the type of experiences by decision-makers of Programme:				Total of references
	B	C	D	E	
role within this study	5	2	3	2	12
other roles in the institution	1	-	-	-	1
design practice of other programmes	2	-	2	-	4
previous professional roles	3	-	3	3	9
lives as a student	-	7	5	-	12
personal lives	3	4	1	3	11
Total	14	13	14	8	49

8.2.2. Personal Experiences from Decision-makers' Roles within the Context of this Study

Within this study, people were interviewed from the perspective of a particular role they had in programme design practice: as institutional decision-maker, teacher, programme coordinator, manager, advisor or external representative. Reflection on personal experiences from their role appears to influence people's programme design practice. I identified 27 references to this source, 24 of which were made by people in a teacher or programme coordinator role. Some references showed how a teacher reflects on what and how they teach and adjusts this to help students to learn, for example:

> When I first arrived in the teaching profession I tended to over-teach my subject and talk on a level that was too high. As experience is gained, I tend to lower the bar a little bit so you think the student may or may not understand or you have a clear understanding of how the student learns, so then you adjust your teaching to that level. (T-33)

Reflection on personal experiences can also justify current practice and provide confidence to the teacher or the programme coordinator:

> We've found that students learn better in the classroom than they do in their own home environment, especially with things like science. If we were to put that material out there for them to learn they wouldn't learn it in my opinion as well as they do with the tutor in the classroom. Students have told us that as well, when they miss classes they feel quite stressful 'cause the notes they get are not as good and they can't understand the textbook and things like that. (P-20)

A third impact of reflection on personal experiences is where people learn from experiencing the consequences of not following the 'rules', illustrated by the following:

> As soon as [the assessment] has been published and given to the students we have to stick to it. [...] I had a situation where the students had a published weighting and it had been marked on another weighting. [I was told] to go back and remark the weightings both ways, to make sure that no student was disadvantaged. This shows how important it is that you do do that, and don't make it flexible, like I did. We had a similar issue [later on], but I picked it up in the post-moderation, but before the results went out [...]. (P-21)

8.2.3. Personal Experiences from Another Role within the Institution

Most decision-makers in this study had other roles within the institution than just the one they were interviewed for. For example, the institutional decision-makers were also faculty managers, or members of institutional support services. The programme decision-makers were also involved in design practice for other programmes or were line managers in the institution. The teachers often taught in other programmes as well. Personal experiences from these other roles were found to influence programme design practice within the context of this study. Of the 29 references found from this source, all but one were from institutional decision-makers who were also faculty managers.

Two kinds of personal experiences were identified. Firstly, institutional decision-makers used examples from their faculty as if this was the topic of discussion, while I interviewed them about their role as institutional decision-maker. For example, in decision-making about intentions:

> I am quite capable of looking at the course outcomes and say to myself: do [the students] really need that? But [as a faculty manager] you do get to know your staff a bit and some staff would like to think that their courses are the most important thing ever, and you have got to listen to their advice carefully, and you also get some staff who want to take anybody and everybody, and in that case if they say that what you do is say to yourself: well are we teaching at the right level? (ID-57);

in decision-making about development resources:

> Development resources we [in the faculty] negotiate on a case by case basis. Myself and some heads of schools have a curriculum development budget, for when we are developing a new programme that is going to take a lot of time and particularly if academic staff need to be freed up for the development (ID-58);

or, in decision-making about teaching staff:

> I [as a faculty manager] am looking for highly qualified staff right throughout, staffing qualifications and the like, and surely having the right people to do the right job. We have two part-timers within the faculty, because they are the two people who have the expertise to do the job. (ID-59)

Secondly, participants spoke from their role as institutional decision-makers, but they clarified themselves with examples from their personal experiences in the faculty context. The following example shows that a variety of teaching methods and a practical focus are important in decision-making at institutional level, because of the decision-maker's experience in her/his own faculty: "It is important to have a variety of teaching methods, because a lot of students, in our faculty's case, are good with their hands, so I think it is important that it has quite a strong practical focus" (ID-60). Another example is that quality assurance committees in the faculties ('Academic Committees') can be trusted to do a good job, because of the decision-maker's positive experience with her/his own faculty's committee:

> We don't get all the detail at Academic Board, so we trust the Academic Committees to be doing their jobs reasonably well. If other Academic Committees are doing what I think we do here [in our faculty] really well, then I think that whole process should be robust. (ID-61)

A third and final example shows that following the programme approval process in the QMS is considered a good thing to do, because of the decision-maker's own positive experiences with the process:

> In my first year, I did follow the process, and actually I think the process is better documented now than it used to be. And so I think you could actually follow that process, having not done it before, and get to the other end quite satisfactorily, because I think it is fairly well documented. (ID-62)

8.2.4. Personal Experiences from Design Practice of Other Programmes

The scope of this study was limited to design practice of provider certificate and diploma programmes. However, decision-makers appeared to use personal experiences from design practice of out-of-scope programmes in their considerations for the programmes within this scope. References to this source were few (16 in total). Most of these (11) were made by institutional decision-makers who were also faculty managers. While some participants referred to personal experiences in other certificate or diploma programmes

to guide their practice, most appeared to draw on their design experiences with degree programmes, like the following:

> There is lots of debate whether the credit size is right. For instance the [Bachelor of XYZ] had different sized courses in it and we had to re-do the whole curriculum, and it wasn't easy to fit things into 15 or 30 credits in terms of content areas because they were required content areas that you couldn't move out from. So trying to get a sensible mix of content into courses [...] that was quite difficult. [...] That is a three-year programme, as opposed to a certificate or diploma that would be shorter, but it is the same process. (ID-63)

A second kind of references relates to interventions by the management in the design practice of a particular programme as a result of negative experiences with other programmes. The following example explains how negative experiences in some programmes led to a rule in the Statute, thus having implications for design practice in all programmes within the institution:

> There are so many things in regulations that are set down that are already predetermined by academic statute. I'm trying to think if there was anything in [this programme handbook] that would be different, special to that programme, I don't think there is... [... *participant reads from the handbook*:] the student's performance or their participation in any offsite excursion. That's in the statute, because we've had one hell of a life experience with courses with practical components and that's why that got put in there. (M-27)

8.2.5. Personal Experiences from Previous Professional Roles outside the Institution

People also bring experiences from previous professional roles to their programme design practice. References to this source were not many, but they were found across all decision-maker groups, except for Programme C. Some references relate to experiences within a professional role in education, as a teacher:

> From my experience, if people know their own learning style, they actually know how they learn, they learn more effectively, and I have also found that the more teachers know about the individual learning styles, the more effective their teaching is, it is very important to me. (ID-64);

or in an educational management role: "I have seen [in a different institution] that sometimes they have ended up with a policy statement which became highly prescriptive, and will presumably quite quickly end up being non-compliant, because nobody does it that way" (ID-65). Other references indicated how people reflect and build on experiences from a professional role outside education. The following two examples show similar personal experiences, but with opposite effects on the practitioners' considerations: "I used to live in an organisation, the army, which relied on its rules and regulations. I had to abide exactly by these, chapter and verse. Now I don't have to do that, and I don't" (T-34), versus "My whole credibility of my job relies on following this, how I am viewed and how I am judged. But having a navy background that does not worry me, I am used to following instructions" (P-22). However, one person expressed caution in using previous professional experiences, as they may form barriers to change:

> It is easy for people like ourselves who have come through an industry and take that industry how it should be and will always be, but we have to make sure that we do not become a stick in the mud. (T-35)

8.2.6. Personal Experiences as a Student

A few decision-makers reflected on their own experiences as a student in their programme design considerations. References to this source were relatively few (20), and 17 of these were found amongst programme A, C and D decision-makers. Some of this could be explained considering that participants in these programmes generally studied a similar programme before they became educators. The following examples illustrate these experiences and how they influenced considerations on teaching methods:

> In my personal experiences my learning was always better if I had been pre-exposed to the problem. With the polytechnic system we are presenting the problem to the student, we are presenting the solution to the student, and that is their learning cycle, providing problem-solution-problem-solution and getting them to demonstrate along the way. I believe sometimes it is better to present them with problems for which there is no solution and either you develop a solution in your context at work, or that solution does not appear until you move from your work context into a formal learning context. (M-28);

on standards of performance in comparison to other institutions:

> All of our staff come from private schools 'cause that's all that was available so we know what the training was like. We've tried to replicate that plus more, because we're a longer programme. We've worked really hard at making sure we ensure those higher standards. (P-23);

and, on the desired learning experience for students:

> I enjoyed [primary school] so much I didn't want to miss school and if the bus left me I walked, me and my brothers walked to school, get there at ten o'clock but we didn't care 'cause I wanted to get to school, 'cause I loved it and school learning was fun. I see now it's not that fun so I try and bring that fun back, because I think it's lost with all the changes of the education system and how we teach these days. (T-34)

8.2.7. Personal Life Experiences

The final source decision-makers appeared to draw on for their programme design considerations is their personal life experiences. Acknowledging that people's life experiences shape their identity (Burr, 1995), this theme also includes references decision-makers made to their own identity. The majority – 31 out of 46 – of the references in this theme were from institutional decision-makers, particularly those who were also faculty managers.

Some participants gave examples how their personal life experiences influenced particular aspects of programme design considerations and decision-making. The following life story tells how the participant's experiences led to the consideration that students need time to work things out in a programme:

> I would never have thought that the skills I learned as a shearer would get me into work as a, first of all as a student, then as a tutor, and then as a section manager, and then as a dean. But I am still using some of the things I have learned from shearing that have become so helpful in this job. Shearing taught me to get out of bed in the morning, day in day out, starting at 5 o'clock in the morning, you worked until 5 o'clock at night. If I decided during the day to sit down for 10 minutes, that affected my income, that affected my status within the group that I worked with also. For every job that I have had, I have been able to apply a lot of the things, and I have never said this is the goal to me. I think that is not quite right. I think it was reinforced in terms of being punctual, giving it your best

> shot all day every day, regardless of how you felt. It was reinforced by having the role models to follow, and working with a group of older people as a young shearer. Without having the time to work things out we don't automatically know how to work for 9 hours, without pulling out after 7 hours and then becoming a burden to the rest of the group, because the rest of the group have already worked out how to work this long. That is why I think time to work things out is important, even if there is the goal there. (ID-66)

Another example shows a participant's experience within her/his own family and friends, which were extrapolated to young people or potential students in general:

> something that influenced me strongly was the attitude of our own daughter, and our son, and I learned quite a lot from them about what young people's needs are. I take notice of friends who've got potential learners. I meet other learners or potential learners all the time. (ID-67)

Other participants referred to what they identify with or what they are passionate about and how it motivates them for their practices. For example,

> I specifically and passionately enjoy exploring alternatives and different approaches and if I don't, if I'm not careful I will tend to get bogged in the detail and won't be able to take my hands off. When you have a good team, you can take your hands off. (M-29)

8.3 Understanding the Sources

The use of personal experiences emphasises the role of people's lives in programme design practice. Each person's life is different and each person's life experiences are different. This highlights the irrationality of decision-making (Flyvberg, 2001), and defies the calculated and planned approach to programme design as painted by the rational lens in Chapter 6, and promoted in many programme design approaches (Chapter 2). It also seems to pass over sociological constructs like language (Chapter 5) and culture (Chapter 7), by calling the attention to decision-makers' involvement as individuals, who are guided by their own unique experiences. The sources of the experiences that were identified from the data not only show *that* practitioners use personal experiences for their considerations, but also *which kinds* of personal experiences they use. Two questions arise then from this identification:

1) Why do people use personal experiences to guide their practices? and,
2) Why do they draw on the sources of personal experiences identified in this chapter?

These questions will guide the theorising of the sources of personal experience that were identified in this chapter.

A literature search into the role of personal experiences in decision-making provided various pointers to possible answers, which appeared not to be unrelated. A starting point is that practical situations tend to be messy and indeterminate (Schön, 1983), and cannot be dealt with by technical rationality only. The use of personal experience and informal sources in these situations is essential, as decision-making in organisational contexts is often too complex, and there are never enough formal data available (Schmidtlein, 2004). According to these literature sources, the way in which personal experience is used seems to be, at least partially, dependent on a person's expertise with the situation under consideration.

Flyvberg (2001) describes how novices in a particular field, in this case programme design, tend to rely on objective rules that can be generalised to all similar situations. The rational lens in Chapter 6 has highlighted examples of these rules and has explained how they provide confidence and security to decision-makers. As people develop their expertise they start using experiences from situations they consider sufficiently similar and transfer these to the situation they need to decide on (Flyvberg, 2001). Confirmation of this was found in Section 8.2.3, which showed that particularly institutional decision-makers who were also faculty managers referred to experiences from this other role. This may be understood when considering that the faculty context is probably one of the few comparable educational contexts for these people to draw on for their programme design decision-making at institutional level. Similarly, Section 8.2.4 described how institutional decision-makers also used experiences from other, deemed similar, programmes to inform their practice in the programmes within the scope of this study. Other experiences that seemed to show sufficient

similarity to the programme design situation under consideration were those from being a student (Section 8.2.6) and from being human (Section 8.2.7). The further people develop their professional expertise, the more they use reflection on their experiences to inform their practice (Flyvberg, 2001). Examples of this reflective practice are found in Section 8.2.2. Almost all examples in this section came from decision-makers in a teacher or programme coordinator role. A possible explanation is that these people have to negotiate the programme almost on a daily basis, which has over time provided them with a lot of expertise on which to build. The experiences from other professional roles in Section 8.2.5 were used in a similar reflective sense. Simultaneously, the process of reflecting on their experiences for making decisions helps people to develop their professional expertise even further (Schön, 1987). These higher levels of expertise resonate with discourses of intuition and wisdom (e.g. Dane & Pratt, 2007; Rowley & Slack, 2009), explaining how highly experienced people use their experiences to make decisions in complex situations. However, ultimately decision-making becomes intuitive, implying that personal experiences are used but may not be expressed explicitly and may therefore not show up in the data. The influence of passion on decision-making, which was referred to in Section 8.2.7, cannot be explained with the above, but is acknowledged in the literature by Mathias (2009).

8.4   The Image of the Personal Experience Lens

The image of the personal experience lens shows programme design practice as a construction of people's personal experiences. While it could be argued that people's experiences are grounded in ideological discourses in society, no direct evidence for this was found in the image of this lens. Instead, this lens shows an irrationality in programme design practice, and the influence of decision-makers as individuals, who are guided by their own unique experiences. The use of these experiences can be largely understood as steps on a continuum of their development of expertise in programme design. The

image of the personal experience lens for the context of this study is visualised in Figure 26. It shows the sources of personal experience that participants appeared to draw on. The sources are positioned to show that the experiences come from all aspects of people's lives. Experiences from the role in which people were interviewed are in the centre, other sources of experiences within the institution are close to the centre and sources outside the institution are positioned furthest away from the centre.
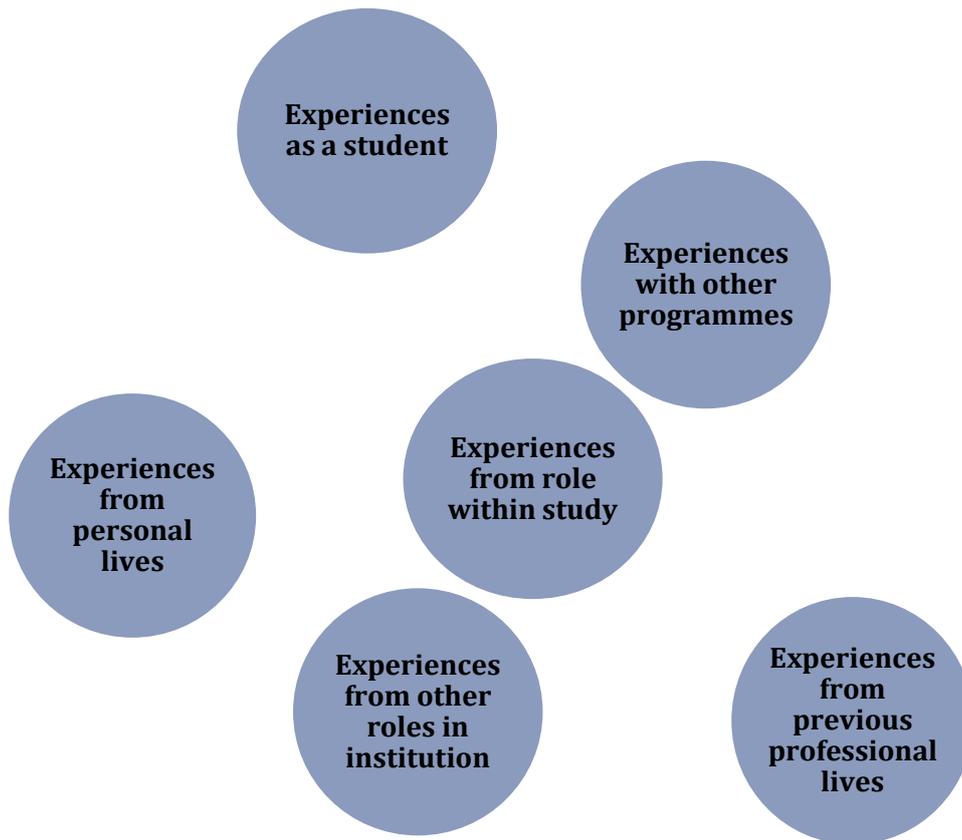
Figure 26: The image of programme design practice as seen through the personal experience lens: Three 'bands' of sources of personal experiences to show that the experiences come from all aspects of people's lives.

CHAPTER 9:
PROGRAMME DESIGN PRACTICE OBSERVED THROUGH AN ETHICAL LENS

9.1   Introduction

The suggestion that ethical motives inform decisions about programmes was given by Sork (1997, 2001; Sork & Newman, 2004), referred to in Chapter 2, who included an ethical domain in his proposed programme planning framework. He was inspired by the work of Cervero and Wilson (1994, 2001), also referred to in Chapter 2, who argued that the question "to whom is the programme planner morally responsible" is of concern in programme design practice. Sork (2001) expressed his disappointment with the lack of attention to questions of ethics and morality in programme planning discussions. He noted, however, that "It is *possible* to plan programmes without ever addressing questions in the ethical domain, but it is *impossible* to plan programmes without making decisions and taking actions that have ethical implications" (Sork, 2001, p. 186, italics in original). This would suggest that once a programme is being taught, it should be possible to identify some of those ethical implications. As an example, possible ethical decisions to be made by teachers with respect to students are: when to adhere to regulations; how to deal with punishment for misconduct; or, how to treat students equally (Macfarlane, 2001).

This chapter shows that the 'why's of programme design decision-makers' considerations and decisions for this case study can be described in terms of ethics and morality. It confirms that decision-makers address questions in the ethical domain, although they may not necessarily raise these publicly. It also shows that many decisions have ethical implications.

My interpretation of 'ethical' in this chapter needs some clarification. Ethics can be explained as a concern with what it means to be a good person, and

with social rules that guide people's behaviour, particularly around what is right and wrong (Mendonca & Kanungo, 2006; Weston, 2009). More specifically, I have used the Princeton University WordNet® dictionary definition of 'ethics' as "the principles of right and wrong that are accepted by an individual or a social group"(WordNet, n.d.). I looked for evidence in the data indicating how decision-makers used their sense of fairness, integrity, professional and/or moral responsibility (Rowson, 2006; Stefkovich & O'Brien, 2004) in considering programme design decisions. I have referred to professional and moral responsibility explicitly here, using the definitions of professional and moral as provided by the same dictionary: Professional = "characteristic of or befitting a profession or one engaged in a profession"; and, Moral = "conforming to standards of behavior and character based on principles of right and wrong" (WordNet, n.d.). This distinguishes professional and moral from political responsibilities, which can be defined as: "responsibilities relating to views about social relationships involving authority or power" (WordNet, n.d.). Acting upon political, including legal, responsibilities may not necessarily be right or wrong from a moral perspective (Mendonca & Kanungo, 2006). Political responsibilities play an important part in this study, but they become visible through the social-political lens, discussed in Chapter 11.

Section 9.2 describes the themes that were identified during analysis of the ethical considerations. Subsequently, Section 9.3 theorises the themes by explaining them in terms of ethical frameworks and ideological discourses. Section 9.4 finishes this chapter with a description of the image of the ethical lens.

9.2   Themes Observed through the Ethical Lens

Four groups in society appeared to be the concern of ethical considerations identified from the data: students, the industry, society as a whole, and the institution including its members. Table XXII and Table XXIII show the number of identified references to each group in the primary and the secondary data, respectively. The figures suggest that the biggest group of

ethical concern is students, and to a lesser extent industry and the institution. References to ethical considerations regarding society are few, but not non-existent. However, none were found in either the documents or the meeting observation notes. The groups found in the primary data are confirmed by the secondary data. The absence of references to industry for Programme C is understandable as there is no industry associated with this programme. To explore the references further, I looked for themes in the ethical considerations within each group. The following subsections describe these themes in more detail. All themes are worthwhile noting for the purpose of developing an understanding of the image of the ethical lens. However, for readability reasons, quotes from the data to support the themes have only been included if a theme or sub-theme was referred to relatively frequently.

Table XXII: Number of identified references to ethical considerations regarding the groups in society that were the focus of these considerations, for each group of primary data sources. QMS = Academic Statute or QMS; ProgDocA = Programme A documentation; and, Obs = meeting observation notes.

Group in society	Number of identified references to each group by:			Total of references
	Institutional decision-makers	Programme A decision-makers	in QMS, ProgDocA, or Obs	
Students	46	27	15 (QMS) 1 (Obs) 1 (ProgDocA)	90
Industry	4	27	2 (Obs)	33
Society	6	5	-	11
Institution	9	10	2 (QMS) 1 (Obs) 1 (ProgDocA)	23
Total	65	69	17 (QMS) 4 (Obs) 2 (ProgDocA)	157

Table XXIII: Number of identified references to ethical considerations regarding the groups in society that were the focus of these considerations, for each group of secondary data sources.

	Number of identified references to each group for Programme:				
Group in society	B	C	D	E	Total of references
Students	12	12	13	7	44
Industry	6	-	9	4	19
Society	2	2	1	1	6
Institution	1	1	5	2	9
Total	21	15	28	14	78

9.2.1. Ethical Commitments to Students

- *Ethical considerations regarding student access*

Ethical considerations regarding student access include what is right or wrong in giving students access to education or to programmes or courses, under which conditions and who should be responsible for the consequences. Four interrelated sub-themes were identified within the student access theme. The sub-themes are shown in Figure 27, including the number of identified references to each.

The horizontal axis in Figure 27 represents the perceived need to give students information and guidance on the expectations of a programme or course. The vertical axis represents who is expected to carry responsibility for the consequences of the student enrolling in the programme or course. One view, shown in the top left quadrant, is that everyone should be able to enrol if they wish. If they do so, they are expected to deal with the consequences. The following example falls within this quadrant:

> one of the reasons for open entry is the issue of accessibility to allow as many students to attempt a programme, and eventually find out for themselves whether they are capable of pursuing further education. Education is a right for the individual. All those who seek to enter into a programme they should be given an opportunity. (ID-68)

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                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │  Student is expected to │
                    │   carry the consequences│
                    │   of enrolling in the   │
                    │    programme/course     │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
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Student is expected to carry the consequences of enrolling in the programme/course

Everyone should be able to enrol; the student is expected to carry the consequences of his/her enrolment (8 references)

Everyone should be able to enrol; the institution should be responsible for providing information and guidance to help students with the decision; the student is expected to carry the consequences of his/her enrolment (9 references).

Not enforced

Information and guidance to express expectations

Enforced

No criteria or guidance

Everyone should be able to enrol; the institution is expected to carry the consequences of the student's enrolment and therefore provides services to support students during their studies (14 references).

The institution is expected to carry the consequences of the student's enrolment; therefore students are selected at the start (17 references).

Institution is expected to carry the consequences of accepting the students on the programme/course

Figure 27: Four sub-themes representing ethical considerations regarding student access, including the number of identified references per sub-theme.

The opposite is shown in the bottom right quadrant. Here the institution is expected to carry the consequences of the student's enrolment, and therefore considers it warranted to select who can and cannot enrol. Students are given information about and guidance on the expectations in the programme, which are applied as entry criteria. This is illustrated by the following:

> We want to make sure that entry requirements don't set an unnecessarily high bar, but at the same time that they don't set students up to fail. And they should be appropriate if there are [...] issues of public

safety, confidentiality, trustworthiness of the student, you need to match those. (M-30)

As in this quote, entry criteria tended to be defended as an assurance that students are able to cope with the study, and not set up to fail. However, various references in this quadrant, including the one just quoted, express caution by stating that entry criteria must be 'genuine' or 'justifiable', and not 'unnecessary'. No explicit indication was found when criteria or barriers are considered to be unnecessary, other than a few references to potential barriers being enrolment fees or cost of books.

Between the two opposites, the third sub-theme in the bottom left quadrant states that entry should be open to anyone, but the institution is expected to carry the consequences of the student's enrolment and therefore creates support mechanisms to ensure these consequences are positive. This is illustrated by: "The purpose of [guidance and support] services is to ensure: steps are taken to identify and provide support for individual and specific groups of students who may need special consideration to achieve their academic potential" (QMS-16). Support referred to in the data includes: support for students with learning difficulties or disabilities, Māori students, women, students with English as a second language and international students; careers counselling; financial support through student loans and allowances; help from the teachers; and, consideration about students having to purchase resources.

In the fourth sub-theme, in the top right quadrant, guidance is given at the start of the programme in the form of information about the programme and what will be expected of the student. Students can decide whether they wish to enrol, and if they do, they carry the consequences of this decision. An example of this sub-theme is:

> it is about being able to provide enough flexibility in the programme that everybody can make the best of it. If they have that information upfront, they can make the determination whether they will be able to hopefully succeed in the programme. (ID-69)

- ***Students should get a worthwhile outcome from the programme***

Twenty-four occasions were identified in the data where decision-makers referred to their responsibility to assist students in achieving worthwhile outcomes. Two meanings of worthwhile outcomes were found.

The first meaning, with 10 identified references, is having somewhere to progress to after finishing the programme, particularly employment:

> We need to assess this course because the unit standard says we have to, and because it is crucial to get into the industry. You have to know when they leave that they can do it. How else would you know, you have to test them. It is our responsibility to the students. (T-36)

The second meaning of a worthwhile outcome, found in 11 references, is achieving something, particularly a qualification:

> [The qualification] is important to them because a lot of them like to know they've got a piece of paper saying they can do something, that's almost a pride thing, that they've done it, they've finished. A lot of them are people who have never finished anything; they've dropped out of school. (P-24)

If students are unlikely to achieve the qualification that the programme leads to, new qualifications can be created to ensure that this worthwhile outcome is still achieved:

> We need to also consider how exit awards and embedded qualifications have become more important, to cater for people whose situation has changed while studying which means that they need to exit earlier than what they thought. We should be able to recognise the work they have done and exit awards seem to be an appropriate avenue. (ID-70)

Three references left the interpretation of a worthwhile outcome open, by only referring to it as being good for the student.

- ***Students should be assisted during the learning process***

A third ethical commitment to students, with 24 references, is to assist in the student's learning process. One type of assistance, referred to 17 times, is about building caring relationships with the students and doing one's best to help them learn:

> There's a saying that I live by or I try to live by that goes: 'No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care'. I don't know too many tutors around here go around sprouting that they love their

students, but I genuinely love my students for who they are and who they could be, who they were. When they see that they tend to be open to a lot of whatever you might be delivering at the time. (T-37)

A second type of assistance, with seven references, is adapting to the perceived needs and wants of the student:

If we have a high employment situation, people have very little time, and are in the workforce. If they want to study, they are juggling a whole lot of other things at the same time. If we are inflexible and rigid it is harder for students to learn. (ID-71)

- ***Students should be protected from potential harm***

Twenty-one concerns were found for potentially negative consequences, or harm, to students as a result of their enrolment in the programme. Potential harm is that students may not be able to complete the programme (nine references), for example due to workload pressures: "You also need to look at the student welfare. If you are demanding to do 15 credits in 4 weeks, it will put a lot of pressure on the student" (ID-72). Other types of potential harm were only found in the primary data. One, with five references, is that students might miss out on some knowledge that they would later need while working in the industry:

Here [in the course descriptor] it says to do it properly you must talk about [x, y and z]. To miss any of those out you are saying they don't need it anymore, but who am I to make that judgment. I still rather put it all in, and if they find they don't need it down the track, that is fine. But if they do need it and they have not had tuition you are doing them a disservice. (T-38)

Other forms of harm are the potential abuse of students' private information by others (three references), having to be in formal education for longer than needed (two references), and potentially missing out on education because of exclusion or the lack of suitable programmes (two references).

- ***Students should have a voice***

Nine references indicated that students should have a voice, for two very different reasons. The first reason is that students are paying customers (four references), for example:

> [evaluation] is one formal way for them telling us what they think. And they have to pay upfront. The only other ways they can tell us is by withdrawal, and not re-enrol, which is a blunt instrument, and when they are doing that you don't know the rationale. With evaluations they can give some feedback. (ID-73)

Alternatively, students should have a voice because students and teachers can learn from and support each other in a trusting relationship (five references): "[evaluations] are great because they give students an opportunity to have a say, and to have an action plan to deal with any concerns hopefully helps towards reaffirmation of trust and obligation to students" (ID-74).

- ***Students should be treated fairly***

Only a few references were found to considerations around fair treatment of students, but two distinct sub-themes expressed different meanings of the word 'fair'. The first meaning, with three references, relates to treating students according to who they are and the kind of programme they are studying, which may imply, for example, that not all students have to complete exactly the same assessments to pass a course:

> I believe that we need to respect the weightings of the assessments in the course descriptors, just out of fairness to the students, so we don't over-bias or over-value a single assessment activity. Students have to have the ability to destroy one assessment activity and still pass the course. (M-31)

The second meaning of 'fair', with four references, is that every student must be treated the same, based on pre-defined standards or regulations:

> You need to be able to refer to your regulations. I don't like to run a programme on opinion or anything like that. If it's there for that person it has to be fair for that person so we refer to the programme handbook all the time for our students. It is important to treat every student the same and to be able to refer to it. (P-25)

One reference incorporated the word 'fairness', but its meaning was left open for interpretation.

9.2.2. Professional Responsibility towards the Industry

All 52 references to professional responsibility to the industry appeared to relate to meeting the needs of the industry. The following three examples from the data illustrate this kind of responsibility:

> [the programme changes] came out of a brainstorm about what is best for industry. (Obs-2)

> We're asking [the industry] to employ our graduates so we need to know that our graduates are actually meeting their needs. I don't have a problem with that, I think the more advice we get the better off we are at making decisions. (M-32)

> The other one is future employers we're sending [students] out to. The first couple of years I used to tear my hair out because [students] would go out and I'd go and visit and sometimes I'd get [employers] saying well they turned up for two days and they never came back again, and I'm thinking why? It's so frustrating. When I get a good report it's wonderful, but I feel personally very let down when they don't do well. (P-26)

9.2.3. Responsibilities towards Society

Professional or moral responsibilities to society as a whole were identified in two distinct areas: accountability to society and care for society. Within each two sub-themes were found.

- *Accountability to society*

Seven references indicated responsibility to the public as customers of the industry, for example: "this topic is very important to be incorporated and it will become more important as people have to dig deeper into their wallets for fuel" (T-39). This sub-theme suggests some connection with the responsibility to the industry that was identified in the previous section. A second form of accountability, identified in five references, was to the public as funders of education, for example: "is it legitimate: is this what a publicly funded crown institution should be spending time and energy on" (ID-75).

- *Care for society*

Two comments referred to the responsibility to meet the needs of minority groups in society, while three others expressed responsibility to help the country educate its people. An example is:

> I think it is important for a nation to educate its people and to take a very active role in that and not simply say that it's up to them to educate themselves. I think it's the provision of the resource that can enable it. It blows me away to be honest that we have so much available here in New Zealand that is not actually valued by the learner, the opportunities that others in the world do not have. (M-33)

9.2.4. Ethical Commitments to the Institution and its Members

Various decision-makers referred to ethical commitments to the institution or its members, particularly teachers. The 32 references showed four themes. The main theme, supported by 11 references, relates to protecting teachers in the institution from potential harm, where the type of harm mostly referred to was being overloaded with work: "my lecturers are all on a full workload, and anything extra is extra, so something else has to go in order for them to do it" (ID-76). Other types of harm were having to carry the negative consequences of a colleague's actions, and being criticised by students without having a defence, for example in anonymous evaluation questionnaires.

Ten references could be summarised as protecting the ongoing credibility and good name of the institution against critical attacks from the outside world. An example is:

> Accreditation is really important. That we are meeting our statutory obligations, in terms of assessing according to a course prescription, and not sticking outside that. [...] That is important to retain our credibility, to keep up our accreditation, so the students will come. If we don't, if we allow standards to slip in that area, we will get a reputation for being shoddy. (P-27)

A third theme, with seven references, is more inward focused, where people demonstrate responsible behaviour to ensure the continued well-being of the institution as a community. For example, "I hate to think we are going down a pathway that is not the philosophy of [the institution]" (T-40). Finally, four

references indicated commitment to respecting staff professionalism and autonomy.

9.3   Understanding the Themes

A closer examination of the themes and sub-themes identified in the previous section reveals three categories that the themes could be grouped under. The categorisation is shown in Table XXIV. The (sub-)themes in the left hand column express discourses of outcomes, free choice, standards and accountability. The (sub-)themes in the middle column align with discourses of care, trust, relationships, and belonging to a community. The right hand column consists of (sub-)themes that were difficult to place in any of the two other categories, because they could be interpreted either way. I have coded each (sub-)theme to make it easier to refer to them, as there are so many. The following sections will explain the categories, suggesting that the themes can be theorised in terms of a combined utilitarian/communitarian ethical framework.

Table XXIV: Categorisation of identified themes and sub-themes of ethical commitments (frequencies of identified references between brackets). Each (sub-)theme has been coded for ease of referencing.

(Sub-)Themes representing discourses of outcomes, free choice, accountability, standards	(Sub-)Themes representing discourses of care, trust, relationships, belonging	(Sub-)Themes that did not easily fit under the two categories
Students	*Students*	*Students*
S-U1: Everyone should be able to enrol; the student is expected to carry the consequences of his/her enrolment. (8)	S-C1: Student assistance involves building caring relationships with the students and doing one's best to help them learn (17)	S-M1: Everyone should be able to enrol; the institution is expected to carry the consequences of the student's enrolment and therefore provides services to support students during their studies. (14)
S-U2: A worthwhile outcome is having somewhere to progress to, particularly employment (10)	S-C2: Students should be protected from potentially missing out on education (2)	S-M2: Everyone should be able to enrol; the institution should be responsible for providing information and guidance to help students with the decision; the student is expected to carry the consequences of his/her enrolment. (9)
S-U3: A worthwhile outcome is achieving something, particularly a qualification (11)	S-C3: Students should have a voice because students and teachers can learn from and help each other in a trusting relationship (5)	S-M3: The institution is expected to carry the consequences of the student's enrolment; therefore students are selected at the start. (17)
S-U4: Student assistance involves adapting to students' needs and wants (7)	S-C4: Students should be treated fairly according to who they are (3)	S-M4: A worthwhile outcome is something that is good for the student (3)
S-U5: Students should be protected from not being able to achieve the outcomes of the programme. (9)	*Society*	S-M5: Students should be protected from potentially missing out on essential knowledge (5)
S-U6: Students should be protected from potential abuse of private information (3)	Soc-C1: The institution should care for society by meeting the needs of minority groups (2)	S-M6: Students should be treated fairly (1)

(Sub-)Themes representing discourses of outcomes, free choice, accountability, standards	(Sub-)Themes representing discourses of care, trust, relationships, belonging	(Sub-)Themes that did not easily fit under the two categories
S-U7: Students should be protected from having to be in education for longer than needed (2)	Soc-C2: The institution should care for society by helping the country educate its people (3)	*Industry*
S-U8: Students should have a voice because they are paying customers (4)	*Institution and its members*	Ind-M1: The needs of the industry should be met (52)
S-U9: All students should be treated according to the same standards (4)	I-C1: The institution's ongoing credibility and good name should be protected (10)	*Society*
Society	I-C2: The continued well-being of the institution should be cared for (7)	Soc-M1: The institution should be accountable to the public as customers of the industry (7)
Soc-U1: The institution should be accountable to the public as funders of education (5)	I-C3: Teachers should be protected from potential harm (11)	
	I-C4: Staff professionalism and autonomy should be respected (4)	

9.3.1. Ethical Commitments in a Utilitarian Framework

The (sub-)themes in the left hand column of Table XXIV seem to fit into the ethical framework of utilitarianism. Utilitarianism is inherent to liberalist and neo-liberalist discourses (Olssen, et al., 2004), in which free choice of the individual is of utmost importance. Utilitarianism defines the 'good' as outcomes that bring the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people (Mendonca & Kanungo, 2006; Olssen, et al., 2004; Robinson & Garratt, 1998). As individual choosers, people will choose the options that will fulfil their preferences and desires, or hurt the least. The sum of the individual 'happinesses' thus created defines the 'good' of an action. This desire for 'happiness' for all can be seen in the following quote from the data:

> A strong programme is that graduates are going out and getting jobs, feedback we get from industry is that the programme is good, it is meeting the needs of industry, that we have laid the foundation in graduates for further learning, students themselves have had a good experience with [the institution] in their learning and the tutoring, and the staff are positive about the programme and their graduates. And when that happens I am happy to spend my time on it to support it. (M-34)

In a utilitarian framework, programmes would be designed that are expected to appeal to the greatest number of people. Optimal happiness can be achieved by satisfying as many people in society as possible. The identified (sub-)themes in the left hand column of Table XXIV paint a picture in which the main group to be satisfied is the students. Programmes are designed to appeal to the greatest number of students. Students have free choice which programme they wish to study according to their own preferences. Whilst students are enrolled, the institution adapts to the students' needs and wants. Furthermore, all students are treated according to the same standards, so no-one should feel disadvantaged and therefore dissatisfied.

Another group to be satisfied within this utilitarian picture is all other members of society. The worthwhile outcomes of achieving a qualification or gaining employment make society happy, as the public as funders of education sees some tangible return on their investment. Simultaneously

these outcomes are expected to make students happy as well, as students will either become more marketable, or can get a job to which they have aspired.

9.3.2. Ethical Commitments in a Communitarian Framework

The middle column in Table XXIV can be understood within a framework of communitarianism. Although generally represented as a philosophical rather than an ethical framework, communitarianism views people as social beings, who have moral and professional commitments to the communities they belong to (Arthur, 1998; Olssen, et al., 2004). Ethics of solidarity and social responsibility are important aspects of communitarian discourses (Arthur, 1998). One type of community that emerged strongly from the data is the institution. Decision-makers feel committed to care for the other members of this community, for example teachers. The identified themes also suggest that students are considered to be members of this community. Fairness within this framework implies that disadvantaged members may be given more care and support than others. Decision-makers protect their community from any potential harm by ensuring that it looks good to the outside world. A second community which was referred to, but only sporadically, is society. As members of society decision-makers consider themselves morally responsible to care for particularly their disadvantaged fellow citizens.

9.3.3. Ethical Commitments Balancing between a Utilitarian and a Communitarian Framework

Ethical decisions may be able to be explained differently in different frameworks (Augoustinos, Tuffin, & Every, 2005; Olssen, et al., 2004). For example, the word 'fair' can be explained in different ways, as was shown in Section 9.2.1. Likewise, the (sub-)themes in the right hand column of Table XXIV can be understood in either a utilitarian or a communitarian framework. One of these themes is meeting the needs of specific industries. In terms of a utilitarian ethic, the happiness for the greatest number of

people could be further increased by including the industry as people who need to be satisfied. From a communitarian perspective however, decision-makers may have a true sense of belonging and therefore professional responsibility to their industry as a community. Particularly in vocational programmes, many teachers have worked in the industry and still experience this professional commitment, as the following illustrates: "We are fortunate, because our industry regards us as a part of their industry, not as a college. We have all worked in that same industry alongside these guys, so we know them all" (T7). The utilitarian and communitarian explanations support and reinforce each other. The professional commitment of the decision-makers to the industry strengthens the optimisation of happiness for as many people as possible. Reversely, the focus on programmes that have qualifications and employment as worthwhile outcomes (Sub-themes S-U2 and S-U3 in Table XXIV) help the decision-makers continue to do good for 'their' industry community. Similarly, the concern that students could miss out on knowledge that they would later need while working in the industry (Sub-theme S-M5 in Table XXIV) could be explained as professional commitment to both the industry and students, but also as contributing to the optimisation of the happiness of the industry.

Except for one reference to fairness, which was discussed previously, the remaining three (sub-)themes in the right hand column of Table XXIV all relate to student access. From a utilitarian perspective, all students have free choice whether to enrol in a programme. However, the three dominant metaphors for a programme identified through the teaching and learning lens in Chapter 5, the production process, the guided tour and the consumable product, indicate that programmes are considered to be designed before a student enrols and without knowing who those enrolling students will be. If one has to design a programme that must make as many students as possible happy, without knowing who those students will be, the only option is to design a programme for the mainstream and likely dominant groups in society. Although all potential students have free choice to enrol in these programmes, they are potentially excluded if the programme does not

align with their cultural identity or if they have different worthwhile outcomes in mind. The following quote illustrates this:

> Students who do not wish to go into the industry are an issue. (...) We don't have a good means of accommodating those students, because the programme's primary aim is provision for industry. For those (...) students we hopefully provide a good learning experience and outcomes, but we are not accommodating a lifestyle choice in that programme. (M-35)

These students can adapt, or they may withdraw from the programme. The institution's responses to this are found in the three themes on student access in the right hand column of Table XXIV. I have tried to make sense of these responses by creating the following explanation as a complex interplay between utilitarian and communitarian discourses:

The institution realises that the risk of students withdrawing may reduce the happiness of the institution's customers, because these students will not be able to achieve the worthwhile outcomes (utilitarian). The institution also wishes to reduce any harm done to students in terms of having to leave the institutional community (communitarian). The data indicate two responses from the institution to these risks. Firstly, they put support structures and services in place to help students adapt to the programme, because it is important that the student achieves the worthwhile outcomes (utilitarian). The support given to students can be different for different students according to their individual needs (communitarian). An observation here is that some support is systematised through the QMS, implying that support is given within limits and according to standards that are the same for everyone (utilitarian). A second response to the risks is the creation of selection mechanisms before students enrol. One form of selection is that students are given detailed information and guidance before enrolment so they can make an informed decision whether the programme suits their needs and whether they should enrol or not (communitarian). Enrolment is however still the student's free choice (utilitarian). In a second form the institution selects students on the basis of entry criteria, which could be interpreted as an open and honest expression to future students about expectations of the programme, to protect them from failure. Failure could mean dissatisfaction

(utilitarian) as well as having to leave the community (communitarian). Entry criteria also potentially exclude students. The data presented in Section 9.2.1 illustrate some of the dilemmas between entry criteria and free choice, which may result in entry requirements being as open as possible, and therefore potentially losing their purpose.

Another option for the institution to avoid potential student withdrawals would be to create more programmes, so students have more to choose from and are more likely to find something that suits them. This could have contributed to the thousands of qualifications/programmes on the Register (NZQA, 2006a). An important issue for consideration within this option would be viability of programmes, which is an aspect that is enlarged on when observing programme design practice through a business lens which is described in Chapter 10.

9.3.4. Differences between Decision-maker Groups

To study differences between decision-maker groups I re-counted the references per decision-maker group for each column of Table XXIV, which I have renamed as utilitarian, communitarian and mixed themes, respectively. The results are presented in Table XXV. Percentages have not been included for the Programme A documentation and the observation notes, due to the low number of references. The table shows that every decision-maker group seems to draw on utilitarian as well as communitarian frameworks. Three figures in this table stand out. Two-thirds of Programme C decision-makers' references fall within the communitarian themes. A closer analysis reveals that the vast majority of these references are about building caring relationships with students, which shows a relationship with the dominance of the guided tour and guided adventure metaphors that was found for Programme C in the image of the teaching and learning lens. Furthermore, the majority of Programme A and Statute/QMS references fall in the 'Mixed themes' category. For Programme A decision-makers this can be explained from their strong professional commitment to the industry, which was clearly visible in Table XII. For the QMS the explanation lies in a substantial

number (12) of criteria and guidelines relating to the expectation that the institution carries the consequences of the student's enrolment. The many formally agreed criteria and guidelines on this aspect could be an expression of the institution's political commitment or accountability to the government, which will be explored through the image of the social-political lens in Chapter 11.

Table XXV: Percentage of references per decision-maker group to each category of themes as defined in Table XXIV.

Category	Utilitarian themes	Communitarian themes	Mixed themes	Total number of references
Institutional decision-makers	38%	29%	32%	65
Statute/QMS	18%	12%	71%	17
Programme A documentation	-	-	-	2
Observation notes	-	-	-	4
Programme A decision-makers	17%	23%	59%	69
Programme B decision-makers	43%	10%	48%	21
Programme C decision-makers	27%	67%	7%	15
Programme D decision-makers	29%	21%	50%	28
Programme E decision-makers	14%	43%	43%	14
Total	27%	27%	46%	235

9.4 The Image of the Ethical Lens

The image of the ethical lens shows programme design practice as relationships between decision-makers and students, the industry, the institution and society that are driven by decision-makers' professional and moral responsibilities. These responsibilities are shaped by a complex interplay of utilitarian and communitarian discourses. Utilitarian discourses ensure that as many people as possible are being satisfied through an

emphasis on free choice and on worthwhile outcomes of qualifications and employment. Simultaneously, communitarian discourses enforce responsibility to and care for a community. The interplay of the two discourses is particularly seen in the commitment to the industry, which shows that they strengthen each other. The two discourses also need each other to define limits. Communitarianism sets limits around free choice, while utilitarianism sets limits around care. If utilitarianism has its way, diversity will continue to increase until society will no longer be able to function because all cohesion has disappeared. Programmes might continue to diversify until each student has her/his individualised programme. On the other hand, if communitarianism becomes too strong, commitments to the community become rules and there is no space left for autonomy and democracy. The balance between the two discourses seems to confirm the argument (Walzer, 1990) that liberalism cannot do without regular correction from communitarianism. It also supports the idea of 'thin' communitarianism as a discourse of diversity within limits (Olssen, et al., 2004). The image of the ethical lens for the context of this study is visualised in Figure 28. It shows the themes and sub-themes with their underpinning ethical frameworks. Because of the length of the (sub-)themes' titles, the codes as introduced in Table XXIV have been used to represent each (sub-) theme.

Chapters 1 and 2 explained how government education policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand are guided strongly by neo-liberalism. The political commitments to powers like government policies and institutions are likely to interact with the ethical commitments studied in this chapter. These political commitments were not visible through the ethical lens, and neither were the tensions that may exist between the different commitments. The social-political lens in Chapter 11 will study these issues in more detail and revisit the findings of this chapter.
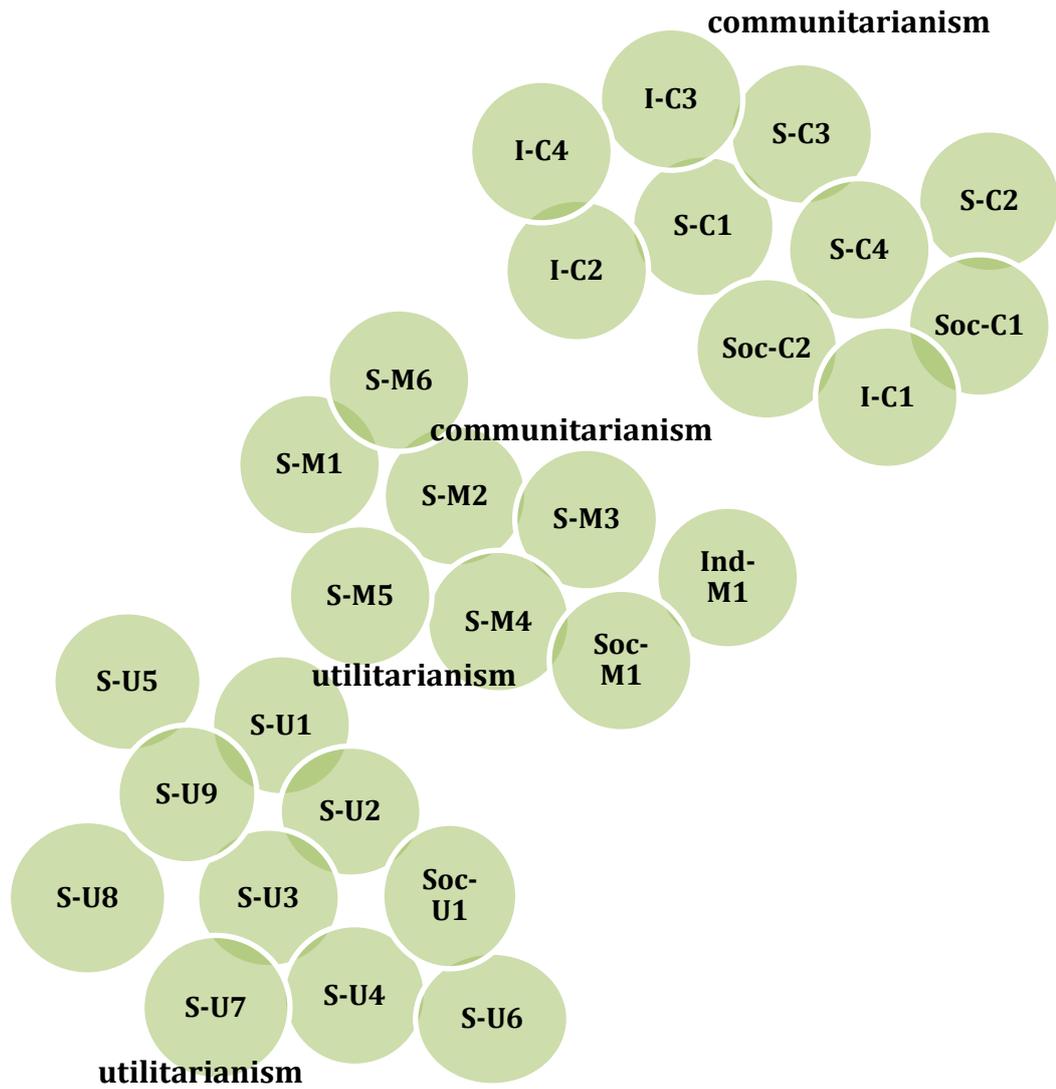
Figure 28: The image of programme design practice as seen through the ethical lens: twenty-seven (sub-)themes and their underpinning ideological discourses. The code for each (sub-)theme is clarified in Table XXIV (page 253).

CHAPTER 10:
PROGRAMME DESIGN PRACTICE OBSERVED THROUGH A BUSINESS LENS

10.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 explained that the market ideology that was introduced to tertiary education in Aotearoa/New Zealand in 1989 has expected educational institutions to operate as businesses. This suggests that the 'why' of programme design considerations and decisions as expressed by decision-makers would include business related justifications. Implicitly, such justifications have already been identified in previous chapters, particularly in the image of the teaching and learning lens, described in Chapter 5. The consumable product, production process and guided tour metaphors in this image all acknowledge the institution's commitment to serving customers, be they students or the industry.

This chapter looks through a business lens to study the explicit signs that programme design considerations and decisions are made for business reasons. The exploration was guided by a search for words like customer, client, market, finance, viability, contract, accountability, effectiveness, efficiency and related expressions. Accountability was only included where it related to contracts. Accountability as professional or moral responsibility was included in Chapter 9, whereas accountability as political responsibility is part of Chapter 11.

Section 10.2 describes the themes that were observed through the business lens. Section 10.3 theorises the findings in terms of discourses in society, as far as possible, and is followed by a description of the full image of the business lens in Section 10.4.

10.2 Themes Observed through the Business Lens

The number of explicit references to business considerations was limited, making the image of the business lens relatively small, but still distinct from the images of the other six lenses. Five themes were identified. An overview of the number of references to each theme and for each decision-maker group is given in Table XXVI for the primary and in Table XXVII for the secondary data sources. The tables show that all themes identified in the primary data are confirmed by the secondary, except 'Customer focus'. This will be reflected on in Section 10.3. No references to business considerations were found in the meeting observation notes.

Table XXVI: Number of references to each theme per decision-maker group in the primary data as identified through the business lens. QMS = Academic Statute or QMS; ProgDocA = Programme A documentation; and, Obs = meeting observation notes.

Theme	Number of identified references by/in:			
	Institutional decision-makers	Programme A decision-makers	QMS/ ProgDocA/Obs	Total of references
Financial considerations	11	13	1 (QMS)	25
Effectiveness and efficiency	6	12	2 (QMS) 1 (ProgDocA)	21
Customer focus	17	4	5 (QMS)	26
Contractual obligations	9	8	3 (QMS)	20
Market considerations	14	-	1 (QMS)	15
Total	57	37	13	107

Table XXVII: Number of references to each theme per decision-maker group in the secondary data as identified through the business lens.

Theme	Number of identified references for Programme:				Total of references
	B	C	D	E	
Financial considerations	2	1	7	4	14
Effectiveness and efficiency	3	1	3	3	10
Customer focus	-	-	-	-	-
Contractual obligations	-	-	1	5	6
Market considerations	-	1	1	1	3
Total	5	3	12	13	33

10.2.1. Financial Considerations

The strongest theme identified in the data is a concern for the financial aspects of a programme. Most (13) references fit into a sub-theme expressing concern for the survival of the programme. Programmes need to be viable to keep them alive. For example:

> we have to be viable. We've just had our five-year review and luckily we were showing we have good health, but it's a fine line because the students drop and then you've lost your funding and our costs will stay the same for staff and things like that. We've found that over the years it's up and down. We have to bear in mind our budgets and we talk about them a lot. (P-28)

A related second sub-theme, with nine references, demonstrates concern for the survival of the institution, by aiming to create a financial surplus on programmes to support other, less viable, programmes or other parts of the institution: "The reason for viability is that we need programmes that pay well to cross subsidise. However, that is changing because from 2008 we have the capped contract with the TEC" (ID-77).

Quite a different third sub-theme, also with nine references, shows how decisions about aspects of the programme are reduced to financial decisions. For example, the following quote shows how the decision for entry requirements becomes a financial decision, because entry requirements may affect the number of student enrolments: "you could set higher entry levels,

that students might have more success and we retain more, but certainly that would cut down the numbers quite a bit" (M-36).

The fourth and last financial sub-theme is where a programme is considered to be a good programme if it is, amongst other quality criteria, financially viable. Eight references to this sub-theme were identified. An example is: "The programme is financially viable and meets the institute's criteria and delivers a small surplus on top. It is a financially comfortable programme to run. From a management perspective it is a lot more pleasant than some other programmes" (M-37).

10.2.2. Effectiveness and Efficiency of Resource Use

Perhaps related to financial considerations is the concern for efficiency and effectiveness of resource use. Resources include personnel involved in the programme, equipment, learning materials, and facilities. One sub-theme, with 18 references, emphasises considerations about efficiency of resources. For example, the decision on the length of a programme may be based on the need to keep the teachers occupied during the entire year: "if you don't get semester or one year courses there are a whole lot of staffing problems because if you've got a 20 week course what do you do with the other 14 weeks for a staff member" (ID-78). Another example of a resource efficiency consideration is weighing which equipment will have to be shared among students:

> We're always looking at the resources. For example, our students get issued a kit of equipment for them to use throughout the year and we review it every year: can we have a class set of this instead of providing the students with it every year, that will keep our costs down; is there a new supplier that we can get these from that will be better quality or cheaper. So we're constantly reviewing that as we go along. (T-41)

A second sub-theme (seven references) involves considerations about resource effectiveness, for example, having the right teacher: "the teacher is probably 70% or so of the resource that will make that programme fly. If you have not got the right teacher, particularly the right lead teacher, it is just not going to work" (ID-79), or having up-to-date resources: "If we are a business

unit, which I guess we are, we need to think business-wise, which is technology and infrastructure change and we need to change with it" (T-42).

The third identified sub-theme (six references) relates to both efficiency and effectiveness. Sometimes a balance seems to be sought, for example between serving all students well (effectiveness) and the resources available to do this (efficiency): "There will always be some students whose learning capabilities are such that they won't fit within that paradigm of how much time and resources we are willing to provide, that is an unfortunate reality" (M-38).

10.2.3. Customer Focus

References to a focus on serving the customer were only found in the primary data. The QMS defines quality in terms of a customer focus: "Quality is continuously improving everything we do to meet agreed standards arising from our clients' stated and implied needs" (QMS-17). However, like three other references to this theme in the QMS, it does not specify who these clients are. Most (18) references suggest that the customer or client is the student, as the following example illustrates: "The way I see our students, they are customers and they are paying money, so therefore we have to cater for what we have and do the best job" (T-43). Four references were found to the industry as the customer, for example: "[The industry] run their business and care about their own primary concern and they wish us to run our business and produce an end product that suits their needs" (M-39). Three of these four references indicated that both students and the industry are seen as customers: "When we make a change to a programme, it is important that we have evidence that the change is important for the client group, the students and the people who are going to employ the students" (ID-80).

10.2.4. Contractual Obligations

Various decision-makers indicated a commitment to meeting contractual obligations, which some referred to as accountability. Most (21) references within this theme show how the student's enrolment is considered to be a

contract between the institution and the student, or between the institution and both the student and the government:

> Someone is paying for a service, and in our case the government pays two thirds and the learners pay one third, roughly, so we need to be accountable to those customers. If we don't do that, we are not in business. I think it is just simple and straightforward. The kind of social good of education stuff I can live with, but if someone is not going to pay for it, it will not happen. (ID-81)

The programme document is considered to be the contract: "From my point [the programme document] is a contract. You can bend it slightly, in terms of changing the way you deliver a little. Effectively this is the document which determines what we have decided to do" (P-29). This also applies to the course document:

> [The course descriptor] is a contract between you and the student. It is what you agreed with the student will be covered in the offering of the course. You can't really go and change what you've actually agreed to before you started the course. (T-44)

Two other types of contractual obligations were identified from the data, but their references were very few. One (3 references) is the commitment to the employment contract between a staff member and the institution: "The moral thing is that someone is employing me. I am taking money for doing the job, and I should do what is in the job description, because they expect that that is what I am delivering" (T-45). The other (2 references) relates to the need to have a contract between the institution, the student and external organisations that offer practical placements to students: "The purpose of this [Memorandum of Agreement] is to safeguard and maximise the benefits for all parties concerned by setting out clear rights and responsibilities for administering the off-site practical/workplace components" (QMS-18).

10.2.5. Market Considerations

As Table XXVI and Table XXVII on pages 264 and 265 indicate, this fifth and final theme was primarily found in the institutional decision-maker data. It highlights the consideration of two types of markets in the decision-making. One is the student market (10 references), consisting of the students who will potentially enrol in a programme. The concern is how the institution can

grow or at least retain its market share. An example is making programmes free of fees for students, which is considered justified if:

- all other reasonable strategies to improve participation have been tried;
- The client group would not enrol in the programme without zero fees due to their financial situation;
- The introduction of zero fees would provide a significant and enduring market advantage over other providers;
- The introduction of zero fees would result in a significant net increase in enrolments. (QMS-19)

Another example shows the importance of developing programmes that the student market wants:

> When we decide on the courses that are being selected for a new programme, or for changes to a programme, what is important is that students want to do it. And concurrently you want more students at [the institution] as a result. (ID-82)

The funding restrictions by the government in terms of capped enrolments are a challenge that requires solutions which retain space for growth:

> I think this information is going to be more important now with the capped EFTS environment because I think we need to be really clear which are the programmes that there is potential to grow numbers in, and which are the programmes that are going to be at a stable level, and which are the programmes actually that aren't meeting a need or aren't needed. (ID-83)

The second type of market is the labour market (one reference): "I then ask myself: is there going to be a market, is there a real market there for those people?" (ID-84). Four statements refer to both the student and the labour market, including: "if there is an industry demand for some specialised skill there is no learner need for, you would not do that either" (ID-85). For three references I was unable to identify which market the participants referred to.

10.3 Understanding the Themes

At first glance theorising the themes that were observed through the business lens seems straightforward. Themes like market considerations, contractual obligations and customer focus can be relatively easily understood in terms of neo-liberalist discourses. Olssen et al. (2004, p. 138)

note that "the centrality of the market is one of the central and distinct features of the neo-liberalism's theoretical and programmatic propositions". Within the world as a market place each person is expected to be an entrepreneur, responding to market forces. The institution as an organisation is supposed to do the same. Education is the commodity to be traded on this market, and customers choose which education they wish to 'purchase'. The role of the state is to act "as a 'mediator' and 'instigator' of the successful operation of the market" (Olssen, et al., 2004, p. 138). Work relations within neo-liberalist discourses follow agency theory, which

> rests on the notion that social and political life can be understood as a series of 'contracts' (or agreed relationships) in which one party, referred to as the principal, enters into exchanges with another party, referred to as the agent. (Boston, et al., 1996, p. 18)

This would explain the 'contractual obligations' theme, where staff feel committed to their contract with the institution. More importantly, it clarifies the idea of the programme documents as a contract between the student and the institution, where the institution delegates work, that is, studying the content of the programme, to the students in return for a reward (a pass, credits or a qualification) or a sanction (a fail). This contractualism still allows the parties some autonomy, but the roles of the parties are clearly specified and the parties can therefore be held accountable (Matheson (1997), cited in Olssen, et al., 2004).

Clear connections can be found with findings from previous chapters. The teaching and learning lens in Chapter 5 showed five metaphors, three of which incorporated institutional responsibility to customers. Of these three, the consumable product has the strongest emphasis on the student as customer. The relationship with this chapter is found in the observation that the three decision-maker groups referring to the customer focus theme (institutional decision-makers, Statute/QMS and Programme A decision-makers) were also the ones with the most references to the consumable product metaphor in Chapter 5. The business lens hardly shows references to the industry as customer, which seems to be at odds with the dominance of the production process metaphor in the image of the teaching and learning

lens. Apparently people do not consider the relationship with industry as a business commitment. Instead, Chapter 9 explained this relationship as an ethical commitment where decision-makers revealed a professional responsibility to meeting the needs of their industry.

The two remaining themes in the image of the business lens, financial considerations and considerations of efficiency and effectiveness of resources, are more difficult to understand. The contract between the government and institutions and between students and institution is steered through the funding regime (Olssen, et al., 2004), making the emergence of financial considerations in this image non-surprising. A new financial monitoring framework for polytechnics that was introduced by the government in 2010 (Tertiary Education Commission, n.d.), involving close monitoring of the financial health of a polytechnic, only strengthens the neo-liberalist interpretation of the importance of financial considerations. However, the sub-themes of financial viability of a programme and the institution suggest other motives. The following may be possible explanations, but the data are too limited to give them with full confidence.

- Financial viability of a programme or the institution ensures survival of the programme or the institution. As long as a programme survives, people involved do not have to experience the discomfort of discontinuation of a programme that they have invested part of their lives and their being in, or the discomfort of potentially losing their jobs (L. M., personal communication, January 2010).

- A surplus on a programme helps subsidise less viable programmes. For institutions, this is a way of avoiding the loss of programmes that are considered valuable for other reasons, but do not attract sufficient enrolments to be viable (Olssen, et al., 2004).

The above reasons support the fourth sub-theme within the financial considerations theme, that a programme is considered to be a good programme if it is, amongst other quality criteria, financially viable. This leaves only the third sub-theme, where programme design decisions are reduced to financial decisions. This might be explained in terms of

managerialist discourses, allowing the concern of the manager for a decision to be financial only, and delegating the actual content of the decision to an agent, for example a teacher (Simkins, 2000).

The theme concerned with efficiency and effectiveness of resource use seems very much related to financial viability. Within the sub-theme of efficiency the concern for survival comes through again, which might be explained as suggested under the financial viability sub-themes above. However, the main explanation would have to come from the importance of efficiency and effectiveness as indicators of quality within managerialist discourses (Olssen, et al., 2004; Simkins, 2000), where "quality is the value the institution seeks (through efficiency and accountability) to advance its relative position in the market" (Hubbell, 2007, p. 8).This focus on quality has been implemented in many tertiary education institutions using the concept of Total Quality Management, which aims for, amongst other things, "delighting the customer" and "continuous improvement" (Eagle & Brennan, 2007, p. 45). This institution's quality management system is no different: "[The institution] will maintain a comprehensive and an up-to-date quality management system (QMS), consistent with its Charter and the needs of and expectation of its clients. The system will be based on the concept of total quality management" (QMS-20). This is where the theme of financial considerations, including effectiveness and efficiency of resource use, is connected to the customer focus theme discussed earlier in this section.

10.4 The Image of the Business Lens

The image of the business lens shows programme design practice as a construction of people's financial and market considerations, with a focus on customers, a concern for efficiency and effectiveness of resource use, and for contractual obligations. The image can be explained using neo-liberalist discourses of the centrality of the market, managerialism and agency theory. The lens also seems to highlight concerns by decision-makers for survival of the programme or the institution, which are difficult to understand in terms of ideological discourses.

The image of the business lens for the context of this study is visualised in Figure 29, including the themes and/or sub-themes and their underpinning discourses.

Survival

Viability

Survival of programme and institution

Design decision = financial

Resource efficiency

Managerialism

Resource effectiveness

Contractual obligations

Student and labour market considerations

Customer focus: students and industry

Agency theory

Market centrality

Figure 29: The image of programme design practice as seen through the business lens: eight business themes and sub-themes in relation to each other and their underpinning discourses.

CHAPTER 11:

PROGRAMME DESIGN PRACTICE OBSERVED THROUGH A SOCIAL-POLITICAL LENS

11.1 Introduction

As referred to in Chapter 2, Cervero and Wilson (1994, 2001) brought the importance of people in programme design practice to the attention of adult educators. They showed how programme design decision-makers negotiate power, interests and responsibilities on an ongoing basis. Chapter 2 also explained how Sork (2001) incorporated this view in his programme planning framework through the introduction of a social-political domain, and how Pinar et al. (1995) acknowledged curriculum as a political text .

I have found a wealth of references in the data indicating that the 'why's of programme design decision-makers' considerations and decisions are of a social and/or political nature. Three major themes were identified during the analysis of these references:

1) The responsibilities and roles of actors in programme design practice;
2) The people, committees, documents and systems to which decision-makers feel politically responsible; and,
3) Negotiations between multiple responsibilities and interests.

The picture created from these themes forms the image of a social-political lens, to borrow the term from Sork (2001), as it shows how decision-makers' social as well as political relationships influence programme design practice. In Section 11.2 I describe each theme, supported by evidence from the data. Section 11.3 theorises the themes in terms of discourses from society, creating connections with relevant findings from previous chapters. The image of the social-political lens is presented in Section 11.4.

11.2   Themes Observed through the Social-Political Lens

11.2.1.   Roles and Responsibilities of Actors

The first theme consists of decision-makers' references to what they regard as their own or others' roles or responsibilities within programme design practice. Such references were found for all decision-maker groups, but particularly in the interviews and the Statute/QMS. Interview participants often commented on what they considered their role or responsibility and what they left for others to decide, while the Statute/QMS contained many procedures which assigned responsibilities to people for executing these procedures. The identification process has resulted in a list of actors whom the decision-makers in this study consider to be involved in programme design practice. These are grouped in Table XXVIII, according to the programme, faculty, institution and society level, respectively. This grouping is based on my own knowledge of the structure of the institution, in which programmes are situated within faculties, faculties within the institution, and the institution within society. Table XXVIII also shows the total number of identified references by all decision-maker groups to the roles and responsibilities of a particular actor. This includes references by a decision-maker to their own roles or responsibilities as actor, as well as references from other decision-makers to this actor's roles and responsibilities. The roles and responsibilities appeared similar across the primary and secondary data, hence the combined results of all of them in Table XXVIII. Where interview participants had dual decision-making roles they often referred to both. For example, institutional decision-makers who were also dean of a faculty often alternated references to their roles or responsibilities as institutional decision-makers with those as dean. In the analysis I assigned their references to the role they appeared to be referring to. On various occasions organisations, committees or documents, instead of people, were referred to as having particular roles or responsibilities. They are acknowledged as such in Table XXVIII.

Table XXVIII: Overview of actors who have assumed or assigned roles and responsibilities in programme design practice, according to themselves or to others. For each actor, the number of identified references from the primary plus the secondary data to their roles or responsibilities is shown between brackets.

	Programme level (178)	Faculty level (153)	Institutional level (93)	Society level (26)
Identified Actor (total number of references)	Teacher (89)	Head of School (54)	Academic Board (25)	Industry Training Organisation (17)
	Programme Coordinator (36)	Dean (32)	Institutional decision-maker (21)	Students (4)
	Programme documents (28)	Faculty Academic Committee (19)	Institutional support services (18)	NZQA/ITPQ (2)
	Programme Team (14)	Administration Manager (17)	Institution (19)	Employers/ Industry (1)
	Development Team (10)	Advisory Committee (13)	Quality Management System (4)	Professional organisation (1)
	Moderator (1)	Faculty (8)	Senior Management Team (3)	Community group (1)
		Advisor (9)	Deputy CEO (2)	
		Administrator (1)	Council (1)	

The following observations can be made from Table XXVIII. Firstly, a range of actors seems to be involved in programme design practice, who each have their own formally (e.g. through the Statute/QMS) or informally assigned or assumed roles and responsibilities. Secondly, very few references were made to actors outside the institution. The Industry Training Organisation may seem an exception, but 15 of the 17 references in this group were self-references by the participating external representatives. Decision-makers from within the institution almost solely assigned programme design responsibilities to actors within the institution. This suggests that members of the institution consider programme design practice to be a responsibility of the institution, and that the entire institution, or at least the identified actors, forms the 'design team'. People external to the institution, which includes students, are only given a marginal responsibility by the institution in the institution's programme design practices. A third observation from Table XXVIII is that documents seem to have an actor role in programme

design practice. This confirms that, once approved, documents assume a life of their own and become decision-makers, as discussed in Chapter 6 about the image of the rational lens.

To explore the observations further, I grouped the references to analyse which types of roles or responsibilities were assigned to each actor. Table XXIX to Table XXXI show the most frequently referred to roles and responsibilities for each actor per level, illustrated by extracts from the data. The society level has not been included as the references to each role or responsibility in this group were very few. A complete list is found in Appendix IV, including the roles and responsibilities at all four levels that were referred to by more than one decision-maker.

The roles and responsibilities in these tables and in Appendix IV suggest that each actor has her/his specific role to play in design practice, and that there are no obvious discrepancies in terms of the same role being assigned to different actors. The roles and responsibilities at the programme level indicate a combination of being autonomous and being morally or politically responsible. For example, roles like *Deciding how and what to teach and assess* and *Looking after the programme* provide autonomy to teachers and programme coordinators, respectively. Simultaneously, however, this is expected to occur within boundaries of political responsibility, e.g. where the programme document is *A contract with students and with funder,* and moral responsibility, e.g. a role of the teacher is *Helping the students achieve.* The roles and responsibilities of the faculty, institutional and society levels in Table XXIX to Table XXXI and in Appendix IV can be summarised as setting the boundaries within which the programme level is expected to function. This occurs through exercising control, for example where the role of Academic Board is to *Critically review and approve programme proposals.* It also occurs through defining and reinforcing the desired environment, e.g. where the role of the dean is to *Create an appropriate and appropriately resourced work environment for the programme and for staff*, or where the role of the advisor is to *Assist with decision-making on programme structure*

and designing within rules and regulations. These observations are further commented on in Section 11.3.

Table XXIX: Most frequently referenced assumed or assigned roles or responsibilities to actors at programme level. The full list is found in Appendix IV.

Decision-maker	Role or responsibility	Frequency
Teacher	Deciding how and what to teach and assess	23
	"I decide on how the unit is being assessed, but I would seek advice and get the opinion from the rest of the team. I understand that I have complete freedom in the assessment, and it is being sent to MITO for moderation." (T-46)	
	Helping students achieve	8
	"You need to know what the students find challenging and what needs to change. It's just being available to hear comments and take it on board" (T-47)	
	Guiding on design at programme level: credits, level and length, selection of courses, prerequisites, sequencing, timetable, qualification requirements	8
	"The courses tend to be driven more by a lecturer understanding the implementation aspects of putting packages of learning together. So they will think about timetable, or sequencing, how courses build and staircase into each other […]" (ID-86)	
Programme Coordinator	Looking after the programme, including the documents, the measurement and monitoring of the outcomes, the budget and the programme changes	15
	"As a programme coordinator I am responsible for the timetable. I negotiate with the staff what subjects they are going to teach and that sort of issues." (P-30)	
Programme documents	Being a contract with students and with funder	8
	"You have to stick to what is in there; that is what we have said we are going to do. From my point it is a contract. You can bend it slightly, in terms of changing the way you deliver a little. Effectively this is the document which determines what we have decided to do. And I reflect on it every now and then when I am unsure or I forget." (P-31)	
Programme team; Development team; Moderator: No roles or responsibilities were referred to frequently.		

Table XXX: Most frequently referenced assumed or assigned roles or responsibilities to actors at faculty level. The full list is found in Appendix IV.

Decision-maker	Role or responsibility	Frequency
Head of School	Monitoring the quality of the programme and its courses	14
	"I need to reassure myself that the programmes are relevant, continuing to meet external needs, continuing to meet the target group needs in terms of the student needs, that the whole programme is vibrant, that people are being used to the best of their abilities" (M-40)	
	Resourcing the programme appropriately, including staffing	13
	"I think you've got to be seen as a reasonably strong advocate for what happens in your area, particularly in the capped structure we're in now. Over the years I've been here capping has come and gone and now it's back again; it's an internal fight for resources." (M-41)	
	Advising the programme team about the programme	10
	"[...] it's about going to the staff and saying 'you've been at this for a while now, how can we re-look at it and what can you do?' Sometimes they go away and think about it, and they come back with 'we don't want to change anything', but at least they've gone away and thought about it. As long as you keep that process happening and the consideration they've given is genuine and honest I think they're all right." (M-42)	
Dean	Create an appropriate and appropriately resourced work environment for the programme and for staff	10
	"My job is to try and create an environment where our lecturers give an outstanding service to our students, so students have outstanding results, and so they tell the world and we can have more students that become outstanding students, that's how it works." (ID-87)	
Advisor	Assisting with decision-making on programme structure and designing within rules and regulations	9
	"Generally we try and take one proposal to Academic Committee so that we've done that ground work by the time it gets there. So at that stage I'm involved and in taking various factors in mind on how I think it will proceed through Academic Committee and Academic Board and obviously how it aligns with various NZQA or ITP regulations." (A-3)	
Faculty Academic Committee; Administration Manager; Advisory Group; Faculty Administrator: No roles or responsibilities were referred to frequently.		

Table XXXI: Most frequently referenced assumed or assigned roles or responsibilities to actors at institutional level. The full list is found in Appendix IV.

Decision-maker	Role or responsibility	Frequency
Academic Board	Developing systems and processes for and monitor academic quality in the institution "[A function of the Academic Board is:] Advising the Council on the development of operating procedures in relation to academic matters so that academic standards are able to be met;" (Statute-8)	11
	Critically reviewing and approving programme proposals "At the organisational level there was a proposal earlier this year that I was vocal on. Because we didn't really think that the demand was there, and we didn't really think that we would be able to get TEC approval without really strong local stakeholder support. So things that have obvious deficits we can put them under that sort of scrutiny at Academic Board." (ID-88)	11
Institutional support people and services; Institutional decision-makers; Senior management team; Institution; Statute/QMS; Deputy CEO; Council: No roles or responsibilities were referred to frequently.		

11.2.2. People, Committees, Documents and Systems to whom Decision-makers Feel Politically Responsible

The second theme that emerged from the data is the people, organisations and documents to which decision-makers express political responsibility. Political responsibilities are defined here as: "responsibilities relating to views about social relationships involving authority or power" (WordNet, n.d.). They are different from professional and moral responsibilities, which are visible through the ethical lens and were discussed in Chapter 9. Table XXXII shows the number of identified references to political responsibilities per decision-maker group. The very low number of references from Programme C decision-makers compared to the other decision-maker groups that were interviewed is noteworthy, but difficult to explain at this stage.

Table XXXII: Number of references to political responsibility per group of decision-makers.

Decision-maker group primary data	Number of references		Decision-maker group secondary data	Number of references
Institutional	54		Programme B	7
Programme A	66		Programme C	2
Meeting observation	2		Programme D	16
Programme A Documents	2		Programme E	11
Statute/QMS	11			
Total	**135**		**Total**	**36**

Figure 30 shows which people, groups or organisations and documents were found to enforce responsibility due to their authority or power. The red circles (with the white letters) represent political responsibilities to authorities external to the institution, while the blue circles (with the black letters) indicate internal political responsibilities. Figure 30 also shows the total number of identified references to these responsibilities. Four authorities stand out from Figure 30 as far as frequencies are concerned. Two of these are internal, namely the Statute/QMS and the formally approved programme documents. The other two are standard-setting bodies and the government, which are external to the institution. To investigate this further, I analysed the types of political responsibilities to these four main authorities that were expressed by the references. Table XXXIII summarises this analysis, illustrated with extracts from the data. The figures regarding political responsibility to the Statute/QMS or programme documents in this table may not seem a surprise considering that interview participants representing Programmes A to E were asked explicitly about their commitment to these two types of documents. Similarly, institutional decision-makers were explicitly asked about their commitment to the QMS, but not to programme documents. This may explain why no references to programme documents as authorities were found for these decision-makers. This explanation notwithstanding, the identified references confirm decision-makers' political responsibility to the Statute/QMS and to programme documents, which

strengthens earlier findings, in the previous section and in Chapter 6, that these documents assume a role as actors in programme design practice.

Figure 30: Authorities to which decision-makers were found to express political responsibility. The number of identified references to the particular authority, from the primary plus secondary data, is shown between brackets.

Political responsibility to standard-setting bodies is only found among decision-makers in programmes that incorporate unit standards, among institutional decision-makers and in documents. This is understandable as programmes including unit standards must meet requirements set by NZQA or by ITOs. The institutional level is therefore also required to take these requirements into account in their programme design practices.

Political responsibility to agencies or people outside the institution seems also supported by some of the findings in Chapter 4 (Table VI, Page 145), where a relatively high number of statements on evaluation at programme and course level and on assessment at course level was found in the Statute/QMS. This formalisation of accountability is one mechanism by which the institution can demonstrate its political responsibility to these external agencies and people.

Table XXXIII: Identified references to political responsibility to four main authorities per group of decision-makers (ID = Institutional decision-makers, PA-PE = Programmes A to E; QMS/ProgDocA/Obs = Quality Management System/Programme A documentation/Meeting observation notes).

Decision-makers express political responsibility to	Number of identified references for decision-maker group						
	ID	PA	QMS/ ProgDocA /Obs	PB	PC	PD	PE
Quality Management System: Adhering to its processes and guidelines	13	6	-	2	1	5	7
	"I certainly use the QMS and faculty processes, I am very strong on that. I would expect to see the programme annual report, for example, and I read that and I am part of the approval group for that." (M-43)						
Formally approved programme documents: Adhering to what is in these documents	-	10	1	1	-	4	3
	"the programme approval document, our handbook is our little bible and we refer to it all the time; mostly for attendance and assessments, regulations. It's very important. It's black and white, there's no room for my opinion or any other staff member's opinion; it's the regulation and students need to understand that that's the way it is. "(P-32)						
Standard-setting bodies (including NZQA, ITOs and others): Adhering to their requirements	21	28	7	3	-	3	-
	"We have to assess because the ITO requires us to do it; the moderation side, we have to assess to their magical units, because they will come along and ask us for the evidence." (P-33)						

Decision-makers express political responsibility to	Number of identified references for decision-maker group						
	ID	PA	QMS/ ProgDocA /Obs	PB	PC	PD	PE
Government (including Ministry of Education and Tertiary Education Commission): Aligning with tertiary education policies	6	1	2	-	-	1	-
	"Before a qualification is approved for funding by Tertiary Education Commission (TEC), a test of strategic relevance will be carried out. This relates to: • Quality of the programme • Strategic relevance • Value for money" (QMS-21)						
Meeting reporting and audit requirements	2	5	-	-	-	-	-
	"It is important that [the students] can achieve the course because the ministry require course completions and they monitor our completions and that will get more so." (M-44)						
Adhering to funding requirements	11	6	-	-	-	1	-
	"With respect to politics, you probably realise that the whole tertiary sector has been under constant review, over the last 15 years or so. As much as you dislike some of these things, you still need to work within that environment. Sometimes you have to comply with certain requirements of the government, because your funding is based on it." (ID-89)						
Total	53	56	10	6	1	14	10

11.2.3. Negotiations

The third and final theme seen through the social-political lens consists of references to negotiations of tensions between different responsibilities or interests. Table XXXIV shows the number of identified references to this theme for each decision-maker group. The differences between the decision-maker groups are considerable. The vast majority of references was found in the interview summaries, with only a few in the meeting observation notes and the Programme A documentation, and none in the Statute/QMS. Taking into consideration the number of participants and interview parts for each group, the number of references from institutional decision-makers is noticeably the lowest and that from Programme C decision-makers the highest. There is at this stage no explanation for these observations.

Table XXXIV: Number of references to negotiations per group of decision-makers.

Decision-maker group primary data	Number of references	Decision-maker group secondary data	Number of references
Institutional	98	Programme B	51
Programme A	179	Programme C	49
Meeting observation	5	Programme D	48
Programme A documentation	1	Programme E	32
Statute/QMS	-		
Total	**283**	**Total**	**180**

The negotiations were interpreted and categorised to find the underlying tensions causing these negotiations. Table XXXV shows the categories, including the number of identified negotiations between any two categories. The first four categories are social-political. *Political responsibility* relates to responsibility to authorities and powers inside or outside the institution as defined in the previous section. The main powers are the government funding requirements, standard-setting body requirements, the Statute/QMS and programme documentation. *Autonomy* includes the freedom of the institution, its personnel and its students to make their own decisions. *Self-interest* relates to people's concerns for themselves and their relationship with others in decision-making: having a voice, avoiding negative personal consequences of decisions, and assuring a positive ongoing relationship with colleagues. *Roles* refers to what people see as their or others' roles and responsibilities as discussed in Section 11.2.1. All other categories in Table XXXV relate to the images of lenses discussed in the previous chapters. The bottom row of the table shows the total number of identified negotiations within the particular category.

Table XXXV: Number of identified negotiations between categories of commitments or interests. The first four categories are social-political. The other categories are linked to the images of the lenses described in previous chapters. The types of negotiations most referred to are highlighted. The bottom row shows the total of negotiations that refer to the category in a particular column. This implies that a negotation between e.g. business and ethical is counted twice in the 'total' row: once under 'business' and on ce under 'ethical'.

		Social-political				Teaching and learning	Business	Ethical	Rational	Personal experience	Cultural
		Political responsibility	Autonomy	Roles	Self-interest						
Social-political	Political responsibility	7									
	Autonomy	132	-								
	Roles	14	1	4							
	Self-interest	21	1	-	17						
	Teaching and learning	12	3	-	4	62					
	Business	7	3	-	-	14	-				
	Ethical	48	12	4	1	11	19	22			
	Rational	2	6	-	-	7	2	16	-		
	Personal experience	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
	Cultural	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	253	159	23	44	113	45	133	33	9	2

Some types of negotiations were clearly more referred to than others. These are highlighted in Table XXXV. One possible explanation is that the underlying tensions are felt more strongly, and by more people, than the tensions underlying other negotiations. However, as during the interviews participants were explicitly asked for their commitment to programme documents and/or the QMS, it is not entirely surprising that many references have shown up relating to negotiation of political responsibility. Other noteworthy categories in Table XXXV are personal experience and cultural, as the identified negotiations with these two categories are almost negligible. And finally, negotiations among personal responsibility, self-interest and roles seem worth noting, as they involve categories that are unique to this chapter. To obtain further insight, the highlighted negotiations in Table XXXV, as well as the just noted ones will be explored in more detail.

Negotiating political responsibility

By far the most identified negotiations – 253 (Table XXXV) out of 463 (Table XXXIV) or 55% - seemed to occur between a sense of political responsibility on the one hand and other interests on the other. Within this group of negotiations, the prominent 'other interests' are *Autonomy* (132 out of 253 or 52%) and *Ethical* commitments (19%). These are discussed in more depth.

Negotiating political responsibility and autonomy

Sub-themes found in this type of negotiation are between (the figure between brackets is the number of identified references):

- Political responsibility for meeting requirements internal to the institution, particularly adhering to the QMS and to programme documents, versus commitment to the autonomy of departments and/or staff (49). For example, the following participant explained how s/he dealt with the the tension of political responsibility of adhering to a unit standard descriptor, which is part of the programme documentation, versus being autonomous in teaching the knowledge s/he considered most beneficial to the students:

> The unit descriptor is a lesson plan. You have to build your lesson plan around the [performance criteria]. You are teaching to a degree where they can be competent in that unit, and you have to cover that content. You have to stick to that descriptor, within reason of course. If the content is junk, which sometimes happens as some of the units aren't that good, and you ask yourself why they need to know that. You teach so that they can complete the assessment, and you spend your teaching on areas that you think are more beneficial to the students. (P-34)

- The need to control what other actors - including students - do, versus commitment to the autonomy of these actors (14), or trust in their ability and professionalism (18). For example, exercising control as external body over practice within a polytechnic, versus trusting the polytechnic to do its job well, as expressed by the following external representative:

> If you put your hand on your heart you can never really tell what's happening [in the polytechnic] because you're not there and then, you don't see it happening, so all we can ever ask is bring someone along to moderation and check it that way. (E-3)

- Political responsibility to meeting external requirements, particularly standard-setting body, government funding, and legislative requirements, versus commitment to the autonomy of the institution (29) or its staff or departments (19). For example,

> [...] when we had the choice of either going back to unit standards or continuing on the path of not having unit standards but our own [provider] qualification, we really had to think quite hard about where this would ultimately lead our programme. If we go away from unit standards it gives us a lot more independence and allows us to grow our programme much more freely, as opposed to being bound by the national qualification to a large extent. The national qualification overrode the self-directed programme because it had that unity with the rest of the [...] industry. (M-45)

- Political responsibility to meeting internal or external requirements, versus commitment to the autonomy of students (3). The following example relates to the institutional requirement to have a 60% response rate for student evaluation questionnaires, against the students' autonomy in participating in the evaluation:

> [...] it is important that [students] have the opportunity to give their feedback, and that it is important they have the choice to do that. It is how we marry up having a set percentage that have to respond, with the choice to give feedback. (ID-90)

Negotiating political responsibility and ethical commitments

The second main area of negotiating political responsibility is with ethical commitments as discussed in Chapter 9. Of the 48 identified references in this area, 22 indicated negotiation of political responsibility to particularly programme documentation, requirements set by standard-setting bodies, and the Statute/QMS, with professional or moral responsibility to students. The following example illustrates this negotiation:

> The discussions to make it a one year programme had already happened and [the institution] cut us back to this [half year programme]. It was from there. We can reconsider but it's like this continuous battle. I guess that's where we're different because we are almost like this with our students, with every single one, not just some and so it's that relationship and that personal touch that we give to each one of them is what drives us and keep up our energy levels and still keep the battle going. (T-48)

The second major type of negotiation in this area (21 references) was found between political responsibility and professional or moral responsibility to industry/stakeholders, for example: "the lag time in approvals or change processes has to be balanced with the responsiveness to stakeholders, that all impacts on the decision-making. Everyone needs to understand that, including the stakeholder, or otherwise you are perceived to be non-responsive." (ID-91)

Negotiating political responsibility, self-interest and roles

While these types of negotiations are not highlighted in Table XXXV, they are worth noting, because they involve categories that are unique to this chapter. Most negotiations within and between these three categories relate to people's concern for themselves and what they consider their role on the one hand, and their positioning in the power relationships within their practice on the other.

Negotiating Autonomy

The negotiation of autonomy is the second most referred to (159 out of 463 or 34%) category of negotiations. However, 83% of these relate to negotiations between autonomy and political responsibility, which were discussed above. Other areas of negotiating autonomy are insufficiently referred to for a meaningful interpretation beyond the acknowledgement of their identification.

Negotiating ethical commitments

The third largest category of negotiation is around ethical commitments (133 out of 463 or 29%). Most negotiation in this category (48 of 133 references) was found with the previously discussed political responsibility. Other types of negotiation in this category are much less frequently referred to. To give a few examples nonetheless, they include negotiations between ethical and other ethical commitments (22 references), particularly between professional or moral responsibility to students on the one hand and to industry on the other. For example:

> There's this tension I feel between having a qualification that is nationally or even internationally transportable and allows students the opportunity to go to another tertiary institution or industry and have that qualification recognised and at the other end of the scale there's the idea to allow local industry needs to develop locally-based courses. I have this feeling we're getting a push from the TEC or from the Ministry to move towards national qualifications and unit standards and really ethically or ultimately I do like that idea. (A-4)

They also include 19 references to negotiations between ethical and business interests, for example between care for teaching staff and financial viability of the programme:

> For someone with my degree of experience, the teaching contact time is OK. I am tired, but it is OK. For these other younger [teachers] who have just started it is far too heavy. But that is an economic thing, isn't it? (T-49)

Furthermore, 16 references were found to negotiations between ethical commitments and rationalisations, where the norm inherent to a rationalisation appeared in tension with people's professional commitment to students or the industry. This example shows the negotiation between the

rationalisation of transferable 'knowledge blocks' in the form of unit standards and the responsibility to ensure that students meet the standards required by the industry:

> [One student] has done heaps of these units but she's done them at school, they were useless, it's not a commercial environment, but they're all cross-credited. She doesn't have to do [this course] because she's got the units that we're assessing in. [...] I don't think that's fair because I personally don't think she's good enough to say she can have [these] units. (P-35)

Negotiating teaching and learning interests

The final major category of negotiations that was found in the data is with teaching and learning interests (24% of references). More than half of these relate to negotiation of different teaching and learning responsibilities or interests. The following is an example of these, showing the negotiation between students who want to be passive and the teacher who wants students to be active learners:

> [The students] put all their energy into questioning why they should not do it, as opposed to doing it and relying on the expertise of the person who has set the question to say: 'if you go down this path, you will be amazed how much you will learn'. (T-50)

Another example to illustrate these negotiations is finding the balance between getting feedback from students and from the industry about a programme:

> What I struggle with is that we really evaluate the students' opinions; we are not necessarily evaluating how well the course meets industry requirements. When we get students' answers they don't look as much at the course and how well the course meets their expectations. They are more looking at how that course was delivered against the prescription. I struggle with that and I don't know how you get answers for that. It is an institute issue. (P-36)

All other types of negotiations in this category were too infrequently referred to for meaningful interpretation.

Negotiating personal experience and culture

These two categories need mentioning because they have remarkably low numbers of references assigned to them in Table XXXV. The only two references in the cultural category relate to discomfort with aspects of the organisational culture. The nine in the personal experience category all relate to people's sense of having sufficient experience, so they do not perceive a need to check the QMS or programme documents whether they adhere to these documents.

11.3 Understanding the Themes

The social-political aspects of programme design practice in adult education have not gone unnoticed in the literature. The theorising of the themes identified in the previous section is guided by this literature, and particularly by the work of Cervero and Wilson, who appear to have been deeply involved in theorising the people aspects of programme design practice (e.g. Cervero & Wilson, 1994, 1998; Cervero, Wilson, & Associates, 2001; Rees, et al., 1997; Wilson & Cervero, 1996). Their theory includes four impacts on planning, each of which is visible in the identified themes.

The first impact, *power*, or "the planner's capacity to act is rooted in sets of historically-developing social and organizational relationships and is not a consequence of individual attributes" (Cervero & Wilson, 1994, p. 254). In line with this, each actor's capacity to act in this study seems to be established through their role in the institution, as each role comes with various responsibilities. Section 11.2.1 showed how those responsibilities change from programme level via faculty and institutional levels to society level. At the programme level they appear as a combination of being autonomous and being morally or politically responsible. At the faculty, institutional and society levels, however, they can be summarised as setting the boundaries for the programme level to function within. This occurs through exercising control, but also through defining and reinforcing the desired environment. Section 11.2.1 also indicated how documents have assumed or assigned roles within programme design practice, which

confirms their status as decision-maker, as referred to in the image of the rational lens. Thirdly, Section 11.2.1 described the institution as the 'design team', or, "who sits at the planning table" (Wilson & Cervero, 1996), as roles and responsibilities were almost solely assigned to actors within the institution. People external to the institution, including students, were only considered to have a marginal, if any, responsibility in the institution's programme design practices.

The influence of *responsibility* on programme design practice, or "To whom is the adult educator ethically and politically answerable" (Cervero & Wilson, 1994, p. 258), was partially confirmed in Section 11.2.2. Four main authorities were found that command political responsibility. Two are members of the design team: the Statute/QMS and formal programme documents. The two others, standard-setting bodies and the government, are not. The other part of responsibility is confirmed by Chapter 9 through the image of the ethical lens. Chapter 9 showed that decision-makers' ethical responsibilities relate primarily to students, to a lesser extent to industry and to the institution and its members, and only sporadically to society. Apart from the institution and its members, none of these groups are included in the design team as defined in the previous paragraph.

The above interpretations of the themes in Sections 11.2.1 and 11.2.2 are summarised in Figure 31. The inner circle indicates decision-making at programme level, which occurs within the boundaries set by the faculty and institutional levels. The design team is formed by all actors inside the thick red boundary. A list of these actors was created in Section 11.2.1 (Table XXVIII, page 277). The design team assumes all roles and responsibilities needed to practise programme design in the institution. Society, including the government, standard-setting bodies, students, and the rest of society form the context that the design team is politically (and, as Chapter 9 has confirmed, also ethically) responsible to, but that has not been assigned an active role by the institution in the institution's programme design practices. In addition to the political responsibility of the design team to society as defined in Figure 31, actors within the design team are also engaged in

internal relationships of power and responsibility. Section 11.2.2 showed the formal power exercised by the Statute/QMS and programme documentation, while Chapter 9 identified decision-makers' professional responsibility to members of the institutional community.
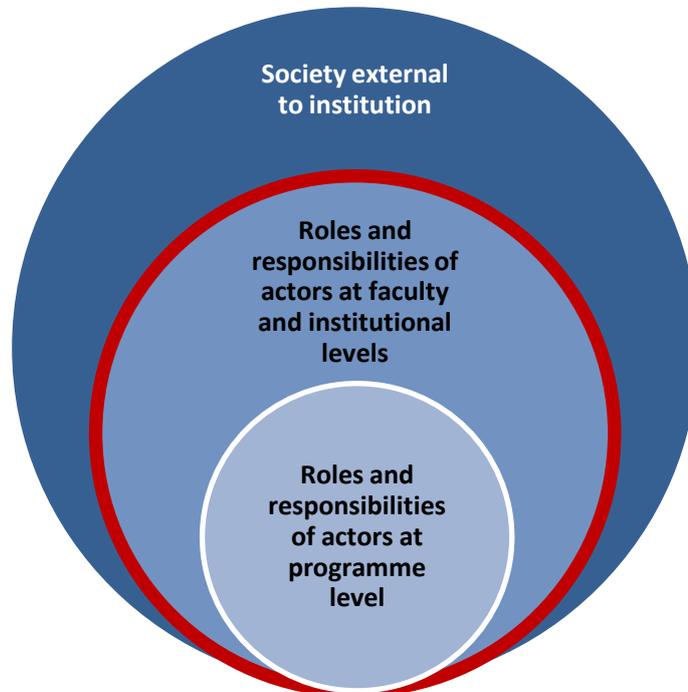
Figure 31: Relationship between the institution as design team (all actors in the two inner circles), the roles and responsibilities of actors within this team, and society as the context.

One explanation of these findings is found in discourses of agency theory (Boston, et al., 1996), where the outer circles in Figure 31 act as the principals, who have exchanges with the inner circles as agents, according to agreed relationships. This explains the 'contract' between students or the government on the one hand and the institution on the other that was identified through the business lens in Chapter 10. The concepts of adverse selection and moral hazard within agency theory allow the government-as-principal to set requirements that have to be met by the institution-as-agent (Kivistö, 2005), for example funding requirements. Within the institution as the design team, however, similar principal-agent relationships exist. The institutional level has an agreement with the faculty level, in the form of

assumed and assigned roles and responsibilities as identified in Section 11.2.1, and the faculty level in its turn has an agreement with the programme level. This supports the concentric structure in Figure 31. The description of the actual responsibilities at each level in Section 11.2.1, which change from operational to more controlling and boundary setting as the level goes from programme to institutional level, can be explained by another neo-liberalist discourse, that of new public management. This discourse, which includes managerialism, is characterised by a "devolution of management control coupled with the development of improved reporting, monitoring and accountability mechanisms" (Boston, et al., 1996, p. 26). While it provides actors, and particularly teachers, with a sense of autonomy, the nature of this autonomy is bounded by managerial control.

However, neither agency theory nor new public management accounts for relationships of power and authority, or how to serve multiple principals. They also do not acknowledge the differences in relationships at different levels of decision-making (Boston, et al., 1996). This explains why people expressed tensions, particularly between political responsibility, autonomy and ethical responsibility. These tensions emerged within the third theme in this chapter, that of *negotiations*. It confirms the final two impacts on programme design in the theory of Cervero and Wilson (1994), who describe how programme developers "always negotiate *with* their own specific interests and power", and "*between* the interests of other people". They "also *negotiate* the interests and power relations *themselves*." (p.256, italics in original). In later work, Cervero and Wilson endorse two types of negotiations that were introduced by Elgstrom and Riis (1992, as cited in Cervero & Wilson, 1998): substantive negotiations, in which people act on the actual programme within the existing web of power relations; and meta-negotiations, in which they act on the power structures themselves. Using this language, the identification of ideological discourses that underpin programme design practice, as this study intends, involves unravelling the web of power relations in which people act. This means that this study does not focus on the substantive negotiations but on the meta-negotiations, by

attempting to make the power relations underpinning the negotiations explicit. In Section 11.2.3 the negotiation between autonomy and political responsibility, including accountability to formal powers and authorities as well as the need to control the practices of others, appeared to be the major area in which power structures were contested. A smaller area of negotiation was among political responsibility, self interest and roles, which was again identified as a contestation of power structures, showing negotiations between people's concern for themselves and the power relations they operate in.

All other identified negotiations in Section 11.2.3 are linked to the images of the lenses in this thesis. Each image, except that of the personal experience lens, has been shown to be underpinned by ideological discourses and therefore power structures in society. This means that indirectly, these negotiations must be characterised as meta-negotiations. The following example of identified negotiations illustrates this.

In this example the decision-maker expresses ethical responsibility in the form of care for teachers and their workload. S/he negotiates workload with the desire to introduce flexible learning, which came up in the image of teaching and learning lens, particularly in the consumable product and guided tour metaphors, to offer choice to the student-as-customer. This implies that the negotiation is a meta-negotiation in essence, between the communitarian discourse of care for the well-being of teachers and the neo-liberalist discourse of public choice. The outcome of the negotiation – flexible learning or not - is undecided in this example, but the example shows how meta-negotiations directly influence the substantive negotiations about the content and format of a programme (Cervero & Wilson, 1998). Another example is the following decision-maker who negotiated between having to be consistent with others in the institution and being autonomous with regards to assigning credits to courses (referred to as 'papers' in this example):

> At the time and also when we had 20-credit papers in the degree we had
> a huge amount of argument and tutors were really digging their toes in
> when Academic Board notified that unless we did external papers [...],

> we were forced we thought to change from 20-credit papers to 15-credit papers to be consistent with everyone else and that's just stuck with us. Fifteen credits is it now and I assume it's a regulation I'm not necessarily clear on but whether that implies the certificate programmes or not? [...] The previous programme was just four years no credits and that went really well. It just gives you so much flexibility, which we have tried to transfer into now what seems to be a restricted 15-credit course and I guess that's going to show down; well, sometimes we have to bend the rules. (M-46)

Consistency was identified as a theme in the image of the rational lens. It was explained as either an expression of discourses of sameness, or of organisational efficiency, which is found in neo-liberalist discourses of new public management (Boston, et al., 1996). Again, this example can be explained as a meta-negotiation, as it negotiates the power structures underpinning the decision-making on credits.

The lack of references to negotiations with the images of the personal experience and the cultural lenses in Table XXXV may be understood when considering that negotiation is probably inherent in these images. The personal experience lens showed how people negotiated their life experiences with the world around them. The cultural lens showed how people negotiated differences from the norm. Therefore the negotiations are likely to already have been incorporated in the images of these lenses.

11.4 The Image of the Social-Political Lens

The image of the social-political lens shows programme design practice as a web of relationships, which are grounded in responsibilities to and negotiations of power and interests. The image is visualised in Figure 32. The concentric ovals and the surrounding square, representing the design team and society, respectively, are a modified version of Figure 31, consisting of the assumed and assigned roles and responsibilities of these actors. The connections between the layers within the design team are formed by political responsibility, autonomy, self-interest, and ethical, teaching and learning, business, rational, personal experience and cultural interests and commitments, as well as negotiations amongst all of these. Therefore these

are shown to go across the layers of the design team. Particularly political responsibility and to a lesser extent autonomy connect the design team with society, which is shown through them reaching outside the ovals. The major negotiations identified from the data (highlighted in Table XXXV on Page 287) are indicated with arrows. Other arrows have been left out for readability purposes. The colours of the ovals representing the ethical, teaching and learning, business, rational, personal experience and cultural interests and commitments align with the colours of the images of the lenses in the previous six chapters, to show the connection between the image of the social-political lens and the other six images. The image of the social-political lens can be partly understood in terms of agency theory and new public management discourses, but these discourses do not explain the negotiations. The latter are underpinned by whichever tensions are being negotiated, the discourses these tensions are grounded in, and the power they exercise.
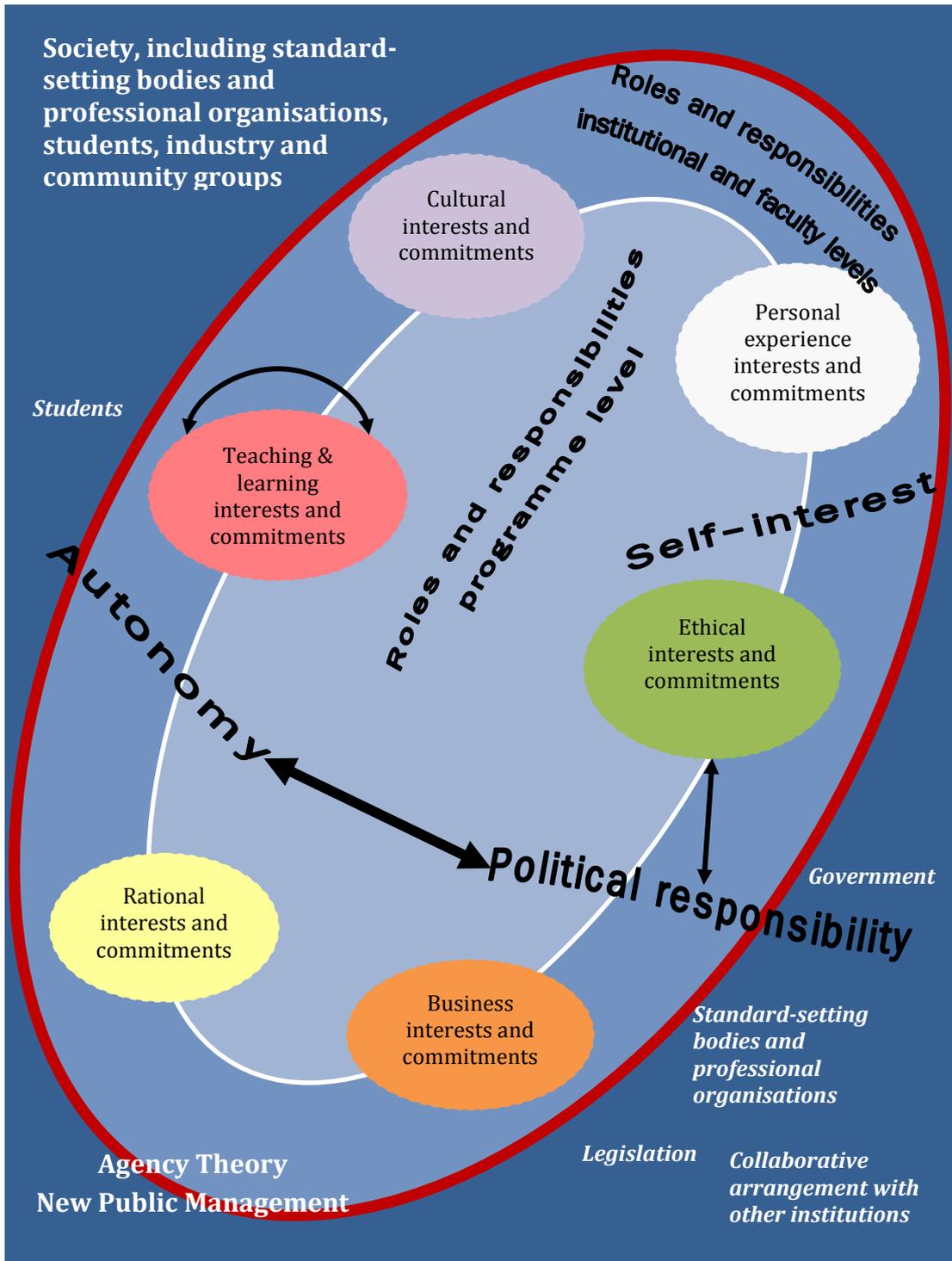
Figure 32: The image of programme design practice as seen through the social-political lens. The concentric ovals represent the layers of the design team, surrounded by society. Political responsibility, autonomy, self-interest, and ethical, teaching and learning, business, rational, personal experience and cultural interests and commitments as well as negotiations amongst all of these connect the layers. Political responsibility and autonomy also connect the design team with society. For readability purposes only the major negotiations identified from the data are indicated with arrows. At the bottom the identified ideological discourses underpinning the layered structure of this image are shown. Other discourses are hidden in the negotiations.

CHAPTER 12: DISCUSSION

12.1 Introduction

This thesis focuses on understanding programme design practice in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand, guided by two research questions:

- For the context of diploma and certificate programmes in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand, how can programme design practice be theorised, acknowledging the complexity of this practice?

- How can design practice of diploma and certificate programmes in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand be understood in terms of ideologies?

At this stage, the data analysis and theorising processes that lead to answering these questions, and were described in Section 3.6, have been partially completed, as the following explains.

To identify the vertical patterns in the data, I analysed 'what' people find important when thinking and making decisions about a programme and mapped these against the findings from the literature. These findings were presented in Chapter 4. They showed the components and elements of educational practice that can be considered to be included in programme design practice. However, Chapter 4 was unable to explain why people found important what they found important.

I subsequently identified horizontal patterns in the data, by analysing the 'why's of decision-makers' considerations and decisions, from their perspectives. Seven distinct ways of looking at these 'why's were found, as if programme design practice was able to be observed through seven lenses: the teaching and learning lens; the rational lens; the cultural lens; the personal experience lens; the ethical lens; the business lens; and, the social-political lens. The images of these lenses were described in Chapters 5 to 11, respectively, in the form of collections of themes identified from the data.

The first step in the theorising process involved the explanation of each lens image, in terms of ideological discourses found in society, where possible.

Where not, other possible explanations were sought using relevant literature. The results from this first theorising step were described in the final few sections of each of Chapters 5 to 11, in the form of what could be seen as seven 'mini-theories'.

The first theorising step has not only resulted in seven 'mini-theories'; it has also shown that these mini-theories are interconnected, since related or similar discourses are able to explain parts of different lens images. For example, agency theory has been shown to explain parts of the image of the business lens as well as parts of the social-political lens. Similarly, market centrality was able to explain parts of the image of the rational lens, but is also closely related to public choice discourses that explained parts of the image of the teaching and learning lens. Furthermore, the development process of the mini-theories has shown various instances where lens images could be understood better if already developed understandings from other lens images were taken into account. For example, the identification of the production process and guided tour metaphors through the teaching and learning lens contributed to understanding the deficiency approach to difference as identified for the cultural lens (Section 7.7). Likewise, the professional responsibility of decision-makers that was identified through the ethical lens helped explain why the business lens hardly showed any references to the industry as customer (Section 10.3).

These interconnections suggest that the mini-theories are part of a bigger scheme, where theorising the total is likely to provide a more comprehensive answer to the research questions than just the sum of the individual mini-theories. Theorising the total of programme design practice is the second and yet to be completed step of the theorising process as explained in Section 3.6.5. For this second step, I used the approach to theorising which Delamont (1992) describes as starting with a "grand theory" and working "down" to a specific situation (p. 160), in this case the specific situation of design practice of certificate and diploma programmes in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Inspired by the emergence of a multitude of (seven) distinct lenses from the data and by the evident interconnectedness of the mini-theories

that explained the images of these lenses, I found complexity theory to be a meaningful framework to use as the 'grand theory' for this approach to theorising. In the next section, I outline those aspects of complexity theory that have appeared useful to theorise the total of programme design practice for the context of this study, including how I have used these aspects to provide a comprehensive answer to the research questions. Next, in Section 12.3, I provide an in-depth argument for theorising programme design practice in this way, using the findings from Chapters 4 to 11 as evidence. Section 12.4 explains how the findings from this study contribute to existing knowledge, while Section 12.5 discusses to what extent they can be generalised to other situations. The implications of the findings for practice are examined in Section 12.6, again drawing on useful insights from complexity theory. Some of these implications are applied in Section 12.7 to understand the potential impact of recent Aotearoa/New Zealand government policies on programmes in polytechnics. Finally, Section 12.8 outlines the limitations of this study, which includes, but is not limited to, a discussion of the influences of the researcher on the findings.

12.2 Complexity Theory and Programme Design Practice

Complexity theory claims that phenomena can be understood as complex systems, which consist of innumerable constituents that connect, interact, organise and re-organise in countless ways (Mason, 2008). There is however no one definition or conceptualisation of complexity or complexity theory (Aldaheff-Jones, 2008). A major distinction between different conceptualisations is whether or not a system is deterministic, that is, whether the new possibilities that emerge from a complex system are foreseeable or not (Aldaheff-Jones, 2008; Osberg & Biesta, 2007). This depends on whether the complex system is closed or open. Determinism is related to closed systems, which do not interact with the outside world. Open systems, on the other hand, interact continuously with their environment, allowing adaptation and development in unpredictable ways (Osberg & Biesta, 2007). Because of the interconnectedness of the constituents within

an open complex system and of the interaction of the complex system with the environment, the system cannot be broken down in its parts, without losing some essential characteristics of the system (Davis, Sumara, & Luce-Kapler, 2008). This makes it difficult to create a picture of what the whole of the system looks like. The only way to get an indication of this is to study patterns within the system that are identified in the moment (Smitherman, 2005). In this study, the images of the seven lenses can be seen as seven different orientations from which to study these patterns.

To theorise programme design practice as a whole and provide a comprehensive answer to the research questions in this study I start with arguing that understanding and explaining programme design practice requires that

> **a programme is theorised as an open complex system, the constituents of which are people's considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships.**

A programme system is open in the sense that its constituents continuously interact with the outside world, that is, the world around the system. However, the acknowledgement of an 'outside world' requires that there are boundaries around the programme system that define which considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships are included in the system and which are part of the 'outside world'. These boundaries provide a stable identity to the complex system. That is, they ensure that people have a common notion about the concept of a programme. I will elaborate on both the boundaries and the openness of the programme system below.

With regard to the boundaries around the programme system, two types can be identified. Firstly, there are boundaries around the constituents, in the sense that the considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships involved only concern those aspects of education that are assigned to the concept of 'programme'. These aspects were identified in Chapter 4 for the current case study, with support from the programme design literature. They consist of six components: consultation for and development of a programme; intentions; structure and instruction;

administration and management; assessment; and evaluation of a programme, and (sub-)elements within these components. Secondly, there are boundaries around the people who create the constituents. For this case study they were identified in Chapter 11, and named as the design team. The involvement of people in the system means that the considerations, language, silences, experiences, and relationships continuously change. As a consequence, a programme system that is made up of these constituents changes continuously as well and is therefore dynamic. Hence, a programme system has a stable identity, but is dynamic at the same time. This dynamic stability is inherent to complex systems (Davis, et al., 2008).

The openness, or the continuous interaction of the programme system's constituents with the outside world, is found in people having a breadth of experiences across their professional and personal lives. Some experiences fall within the boundaries of the programme system and others do not. However, the experiences inside and outside the system are intimately connected and are expressed through the person who has the experiences. In addition, the people in the design team, that is, the people within the system's boundaries, interact with people outside the system. This means that the design team's considerations, the language they use, the norms found in what they do and do not say, and their relationships, interact with those of the people outside the system.

The interactions between the system's constituents and the outside world shape subsequent interactions within the system, and thus create new possibilities for the system as a whole. This process allows a programme as an open complex system to learn and develop without the help of an overseer (Davis, et al., 2008; Mason, 2008). In other words, a programme that is theorised as an open complex system is not designed or developed, but develops itself. Therefore,

> **Programme design practice can be theorised as the programme system's adaptation to influences from outside.**

Using the statements that propose to theorise a programme as an open complex system and programme design practice as the programme system's

adaptation to the influences from outside, a programme can be visualised as a swarm of constituents. A two-dimensional representation of an arbitrary example of such a swarm is shown in Figure 33, including the (open) boundaries that indicate where the programme system 'finishes' and the rest of the world begins. What holds the swarm together is its internal redundancy (Davis, et al., 2008), that is, the similarity in people's considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships. This redundancy allows the constituents of the system to work together and gives the programme its robustness and stability. The redundancy can be explained through the influence of power structures (Mason, 2008), as follows: as the system's continuous interaction with the outside world creates new considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships, the programme system continues to adapt, but this adaptation is not random. The prevailing power structures will "lock-in" the new constituents and steer them in a particular direction. This is a result of the "positive feedback to or self-reinforcement of phenomena, a process which is characterised by the increased incidence and significance of initially apparently trivial events under the random conduciveness of circumstances" (Mason, 2008, p. 42). In this study the self-reinforcement of phenomena, which results in redundancy, is visible in the themes that were identified within the images of each lens in Chapters 5 to 11. Most themes were shown to have been shaped, or "locked-in", by particular ideological discourses. At the same time, the themes confirmed and strengthened the discourses.

For this reason,

Ideological discourses can be theorised as the power structures that shape the direction of the adaptation of the programme system.

Ideological discourses are integral to a complex programme system, but simultaneously they form an external power that shapes the direction of the system's adaptation. This external power is exercised through the programme system's interaction with other systems. For example, the people whose considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships
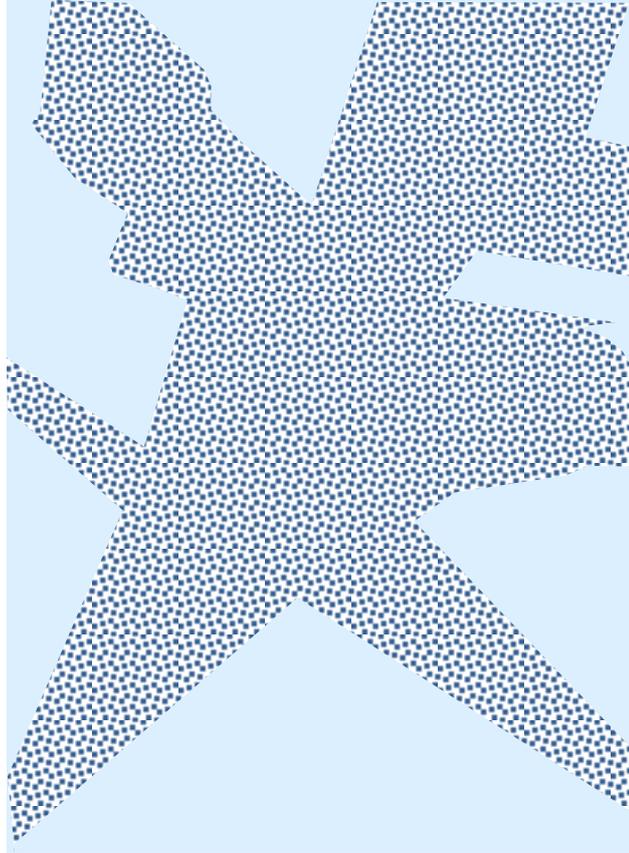
Figure 33: Two-dimensional representation of a programme as a 'swarm' or a complex system. The dots indicate considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships. The 'tentacles' represent directions of the system's adaptation shaped by ideological discourses.

make up the programme system can be seen as systems themselves, and the development of these people, in the form of their ongoing life experiences and thoughts, creates triggers and disturbances that cause the programme system to respond and change (Davis, et al., 2008). Another example is where a programme system interacts with society as a complex system. The interaction between the two systems triggers a programme to adapt in the directions of ideological discourses that are shaped by the society system.

To summarise, in this section I have started to argue that:

> A **programme** can be theorised as an open **complex** system, the **constituents** of which are people's considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships;

> **Programme design practice** can be theorised as the programme system's **adaptation to influences from outside**; and,

> **Ideological discourses** can be theorised as the **power structures** that shape **the direction** of the adaptation of the programme system.

In the next section I will further detail and make a case for this proposed theory, using the findings from Chapters 4 to 11.

12.3 The Programme System in this Case Study

This section provides evidence that argues for the proposed theory for programme design as summarised in the three statements at the end of the previous section. Evidence will be drawn from the case that is studied in this thesis, using the findings from Chapters 4 to 11. It was noted in the previous section that the only way to create an indicative picture of a complex system is to study patterns within the system that are identified in the moment (Smitherman, 2005). Chapters 5 to 11 demonstrated that these patterns can be identified and studied through different lenses. The patterns observed through each of seven lenses were presented in the form of themes. These themes were interpreted from data that were generated at a particular moment in time, and could therefore only provide an indication of what the complex programme system looked like at the time of data generation.Since the time of data generation the programmes studied in this thesis have most likely changed. To acknowledge this, I will refer to the evidence using the past tense. The following argument consists of four parts: the constituents of the programme system; the adaptation of the programme system to influences from outside; the complex system as more than the sum of the lens

images; and, the role of ideological discourses as forces of power and direction.

The constituents of the programme system

The constituents of a complex programme system are people's considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships. The findings from Chapter 4 showed what the considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships were about, while the identification of the design team in Chapter 11 showed whose considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships were included in the system. The following explains how the themes identified in Chapters 5 to 11, and therefore the system as a whole, can be seen as constituted by considerations, language, silences, experiences and/or relationships.

Considerations I define here as thoughts, deliberations and reflections that people use to make decisions. I asked for these during the interviews, but they were also found in the statements in the documentation I analysed. In this sense all themes in all Chapters 5 to 11 can be seen as consisting of considerations that were distilled from the data. I was able to identify similarities, or internal redundancies, between considerations in the form of themes in the images of each lens. As a specific example, the business lens in Chapter 10 showed themes as groups of similar business considerations in programme design. For example, business considerations that were similar because they all expressed a focus on customers were grouped in the customer focus theme. Other groups of similar business considerations were the financial considerations, effectiveness and efficiency, market considerations, and contractual obligations themes. Similarly, considerations were shown to form themes in all other chapters. However, in these other chapters the considerations went hand-in-hand with other types of constituents of the system.

I have defined *language* as the words and expressions that people use to articulate programme design considerations and decisions. The role of language as a constituent of the programme system is most evident in

Chapter 5, in which programme design practice was observed through a teaching and learning lens. Chapter 5 explained how similarities and differences across people's words and expressions led to the emergence of five distinct themes, presented as metaphors for a programme: a consumable product, a production process, a guided tour, a guided adventure, or a mission. The contribution of these metaphors to the complex system was that they indicated the interplay of different meanings of learning, teaching, knowledge, and how these were organised. Other contributions of language to the system were less explicit than in Chapter 5. As I explained in the Methodology chapter, I identified the themes in each of Chapters 5 to 11 by analysing not only what people said or what was written in the documents, but also how it was said or written, including which words and expressions people used. In this way language was an implicit constituent contributing to the images of all lenses.

Silences are defined here as considerations that remain unspoken or unwritten, but can be deduced from spoken or written considerations and from how these considerations are spoken or written. The contribution of silences to a programme system was particularly demonstrated in the image of the cultural lens in Chapter 7. The themes in Chapter 7 showed how considerations about and approaches to difference were connected with cultural normalcies that tend to be hidden in silences. It was pointed out that the identified considerations about difference can only be understood in combination with the silences of normalcy. Silences were also found in the image of the rational lens in Chapter 6, in combination with relationships.

The case for *relationships* as constituents of a programme system was made in three chapters. Chapter 6 showed that rationalisations as models and frameworks that describe *relationships between components/elements and other aspects* of programme design played an important part in people's considerations, providing confidence and simplicity when people made decisions about a programme. Often the rationalisations took the form of silences, because they had become norms that were no longer questioned. Chapters 9 and 11 demonstrated how *relationships between people* helped

constitute the complex programme system. In Chapter 9 the relationships highlighted by the ethical lens referred to professional and moral responsibilities that people felt towards others. Chapter 11 provided evidence for relationships in terms of peoples' assumed and assigned roles and responsibilities and their political commitments to the organisational structure and the outside world.

Finally, the personal experience lens highlighted how people's personal *experiences* contributed to the programme system. Some of these were experiences within the boundaries of the programme system, but Chapter 8 also provided examples of people's experiences in the world outside the programme system, and how these were brought into the system to contribute to its development. This brings me to the second part of the argument.

Adaptation of the programme system to influences from outside

While the experiences identified in Chapter 8 were explicit examples of how the programme system adapted to influences from outside, more implicit examples were found in the images of all other lenses. Defining 'outside' as people and groups of people who were not found to be members of the design team in Chapter 11, the following main groups of outside influences were identified:

- Influences from students as customers were visible in the consumable product and guided tour themes (teaching and learning lens), which showed how influences from students as customers helped shape the views on teaching and learning and the structure of programmes. These influences were also seen in the customer focus theme (business lens), supporting the programme system to adapt to meet the perceived wants and needs of the student-as-customer, and in the utilitarian themes in the image of the ethical lens.

  Relatively minor influences from students other than as customers were also identified, for example in the guided adventure theme (teaching and learning lens), and also in the communitarian themes of

the ethical lens.

The themes in the image of the ethical lens indicated how the influences from students as customers or otherwise interacted with the programme system through people's sense of moral and professional responsibility;

- Influences from the industry were found in the production process theme (teaching and learning lens), which helped shape views on the structure of a programme and on teaching and learning. These influences were also found in the image of the ethical lens, where meeting the needs of an industry was found as a strongly represented theme;

- Influences from society had a minor presence in the images of the ethical (utilitarian and communitarian themes) and teaching and learning lenses (mission theme), but were profound in the image of the cultural lens. This lens provided evidence how norms from society influenced the programme system by shaping particular approaches to difference;

- Influences from the government and standard-setting bodies were shown in the Aotearoa/New Zealand qualifications framework rationalisation in the image of the rational lens. Chapter 6 explained how these influences have contributed to the views on and structuring of knowledge in programmes. The image of the social-political lens provided insight in how influences from the government and standard-setting bodies have entered the programme system through people's sense of political responsibility; and,

- Influences from the field of education were particularly found in the image of the rational lens: the Tyler Rationale, Bloom's taxonomy and teaching frameworks, including learning styles, models, were all shown to have contributed to shaping the programme system in a particular way.

In summary, the above two parts of the argument provide evidence that for this case study: 1) the programme system is constituted of people's

considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships; and, 2) the programme system adapts to influences from outside. These influences appear to be brought into the system through people's experiences, as well as through their sense of ethical and political responsibility. However, the argument has not yet provided evidence how the constituents work together as part of a complex system. This is the topic of the third part of the argument.

The whole is more than the sum of the parts

While the lens images can be studied separately, as Chapters 5 to 11 have shown, they are interrelated and interconnected, and so can be considered to comprise a complex system in which the whole is more than the sum of the parts. The negotiations theme, which was identified in Chapter 11, provided explicit evidence for connections and interactions across the images of the lenses. Additionally, the final sections of Chapters 5 to 11 indicated that an image or theme cannot always be fully understood without considering another image or theme. A good example of this is the production process theme, which was visible through the teaching and learning lens (Chapter 5). Without considering any other images, this theme could be understood as an institution's commitment to government policies, which promote education for the purpose of the economy. However, the image of the ethical lens put a different slant on this explanation, as it showed a strong professional commitment of decision-makers to their industry. This implies that the explanation for the emergence of the production process theme through the teaching and learning lens is more complex that the study of only one lens would suggest. It also shows that the emergence of the production process theme was strengthened by the ethical lens. Another example of this strengthening can be seen in the role of the programme document. This document was identified as a rationalisation in Chapter 6, and can be explained as just that. However, combining this identification with the findings from Chapter 11, where the programme document was found to be an actor, and with those from Chapter 10, which identified the programme

document as a contract, helps to better understand how political commitment and contractual obligations to the programme document supported its survival as a rationalisation. A final example is the dominance of a deficiency approach to difference that was visible through the cultural lens (Chapter 7). No evidence was found in Chapter 7 that links this dominance to neo-liberalist discourses. However, when considering the image of the ethical lens at the same time, with its themes around the same rules for everyone, as well as the production process theme with the same outcomes for everyone, the dominance of deficiency discourses becomes connected to and able to be understood as to do with the influence of neo-liberalist discourses in the bigger scheme of the programme system.

In summary, the above shows that considering a programme system in its entirety, incorporating all perspectives in the form of the images of the seven lenses including their interconnections, enables a deeper understanding of programme design practice than studying each perspective individually. The power forces that drive the interconnection and the mutual strengthening of the lens images have been identified as ideological discourses from society.

Ideological discourses as forces of power and direction

Most identified themes in the images could be directly explained as expressions of ideological discourses as the final sections of Chapters 5 to 11 have argued. Figure 34 is a visualisation of the programme system in this case study at the time of data generation. It shows the relationships between: 1) the themes as patterns of similarity within in the programme system that were visible through the lenses; 2) the themes as expressions of ideological discourses; and, 3) ideological discourses. The dots in Figure 34 represent the considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships that made up the system, as was done in Figure 33 for a generic programme system. These constituents thread through the themes that were visible through each lens. Each theme identified in Chapters 5 to 11, excluding Chapter 8, is presented as an oval, where the colours of the ovals distinguish
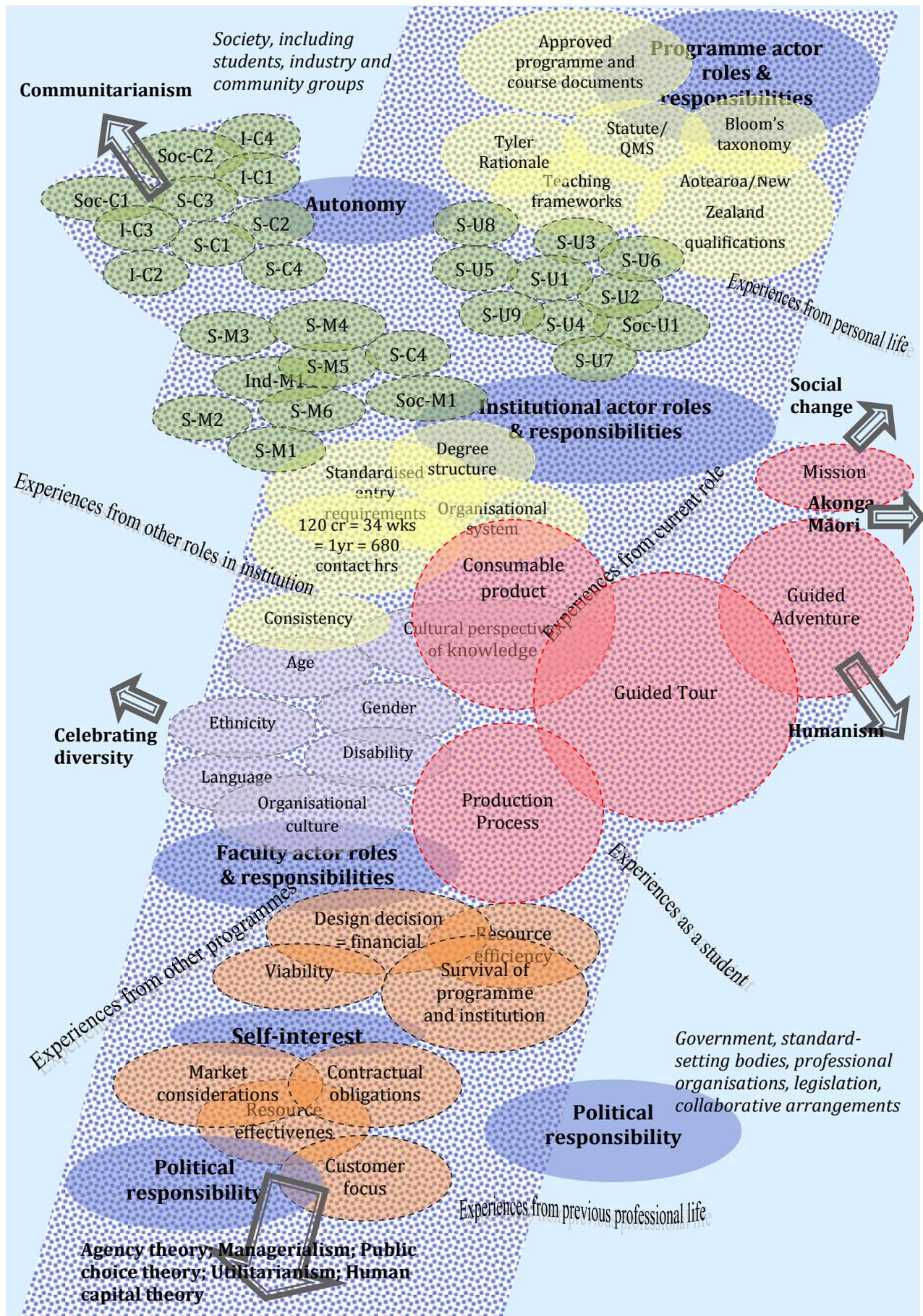
Figure 34: Programme system in the context of the case study, including the themes that were identified through the seven lenses. The colours of the themes distinguish the images of the lenses in Chapters 5 to 11. The explanations for the abbreviations of the themes in green are found in Chapter 9. The discourses indicating the direction of the system are shown in bold.

the images of the different lenses. The themes identified through the personal experience lens (Chapter 8) are represented as interactions between the system and the world around it. Themes that were found in Chapters 5 to 11 to be connected have been put together or are overlapping in Figure 34. The many dots outside the themes indicate that it is most likely there were other constituents at play when the data were generated that I have not been able to incorporate in this study. One reason is that I only spent a limited time interviewing each participant which has almost certainly prevented me from capturing all their considerations. Another reason is that the data were generated over a period of 16 months. There is little doubt that during this period new constituents emerged that I was not able to include in the data.

Ideological discourses shape the programme in particular directions over time. The prevailing direction identified in Chapters 5 to 11 is that of neo-liberalist discourses, which "regard the community as founded upon economic relations" (Ball, 2006, p. 39). They include discourses of public choice, managerialism and new public management, agency theory, utilitarianism and human capital theory (Boston, et al., 1996; Codd, 2005a; S. Harris, 2007; Olssen, et al., 2004). The prevailing direction is visualised in Figure 34 through the main vertical 'trunk', which contains all themes identified in Chapters 5 to 11 that were explained in terms of neo-liberalist discourses. These discourses have shaped a programme as a business enterprise, where students and/or industry are seen as customers whose wants and desires need to be fulfilled. This goes beyond the identification of the image of the business lens and the market considerations, customer focus, resource effectiveness, and contractual obligations themes within this image. It is also demonstrated by and further refined through the consumable product and production process metaphors (teaching and learning lens) and the utilitarian themes in the image of the ethical lens.

The following other themes were identified in the system as following the direction of neo-liberalist discourses. They reinforce the shaping of a programme as a business enterprise:

- A strong sense of political responsibility was identified to organisations external to the system, particularly the government and standard-setting bodies. This was evident in the image of the social-political lens. This political responsibility followed agency theory discourses, showing how these organisations as principals have exchanges with the case study institution as agent according to agreed relationships. Within the programme system, a similar principal-agent relationship was found between the Statute/QMS and approved programme documents on the one hand and their users within the case study institution on the other. The political responsibility to these documents resulted in the documents becoming part of the design team, as was demonstrated in Chapter 11. This implies that the considerations, language, silences and relationships presented in these documents were constituents of the programme system. The findings of Chapters 5 to 7 and 9 to 11 all showed how the texts in the Statute/QMS and the Programme A documents contributed to the construction of the themes within the system.

- The organisational structure, in the sense of who is in the design team, showed a similar principal-agent structure, as programme design was seen as an assigned task to the institution by the outside world (social-political lens). Within the design team, assigning of tasks continued through assigned and assumed roles and responsibilities at different levels in the team (social-political lens).

- The idea of designing a programme before any customers – students – become involved was promoted in the consumable product metaphor (teaching and learning lens), the non-involvement of students in the design team (social-political lens), deficit approaches to difference in ethnicity, disability, language, age and gender (cultural lens), and open access, where the student carries the consequences of their enrolment (ethical lens).

- There was limited explicit concern for what knowledge is of most value. This decision was entrusted to the perceived wants and desires of the

mainstream customers, be it students or industries. Evidence of this type of customer focus is found in the consumable product and production process metaphors (teaching and learning lens) and in the cultural aspects of knowledge (cultural lens).

- Programme design was promoted as an industrial process, as shown by the production process metaphor (teaching and learning lens), which is driven by rational outcomes-focused models that encourage efficiency, including the Tyler Rationale, the Aotearoa/ New Zealand qualifications system, the Academic Statute and Quality Management System, and Bloom's taxonomy (rational lens).

While the above shows how neo-liberalist discourses have shaped the idea of a programme as a business enterprise, the findings indicate that the direction of the adaptation of the programme system in the case study was not entirely dominated by neo-liberalist discourses. Some themes were shown to mirror different ideologies and point in distinctly different directions. These themes were few but significant. They are shown in Figure 34 as 'bulges' and 'branches' that 'grow' away from the direction of the 'trunk'. For example, through the teaching and learning lens the guided adventure and mission metaphors were visible. These followed the direction of humanist, social change and/or akonga Māori discourses. Likewise, the ethical lens showed themes that had emerged from communitarian discourses.

However, in most cases where non-neo-liberalist discourses had the potential to shape alternative directions of the system, they did not seem to have had sufficient power to do so, and were "gathered up in the path" of neo-liberalism (Mason, 2008, p. 40). Findings suggest this occurred in different ways:

- By finding a middle way between the directions of discourses. This was visible in the emergence of the guided tour metaphor (teaching and learning lens), which was shown to be a middle way between public choice and human capital theory discourses with humanism and akonga Māori, however with a strong preponderance of the neo-liberalist discourses. It was also seen in the complex interplay

of communitarian and utilitarian discourses around three of the student access sub-themes explained in Chapter 9 (ethical lens).

- By weaving the discourse paths together so they could strengthen each other.

This was found particularly in themes related to responsibility, where political responsibility strengthened professional responsibility and vice versa. For example, the neo-liberalist principal-agent structure of the design team identified through the social-political lens was strengthened by a communitarian professional responsibility to the institution (ethical lens). Similarly, meeting the needs of an industry as a professional responsibility (ethical lens) strengthened the human capital theory discourse that supported the production process metaphor (teaching and learning lens), and vice versa. As a third example, the themes that indicated a responsibility to students all reinforced each other, although they shaped and were shaped by different discourses: ethical responsibility to students was grounded in either utilitarian or communitarian discourses (ethical lens), the guided adventure metaphor in humanist and/or akonga Māori discourses(teaching and learning lens), while the view of the student as the customer in the consumable product and guided tour metaphors (teaching and learning lens) and in the customer focus theme (business lens) reflected neo-liberalist discourses.

This weaving process resonates with Olssen's observations on the development of lifelong learning discourses, showing "how educational and economic practices mutually condition and adapt to each other" (Olssen, 2006, p. 213).

- By leaving themes or concepts multi-explanatory so they could, in principle, follow neo-liberalist or other discourses.

The themes of 120 credits = 34 weeks = 1 year = 680 contact hours, consistency, degree structure, standardised entry requirements and organisational system (all rational lens) fell in this category, as they were explained to possibly have followed the direction of either neo-

liberalist organisational efficiency discourses or sameness discourses. Other examples were 'fairness' and 'society' which were shown through the ethical lens to have different meanings within different discourses. Furthermore, the teaching and learning lens showed clearly how the concept of 'programme' was multi-explanatory depending on which discourse direction was followed. It is likely that the direction of all these themes or concepts has been subsumed by the neo-liberalist discourses, because those discourses were so much stronger than the alternatives.

Finally, there were themes identified in Chapters 5 to 11 that did not seem to be related to discourses. One category of such themes consisted of the personal experiences of the people involved (personal experience lens in Chapter 8). This is an example of how the programme system interacted with people as systems. Chapter 8 identified that people added experiences to the programme system from other roles they had in the institution, their involvement with other programmes, their previous professional roles, their experiences as a student themselves and their personal lives. The examples in Chapter 8 showed how these experiences influenced the system. Another category of non-discourse-related themes was identified through the business lens. These themes demonstrated a need for the survival of the programme and the institution, possibly because survival of the programme supported the survival of the people involved. Similarly, it seemed important for the institution that a programme survived, because this would support survival of the institution. This later point strengthens the idea of a programme as an open complex, 'living', system, which needs to interact with its environment for survival, and by doing so, it simultaneously creates the environment as well as the survival of the environment (Stacey, Griffin, & Shaw, 2000).

12.4 Contribution to Existing Knowledge

This thesis has taken up the challenge put forward by Radford (2008) for educational researchers to engage with the possibilities that complexity

theory can offer. The study presented in this thesis has resulted in a theory that provides new knowledge about programme design practice, by explaining this practice within the framework of complexity theory. This section outlines in more detail how the findings of this study contribute to existing knowledge of programme design.

12.4.1. Contribution to Knowledge of Programme Design Theory

The following overview explains how the theory for programme design practice grounded in complexity theory, summarised at the end of Section 12.2, acknowledges, integrates and builds on existing theories and thinking that was summed up in the literature review in Chapter 2, Section 2.3. Specific findings regarding the lenses, themes and discourses that were identified for this particular case study also acknowledge some of the literature findings.

The new theory encompasses Tylerian approaches, which were shown in Chapter 2 to have had a strong influence on programme design in adult education. These approaches are represented in the six components that define which constituents are part of the programme system and which are not. The Tyler Rationale was also identified as one of the themes in the image of the rational lens.

The complexity theory for programme design presented in this chapter encompasses Cervero and Wilson's theory (e.g. 1994, 1998), which describes programme design as negotiations of interests and power, which are rooted in social and organisational relationships. Negotiations of power and interests were identified as a distinct and substantive theme in the image of the social-political lens. The findings in Chapter 11 (Section 11.3) were partially explained using the theory by Cervero and Wilson. The new theory explains interests and power as exercised through ideological discourses as discussed in Sections 12.2 and 12.3. These are shaped by interactions (or relationships, in Cervero and Wilson's terms) between constituents that are inherently social and organisational, because the constituents are contributed by people.

The theory developed in this thesis accounts as follows for the unease about the lack of useful existing theories expressed by the various authors referred to in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1. Firstly, it acknowledges and incorporates societal influences on programme design (Burgess, 2004; Slaughter, 1997). These influences are particularly visible in the political responsibilities theme that was visible through the social-political lens. They are also found in the image of the cultural lens, which showed how normalcies from society (e.g. the gender normalcy in a particular industry, or the ethnicity normalcy in Aotearoa/New Zealand) influence programme design practice. Secondly, the new theory incorporates power negotiations from government to department levels (Schuyler, 1998), which are included in the negotiations theme in the image of the social-political lens. Thirdly, the use of complexity theory for the new theory builds on the notion of complexity and situation-dependency that was flagged by Sloane-Seale (1997). Finally, the theory demonstrates similarities with other contexts, for example with universities in the United Kingdom, where neo-liberalist discourses were also found to strongly influence curriculum (Barnett, 2000; Barnett & Coate, 2005; Barnett, et al., 2001). Additional comment on possible generalisation of the theory to other contexts, e.g. non-formal education (Egan, 2005), is provided in Section 12.5.

The theory developed here provides new insights in the relationship between design and implementation, which add to the discussion in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.4. In that discussion a range of perspectives on the boundaries between design and implementation was identified. The new theory steers away from the distinction between programme design and implementation. When programme design is theorised as the adaptation of a complex programme system to influences from outside, design is continuous, from the moment the programme system emerges to the point where it 'dies'. What is commonly referred to as 'design' and 'implementation' merges into one continuous process of design. This takes the ideas of 'design-in-advance' and 'design-in-action', that were introduced by Barnett and Coate (2005) and referred to in Section 2.3.1, one step further. The acknowledgement of a continuous

process of design implies acknowledgement that, for example, teachers who make decisions on which resources to use in the classroom design a programme just as much as those who create the approval documentation. However, in my experience, people do use the term 'design' to distinguish it from 'implementation'. The new theory offers an explanation how people's experience of this distinction is shaped by the discourses or power structures at play, as the distinction tends to be used to separate the stage of approval of the programme documents by some authority from the stage after approval. Applying this new theory, the need for an approval stage in this case study has come about under the influence of neo-liberalist, and particularly managerialist, discourses. To obtain funding for a programme, the programme specifics must be written down in a document, which forms the contract with the funder. The stage up to the completion of this document tends to be referred to as 'design', while everything afterwards is called 'implementation'. But after the approval stage the programme system develops further, and thus the design continues. The documents become integrated in the system as part of its 'memory' (Davis, et al., 2008), and as actors, a role that was demonstrated in Chapter 11.

The understanding of programme design practice developed in this study was inspired by and builds on the idea of curriculum texts in compulsory education (Pinar, et al., 1995). This was explained in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.4, and in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.2. The idea of texts is reflected in the use of the lens metaphor to study different perspectives of the complex programme system. As was explained in Section 2.3.4, Pinar et al.'s (1995) work relates to understanding the entire field of curriculum through different perspectives, not on understanding individual curriculum design situations. Furthermore, their focus is on compulsory education in the United States of America, and not on polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Therefore, it is not surprising that the lenses identified in this case study have ended up being different from the texts by Pinar et al. (1995).

The programme design theory developed in this study contests the contrast described by Doll (2005) between the use of complexity theory and the

'culture of method', that is, the promotion of scientific approaches to curriculum, which was referred to in Section 2.3.4. If a programme is theorised as a complex system, 'methods', like the Tyler Rationale, can be seen as examples of what Biesta (2010) refers to as complexity reduction. This is a process of channelling and simplifying a complex construct into something that has an illusion of predictability and controllability. 'Methods' were particularly visible in the image of the rational lens, and were referred to as rationalisations. They were shown in Section 6.4 to shape and be shaped by ideological discourses from society, particularly neo-liberalist discourses, including performativity and most likely organisational efficiency discourses. Rationalisations as well as the discourses that they shape and that shape them are integral to the complex programme system. They are not, as Doll (2005) seems to suggest, in conflict with the notion of a complex system. The prevailing, in this case neo-liberalist, discourses exercise the power to make the political 'decisions' in whose interest complexity is reduced, which aligns with Biesta's observation that complexity reduction is highly political (Biesta, 2010).

The theory developed in this thesis further demonstrates how programme design practice can be explained in terms of its underpinning ideological discourses, and therefore bridges the disconnect between ideology and programme design research that was concluded from the literature review in Chapter 2, Section 2.5. The new theory describes how a complex programme system incorporates ideological discourses from society and how the direction of its adaptation is shaped by these discourses. In this way the theory goes some way to explaining how ideological discourses and their tensions play out in actual programme design practice. This process was described in the Section 12.3, which explained how ideological discourses exercise power and provide direction to a programme system in the particular case study described in this thesis.

Summarising, the theory developed in this thesis is able to integrate the disconnected understandings of programme design practice in tertiary education that were presented in the literature. It also adds to the literature,

as it is able to account for the notions of complexity that were identified from the literature. More importantly, it is able to give a comprehensive indication of what this complexity looks like for a particular context, that is, the context of certificate and diploma programmes in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This seems a significant contribution to existing knowledge as no other findings of this kind were found in the literature.

12.4.2. Contribution to Knowledge of Programme Design Practice in Polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand

In Section 2.4 it was found that the literature related to understanding programme design practice in the Aotearoa/New Zealand context was very limited, and focused almost entirely on the impact of tertiary education and curriculum policies on programme design.

The main contribution of this study to knowledge of programme design practice in polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand is that the findings have provided a theory of programme design practice that, almost certainly, did not exist previously. In addition, the findings are able to add to the five areas of tension between the perspectives of educators and the views promoted by government policies that were noted in Section 2.4 as having to be included in theorising programme design practice. As outlined below, they elaborate on these areas and refine them for the specific case of provider certificate and diploma programmes in polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

- *Accountability: external/managerial versus internal/professional*

This study confirms the tension between external and internal accountability, which is explicitly visible in the tensions between political and ethical responsibilities that were identified in the negotiations theme in the image of the social-political lens. Furthermore, many negotiations were found between political responsibility and autonomy, which demonstrates the ongoing seeking of a balance between what needs to be controlled (external accountability) and what can be left to the professional responsibility (internal accountability) of practitioners. What is new, is that the inherent

tension between the discourses that shape these two types of accountability has played out in this particular case study as interweaving of the discourse paths, as explained in Section 12.3. As a result the two types of accountability appear to strengthen each other.

- *The programme design process: educators' concerns with the government policies that encourage pre-definition of learning outcomes, limited involvement of teachers in the design stage, difficulty for students to strive for excellence, and lack of integration and depth of learning in programmes*

Confirmation of tensions in the programme design process was particularly found in the image of the teaching and learning lens. Encouragement of pre-defining learning outcomes and the difficulty for students to strive for excellence can be seen in the production process metaphor, while limited involvement of teachers in the design stage and lack of integration and depth of learning in programmes are characteristic of the consumable product metaphor. What this study has added is that the tensions seem to have evolved into a new conceptualisation of a programme, which I identified as a guided tour metaphor. This metaphor was shown in Chapter 5 to form a midway between the discourses of government policies and those traditionally supported by adult educators.

- *The meanings of student-centred learning: student access versus student autonomy*

The negotiation of different ideologies in relation to student-centred learning in this case study has appeared to strongly favour neo-liberalist discourses. The social-political lens demonstrated how students were not seen as actors in programme design practice in this particular case study, implying that programmes are not designed *with* students. The teaching and learning lens, the ethical lens, and the business lens showed dominance of the view on students as customers, where programmes are designed *for* students. This is in line with the literature review findings in Section 2.4, which indicated that student-centred learning in government policies tends to be interpreted as student access, in terms of offering opportunity and choice, rather than allowing students to take control over their own learning.

- *Concepts of knowledge: educators' concerns with the lack of openness in the concepts of knowledge, the one-sided view on what knowledge is valued, and the fragmentation of knowledge that are promoted by government policies*

This study reinforces the concepts of knowledge and of knowledge acquisition that were identified in Section 2.4 as being promoted by tertiary education policies in Aotearoa/New Zealand. That is, valued knowledge is pre-defined, decided unilaterally by industry and professional groups, and fragmented into isolated components. This reinforcement was visible in the images of various lenses:

- o Two strongly represented metaphors in the image of the teaching and learning lens shared the above concepts of knowledge: Valued knowledge in the production process is what the industry wants, while the fragmentation of knowledge into isolated components is promoted through the consumable product metaphor;

- o The image of the rational lens identified the Aotearoa/New Zealand qualifications system as a rationalisation. This system was shown in Chapter 6 to define knowledge as being external to individuals, which enables knowledge to be pre-defined. The system was also shown to define knowledge as being decontextualised and able to be broken down into independent blocks (courses or components or unit standards) which can then be put together in an infinite number of ways to make up qualifications. Because the qualifications system had become a rationalisation, these definitions of knowledge continued to be reinforced unconsciously; and,

- o In the image of the cultural lens the cultural aspects of knowledge appeared to be disregarded. As a consequence of the silence about decisions on knowledge, instrumentalist and conservative views of knowledge (Wheelahan, 2008) as critiqued in Section 2.4 continued to be promoted.

- *Cultural diversity: the tension of students studying in an education system or a programme that is grounded in a culture with which the students cannot identify*

The tension around cultural diversity highlighted in Section 2.4 was limited to culture defined as ethnicity. The approach to ethnic diversity was highlighted through the cultural lens. The image of this lens confirmed the identified tensions from Section 2.4 that mainstream-centric education is generally reinforced through deficit approaches. However, some approaches were identified in this study that celebrated diversity. One was the existence of a department within the institution where being Māori is considered normal. What this study has added to the findings in Section 2.4 are other dimensions of culture that, as Chapter 7 has shown, have contributed to what is considered mainstream-centric or normal in programme design practice: people's first language; disability; gender; age; organisational culture; and cultural concepts of knowledge. The cultural lens also pointed out that the tension of cultural diversity not only related to students, but also to programme design practitioners, for example, teachers.

Thus the new theory and the case study considered within this new theory account for the five areas of tension found in the literature, but they have shown that the neo-liberalist discourses underpinning tertiary education and curriculum policies have had a much wider and refined influence on programme design than expressed in those five areas. This wider influence is visible in the identified themes within this study that were not found in the literature, and how they are interrelated within the images of the lenses and within the complex programme system as a whole.

12.5 Generalisation of the Findings

12.5.1. Generalisation to Other Programmes

There are strong indications that the new theory can be generalised to other certificate and diploma programmes in the institution, as the following

explains. There is no evidence at this stage that indicates to what extent the theory would be applicable to degree programmes.

This study was conducted as a case study including multiple embedded cases with a purpose of exploring analytic generalisation of the theory. Each of Chapters 5 to 11 has commented on differences that were observed between the different embedded cases. The embedded cases were selected on the basis of their level (institutional, certificate or diploma) and whether or not they were subject to external requirements. However, these factors did not seem to have much influence on the patterns or themes that emerged from the data. Overall, the patterns were very similar across the embedded cases, which supports generalisation. However, there was one exception. The Programme C decision-makers' references were significantly different from the other cases in the images of most lenses. In the image of the teaching and learning lens, the dominant metaphors referred to by these decision-makers appeared to be the guided tour and the guided adventure, compared to a dominance of production process, guided tour, and consumable product for the others. The emergence of the mission was particularly due to the Programme C embedded case. Both the rational and the business lens showed very few references from Programme C decision-makers, while the ethical lens indicated a much higher percentage of references to communitarian discourses from this decision-maker group than from the others. Finally, the social-political lens showed hardly any references to political responsibility from this group, and relatively the highest number of references to negotiations. No differences in patterns were found between Programme C and other decision-makers in the images of the cultural and personal experience lenses.

Chapter 5 noted that Programme C was taught from a Māori context and world view. It was explained how the emergence of the guided tour and the mission for this programme can be understood from Māori concepts of teaching and learning, which are reflected in akonga Māori. The guided tour in this respect may be seen as a mid-way between akonga Māori and requirements for outcomes. The findings from Chapter 5 for Programme C

can also explain the patterns in the other chapters. Within akonga Māori, educators as well as students have a responsibility to the community, and the teacher can be seen as the students' travel companion. The large emphasis on communitarian themes aligns with this. Neither the guided adventure nor communitarian discourses are concerned with political responsibility to others; the only responsibility is professional and moral. This could explain Programme C decision-makers' limited concern with political responsibility in the image of the social-political lens. It may also explain the large number of negotiations for this group, because of the tensions with the dominant discourse.

12.5.2. Generalisation to Other Institutions

Because the theory is based on considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships of *people*, it is very likely to be applicable to other tertiary institutions and possibly also to non-formal education. The theory is sufficiently open to allow generalisation to these other contexts, and in this sense it hopefully encourages researchers in other contexts to explore its value. My understanding is that programme design in other polytechnics in Aotearoa/New Zealand has a similar context to the case studied in this thesis, with a similar influence of neo-liberalist discourses. This similar context is likely to confirm the theory for these other polytechnics. However, considering that the themes are created by the discourses as a "spontaneous appearance of [a] macro-level pattern" (Osberg & Biesta, 2007, p. 37), they will reinforce the discourses that shaped them, but in time, in different situations and/or with different people different themes may emerge. This implies that in other contexts the themes, and perhaps also the lenses, are likely to be different. For example, in universities I can imagine the emergence of a responsibility to the discipline, while for wānanga the emergence of akonga Māori perspectives could be much stronger, and in certain non-formal education contexts a stronger sense of responsibility to the community might emerge. Having said this, I presented the image of the teaching and learning lens to polytechnic and other tertiary educators on

various occasions, and the general response has been one of recognition and support, thus confirming the themes that were identified for this particular lens.

12.6 Implications for Practice

This study started with a desire to find a theory for programme design that would be able to "tell us what now exists" (Goodlad, 1979, p. 363), however with an ultimate goal to improve education and programme design related matters, by offering opportunities for developing awareness of what is and what could be, reflection on practice, and for taking action (McCutcheon, 1982). So now that this theory has been developed and the case study is understood using this theory, the question is: So what? What does this mean for education and programme design? I have identified three major implications of the findings of this study for programme design practice, which I explain below. These implications would apply to all people who have a role in programme design, regardless of their position within this practice.

1) The effects of a programme system on the world around it cannot be predicted or controlled but can be influenced

Acknowledging a programme as an open complex system includes accepting that the development of a programme is controlled by the dynamics of the system, and not by individuals. This means that the effects of a programme system on the world around it, including on what students learn, cannot be predicted, as they emerge from the programme system as it adapts. As a consequence the effects of any two programmes taught at different institutions cannot be predicted and are almost certainly different, even if those programmes lead to the same qualification, use the same programme documents, use the same assessment tasks, etcetera. Education policy-makers and managers who promote, for example, collaborative development of programmes, often for purposes of resource efficiency, ignore the

dynamics of the programme system that is not shown in the documents, as well as the ongoing adaptation of the system after the programme documents have been completed. When this ongoing adaptation occurs within different institutions, the people in each design team will be different. This creates different programme systems with different evolution processes, which will have different effects on the world outside the systems. The unpredictability of the effects of a programme system on the world around it also implies that design team members must accept uncertainty about the effect of their contributions as an unavoidable aspect of programme design practice. Furthermore, a programme as a complex system will evolve over the years of its existence, where teachers, students, managers and other people who contribute to and interact with the system come and go. New experiences will enter the system, resulting in new interactions and adaptation of the programme as a result. For example, design team members reflect on their experiences in the programme and bring their reflections back into the system in the following year; new teachers' previous experiences or teachers' interactions with new groups of students will change the courses they teach; or, a change in government policies will influence the composition of the design team. As a consequence, new possibilities will continue to emerge and the effects of the programme system on the world around it will continue to change.

The impossibility to predict or control the effects of a programme system on the world around it does not imply that these cannot be influenced. This study has clearly shown how ideological discourses influence the direction of the system's adaptation. With the direction, the discourses influence the kinds of effects that they favour. However, the dynamics of the system prevents prediction and control of the effects of these influences. While the programme system does provide for measurement of its effects through the inclusion of assessment and evaluation components, this measurement must be considered with great care, because assessment and evaluation have serious limitations, in the sense that: 1) they can only measure the effect of some influences, as many influences are covert and even unconscious (e.g.

hidden in silent norms); 2) they only measure the effect of particular interpretations of the influences (e.g. one particular interpretation of a 'fair assessment'); 3) they are unable to account for unintended effects that emerged from the dynamics of the programme system; and, most importantly, 4) because assessment and evaluation considerations are constituents of the programme system itself , they shape and are shaped by the same discourses that direct the system. This means they can act as a self-fulfilling prophecy, creating an illusion of predictability and controllability of the effects they are measuring.

2) *Opportunities for survival and development of a programme are to be sought in diversification, not in more of the same*

A complex system needs redundancy to allow the elements of the system to work together. The discourses are an example of how this redundancy works: considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships of a similar kind are shaped by a discourse and give a programme its cohesion and strength. However, too much redundancy leads to an unintelligent system that is unable to cope with situations of crisis (Davis, et al., 2008). This is a risk of a continued strengthening of the dominance of neo-liberalist discourses. This has already been noted by Harvey (2003) regarding the narrow focus of the Aotearoa/New Zealand government on creating a knowledge economy, and what may happen if things do not go as planned. For a programme to survive and continue to develop in the long term, it is therefore important to increase the number of possibilities in the system that will allow the emergence of alternatives. This requires the balancing of redundancy with diversity in the system. Diversity brings possibilities, and an increase in diversity results in an exponential increase in possibilities. The possibilities "enable novel actions in response to shifts in the grander context" (Davis, et al., 2008, p. 196). New ideas enter the system via its connections with the outside world. In the programme system, these connections are found in people's personal experiences and their relationships with the outside world. Therefore, creating diversity means

diversifying people's experiences and their relationships with the outside world. This can be achieved through:

1. Professional development of *all people* in the design team, which may enrich people's experiences as well as their professional relationships. For the purpose of creating diversity this professional development would be most effective if its intentions reach beyond reinforcement of the dominant, in this case neo-liberalist, discourses;

2. Increasing the number of people in the design team. This will increase the number of experiences and relationships, and therefore the number of possibilities, but only if the new people do not bring more of the same, as this would only increase redundancy. For example, in a team of teachers who all have an industry background this might mean bringing in a new person with experience in, for example, secondary school teaching. But it goes wider than that. It also means bringing in new people who identify with other ethnicities, have a different first language, have disabilities, are of a different age or gender, have different personal life experiences, etcetera; and,

3. Including students in the design team. This means development of programmes *with* instead of *for students*, using the students' experiences and relationships with the world to dramatically increase the possibilities for the system to develop. This resonates with the metaphor of the guided adventure, where the programme is allowed to develop through the student's experiences during their journey. It would steer the programme from 'planned enculturation', which is promoted through human capital theory discourses, towards an emergent curriculum (Osberg & Biesta, 2008), where students can "explore the social and economic milieu and to construct personally meaningful understandings of the world and their place in it" (Ayers & Carlone, 2007, p. 477). This way of diversification would also require the adoption of a complexity theory for learning and the emergence of knowledge, which is very different from the representational forms of knowledge that are promoted in neo-liberalist outcomes-focused discourses (Davis, et al., 2008; Jörg, Davis, & Nickmans, 2007; Osberg & Biesta, 2008).

However, just diversifying the experiences and/or relationships in these three ways does not necessarily diversify the system (Arnold, 1993). The new experiences and relationships must be integrated in the programme system and the people who contribute them must be acknowledged as members of the design team. This implies that the new experiences and relationships must be able to stumble across all other considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships in the system (Davis, et al., 2008). The space to make this happen can be found in the autonomy of (groups of) decision-makers. For the case study in this thesis, the construction of the design team was explained in Chapter 11 as following agency theory, providing autonomy to the institution under constraints set by the government, and to faculty and programme levels under constraints set by the higher levels. Nothing in those constraints said who had to be in the design team; its composition had been constructed entirely by the system, using the space that autonomy offered. Therefore in this autonomy lies space to integrate new and diverse experiences and relationships into the system, by reconstructing the design team and each member's roles and responsibilities.

This idea of 'space' is in line with the concept of 'enabling constraints', which allow complex systems to "maintain a delicate balance between sufficient structure, to limit a pool of virtually limitless possibilities, and sufficient openness, to allow for flexible and varied responses" (Davis, et al., 2008, p. 193). Another constraint that can enable the diversification of the system is found in the multi-explanatory themes or concepts that were referred to in Section 12.3, for example 'fairness' or 'society'. While being more or less constrained by their meanings within neo-liberalist discourses, the acceptance of these concepts within these discourses enables conversations about their alternative meanings. Such conversations can act as positive feedback loops (Davis, et al., 2008) to strengthen alternative non-neo-liberalist discourses. Other seeds of alternative discourses that are already found in the system can also be supported to blossom in this way, for example by initiating conversations about meanings of learning, knowledge, and teaching.

3) *Acknowledging ideological discourses as the power structures that shape the direction of the adaptation of programmes as complex systems requires responsible decision-making*

It is important to continuously remind ourselves that a programme is an instrument for education. Education "directs the kind of learning that takes place"; it "purposely shapes the subjectivity of those being educated" (Osberg & Biesta, 2008, p. 314). Therefore, a programme requires responsible decisions on the directions it should follow.

However, when a programme is theorised as a complex system, it touches the problematic relationship between complexity theory and responsibility, in the sense that ethics and values are inherently absent in complexity theory, because complexity theory does not concern itself with what ought to be (Fenwick, 2009; Morrison, 2008). Reading across the literature I noticed that complexity theories for education seem to be more popular among educators who are concerned about the unidirectional economically driven outcomes focus of education than among others. As a result these educators promote an 'ought to be' that moves away from this outcomes focus. However, nothing in the programme design theory developed in this thesis says that the outcomes focus is wrong, and nothing gives me the right to say that the participants in this case study who consciously or unconsciously promoted the outcomes focus were irresponsible. Instead, by connecting complexity theory to ideological discourses, the theory allows for different responsibilities to emerge in a programme system, depending on the discourses that shape and are shaped by the interactions of people's considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships in the system. In the case study, neo-liberalist discourses appeared dominant, but the programme design theory does not make a judgment call on this finding.

So where does this leave responsibility? While I have not claimed that any of the discourses that are followed by the system are right or wrong, I have argued that a too narrow development in the direction of one particular type of discourses – in this case neo-liberalist discourses – endangers the survival

of a programme. I have explored spaces that allow steering away from neo-liberalist discourses to increase possibilities for emergence that enhance the chances of a programme's survival and continued development. To do this, diversification is needed, which almost automatically leads to a programme that will be inclusive of other people and of alternative ways of thinking. But it does not take the people involved away from their responsibilities. In our everyday lives we are subject to the discourses in our society, and we can either follow them or resist them. By not acting, we follow the mainstream discourses as was shown in this study, particularly in the images of the cultural and rational lenses. This leaves us with only one responsibility, which is deciding which discourses to follow. This means that we have a responsibility to think critically about the ideological discourses we follow and to be mindful of the possible consequences of our considerations, language, experiences and relationships, so we can un-silence the silences and contribute to the sustained development of the programme system.

12.7 The New Theory and Recent National Policy Changes

This research has given an indication of a programme system at a certain moment in time. With a programme theorised as a complex system being dynamic, programmes will have adapted to influences from outside since I started this study. Considerable policy changes at the national level in Aotearoa/New Zealand have been introduced recently. These have started to interact with the five programmes that were included in this study. To date, all five programmes have survived. The main policy developments at the national level are:

- *A new Tertiary Education Strategy 2010-1015*
  During 2009, a new government led by the National Party developed a third Tertiary Education Strategy (TES-III), with a stronger focus than TES-II on national economic development, increased financial monitoring of polytechnics, and increased accountability of all tertiary education institutions for their educational performance through a

system of performance-based funding (Ministry of Education, 2009; Tertiary Education Commission, 2010b).

- *Educational Performance Indicators*

  Criteria for performance to decide on funding have been defined as Educational Performance Indicators (Tertiary Education Commission, 2010a). These are: Successful course completion; Student retention; Qualification completion, and Student progression rates to higher levels of study. These figures are calculated per tertiary institution and published on the Tertiary Education Commission website in the form of 'league tables'.

- *Embedding of literacy and numeracy in all level 1-3 programmes*

  Since 2009 the government has assigned considerable funding to embed literacy and numeracy into certificate programmes at levels 1-3 (Tertiary Education Commission, 2008b) to support economic development as referred to in TES-III. Polytechnic programmes at these levels must incorporate literacy and numeracy into the programme objectives, deliberately teach literacy and numeracy in the programmes, diagnostically assess students' literacy and numeracy development stages at the beginning of the programme, and assess the students' progress in literacy and numeracy near the end of the programme. A development framework, teaching resources, and professional development resources have been developed to support institutions in achieving this. The government has also developed an assessment tool which institutions are expected to use from 2011 to measure students' progress in literacy and numeracy in the programmes with embedded literacy and numeracy. The results of these assessments are intended to inform funding decisions beyond 2011 (Tertiary Education Commission, 2010b).

- *Self-assessment and External Evaluation and Review*

  A new evaluation system (NZQA, 2010a, 2010c) has been introduced by NZQA from 2010, replacing the audit system that had been in place since the 1990s. The new system requires each polytechnic to develop

processes of continuous self-assessment, based around six outcomes-focused evaluation questions. The institutions are autonomous in the self-assessment process, but every four years an external review panel will review the polytechnic and judge its educational performance and its capability in self-assessment against the six questions.

- *Targeted review of qualifications*

    NZQA is reviewing the qualifications at levels 1-6 to reduce the number of qualifications in Aotearoa/New Zealand. As was originally intended in the early 1990s, it is developing one New Zealand Qualifications Framework which has become operational mid 2010 (NZQA, 2010b).

As the previous section has explained, it is not possible to predict how complex certificate and diploma programme systems in polytechnics will adapt to these developments. However, the theory developed in this thesis is able provide insight in the direction of the adaptation. All policy developments are characterised by increasing and increasingly detailed requirements from the government-as-principal on the institution-as-agent. Particularly the embedding of literacy and numeracy and the targeted review of qualifications are expected to have a major influence on the professional autonomy of polytechnics to decide what they teach. All developments have a stronger focus on the achievement of outcomes. Hence, the main discourse in these policies is that of further strengthening of the neo-liberal project and a reduction of the professional autonomy of institutions. This implies more redundancy and less space for diversity in the system, which threatens the sustained development of programme systems and of education in general. It seems there is more need than ever to use the limited spaces to the full.

12.8 Limitations of this Study

12.8.1. Depth versus Breadth

The desire to study breadth as well as depth in this case study, as explained in the methodology in Chapter 3, has resulted in both having been compromised. This was anticipated in the research design and data collection. It has compromised breadth in the sense that a case study of only

one polytechnic was conducted, and only provider certificate and diploma programmes were studied. However, some breadth was ensured by the inclusion of several embedded cases, which has allowed exploring generalisation across the institution, as reported in Section 12.5.1. Breadth has also been compromised by the exclusion of the student voice in this study. As I explained in Sections 3.5.2 and 3.5.4, hearing the student voice was planned for in the research design, but due to the time available for this study and the amount of time I was willing to ask from students I compromised depth and decided to hear their voice through a written questionnaire. It was not until I started analysing the data and the theory started to shape up that I found out that the questionnaires had been too closed to contribute to the theory in a meaningful way. It was with great reluctance that I decided to use the questionnaires as reference data only for this thesis, as I felt strongly ethically committed to valuing the time the students had given me. This experience has taught me to think more carefully about whose time to ask and for what purpose. Nevertheless, it would still be very worthwhile to study the students' perspective on their role in the construction of a programme, which would enrich the theory developed in this thesis.

Depth has been compromised as I have not studied in-depth the dynamics of decision-making processes, which can provide a more profound understanding of complexity (Jörg, et al., 2007). The only way in which I have done this is through the observation of one meeting, which provided some but limited contribution to the theorising. A more extensive study of the dynamics would not have allowed me to study the breadth of programmes within the limited time available. Further research in this area might provide particular insight in the power dynamics of practice. It may be worth noting that extensive study of this area within a different context has already been conducted by Cervero and others (Cervero & Wilson, 1994, 1998; Cervero, et al., 2001; Rees, et al., 1997; Wilson & Cervero, 1996; Yang & Cervero, 2001).

Depth has also been compromised in the sense that each of the lens images could have been studied in much more detail. Each could probably easily fill

up an entire doctoral thesis, but more in-depth data would have to be collected related to each specific image. However, this would not have shown the connections between the images, which have been invaluable for answering the research questions in this thesis. Now that the overall picture of the theory has been developed, a deeper exploration of each image, perhaps also in other contexts, would be an interesting extension to this study.

12.8.2. Influence of the Researcher

A question that has kept me occupied throughout this research project is the influence of my own involvement on the process and the findings. I referred to this influence in the Introduction chapter, in which I explained what motivated me to start this research project. I spent a section in Chapter 3 explaining my involvement and its potential consequences both as researcher and as employee of the institution that serves as the case of this study. Throughout Chapter 3 I made further comments about the choices I made that influenced the research process. I noted in Chapter 3 that, just like the participants, as a researcher I can only draw on the resources that I have available for my own discursive practices and for the discourses that I bring into action. This has various implications for the findings of this study. Firstly, English is not my first language. As a consequence, I may have 'missed' some themes from the data, or I may have interpreted some themes differently from a native English speaker. The use of multiple data sources for triangulation purposes has hopefully minimised this issue. Secondly, my cultural identity is different from that of the people in Aotearoa/New Zealand. My engagement with Māori culture has been limited, meaning that I am uncomfortable with interpreting Māori concepts like akonga Māori. Reading the literature about it only solves this problem to a small extent. While I have referred to akonga Māori in this study, I may have given it insufficient acknowledgement. It is an area that I would need to explore further, but with guidance from Māori people. Finally, I may not have recognised the ideological discourses that shape some of the themes. To

minimise this risk, I have taken considerable effort to explore the literature for creating an understanding of each lens image.

The theory that I presented in this chapter emerged from my considerations of interactions with the participants, with the literature, with documents, and with multiple other people, implying that I am part of the theory. For the case study I am also an integral part of the programme system, because of my involvement with programme design as an institutional decision-maker and advisor in the institution. I am in a position to use my experiences from conducting this study in the spaces that the system offers. This may be a start of the programme systems' adaptations in this institution in alternative directions.

CHAPTER 13: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research project has developed a theory for design practice of programmes leading to provider certificate or diploma qualifications in a polytechnic in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The theory consists of three aspects:

> A programme can be theorised as an open complex system, the constituents of which are people's considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships;

> Programme design practice can be theorised as the programme system's adaptation to influences from outside; and,

> Ideological discourses can be theorised as the power structures that shape the direction of the adaptation of the programme system.

This theory of programme design practice integrates existing theories, including Tylerian approaches, theories that explain programme design as a negotiation process of interests and power, ideas from the reconceptualisation movement, notions of complexity, as well as the role of ideological discourses in programme design practice.

Two types of boundaries separate the programme system from the rest of the world. There are boundaries around the constituents, in the sense that the programme system only consists of people's considerations, language, silences, experiences and relationships that are assigned to the concept of 'programme'. There appears to be a general and largely agreed notion in this case study, and this is supported by the literature, that the following components are assigned to the concept of programme: consultation and development; intentions; structure and instruction; administration and management; assessment; and evaluation; including elements within these components. There are also boundaries around the people who create the

constituents. These are the people whom the system has allowed into the 'design team'.

At the same time the system is open, which means that it interacts continuously with the world around it. This appears to occur through people's personal experiences and relationships. Ideological discourses form the external and internal power structures that shape the direction of the adaptation of the programme system. As an external force ideological discourses influence people's personal experiences and relationships outside the programme system, while as an internal force they shape and are shaped by themes that group similar constituents of the programme system together.

The theory has been developed through a case study of one polytechnic. In this case study, neo-liberalist discourses appeared to predominate. These include discourses of public choice, managerialism and new public management, agency theory, utilitarianism and human capital theory. Alternative discourses appeared either to have been assimilated by neo-liberalist discourses or to play a marginal yet notable role in trying to change the system's directions. Alternative discourses identified through the case study were discourses of humanism, social change, akonga Māori, communitarianism, and celebrating diversity.

The complex programme system can be studied in more detail using a range of lenses. For the case study in this thesis seven lenses were identified: the teaching and learning; rational; cultural; personal experience; ethical; business; and social-political lenses. The image of each lens enabled close observation from a particular perspective as to which ideological discourses are at play, how they are shaped, and how they play out in practice.

The theory developed through this study has three major implications for practice. Firstly, it means that it is not possible to predict or control the effects of a programme system on the world around it, including, but not limited to, on what students learn. However, the effects can be, and are, influenced through ideological discourses, which are, at least partially, shaped by the constituents in the programme system and therefore by the people in the 'design team'. Secondly, the theory implies that diversification

of the system is a necessary condition for the survival and ongoing development of a programme system. The redundancy of constituents that follow neo-liberalist discourses in the programme system of this case study risks the development towards an unintelligent system that is unable to cope with situations of crisis. While limited, the following spaces to diversify a programme system were identified:

- To increase the experiences and relationships in the design team through the professional development of existing members, preferably beyond the reinforcement of dominant discourses, and through the addition of new people with different and diverse experiences and relationships, including students;

- To use the opportunities for exercising autonomy to adopt and acknowledge new members in the 'design team'. This particularly includes members who have different experiences than existing members, identify with other ethnicities, have a different first language, have disabilities, are of a different age or gender, have different personal life experiences, etcetera. It also includes students as new members, implying that programmes are developed with, instead of for, students; and,

- To exploit multi-explanatory themes and concepts which are already acknowledged by neo-liberalist discourses by promoting their meanings and use within alternative discourses.

The diversification will open the doors further to move in the directions of alternative discourses. This leads to the third implication of the theory. By not acting upon the opportunities to diversify, mainstream discourses will continue to be followed, which increases redundancy and therefore risks the survival of the programme system. This leaves educators with one responsibility, which is to think critically about the ideological discourses to follow and be mindful of the possible consequences of their considerations, language, experiences and relationships, so they can un-silence the silences and contribute to the sustained and intelligent development of programme systems and of education in general.

Considering recent education policy changes at the national level in Aotearoa/New Zealand this may feel like rowing against the current, as these developments only point towards strengthening neo-liberalist discourses and therefore increasing redundancy. It seems there is more and a more urgent need than ever to fully use whatever spaces are left.

The following recommendations follow from this study:

- For educators and all other people involved in programme design practice:
    - To accept uncertainty about the effect of their decisions as an unavoidable aspect of programme design practice;
    - To take the responsibility for thinking critically about the ideological discourses they follow and be mindful of these when making programme design decisions; and,
    - To actively use the spaces that have been identified in this study and any other spaces they might find to diversify the programme systems they are involved with.
- For educational researchers:
    - To further explore the applicability of this new programme design theory in other post-compulsory education contexts;
    - To research how students perceive their contribution to a programme system, and use the findings to further develop the theory;
    - To further research the influence of Māori perspectives on programme design in tertiary education, in a collaboration between Maori and non-Māori researchers; and,
    - To research each lens image in more detail, to confirm or refute the themes and their implications – and to explore further spaces for diversification that may be visible though the lenses.

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APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES INSTITUTIONAL DECISION-MAKERS

Design of [Provider] Diplomas and Certificates - Interview Questions for Institutional Decision-Makers

This interview is not about particular programmes, but more in general about what is important to you when you are involved in decision-making on Certificate and Diploma programme and course design matters at an institutional level. This could be in Academic Board, in one of its subcommittees, or in [the senior management team], when they decide on any academic matters related to programme or course design.

Part 1: Programme design
Context, Consultation and Development
- What is important to you in a consultation and development process
  a. for a new programme? Why is this important?
  b. for changes to an existing programme? Why is this important?
- How do the following contextual factors influence your decision-making on programme design matters:
  - Political context;
  - Social context;
  - Collaboration with other organisations;
  - Requirements set by other organisations; and/or,
  - The potential learner community?
- What is important information to enable you to decide whether it is worthwhile for [the institution] to invest money and time in a new programme or in changes to a programme? Why is this information important?

Goals, objectives and outcomes
- What do you consider important goals for [provider] Certificates and Diplomas in general? Why are these goals important?
- Why, in your opinion, should we define goals, objectives and/or outcomes for a programme?
- Which criteria are important for you to decide if programme goals/objectives/outcomes are acceptable? Why are these criteria important?

Structure and instructional strategies
- How do you expect a programme to cater for the diversity of learners in the programme? Why is that important?

- What is important to you in your decision-making on
  a. the courses that are selected for a programme? Why is that important?
  b. the kind and degree of flexibility in a programme? Why is that important?
  c. entry requirements for a programme? Why is that important?
  d. the number of credits, the length and the level of a programme? Why is that important?

Administration and Management
- What is important in your decision-making on resources for a programme, including: Personnel; Financial resources; Learning resources; Facilities and equipment; Time allocation for staff; Time allocation for learners; Development and evaluation resources?
  Why is that important?

Assessment
- What do you see as the purpose of assessment at a programme level? Why is this important?
  a. What is important to you in your decision-making on summative assessment at a programme level? Why is this important?
  b. What is important to you in your decision-making on formative assessment at a programme level? Why is this important?

Evaluation
- How important is it to you to evaluate programmes or particular aspects of programmes? Why is this important?
- What is important to you in your decision-making on evaluation of programmes or particular aspects of programmes? Why is this important?

General
- How is what you find important in programme design matters reflected in the QMS and in other institutional requirements and guidelines?
- How strictly do you use the QMS guidelines and processes in your decision-making on programme design matters? Why?
- In your opinion, what is the influence you have in the decision-making on programme design matters?
- What do you do if what you find important is not taken into account?

Part 2: Course design

This interview is not about particular courses, but more in general about what is important to you when you are involved in decision-making on Certificate and Diploma course design matters at an institutional level. This could be in Academic Board, in one of its subcommittees, or in [the senior management team], when they decide on any academic matters related to course design.

Consultation and Development Process

- What is important to you in a consultation and development process
    a. for a new course? Why is this important?
    b. for changes to an existing course? Why is this important?

- What is important information to enable you to decide whether it is worthwhile for [the institution] to invest money and time in a new course or in changes to a course? Why is this information important?

Goals, objectives and outcomes

- Why, in your opinion, should we define goals, objectives and/or outcomes for a course? Why is that important?
- Which criteria are important to you to decide if course goals/objectives/outcomes are acceptable? Why are these criteria important?

Structure and instructional strategies

- How do you expect a course to cater for the diversity of learners in the course? Why is that important?
- What is important to you in your decision-making on
    a. the content and the teaching and learning activities selected for a course? Why is this important?
    b. the kind and degree of flexibility in a course? Why is that important?
    c. the number of credits, the length and the level of a course? Why is that important?
    d. entry requirements for a course? Why is that important?

Administration and management

- What is important in your decision-making on resources for a course, including: Personnel; Financial resources; Learning resources; Facilities and equipment; Time allocation for staff; Time allocation for learners; Development and evaluation resources?
  Why is that important?

Assessment

- What is the purpose of assessment at a course level to you? Why is this important?

a. What is important to you in your decision-making on summative assessment in a course? Why is this important?
b. What is important to you in your decision-making on formative assessment in a course? Why is this important?

Evaluation
- How important is it to you to evaluate courses or particular aspects of courses? Why is this important?
- What is important to you in your decision-making on evaluation of courses or particular aspects of courses? Why is this important?

General
- How do you see the relationship between courses and programmes?
- How is what you find important in course design matters reflected in the QMS and in other institutional requirements and guidelines?
- How strictly do you use the QMS guidelines and processes in your decision-making on course design matters? Why?
- In your opinion, what is the influence you have in the decision-making on course design matters?
- What do you do if what you find important is not taken into account?

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW AND WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRES PROGRAMME DECISION-MAKERS

Only the questionnaires for Programme A have been included in this Appendix. Questionnaires used for Programmes B-E were a subset of these, with only one interview per participant, as explained in Chapter 3. Minor adjustments were made for Programmes B-E depending on the characteristics of each programme (e.g. removal of reference to unit standards when the programme did not include unit standards).

Design of [Name programme] - Interview Questions for Managers/Advisors

Before the first interview, could you please answer Question 2a?

Part 1: Questions about the entire [Name programme]

1. In your opinion, why does this programme exist at [this institution]?
2. On the following page you find a list of aspects that are relevant to programme design. For the [name programme], could you answer the following questions?
    a. You probably have more involvement or influence in some aspects of programme design decision-making than in others. For each aspect on the following page, could you tick the appropriate box, indicating either:

        1) You have had no involvement in the decision-making and you don't think you should have – tick *no-no*; or,

        2) You have had no involvement in the decision-making but you think you should have been involved – tick *no-yes*; or,

        3) You have had involvement in the decision-making but the final decision was made by someone else – tick *yes-other*; or,

        4) You have had involvement in the decision-making because it was you, or a team you were a member of, who made the final decision – tick *yes-me*.

        Could you please bring the completed table to the interview?
    b. For each aspect where you have ticked *no-yes, yes-other*, or *yes-me*, how do you think this aspect should be incorporated in the programme and why?
    c. How is what you find important actually reflected in the programme? How have you been able to influence this?
    d. If it is not reflected in the programme, why not? How do you deal with this in your everyday practice?
3. How do you use the programme approval document? How strongly do you feel

obliged to keep with what is in this document? Why?

4. What is your involvement in the development of the programme approval document? Does this raise any issues for you?

5. Do you use the QMS processes or faculty quality processes relevant to this programme? What do you use them for? How strongly do you feel obliged to use the QMS or faculty quality processes?

6. Why is it important for you to devote your time to this programme?

List of aspects referred to in question 2.

		No-no	*No-yes*	*Yes-other*	*Yes-me*
a.	The objectives of the programme;				
b.	The entry requirements for the programme;				
c.	The number of credits, the level or the length of the programme;				
d.	The selection of (compulsory and elective) courses for the programme, their sequence and/or their interrelationship;				
e.	The flexibility of the programme;				
f.	Accommodating the diversity of students in the programme;				
g.	Time allocation for students in the programme (eg. scheduling of contact time, planning of learning time, timeframes to be met);				
h.	Staffing in the programme;				
i.	Time allocation for staff (eg. scheduling of contact time, planning of development time, planning of administration time, timeframes to be met);				
j.	The cost and funding structures of the programme;				
k.	The teaching resources, equipment, technologies and facilities for the programme;				
l.	Development and evaluation resources for the programme;				
m.	Programme regulations;				
n.	The qualification requirements and what is meant by completion of the programme;				
o.	Evaluation of the programme;				
p.	The involvement of external bodies with the programme;				
q.	The ongoing consultation process;				
r.	The ongoing development of the programme.				

Part 2: Questions about the three courses: [Names courses]

Before the interview, could you please answer Question 2a?

1. In your opinion, why are these courses part of the programme?

2. On the following page you find a list of aspects that are relevant to course design. For the three courses listed above that are part of the [Name programme], could you answer the following questions?

   a. You probably have more involvement or influence in some aspects of course design decision-making than in others. For each aspect on the following page, could you tick the appropriate box, indicating either:

      1) You have had no involvement in the decision-making and you don't think you should have – tick *no-no*; or,

      2) You have had no involvement in the decision-making but you think you should have been involved – tick *no-yes*; or,

      3) You have had involvement in the decision-making but the final decision was made by someone else – tick *yes-other*; or,

      4) You have had involvement in the decision-making because you made the final decision – tick *yes-me*.

      Could you please bring the completed table to the interview?

   b. For each aspect where you have ticked *no-yes, yes-other*, or *yes-me*, how do you think this aspect should be incorporated in the courses and why?

   c. How is what you find important actually reflected in these courses? How have you been able to influence this?

   d. If it is not reflected in the courses, why not? How do you deal with this in your everyday practice?

3. How do you use the course and/or unit descriptors? How strongly do you feel obliged to keep with what is in these documents? Why?

4. What is your involvement in the development of the course and/or unit descriptors? Does this raise any issues for you?

5. Do you use the QMS processes or faculty quality processes relevant to these courses? What do you use them for? How strongly do you feel obliged to use the QMS or faculty quality processes?

List of aspects referred to in question 2.

	No-no	No-yes	Yes-other	Yes-me
a. The objectives of each course;				
b. The entry requirements for each course;				
c. The number of credits, the length or the level of each course;				
d. The content of each course;				
e. The teaching and learning activities chosen for each course;				
f. The sequencing of the content in each course;				
g. The flexibility of each course;				
h. Accommodating the diversity of students in each course;				
i. The time allocation for students for each course;				
j. The staffing in each course;				
k. The time allocation for staff for each course;				
l. The cost and funding structures of each course;				
m. The learning resources, equipment, technologies and facilities for each course;				
n. The development and evaluation resources for each course;				
o. The course regulations that apply to each course;				
p. Summative assessment in each course;				
q. Formative assessment in each course;				
r. Evaluation of each course;				
s. The involvement of external bodies with each course;				
t. The ongoing consultation process about each course;				
u. The ongoing development of each course.				

Design of [Name programme] - Interview Questions for the Programme Coordinator/Teachers

Before the first interview, could you please answer Question 2a?

Part 1: Questions about the entire [Name Programme]

1. Why does this programme exist at [the institution] in your opinion?

2. On the following page you find a list of aspects that are relevant to programme design. For the [name programme], could you answer the following questions?

    a. You probably find some aspects of programme design more important to be incorporated in a certain way than others. For each aspect on the following page, how important is it to you that the aspect is incorporated the way you want it to be? Could you please tick the appropriate box and bring the completed table to the interview?

    b. For each aspect that you find very or reasonably important, how do you think this aspect should be incorporated in the programme and why?

    c. How is what you find important reflected in the programme? How have you been able to influence this?

    d. If it is not reflected in the programme, why not? How do you deal with this in your everyday practice?

3. How do you use the programme approval document? How strongly do you feel obliged to keep with what is in this document? Why?

4. What is your involvement in the development of the programme approval document? Does this raise any issues for you?

5. Do you use the QMS processes or faculty quality processes relevant for this programme? What do you use them for? How strongly do you feel obliged to use the QMS or faculty quality processes?

6. Why is it important for you to devote your time to this programme?

List of aspects referred to in question 2.

	Very important	Reasonably important	Not so important
a. The objectives of the programme;			
b. The entry requirements and entry expectations for the programme;			
c. The number of credits, the level and the length of the programme;			
d. The selection of (compulsory and elective) courses for the programme, their sequence and their interrelationship;			
e. The flexibility of the programme;			
f. Accommodating the diversity of students in the programme;			
g. Time allocation for students in the programme (eg. scheduling of contact time, planning of learning time, timeframes to be met);			
h. The staffing in the programme (teaching and other staff);			
i. Time allocation for staff (eg. scheduling of contact time, planning of development time, planning of administration time, timeframes to be met);			
j. The cost and funding structures of the programme;			
k. The teaching resources, equipment, technologies and facilities for the programme;			
l. Development and evaluation resources for the programme;			
m. The programme regulations;			
n. The qualifications students can achieve, requirements for achieving them, and what is meant by completion of the programme;			
o. Evaluation of the programme;			
p. The involvement of external bodies with the programme;			
q. The ongoing consultation process;			
r. The ongoing development of the programme.			

Design of [Name programme] - Interview Questions for the Programme Coordinator/Teachers

Part 2: Questions about courses

[Note: Teachers answered the questions for one course of their choice; programme coordinators for all three selected courses.]

Before the interview, could you please answer Question 2a?

1. In your opinion, why is/are this/these course(s) part of the [Name programme]?

2. On the following page you find a list of aspects that are relevant to course design. For the [selected] course[s] in the [Name programme], could you answer the following questions?
   a. You probably find some aspects of course design more important to be incorporated in a certain way than others. For each aspect on the following page, how important is it to you that the aspect is incorporated the way you want it to be? Could you please tick the appropriate box and bring the completed table to the interview?
   b. For each aspect that you find very or reasonably important, how do you wish to see this aspect incorporated in the course and why?
   c. How is what you find important reflected in the course? How have you been able to influence this?
   d. If it is not reflected in the course, why not? How do you deal with this in your everyday practice?

3. How do you use the course and/or unit descriptors for this/these course(s)? How strongly do you feel obliged to keep with what is in these documents? Why?

4. What has your involvement been in the development of this/these course(s) and/or unit descriptor(s)? Does this raise any issues for you?

5. Do you use the QMS processes or faculty quality processes relevant to this/these course(s)? What do you use them for? How strongly do you feel obliged to use the QMS or faculty quality processes as far as this/these course(s) is/are concerned?

List of aspects referred to in question 2.

	Very important	*Reasonably important*	*Not so important*
a. The objectives of each course;			
b. The entry requirements for each course;			
c. The number of credits, the level and the length of each course;			
d. The selection of content for each course;			
e. The selection of teaching and learning activities for each course;			
f. The structure of each course;			
g. The flexibility of each course;			
h. Accommodating the diversity of students in each course;			
i. Time allocation for students in each course (eg. scheduling of contact time, planning of learning time, timeframes to be met);			
j. Staffing in each course (teaching and other staff);			
k. Time allocation for staff in each course (eg. scheduling of contact time, planning of development time, planning of administration time, timeframes to be met);			
l. The cost and funding structures of the courses;			
m. The learning resources, equipment, technologies and facilities for the courses;			
n. Development and evaluation resources for the courses;			
o. The course regulations;			
p. Summative assessment of each course;			
q. Formative assessment of each course;			
r. Evaluation of each course;			
s. The involvement of external bodies with each course;			
t. The ongoing consultation about each course;			
u. The ongoing development of each course.			

Design of the [Name programme] - Interview Questions for External Body Representative

This interview is about your perception of how your organisation influences programmes like the [Name programme], that is, [description of type of programmes]

Development process

1. What do you see as the purpose of [provider] programmes and qualifications?
2. How was the National Certificate developed?
3. How were the unit standards developed?
4. How have the following contextual factors influenced [your organisation's] decision-making on the National Certificate and the unit standards:
    a. Political context;
    b. Social context;
    c. Collaboration with other agencies, including providers and industry;
    d. Requirements set by other agencies; and/or,
    e. The potential learner community?

Structure and instructional strategies

5. In your opinion, what is [your organisation's] influence on:
    a. How polytechnics structure the National Certificate and the unit standards they offer, either as separate qualifications or embedded in a provider qualification?
    b. How polytechnics teach the National Certificate and the unit standards they offer?
    c. How polytechnics set the entry requirements for the National Certificate and the unit standards they offer?
    d. How flexible polytechnics make the National Certificate and the unit standards they offer?
    e. How polytechnics accommodate the diversity of learners in the National Certificate and the unit standards they offer?
6. How has [your organisation] decided on the credits and the level of the National Certificate?
7. How does [your organisation] decide on the credits and the level of the unit standards?
8. How do you see the relationship between unit standards and national qualifications?
9. How has [your organisation] decided which unit standards should be compulsory in the National Certificate, and which elective?

Administration and Management

10. In your opinion, what is [your organisation's] influence on:
    a.   How polytechnics resource the National Certificate and the unit standards they offer?
    b.   Which staff polytechnics appoint to teach National Certificate and the unit standards?

Assessment

11. What do you see as the purpose of assessment? Why is this important?
12. What is [your organisation's] influence on assessment conducted in programmes like the [Name programme], which incorporate the National Certificate and unit standards?
13. In your opinion, what is the meaning of the [Name embedded national certificate] qualification?
14. In your opinion, what is the meaning of 'competency'?

Evaluation

15. In your opinion, what is your influence on evaluation conducted in programmes like the [Name programme], which incorporate the National Certificate and unit standards?

General

16. What does [your organisation] require or expect from polytechnics who teach towards the national qualifications? Why is this important?
17. How important is the existence of programmes like the [Name programme] to [your organisation]?

Student Questionnaire: Towards an understanding of Programme Design Practice in a New Zealand Polytechnic

1. How important was each of the following to you when you decided to enrol in the [Name programme]? *(Please tick)*			
	Very important	*Important*	*Not important*
a. The programme fee.			
b. The programme allows me to complete unit standards.			
c. The programme allows me to complete a national certificate.			
d. The programme allows me to complete [a provider] certificate.			
e. The length of this programme ([length]).			
f. The level of this programme (level [level]).			
g. The number of credits in this programme ([credits])).			
h. This programme is taught in [location].			
i. This programme is full-time.			
j. The tutors in this programme.			
k. The entry requirements of this programme.			
l. This programme is about [subject area].			
m. This programme helps me to achieve my goal, that is *(please state your goal)*:			
n. The programme gives me something to do.			
o. The timetable suits my personal circumstances.			
p. I can get a student allowance for this programme.			
q. Other, that is:			

2. Which qualifications did you have when you started this programme? *(Please tick)*					
No qualifications		*NCEA Level 1*		*NCEA Level 2*	
Other, that is:					

3. What kind of knowledge or skills did you lack when you started this programme?

4. Which help have you sought to support your [...] study? (*Please tick, more than one answer possible*)										
Tutors		*Class mates*		*Whānau/Family*		*[...] Learning Services*		*[...] Disability support*		*[...] Māori/Pasifika support*	
Other, that is:										

5. Which study activities have you participated in?								
	All or almost all		*More than half*		*Less than half*		*Hardly any*	
Have you attended the theory classes?								
Have you attended the [...] practicals?								
Have you completed the work experience days?								
Approximately how many hours have you spent each week on study outside classroom and work experience time? *(please tick)*	*Less than 1*		*1-5*		*5-10*		*More than 10*	

6. Which learning materials have you used for your study? (books, workbooks, handouts, etcetera) *(Please tick, more than one answer possible)*							
What the tutors have given me		*Internet*		*My own notes*		*Materials from the library*	
Other, that is:							

7. Which subjects or units in the programme have you worked the hardest for, and why?

8. Which subjects or units in the programme have you worked the least hard for, and why?

9. Why do you do assessments? *(Please tick, more than one answer possible)*							
To be able to pass		*To get feedback on my learning*		*To measure my progress*		*I don't do assessments*	
Other, that is:							

Which subjects or units in the programme have you worked the hardest for, and why?

Which subjects or units in the programme have you worked the least hard for, and why?

Why do you do assessments? *(Please tick, more than one answer possible)*							
To be able to pass		*To get feedback on my learning*		*To measure my progress*		*I don't do assessments*	
Other, that is:							

Observation scheme   Meeting: [name meeting] Date: [date]   Programme name: [Name programme]

What is discussed (aspect)	By whom	What is their view	What is decided

APPENDIX III: ELEMENTS OF PROGRAMME DESIGN IN PRIMARY DATA

The charts in this appendix refer to the analysis of vertical patterns described in Chapter 4. Each chart shows the total number of criteria and statements that were identified in the Academic Statute, the Quality Management System and the interviews with institutional and Programme A decision-makers for each (sub-) element within the component and at the level as indicated in the title of the chart.

Consultation and Development - Programme Level

■ Elements □ Sub-elements

Category	Value
Student Community	69
Potential students	47
Actual students	22
Who to consult, how and about what	100
Who consults	2
When to consult	0
Who develops the programme	8
Development process	32
Criteria for decision-making	18

Intentions - Programme Level

■ Elements □ Sub-elements ■ Sub-sub-elements

Category	Value
Sources of programme intentions	12
Purpose of Programme	54
Internal purposes	11
External purposes	43
Purpose of programme intentions	14
Communication	8
Curriculum development	3
Evaluation	3
Types of programme intentions	56
Related to student learning	51
Other than student learning	5
Criteria for programme intentions	19
Clear	10
Defensible	4
Representative	1
Consistent	1
Feasible	3
For students	3
For the institution	0

Structure and Instruction - Programme Level

■ Elements □ Sub-elements

Category	Value
Entry requirements and expectations	53
What they are	32
How they are applied	6
If there should be any	9
Exclusion from a programme	6
Credits, Length and Level	57
Credits	10
Length	17
Level	16
Combination of credits, length and level	14
Programme structure	54
Instructional methods	24
Programme Content	26
Student diversity	54
Culture or country of origin	9
Personal Background	7
Age or gender	3
First language	1
Life experience	0
Personal circumstances	8
Physical ability	4
Educational background	6
Between student groups	0
Reasons for participating	4
Learning styles and preferences	5
Learning ability	7
Flexibility	41
Flexibility of access	24
Flexibility as student control	14
Flexibility for teachers	5
Time allocation for students	25

Administration and Management - Programme Level

■ Elements　□ Sub-elements　■ Sub-sub-elements

Category	Value
Personnel	55
Teachers	50
Non-teaching personnel	5
Resources	160
Financial resources	46
Learning resources	19
Facilities and equipment	22
Time allocation for personnel	44
For teachers	43
For non-teaching personnel	1
Development resources	14
Evaluation resources	2
Institutional support resources	2
Administration resources	1
Resources in general	12
Regulations	17

Assessment - Programme Level

■ Elements　□ Sub-elements

Category	Value
Why programme assessment	15
Summative purposes	14
Formative purposes	1
What to assess	14
How to assess	10
Who assesses	3
When, where to assess	0
Criteria for good assessment	9
Communication of assessment	2
Interpretation of qualification	26
Consequences of assessment	3
Formative assessment considerations	1

Evaluation - Programme Level

■ Elements   □ Sub-elements

Category	Value
Why evaluation	33
For programme	18
For institution	9
For others	6
What to evaluate	90
How to evaluate	29
Whose input	17
Who conducts evaluation	12
When to evaluate	9
Criteria for good evaluation	8
Interpretation - consequences	17

Consultation and Development - Course Level

■ element   □ sub-element

Category	Value
Student Community	32
Potential students	13
Actual students	19
Who to consult, how and about what	22
When to consult	0
Who consults	1
Who develops the course	4
Development process	8
Criteria for decision-making	14

Intentions - Course Level

■ element　　□ sub-element　　■ sub-sub-element

Category	Value
Sources of course intentions	7
Purpose of the course	11
Internal purposes	1
External purposes	10
Purpose of course intentions	13
Communication	5
Curriculum development	4
Evaluation or Assessment	4
Types of course intentions	24
Related to student learning	24
Other than student learning	0
Criteria for course intentions	25
Clear	7
Defensible	2
Representative	0
Consistent	1
Feasible	2
For students	1
For institution	1
Current	4
Related to level	5
Differentiating	1
Teacher independent	1
Open	1
Fit in programme	1
Interpretation of course intentions	1

Structure and Instruction - Course Level

■ element □ sub-element

Category	Value
Entry requirements and expectations	26
What they are	15
How they are applied	2
If there should be any	5
Exclusion from a course	4
Credits, Length and Level	57
Credits	21
Length	10
Level	21
Combination of credits, length and level	5
Course structure	0
Teaching methods	49
Course Content	35
Student diversity	30
Culture or country of origin	3
Personal background	8
Age and gender	0
First language	2
Life experience	0
Personal circumstances	0
Physical ability	0
Educational background	0
Between student groups	3
Reasons for participating	3
Learning styles and preferences	7
Learning ability	4
Flexibility	31
Flexibility of access	6
Flexibility as student control	7
Flexibility for teachers	18
Time allocation for students	19

Administration and Management - Course Level

■ element □ sub-element ▨ sub-sub-element

Category	Value
Personnel	25
Teachers	23
Non-teaching personnel	2
Resources	55
Financial resources	7
Learning resources	12
Time allocation for personnel	17
For teachers	16
For non-teaching personnel	1
Facilities and equipment	10
Development resources	2
Evaluation resources	4
Resources in general	3
Regulations	3

Assessment - Course Level

■ element □ sub-element

Category	Value
Why course assessment	29
Summative purposes	18
Formative purposes	11
What to assess	23
How to assess	32
Who assesses	3
When to assess	6
Where to assess	2
Criteria for good assessment	42
Communication of assessment	23
Interpretation and consequences	31
Student diversity considerations	4
Formative assessment considerations	18

Evaluation - Course Level

■ element ☐ sub-element

Category	Value
Why evaluation	19
For course	11
For institution	4
For others	4
What to evaluate	31
How to evaluate	23
Whose input	8
Who conducts evaluation	10
When to evaluate	7
Criteria for good evaluation	5
Interpretation - consequences	9

APPENDIX IV: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ACTORS IN PROGRAMME DESIGN

Table XXXVI: Assumed or assigned roles and responsibilities of actors at programme level, identified in Chapter 11, and the number of references to each. Only roles or responsibilities referred to by more than one decision-maker are listed.

Decision-maker	Role or responsibility
Teacher	• Deciding how and what to teach and assess (23) • Helping students achieve (8) • Guiding on design at programme level: credits, level and length, selection of courses, prerequisites, sequencing, timetable, qualification requirements (8) • Being up to date in own subject area (6) • Designing courses/lead the ongoing development of a course (6) • Teaching the course as well as possible, and assessing the students, including for recognition of prior learning (5) • Taking care of student diversity (5) • Supporting the industry (3) • Taking care of learning resources (3) • Being reflective and acting upon reflection (4) • Following and enforcing the programme documents and regulations (3) • Providing feedback to ITO on unit standard and national qualification development (2) • Assessing learning assistance needs and referring students to appropriate support service (2)
Programme Coordinator	• Looking after the programme, including the documents, the measurement and monitoring of the outcomes, the budget and the programme changes (15) • Facilitating the programme team (6) • Carrying out Assessment and Moderation procedures (4) • Deciding on and implementing entry and selection criteria (2) • Being involved in the development of courses (2)
Programme documents	• Being a contract with students and with funder (8) • Being a funding decision-maker and measuring stick (6) • Being a teaching guide (6) • Being an administrative guide (5) • Being a rule book (2)
Programme team	• Working as a team (7) • Deciding who teaches what and when (4)
Development team	• Deciding on sufficiency and appropriateness of resources (2) • Design programme for approval, and complete impact report (2) • Deciding on selection and design of courses (2)
Moderator	Not referred to by more than one data source.

Table XXXVII: Assumed or assigned roles and responsibilities of actors at faculty level, identified in Chapter 11, including the frequencies of references to each. Only roles or responsibilities referred to by more than one decision-maker are listed.

Decision-maker	Role or responsibility
Head of School	• Monitoring the quality of the programme and its courses (14) • Resourcing the programme appropriately, including staffing (13) • Advising the programme team about the programme (10) • Leading programme and course development (7) • Enabling flexibility and autonomy within the programme team (6) • Negotiating and monitoring the performance and development of teachers (2)
Dean	• Creating an appropriate and appropriately resourced work environment for the programme and for staff (10) • Managing faculty finances (6) • Exercising influence at a strategic level in the faculty (5) • Being the academic leader in the faculty – guarding quality standards (4) • Initiating the process for development of new programmes (3) • Developing and monitoring systems and processes to ensure accountability (2)
Faculty Academic Committee	• In-depth reviewing of programme and course proposals (5) • Developing standards for measuring the students (3) • Monitoring implementation of review recommendations (3) • Approving assessment results (2)
Administration Manager	• Checking accuracy of programme information in approval documentation (6) • Administering the programme (4) • Administering student evaluations (3) • Administering the budget (3)
Advisory Group	• Providing industry input to programmes and courses (7) • Providing feedback on programme reports (2)
Faculty	• Deciding on the content of courses, resources and facilities, incorporating flexibility around group work and associated skills into programmes, ensuring student diversity is taken care of (4)
Advisor	• Assisting with decision-making on programme structure and designing within rules and regulations (9)
Administrator	Not referred to by more than one data source.

Table XXXVIII: Assumed or assigned roles and responsibilities of actors at institution level, identified in Chapter 11, including the frequencies of references to each. Only roles or responsibilities referred to by more than one decision-maker are listed.

Decision-maker	Role or responsibility
Academic Board	• Developing systems and processes for and monitor academic quality in the institution (11) • Critically reviewing and approving programme proposals (11)
Institutional Support People and Services	• Academic Section: advising the institution on educational matters; critique and advise Academic Board (4) • Academic quality advisor: organising and advising on approval and review processes (3) • Support service managers: incorporating programme in budget (2)
Institutional decision-makers	• Acting as a peer reviewer and advisor (4) • Gate keeping the standards (4)
Senior management team	• Deciding on the business aspects of programmes (3)
Institution	• According to people in the institution: Educating people (6) • According to external representatives: Developing programmes that meet the needs of the regional industry, community and students (4) • According to external representatives: Meeting accreditation and ITO requirements (3)
Statute/QMS	• Providing a framework to guide programme and course design (2)
Deputy CEO; Council	Not referred to by more than one data source.

Table XXXIX: Assumed or assigned roles and responsibilities of actors in society, identified in Chapter 11, including the frequencies of references to each. Only roles or responsibilities referred to by more than one decision-maker are listed.

Decision-maker	Role or responsibility
Industry Training Organisation	• Moderating assessments (4) • Assisting and advising polytechnics (3) • Specifying requirements needed to teach towards a unit standard (2)
Students; **NZQA/ITPQ;** **Employers/industry;** **Professional organisation;** **Community group**	Not referred to by more than one data source.