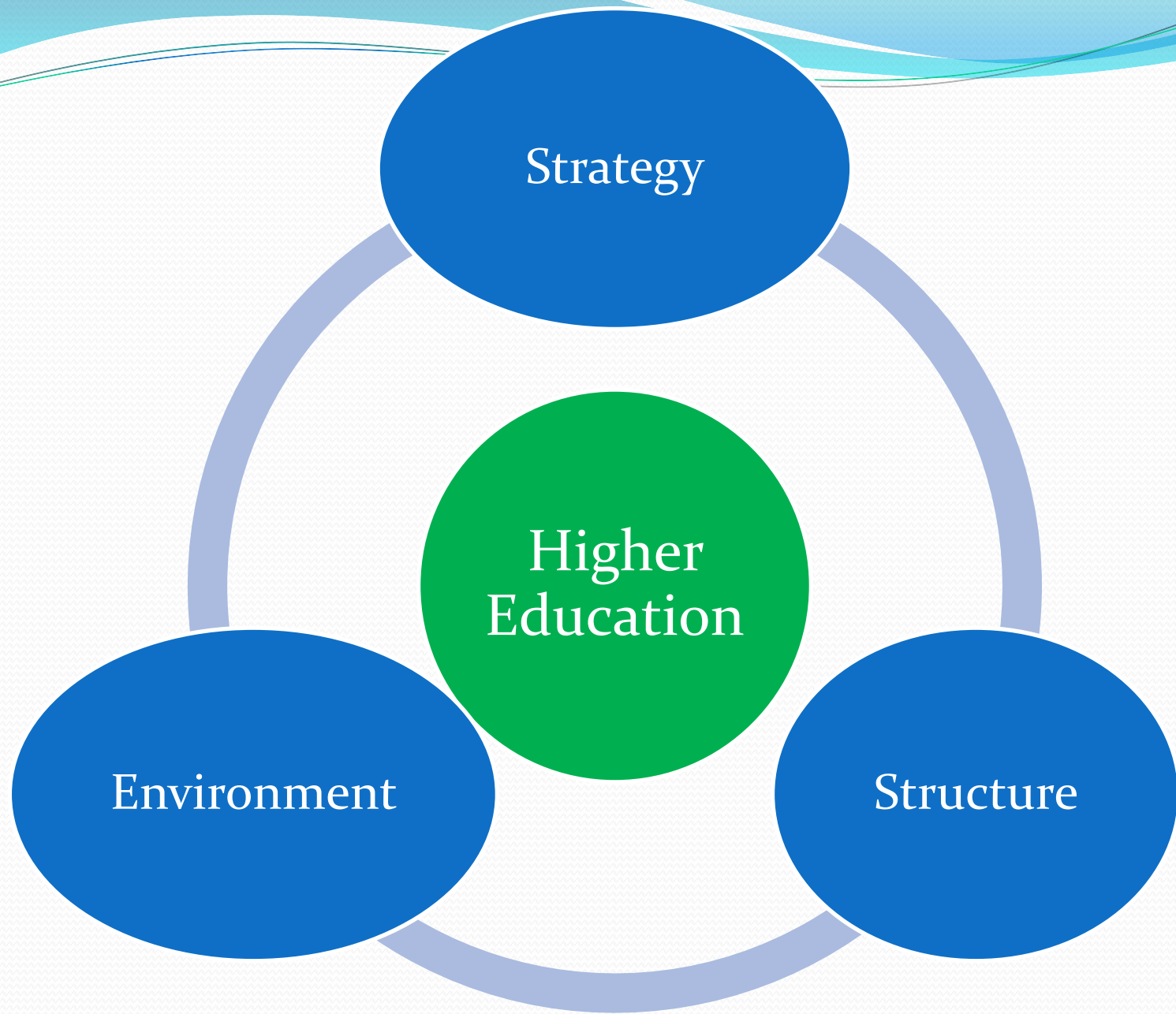


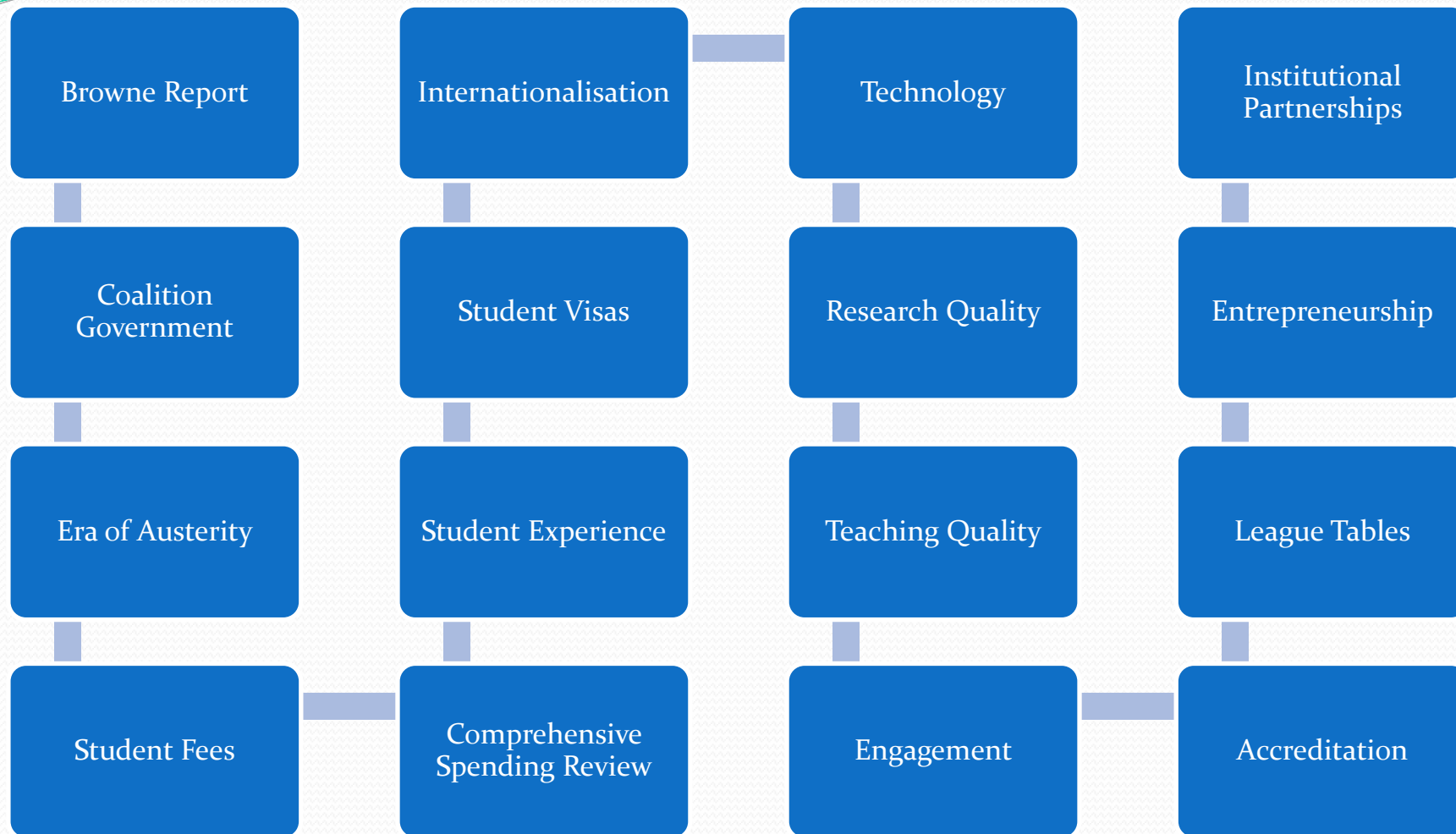
Designing Research
to Support Change:
*Structure and Strategies -
UK Business Schools at times of
change*

Prof John Wilson, Prof Rona Beattie, Dr Alec Wersun
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Outline

- **Introduction**
- **Research questions**
- **Methodology**
- **Findings**
- **Conclusions & future work**





Research questions

- **Has changed occurred in the academic structures of universities and business schools in the last five years?**
- **If so, what is the nature of the change?**
- **If so, what are the main causes of the change?**

Note: research previously undertaken by CEEMAN

Methodology

- **Survey of deans/directors of UK business schools, 114 questionnaires (ABS)**
- **Why deans/directors of business schools?**
 - **Financial importance to universities of business schools**
 - **Assumed deans/directors are particularly aware of the environment and predisposed to act as appropriate**
 - **Able to provide authoritative and informed views**
- **March 2010 – note: prior to UK general election**
- **40 % response rate equally between “New” post-1992 and “Old” pre-1992 universities**

Typical respondent

- **British white male**
- **between 51-60**
- **has been in the sector for more than 20 years**
- **has been as dean for less 5 years**
- **has worked in 2-3 business schools**
- **lead school 50-100 FT academic staff**
- **equally likely to be appraised by VC/DVC/PVC**

Findings – University level

- The majority of universities are structured on the basis of faculties and schools
- University structure of faculties/schools has occurred within the preceding 5 years
- However, 30 % of respondents do not believe that the structure of their university is appropriate for achieving the university's strategic objectives

Findings – School level

- **71% of respondents have changed the structure of the school they inherited**
- **60% indicated that structure had never been an issue for academics in their school**
- **22% considered the school Mission was a relevant factor in determining school structure**
- **35% considered the school Vision was a relevant factor in determining school structure**
- **79% stated that the academic groupings in their school had changed in the preceding 5 years. The breakdown is: 33% in the last 18 months, 30% in last 3 years (i.e. 63% in the last 3 years) and 16% in the last 5 years.**

Findings – School level

- **65% stated that the school committees had changed in the preceding 5 years. The breakdown is: 33% in the last 18 months, 19% in last 3 years (i.e. 52% in the last 3 years) and 13% in the last 5 years.**
- **91% stated that the composition of the senior group roles had changed in the preceding 5 years. The breakdown is: 52% in the last 18 months, 30% in last 3 years (i.e. 82% in the last 3 years) and 9% in the last 5 years.**
- **90% considered their academic staff believed the structure of the school was fit for purpose**
- **Structure is primarily: departmental 59%; matrix 41%.**

Findings – External

- 84% of respondents anticipated that the reduction in public funding between 2009-10 and 2013-14 would be no more than 25% (22% thought it would be < 15% and 62% thought it would be between 15% and 25%). 14% thought it would be >25% and 2% did not know.
- In response to the medium-term financial environment, 47% believed the structure of their university would change, 53% did not.
- Anticipated *primary* response of their school to the new fiscal environment: 9% cut costs; 36% increase income; 55% equal weighting.
- 88% anticipated no revision to their school's mission. The 12% that anticipated changes were all new universities.
- Anticipated changes to School:

| | No | Yes |
|----------------------------------|----|-----|
| | % | % |
| • Academic groupings | 72 | 23 |
| • Committee structure | 81 | 19 |
| • Allocation of responsibilities | 48 | 52 |

Conclusion

- **Research questions: has changed occurred?**
 - High incidence of change in academic structures in schools (71%) following change of Dean
 - Changes at university level in last 5 years
- **Nature of change:**
 - At School level, changes to academic grouping, committee structures and managerial responsibilities, particularly in last 18 months to 3 years
 - At university level, trend to faculties/schools

Causes of change

- Change would not appear to have been the result of changes in mission (only 22%) or vision (35%) or concerns expressed by academics (60% said structure had never been an issue)
- Change is not necessarily the result of anticipated external changes, with clear and significant underestimates in the post-general election funding reduction. Also, extremely optimistic view on ability to cope with predicted cuts by increasing income
- Change to academic groupings and committees is not anticipated, but around half of the respondents anticipate changes to managerial structures.
- In the responses, there is no real sense of the unprecedented external environment in the UK (viz England).
- The main driver for change would appear to be change of dean/director.
- It may be said (a) strategy is a function of mission (b) strategy follows environment and (c) structure follows strategy. The findings appear to indicate that, in UK business schools, the theory is not upheld and the main driver/cause of structural change is change in senior management.