

# **Entrepreneurial leadership in the mixed sector provider**

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## Abstract

The environment in which tertiary education providers operate, the contemporary education landscape, is shaped by government policy, quasi-education markets and information and communications technologies. For the tertiary education provider to appropriately respond to changes in this landscape, effective leadership is required.

The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership capability of staff in leadership roles, and how they describe their role as a leader at South Eastern Polytechnic (SEP), a mixed sector tertiary education provider. Furthermore, the focus was to ascertain the understanding these staff have of innovation and entrepreneurship, and the leadership capabilities required to build and support innovation and entrepreneurship at a mixed sector provider.

A convergent parallel mixed methods research design was used in this study. This design incorporated questionnaires with staff in leadership roles at SEP, and interviews with people in senior leadership roles providing educational services to SEP. A focus group was then conducted with staff in leadership roles to clarify and elaborate on the findings from the questionnaire and interviews.

Insights from this study provide a deeper understanding of leadership at a mixed sector provider. It is evident from the findings that the role of a leader is not clearly understood by many staff in leadership roles at mixed sector tertiary education providers. This in turn inhibits their ability and capability as a leader to effectively communicate and direct staff to achieve the strategic objectives, and to provide leadership that builds and supports innovative and entrepreneurial activity. This project provides a base on which further research can be undertaken into how staff in leadership at mixed sector providers understand their role as a leader, and the capabilities required to provide effective leadership in the contemporary education landscape.

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## **CHAPTER 1: Background**

For more than two decades, governments around the world, led by the English-speaking polities, have moved higher education systems closer to the form of textbook economic markets. Reforms include corporatisation, competitive funding, student charges, output formats and performance reporting. (Marginson, 2013, p.353)

### **1.1 Background of the problem**

Australia's higher and vocational education sectors have become corporatised and market focused. No longer do staff in leadership roles in Australia's tertiary education institutions only provide leadership for teaching and learning activities. These leadership roles have become more complex (Duignan, 2007), challenging (Scott, Coates, & Anderson, 2008), and demanding (De Boer & Goedegebuure, 2009). This complexity has occurred as governments alter the policies and market structures by which people can access vocational and higher (tertiary) education in Australia. Changes in the information and communications technologies have also altered the way in which learners can access information, participate in courses, and communicate with the educational institute with which they have enrolled (Christensen, Baumann, Ruggles, & Sadtler, 2006; Johnson et al., 2016; Weise & Christensen, 2014).

As tertiary education providers come to terms with changes in policy, market structures, and technology. Staff who provide leadership in these providers need the capability to understand the environment in which their organisation operates. Then in undertaking their role as a leader, they need to have the capability to communicate to their work teams the vision and strategies that will enable the provider to respond to changes in the operating environment, in a manner that enables it to sustain and thrive. Those in leadership roles will also need to develop the capability to build and support innovative activity that will enable the organisation to differentiate itself from its competitors in a demand-driven market.

There are a number of strategies a mixed sector provider may initiate to build the leadership capabilities of their staff that will enable it to achieve its desired leadership approach. One strategy is to promote selected staff who through a succession management process have demonstrated and then refined their leadership capabilities to enable them to effectively undertake the position they are to be appointed to (Wallin, 2005; Brant, Dooley & Imam, 2008). If the organisation has not identified a suitable internal candidate then they could employ an external candidate who demonstrates the leadership capabilities required of the role, but may not have either the educational or industry background. Another option is to promote an internal candidate who does not have extensive leadership experience, but has demonstrated the potential to provide leadership. This is a risky option as it will take time for the individual to build the leadership capability, or they may not be able to transition to a leadership role (Johnsrud & Sagaria, 1989; Sorcher & Brant, 2002; Brant et al, 2008).

This study is focused on the leadership capabilities and understanding of the role of leadership that those staff in leadership positions at a mixed sector tertiary education provider operating in a quasi-demand driven education market. The market that now exists in Australia's tertiary education sector has resulted from the drive by Australian governments to utilise quasi-economic markets to achieve its policy objectives (Marginson, 2013). Australia's quasi-education market in the higher education sector is now loosely based on the recommendations from the Review of Australian Higher Education (Bradley Review) (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales, 2008). Likewise, the quasi-education markets that exist in the vocational education sector are set by the policy settings imposed by the incumbent government and differ between states. In Victoria, the state in which this case study was undertaken, the quasi-vocational education market structure shifts frequently as the government policy alters to meet labour market needs. The federal government also uses funding and regulatory mechanisms to influence the structure of the quasi-vocational

education markets in each state. This quasi-education market is undergoing further change as the recommendations of Strengthening Skills (Joyce report) (Joyce, 2019) are implemented. Governments at both the federal and state levels continue to intervene and regulate both the higher education and vocational education sectors. Over the past 20 years, nationally and in Victoria, there have been 173 changes in vocational education policy implemented.

Critical to the long-term viability of tertiary education providers is having the staff with the capability to provide leadership to effectively respond to changes in government policy. This is particularly critical for mixed sector providers for whom government policies are shifting their vocational education role from that of a provider of technical and further education to that of a workplace training provider (Wheelahan, 2015). They must also respond to the competitive forces that exist in quasi-education markets, which have been created by changes in government policy and implemented through legislation and regulation.

The third driver shaping Australia's contemporary education landscape is information and communications technologies. As these technologies have become more accessible to people, tasks and operations that have been done manually are now automated. Education providers are now using these technologies to alter the structure and way education and training is delivered, to provide students with an enhanced digital learning experience and to gain a competitive advantage. Some of these new providers are also lowering costs by either providing some or none of the support services, recreation centers or libraries generally found in traditional education providers. Rather these providers have limited physical learning spaces and are only delivering programs that are targeted to meet areas of high demand (Christensen, Horn, Caldera, & Soares, 2011). Other innovations have included the creation of on-line only education providers and the creation of massive open online course (MOOC's) portals which enable learners go complete courses at little to no cost, but not receive a credential unless they enrol, pay and successfully achieve the required assessments (Weise &

Christensen, 2014). The availability of online learning has also enabled those who were previously geographically or physically isolated from education providers with access to these programs and courses (Trow, 1999). As tertiary education providers adapt to these technologies, the role of the teacher is changing (Rogers, 2000), from that of the keeper of knowledge to that of a facilitator of learning. It is the role of those in leadership roles in vocational and higher education providers to identify technological advances that will best service the organisation, and to ensure they will be effectively and efficiently implemented. In parallel this has also enabled innovators and entrepreneurs, who are new entrants to the education market, to develop products and deliver services that transform markets. This disrupts and recreates market expectations and perceptions of how a product or service is either produced or delivered (Downes & Nunes, 2013). For example, the introduction of powerful handheld devices at prices that most consumers can afford has provided them with the opportunity to access education providers to build their skills and knowledge and gain qualifications at little to no cost (Fuegen, 2012).

As tertiary education providers try to cope with the impact of changes in: technology, the expectations of employers and students are also changing, requiring teaching models to be modified in order to respond to these changing expectations (Lomax-Smith, Watson, & Webster, 2011). The expectation of governments that taxpayer funds are used appropriately has resulted in education providers being subject to increasingly complex regulatory and reporting requirements (Marginson, 2013). This has given tertiary education providers the challenge of complying with a complex reporting and operating framework (Dow & Braithwaite, 2013), while responding appropriately to a demand-driven market in an ever changing environment (Lomax-Smith et al., 2011). As a result, staff in leadership roles need to develop or acquire capabilities that enable them to not only become agile enough to effectively compete in an open market, but to also be accountable and responsible at all levels

of the organisation in order to document and justify government expenditure on the education and training they have delivered (Williamson, 2015). The role of a leader is further complicated at South East Polytechnic (SEP) a tertiary mixed sector provider, delivering mainly vocational and some higher education programs. This requires SEP to report and respond to two government authorities which have responsibility for regulating each of these sectors: the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Authority (TEQSA). SEP is also required to meet contractual requirements of its funding agreements with the government departments providing this funding.

Those in leadership roles at tertiary education providers will need to have the capability to effectively respond to changes in government policy, technology, and market conditions. Having this capability should enable those in leadership roles to build entrepreneurial capability, and support the delivery of innovative vocational and higher education programs which will differentiate them from other providers against which they compete. An entrepreneurial approach reduces the reliance on government support, provides the organisation with a degree of autonomy, and enables the organisation to diversify income sources and develop new business units (Clark, 1998). The combination of these factors has meant that tertiary education providers should build their capability to meet the needs of a demand-driven market. This would enable them to shift from a bureaucratic organisation mindset to an entrepreneurial organisation mindset, while dealing with the impact this change in mindset has on the culture of the institution (Keast, 1995).

The need to shift the organisational mindset is demonstrated by the shift in the strategic objectives of SEP over the past 10 years. A comparison of SEP's strategic plan (current plan) to the strategic plan in place in 2009 (2009 plan) identified the following differences between the two plans:



- the strategic outlook is now shorter – in 2009 there was a five year plan, and currently there is a three year plan;
- the mission outlined in the 2009 plan had an inward focus on the delivery and development of education programs, and providing student support to enable the student to focus on achieving their educational goals;
- the 2017 strategic plan not only focuses on achieving an educational outcome, it also focuses on graduates being work/life and world ready;
- the 2017 strategic mission is also externally focused on working with community to enable social inclusion and business to ensure the development of a workforce for the future.

These differences then flow through into the goals set out in each of the strategic plans. The 2009 plan had 48 goals outlined under seven themes; the current strategic plan has five broad themes, with 26 goals listed. Fourteen of these goals were internally focused and operational goals. Of these, five were related to communicating to the market and raising the profile of the organisation. Of the 48 goals listed in the 2009 strategic plan, only five of these responding to changes in government policy or information technology (SEP, 2007). This is contrasted with the current strategic plan in which 16 of the 26 goals have an outward focus on communicating to the market and differentiating SEP from other providers. Only six of goals are operational/internally focused, with four focusing on responding to government policy or information technology (SEP, 2017). These changes in the strategic mindset of SEP should require staff in leadership roles at SEP to both understand their role as a leader and demonstrate the capabilities to provide effective leadership to enable SEP to achieve its strategic objectives. There has also been a shift in the values that underpin each SEP strategic plan. While *Integrity* and *Excellence* are two values that appear in both the 2007 and current SEP strategic plans, *Access* (making programs and services available to as many people as

possible) and *Enterprise* (innovative and entrepreneurial business development strategies) are two values that no longer appear in the current strategic plan. These have been replaced by *Ambition, Scholarship, Passion, and Respect*: each of these is described as displaying an “open, collaborative and quality-driven culture” (SEP, 2017). The organisation’s strategy has moved from internally focused operational objectives to objectives with an outward focus that would enable SEP to differentiate from other providers in the tertiary education market. This requires leaders to develop the leadership capabilities that will enable them to build and support innovation and entrepreneurship that enables this differentiation to take place. To achieve this, Foley & Conole (2003) assert that it is not appropriate to assume that generic leadership capabilities meet the needs of the mixed sector provider.

While there is a recognition that the leaders of tertiary sector providers need to demonstrate the leadership capabilities that are appropriate for the sector, there is little understanding of the leadership capabilities required by a contemporary tertiary education provider (Bryman, 2007; Gibb, Haskins, & Robertson, 2013). Bryman’s (2007) review of research undertaken on leadership at the departmental level in higher education organisations concluded that, while effective leadership does have a positive impact on the academic departments, there is no single capability identified as being the most important in being the head of an academic faculty. More recent research being undertaken into effective leadership in the VET Sector (Coates et al., 2010) and in the higher education sector (Scott et al., 2008) in Australia has focused on identifying a range of capabilities desired of staff providing effective leadership for their organisation. Scott et al. (2008) identified the core focus for leadership in higher education organisations “should be on achieving effective change management and implementation.” This is consistent with wider leadership research that has identified that leadership roles in organisations must also understand, interpret, and respond to changes in the landscape in which their organisation operates (Goleman, 2013). However, to

provide leadership of this type is complicated in many tertiary education providers including SEP whose default governance structure is based on a bureaucratic structure not designed to be flexible and responsive to change (Middlehurst & Elton, 1992). This has made the role of a leader in a tertiary education provider has become increasingly complex, yet the research undertaken into the understanding of leadership now desired in the tertiary sector is limited (De Boer & Goedegebuure, 2009).

This case study provides an insight into the personal and interpersonal capabilities demonstrated by staff in leadership roles, and their understanding of the role of a leader as they respond to the challenges and surprises encountered at a mixed sector provider, SEP. Drawn from the research undertaken in this study, a deeper understanding has been gained of how staff in leadership roles at SEP describe their role as a leader, and the personal and interpersonal capabilities they demonstrate when providing leadership to enable SEP to respond to changes in the contemporary education landscape. The conclusions from this study will assist in understanding the capabilities required of future leaders in the tertiary education sector, particularly in understanding how those currently in leadership roles can effectively build the capabilities of future leaders to direct their areas of responsibility, and support innovative and entrepreneurial activity.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The problem addressed in this study is the limited understanding of leadership in mixed sector providers. The need to be innovative and entrepreneurial is gaining increasing importance in the leadership of tertiary education providers as the quasi-education market has shifted to a demand driven model. Through being innovative and entrepreneurial, an organisation has the capacity to differentiate itself from its competitors by offering different products and services. On this basis there is a need to gain a greater understanding of

leadership is required in order to determine the capabilities desired of staff in leadership roles in mixed sector providers.

In undertaking this study, three aspects of leadership at a mixed sector provider were examined: (1) the understanding that staff in leadership roles have of how changes in the contemporary education landscape (macroenvironment) impact on leadership at a mixed sector provider (SEP); (2) how leaders at SEP respond to the challenges set by the external environment, and in turn how they perceive and perform their leadership roles at SEP (internal environment); and (3) how innovation and entrepreneurship is understood by staff in leadership roles at SEP, and how their capability to build and support these activities can be developed (Figure 1).

This study asserts that to provide effective leadership in a mixed sector provider, those in leadership roles must understand their role as a leader, have the capability to understand the external environment, and the capability to provide leadership for the organisation to achieve its strategic objectives. This should provide an insight into the capabilities a leader needs to demonstrate to provide effective leadership for the organisation.

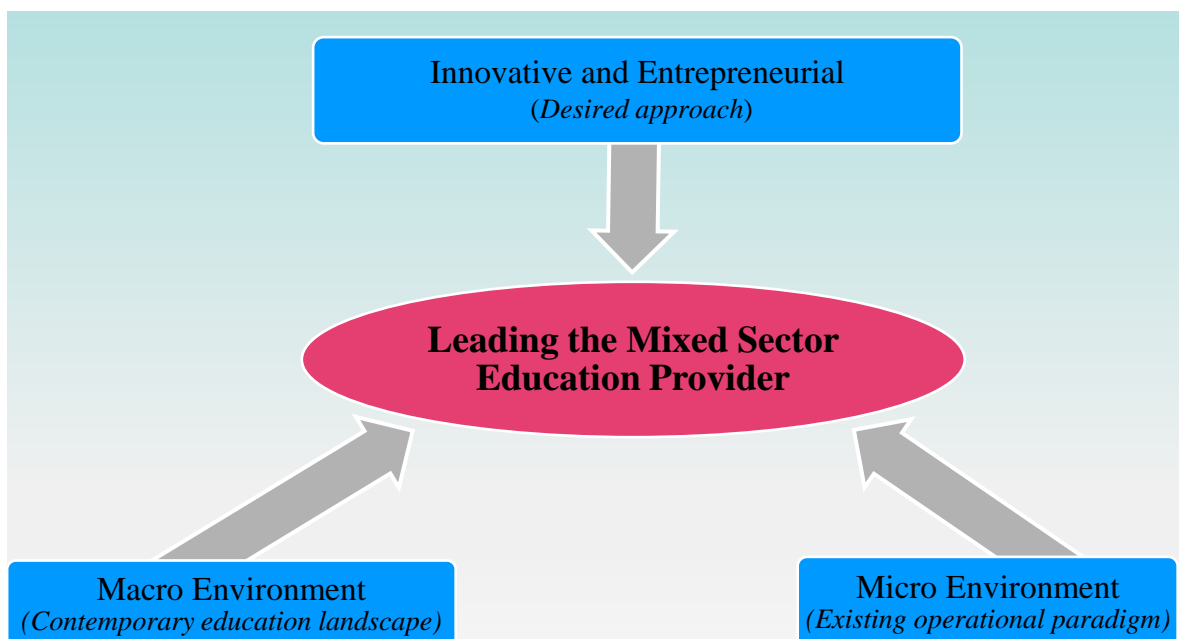


Figure 1. Leading the mixed sector provider (conceptual relationship).

### **1.3 Statement of the Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of the role of leadership, and personal/interpersonal leadership capabilities demonstrated by staff in leadership roles at a mixed sector education provider. As such, the study's focus was to establish the understanding the study's participants have of leading innovative and entrepreneurial activity at a mixed sector tertiary education provider. This study is built on the work undertaken into two areas of leadership in tertiary education. The first area is the emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2013) dimensions of leadership, specifically personal and interpersonal capacities. The study also examines the role of a leader, the challenges, and influences on leaders across a range of leadership levels in higher education (Scott et al., 2008) and vocational education providers (Coates et al., 2013). The leadership capabilities of the participants from SEP will be evaluated using the framework validated by Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008). The second area builds on the work done by Kirby, Guerrero-Cano, and Urbano (2011), and Guerrero-Cano and Urbano (2012), in respect to defining an entrepreneurial university, identifying the barriers and facilitators to a university being entrepreneurial, and the success factors by which to judge an entrepreneurial university.

This study examines the leadership provided to both these areas at SEP, to identify the capabilities of staff providing leadership, and their understanding of the role of a leader at a mixed sector provider. It has also established their understanding of what defines an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider, along with the key facilitators and barriers to a mixed sector provider being entrepreneurial, and the factors an entrepreneurially successful mixed sector provider demonstrates.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

The overarching question posed in this study is: Do staff in leadership roles at a large metropolitan mixed sector provider have the appropriate capabilities to effectively lead innovation and entrepreneurship in the contemporary education landscape?

To answer this question, the following research questions have been posed to help understand the function of leadership at SEP:

1. What are the capabilities and priorities of leaders in a mixed sector provider?
2. How are leaders of a mixed sector provider described by leaders of other organisations operating in the contemporary education landscape?
3. Do leaders at SEP have the capability to provide leadership that builds innovation and entrepreneurship?
4. How can the capability of leaders at SEP be developed in order to lead an innovative and entrepreneurial organisation?

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

As identified by several studies (Scott et al., 2008; Coates et al., 2010; Gibb, et al., 2013), there has been a lack of research into the effective leadership required by providers of higher education operating in demand-driven markets. This study intends to add to the body of knowledge regarding leadership capability required for a mixed sector education provider. In particular, the study will explore the role of entrepreneurship (Haan, 2015) which may need to be integrated and supported by the mixed sector provider to respond to shifts in the contemporary education landscape (Hempsall, 2014; Kirby et al., 2011).

To increase competition and increase the value of the investment that government makes in vocational and higher education, the vocational sector, and to a lesser extent, the higher education sector, have been opened up to competition from private training providers. As a result of this market deregulation there is a need for leaders in mixed sector education

organisations to ensure they are able to clearly define to future students the value proposition to attend their institute rather than competitor institutes.

Consequently, this study has yielded insights into four domains of interest:

1. Identified the key leadership capabilities exhibited by a successful mixed sector education provider, which in turn leads to the provider holding market advantage over its competitors.
2. Determined the leadership capabilities a mixed sector organisation should attain to effectively lead an innovative and entrepreneurial mixed sector provider.
3. Identified that some staff in leadership roles do not describe their role as a leader as one of providing direction and leadership to their area of responsibility.
4. Provided an insight into how staff describe their role as a leader, and how this may impact on their ability to provide effective leadership to their work group or department.

## **1.6 Summary of the Research Design**

This study has adapted research questions from the projects listed above to establish the differences between leadership in a mixed sector provider, in contrast to a provider delivering only either higher education or vocational education. To understand why these differences exist, a mixed methods approach using a convergent parallel mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) has been adopted. Using this method, the quantitative data is gathered first to establish an understanding of the problem; the qualitative data then gathered assists in refining the results from the quantitative data, and explaining the results through gathering a deeper understanding of the participants' perspective of the research problem (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006). The importance of gaining a deep understanding of the study's participants' views and perspectives cannot be underestimated (Greenfield, 1973; Eacott, 2017). A number of staff who provide leadership at SEP view their

role in the organisation from the perspective of a tradesperson/industry professional who is delivering an education and training program; however, others view their role as an educator delivering education and training in skills and knowledge. This diversity in how a staff member views their role as a SEP leader has been examined along with their perspective on enacting leadership in the organisation. The examination of the views and understanding of staff who provide leadership at SEP will be used to inform what the desired leadership capabilities are, what their role is, what impacts on their roles, and the challenges they face in providing effective leadership to enable a mixed sector provider to be innovative and entrepreneurial.

There were 32 participants from SEP, and a further five participants who were external to the SEP, who participated in the study. The staff from SEP who volunteered to participate in this study were drawn from a pool of approximately 120 people who hold positions as executive directors, associate directors, deans, heads of department, education managers, and course coordinators, and who provide leadership to other staff at SEP. A minimum sample size of 30 participants was reached to ensure that sample size response to the internal questionnaire was statistically valid (Levin, 1981). The staff who participated in this study are at all levels of the organisational hierarchy at SEP, and provide leadership to both the teaching and non-teaching staff. This is in accord with the objective of the study to establish the leadership capability and behaviour across leaders and key influencers in SEP. The specific breakdown of the type and role of leaders who participated in this study is provided in tables 2 and 3, in Chapter 3.

Five people (external participants) who held senior leadership roles in organisations that conducted educationally related activities with SEP were also interviewed. Each of these participants was asked to participate in this study because of their experience in both



providing leadership for their respective organisations, and their experience in developing and implementing leadership development programs across a range of organisations.

The interviews were undertaken to ascertain what they considered the capabilities that leaders at SEP should exhibit, and the challenges and barriers to providing effective leadership. They were also requested to provide input into how leadership capabilities could be effectively developed. The external participants also chose a definition of an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider and selected their description of the contemporary education landscape on each of the 11 dimensions.

The literature review undertaken as part of the project was conducted to establish the context in which this study was undertaken, to identify gaps in the literature that this study could address, and to validate the findings of this study. The following questions were addressed in undertaking the literature review:

- What are the dimensions that describe the current state of the contemporary education landscape?
- How have leadership models been applied in the tertiary education sector, and what underpins effective leadership capabilities?
- What form does innovation take in the contemporary education landscape?
- Are existing bureaucratically structured providers in the tertiary education market able to take advantage of changes in technology or government policy?
- Is there a positive relationship between leadership capability and the effective management of innovation and entrepreneurship?

After the internal questionnaire had been administered, a focus group was conducted with staff in leadership roles at SEP to gain a further insight into the responses generated. The questions posed in the focus group were generated following a preliminary analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire and external interviews. This analysis centred on the concepts

that underpin the contemporary education landscape, leadership, innovation, and entrepreneurship. The study also draws on documents published by SEP which provide an insight into the strategic mission and objectives, leadership structures, and other information relevant to this study, along with field observations made by the researcher who holds a leadership role at SEP.

## **1.7 Definition of Key Terms**

*Competitive Advantage:* Is the advantage an organisation has gained over its rivals in the marketplace through a combination, or one of, operational effectiveness, differentiation, innovation, or as a cost leader? Porter (1996) contends that the leadership of an organisation plays a key role in establishing its operational effectiveness through ensuring its strategic direction and objectives are continually reinforced through its clear communication to staff. In the context of tertiary education, the concept of competitive advantage has been imposed on the sector, and while academic autonomy, reputation, and status are highly valued by many educational institutions, the drive by governments for educational providers to render value for money, and meet the needs of the market, are viewed as being of greater importance (Haan, 2015).

*Entrepreneurship:* The definition of entrepreneurship within the context of this study is based on two schools of thought. The first is the classical model which defines entrepreneurship as the ability of an individual within an organisation to identify opportunities for innovation. The second model is the intrapreneurship model which defines entrepreneurship as the capability of leaders to change and adapt the organisation to become more innovative and competitive (Cunningham & Lischeron, 1991).

*Higher Education:* Can be defined both in terms of the type of provider delivering the educational program, and the type of organisation that has been granted legislative authority

to deliver and award a higher education qualification. One legislative definition of a higher education qualification is as follows:

- a degree, or
- a post-graduate qualification, or
- a diploma or advanced diploma.

*(Higher Education Act 2001 (NSW), Section 3.)*

Concurrently, the Australian Qualifications Framework defines a Higher Education Provider as “a body that is established or recognized by the Commonwealth or State or Territory Government to issue qualifications in the higher education sector. It may be a University, a self-accrediting Institution or non-self-accrediting Institution” (Australian Qualifications Framework Council, 2013).

*Information Technology:* Lewis (1999, p.148.) asserts that the application of the term information technology when applied to the educational setting can be defined as:

- technology as a curriculum area in itself;
- technology as the presentation of learning material, with occasional administrative functions such as assessment;
- technology at the core of administrative and managerial infrastructure.

*Innovation:* Innovation is the specific function of entrepreneurship, whether in an existing business, a public service institution, or a new venture started by a lone individual in the family kitchen. It is the means by which the entrepreneur either creates new wealth, produces resources, or endows existing resources with enhanced potential for creating wealth (Drucker, 2002).

*Neo-liberal Market Management:* In the context of tertiary education, neo-liberal market management is a government policy agenda structured to move provision of tertiary education into a capitalist market. In this market, education becomes a commodity purchased

by buyers, there are no barriers to entry, government funded education providers compete against profit making organisations funded by private equity whose objective is to generate profits and gain market share, and there is no government interference (Marginson, 2013).

*Leadership:* “Leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations” (Kouzes & Posner, 1987, p.30). Ramsden (1998, p.21) defines leadership in the academic context as “a practical and everyday process of supporting, managing, developing and inspiring academic colleagues”; he further notes that “leadership in universities can and should be exercised by everyone, from the vice chancellor to the casual parking attendant.”

*Leadership Capability:* Scott (2008, p.11) describes leadership capability in the context of higher education as involving that level of talent, gift, or capacity required to produce productive outcomes and deliver innovations under testing, uncertain, and constantly shifting human and technical situations.

*Market (Demand-driven):* A market is a means of organising the exchange of goods and services based on price, rather than upon other considerations such as tradition or political choice (Dill, 1997, p.168). In the tertiary education market, when the market is demand-driven, the number of places available at tertiary institutes exceeds the number of potential students seeking a place at a tertiary institute at a point in time.

*Market (Supply Driven):* The converse of a demand-driven market, is a supply driven market in which the number of potential students looking for a place at a tertiary education institution exceeds the number of places that are available in tertiary education institutions. Such a market in a tertiary education sector is generally a result of government policy that has created high barriers to entry to the market, pricing structures, regulatory requirements and frameworks, and access to subsidies (Dill, 1997, p.173).

*Mixed Sector Education Provider:* A provider of Vocational and Higher Education “with at least 3 per cent but no more than 20 per cent of their student load enrolled in their

minority sector” (Moodie & Wheelahan, 2009). In the case of the provider being referred to in this study, Higher Education is the minority sector.

*Registered Training Organisation (RTO):* A registered training organisation is an organisation that is approved by the Australian Skills Quality Authority to deliver and assess accredited selected training programs (ASQA, 2019).

*Tertiary Education:* “Builds on secondary education, providing learning activities in specialized fields of education. It aims at learning at a high level of complexity and specialization. Tertiary education includes what is commonly understood as academic education but also includes vocational or professional education” (UNESCO, 2011). For the purpose of this study, the term “tertiary education provider” is a collective description of higher education and vocational education (including Technical and Further Education providers, or TAFEs, and privately funded registered training organisations).

*Vocational Education and Training:* Education programs designed for learners to acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies specific to a particular occupation, trade, or class of occupations or trades. Such programs may have work-based components (e.g., apprenticeships, dual-system education programs). Successful completion of such programs leads to labour market-relevant vocational qualifications acknowledged as occupationally-oriented by the relevant national authorities and/or the labour market (UNESCO, 2011).

## **1.8 Key Assumptions and Bias**

In undertaking this study, a number of assumptions and biases were identified that may impact on the interpretation and reporting of the data gathered in this study.

### **1.8.1 Assumptions**

- Staff in leadership roles at SEP who participated in this study understand the key concepts of leadership and management, and they are able to provide an informed response when completing the research instruments.

- The participants understand the differences between personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities.
- When completing the research instruments, the participants will be honest in the responses they provide.
- The external participants in this study have an adequate knowledge of the tertiary education sector and educational leadership.
- Staff in leadership roles at SEP allowed themselves adequate time to appropriately consider and respond to each question.
- Staff who participated in the focus group were comfortable in expressing their opinions in front of their peers.
- There was adequate time provided for the focus group to be conducted.

### **1.8.2 Bias**

As the researcher is an insider in the organisation, having held senior leadership roles at SEP for more than a decade, his experiences working for the organisation may have influenced both the framing of questions for this study, and the interpretation and presentation of the data gathered in the study. This places the role of the researcher in this study as that of an insider (Greene, M.J., 2014). Being an insider requires the researcher to find the balance between either being overly sympathetic with the opinions of the participants, or being overly critical and not valuing the opinions of their opinions (Guba, 1981). When reporting the findings and presenting the conclusions of this study, the researcher as an insider must consider the context of the environment in which it will be presented. Then in presenting the research ensure it is undertaken in a manner that clearly outlines the key findings in the context of the entire study and is respectful of the study's stakeholders (Zohrabi, 2013). The insider bias may also be reduced by the researcher not "projecting their own views on to the participants, or the data analysis" (Greene, M.J., 2014, p, 4). Caution by the researcher in

projecting their views onto the participants was also considered in planning the interviews undertaken with the external participants. To mitigate this possible bias, participants were provided with the questions prior to the interview, and by giving interview participants the opportunity to prepare their responses without being influenced by additional comments made by the researcher during the interview. As the researcher has or had a professional relationship with each of the external interview participants, caution was also exercised when in interpreting their responses from the interview participants. As the objectivity may be reduced due to the researcher's familiarity with the interview participants and the past experiences they have shared (Greene, M.J., 2014). To ensure that the findings presented in this case study have been reported objectively, the researcher has worked to find a balance that on the one hand does not report findings in too favourable a manner as to not offend participants, nor report the findings in a manner that is judgmental of the participants' capability as a leader, particularly the SEP participants. This is demonstrated in the findings and conclusion chapter of this dissertation by referring to leaders of mixed sector provider, not leaders of SEP. Despite the possibility of these biases impacting on the integrity of this case study, the benefits of the researcher being an insider enables this case study to be presented from the perspective of those leading a mixed sector provider balancing the needs and regulatory constraints that exist in the mixed sector provider.

## **1.9 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study**

The limitations have been identified to provide the reader with an understanding of the weaknesses of the study, and to place the study in context (Brutus, Aguinis, & Wassmer, 2013). Five limitations are identified:

- (i) All participants in this study provide leadership to other staff at SEP, limiting the sample population. They consisted of approximately 130 staff who hold roles including, executive directors, deans, heads of department, education managers,

and course coordinators, of whom 32 consented and responded to the questionnaire and/or participated in the focus group.

- (ii) The researcher has assumed the SEP staff who participated in this study are conversant with the concept of leadership capability and had received some leadership training.
- (iii) The external participants selected to participate in the interviews were selected on the basis of availability, willingness to participate in the program, and above all had an existing professional relationship with the researcher.
- (iv) As this study was undertaken within the mixed sector education organisation under the auspice of an organisational project, there is a possibility that the responses to the survey instrument may be biased, either by the perception that there should be a positive result to the survey, or because participants may not have had adequate time to complete the survey properly due to work commitments.
- (v) The sample size will provide a limited capacity from which to draw conclusions based on the results from the statistical analysis.

The study also has a delimitation identified by the researcher. While it is acknowledged that this study contains a number of assumptions, biases, and limitations, the study will examine a limited number of respondents who work across a range of industry sectors in both higher and vocational education at SEP. This limits the generalisations that can be drawn from the findings of the study. These findings, however, will provide the opportunity to signpost future research into leadership in tertiary education providers, particularly those that operate across a range of regulatory jurisdictions (Fredman, 2011).



## **1.10 Outline of the Document**

This chapter has provided an overview of the drivers that shape the contemporary education landscape, which is increasingly influenced by government policy and information technology. Leaders in tertiary education institutions and, in the case of this study, the mixed sector provider SEP, operate in a quasi-demand-driven market, and provide leadership aimed at effectively responding to changes in the contemporary education landscape. In the next two chapters, a review of the literature is provided in respect to the drivers of the contemporary education landscape, and the tertiary education sector, with specific attention to the mixed sector provider in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, the literature is reviewed in respect to the leadership required in a mixed sector provider; that is, it examines the function of leadership, and the need for further research into educational leadership in tertiary education providers. Chapter 3 also reviews the literature about innovation and entrepreneurship, and the development of leadership capability that will support and enhance innovative and entrepreneurial activity in a mixed sector provider operating in the contemporary education landscape. In Chapter 4, the methodology used in this study, a convergent parallel mixed methods design, and the research tools used in this design, are presented. The methodology chapter also presents the demographic profile of the study's participants, along with data collection and the data analysis processes used. The findings generated from the mixed methods research approach are presented in Chapters 5 and 6. These chapters present the findings under the themes of: leadership priorities and capability; and, leading the innovative and entrepreneurial mixed sector provider. Finally, Chapter 7 discusses the findings of this study and conclusions presented, concluding with recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

The intent of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of leadership at a mixed sector education provider whose strategic intent is to be innovative and entrepreneurial. As such, the focus of this study was to understand the leadership capabilities demonstrated at a mixed sector education provider (SEP), and to establish how appropriate these capabilities are to build innovative and entrepreneurial activity. This review identifies and examines the key literature in respect to: 1) the contemporary education landscape; 2) defining the mixed sector provider; 3) leadership models in tertiary education; 4) innovation and entrepreneurship.

The literature identified and examined in respect to the contemporary education landscape, and defining the mixed sector provider relate to the macroenvironment in which SEP operates. Models of leadership and innovation and entrepreneurship relate to the microenvironment; that is, the operating environment within SEP. This chapter examines the literature in respect to the macroenvironment in which SEP operates, described in this study as the contemporary education landscape. The first part of the chapter identifies the drivers that shape this environment: 1) government policy, 2) market forces, and 3) information and communication technology (ICT). Together these drivers shape the contemporary education landscape. Each driver is represented by a number of dimensions that help to describe the current state of each driver in this landscape. This state is established by the participants' determination of the current state of each dimension. Thus, the literature reviewed in this section defines the drivers and dimensions that underpin the concept of the contemporary education landscape.

The review then moves to the role that government policy has in shaping Australia's tertiary education sector. This includes a review of the changes in government policy at the state and federal levels that have facilitated the establishment of this provider type and the impact government policy has on the operation of a mixed sector provider. Specific attention

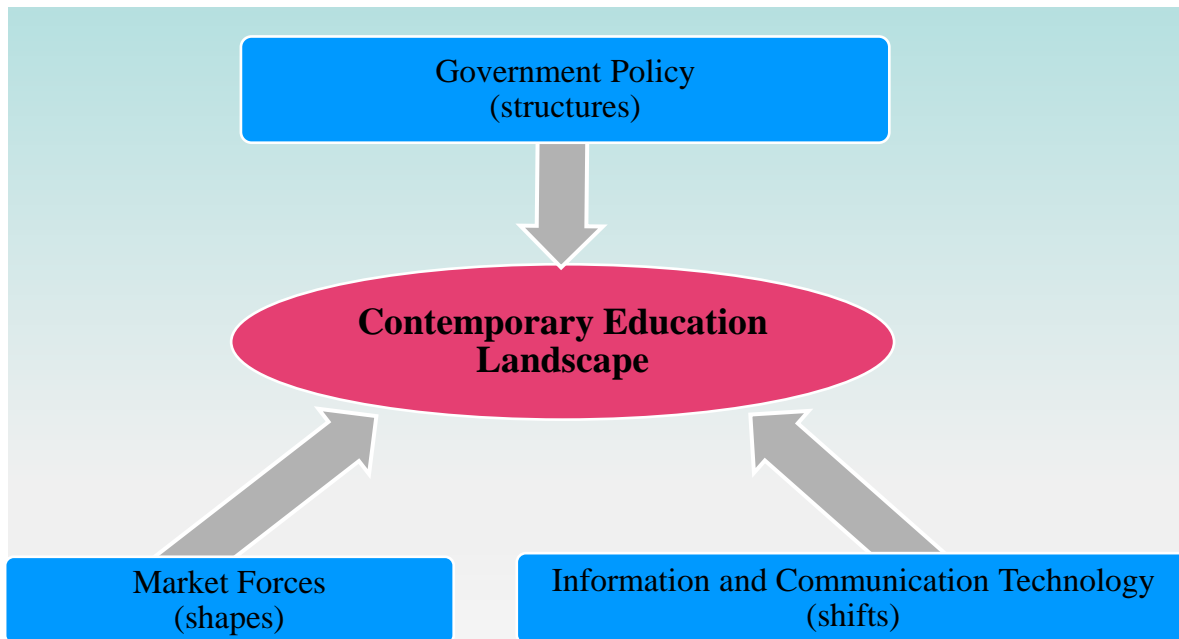
is paid to the role of the mixed sector provider in providing both vocational and higher education. The literature on development of quasi-education markets is then presented. This reviews the key literature on the forces that shape markets, and the applicability of this to education markets, and the operation of demand-driven markets and competitive advantage in the tertiary education sector. In reviewing literature on the role information and communication technology plays in shaping the contemporary education landscape, attention is paid to its impact on the tertiary education sector and how approaches to teaching have been impacted.

This chapter explores the literature that underpins the concept of the contemporary education landscape, and how the key drivers of this landscape have shaped the environment in which the mixed sector education provider has emerged. In presenting the key drivers that shape the contemporary education landscape, the review discusses how changes in these drivers then impact on the dimensions that reflect the current structure of this landscape. The review then explores the changes in government policy, a key driver of the contemporary education has shaped the policy and legislative framework by which the mixed sector provider now operates in a quasi-market. The next section addresses the marketisation of the vocational and higher education sectors, discusses how tertiary education markets operate, and the factors that shape these markets. The chapter concludes with an exploration of the key literature that explains the impact of information and communications technology on the contemporary education landscape. This does not centre on any specific information or communications technology, but how technology has shaped approaches in the delivery of education and training in the contemporary education landscape.

## **2.1 The Contemporary Education Landscape**

The way we perceive the environment in which we live and work is shaped by our beliefs: how we understand how complex organisations and structures function; and, how we

use and adapt to technological change will shape the decisions we make in the jobs we hold and in our personal lives (North, 2005). There are three primary drivers that shape the contemporary education landscape (Figure 2). The first is the role of government in establishing and modifying the legislative structures underpinning the regulatory and operating conditions of higher and vocational education providers (Mulcahy, 2003). Through the modifications in the regulatory structures under which tertiary education providers operate have resulted in the creation of quasi-education markets (Marginson, 2013). These markets now shape the contemporary education landscape which is identified as the second driver of the landscape in this study. Furedi (2011) suggests that the marketisation of tertiary education has been enabled to either achieve a political or ideological approach desired by government, or to meet the economic or social needs of the community. The final driver is the availability of ICT that now enables education providers to deliver education and training outside the classroom, laboratory, or trade training space (Alexander et al., 2019). Students are also able to access their programs at times and places that suit their needs, not the needs of the education provider (Weise & Christensen, 2014), “as ways of working and learning are no longer constrained” (PWC, 2016, p.17).



*Figure 2.* The contemporary education landscape.

The leaders of education providers operating in this landscape must have the capability to understand, interpret, and respond to the factors that make up the contemporary education landscape in order to meet the needs of stakeholders and respond appropriately to change (Callan & Bowman, 2013; Gibb & Haskins, 2013). In addressing the tensions that underpin the environment in which an organisation operates, its leaders need to have an awareness of themselves, others around them, and the wider world (Goleman, 2013). More specifically, leaders of mixed sector providers need to have an awareness and understanding of the changes taking place in the increasingly complex environment (Drew, 2010) in which the organisations they lead operate. McCaffery (2018) contends that a university leader must know their environment, their organisation, department, and their own self.

## **2.2 The Challenge of the Contemporary Education Landscape**

A number of important questions are raised in the literature which should be carefully considered when reviewing the contemporary education landscape. What role will tertiary

and vocational education play in Australia's society in the 21st century? Is their role to provide education for the greater public good, or to serve the private needs of individuals (Marginson, 2011, 2018)? Are the providers of tertiary and vocational education structured to meet local need, or are they structured to be globally competitive? (Clark, 1997; Hemsley-Brown, & Oplatka, 2006; Ward, 2012). Should governments dictate the type & availability of courses, or should this be decided in the open market (Clark, 1998; Trow, 1999; Baldwin & James, 2000; Jongbloed, 2003)? The challenges that face the mixed sector provider in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are centred on working within an ever-changing government policy framework. Beddie (2014) asserts that the policy framework continues to change as governments change and new policy approaches are implemented to achieve greater productivity or governments' funding of the tertiary and vocational education sectors is reduced. These challenges are further complicated for mixed sector providers who deliver both vocational and higher education, as there is the requirement to respond to two different regulatory regimes and to policy changes from both the state and commonwealth governments is onerous (Wheelahan, Arkoudis, Moodie, Fredman, & Bexley, 2012). Noonan, Burke, Wade, and Pilcher (2014) contend that policy approaches by Australian governments are piecemeal and the division of policy between levels of government has thwarted attempts to reform the sector. However, the funding of student places for both higher education and vocational education programs is a key instrument of governments to demonstrate their commitment to making the tertiary education sector accessible for all (Bradley et al., 2008; Lomax-Smith et al., 2011; Pitman, 2014), as is providing user choice for vocational training in Victoria (Allan, 2008; Hall, 2012). Ongoing changes in funding, along with establishment of quasi-demand-driven systems, have shaped the way tertiary providers operate (Callan & Bowman, 2013).

The broader economic and social environment in which the tertiary sector operates has changed, it is now operating in a global environment undergoing rapid change (Norton, 2009;

Lomax-Smith et al., 2011). The wider community is now able to access information and communication technology. This has altered the expectations of learners about accessing courses that meet the requirements of a modern workforce and the modes of learning they can undertake (Lomax-Smith et al., 2011). Tertiary education providers need to use technology to deliver courses and maintain their relevance in the ICT age (Bower, 1995; Christensen, Horn, Caldera, & Soares, 2011; Weise & Christensen, 2014; Khan, 2015). Alexander et al. (2019) assert that the key trends and challenges facing the tertiary sector now include: rethinking how educational institutions work; rethinking the practice of teaching; and the evolving roles of faculty in using educational technology. Each of these challenges become competing priorities that in turn place tension on the decisions leaders of tertiary sector providers make in providing leadership to their respective areas of responsibility (Scott et al., 2008; Fullan & Scott, 2009; Coates et al., 2010; Gibb et al., 2013).

While some providers may regard an open market as being a threat to the survival of their business, the open market provides the opportunity for providers to innovate their course offerings (Christensen et al., 2006). As such, Sahni, Wessel, & Christensen (2013) contend that the leaders of education providers need to be innovative in their course offer to respond to the forces of a competitive marketplace. The development of an innovative course offer alone is not enough to be competitive; the organisation must have a “Culture of innovation” (Setser, Morris & Falcone, 2015) to “get things done” (Schumpeter, 1947), and understand the competitive forces that shape a market in order to gain a competitive advantage in the market (Porter, 2008). While innovation may provide competitive advantage, the impact of information technology on tertiary education and other industries has meant that an organisation’s leadership and strategy should no longer focus on maintaining a sustainable competitive advantage; rather it should focus on continually innovating and managing the impact of change (Christensen & Overdorf, 2000; Wiggins & Ruefli, 2005). Ultimately,

higher and vocational education institutions will need to fundamentally rethink the way they work (Johnson et al., 2016). There are a number of factors that leaders need to have an awareness of, learn from, understand how to effectively respond to, and to enable the organisation to effectively respond to the challenges it faces (Fullan & Scott, 2009). It is the leadership of vocational and higher education providers which will play the critical role in reshaping these organisations to meet the challenges of the contemporary education landscape (Coates et al., 2010; Scott et al., 2008), and to these organisations becoming entrepreneurial as an adaptive response to the changing external environment (Kirby et al., 2011). In Australia's tertiary education sector many of these changes in this external environment are driven by shifts in government policy at both the federal and state levels.

### **2.3 A Background to Education Policy in Australia: Higher Education**

Governments at both federal and state levels in Australia have, to varying degrees, responsibility for the policy, funding and legislation that underpin the operation of the nation's tertiary education system. At the federation of Australia, education was a state responsibility; however, as the federal government gained control of the taxation systems from the states, its involvement and policy influence increased, commencing with the establishment of the Universities Commission in 1942 (Gale & Parker, 2013). From the 1960s to the 1990s, there were several key changes in the structure of the tertiary education system. A key change took place in 1974 when the states handed responsibility for funding of universities to the Australian government (Kosky, 2002). Other significant changes have included establishing the binary system of tertiary education providers, comprising of universities and colleges of advanced education (CAE) in response to the Martin report in 1964 (Beddie, 2014). The binary system remained in place until 1988 when the Australian government implemented the key recommendations from the white paper, *Higher education: A policy discussion paper* (Dawkins, 1987). With the implementation of this policy, a number



of reforms were implemented, including: the abolition of the binary system; amalgamating a number of universities and CAE; and increasing access to higher education places (Harman, 1989). During this period, Harman (1989) contends there were “four sets of factors” that drove the higher education policy underpinning industrialised countries, including Australia. These factors were: responding to prevailing economic conditions and structures within a country; the demand for greater efficiency from public sector organisations; massification of higher education systems; and responding to social equity in access to higher education. West (1998), in his review of higher education, contended that four themes would influence government policy for higher education institutions over the next two decades: community expectations of higher education providers, demand for university places, the digital revolution, and competition. These themes have in turn influenced government policy in respect to: shaping the higher education system for national policy purposes; higher education funding; industrial relations settings; and quality assurance and accountability of higher education providers (Coaldrake, 2000, p.10). The Bradley Review contends that the quality and performance of a nation’s higher education system “will be a key determinant of its economic and social progress” (Bradley et al., 2008, p.xi). To be assured of having a high performing higher education system, Bradley et al. (2008) identified that appropriate quality assurance and governance structures be implemented, participation in higher education be increased, and appropriate funding provided to support the increase in participation. As a result, government funding to universities has grown sharply since 2010, as opposed to the vocational education sector whose funding has reduced in real terms in the same period (Noonan et al., 2014). These policy changes responded to both the challenges identified in the Bradley report, and a desire to be competitive in a globalized market shaped by neo-liberal ideology (Marginson, 2013; Zajda, 2013).

Marginson (2016, p.112) asserts that neo-liberal economic approaches have shaped higher education policy since the mid-1980s, as Keynesian principles lost favour. The neo-liberal approach shifts the role of service provision from the state to the individual, in taking this approach “the state seeks to create an individual that is an enterprising and competitive entrepreneur” (Olssen & Peters, 2005, p.315). As neo-liberalism has become the dominant hegemony, the priorities, structure, and purpose of tertiary education providers have to varying degrees reflected the ideals of neo-liberalism (Saunders, 2010). In the neo-liberal education model, investments are made in “human capital”, the consumer has choice of provider in an open market, and the user pays as education is seen as an investment for a future dividend (Ward, 2012). Yet Marginson (2016) asserts that the neo-liberal approach has not resulted in improvements in quality of course delivery in the higher education sector. Nor will neo-liberal reforms result in a greater number of students from lower socioeconomic status (SES) backgrounds entering universities (Zajda, 2013). The implementation of neo-liberal policy in the tertiary education context has led to governments establishing competitive business models and markets, and then constraining these through bureaucratic control systems that include contracts, audit regimes, and performance target accountabilities (Marginson, 2016).

In the context of the mixed sector provider, funding for undergraduate programs has been limited to selected courses where there are identified skill shortages. In the case of SEP, a Non-University Higher Education Provider (NUHEP), there is limited funding available for parts of their Early Childhood Education and Nursing undergraduate programs. In general, however, NUHEPs do not receive government funding for providing undergraduate programs (Norton & Kemp, 2014). To enable NUHEP’s to be competitive in this environment will require leaders of these providers, including SEP, to be innovative and entrepreneurial in their higher education course offerings to differentiate their courses from other providers in a

manner that provides potential students a value proposition to enrol in a full fee course, as opposed to a course that attracts a government subsidy.

## **2.4 A Background to Education Policy in Australia: Vocational Education**

As SEP is a mixed sector provider, its primary role is the delivery of vocational education programs, the delivery of higher education programs is an extension of its role to provide technical and further education (Moodie & Wheelahan, 2009). The changing role of the mixed sector provider is not new, Goozee (2001) contends that, as courses have been moved to higher education providers, TAFE providers struggle to clearly identify their role and place in Australia's education system. Despite the numerous reviews undertaken into Australia's tertiary education sector, including (Kangan, 1974; Dawkins, 1987; Deveson, 1990; West, 1998; Bradley et al., 2008), successive governments have not clearly articulated a vision and role for the vocational education sector over this period that places it on an equal footing with higher education (Beddie, 2014). The most recent review undertaken by the Commonwealth government also "proposes a new vision for vocational education in Australia" (Joyce, 2019, pg.1). This vision includes funding, policy and regulatory settings required to maximise achievement of skills and employment outcomes from the VET sector (Joyce, 2019). This lack of vision is borne out by the fractured approach that Commonwealth and state governments have in setting policy, and the degree of intervention in providing vocational and higher education (Burford, 2009; Noonan et al., 2014).

While the VET sector has operated in an uncertain policy environment, historically, vocational education policy was the domain of state governments prior to recommendations of the Australian committee on technical and further education (Kangan Report) to establish the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission in 1975 (Goozee, 2001). Since this time, Commonwealth and state governments have entered into a series of agreements to develop a national VET system and increase funding of the system by the Commonwealth (Noonan,

2016). Atkinson and Stanwick (2016) assert that the drivers of government policy in relation to VET are responses to labour market needs, and to meet the skill development needs of individuals and organisations within Australia's economy. As such, the focus of TAFE has moved from providing education to providing training in skills for industry. This is embodied in the shift from course curricula to national training packages in the mid-1990s (Jones, 2018). Concurrently, governments have moved to establish an "open training market," as first proposed in the "Training costs of award restructuring" report undertaken by the Training Costs Review Committee (Deveson, 1990), and subsequently endorsed by the review undertaken into competition policy in Australia (Hilmer, 1993). In turn this has shaped the creation of quasi-markets in the VET sector in the mid-1990's (Anderson, 2005). Anderson (2014) contends that organisational values of public sector providers have shifted as they strive to become more efficient, market-driven, and responsive to the needs of large employers, rather than responding to government policy and workforce planning. The opening of user choice funding to non-government training providers in the early 1990s provided employers with the opportunity to select the training provider best suited to meet their training need, and saw the start of the shift of government funding to private providers (Burke, 2018). This shift in funding has continued, and private providers now enrol 60.2% of students undertaking VET programs at more than 4000 private training providers across Australia (NCVER, 2018). Anderson (2014) asserts that as private VET providers have increased their market share they have become increasingly reliant on government funding, whereas government providers (TAFEs) have reduced their reliance and identified other revenue sources to fund their operations.

There has been a great deal of change in the number of providers, market structure, and funding in both the vocational and higher education sectors (Noonan et al., 2014). Burke (2018) asserts that this uncertain environment is as a result of "erratic" funding changes, and

poor policies. This uncertainty is further complicated by conflicting policy priorities between Commonwealth and state governments; consequently, impacting on the degree of autonomy a provider is given to achieve its strategic objectives (Meek, 2009).

As a result, the governance and regulatory frameworks needed to regulate a large number of providers was in some cases neither appropriate nor adequate (Mackenzie & Coulson, 2015). Opportunistic investors then exploited regulatory loopholes to enter the vocational education market for financial gain (Toner, 2014). This has also resulted in poor outcomes for students who had little understanding of the program they were undertaking, or incurred deferred tax liabilities as a result of enrolling in programs that did not lead to employment outcomes, or were beyond the capability of some individuals (Burke, 2018; Jones, 2018). As governments attempt to achieve policy outcomes by manipulating the structure of these markets, Furedi (2011) asserts this has led to an increase in state intervention and micromanagement. In some cases, this intervention has been required to counter the unscrupulous practices of some providers, which have occurred due to government policy implementation being either wrongly or badly done (ANAO, 2016). Jones (2018) asserts that as a result of reduced funding, TAFE providers now focus on meeting regulatory standards and working within financial constraints. In turn, Noonan (2016) asserts this has impacted on their ability to innovate their teaching and learning practices. Further, Jones (2018, p.3) contends the sector is only preparing people for “narrowly defined tasks for yesterday’s industries”, as successive government policies have managed vocational education as a cost to society, rather than an investment in the future. As a consequence, asserts Harris (2015), the quality of teaching, training and assessment undertaken in Australia’s VET system has diminished. Mixed sector providers, such as SEP, therefore operate in a complex environment, balancing, dealing with, and responding to, the regulatory

and legislative framework underpinning both the higher and vocational education sectors (Wheelahan et al., 2012).

## **2.5 The Emergence of the Mixed Sector Provider**

The authority for a mixed sector provider to deliver higher education programs in addition to vocational education has been enabled through legislation that permits them to deliver and accredit higher education qualifications in addition to vocational education qualifications (Kosky, 2002). SEP can then be classified as a mixed sector tertiary education provider, delivering both higher education and vocational education programs (Throughout this study it will be referred to as a mixed sector provider). This definition is based on the classification of vocational and higher education providers developed by Moodie (2010). In the case of SEP, higher education makes up between 3% and 20% percent of the enrolled student load, with just over three percent 3% of qualifications attained in 2012 being degrees (SEP, 2013).

The key policy drivers that enabled SEP to become a mixed sector provider were: the need to upskill the workforce; to gain greater efficiency and effectiveness in delivering vocational and higher education programs; to transfer the cost of education from government to the student; to be globally effective; and to increase access to higher education (Bradley et al., 2008; Harman, 1989; Kosky, 2002; Norton & Kemp, 2014). These reforms were aimed at: “developing an infrastructure base that facilitates business success” (Kosky, 2002); increasing access to education and training (Kosky, 2002; Fredman, 2011); enabling pathways for students to successfully complete higher education qualifications (Fredman, 2011); and, increasing access to higher education for people from low SES backgrounds (Bradley et al., 2008). While the overarching aim of these policies is to enable society to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Beddie (2014) asserts that until a major shift in the mindset of the public’s understanding of the importance of applied learning and “Institutional Snobbery” are

overcome, a coherent tertiary education sector policy, and funding system that acknowledges the equal roles of teaching and research in the tertiary sector, this is not likely.

The mixed sector provider has an opportunity to exploit opportunities in the higher education sector as established universities adjust their business models to remain competitive in the contemporary education landscape. Should mixed sector providers be able to target and service particular customer segments, and create new markets through collaborations with organisations external to the education sector (Ernst & Young, 2012), they should be in a position to remain viable and relevant to their community. Leaders in the contemporary mixed sector provider need to have the capability to lead an organisation delivering vocational and higher education in a “challenging and complex market place” (Callan & Bowman, 2013, p.13). The quasi-market structure (demand-driven) is now dominant in Australian vocational and higher education markets, and is derived from the neo-liberal market model which has been the objective government policy reform agendas since the 1980s (Marginson, 2013).

## **2.6 Why Develop Demand-driven Education Markets?**

As outlined in the previous section, the dominant structure in Australia’s contemporary education landscape, by which course places are allocated in the tertiary education sector, is through government mandated quasi-markets. Marginson (2016) asserts that governments have created these market structures to impose a neo-liberal approach on the tertiary education sector. It is argued, however, that there are other reasons for creating demand-driven markets in this sector. Dill (1997, p.168) argues that there are three key reasons for developing demand-driven higher and vocational education markets: (i) to fund mass education “with a more efficient allocation of scarce public resources”; (ii) a means of increasing the efficient utilization of taxpayer funds; (iii) the rapid diffusion of public policy in respect to institution quality and subject fields. Ultimately, the demand-driven market is attempting to accommodate the desires of students while at the same time maintaining the

quality of program provision (Brown, 2010). However, Dill (1997) asserts that when market frameworks are applied to education as a mechanism to assure quality in the provision of courses, it is likely that the quality of information provided to potential students will not be sufficient to enable the person to make an informed decision, and therefore an imperfect market would exist.

Jongbloed (2003) contends that one of the key roles of government in the contemporary higher education system is to define the frameworks, boundaries, and areas in which providers operate and facilitate the development of high-level skills to support the knowledge economy. Norton and Kemp (2014) assert the contemporary higher education system can best achieve the flexibility to respond to the objectives of government policy through a demand-driven model. However, manipulating a demand-driven quasi-market by government policy restricts the ability of the market to be free, thereby inhibiting the sovereignty of both the student (consumer) and the education provider (producer) (Jongbloed, 2003). This is well illustrated by the VET FEE-HELP scheme which operated from 2010 to 2015, and which was designed to: (i) enable people on low incomes or from disadvantaged backgrounds to undertake a VET program at diploma/advanced diploma level with a registered training organisation; and (ii) increase access to the market. However, there was very little regulation, accountability, or scrutiny implemented to supervise the program. Consumers had little if any understanding of how the VET FEE-HELP scheme operated, or of their future liabilities, and in some cases were not aware of their own level of readiness to undertake a program at a diploma level (Saccaro & Wright, 2018).

The push of government policy towards marketisation of both the vocational and higher education sectors has been the dominant policy over the past 30 years (Karmel, Beddie, & Dawe, 2009). This has meant that the role of leaders in the contemporary mixed sector provider will be to provide the environment to enable individuals and work teams to



have the confidence, resources, and strategic impetus to be innovative and entrepreneurial in a demand-driven system (Dill, 2001).

## **2.7 The Implication of Quasi-Education Markets**

The need for leadership capability to be further developed at SEP is reinforced by the experience over the past decade of deregulation in the vocational education market in Victoria (Hall, 2012), and recommendations to further deregulate the higher education market (Norton & Kemp, 2014) and vocational education market (Joyce, 2019). Deregulation of vocational and higher education markets will require mixed sector providers to substantially reorganise their operations to be competitive in a demand-driven market (Wheelahan, 2013). For SEP and other mixed sector providers, major reductions in funding in 2012 to cover costs such as libraries, student services, and industrial relations agreements (full service funding) (Hall, 2012), has hastened the necessity for these providers to be cost competitive in a demand-driven market (Essential Services Commission, 2011). As mixed sector providers go through this reorganisation, questions are being raised as to how governance structures are established, and the degree of autonomy given to mixed sector providers (Meek, 2009). How staff in leadership roles at mixed sector providers will work within these structures, particularly when given the autonomy to respond to the needs of a demand-driven training market, will be dependent on the capability held by the leadership in mixed sector providers to effectively identify, analyse, and respond to the structure of quasi-markets that exist in the contemporary education landscape.

### **2.7.1 The competitive forces that shape markets**

Locke and Maton (2019) contend that leaders in the tertiary education providers need to understand the competitive forces that shape markets, negotiating the tensions in the role between being an educator and competing for students in a marketised system. This is consistent with Porter (2008), who contends that to effectively position an organisation in the

marketplace, it is essential that those who set an organisation's strategy understand the competitive forces that shape the structure of a market. Porter contends that there are five forces that shape competition in a market sector (figure 3.), as each of the forces change the structure of the market alters. When threat of either new entrants and/or substitute products is reduced or the bargaining power of buyers is reduced then the rivalry among existing competitors is reduced. The opposite then occurs when there are new entrants in the market and/or substitute products are introduced to a market, or the bargaining power of suppliers is reduced. The rivalry between existing competitors is demonstrated by individual competitors attempting to differentiate themselves for other competitors by providing a better quality product or service, a different price for a similar or identical product or service, or other factors they may rely upon to differentiate themselves from competitors.



*Adapted from Porter (2008)*

*Figure 3. The five forces that shape industry competition*

By utilising Porter's competitive forces framework, a framework to assess the impact of each force on a specific industry can be developed (Dobbs, 2014), and is an appropriate framework to assess the competitive forces impacting on the tertiary education market (Pringle & Huisman, 2011). Dälken (2014) contends the framework is not outdated, but the impacts of digitalisation, globalisation, and deregulation on an industry need to be considered when applying it, and Dulčić, Gnjidić, and Alfirević (2012) suggest the model would be more practical, provided leaders use it with an understanding of the organisation's interaction with the five forces in its past, present, and (possible) future state. In applying the five forces model to the tertiary education markets, Pringle and Huisman (2011) contend that each of these forces is applicable to education markets. Although some authors recommend a degree of caution when using Porter's competitive forces framework to assess market conditions in an education market, there is agreement that understanding the forces that shape these markets is a key role of those in leadership roles at tertiary education providers.

### **2.7.2 The operation of markets in the education sector**

Increased competition in the vocational and higher education sectors has eventuated as a result of legislative changes initiated by government policy which reduced or removed the barriers to entry in these sectors (Bullock, 2011). This has enabled new tertiary education providers to compete against existing public providers, these being TAFE in providing vocational education, and universities in higher education. The barriers that have been altered to enable new entrants to compete in these markets are: (i) government regulations that restrict the potential provider from offering equivalent qualifications to those already offered by established providers in the sector/s; (ii) restrictions to government funding and student loan schemes that established providers currently access; and (iii) increased regulation, compliance, and approvals from established providers to deliver qualifications (Jongbloed,

2003). Barriers to entry created through government regulation were once seen as being a competitive advantage held by those organisations that benefitted from such artificial barriers (Barney, 1991). However, as governments remove these barriers, whether regulatory or funding mechanisms (Bradley et al., 2008), any competitive advantage gained becomes transient. To maintain an advantage over their competitors, the leaders of contemporary education providers will be required to continually implement innovative strategic initiatives, which will require these leaders to develop new operational capabilities (McGrath, 2013).

In 2012, Australia's higher education system moved from being supply driven to a quasi-demand-driven system (Dow, 2013; Norton & Kemp, 2014). As such, the bargaining power shifted from the supplier (education provider) to the buyer (student) (Porter, 2008). In the demand-driven system, the number of places available in the majority of courses exceeds the demand for these places (Beddie, 2014). In such conditions, it is contended, the price of the course would be in the favour of the purchaser of the training (Jongbloed, 2003; Hemsley-Brown, 2011). However, in Australia's existing demand-driven system there are local distortions in pricing due to the availability of Commonwealth-supported places and full-fee places (Kaplan & Norton, 2004). This is not unique as demand-driven higher and vocational education markets across the world are by no means perfect; indeed, for the market to be perfect, Jongbloed (2003) asserts there are eight basic conditions that need to be achieved before the market conditions can be considered to be free. According to Jongbloed, for a market to be considered to be free, there are 'four freedoms' for providers and 'four freedoms' for consumers that must be present for that market to be considered to be free from distortions, barriers and regulations (table 1). When these conditions are not present in a market, Jongbloed (2003) asserts that a free market does not exist. To resolve this government needs to find a balance between regulation, pricing, monitoring and quality

assurance processes to ensure that tertiary education markets can be corrected when failures are identified

Table 1

Eight conditions for a free market

'Four freedoms' for providers	'Four freedoms' for suppliers
Freedom of Entry	Freedom to choose provider
Freedom to specify the product	Freedom to choose product
Freedom to use available resources	Adequate information on price and quality
Freedom to determine prices	Direct and cost-covering

Jongbloed (2003)

An identified constraint to a free market on the supply side in the Australian higher education system is the manipulation by government of the subsidy paid per student to providers, which has a consequent impact on the fees providers charge students (Norton, 2009). The key constraint on the demand side of the Australian higher education system is the lack of understanding future students have of courses and institutions providing programs (Baldwin & James, 2000). This has been particularly borne out by numerous issues and scandals in regard to the manner in which VET FEE-HELP was accessed by a range of providers whose key objective was to maximise the financial returns to their respective shareholders (Education and Employment References Committee, 2015).

The opening of the market to different provider types in vocational and higher education has enabled providers to differentiate both themselves and the courses/programs they offer from those of other providers. Differentiation between providers can exist in terms of: the provider type, and the reputation of the provider (Mazzarol & Soutar, 1999; Foskett, 2010); the programs and mode of delivery offered by the provider (Dill, 1997; Jongbloed, 2003); the facilities provided by providers (Weise & Christensen, 2014); the reputation of staff employed by the provider (Mazzarol & Soutar, 1999); fees charged by the provider (Brown, 2010); and the outcomes achieved by graduates from providers (Jongbloed, 2003).

Through using the differentiated variables, a provider may be able to establish a competitive advantage over other providers, and this competitive advantage may be achieved by identifying and defining its “distinctive competencies”, and by maintaining its “barriers to imitation” that advantage may be sustained (Mazzarol & Soutar, 1999).

However, it is no longer the norm that organisations can sustain their competitive advantage over a long period (McGrath, 2013). One of the key ways to generate competitive advantage is through an astute leadership team and strategic use of resources (Barney, 1991). Organisations can now access new technologies that can “drive down costs, increase accessibility, and improve services” (Sahni et al., 2013). The impact of competition, both in terms of gaining access to resources and being globally competitive, is a key factor that will impact on universities in the next 10-15 years (PWC, 2016). In such an environment it is critical that the strategic leadership of the organisation has a market-focused perspective (Foskett, 2010).

### **2.7.3 Information and communication technology**

Technology is driving educational change (Johnson et al., 2016). This has led to information and communication technologies playing an ever-increasing role in the teaching, learning, and administration of higher education organisations (Snyder, Marginson, & Lewis, 2007). The technologies used for learning have become more accessible, available, and effective, but they also present difficulties in terms of the pace of change, obsolescence and replacement, information overload, and meeting the needs of all users, particularly those who lack skills or confidence in using technology (Lewis, 1999). To remain competitive, educational providers will need to develop appropriate strategies that effectively and continually integrate technology into their learning platforms (Rogers, 2000).

Higher education has maintained its educational structure and form throughout previous periods of technological change. These periods of change have included the

industrial revolution, the great depression, and the introduction of the use of high frequency transistors (Wooldridge, 2015). However, its form has now altered and changed through the evolution of information technology. This is primarily due to the manner in which information technology has changed the relationship between people and technology (Duderstadt, Atkins, & Van Houweling, 2002). In turn, this has altered the expectations of learners as to how, when, and where they participate in the learning process. It has also given higher education providers new opportunities and challenges in meeting the expectations of learners (Scott et al., 2008).

The role of the educator is also changing in the contemporary mixed sector provider; lecturers are no longer the primary source of knowledge (Kember, 2009). Lecturers, tutors and instructors no longer play the role in purely transferring their knowledge to students based on their conceptions of teaching. They now need to play a role in motivating students, and providing students with the tools and experiences to direct their own learning, and develop their critical thinking and problem solving capabilities (McCabe & O'Connor, 2014; Khan, 2015) through student-centred approaches to learning. Students also expect providers will be customer-focused and that learning will be tailored to their needs (PWC, 2016). The role of the educator is further muddied by the need for some students to gain skills and knowledge that will provide an immediate employment outcome (Drew, 2010; Weise & Christensen, 2014). Employers also have an expectation that students will be work-ready and have a skill set that includes “problem solving, critical thinking, emotional intelligence and digital literacy” (PWC, 2016).

The contemporary education landscape is shaped by a range of forces that can be altered and varied as a result of changes in government policy and the use of technology to change the manner in which education can be delivered and accessed by students (Mulcahy, 2003). Christensen et al. (2011) assert that technology is an enabler of innovation, and

enables education providers to implement new business models to make education more accessible and reduce the significant operating overheads of the business models currently found in most tertiary education providers.

## **2.8 The Impact of Information Technologies on Tertiary Education**

Changes in government policy that have enabled new providers to enter the higher and vocational education markets, together with the availability of technologies that change the manner in which education is delivered, have created an environment potentially rich in innovation (Dobbs, Manyika, & Woetzel, 2015; Wooldridge, 2015). The implication for the leadership of the contemporary mixed sector provider is the need to have the capability to understand and take advantage of opportunities provided by this environment. For example, organisations with such leadership capability can take advantage of changes in the operating environment and access new technologies to create new products or methods of service delivery at a lower price that will appeal to, and be valued by, a wider range of customers.

This capability to alter a market's structure is defined as "Creative Destruction" (Schumpeter, 1950). It is the process of developing a new product as a result of an innovation in the production process, and applying a new technology or organisational approach to enable the producer of that product or service to sell it at a lower price point than its competitors. In some cases, of course, the product has no existing competitors so a new market is created for the product; for example, floppy disc storage being replaced by portable hard disc technology (Bower, 1995). This process is also described as disruptive innovation (Bower, 1995). In the field of education, Christensen et al. (2006, p.94) describe online learning as being a catalytic innovation. "Catalytic innovations are a subset of disruptive innovations, distinguished by their primary focus on social change, often on a national scale." More recently, massive open online courses (MOOCs) are another example of an innovation that is likely to disrupt higher education (Weise & Christensen, 2014).



Trow (1999, p.323) foreshadowed the impact that information technology would have on higher education. “Both governments and institutional policy makers must pay close attention to new forms of instruction as a result of adoption of information technology, policies must be responsive to the nature and goals of the education offered.” What has caught many providers unaware is the speed with which information technology has impacted on the manner in which education is delivered (Christensen et al., 2011; Dobbs et al., 2015). There are now organisations working on the fringe of the vocational and higher education sectors that are not highly regulated, and provide services outside the traditional delivery modes, that assist students in their learning and provide recognition for learning/knowledge attained outside traditional university models (Dodd, 2017). Technology will also enable employers to collaborate and deliver customised training programs that provide them with the skills they need and reduce the skills mismatch that often takes place when educators and employers work independently of one another (Wooldridge, 2015). Advances in technology have enabled employers to collaborate in the delivery of education and training programs through the use of shared information technology systems along with the mutual recognition of education and training undertaken by an individual through digital badging accreditation systems (Gibson, Ostashewski, Flintoff, Grant, Knight, 2015).

Innovative delivery modes that reduce the costs of delivery appeal to governments, and provide mass access to education as a result of disruptive innovations, are an option for governments to incentivize the funding of programs that meet these criteria (Christensen et al., 2011). Disruptive innovation has added a further complexity to the environment in which mixed sector providers operate, and their leaders must provide guidance and direction to ensure the survival and viability of the provider. For this to take place, organisations need to ensure they understand what resources they have, and how these can be used to change processes, enable new ways of working, and enhance decision-making processes for the

allocation of resources. Organisations must also ensure their values will support initiatives that may not be consistent with existing business rules, but may provide the opportunity to enter a new market (Christensen & Overdorf, 2000). For this to take place, leaders of organisations need to have the capability to identify and respond to change, and develop the capability to be innovative in a manner that will disrupt the market of competitors (Tierney, 2014).

## **2.9 Determining the current state of the contemporary education landscape**

Having examined the literature supporting the premise that government policy, market conditions, and ICT are the drivers shaping the contemporary education landscape. It is asserted that each of these drivers have a role in shaping this landscape and each driver has a number of dimensions that describe the role of each driver has in shaping the landscape. Each of these dimensions were then used in the research phase of this study to determine how the participants in the study describe the current state of the contemporary education landscape. Being either a traditional view of being only funded, and operated by government, and using traditional classroom based delivery models. Contrasted against the free market model, entirely funded by the learner, delivered by private enterprise with ICT being the preferred platform for the delivery of programs and courses. Through a series of questions posed in a survey, interview and focus group, differences in how the current state of the contemporary education landscape is described between staff at different levels of leadership and the external participants in the study can be identified. These findings will in turn be considered in the light of the key findings in respect to the role and capabilities demonstrated by staff in leadership roles at SEP.

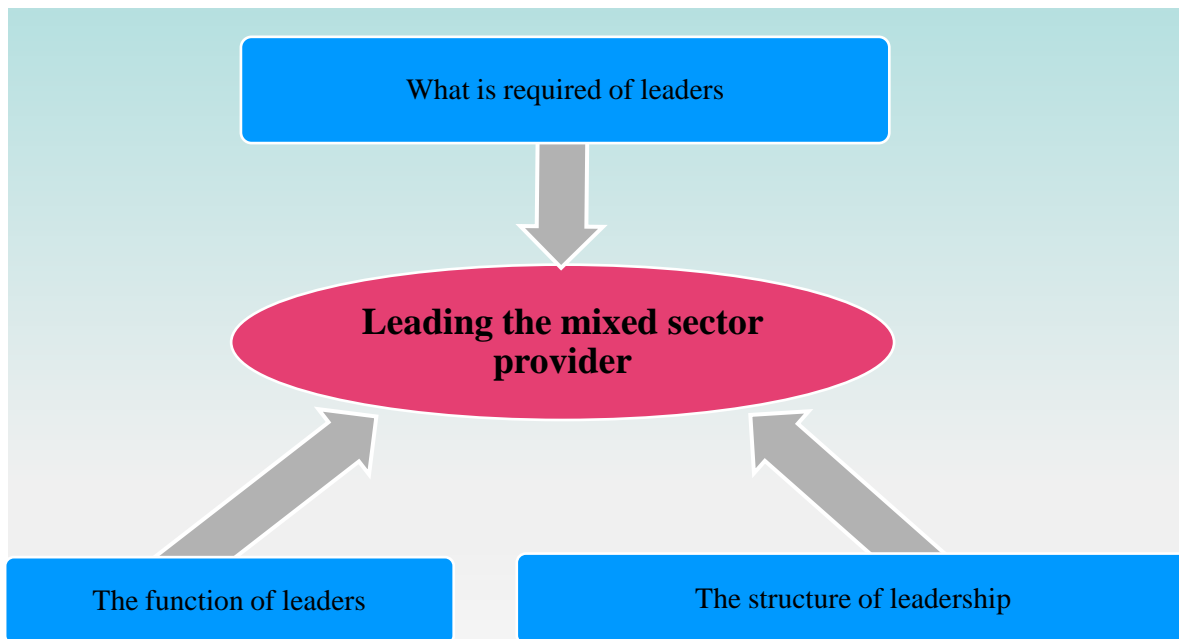
## **2.10 Summary**

The Australian tertiary education sector in which SEP, a mixed sector provider, operates, is in a state of flux due to government-imposed reform which: establishes a demand-driven market; redistributes the cost of tertiary education from government to the individual; and increases participation in vocational and higher education programs. The sector is also facing change to its established business processes, products and organisational structures resulting from applying information technologies and innovation, resulting in new modes of learning and business structures. Mixed sector providers no longer have a competitive advantage. New modes of learning and business structures are drawing students away from the existing modes of education and training provided by mixed sector providers to providers who are agile and cost competitive. This challenging landscape will require the leaders of tertiary education providers, including SEP, to have the capability to provide effective leadership that supports and encourages innovative activity in order to differentiate itself from its competitors in the contemporary education landscape.

### **CHAPTER 3: Literature Review – Leadership**

The focus of the study was to understand the leadership capabilities demonstrated at a mixed sector education provider and to establish how appropriate these capabilities are to build innovative and entrepreneurial potential. The literature reviewed in this chapter addresses the role of leadership in the mixed sector provider (Figure 4), and innovation and entrepreneurship in education (Figure 5). In presenting the literature on leadership, the first section of this chapter reviews the literature as to what is expected of staff in leadership roles at a mixed sector provider, and how these requirements have shifted as the contemporary education landscape has changed. In the second section, key literature in respect to the function of leadership in tertiary education providers is presented and discussed, particularly the capabilities required to lead the mixed sector provider in the contemporary education landscape. The final part of this section examines the literature in respect to models of leadership and their application to leadership in the tertiary education sector.

The next section of the chapter examines the literature on the topic of innovation and entrepreneurship. The following aspects are covered: (i) understanding innovation and entrepreneurship; (ii) adopting innovation and entrepreneurship; and (iii) leading innovation and entrepreneurship. The first part discusses the literature that examines our understanding of how innovation and entrepreneurship works in the tertiary education sector. The review then examines how innovation has been adopted in this sector, and concludes with a discussion of the literature that addresses how the leadership capabilities required to lead innovative and entrepreneurial activity may be developed in existing and future staff entering leadership roles in mixed sector providers.



*Figure 4.* Leading the mixed sector provider.

### **3.1 What Is Required of Leaders at a Mixed Sector Provider?**

The literature reviewed in the previous chapter identified that the tertiary education sector is undergoing continual change (Scott et al., 2008; Drew, 2010; Lomax-Smith et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2016), and these changes are driven by: government policies that alter the structure of the contemporary education landscape (Gale & Parker, 2013; Beddie, 2014; Marginson, 2016); market forces that shape the contemporary education landscape (Dill, 1997; Jongbloed, 2003; Kaplan & Norton, 2004; Norton & Kemp, 2014; Locke & Maton, 2019); and how advances in information and communication technology (Mulcahy, 2003) are shaping the ways education and training is delivered, and the expectations of learners who use these technologies to undertake their learning (Scott et al., 2008; Christensen et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2016). Scott (2008) contends that the broader changes taking place in society are now placing pressure on higher education providers to change. This in turn is testing the capability of the leaders of these organisations to implement the changes needed to enable providers to respond to the drivers shaping the contemporary education landscape (Coates, 2013). As a result, the role of a leader in a tertiary education organisation has become more

demanding, more strategic in focus, and more complex (Duignan, 2007; Eddy & Rao, 2009; De Boer & Goedegebuure, 2009). Mulcahy (2003) asserts that the role of a leader in VET providers is increasing in complexity and has an increased focus on the external environment, rather than the internal environment. However, Adams and Gamage (2008) contend that some staff in leadership roles are not effective leaders, despite having held their leadership roles for some time. Their effectiveness is further impacted by workload, a lack of leadership training, and division of leadership between frontline and senior leadership (Adams & Gamage, 2008). Fullan and Scott (2009) also identify the need for leaders at all levels in higher education providers to identify the leadership capabilities needed to deal with the “context and process of change.” Despite these assertions, research undertaken into educational leadership is limited and further work needs to be undertaken to gain a greater understanding of the leadership capabilities required (Bryman, 2007). Likewise, the understanding of the role leadership plays in entrepreneurship in tertiary education providers is not clear (Rothaermel & Agung, 2007; Siegel & Wright, 2015).

### **3.2 The Role of a Leader**

The roles that leaders in the contemporary mixed sector are required to undertake are increasingly focused on changing and transforming their organisations (Brown, 2001), and in doing this, leaders must be “self-aware, decisive, committed, able to empathise with and influence a wide diversity of people, cognitively flexible, and particularly deft at diagnosis and strategy formulation” (Scott et al., 2008); able to meet the skill development needs of industry (Coates et al., 2013); and understand and mitigate the risks of operating in a marketised environment (Foskett, 2010). While undertaking a leadership role to transform their organisations, leaders are also required to deal with bureaucracy and the controls imposed by government (Fredman & Doughney, 2012), and to manage their current operations to ensure the ongoing viability of their organisations (Scott et al., 2008). The role

of leadership in education extends beyond leading staff alone. Richards (2012) asserts that students see their learning enhanced when the teacher takes a leadership role in their learning. Likewise, Sathye (2004, p.11) contends that leaders in higher education institutions, unlike leaders in other organisation types, “need to stay close to teaching, learning, research and scholarship to bring out the best of academics.” However, Shattock (2013) contends that the trend of tertiary education providers to centralise student service functions, and the increasing influence of financial management, have pushed an organisation’s leadership away from providing academic governance and leadership.

Central to leading the mixed sector provider is to ensure that issues incorporating the human dimension of organisational leadership, particularly those dealing with change, are adequately dealt with in respect to achieving objectives, building and maintaining the team, and developing the individual (Drew, 2010). However, Duignan (2007) contends that the leaders of many organisations do not understand the complexity of the organisations in which they work and the interpersonal dynamics that take place in their organisations. There is, however, a need for further research to be undertaken to gain a clearer understanding of the role and functions required of leaders working in tertiary education providers operating in Australia’s contemporary education landscape (Scott et al., 2008; De Boer & Goedegebuure, 2009; Coates et al., 2013). Hemsall (2014) has identified a need for further research into leadership required for the knowledge era, and the need of those who work in knowledge organisations to provide leadership across all levels of the organisation.

### **3.3 The Function of Leadership in the Mixed Sector Provider**

Middlehurst and Elton (1992) assert that leadership in tertiary education providers has three distinct functions for which leadership is to be provided: educational, academic, and administrative. The educational function is the provision of leadership outside of the organisation, providing input on education policy, building links with employers and advising

on qualification frameworks. The academic function is leadership provided with the internal leadership to structure the academic direction of the organisation in respect to courses and staffing expertise. Finally, the administrative function relates to leadership provided to maintain the supporting operations of the education provider. Each of these functions is required at differing levels of the hierarchical structure that exists in the tertiary education provider. There is a need for leadership across different levels of the organisational hierarchy of a tertiary education provider, however the function of leadership differs between the levels of the hierarchy (Spendlove, 2007). Yet, De Boer and Goedegebuure (2009) assert the role of leadership in the middle levels of academic organisations is not clearly understood. This is particularly important as these roles become more strategic in nature. The transition to a successful tertiary education provider delivering higher and vocational education requires an organisation to have leaders with the capability to provide a clear vision, manage an ambiguous government policy framework (Gallagher, 2000), and work within a changing and, at times, unpredictable operating environment.

In the context of the Australian tertiary education sector, two staff groupings have the potential to provide leadership to their areas of responsibility. The first area is those staff in senior leadership roles. Their role should be focused on creating and communicating the providers' vision, mission, and strategy, and enabling changes to be made in the organisation to achieve the vision and mission. The second area is frontline leaders who focus on the operational needs of the organisation. Like senior leaders, they also need to communicate and enable changes to achieve the organisation's vision and goals (Mulcahy, 2003).

To provide effective leadership, both these groupings require managers and leaders to have capability across the dimensions of personal leadership, interpersonal leadership, and cognitive leadership (Scott et al., 2008; Coates et al., 2010). The focus of leadership across these three dimensions varies between the various roles undertaken at all levels across the



education provider, and the focus and importance of the activities the leader is undertaking (Scott et al., 2008). Nearly all positions of authority in tertiary education providers are appointed through a formal process. However, to be an effective leader the appointed person then needs to gain the moral authority and trust of those being led (Scott et al., 2008). As such, when considering what leadership capability is required for a leadership role in an organisation, it is not appropriate to only establish what the transactional or transformational focus of the role is. Other skills, values, or personality traits that make up effective leadership must also be considered (Yukl, 2012). These capabilities will need to change over time as the circumstances of the organisation, and the environment in which it operates, undergoes change (Hollenbeck, McCall Jr, & Silzer, 2006).

The increasingly complex and changing contemporary education landscape will require those providing leadership for tertiary education providers to understand the leadership role they are undertaking and demonstrate the capabilities required to provide leadership to respond effectively to these changes (Mulcahy, 2003; Scott et al., 2008; Coates et al., 2010; Fullan & Scott, 2009). However, this capability, asserts Hemsall (2014), is not presently demonstrated in providers. The leaders of mixed sector providers in the future will need to “thrive on change, foster innovation, and build a trusting and learning culture” (Brown, 2001). Jones, Lefoe, Harvey, and Ryland (2012) assert that this can take place only if a culture of collaborative leadership, and not individual leadership, is evident.

### **3.3.1 Describing educational leadership**

Traditionally, the mixed sector provider has had a hierarchical organisational structure within which accountabilities, responsibilities, and delegations are set in accordance with these structures. Many responsibilities and accountabilities are required to ensure the mixed sector provider can appropriately respond to bureaucratic responsibilities required as a statutory government authority, and to meet requirements of regulatory frameworks (ASQA,

TEQSA) within which it operates. Bensimon (1989) asserts that the bureaucratic approach is traditionally the dominant approach in educational leadership, and contemporary leaders need to have the capability to integrate each of the frames into their leadership approach. Eddy and Van Der Linden (2006) contend that what it means to be a leader in a tertiary education provider, and the practice/style of leadership, is shifting from an authoritative leadership model to a participative model. However, more recent study indicates that positional (authoritative) leadership models are still predominant, particularly where a leader has limited organisational leadership skills (Eddy & Khwaja, 2019).

“Leadership at all levels in educational settings should be primarily concerned with the generation of knowledge and the promotion of effective teaching and learning” (Duignan & Macpherson, 1993, p.10). Similarly, Askling and Stensaker (2002), and Middlehurst (2004), argue that educational providers whose objectives are set by government policy are better placed to respond to these objectives through leadership throughout the organisation, rather than a top-down approach. Hemsall (2014) asserts that traditional leadership skills are no longer effective to deal with the challenge of the contemporary education landscape. There is a need to develop/use a wider range of approaches to leadership to understand the environment and engage all stakeholders to communicate and implement a shared vision. For leadership to be effective, those providing leadership need to have a wide range of leadership capabilities, and the capacity to interpret a range of situations and enact the appropriate competencies to respond (Hollenbeck et al., 2006). Staff in leadership roles also need to find the balance between providing effective leadership for a tertiary education organisation providing pedagogically sound education whilst operating in the mass education environment (Drew, 2010). This is further complicated in the delivery of vocational education, as at SEP, a competency-based system focused on developing skills and underpinning knowledge, not providing skills to enable vocational education learners to gain skills required to build

knowledge (Wheelahan, 2015). This requires leaders of mixed sector providers to understand their role as a leader, both in achieving the organisation's objectives, and in understanding their role in delivering the educational outcomes as defined by regulatory frameworks within which the mixed sector provider operates.

### **3.3.2 Describing effective leadership**

There is no single indicator of effective leadership, nor are those who provide effective leadership limited to defined roles within an organisation (Crossman & Cameron, 2014). It is also inappropriate to assume that providing effective leadership is maintained at the senior levels of an organisation's hierarchy, but effective leadership should be provided across all levels of a tertiary education provider (Mulcahy, 2003). Kotter (2001) contends that leaders set direction, communicate the vision and goals of the organisation, and inspire those in the organisation to achieve the vision. Whereas managers plan, allocate, and control the resources of the organisation. In this context, managers have communicated the vision and goals of the organisation, and their role is to allocate the organisation's resources to achieve the organisation's vision and goals (Middlehurst & Elton, 2012). Those who provide effective leadership demonstrate a range of interpersonal and personal capabilities, including effective communication with their fellow staff, and can set and explain objectives (Kempster & Cope, 2010). Kotter (2001), in describing what leaders do, also identifies the capability of a leader to effectively communicate to their teams, and specifically the capabilities to set the direction, align people to the vision of the organisation, and inspire those in the organisation to achieve the vision. In addition to the interpersonal capabilities, Goleman (2013) asserts that effective leaders are those capable of having an awareness to focus on themselves, to focus on others, and to focus on the wider world, which in turn will enable them to strategize, innovate, and lead effectively. While these are the capabilities demonstrated by effective leaders, Bryman (1996) explains that ineffective leadership is demonstrated by people who

lack confidence, are indecisive, not able to take control, and exhibit an inability to make decisions to deal with a situation. Above all, “Leadership is about motivating people, diverse people, to work together to get results never before obtained” (Fullan & Scott, 2009, p.97).

### **3.4 Approaches to Leadership**

The traditional approaches to leadership is seen by some to be no longer appropriate in a sector undergoing constant change (Scott et al., 2008). To deal with constant change, effective leadership capability cannot only be demonstrated by senior leaders in the organisation. Strong leadership capability is required across all levels of an education provider (Guerrero-Cano, Urbano, Cunningham, & Organ, 2014), and leadership “can and should be exercised by everyone” (Ramsden, 1998, p.21). This need to have staff at all levels of the organisation provide leadership is consistent with contemporary perspectives organisational leadership. The traditional view of, or approach to, leadership, contends Prentice (2004), is that of a “military commander” who uses “punishment and reward” to motivate his troops. This, contends Prentice, is a simplistic view as threat and reward may help to motivate an individual, but successful leadership is the ability to ensure each individual in an organisation understands their role, and being able to understand and motivate each individual to perform their roles to the best of their abilities. Bass (1990) contends the transformational approach is more effective in leading individuals in an organisation than the transactional approach, which can be counterproductive when disciplinary threats may be used in trying to motivate staff. Howell and Avolio (1993) assert that transformational leadership is more effective when leadership is individualised and charismatic, staff are intellectually stimulated, and management by exception and contingent reward is reduced. Although Bass (1985) contended that transformational leadership at higher levels of the organisation has the greatest impact, Lowe (1996) asserts this is not the case and contends that transformational leadership has a greater impact when leader behaviour is

demonstrated at lower levels of the organisation. While Middlehurst (2012) asserts that transformational leadership has been applied to the tertiary education sector, the focus and direction of leadership has moved beyond a transformational model to a model that emphasises collaborative and collective leadership, and mutual influence and power.

The concept of “leader behaviour,” as described by Lowe et al. (1996), moves the focus of who leads away from appointed leaders to individuals who provide leadership to their colleagues in an organisation. This takes place, assert Posner and Kouzes (1988, p.485), when an individual “accomplishes extraordinary things in an organisation, undertaking the following practices: (1) challenging the process; (2) inspiring a shared vision; (3) enabling others to act; (4) modeling the way; (5) encouraging the heart.” This description of leadership, unlike the earlier descriptions provided, does not place the leader at the apex of the grouping, directing others; rather leadership is provided at all levels of the organisation. Posner and Kouzes (1988) identified these recurring themes through interviews that asked individuals to identify examples of extraordinary leadership they had seen demonstrated, not leaders who had demonstrated extraordinary leadership.

More recent research into leadership has focused on how people interact, and the situations within which they operate (Spillane, 2005). This is a shift in focus away from the “deeds of individual leaders,” or focused leadership, to distributed leadership approaches (Gronn, 2002). Gronn (2002) asserts these approaches are aligned to changing processes of work and divisions of labour required by organisations to respond to “new workplace imperatives,” which in turn impact on how people communicate and work with one another. Harris (2016, p.144) contends that when distributed leadership is effective when: “those best equipped or skilled or positioned to lead do so, in order to fulfil a particular goal or organisational requirement.” However, Harris (2016) asserts distributed leadership requires the capability and capacity of informal leaders to be built around a structure that clearly

outlines the operating fundamentals of the educational organisation: it will not just happen. Bolden, Petrov, and Gosling (2009) argue that “top down leadership” is not suited to tertiary education institutions, a leadership model that motivates staff to work to achieve a shared vision is better suited. They assert that leadership should be distributed across the institution and there are two representations as to how distributed leadership is enacted in educational organisations: devolved (the assignment of responsibility down the organisational hierarchy), and emergent (where individuals or groups want to take responsibility for new initiatives or ideas to achieve organisational objectives). For the distributed leadership framework to be effective in this environment, Bolden (2009) contends it needs to enable consultation, participation, and both formal and informal networking across the organisation, without being influenced by the power dynamics which may be present. However, Woods (2016) asserts there needs to be a clearer understanding of how power and authority is applied in distributed leadership, as everyone involved needs to understand the complexity of power and its application in a setting with both complementary and competing authorities. This requires the organisation’s leadership to find the appropriate balance between the devolved and emergent distribution of leadership (Woods, 2016; Bolden et al., 2009). It is clear from the literature that distributed leadership is not a model of leadership in which power and authority is distributed equally; rather authority to lead should be distributed to those ethically justified to be granted with that authority (Woods, 2016). Further, those providing the leadership need to provide clarity and direction to serve the “collective interests of the members” (Bolden et al., 2009). Hartley (2015) contends that the distributed leadership model “purports to produce a collective organisational wisdom which may help to deal with complex situations,” and provides a model of leadership compatible with digital technologies that are easily shared, distributed, and solution seeking in their application.

Although Bolden et al. (2009) identify the need for distributed leadership to serve the “collective interests of the members,” it is those providing leadership to others who need to demonstrate the values an organisation aspires to represent. Distributed leadership, Bolden et al. (2009) contend, is also an appropriate leadership model that will enable organisations to effectively respond to the ever-increasing rate of technological change being forced upon them. In addition, while leadership and management in educational organisations is also being driven by “bureaucratic rationality” and “political expediency”, Duignan & Macpherson (1993, p.8) contend that educational “leadership should focus on what is worthwhile and on what is worth doing”, “because leadership in education is formed by and forms values.” The “authentic” model of leadership, Duignan (2014) asserts, leads to better organisational performance than organisations that have a win at all costs approach to leadership.

The need for authentic leadership, Duignan (2014) contends, is critical in providing effective educational leadership, when leaders throughout an organisation are dealing with complex and changing situations. However, leaders need to be aware of the pitfalls of inauthentic behaviour and maintain “their values and moral purpose” when making decisions and implementing actions.

“What is important to understand is that, in this world, leadership cannot just come from the top. Everyone is a leader of change in their own area of expertise” (Fullan & Scott, 2009, p.98). As the strategic intent of mixed sector provider becomes more entrepreneurial, Gibb et al. (2013) argue those in leadership roles will need to have the capability to “lead innovation from the bottom”, “empowering risk and building reward” which is underpinned by careful management of relationships defined by trust.

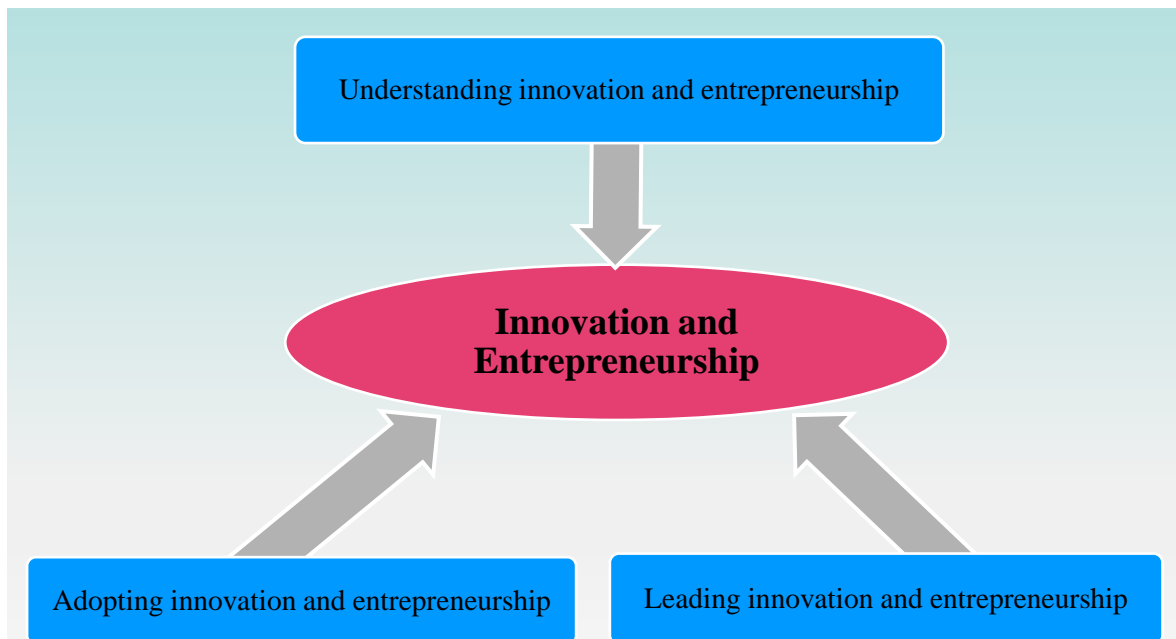
While no single leadership model in this section has been singled out as being the preferred model that will enable tertiary education providers to thrive in the contemporary education landscape. Dinh et al. (2014, p. 55) assert that future research needs to be

undertaken “that considers how disparate leadership theories relate or operate simultaneously to influence the emergence of leadership phenomena.” As the contemporary education landscape continues to evolve, so does the need for tertiary providers operating in this landscape to have effective leadership that empowers individuals and teams to be innovative, and participate and embrace change in a dynamic environment. To achieve this state, De Boer and Goedegebuure (2009) assert, further insights and understanding of the role of leadership need to be gained. As the contemporary education landscape has become market focused, the need for providers to be innovative has been identified by a number of researchers as a means to enable tertiary education providers to differentiate themselves from other providers in the contemporary education landscape. The next section explores the literature about how innovation and entrepreneurship has been adopted by the tertiary education sector, and how leadership capability can be developed for those in leadership roles in mixed sector providers operating in the contemporary education landscape.

### **3.5 Understanding Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Tertiary Education**

The early literature on innovation and entrepreneurship drew upon Schumpeter (1947, p.132) who asserted that “the function of entrepreneurs is to reform or revolutionize the pattern of production by exploiting an invention or, more generally, an untried technological possibility for producing a new commodity or producing a new commodity in a new way . . . and so on.” Based on Schumpeter’s description of what an entrepreneur does, Michael (2007, p.287) defines entrepreneurship as “the study of human actions that lead to changes in the division of labour.” While each of these definitions differs in its focus on either the present or the future, the underpinning theme is how resources available to the individual or the organisation are controlled and allocated in an innovative manner by those leading the organisation. Innovation is how an organisation uses and organises its resources to create change in its economic or social potential (Drucker, 2002).





*Figure 5. Innovation and Entrepreneurship.*

In the context of a mixed sector provider such as SEP, being entrepreneurial relies on the leaders and managers of the organisation having the capability to build, support, and operationalise the practice of innovation, take risks, and be creative in providing education and training (Dyer, Gregersen, & Christensen, 2009). While leaders and managers in an organisation will possess varying capabilities to be entrepreneurial, to maximise opportunities they must have the capability to visualise the desired future state of the organisation and understand their role in empowering their work team to achieve these goals (Hamel, 2006). In a commercial organisation, the overarching goal is to generate personal or shareholder wealth. Whereas a not for profit organisation such as SEP (a statutory government authority), the overarching goal is to create social value for its immediate and wider community (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006). To create social value through entrepreneurial activities of organisations such as SEP, the focus should be on social impact, and the resources available to the organisation allocated to maximise education and training outcomes (Austin, et al., 2006).

Facilitating innovation in the tertiary education provider differs from provider to provider, and each provider needs to identify and adapt the appropriate approach that best suits the organisation's needs (Gibb et al., 2013). Within the Australian context, the drive to entrepreneurship in our tertiary education institutes emerges from the “push of government policy and the pull of new market opportunities” (Gallagher, 2000, p.5). While the Australian government's focus is on developing innovative thinking and approaches, many education providers take the approach that innovation comes from having the biggest and best facilities (Winston, 2000). Tierney (2014) argues that universities can no longer improve their organisation through using sustainable (physical) technologies; rather, they need to develop a culture of innovation for which processes and procedures that reward risk-taking in a collaborative environment with stable organisational goals. Many organisations', particularly universities, have tried to demonstrate innovate approaches through what Weise and Christensen (2014, p.3) describe as sustaining innovations, which are investments in “enhanced technology in teaching, improved classrooms, better residence halls and dining facilities.” While it can be argued that students are attracted by such facilities (Akers, 2013), continued expenditure on facilities and equipment focused on demonstrating to students and their parents that “our facilities are the best”, rather than developing a true culture of innovation in the organisation, is unlikely to foster survival in the longer term (Tierney, 2014). “In order to breed innovation and adapt to economic needs, higher education institutions must be structured in ways that allow for flexibility while spurring creativity and entrepreneurial thinking” (Johnson et al., 2016). For SEP to capitalise on entrepreneurial opportunities, its leaders need to understand innovation and entrepreneurship. They then need to have the capability to implement, support and sustain innovation and entrepreneurship, and to ensure the need to be innovative and entrepreneurial is explained and understood by the organisation.

### **3.6 Adopting Entrepreneurship in Tertiary Education**

For entrepreneurship to be adopted and understood in the contemporary mixed sector provider, leaders of these organisations need to be able to define and explain entrepreneurship in the context of their organisation, and to recognise the characteristics that demonstrate that entrepreneurship is understood and practiced in the organisation. Cunningham and Lischeron (1991, p.46) contend the term “entrepreneurship” has been used to define a wide range of activities such as “creation, founding, adapting and managing a venture.” Within the sphere of entrepreneurship in higher education, Yusof and Jain (2010) assert there are three requirements for entrepreneurship. The first requires changing the approach of the education provider to become entrepreneurial in the way it works, its culture, and strategic intent (Alexander et al., 2019). The second requirement is to develop the capability of the higher education organisation to commercialise intellectual property developed by the provider for financial gain (Etzkowitz, 1998). The third requirement is the practice of academic entrepreneurship that being the process of creating new business opportunities within the existing structures of the university (Brennan & McGowan, 2006). What is common across all three requirements is that for any university to become entrepreneurial, it requires an entrepreneurially focused strategic mindset to be embedded at all levels of the organisation (Clark, 1998; Brennan & McGowan, 2006; Yusof & Jain, 2010; Alexander et al., 2019). In building this capability, leaders must also have the competence to identify how innovation will be supported at different levels of the organisational hierarchy, particularly attitudes to commercialisation and the experience individuals have in thinking and building innovative activities (Guerrero-Cano, Urbano, Fayolle, Klofsten, & Mian, 2016).

There is no single approach to a university becoming entrepreneurial, but there are a number of common attributes that entrepreneurial universities exhibit. These are focused on

leadership that stimulates innovation, and support and incentives for activities that build innovative capability and champion entrepreneurship (Gibb, Hofer, & Klofsten, 2014).

Despite there being a significant increase in research undertaken into innovation and entrepreneurship in the tertiary sector in the last decade (Schmitz, Urbano, Dandolini, de Souza, & Guerrero-Cano, 2017), there is a need to gain a greater understanding of the barriers inhibiting this advance by undertaking further research into the factors critical to becoming an entrepreneurial tertiary education provider (Rothaermel & Agung, 2007; Yusof & Jain, 2010). Barriers to a tertiary education provider becoming more entrepreneurial may be as a result of the organisation's structure, governance, or processes not supporting innovation or fostering entrepreneurship (Kirby et al., 2011). The informal barriers may be a result of organisational values and beliefs, reward systems, and teaching methodologies (Clark, 1998; Sporn, 2001; Guerrero-Cano & Urbano, 2012).

Further research is needed into how changes in the contemporary education landscape impact the capability of a tertiary education provider to be entrepreneurially focused (Guerrero-Cano, Urbano, & Kirby, 2006). While the role of the entrepreneurial education provider is continuing to evolve (Audretsch, 2014), it is the role of the leaders of these providers to develop new capabilities that can instill a collegial entrepreneurialism across all areas of the university to guide and lead change, and enable the organisation to create an active learning organisation (Clark, 2000). To achieve this, the role of middle-level and frontline leaders in embedding entrepreneurial activities in the educational institution cannot be underestimated (Beresford & Michels, 2014). To enable this change, the mixed sector provider needs to develop the organisational agility and leadership flexibility to deal with changes in the operating environment, while also maintaining stability in organisational structure and business processes (Aghina, DeSmet, & Weerda, 2015).

### **3.7 Developing Effective Leadership Capability**

The literature reviewed in this study has identified that the contemporary education landscape in which SEP (a mixed sector provider) operates is complex and undergoing continual change as governments adjust funding and regulatory arrangements to achieve their desired policy outcomes. In turn, quasi-education markets may shift to accommodate or exclude providers of courses, or modes of course delivery, and new information and communications technologies alter the manner in which courses could be delivered, and the expectations of how staff and students communicate can shift.

It has been identified through the literature that staff providing leadership at tertiary education providers need an appropriate mix of personal and interpersonal capabilities. This will enable them to lead effectively, to communicate the mission and goals of the organisation, and to demonstrate the values desired by the organisation in order to respond to changes in the contemporary education landscape.

While it may be possible for a mixed sector provider to employ people who have the leadership capabilities desired by the organisation, Coates et al (2010) assert they may have limited leadership training, and any training they receive will develop their leadership capabilities. Building capability within the organisation, when done effectively, will enable those participating to understand, adopt, and then demonstrate, the values desired by the organisation. In turn, this will then enable them to develop the organisation's capability to continue to build and learn the desired capabilities and values (Senge, 2014). This should be embodied in leadership programs delivered in educational institutions, modelling the manner in which these organisations wish to engage their learners (Scott et al., 2008). How this is best undertaken is not clear, as a variety of approaches have been tried (Mulcahy, 2003), and appropriate methods of leadership development are still being developed (Callan, Clayton,

Mitchell, & Smith, 2007). These models of leadership development may change at different stages in the career of the educational leader (Dopson et al., 2019).

In building leadership development programs Crossman & Cameron (2014) assert that change management and leadership competencies, and their development, are issues that need to be addressed. The need for tertiary sector leaders to effectively deal with change is a key requirement of leadership development (Drew, 2010; Scott, Bell, Coates, & Grebennikov, 2010), but the need to build the capabilities of the human dimensions to communicate the reasons for change are not to be neglected. Hemsall (2014, p.392) suggests leadership development needs to be integrated and focus on the “head, hand and heart.” Leaders of organisations also need to build the capacity within the organisation to understand the need to make change, “that one reason the situation is not working is because people do not know how to improve it, or they do not believe it can be improved” (Fullan, 2015). As part of this process, the leader must have the capability to identify, understand, and empathise with those participating in implementing change: “The leader who presupposes what the change should be and acts in ways that preclude others’ realities is bound to fail” (Fullan, 2015, p.83). Building the capabilities currently required in leadership roles in a contemporary mixed sector provider needs to be done in a manner that enables these leaders to remain engaged with the organisation while developing their capability and allowing them to learn in a manner that suits them (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006).

Coates contends that leaders in Australia’s VET sector describe the need for “authentic and active modes of learning” which is “practice-based and self-managed” (Coates et al., 2013; Crossman & Cameron, 2014). To be self-managed, Goleman (2002) contends, is more than identifying what learning one will undertake; it also involves the individual understanding their values, building on their strengths, and demonstrating the behaviors’ and values they have identified a leader should exhibit. To enhance the leaders’ learning, there

needs to be a supportive culture created that will enable the continuous development of leadership capability. When established correctly, the learning organisation has the capability to create a competitive advantage through the organisation learning and developing more quickly than its competitors (O’Keefe, 2002); but for this to take place the organisation must support and embrace the concept of a learning organisation (O’Keefe, 2002). No longer can sustained change take place through heroic leadership, taking an organisation through change where the change is not embraced or employees are not encouraged to propose new ideas. Rather, for change to be embraced by the organisation, the organisation needs to embrace a learning culture at all levels of the organisation (Senge, 2014).

The learning culture should also embrace the experiences of those within the organisation, and not only rely on knowledge and learning gained from those external to the organisation. There must be the opportunity provided to learn from the leadership experiences of others, and then to reflect on these experiences to assist in developing the leadership capability of others (Ramsden, 1998; Coates et al., 2013). When developing leadership capability through using informal programs based on the experiences of others and reflecting on one’s own experiences, attention needs to be paid to ensuring that those participating in these programs are exposed to a range of experiences. These experiences will enable the development of capabilities that will lead to the individual implementing appropriate strategies for effective leadership (Eddy, 2013).

There is also the need to ensure that the process of developing the capability of leadership does not lose its focus and develop managers rather than leaders. This can occur as a result of the organisation being conservative in its approach to leadership development and focusing on “the development of collective leadership and the managerial ethic” (Zaleznik, 1992). Leadership programs have also focused on the technicalities of running an organisation, rather than developing the capabilities required to lead an organisation (Askling

& Stensaker, 2002). To make a leadership development program authentic, it needs to focus on the experiences of others and give opportunities to individuals to reflect on their own experiences as leaders (Coates et al., 2013; Ramsden, 1998). The chances of a leadership program failing are minimised when the program is contextualised, it is tied to real on-the-job projects, ensuring it addresses the undesirable behaviours of participants (Gurdjian, Halbeisen, & Lane, 2014).

### **3.8 Summary**

The literature reviewed in this section has identified that research into leadership of mixed sector providers is sparse. Further research is needed to understand how leaders communicate and undertake their role as the organisation responds to changes in the contemporary education landscape. This landscape in turn is driven by changes in government policy, market forces, and information and communication technology. In this review, a number of leadership models were presented and reviewed within the context of educational leadership. The literature reviewed identified that a model of distributed leadership which facilitates leadership across all levels of the organisation would be appropriate for the mixed sector provider. This will enable effective use of information technologies that distribute information technology across the organisation, and facilitate innovative and entrepreneurial activity. It is identified from the literature review that staff in leadership roles at all levels of the organisation need to understand their role in providing leadership, and to then effectively communicate the role their work groups have in achieving the organisation's strategic objectives. For staff providing leadership, the literature review points to the need for staff in leadership roles to have the capability to demonstrate and reinforce, across all levels of the organisation, the values and mission desired to be lived. To develop this capability, leadership development needs to be contextualised, to comprise a



combination of formal and informal learning, and to be undertaken at all levels of the organisation, thus instilling a culture of learning within the organisation.

## CHAPTER 4: Research Methodology

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the role of leadership, and the capabilities demonstrated by staff in leadership roles at a mixed sector tertiary education provider. In undertaking this role, staff need to have the capability to lead innovative and entrepreneurial activity in the contemporary education landscape. This study requested staff in leadership roles at SEP to participate in a questionnaire and focus group which provided the qualitative and quantitative data that responded to the questions posed in the study. To gather these data, a convergent parallel mixed methods design was used (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This methodology was selected as it enabled qualitative and quantitative data to be gathered in parallel from participants who have different perspectives on leadership in the contemporary education landscape. These perspectives are either from staff in leadership roles at SEP (internal participants) or from people with leadership roles external to SEP but at organisations operating in the tertiary education sector (external participants). The methodology used in the study is consistent with that used in similar studies undertaken on leadership at other tertiary education providers (Scott et al., 2008; Coates et al., 2010). It has also increased the “meaningfulness and validity of constructs and inquiry results by both capitalizing on inherent method strengths and counteracting inherent biases in methods and other sources” (Greene, J.C., Caracelli, & Graham, 1989, p.259).

In this chapter the research design is presented and the rationale for this design is justified. Following this, an overview is presented of the site at which the study was undertaken, the sample population and participant profiles. This includes the process used to identify and invite potential study participants and how they participated in the study. The research process is then explained and data collection processes are described. The data analysis and interpretation processes used in the project and the key outputs are then presented. The chapter will then conclude with an explanation of the role of the researcher

and the process used to manage the data gathered in this study, as well as a presentation of ethical approvals gained to conduct this research at SEP.

#### **4.1 Research Design and Rationale**

This case study has adopted a pragmatic approach to collect the data which addresses the research questions posed. This approach was taken as it uses a research methodology to collect both qualitative and quantitative data that enabled the researcher to understand the views of the study's participants and draw conclusions (Morgan, 2007) that may apply not only at SEP but at other educational institutes operating in the contemporary education landscape. In analysing and interpreting the data, the researcher has taken the position that the participants have provided responses that have been shaped and influenced by the environment in which they work (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Greene, J.C., & Hall, 2010).

To gather, analyse and interpret the qualitative and quantitative data generated, a convergent parallel mixed methods design was used for this study. Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p.77) define the convergent parallel mixed methods design as “when the researcher collects and analyses both quantitative and qualitative data during the same phase of research and then merges the two sets of results into an overall interpretation.” In this study, the questions posed in the internal questionnaire and external interview were informed by SEP site documents and the field observation notes. The collection of the data then commenced with the distribution of the questionnaire. This was distributed to SEP staff, containing mostly quantitative questions and some qualitative questions. In parallel, interviews were conducted with the external interview participants. They also completed a small quantitative questionnaire. This collection process provided data from two exclusive sources which was then analysed independently to provide two perspectives on leadership at SEP, which aided the design of the questions posed in the focus group (Figure 6).

Having completed the data collection phase of the study, the qualitative and quantitative results were then cross-tabulated to enable similarities and differences to be identified between the participant subgroups from which the key findings of the study are based (Creswell, 2013). This process enabled collection of sufficient data to gain an understanding of leadership, innovation and entrepreneurship (Ivankova et al., 2006) at SEP, and to assist in understanding how the “complex phenomenon” of leadership (Stentz, Clark, & Matkin, 2012) is enacted at SEP. The approach used enabled the study to deploy the strengths of each method, thereby enabling a comprehensive analysis (Greene, J.C., et al., 1989) of leadership at a mixed sector provider operating in the contemporary education landscape.

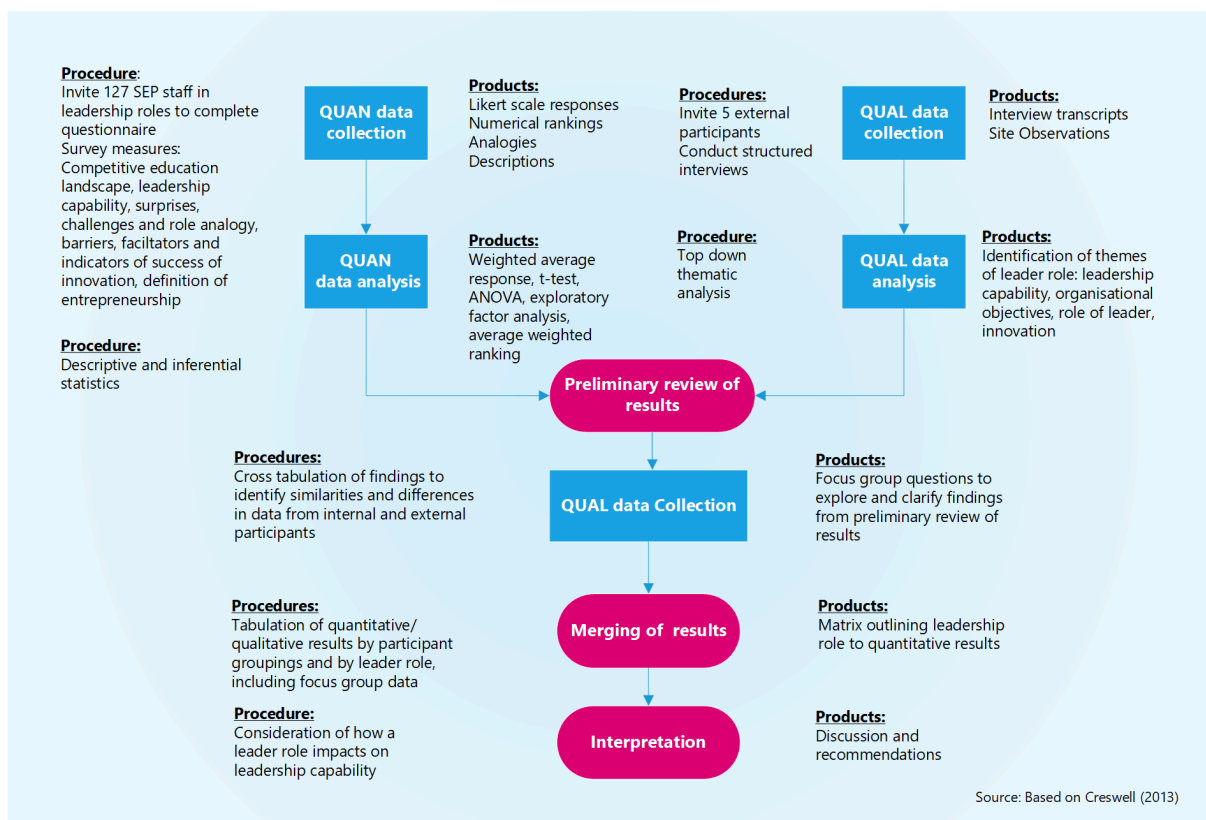


Figure 6. Overview of the research design.

The qualitative approaches were used to collect data that would assist in responding to the what, why, or how questions posed in the study (Molina-Azorín, López-Gamero, Pereira-Moliner, & Pertusa-Ortega, 2012). These included: where leaders in the organisation directed their activities; their descriptions of what it is like to lead a mixed sector provider; and the key challenges faced in providing leadership in a mixed sector provider. In this study, these matters were evident in the responses to questions posed in the external questionnaire about: leadership capability; effective leadership; and skills and capabilities future leaders of contemporary mixed sector providers will need to develop.

Quantitative approaches were used to gather data about the how many, how often questions that were posed in this study (Molina-Azorín et al., 2012). This specifically provided data about: participant demographics; leadership capability; innovation; entrepreneurship; and the contemporary education landscape. There were also selected questions in the external questionnaire focusing on entrepreneurship and the contemporary education landscape. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods has a place in the study of leadership (Parry, 1998; Kempster & Parry, 2011) and provides “a greater understanding of leadership” (Stentz et al., 2012). In this study the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods has enabled a greater understanding of the measured leadership capabilities identified at SEP and an understanding of the approaches, challenges, and barriers leaders face in a mixed sector provider.

The design of this study emerged from the deeper understanding of educational leadership from the literature reviewed by the researcher in the preliminary stages of this project. This knowledge is used in conjunction with the researcher’s leadership experience and observations of other leaders at SEP. Based on this, a research design was developed that required insights into leadership at SEP from staff in leadership roles at the organisation, and insights from leaders of organisations providing educational services to SEP. To reduce any

bias during the data collection/analysis phases, the convergent parallel mixed method design was used.

In the first phase of data collection for this study, the SEP participants completed a questionnaire that elicited mainly quantitative data, but also some qualitative data. While this was taking place, the researcher conducted interviews with the external participants. These participants also completed a short questionnaire. Having completed this, the researcher then analysed the data from the questionnaires, and then analysed the external interview transcripts. Each of these analyses was completed independently, and then the qualitative and quantitative data gathered, was cross-tabulated. Converging the data to form the preliminary findings enabled the researcher to refine and develop the questions posed in the focus group, and to corroborate the responses from the different data sources used in this study (Greene, J.C., et al., 1989). The methodology used in this study has been adopted to gain an understanding of how those in leadership roles at SEP describe the challenges they face and the priorities they set to effectively undertake their jobs. The methodology also measured how important these staff rate the personal and interpersonal capabilities they need to effectively undertake their role, and measure the impact of the forces that shape the contemporary education landscape.

## **4.2 Research Questions**

The overarching question posed in this study is: Do staff in leadership roles at a large metropolitan mixed sector provider have the appropriate capabilities to effectively lead innovation and entrepreneurship in the contemporary education landscape?

To answer this overarching question, the following subquestions have been posed in order to understand the function of leadership at SEP:

1. What are the capabilities and priorities of leaders in a mixed sector provider?

2. How are leaders of a mixed sector provider described by leaders of other organisations operating in the contemporary education landscape?
3. Do leaders at SEP have the capability to provide leadership that builds innovation and entrepreneurship?
4. How can the capability of leaders at SEP be developed in order to lead an innovative and entrepreneurial organisation?

### **4.3 Sample Site, Population, and Participant Selection Procedures**

The study site, SEP, is a mixed sector provider in metropolitan Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. The provider has seven metropolitan campuses and one rural campus in country Victoria. The provider is a statutory government organisation, established by an act of the Victorian Parliament. It delivers a wide range of qualifications ranging from nationally accredited vocational education programs from certificate to advanced diploma level, undergraduate degrees, and graduate diplomas to a master's qualification at postgraduate level. Participants for this study were drawn from two distinct population groups: internal participants, and external participants.

#### **4.3.1 Internal participants**

The internal participants were employed at SEP, the mixed sector provider at which this study was undertaken. All potential internal participants in this study held formal leadership roles within SEP at one of the four distinct levels (Table 2) in its organisational structure. In total, when the questionnaire was distributed on 10 September 2015 there were 127 staff who held senior, middle, and frontline management roles at SEP. All these staff were invited to participate in this study.

Other than the teaching and administrative roles presented in Table 2, all other roles require staff in these roles to provide leadership to their departments or work teams. Those roles that are closely related to the delivery of programs and processing of student data

(education manager, administrative coordinator) are focused on the management of immediate issues and only provide leadership and vision to their work groups. This is in contrast to the senior and executive leadership of the organisation whose roles are focused on the longer term objectives, and on providing clear leadership and vision to the organisation, faculties, and departments.

Table 2

*Leadership Roles at SEP*

Leadership	Leadership Role	Data analysis classification (subgroup)
Senior administrative officers	Provide leadership to frontline administrative staff whom have contact with current, former and future students. Senior administrative officers also provide leadership for back office functions at SEP, including payroll, registrar, human resources, technical services,	
Education managers, course leaders, senior educators	Provide leadership to teaching staff and are the first point of contact most students have with SEP when they commence their programs. They are responsible for the ensuring teachers deliver content in accordance with the curriculum/training package. Respond to queries from students in respect to course progress or complaints.	Course leadership
Heads of department/heads of administrative departments	The head of department has a role to provide leadership and management to a teaching department. (These departments are generally an aggregation of courses that deliver related skill sets; for example accounting, plumbing, or nursing). The heads of administration provide leadership and management to an administrative department providing an administrative function to a department (for example, media services, marketing and promotions).	Senior leadership
Senior leaders (deans, associate directors, executive directors)	The function of this level of the organisation is to provide strategic leadership to the organisation, interpret and implement the strategic objectives of the board and government policy, and participate in dialogue to understand the needs of industry, community, and students.	

The executive directors, deans/associate directors, heads of department, and heads of administrative departments (senior and departmental leadership) have roles that are focused



on organisational leadership and faculty/department management. Senior educators, course leaders, and senior administrative officers (course leadership) have roles that focus on course leadership and leadership of frontline administrative staff. This classification of roles is consistent with the classification of leadership roles used by Scott et al. (2008) in higher education providers, and Coates et al. (2013) in the vocational education sector. As noted, these classifications enabled a comparison of the findings from this study to the findings of the previous studies.

All potential internal participants were approached by email requesting their participation in the study. Contained in this email was an overview of the study objectives. Participants were provided with a copy of the ethics approval letters issued by University of Canberra and the mixed sector provider institute, participant information for internal and external participants, and a consent form (Appendix B). Finally, the email also provided participants in the study with the contact details of the investigator, supervisors of the study, and the Executive Officer of Ethics at the University of Canberra.

Having had the questionnaire distributed to them, potential internal participants were given a four week window in which to complete and submit it. At the conclusion of this period, 58 completed responses to the survey were received (a response rate of 45.67%). The breakdown by leadership subgroup is set out in Table 3, and a detailed demographic profile of the SEP participants is provided in tables 18-20, located in Appendix G. The response rate is above the minimum sample size of 30 responses required to undertake statistical analysis of the results using a t-Test (Levin, 1981).

#### **4.3.2 External participants**

For the purposes of this study an external participant is a person who was not employed by the mixed sector provider. Five external participants were selected and asked to participate in the interviews for this study (Table 3). Each external participant currently

holds, or had recently held, senior or executive level positions in organisations that currently deliver education and training programs, either as a private education and training organisation or as an enterprise training provider. These organisations may provide professional services to the vocational and/or higher education sectors, and these services may be to provide staff development, leadership training, or organisational development support. Each participant was asked to participate based on this experience. In addition, each of them also had experience in developing and implementing leadership programs for their own organisations or for other tertiary education providers. They provided this research project with a broad range of perspectives on leadership capability in the tertiary education sector. The external participants who were approached to participate in the study were sent an email in the first instance requesting their participation in the study. This email differed from the email sent to the internal participants as it contained an overview of the questions they would be asked during the interview, should they consent to participate. The email also provided an overview of the study and a background as to why the study was undertaken, both in terms of the individual researcher's objectives and the objectives of the research cohort (Appendix C). As with the email sent to the internal participants, each external participant received the participant information form and contact details for the investigator, supervisors, and Executive Officer of Ethics at the University of Canberra, along with the ethics approval from the University of Canberra.

Table 3

*Summary of Population Size and Response Rate*

Category	Site Population	No. of responses	Response Rate
1: SEP staff in leadership roles	127	58	45.67%
2: Senior and departmental leadership	65	27	41.54%
3: Course and frontline leadership	62	31	50.00%
4: External participants	5	5	100.00%

#### **4.4 Classification of Responses, and Participant Descriptors Used**

The data gathered from staff in leadership roles at SEP are classified and presented under the following groupings: (i) responses from all staff holding leadership roles at SEP; (ii) responses from staff holding either a senior or a departmental leadership role at SEP (senior leadership subgroup); (iii) responses from staff who held either a course or a frontline leadership role at SEP (course leadership subgroup). In presenting the data gathered from internal participants when a quote is presented, it is attributed by using the coding IP, followed by C for participants from the course leadership subgroup, or S for the senior leadership subgroup. A number is then applied to differentiate individual participants within these subgroups. For example, internal participant number 3 from the senior leadership subgroup would have the coding (IPS-3). References to, and quotes from, the internal participants in focus groups are identified using the coding FGP, followed by a reference number allocated to each participant; for example, focus group participant 1 has the coding (FGP-1). References to, and quotes from, the external interview participants are identified using the coding EP followed by a reference number; for example, (EP-1).

#### **4.5 Participant Selection**

This study used a homogeneous sampling scheme (Kemper, Stringfield, & Teddlie, 2003) for the SEP participants. In this sampling scheme all staff in leadership roles at SEP were identified as potential study participants and then invited to participate. In the selected population group, all staff identified by the researcher as holding either a management or leadership role based on their formal role title in their faculty/departmental organisation charts was invited to participate in this study. Other staff at SEP who may have provided informal leadership to their fellow staff but did not hold a management leadership role were not invited to participate. This decision was taken as the researcher was unable to identify staff members who may have held an informal leadership role in their work area.

Having obtained approval from SEP to have staff participate in this study, the identified staff were then emailed an invitation along with the “Internal participant information sheet and consent form to participate in the internal questionnaire and focus group.” The SEP staff who consented to participate in the study then completed the internal questionnaire on Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>) via the link provided in the invitation. Participants who consented to participate then returned the consent form to the researcher via SEP’s internal mail system.

The external participants who participated in the study were approached by the researcher via a telephone call. In this telephone call the potential external participant received an explanation from the researcher that outlined the purpose of this study and the research questions that the study was addressing. The researcher then outlined what was required of the external participant should they consent to participate in the study, and that prior to the interview commencing the external participant would be sent a copy of the “External participant information and consent form” (Appendix C). Written consent from the participant was required to be provided to the researcher prior to the interview being conducted. Five external participants were approached by the researcher requesting their participation in the study. Each of the five participants agreed to participate in this study and provided their written consent to do so.

Having conducted the internal and external interviews, a preliminary analysis was undertaken of the qualitative and quantitative data gathered from the questionnaire completed by the internal participants at SEP and the interviews with the external participants. This was done to build questions to be asked in the focus group that would enable an “in depth” exploration of the key findings identified from the questionnaires (Molina-Azorin, 2016). The focus group was then conducted. Prior to the focus group commencing, the participants were provided with a copy of the “Internal participant and consent form” (Appendix C), and

requested to complete the consent form. This was only requested from participants if they indicated they had not participated in the questionnaire phase of data collection. All completed participant consent forms were then collated, and securely stored to ensure the identity of participants remained confidential. Once the data collection phase of the study was completed, a detailed analysis of the data was undertaken to establish the findings of this study, as detailed in the subsequent chapters in this document.

**4.6 Data Collection**

As this study has used a convergent parallel mixed method approach, as outlined in Figure 7, the data collection tools were designed in a manner to primarily collect either qualitative data or quantitative data.

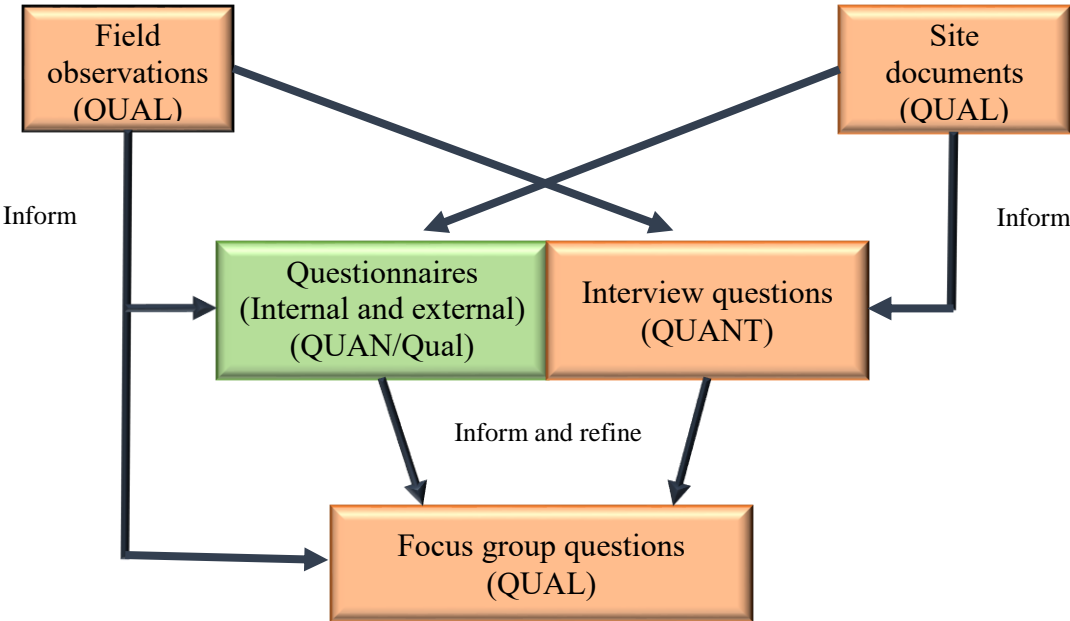


Figure 7. Data collection process.

A description of each method used to collect the data, and type of data collected through using the method, is set out in Table 4, along with a brief description of how the data

collection method was used, to whom it was administered, and the type of data (qualitative/quantitative) collected using that method.

Table 4

*Data Collection Methods*

Source and data type	Use
Questionnaire (quantitative/qualitative)	Provided an understanding of the leadership capability existing in the organisation and their understanding of the key concepts that underpin a demand-driven market and the concepts of entrepreneurship and the contemporary education landscape. The internal questionnaire is primarily a quantitative questionnaire. It does, however, contain embedded qualitative questions. The questionnaire was administered to SEP participants at the commencement of the study.
Interviews (qualitative)	Provided an overview of the capabilities to be exhibited by leaders in a mixed sector provider, and the challenges and issues they consider they face. It also provided an understanding of their understanding of the contemporary education landscape and what entrepreneurship is in the tertiary education sector.
Focus Group (qualitative)	The focus group provided further insight into the understanding of leadership capability, innovation, entrepreneurship, and competitive advantage at SEP.
Site Documents (qualitative)	Each of the site documents used in this study provides a snapshot of a point in time in respect to the organisation's mission, values, and objectives. The site documents also provide information of how the organisation has responded to the changes taking place in the contemporary education landscape.
Field observations (qualitative)	As the researcher holds a leadership role at SEP, observations have been made of the way fellow staff in leadership roles have led as they respond to changes in the contemporary education landscape, and how they have provided leadership that either supports or hinders innovation in their work areas or across the organisation.

**4.6.1 Questionnaire**

There were two questionnaires developed for this study. One for the internal participants, and one for the external participants. The questions included were drawn from previous studies that researched: higher education (Scott et al., 2008); vocational education (Coates et al., 2010); and, innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education (Guerrero-Cano & Urbano, 2012; Kirby et al., 2011). The questionnaire administered to the SEP staff in

leadership roles was structured to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. These questions were also contextualised for SEP using the data gathered by the researcher from field observation notes and site documents. This was undertaken to assist those who took part in the study to understand the context of each question in relation to the terminology, structure, or processes used at SEP. Having contextualised the questions that would assist SEP staff to understand and interpret the questions and provide an appropriate response, the key topics addressed in the questionnaire were:

- (i) the contemporary education landscape;
- (ii) the required leadership capabilities in a contemporary mixed sector provider;
- (iii) the key factors required to develop innovative capacity in the organisation;
- (iv) the definition of an entrepreneurial contemporary mixed sector provider;
- (v) the ranking of facilitators to, barriers against, and success criteria of an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider.

The questionnaire was administered online to internal participants through the internet hosted program, Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>). Although participants were given the option of completing the survey on paper should that be their preference, none of the participants elected to do so. The questionnaire was made available to participants to complete in October 2015. Once the participants had completed the consent form and acknowledged that they had provided consent, they then completed the online questionnaire.

#### **4.6.2 Demographic information**

Questions were included pertaining to demographic information about the internal participants, thus enabling the researcher to provide the reader with an overview of the demographic profile of the study's participants. It also enabled the researcher to sort and analyse the responses from each participant by leadership subgroup. This level of analysis assists in gaining a richer level of analysis than that which would be gained from the analysis

of the internal participants as a homogenetic group (Molina-Azorín, 2010). Responses to this section of questions were quantitative.

#### **4.6.3 Defining the contemporary education landscape**

Eleven dimensions were examined in this study to measure how both the internal and external participants describe the impact each of the key drivers has on the contemporary education landscape. The participants selected one of seven descriptors on a Likert scale: #1 – all (past state), #2 – most (past state), #3 – some (past state), #4 – equally (past/future state), #5 – some (future state), #6 – most (future state), #7 – all (future state). Responses to this section of questions were quantitative.

#### **4.6.4 Major priorities and influences in your current role**

Participants were requested to rank the importance of a range of duties that a staff member in a leadership role would be required to undertake in performing their role, and a number of influences that may also impact on their role. The participants selected one of five descriptors on a Likert scale, #1 – low, #2 – low/medium, #3 – medium, #4 medium/high, and #5 – high. The responses to this section were quantitative. Participants were also requested to nominate any other priorities that they considered to be important to their role (qualitative) and then rank that item's relative importance (quantitative).

#### **4.6.5 Personal and interpersonal leadership capability scales**

The leadership capability scales used in this study are based on the professional capability framework, tested and validated by Scott (2003) and Vescio (2005). Participants were requested to rank a number of statements, each describing a personal or interpersonal capability. The participants selected one of five descriptors on a Likert scale, #1 – low, #2 – low/medium, #3 – medium, #4 – medium/high, and #5 – high. The responses to this section were quantitative. Participants were also requested to nominate any other priorities that they



considered to be important to their role (qualitative) and then rank that item's relative importance (quantitative).

### **Surprises, challenges and role analogy**

Questions in respect to an analogy that best described their role, along with the surprises and challenges of their role, requested the participant to provide a description in their own words. Open ended responses add illustration and insight into what the study's participants think and feel about their leadership role (Molina-Azorin, 2016). All responses in this section were qualitative.

#### **4.6.6 Defining the entrepreneurial mixed sector provider**

The participants were provided with six definitions of an entrepreneurial education provider, and then asked to select one definition they believed defined an entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider. Each of these definitions differ slightly as they are based on the educational context from which they have been derived (Guerrero-Cano et al., 2006; Kirby et al., 2011). This approach yielded quantitative data.

#### **4.6.7 Factors to create innovation**

For each of eight items the participants were asked to identify how important that item would be in creating innovation at SEP. To report this, participants selected one of five descriptors on a Likert scale, #1 – low, #2 – low/medium, #3 – medium, #4 –medium/high, and #5 – high. Each participant was requested to describe what they considered to be the most important (i) resources, (ii) organisational processes, (iii) organisational values, required to support innovation at SEP. This approach yielded quantitative data.

This section of the questionnaire uses two sets of frameworks. The first was developed by Kirby et al. (2011) and relates to facilitators and barriers to create innovation, and success indicators of an entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider. The second framework was developed by Guerrero-Cano et al. (2006) to identify the factors that measure

the success of building innovation, and barriers to innovation. Both of these frameworks are based on the work of North (2005), and focus on the environmental factors that shape attitude, and approaches to economic change. For this section the participants were requested to numerically order the items by rank, from #1 – most required through to #13 – least required in the list of criteria for the facilitators that yielded quantitative data. For the barriers to becoming more entrepreneurial the participants were requested to rank from #1 – most significant barrier through to #13 – least significant barrier, this approach yielded quantitative data. Finally, with the success criteria, the participants were requested to rank 17 items from #1 – most important through to #17 – least important success criteria on which an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider can be judged. The responses for this section are quantitative.

The questionnaire completed by the SEP participants collected quantitative/qualitative data that provided an insight into the way staff in leadership roles at SEP describe: the contemporary education landscape; the personal and interpersonal capabilities required to be an effective leader; the challenges, surprises, and priorities of the role; and their understanding of innovation and entrepreneurship in the tertiary education sector. The preliminary analysis of the quantitative data was undertaken by determining a weighted average response for each of the questions for which a quantitative response was provided. A top-down analysis was conducted with qualitative data gathered to identify key themes and clusters of responses. For both the quantitative and qualitative data the responses are grouped by all participants and by leadership subgroup. This preliminary evaluation of the data, along with data gathered from the interviews undertaken with the external participants, enabled the researcher to inform and refine the questions that were posed to the SEP staff who participated in the focus group.

#### 4.6.8 External interviews

Parallel to the questionnaire posed to the participants from SEP, five interviews were conducted with participants external to SEP who have an intimate understanding of the tertiary education sector and the contemporary education landscape in which SEP operates. The qualitative data gathered from the external interview participants provided a background and an insight into their understanding of:

- (i) the contemporary education landscape;
- (ii) the required leadership capabilities in a contemporary mixed sector provider;
- (iii) key factors required to develop innovative capacity in the organisation;
- (iv) the definition of a contemporary entrepreneurial mixed sector provider;
- (v) barriers to, facilitators, and success criteria of, an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider.

Prior to undertaking the interviews, the researcher sent each external interview participant a list of the questions to be posed during the interview. This was done to enable the interviewee the opportunity to think about the question in order to enhance the quality of the responses provided to each question. Although most of the data gathered from the external participants was qualitative, they were also requested to complete a short questionnaire which generated quantitative data. This questionnaire used questions from the questionnaire completed by the internal participants. The topics covered by these questions are:

- (i) Defining the entrepreneurial mixed sector provider; and
- (ii) Describing the contemporary education landscape.

During the interview, structured questions were asked to open each question, and where needed the researcher asked additional questions to either gain further clarification and/or request more detail to the responses initially provided.

The final part of the interview was a discussion in regard to their opinion as to how entrepreneurially focused SEP is when compared with other mixed sector providers in the tertiary education market, both in Australia and overseas. The data gathered in the interview was then triangulated with data gathered from the questionnaires and the SEP focus group, along with the findings from the literature review.

The interviews were conducted with five external participants. These were completed between October 2015 and February 2016, fitting in with the work schedules and availability of the interview participants. Each external participant was requested to take part in an interview conducted by the researcher. In all cases the researcher has a pre-existing professional relationship with the participants. This assisted the interview process as both the interviewer and interviewee did not need to spend time either prior or during the interview familiarising themselves with one another. A week prior to the interview each participant was sent the questionnaire, a list of key definitions used in this study, and the interview questions to be asked in the interview, to provide each participant with an opportunity to gather their thoughts and develop responses they might give to each question, and to complete the questionnaire prior to the interview.

Once the interviews had been completed the five external participants made themselves available to be contacted at a later date should any clarification be required on the points raised during the interview. This was not required by the researcher.

Having completed the interviews and received the completed questionnaire a preliminary data analysis of the questionnaire responses and the interviews was undertaken. The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data was done independently of one another (Table 5), and the preliminary results from both data sources were converged to assist in constructing the focus group questions to enable further investigation of any significant points identified from the preliminary results.

#### **4.6.9 Focus group**

Having gathered quantitative data from the questionnaires and qualitative data from the interviews with the external participants, the next phase of the data collection process was to conduct the focus group. Prior to this taking place a preliminary analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data that was gathered from the questionnaires and external interviews was undertaken. These findings along with findings from the field observations made by the researcher informed and refined the structure and content of the questions posed in the focus group. As a result, the aims of the questions posed to the focus group were as follows:

1. To ask participants to define leadership capability, and establish what capabilities are required for leaders to effectively deal with innovative changes impacting on the operations of SEP.
2. To establish what capabilities leaders at SEP need to demonstrate to be effective in their role, both personal and interpersonal.
3. To identify if leaders at SEP have the right mix of leadership capabilities to be innovative and entrepreneurial.
4. To gain an understanding from participants as to what an innovative and entrepreneurial mixed sector provider is.
5. To understand what innovative and entrepreneurial activities SEP undertakes.
6. To establish what the participants believe are competitive advantages SEP has and whether they are sustainable.
7. To gain an understanding of how existing competitive advantages could be compromised.
8. To identify the understanding participants have of the concept of value proposition.

The focus group was conducted by an external facilitator, as the researcher was not given approval by the SEP human ethics committee to facilitate it. This decision was made as the organisation's human ethics committee expressed concerns that the researcher could influence the focus group participants due to his senior position at the Institute.

Unfortunately, during the focus group the external facilitator was unable to identify when further clarification or explanation should be requested from a participant as their knowledge of leadership theory was limited. This is an identified limitation of this study. The focus group provided participants the opportunity to explain and elaborate on their perceptions, understanding, and application of each of the areas listed above, and provided the study with additional data on which the findings and recommendations from the study are drawn.

The focus group was held on 24 May 2016. All participants from SEP who had consented to participate in the focus group were sent an invitation to attend. The invitation requested that they notify the researcher of their intention to attend and once the required number of attendees for the focus group had given notice of their intention to attend, the remaining participants were sent an email to explain that the focus group was full and they would not be required. In the event, some unrequired participants attended the focus group, resulting in there being 16 participants in the focus group. Ideally, ten to 12 people would have participated in the focus group (Krueger & Casey, 2014). The focus group was recorded on a digital voice recorder and then transcribed by the researcher. The anonymity of the participants in the focus group was maintained by the focus group facilitator who used a coding system to refer to each participant. This was the acronym FGP, and then a number which was provided to each participant at the commencement of the focus group. At the conclusion of the focus group, the facilitator explained to the participants that the transcript of the focus group would remain confidential, and that they could withdraw their consent from

participating in the project by notifying the researcher. Finally, the focus group facilitator thanked the participants for their participation.

#### **4.6.10 Site documents**

The use of site documents (which included annual reports, strategic plans, business transition plans, and staff position descriptions) enabled the researcher to identify documented changes in the strategic intent, vision, and objectives set by SEP in its recent history (Creswell, 2018). The site documents accessed for this study were also used by the researcher to classify the leadership roles that exist at SEP into the two subgroups of course and senior leadership. In undertaking this process, the researcher was able to classify selected position descriptions based on the responsibilities and accountabilities articulated. It then enabled an objective classification of leadership roles based on this classification.

#### **4.6.11 Field observations**

The field observation notes gathered over the duration of the study enabled the researcher to articulate the context and environment in which this study was undertaken. These notes consisted of approximately 40 observations recorded in the period of 2015-2019 on significant events or responses to changes in the contemporary education landscape, and what caused that change. The dimensions that the researcher has used to measure changes in the contemporary education landscape are based on the observations that the researcher made about what leaders understand and articulate when discussing how they judge and measure the changes that are taking place in the contemporary education landscape (Creswell, 2018). The researcher also used field observation notes to assist in placing the comments made by participants in the focus group within a specific context, being either leadership provided within a part of SEP or across the entire organisation.

#### **4.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

To reduce, display, and analyse the qualitative and quantitative data gathered in order to present the findings and conclusions of the study, the researcher identified and applied a series of processes to analyse and interpret the quantitative and qualitative data. The first phase of this process was to reduce the data into a form that would enable it to be displayed for the reader, and then transform the data into a form that would enable the research questions posed in this study to be answered (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). While the focus of this study is on the leadership of mixed sector providers operating in the contemporary education landscape, it also examined the differences between levels of leadership on a range of dimensions associated with their leadership role at SEP. As described in Figure 6, this study used a convergent parallel mixed methods design to collect the data. This design enabled the researcher to collect data from both the SEP participants and conduct the external interviews in parallel. The quantitative and qualitative data gathered from each of these collection methods were then analysed, as described later in this section, in order to: (i) inform the structure of the questions posed to SEP participants in the focus group; and (ii) inform the findings of this study.

The data was gathered for this study in the period October 2015 to May 2016. The findings from the study are still relevant as the drivers, and current state, of the contemporary education landscape, the leadership capabilities, and the manner in which staff undertake their leadership roles, are very similar (if not identical) now as when the data were gathered. The break of approximately four years between collecting the data and submitting this document is due to the following factors: the researcher undertook the professional doctorate as a part-time student; a 12 month break in 2017 granted by the University of Canberra due to a change in the supervisory panel; and a delay in suitable supervisors being identified and then allocated to the supervision of this project.



Based on the division of leadership focus, it was determined by the researcher that the quantitative data gathered from the internal participants would be classified into three groupings: (i) all participants, (ii) senior and departmental leadership, and (iii) course and frontline leadership. This assisted in being able to identify the differences between the subgroups at SEP, this would also enable comparison with the findings from research undertaken by (Scott et al., 2008; Coates et al.; 2013), as they used similar groupings of leadership in presenting their research. Using this division to undertake a comparison, rather than other characteristics such as gender or age, highlighted variations in leadership capability between the subgroups existed when the survey was conducted, and assisted in understanding the “individual variations in the characteristics” (Cohen, 2018) of each subgroup. The comparison between the data generated in this research and the findings from the research undertaken by Scott et al. (2008) looked at trends in the similarities and differences of the overall findings, as the base data from the 2008 and 2013 research was not available to enable statistical comparison.

Having administered the internal questionnaire using Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>), the data were exported into an Excel file to enable statistical analyses to be undertaken. These analyses were undertaken using XLSTAT™ (<https://www.xlstat.com/en/>), a data analysis add-on to Excel. The first step in the analysis process was to allocate a weighted ranking to each participant’s response to establish the weighted average response (mean) for all participants, and for the two participant subgroups. The responses by participants were also aggregated by response category to determine the absolute value for each category for each question. The first statistical analysis undertaken on the quantitative data was an exploratory factor analysis. This was conducted on groups of common quantitative data, as summarised in Table 4. The exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine if there were any underlying relationships that exist in the Likert scale

ranking each variable in the questions posed to the internal participants. Due to the small sample size in this study, it was not appropriate to draw conclusions based on results of each analysis undertaken (Yong & Pearce, 2013; Beavers et al., 2013); however, the suitability of the results for each data set as a basis for undertaking further research is discussed in the findings sections of this paper.

The next phase of the data reduction process was to undertake an analysis of variance of the quantitative data. This was done to determine if there were significant differences of the sample means in the responses of the two leadership subgroupings into which the participants of this study were classified. The statistical tests used to determine this were: (i) Analysis of Variance (ANOVA); and (ii) Student's t-test, two sample assuming equal variances. The ANOVA was used to determine if there was a significant variance for one independent variable between means for the three subgroupings (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006): (i) all participants; (ii) senior and departmental leadership; and (iii) course and frontline leadership. When undertaking both the ANOVA and Student's t-test, a 95% confidence level [CI] was used. The ANOVA test was also applied to the responses from the external interview participants and compared against the two internal participant subgroups in respect to the dimensions that make up the contemporary education landscape. When a significant variance between means was identified using the ANOVA test, Student's t-test: two sample assuming equal variance was then administered to identify which of the two groupings the significant variance between means existed for the independent variable (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006). This t-test was the most appropriate statistical analysis tool to use due to the small sample size (Levin, 1981; Cohen, 2018). When undertaking the statistical analysis, a 95% CI has been used. Having run the statistical analysis, comparisons were then made to identify significant variations between the identified categories.

The qualitative data gathered from the internal questionnaire were classified into three groupings: (i) all participants, (ii) senior and departmental leadership, and (iii) course and frontline leadership. Having classified the responses into these groupings, a thematic analysis was undertaken. This thematic analysis was a top-down analysis, using a coding scheme based on the key themes identified in research undertaken by (Scott et al., 2008; Coates et al., 2010; Kirby et al., 2011). This coding system enabled a frequency count of themes to be undertaken to assist in understanding and demonstrating the strength of responses from participants (Bergman, 2010).

External interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder, and then transcribed and analysed to identify key themes and statements made by interview participants based on their understanding and experiences of events and situations they have experienced while working in the contemporary education landscape. In respect to the short questionnaire only posed to the external interview participants, the data gathered were analysed using the same methodology and approach as for the internal participants.

The focus group was recorded and then transcribed to identify the key themes from statements made by the participants. An outline of the data analysis process is provided in Table 5. Once the data analysis process had concluded, common themes and links between the qualitative and quantitative data were identified, and the data were then mixed to describe the common themes and links in the data and to support assertions made in the findings, particularly when qualitative data supported the findings drawn from the analysis of quantitative data and vice versa.

This section has outlined the processes and analysis in this study to reduce, display, and transform the qualitative and quantitative data to enable the researcher to identify the key findings and assertions from the data gathered for this study.

Table 5

*Qualitative and Quantitative Data Analysis Processes*

Phase	Qualitative Data Process	Research Source	Quantitative Data Process	Research Source
Data Reduction	Top-Down Thematic Analysis	External Interviews Focus Group Internal Questionnaire (Qualitative questions)	Descriptive Statistical Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant demographic data</li> <li>• Inferential Statistical Analysis</li> <li>• Exploratory Factor Analysis</li> <li>• ANOVA</li> <li>• Student's t-test: two sample assuming equal variances</li> </ul>	Internal Questionnaire  Internal Questionnaire External Participant Questionnaire
Data Display	Tables Dimensions of the contemporary education landscape What is it like to be a leader? Key themes: Analogies describing the role of a leader Analogies describing the role of a leader, by theme and subgroup What it is like to be a leader at SEP? Surprises of a leader's role at SEP? Surprises of a leader's role at SEP? by theme by subgroup Most Challenging aspects of leadership role Resources to support innovation Processes to support innovation Values to support innovation	Internal Questionnaire	Charts Contemporary education landscape (participant responses)  Tables Major areas of focus Categories of academic leadership Categories of academic leadership by leadership subgroup Key impacts on daily work Personal leadership capabilities/ by theme Interpersonal leadership capabilities/ by theme Ranking of personal/Interpersonal capabilities by leadership grouping Definitions of an entrepreneurial education provider Definitions of an entrepreneurial education provider: participant responses Success Criteria: entrepreneurial mixed sector provider Making an organisation entrepreneurial Barriers to an organisation being entrepreneurial Creating innovation in an organisation	Internal Questionnaire & External Interviews  Internal Questionnaire
Data Transformation	Conversion of qualitative data into numerical codes What it is like to be a leader at SEP (Classification of analogies) Surprises of a leader's role at SEP	Internal Questionnaire	Conversion of quantitative data into narrative data Contemporary education landscape Priorities of leaders at SEP (responses converted by themes of academic leadership Impacts on the role of a leader (responses classified by theme) Personal & Interpersonal Leadership Capabilities (responses classified by theme)	Internal Questionnaire

Adapted from (Onwuegbuzie &amp; Leech, 2006)

Running head: Entrepreneurial leadership in the mixed sector provider

## 4.8 Data Management

Data for this study were recorded through a number of mediums. The questionnaires completed by the SEP participants was gathered using Survey Monkey (<http://www.surveymonkey.com>), then downloaded by the researcher onto a PDF file that provided a descriptive statistical analysis of the data, and an Excel spreadsheet with individual participant responses. The data was presented in a matrix format with the responses from each participant listed by row, and each question listed by column. This format enabled the researcher to undertake inferential statistical analysis of the quantitative responses, and conduct a top-down thematic analysis of the qualitative data. The questionnaires completed by the external participants were recorded onto a paper form and then transcribed onto an Excel spreadsheet by the researcher, using the same matrix format used to record the responses from the SEP participants.

The external interviews and the focus group were recorded using a digital voice recorder on an MP3 file format. The file was then transferred to a Microsoft Word format using the NCH Express Scribe (voice to text software application). Following this, edits to the Word document were made by the researcher who curated the transcripts to correct any errors made by the software when transcribing the voice recording. Each external interview and the focus group transcriptions were saved onto separate documents.

All digital data files are stored in a password protected folder on the researcher's personal computer that requires the user to login when they start up the computer. A back up copy of the digital data files is also stored on a password protected cloud storage service (One Drive). This storage service is provided to the researcher by their employer and is password protected. The paper documents generated for this study (external questionnaires and participant consent forms) are stored in a locked filing cabinet.

Once data had been collected and recorded in a digital format, master copies were made of the questionnaire data files and MP3 files of the interviews and focus group, and these were saved and securely stored in a different physical location. When this project is completed all data collected from participants in the research phase will be transferred to the University of Canberra to be securely stored for a minimum of five years. The data protection procedures followed by the researcher in this project are in accordance with the guidelines set out in the University of Canberra Human Ethics Manual April 2018.

The analysis of the quantitative data was undertaken using XLSTAT (<https://www.xlstat.com/en/>), an Excel data analysis add-on application. This enabled the researcher to undertake advanced inferential statistical analysis in Excel.

The qualitative data were analysed using a top-down coding methodology. This process was undertaken manually by the researcher who based the coding scheme on the key themes identified in previous educational leadership research (Scott et al., 2008; Coates et al., 2013; Kirby et al., 2011) to classify the themes identified in the quantitative data gathered in this study. As the themes were identified, the text was highlighted using a colour coding, with each colour representing a specific theme.

Having undertaken preliminary analysis of the data, the next phase was to write this dissertation. This was undertaken using the Microsoft Office suite of applications. Throughout the writing phase two versions of this document have always been saved, one copy onto the hard drive of the researchers' personal computer and a mirrored copy onto a password protected cloud server service.

All data collected in this study is stored in accordance with the Australian code for the responsible conduct of research. All data collected and stored electronically is password protected with the investigator and supervisors being the only people with access to the

password. Finally, all data will be destroyed on 1 May 2021, again in accordance with the guidelines for managing research data and records.

#### **4.9 Role of the Researcher**

This study required the researcher to participate in the process of gathering, analysing, reporting the findings, and drawing conclusions from the research undertaken. The researcher is a member of the leadership group at SEP, the mixed sector tertiary education provider at which this project was conducted. The researcher has held senior leadership roles for the past 13 years at SEP, and has witnessed firsthand the changes in the environment in which this organisation operates. As such, the researcher is clearly an insider to this study and needs to consider the biases that may subconsciously influence the approach taken in this study (Greene, M.J., 2014). As an insider, the researcher needs to continually work to reduce the impact of biases, and be respectful in both the process of undertaking and reporting the research. Possible biases may include: not valuing the contribution of participants; and being judgmental when evaluating these responses in the data analysis and reporting phase of the study (Guba, 1981). To minimize any biases in reporting the results of this study, the researcher must consider the environment in which the study will be reported and the possible impact the results may have on the participants (Zohrabi, 2013).

The opportunity to undertake this study has enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of how leaders function at SEP, in both setting out its strategic vision and objectives, and how they respond to changes in the contemporary education landscape. It has also enabled the researcher to reflect on the researcher's own practice as a leader and how decisions are made and communicated with others in the work group to build the leadership capabilities of current and future leaders at SEP.

#### **4.10 Ethics Approval and Risk Mitigation**

This study gained ethics approval from the Human Research Ethics Committees at both University of Canberra, approval number 15-62, and at SEP, the research location, approval number 016/2015 (Appendix A). The doctoral program for this study is being undertaken at the University of Canberra, and the research study was undertaken at SEP where the internal participants are employed and the Institute management policy requires that approval be gained from the Ethics Committee for any human research undertaken at the mixed sector provider.

The questionnaires and focus group questions were reviewed by two senior staff members at SEP to ensure that the data gathered in this study is undertaken in a respectful manner, and to minimise the likelihood that the responses would generate inappropriate comments from participants when the questionnaire or focus group was administered. Any improvements suggested were then incorporated into the questionnaires and focus group questions and submitted for approval from the Ethics Committee.

Confidentiality of participants is central to the manner in which the data are gathered, handled, reported, stored, and disposed of in this research project. All participants were made aware of this process, and also made aware that their participation in the project was voluntary, any possible harm to them was minimised, and their confidentiality was maintained throughout the project (Cohen & Manion, 1994). It was also explained to each participant that if they were uncomfortable with the process at any point, they would have their data removed from the study. None of the participants elected to do so.

#### **4.11 Summary**

This chapter has provided a description of the methodology used in this case study, a convergent parallel mixed methods design, to gather qualitative and quantitative data, and then reduce, display, and transform the data. The outline of the research design describes the



actions, rationales for the actions, and the links between the research questions and the research instruments used to gather the data used in the study. An explanation of the study site was provided, along with summaries of the demographic profiles of the participants, and descriptions of the categories of leadership at SEP. The research process has then been outlined explaining how participants were requested to participate, the process to gain informed consent from the participants to participate, when and how the research was conducted, and how the responses from participants have been de-identified to enable presentation in this document. Following the data collection phase, the data analysis and interpretation phase of the study is described. This includes the processes and tools used to reduce, display, and transform the qualitative and quantitative data gathered for this study. Finally, the chapter outlines the data management processes, the role of the researcher, ethics approvals, and risk mitigation strategies applied in the study.

The findings of this study which have been generated from the data analysis and interpretation phase are presented by three areas of focus, which are separated into discrete chapters. This has been done to enhance the readability of each section, with a focus on the key findings related to: leadership; innovation and entrepreneurship; and developing leadership capability.

## CHAPTER 5: Findings – Leadership Priorities and Capabilities

The focus of this study was to understand the role of leadership and the leadership capabilities demonstrated at a mixed sector education provider, and to establish how appropriate these capabilities are to build innovative and entrepreneurial potential. In this and the subsequent chapter the findings of this study are presented. Each chapter provides an insight into aspects of the role of a leader at a mixed sector provider. It builds the understanding of the leadership capabilities needed to provide effective leadership at a mixed sector tertiary education provider. This chapter responds to the research questions posed in this study in respect to: the priorities and capabilities of leaders at SEP; how leaders at SEP are described from the perspectives of internal and external participants; and how the capability of current and future leaders of mixed sector providers can be developed. In presenting the findings, the study asserts that the priorities, approach to leadership, and the capabilities demonstrated by staff in leadership roles, are influenced and shaped by the environment in which the organisation operates, the contemporary education landscape (Figure 8).

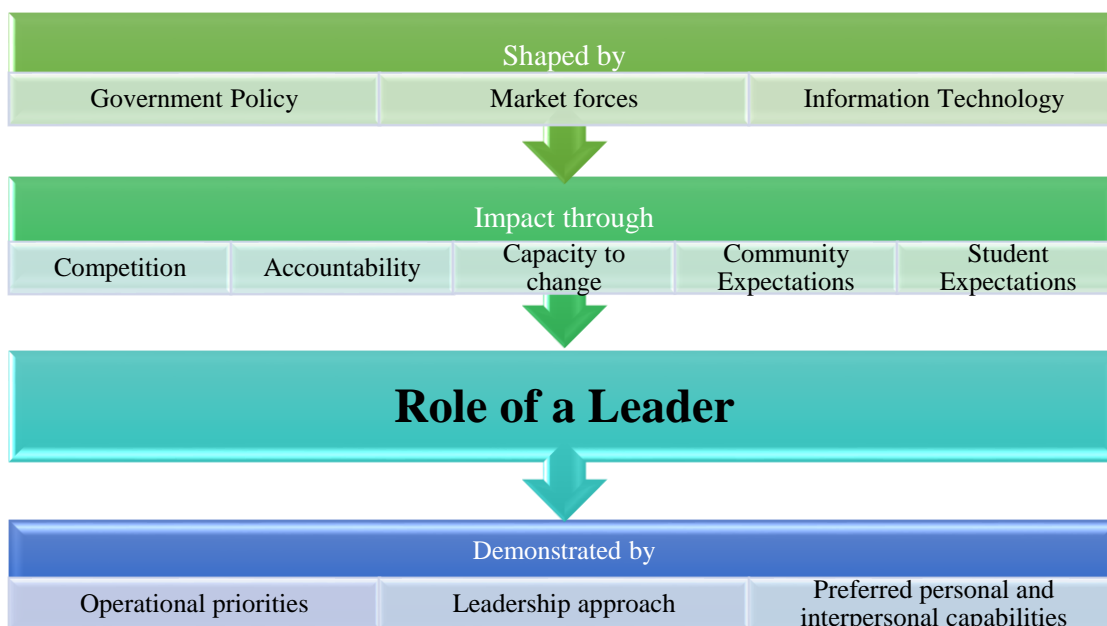


Figure 8. The role of a leader.

There are three drivers that shape the contemporary education landscape. Changes in each driver shift the structure of this landscape which then impacts on operations of the mixed sector provider. Those in leadership roles then need to make operational and strategic decisions to ensure the organisation effectively responds to these changes. How these changes are interpreted by those in leadership roles influences the decisions or non-decisions they make.

## **5.1 The Contemporary Education Landscape**

This study has taken the position that the decisions leaders make and the values they demonstrate are shaped by their understanding of the environment in which they work (Greenfield, 1973; Eacott, 2017). In the case of this study, this is the contemporary education landscape. This describes the environment in which higher and vocational education providers, including SEP, operate. This landscape is shaped by three drivers:

- (i) The role of government, including: dimensions of funding; degree of intervention; and the shaping of strategy; and organisational culture in government controlled mixed sector providers.
- (ii) The market, including: demand or supply driven; establishment costs; access to market (barriers to entry); and product differentiation.
- (iii) Information and communication technology, including: the role of the educator, and technology platforms used to deliver education.

Each driver and the underpinning dimension of the contemporary education landscape is listed in Table 6.

How the leaders of tertiary educational providers, including SEP, respond to each of these dimensions is influenced by their capability to identify and understand the impact each dimension of the contemporary education landscape has on their organisation (Tierney, 2014). This in turn shapes how they respond to the challenges and opportunities that arise as a result

of changes in the key drivers that shape the dimensions of the contemporary education landscape. The manner in which each dimension is described by the participants in this study is shaped by their job role, knowledge, experience, and understanding of the drivers and dimensions that make up this landscape. Any biases, preconceptions, or ideologies participants hold may also impact on how they describe the contemporary education landscape (North, 2005). This may explain the differences in how the two leadership subgroups and the external participants describe the contemporary education landscape. The data gathered in this study has been analysed, and the results are clustered by the SEP groupings and an external participant grouping. The groupings of responses from staff in leadership roles at SEP are: (i) all SEP participants; (ii) a senior leadership subgroup; and (iii) a course leadership subgroup (Table 6).

### **5.1.1 The contemporary education landscape: government**

Responses from participants make it clear that government plays an active role in shaping the contemporary education landscape. The responses from all participant groupings show they consider that government has an interventionist approach in setting policy and regulation for the tertiary education sector. When the responses are reviewed by participant subgroup (Table 6), there is a significant difference between the course leader and the senior leader subgroups in respect to funding, with the senior leader subgroup reporting that students contribute more to tuition costs as a portion of the total tuition cost than that reported by course leader subgroup. When comparing the responses of the external participant subgroup, for each of the four dimensions the average weighted mean score was lower than that of the SEP participants, indicating they believed government played a greater role in shaping the operations of mixed sector providers than SEP participants did. This sentiment was summed up by one of the external participants (EP-3) who identified the interventionist role of government, noting: “Government is incredibly conservative and incredibly controlling of

what you [publicly funded mixed sector providers] do, can and can't do, and they will do that by controlling the boards.”

### **5.1.2 The contemporary education landscape: market**

There are four dimensions (Table 6) measuring the impact that changes in the structure of the tertiary education market have on the contemporary education landscape. For the dimensions of establishment cost and product differentiation, the weighted average response for each participant subgroup is similar, with participants considering there is some product differentiation, and that establishment costs for new providers to enter the market are high. However, there are some minor differences in the weighted average score between the participant subgroups in respect to barriers to enter the market, and the supply of and demand for places at tertiary education providers. In regard to the barriers to entry, the external participants consider the barriers for new providers to enter the tertiary education market are lower than the SEP participants consider them to be. For the supply of, and demand for, places in the tertiary education market, 79% of the course leadership subgroup considered that the market is now mostly demand-driven. In contrast 60% of external participants, and 51% of the senior leadership subgroup, considered the market is balanced between supply of and demand for tertiary education.

Table 6

*Key Drivers and Dimensions of the Contemporary Education Landscape*

Dimension	Key Driver	Past state Likert Scale All 1, Most 2, Some 3, Equally 4	Future state Likert Scale Some 5, Most 6, All 7	Weighted average score by participant grouping			
				All internal participants (N=56)	Course Leaders (N=29)	Senior Leaders (N=27)	External Participants (N=5)
1: Funding	Government	Funded by the state	Funded by the student	3.64	<b>3.38*</b>	<b>3.93*</b>	3.20
2: Access to market	Market	High barriers to entry	Low barriers to entry	4.33	4.55	4.11	5
3: Supply/Demand	Market	Demand exceeds supply	Supply exceeds demand	4.96	5.24	4.67	4.20
4: Role of the educator	Technology	Keeper of knowledge	Facilitator of knowledge	4.45	4.31	4.59	4
5: Role of Government	Government	Government as intervener	Government as facilitator	2.94	2.97	2.93	2
6: Establishment Cost	Market	High establishment cost	Low establishment cost	2.68	2.62	2.74	2.6
7: Product differentiation	Market	Low product differentiation	High product differentiation	4.20	4.03	4.37	4
8: Technology platform	Technology	Stable technology platform	Dynamic technology platform	3.27	3.10	3.44	2.6
9: Role of technology	Technology	Shaping technology	Shaped by technology	4.88	4.79	4.96	5.6
10: Driver of strategy	Government	Strategy set by government	Strategy set by board	3.64	3.52	3.78	2.8
11: Culture	Government	Bureaucratic	Entrepreneurial	2.84	2.72	2.96	2.4

\*Significant difference in responses between internal participant subgroups t-test assuming equal variance at 95% CI

### **5.1.3 The contemporary education landscape: technology**

The participants from each subgroup and the external participants all recorded similar average weighted scores from their responses to each dimension used to identify the impact of technology on the contemporary education landscape. The responses indicate that in the contemporary education landscape, the role of the teacher is to facilitate the learning of students through using a range of technologies that enable the learner to access information and then build their knowledge, based on the information they have accessed. While the participants still consider education is delivered on a stable technology platform (i.e., classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories, simulated work places), technology is shaping the future of the tertiary education sector.

### **5.1.4 The contemporary education landscape: similarities and differences**

For all but one of the dimensions of the contemporary education landscape, the differences in the weighted average response between the two leadership subgroups at SEP, course leadership and senior leadership, are not statistically significant with the exception of the funding dimension (Table 6). The weighted average response between these two subgroups was significantly different when the responses were tested using a t-test assuming equal variance at 95% CI. The difference in this dimension was that the participants categorised as course leaders indicated that some of the funding for courses is provided by the state, whereas the senior and departmental leadership indicated that funding is provided equally by the student and the state. This difference in the understanding of the funding mix for courses in respect to student and state contributions may be due to staff in the senior leadership subgroup having access to funding agreements and budgets, whereas staff undertaking course and frontline leadership roles generally have limited access to and a limited understanding of budgets, revenue sources, and course costings. There were no

significant variances in the weighted average response between the leadership subgroups at SEP and the external participants when applying an ANOVA test at 95% CI.

There are some minor differences between how the participant subgroupings describe the contemporary education landscape when summarising the responses by each of the key driver groupings. The way each grouping perceives changes in each driver may impact on how they prioritise the activities they undertake in their leadership role at SEP. The external participants are of the opinion that government plays a greater role in the operation of SEP than are the participants from SEP. While SEP participants also report that government plays an interventionist role in the operations of a mixed sector provider, the board of SEP still has some say in setting the strategy of the organisation (Karmel et al., 2009).

There is consensus in the responses from both the internal and external participants that the tertiary education market is supply driven. Staff in course and administrative roles are of the opinion that the supply of places mostly exceeds the demand for places, whereas both the external participants and senior leadership are of the opinion this only occurs in some cases. The lack of understanding as to the impact of the shift to the quasi-demand-driven market (Marginson, 2016) may impact on how leaders at different levels of the organisational hierarchy view and respond to changes in demand for course places (Anderson, 2014). Finally, in respect to the third driver, technology, both SEP and external participants are strongly of the opinion that technology shapes the manner in which education is delivered, that the role of educator is moving to that of a facilitator of knowledge, not a keeper of knowledge, and that the technology used to deliver education is still structured around classrooms, lecture theatres, and practical training spaces. As technology evolves, those leading educational organisations will need to rethink how they best use technology to meet the demands of students and to achieve the organisation's strategic objectives (Alexander et al., 2019).



How a leader in an organisation prioritises their daily activities is shaped by their perception of the environment in which they work (North, 2005): the contemporary education landscape. Changes in the contemporary education landscape impact on the role a leader takes at SEP and how they make decisions to respond to these changes (Fullan & Scott, 2009). This is demonstrated by the factors they consider have the greatest impact on their role as a leader.

## 5.2 What Impacts on the Role of Leader?

Staff who undertake leadership roles in an organisation such as SEP are appointed to these roles to provide leadership to achieve the strategic objectives and mission of the organisation. To achieve this, they need to prioritise their attentions and activities in a manner that will have the greatest impact to achieve this. They must also respond to the challenges and surprises that have resulted from changes in the contemporary education landscape. If they do not respond appropriately, their effectiveness as a leader may be diminished. To determine the challenges and surprises have the greatest impact, staff in leadership roles at SEP ranked 23 factors that may impact on their daily work as a leader at SEP (Table 19). The items that impact on the daily work of a leader at SEP are categorised under one of five themes (Table 7) describing underpinning pressure of the item (Scott, 2008).

Table 7

### *Key Impacts by Theme on the Daily Work of a SEP Leader*

Theme	Weighted average response (ranking)		
	Senior and departmental leadership	Course leadership	All SEP participants
1. Competitive pressures	4.09 (2)	3.72 (2)	3.90 (2)
2. External accountability	3.62 (4)	3.71 (3)	3.67 (4)
3. Institutional change capability	4.17 (1)	4.08 (1)	4.13 (1)
4. Social pressures	3.91 (3)	3.64 (4)	3.78 (3)
5. Student pressures	3.62 (4)	3.56 (5)	3.60 (5)

Note: See appendix G, Table 19 for weighted average score by item  
Likert scale: 1 (low)-5 (high)

Of the top ten factors, four were related to internal operational matters and were process related; for example, the two highest ranked themes that impacted on their work for all SEP leaders are: “Cumbersome administrative processes”, followed by “Greater government reporting and scrutiny.” Both these items are related to ensuring staff undertake business processes correctly. Themes related to building the business and differentiating it from its competitors (such as “Understanding/clarifying and implementing new strategic directions” or “Maintaining a specific institutional image”) were not highly ranked either by the senior or course leadership subgroups. It is clear from their feedback that operational matters have the greatest impact on the roles of those in leadership positions. It should be noted, however, that when an exploratory factor analysis was applied to the participant responses on the factors that have the greatest impact on the role of a leader, it indicated a low sample adequacy, with a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) of 0.513. While the sample size for this measure was inadequate to establish a conclusive result, the KMO indicates these themes may not be suitable to draw inferences from.

When comparing the responses of this study against the findings of Scott (2008) on higher education, and Coates (2013) on vocational education, there are a number of differences in the factors that have the highest impact on the daily work of a leader. The factor “Cumbersome administrative processes” ranked in the survey as having the highest impact by all participants and the senior leadership subgroup. This factor was only ranked fifth by the higher education participants in Scott’s (2008) project and eighth by the vocational education participants in the Coates (2013) project. Similarly, “Greater government reporting and scrutiny” ranked second in this project, ranked eighth in Scott’s (2008) project, and ninth in the work of Coates (2013). Both of these research projects identified “Managing continuous change” as having a very high impact on the daily work of

leaders in the higher and vocational education sectors, whereas this item was ranked eighth by all participants in this study.

These differences in responses from this study to findings of Scott (2008) and Coates (2013) may be attributed to a number of different factors. The ranking of “Cumbersome administrative processes” as having the highest impact, may be due to the prescriptive reporting requirements required for vocational education programs by the Victorian government and to a lesser extent responding to the reporting requirements for higher education programs. It may also be due to the administrative systems (student management and financial management software) in place were either not designed to provide this level of detail and/or required additional customization of the existing systems. This also required staff in leadership roles to consider how best to utilize existing administration systems to effectively respond to these reporting requirements, or planning and implementing changes in operational and administrative systems to ensure the appropriate information is gathered and then reported to the appropriate government regulatory authority. Consequently, the priority of staff in leadership roles away from setting and implementing the strategic objectives of the organisation to that of meeting the bureaucratic reporting demands of interventionist government policies. This may also in some cases require the development of capabilities that they have not utilized in previously to enable them too effectively and prioritise the conflicting demands of their role (Gale & Parker, 2013; Marginson, 2016).

### **5.3 The Priority of Leaders at SEP**

Having identified what areas have the greatest impact on the role of leaders at SEP, it was then determined how this influences the priorities they have in undertaking their leadership roles. To achieve this, the leadership staff at SEP who participated in this study ranked 14 items (factors) on a Likert scale, with 5 being the highest (most important) and 1 being the lowest (least important) for each factor. For all SEP participants and the SEP

subgroups, the most important factor is “Managing relationships with senior staff.” “Preparing for internal and external audits and reviews” was the second most important factor for all participants and the subgroups. In general, the ranking of responses by subgroup were similar. The only significantly different response when testing the average weighted response using a t-test assuming equal variance at 95% CI, was the factor, “Setting, monitoring and evaluating performance against budget and program profile.” This was ranked fourth by the senior leadership subgroup, and 14th by the course leadership subgroup. The difference in ranking may be because participants from the course leadership subgroup are not provided with delegated authority for financial expenditure, and as such are not involved in managing budgets or held accountable for achieving financial targets/goals in their roles. To then determine the underpinning themes (Table 8), each of the 14 items are classified into one of five categories of academic leadership (Scott, 2008).

When the average weighted response for the participants is aggregated under the categories of academic leadership, and an average weighted response for each category is determined, the category for all participants and each of the leadership subgroups that has the highest importance is “Managing staff”, followed by “Networking with industry colleagues.” While it would be expected that staff from the course leadership subgroup place a high priority on activities related to managing staff, it is interesting that the average weighted ranking for teaching and learning activities is third, yet SEP staff in this category would spend the majority of their time on activities related to this category. The ranking of the average weighted response by category for the senior leadership subgroup also indicated they are focused on short-term activities, ranking “Managing staff” and “Networking with industry colleagues” as their two most important areas of priority. Activities to do with longer term planning and client focused activities (externally focused) were not a priority for the senior leadership subgroup, although it is a key accountability of senior staff in the organisation to be

actively engaged in, and to lead, planning activities at SEP. When an exploratory factor analysis was applied to the participant responses for the areas of priority of a leader, it indicated at middling sample adequacy, with a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) of 0.691. While the sample size for this measure was inadequate to establish a conclusive result, the KMO indicates these themes need further investigation before inferences can be made from the results.

Table 8

*Major Areas of Priority, by Category of Academic Leadership*

Category of academic leadership	Senior and departmental leadership	Course leadership	All SEP participants
Teaching and learning activities	3.70 (5)	3.89 (3)	3.80 (5)
Management and administration activities	4.12 (3)	3.64 (5)	3.87 (3)
Managing staff	4.50 (1)	4.38 (1)	4.44 (1)
Networking with industry colleagues	4.17 (2)	4.18 (2)	4.18 (2)
Planning and policy development	4.00 (4)	3.75 (4)	3.87 (3)

When these results are compared against research undertaken at other vocational and higher education providers, there are a number of differences. Research undertaken in the higher education sector has identified that senior leaders (vice-chancellors, pro-vice-chancellors) in higher education institutions rank “Planning and policy development” as being their most important priority (Scott, 2008). The average weighted score for the senior leadership subgroup at SEP shows they rank this area of focus as their fourth priority area of importance, as do the course leadership subgroup which also ranked “Planning and policy development” as their fourth highest priority. Their highest ranked priority area, “Managing staff”, was also ranked as the first or second priority of staff in course leadership roles in higher education institutions (Scott, 2008).

When the results of this study are then compared against similar research undertaken in Australia's vocational education sector (Coates, 2013), "Planning and policy development" is not seen by senior leaders in the vocational education sector as their most important priority. Coates (2013) identified "Managing organisational change" and "Networking" as having a higher priority than "Managing staff", which had equal priority to "Planning and policy development" in the vocational education institutions that took part in Coates' (2013) study. The priority senior and course leadership levels place on internally focused activities of the organisation is similar to that in other vocational education institutions. However, there are clear differences in the priorities of senior leaders at SEP when compared to senior leaders of higher education institutions, whose priorities are focused on planning, policy development and organisational change.

The external participants who were interviewed for this study were clear in describing where leaders in mixed sector providers do not appropriately prioritise their daily activities. They identified that their priorities should be on making staff accountable and responsible (EP-1), and positioning the organisation for the future (EP-3). Integrating the latest technology into delivering and managing education (EP-2) was a third priority. EP-1 was also very clear about the priorities that leaders of SEP should have:

*"There are half a dozen attributes, which is effectively things like strategic understanding, business acumen, being able to work with and through people, understanding innovation, and what it is to innovate and to create an innovative culture and I think certainly about managing change."* (EP-1)

All interview participants were strong in their opinions on the need for leaders in mixed sector providers to focus on what needs to be done to position the organisation for the future in terms of curriculum and technology, and the need to develop the leadership capabilities of staff currently and potentially undertaking leadership roles.

This is reflected in the description that all SEP participants provide of the role of government in the contemporary education landscape. They indicate that government intervenes in the operations of SEP most of the time, and the approach of government to implement change is structured around intervention and bureaucratic approaches as a means to implement government policy. This requires those in leadership roles at SEP to respond to these changes by reallocating resources to meet government policy demands, rather than achieving the long-term strategic goals of the organisation (Drew, 2010). The Free TAFE policy implemented by the Victorian government in 2019 is an example of those in leadership roles at SEP having to reallocate resources to meet changes in the contemporary education landscape created by an interventionist approach by government to achieve the policy of increasing enrolments in government owned tertiary education providers delivering vocational education.

While providing leadership to staff is seen by leaders at SEP as being a key priority of their role, the external interview participants consider leaders in mixed sector providers are not effective in providing this leadership as they assert that leaders of mixed sector providers do not make staff accountable and responsible for their actions. The external participants also stress the importance of leaders at SEP prioritising their roles to plan and prepare the organisation for the longer term, enabling the organisation to have the capacity to be innovative, which is driven by leaders who have the capabilities to introduce, foster, and build change (Fullan & Scott, 2009). This will enable SEP to withstand the changes in technology, government policy, and market forces that will shape the future education landscape.

#### **5.4 Surprises and Challenges of Leadership Role**

It was established that staff in leadership roles at SEP are mainly impacted by operational and bureaucratic matters, and consequently their major areas of priority are operational rather than strategic. Participants were asked to describe what surprised them

about working in their current leadership role, and to list the three most challenging aspects of this role. The majority of surprises and challenges identified by all participants were consistently related to the leadership and management of operational activities at SEP. The themes that consistently came through in the responses from participants to both the surprises and challenging aspects of their role (Table 9) were: “Meeting the compliance frameworks within which SEP operates”, “Business processes”, and “Lack of resources (Human, physical, financial).” The course leadership subgroup responses highlighted that the lack of clear leadership they were provided with was a surprise to them. This was identified as being one of the most challenging aspects of their leadership role, along with “Lack of business process”, and “Balancing workload & work/family balance.” As with the items that have the greatest impact on the daily work of a leader at SEP (Table 7), when the surprises about the current role of a leader are summarised by theme, overwhelmingly they are categorised as relating to institutional change capability (Table 9).

Table 9

*Surprises About Current Role, by Theme*

Description	All participants (n=58)	Senior leadership (n=27)	Course leadership (n=31)
Competitive pressures	4	1	3
External accountability	2	1	1
Institutional change capability	31	17	14
Social pressures	0	0	0
Student pressures	0	0	0
Total Responses	37	19	18

The key challenges identified by staff in undertaking their leadership roles at SEP were associated with working within compliance frameworks, business processes, and resourcing. While the issues associated with resourcing and business processes are consistent with the key challenges facing staff in leadership roles at higher education institutions



(Foskett, 2010), “Unproductive meetings”, a key challenge faced by leaders in higher education as identified by Scott (2008), was not identified as a challenge by staff in leadership roles at SEP. Conversely, the challenge of recruiting suitably qualified and experienced teaching staff, identified by staff at SEP, was not highlighted as a challenge facing leaders in higher education providers (Scott, 2008). The issue of managing staff was identified as one of the key challenges facing leaders in vocational education providers (Coates, 2013); however, recruiting teaching staff was not identified as a challenge. Other challenges facing vocational education providers (Coates, 2018) are consistent with the findings in this study.

Looking at these differences, the inference may be drawn that leaders at SEP are stuck fighting with administrative and bureaucratic processes rather than implementing and managing change in the organisation (Fredman & Doughney, 2012). However, there may be other factors which have influenced the rankings. First, the organisational structure at SEP has its senior staff in teaching faculties providing leadership for both vocational programs and higher education courses. This requires these leaders to demonstrate they are meeting the regulatory standards of two regulators, ASQA and TEQSA, adding a further layer of complexity to the role of staff in leadership roles in a teaching faculty (Duignan, 2007; De Boer & Goedegebuure, 2009). The researcher has observed a number of senior staff at SEP struggling with the competing demands of reporting to and meeting regulatory standards. In many cases these leaders place their focus on balancing the competing needs, and not placing a focus on planning and communication with staff that provides clear leadership to enable staff to capitalise on a factor that can differentiate SEP in the tertiary education market, such as the capability of building seamless qualification pathways from post-secondary through vocational programs, and onto higher education. The complexities this creates for staff providing leadership is unique, and is not faced by education providers who exclusively operate in either the post-secondary, vocational, or the higher education sectors alone, or have

dual sector organisational structures (Wheelahen et al., 2012). This observation is borne out in the responses from the course leadership subgroup to the question, “What are the most challenging aspects of your current leadership role?” Responses indicated the lack of clear leadership provided was a challenge to them. The priority of providing effective leadership was not ranked highly by staff who reported their role as being in the senior leadership subgroup. Issues such as “keeping staff motivated”, “facilitating change”, and “getting leaders to lead”, were only listed as the third most important challenge. Participants in the senior leadership subgroup were more concerned with the “inefficiency of systems and processes”, “bureaucratic requirements”, and “being stuck in the business”, as being the key challenges of their role at SEP. When the questionnaire responses to the surprises and challenges that staff faced in their role as a leader were discussed in the focus group, the tone and the responses from the focus group participants were negative in nature, identifying issues, blockers, and impediments to undertaking their role. Only one response was positive. This came from a participant who is grouped in the senior and departmental leadership group who noted, “*Surprised as to what staff can achieve when you provide the right tools and support*” (IPS-26).

The surprises and challenges identified by many of the participants are also reflected in the analogies they provide to describe what it is like to be in their current leadership roles. Twenty of the 27 participants who identified their role as being a senior leader at SEP, and 18 of the 31 respondents in the course leadership grouping, provided an analogy that best described their role as a leader at SEP. These responses were then classified under one of four themes that best summarise the analogy.

Table 10

*Key Themes: Analogies Describing the Approach to Leading at SEP*

Theme	Description
The loner	A leader who describes role as working in isolation from others, they don't feel connected or supported by other leaders in the organisation
The director	A leader who sees their role as providing direction to others, setting the direction of the organisation with clear strategies and goals in place.
The fighter	The leader who sees their role to fight for his 'team', pushing obstacles out of the way, winning the battles.
The balancer	The leader who sees their role to balance the competing priorities, striving to achieve harmony in the organisation. More a manager than a leader.

There are five participants who clearly view their role as a leader, in control of their domain and directing others: *'captaining a flotilla of ships with different destinations, crews and cargos!!'*, *'the diversity is challenging'* (IPS-13). Nine staff consider themselves to be a loner in their role, not connected with others in the organisation; for example, *'being in the middle of an ocean in a storm where wave after wave hits you and you don't know where the next is coming from'* (IPC-14), or *'being on a ship without a rudder'* (IPS-6, IPS-8). Another perspective was that of a leader who is fighting for his team and the organisation. There were ten staff in leadership roles at SEP who considered it was their role as a leader to take on the challenges: *'sometimes going forward, sometimes going back, but never really achieving what they set out to do'*, *'a washing machine – going round and round. Constantly putting out fires and little time for strategic development'* (IPS-24), *'a fireman'* (IPS-14). The final perspective comes from staff in leadership roles who view their role as balancing differing interests and objectives: staff describe this as either *'spinning plates'* (IPC-9) or *'juggling balls'* (IPC-12, IPC-13, IPC-22, IPS-5). Reference to juggling balls was the most frequent response from participants when providing an analogy that best described their role at SEP. The responses of the SEP participants to the challenges they face in their roles is consistent

with the findings of Bolden et al. (2009) who note that these challenges are consistent with “the tensions and complexities inherent when exploring leadership within large, complex organisations” (p.267).

Table 11

*Analogies Describing the Role of a Leader at SEP*

Theme	All Participants	Senior Leadership	Course Leadership
The loner	9 (24%)	5 (25%)	4 (22%)
The director	5 (13%)	2 (10%)	3 (17%)
The fighter	10 (26%)	6 (30%)	4 (22%)
The balancer	14 (37%)	7 (35%)	7 (39%)
TOTAL	38 (100%)	20 (100%)	18 (100%)

When the analogies are classified by the two leadership subgroups (Table 11), there are no clear differences in how they describe their role as a leader. Only two staff in the senior leadership subgroup provide an analogy that describes a leadership role where they are taking charge and have a vision to lead their staff by. Most of the analogies describe the confusion, lack of purpose, and isolation leaders feel when describing their role as a leader at SEP. This is consistent with the findings of Coates et al. (2013) in respect to the way leaders within Australian VET organisations describe their roles. When comparing the findings of this study against the work undertaken by Scott et al. (2008), the senior leaders at SEP do not describe their roles as being in control and directing the organisation, as leaders in higher education do.

The role of a leader at SEP is complex. Leaders at all levels of this organisation have a major focus on the operational activities of the organisation, and the factors that have greatest impact on their role as leaders are also operationally focused. Despite there being ongoing change in the higher and vocational education markets in which SEP operates, leaders at SEP do not see the challenges of operating in demand-driven markets as having a

major impact on their role as leader; rather, their attention is on internal factors. While staff in senior leadership roles at SEP recognise that strategic planning is a major area of their focus, it is not identified by this group as either having a major impact on their role or as being a challenging aspect of their role, in contrast to the impact of the large number of operational issues (Adams & Gamage, 2008).

## **5.5 Leadership capability**

There were two dimensions of leadership capability examined in this study: (i) personal capability; (ii) interpersonal capability. In the contemporary education landscape, both these capabilities play a critical role in the leadership of higher education (Scott et al., 2008), and vocational education institutions (Coates et al., 2013). This landscape is shaped by three key drivers: (i) changes in government policy; (ii) the impact of information technology; and (iii) the demand for, and supply of, places offered by higher and vocational education institutions. These drivers require leaders of these organisations not only to understand, interpret and respond to changes in the contemporary education landscape, but also to have the capability to effectively lead staff in the organisation by communicating the vision, mission and strategic objectives of the organisation in a manner that enables staff to achieve the organisation's objectives. As SEP is a mixed sector provider offering both vocational and higher education courses, this is operationally complex (Wheelahan et al., 2012) and its leaders need to identify, understand, and demonstrate the leadership capabilities required to provide effective leadership.

The participants in this study do place a high importance on the personal and interpersonal capabilities they need to demonstrate as a leader when they are asked to rank the relative importance of a list of capabilities. What is not clear, however, from this study, is their understanding of what the personal and interpersonal capabilities are when they are asked to describe the capabilities they require. The ranking that this study's participants place

on personal and interpersonal leadership capability is consistent with previous research by Scott et al. (2008) on higher education providers, and Coates et al. (2013) on vocational education providers. In this study, the average weighted ranking for all 15 personal leadership capabilities (Table 21) participants were asked to rank were ranked as being of high to very high importance. For the interpersonal capabilities, 11 of the 12 participants ranked interpersonal capabilities as being of high to very high importance in undertaking their leadership role.

Although participants placed a high importance on both personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities when responding to the questionnaire. During the focus group when asked to describe and explain personal and interpersonal leadership capability the responses were limited. What is not clear however, is why the responses were limited. It may have been that the participants were not comfortable in discussing this topic in front of their peers, or the focus group facilitator did not ask the appropriate follow up questions to enable the participants to expand on their initial response.

The external interview participants were also asked what interpersonal and personal leadership capabilities they believe are not exhibited by leaders at SEP and other mixed sector providers. In responding to these questions, the external participants included both personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities in their responses.

### **5.5.1 Personal leadership capability**

Personal leadership capabilities include having integrity, a commitment to excellence, and leading by example (Scott et al., 2008). There were 15 personal leadership capabilities that each participant ranked in respect to the importance each has when a leader is responding to organisational events at SEP. Reviewing the responses of all SEP participants (Table 21), the highest ranked personal capability is “remaining calm under pressure when things take an unexpected turn.” The lowest ranked capability is “taking responsibility for financial

performance of cost centres.” When the results are reviewed by two SEP leadership subgroups (Table 21), the senior leadership subgroup identified “remaining calm under pressure when things take an unexpected turn” as the most important personal leadership capability. Comparing this ranking with previous research, this capability was ranked fourth most important by pro-vice-chancellors and deputy vice-chancellors in the higher education leadership research study undertaken by Scott et al. (2008). The course leadership subgrouping identified “wanting to achieve the best possible outcome for the institute” as the most important personal leadership capability. In recent research undertaken into leadership capability in education, this capability was ranked as the fifth most important capability in the Coates et al. (2010) vocational education leadership project. However, it was not as highly ranked in leadership research undertaken in higher education institutions (Scott et al., 2008). Each of the personal leadership capabilities are then aggregated under three broader themes: self-regulation, decisiveness, and commitment (Scott et al., 2008). The weighted average for each individual capability is summed and averaged to determine the ranking by theme as set out in Table 12. When an exploratory factor analysis was applied to the participant responses for personal capabilities, it indicated middling sample adequacy with a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) of 0.752. While the sample size for this measure was inadequate to establish a conclusive result, the KMO indicates these themes are suitable to draw inferences from.

Table 12

*Personal Capabilities: by Theme*

Theme	Senior and departmental leadership, Questionnaire (i) (n=21)	Course leadership Questionnaire (i) (n=21)	All participants Questionnaire (i) (n=42)
1. Self-regulation	4.41 (3)	4.27 (1)	4.34 (1)
2. Decisiveness	4.50 (2)	4.09 (2)	4.29 (2)
3. Commitment	4.52 (1)	4.06 (3)	4.29 (3)

“Self-regulation” was the highest ranking personal capability for all participants and the course leadership subgroup. This contrasted with the senior leadership subgroup who ranked ‘commitment’ as the most important theme. ‘Commitment’ was ranked third by the course leadership subgrouping. Although there is a difference in the rankings between the two leadership subgroupings, the differences are not statistically significant when tested using an ANOVA test at 95% CI. There are differences between the rankings of the two leadership subgroups, with the senior leadership subgroup placing a higher importance on personal leadership capability than those staff in the course leadership subgroup. This is consistent with the research undertaken by Scott et al. (2008) who reported that staff in senior leadership roles in higher education institutions place greater importance on personal leadership capabilities than staff in operational leadership roles (Scott et al., 2008).

While there is an understanding of the importance of leadership capability demonstrated by participants, when asked to describe and explain in the focus group any additional (i) personal and (ii) interpersonal capabilities they feel are required by leaders at SEP, the responses provided indicate that some of participants do not understand the difference between personal and interpersonal capability. In the course of responding to each of these questions, 15 points were raised by participants discussing personal leadership capability; however, only five of these points are a personal leadership capability. The other points are more appropriately classified as interpersonal leadership capabilities. There were two themes that came through in the personal capabilities identified: ‘adaptability’ (FGP-2), (FGP-6), (FGP-21); ‘confidence to take risks’ (FGP-17); ‘organisational empathy’ (FGP-5).

When comparing the findings of this study alongside similar research projects, ‘having the confidence to take risks’ and ‘being adaptable’ are both capabilities that were not articulated by participants in the research undertaken by Scott et al. (2008). These capabilities are identified by one of the external interview participants (EP-1) in this study who contends



they are needed in leaders in an education provider operating in the contemporary education landscape.

However, external interview participants also expressed concerns that staff in leadership roles at mixed sector providers generally do not have a self-awareness of their own leadership capabilities, particularly their awareness of where their personal leadership capabilities are lacking. Rather, their awareness of their own personal leadership capability is formed by the overriding culture and structure of the organisation (EP-5).

The structures of organisations, and the structure of the environment in which they operate, are often at odds with the beliefs and intentions of the individuals who make decisions in respect to the operation and changes made to the organisation (North, 2005, p.79).

### **5.5.2 Interpersonal leadership capability**

Interpersonal capabilities are those capabilities an individual requires to effectively communicate with others, including motivating, empathizing, and listening to others (Scott et al., 2008). Each participant in this study was requested to rank 12 interpersonal capabilities in regard to the importance they placed on each one when handling interpersonal situations in their role as a leader at SEP (Table 22). When reviewing the rankings of all participants in this study, the highest ranked interpersonal capability was “being transparent and honest in dealing with others.” The lowest ranked interpersonal capability for all participants in this study was “empathising and working productively with students from a wide range of backgrounds.” Both leadership subgroups ranked “being transparent and honest in dealing with others” as the most important interpersonal capability. This capability has also been identified as the most important interpersonal leadership capability by leaders of other vocational education institutions (Coates et al., 2013) and higher education institutions (Scott et al, 2008). This sentiment is also endorsed by External Interview Participant 1, who

noted. "...there is a need for accountability across all levels of the (mixed sector) provider. Leaders need to make it clear what they are accountable for and ensure that this flows through" (EP-1). Other external interview participants also asserted that honesty and transparency constitute a key capability required of leaders in a mixed sector provider. The lowest ranked interpersonal leadership capability is "understanding how the different groups that make up our institute operate and influence different situations."

When the weighted average responses for each interpersonal capability for all participants are aggregated under the two overarching interpersonal leadership themes of "empathizing" and "influencing", as shown in Table 13, the capabilities grouped under "empathizing" have an average weighting of 4.32, as opposed to the average weighting of 4.17 for the capabilities under the theme of influencing. When an exploratory factor analysis was applied to the participant responses for interpersonal capabilities, it indicated at middling sample adequacy with a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure (KMO) of 0.732. While the sample size for this measure was inadequate to establish a conclusive result, the KMO indicates that these themes are suitable to draw inferences from.

Table 13

*Interpersonal Capabilities: Comparison of Response to Themes*

Theme	Senior and departmental leadership, Questionnaire (i) n=21	Course leadership Questionnaire (i) n=20	All SEP participants Questionnaire (i) n=41
Empathising	4.35 (1)	4.29 (1)	4.32 (1)
Influencing	4.31 (2)	4.03 (2)	4.17 (2)

Average weighted response, 5 point Likert scale, 1 – low, 5 – high

The senior leadership subgroup placed a high degree of importance on both the overarching interpersonal themes: empathise and influence. The weighted averages for each theme for the course leadership subgroup also ranked the two themes in the same order as the senior leadership grouping: (i) empathising, and (ii) influencing. The weighted averages are,

however, slightly lower for the course leadership subgroup than those for the senior leadership grouping and the difference in the weighted average is slightly greater (Table 13). An analysis of statistical variance (ANOVA) at 95% CI, undertaken on the average weighted mean responses to each interpersonal leadership capability, by leadership sub-group, showed there are no significant variances between the weighted average mean for each overarching leadership capability theme.

When discussing interpersonal leadership capability during the focus group, there was an acknowledgement that while staff in leadership roles had confidence in the capability of the staff they directed, to get the best out of their work groups they needed to use a range of strategies and approaches to motivate all team members. FGP-15 noted “I am always looking and thinking for the best and the strengths of an individual.” Another participant commented that there are “different styles and different things that work in different environments, we all have different ways of getting the best out of people” (FGP-19). FGP-15 also noted the need to have a different work style for different environments. These comments were all expressed by participants who classified their leadership role as being in the senior leadership subgroup. Only one focus group participant who classified themselves in the course leadership subgroup participated in this discussion, noting that the required interpersonal capabilities are to be ‘innovative, strategic and ambitious’ (FG-21); qualities which are more appropriately classified as personal leadership capabilities. Other interpersonal capabilities identified are ‘listening skills’ (FGP-1), ‘communication’ (FGP-5), and ‘empathy’ (FGP-6). These capabilities are all consistent with the characteristics of effective leaders in higher education institutions as articulated by Scott et al. (2008) and Coates et al. (2010).

There are some minor differences in how the most important personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities were ranked by the two leadership subgroups at SEP. This study has identified that staff in leadership roles at SEP are able to identify the personal

and interpersonal leadership capabilities they need to demonstrate when providing effective leadership, as the responses they provided when ranking most of the capabilities is consistent with of prior research (Scott et al.,2008; Coates et al., 2010).

As to why the SEP participants had difficulty in articulating and describing personal capabilities as opposed to interpersonal capabilities during the focus group needs further investigation. Was it that the participants did not understand the difference between personal and interpersonal capability? Were the questions not clearly articulated to the focus group participants, or was there another explanation? Further investigation could be undertaken at other mixed sector or tertiary providers to provide clarity. Nevertheless, effective and authentic personal and interpersonal capabilities are critical in leading an educational provider operating in a changing and challenging environment (Duignan, 2014).

## **5.6 Building Leadership Capability**

As it has been discussed, staff in leadership roles at SEP have a lack of understanding of the role of a leader and difficulty in differentiating between personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities when trying to explain or demonstrate these. In exploring the overarching research question of this study, the sub questions to be addressed is: How can the capability of leaders at SEP be developed in order to lead an innovative and entrepreneurial organisation? This question was posed to the external interview participants as each participant had extensive experience in either developing and/or delivering leadership programs. In responding to the research question, three themes came through in regard to explaining how leadership capability in a mixed sector provider could be developed.

- *Structure* of effective leadership capability development programs;
- The key *content* to be included in the program;
- *Selecting* leadership development program participants.

### 5.6.1 Structure

The structure of a leadership program is concerned not only with how the knowledge is delivered to and received by the participants; it also comprises the governance of the program including developing the program content, steering committee make up/terms of reference, and how participants will be rewarded and/or recognised for successfully completing the program (Foley & Conole, 2003; Callan et al., 2007; Scott et al., 2008). It was identified by interview participants that there needs to be a mix of approaches when identifying appropriate programs for developing leadership capability. It was also asserted by interview participants that the leadership capability development program needed to be contextualised and situated in the workplace. When identifying an appropriate program to undertake, external participants noted that formal (accredited) leadership programs may not be appropriate (EP-1). Both Scott et al. (2008) and Coates et al. (2010) contend that the mentoring of those in leadership development programs should be a key element of this type of program, and the mentoring program should be guided by a framework that enables both the participant and the mentor to examine and identify what capabilities the individual needs to develop.

Some interview participants also highlighted the need for leadership development programs to provide between 6-12 months for program participants to be exposed to the leadership capabilities desired by the organisation (EP-2, EP-3). While the cost of placements may be substantial, the long-term benefits for the organisation would outweigh these costs. Despite the costs associated with placing staff overseas or interstate, Foley and Conole (2003) assert this an appropriate method of leadership development.

Continuing on the theme of building the desired values and capabilities of the mixed sector provider, EP-1 also noted that the leadership capability development program should be conducted in a manner that uses teaching approaches and values the organisation's leadership

wishes to implement, or have implemented, to maximise technology use that enhances learning outcomes. This approach is interesting in terms of having participants in a leadership group program mimic the approach the organisation wishes to take with its broader student body. It does, however, enable those both delivering and participating in the program to model the behaviours and capabilities, particularly both the personal and interpersonal, while undertaking the program (Fullan & Scott, 2009).

### **5.6.2 Content**

In developing a program designed to build leadership capability in a mixed sector provider, the content needs to develop the capability of participants for the future needs of the organisation, not its current needs (EP-1, EP-5). External interview participants identified that future leadership programs should provide participants with the leadership capability to understand the existing culture of the organisation and then to change its culture to enable the organisation to change its approach (EP-2, EP-5). This is endorsed by Hemsall (2014), who asserts that traditional leadership skills are no longer effective, and leaders need to have the skills that will enable them to effectively deal with the future challenges that will be faced by tertiary sector providers.

### **5.6.3 Selection**

The third category identified by the interview participants as being critical to developing leadership capability in a mixed sector provider is the process undertaken to identify and select possible future leaders of the organisation. EP-1 noted that a common mistake made by many education providers in selecting people to undertake leadership roles was basing their decision on their past performance, not on their capability to be a future leader. Building on the need to develop leadership for the future, EP-4 noted that the focus needed to be on building the capability of leaders for the future. It should not be on training them for existing roles; rather, it should first focus on identifying and recruiting people who

could be capable of leading the organisation, and then work at building their leadership capability. The need to ensure those selected to undertake leadership development have been selected based on their potential and not their current performance has been identified as a key issue that mixed sector providers have needed to address (Foley & Conole, 2003). Hemsall (2014), however, asserts this issue goes beyond selecting participants for a leadership development program; it also needs to be considered in the wider context of approaches to the educational provider's recruitment and selection processes and policies, and how internal career pathways are communicated within the organisation.

## **5.7 Summary**

Participants in this study describe the contemporary education landscape as one shaped by an interventionist policy approach by government. This has led to the establishment of quasi-markets in both the vocational and higher education sectors, which are then manipulated by government through changes in funding, and access is afforded to new provider types to enter the market. These changes are taking place in a landscape that is now shaped by new forms of information and communications technologies. This has provided the opportunity for innovators to implement new forms of educational delivery, challenging established education providers to effectively respond to alternative delivery models impacting on revenue sources, learning and assessment strategies, and fixed asset utilization.

In this challenging environment it would be logical to presume that the priority of staff in leadership roles at SEP would be on planning and implementing strategies that would enable SEP to effectively respond to the challenges that exist in the contemporary education landscape. This study has however identified that staff in leadership roles at SEP have placed a priority on interpersonal factors, including staffing and networking with industry colleagues. External factors such as planning and policy development, and teaching and learning activities do not have as high a priority. The priority placed by staff in leadership roles at SEP

on internal matters is also reflected in their description of their role as a leader at SEP, only 10% of staff in senior leadership roles describe their role as a leader to direct staff, where as 65% of this subgroup describe their role as either fighting for their workgroup or balancing the needs of the organisation.

It is not clear from this study why staff in leadership roles are so internally focused. There may be a number of possible reasons that contribute to this mindset. It may be the complexity that leaders face in reporting to multiple regulatory providers; responding to prescriptive requests for information and student data from government; leading teaching departments that have both vocational and higher education course offerings, managing teaching staff in the same department who have different employment awards and conditions. Or could it be a case that some of these staff in leadership roles do not understand their role of a leader. This will require further research to understand why staff in leadership roles at SEP and possibly other mixed sector providers are internally focused in the role as a leader?

The study identified that for a leadership program to achieve the desired organisational outcome to meet the existing and future leadership needs of mixed sector providers, it should be contextualised and situated in the workplace. Ideally, it should include the opportunity to either see or work with organisations that demonstrate the values and approaches to learning which are desired by the mixed sector provider, within an environment where entrepreneurial capability has been optimised. In preparing for the future leadership needs of the organisation, care needs to be taken in identifying future leaders. This would not be based on their performance in their current role, but rather on their potential as a leader for the future.





## **CHAPTER 6: Findings - Leading Innovation and Entrepreneurship**

A focus of this study was to gain an understanding of the capabilities required by staff in leadership roles at a mixed sector tertiary education provider to lead innovative and entrepreneurial activity in the contemporary education landscape. This section presents the definition that participants considered best defines an entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider, and their understanding of the facilitators, barriers, and success indicators of an entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider. An understanding staff in leadership roles at SEP have of the resources, processes, and values they consider are required to build and support innovative activity at a mixed sector provider was established. Overall this will build our understanding of innovative and entrepreneurial activity at SEP (Figure 5), and in turn addresses the sub question posed in this study:

Do leaders at SEP have the capability to provide leadership that builds innovation and entrepreneurship?

Having the capability and skills to build and support innovative activity is regarded by Keast (1995) as being key to an education provider effectively responding to changes in government policy that have deregulated education markets. On the topic of entrepreneurship and innovation, the responses from SEP staff will be discussed in the context of the observations made by the external participants regarding leaders at SEP and other mixed sector providers. The findings from this study will also be discussed in the context of recent research that investigated the understanding that educational leaders in Europe have of entrepreneurship in the tertiary education sector.

### **6.1 Defining the Entrepreneurially Orientated Mixed Sector Provider**

There is a range of perspectives as to what constitutes an entrepreneurially focused tertiary education provider. Etzkowitz, Webster, Gebhardt, and Terra (2000) hold that such a provider is “an entrepreneurial incubator supporting and enabling staff and students to

generate funds from patents, research contracts and collaborations.” A second perspective is that such providers “innovate business activities, and shift organisational structures to enable the provider to ‘stand up’ in its own right” (Clark, 1998). A third perspective is “on the building of a culture that promotes and supports innovation and entrepreneurship” (Kirby, 2002). To determine the definition participants in this study regarded as best describing an innovative and entrepreneurial mixed sector provider operating in the contemporary education landscape, participants were requested to select one of six definitions (Appendix F) identified by Kirby et al. (2011) that they felt best defined an entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider. The definition identified by the majority of SEP staff in leadership roles (58.97%) and the external interview participants (60%) is, “As at the heart of any entrepreneurial culture, entrepreneurial mixed sector education providers have the ability to innovate, recognize and create opportunities, work in teams, take risks and respond to challenges ” (adapted from Kirby, 2002, p.2).

This definition was also identified in the study undertaken by Kirby et al. (2011) as best defining an entrepreneurially focused tertiary education provider. The definition places an emphasis on the capability of an individual to participate in team work, risk taking and responding to challenges, and for leaders to build a culture that supports and engenders these capabilities in the organisation. Guerrero-Cano et al. (2016) assert that for leaders building and promoting an innovative and entrepreneurial academic culture, these concepts need to be understood across all levels of the organisation. It is, therefore, not only those in senior leadership roles who need to demonstrate the personal and interpersonal capabilities required to support and build innovation; leaders at all levels of the organisation must also demonstrate these capabilities (Beresford & Michels, 2014). For this to take place in any tertiary education provider, it is the responsibility of those staff who provide leadership in the organisation to have the capability to understand their role in leading innovative and

entrepreneurial activity. Staff in leadership roles should have the capability to lead others in a manner that demonstrates the values desired by the organisation. They should also have capability to effectively communicate the organisation's goals and values in a manner that builds a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship.

For this to take place, EP-5 contends those in leadership roles at SEP need to understand that a mixed sector provider that is innovative and entrepreneurial is externally focused, understands and analyses the environment in which it operates, and is networked, not hierarchical in its structure. However, another external participant (EP-2) cautions that in building the innovative and entrepreneurial capability of a mixed sector provider, the organisation must be mindful of its community and service orientation. Other key themes that come through from the interviews when describing an innovative and entrepreneurial education provider is an organisation that is “networked”, “client focused”, and has “a culture that allows informed risk taking.” These themes resonate with the preferred description of this study's participants of an entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider.

## **6.2 How is Entrepreneurship Understood?**

Having established how the majority of participants in this study define an entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider, the next phase is to understand what the participants in this study regard as being the barriers to, and facilitators of, building entrepreneurial capability at SEP. This series of questions was posed to determine the understanding staff in leadership roles have of entrepreneurship. The responses provided by participants are compared against the findings of Kirby et al. (2011) to determine if the understanding SEP staff have of entrepreneurship is consistent with that of staff at other tertiary education providers.

To gain an understanding of what are the most important factors to facilitate entrepreneurial activity at SEP, the study's participants were asked to rank 13 factors in order

of importance, with 1 being the most important through to 13 for the least important factor (Table 14). Based on this ranking, the three most important facilitators required to make SEP entrepreneurial (Table 14), as identified by staff in leadership roles at SEP and ranked by importance, are “flexible organisational structure”, “favourable staff attitudes toward entrepreneurship”, and “links with industry.” This is consistent with the three most important facilitators identified by participants in the research project undertaken by Kirby et al. (2011). However, when focus group participants were requested to identify what SEP did well when trying to be entrepreneurial, only one participant provided a response. This participant (IPC-9) from the course leadership subgroup explained that they received support from their superiors to be innovative and entrepreneurial; however, they did not explain what this was.

I think we receive wonderful support from my superiors in terms of being innovative and entrepreneurial, so again at a local level for me in comparison to where I have been recently, I think that SEP does a wonderful job in support of being innovative and entrepreneurial (IPC-9).

The importance of building and maintaining a culture that supports entrepreneurial activity was also identified as being a key factor in building a culture of entrepreneurship; however, EP-1 noted those who are undertaking entrepreneurial activity need to understand their accountabilities and responsibilities in a supportive manner that builds capability through effective monitoring, evaluation, and review.

Table 14

*Entrepreneurial Facilitators*

<b>Facilitators</b>	<b>All SEP Participants Questionnaire (1) n=37</b>	<b>Course &amp; Frontline leadership Questionnaire (1) n=19</b>	<b>Senior &amp; Departmental leadership Questionnaire (1) n=18</b>
<i>Average weighted Response (Ranking)</i>			
<i>Flexible organisational structure</i>	4.94 (1)	5.61 (2)	4.07 (1)
<i>Favourable staff attitudes toward entrepreneurship</i>	5.21 (2)	5.06 (1)	5.40 (4)
<i>Links with Industry</i>	5.50 (3)	5.79 (4)	5.40 (5)
<i>Clear business rules</i>	5.56 (4)	5.78 (3)	5.29 (3)
<i>Entrepreneurial role models</i>	5.85 (5)	6.72 (5)	4.80 (2)
<i>Seed funding</i>	6.75 (6)	7.00 (6)	6.47 (7)
<i>Support measures for start ups</i>	7.19 (7)	8.11 (10)	6.28 (6)
<i>Appropriate reward system</i>	7.37 (8)	7.68 (8)	7.00 (8)
<i>Business Incubators</i>	7.56 (9)	7.26 (7)	7.93 (10)
<i>Minimal regulation for the creation of new ventures</i>	7.72 (10)	8.00 (9)	7.44 (9)
<i>Support for technology transfer</i>	8.17 (11)	8.26 (11)	8.06 (11)
<i>Entrepreneurship courses for students/staff</i>	8.65 (12)	8.42 (13)	8.93 (12)
<i>Favourable student attitudes toward entrepreneurship</i>	9.29 (13)	8.37 (12)	10.37 (13)

Rank from 1(most required) to 13(least required)

The importance of appropriate support of entrepreneurial activities is regarded as being one of the key activities leaders need to undertake in building and supporting entrepreneurship (Kirby, et al., 2011; and Setser et al., 2015). However, neither the SEP focus group nor external interview participants were able to identify any facilitators of entrepreneurial activity. As with the responses from the SEP participants in respect to leadership capability, it is clear that when the participants are provided with a list to rank, they have enough understanding of each facilitator to apply a ranking or level of importance to each. However, when asked to explain why each facilitator of entrepreneurship is important, the responses provided were limited.

On the flip side of the facilitators of entrepreneurship in a mixed sector provider are the barriers to a mixed sector provider being entrepreneurial. The questionnaire provided to the staff in leadership roles at SEP asked them to rank 12 factors (Table 15) identified by Kirby et al. (2011) that are considered barriers to a mixed sector provider being entrepreneurial. The three factors most highly ranked by SEP participants as being barriers to entrepreneurship are: (i) “government funding/dependence on government funding”; (ii) “government regulation”; and (iii) “lack of funding.” These results differ from the findings of Kirby et al. (2011), in which these factors were not regarded as being major barriers to a provider being entrepreneurial. Kirby et al. (2011) ranked “organisational structure”, “core business function” and “inadequate links with industry” as being the major barriers to a tertiary education provider being entrepreneurial. Funding and government support were regarded as not being barriers to a tertiary education provider being entrepreneurial.

However, when reviewing the responses by leadership subgroup in respect to the importance of the factors that are barriers to a mixed sector provider being entrepreneurial, the factor “government funding/dependence on government funding” has the highest average weighted response for staff in the course leadership subgroup. However, this factor has the eighth highest average weighted response for the senior leadership subgroup. The factor that received the highest average weighted response for the senior leadership subgroup is “organisational structure and governance”; this only received the tenth highest average weighted response for the course leadership subgroup. The difference in the average weighted response for this item between the SEP leadership subgroups is significantly different when using a t-test assuming equal variances at 95% CI.

Table 15

*Barriers to Your Organisation Being Entrepreneurial?*

<b>Barriers</b>	<b>All SEP Participants Questionnaire (1) n= 38</b>	<b>Course &amp; Frontline leadership Questionnaire (1) n= 19</b>	<b>Senior &amp; Departmental leadership Questionnaire (1) n=17</b>
	<i>Average weighted Response (Ranking)</i>		
<i>Government funding/dependence on government funding</i>	5.22 (1)	4.32 (1)	6.54 (8)
<i>Government regulation</i>	5.34 (2)	5.17 (2)	5.57 (3)
<i>Lack of funding</i>	5.50 (3)	5.67 (3)	5.31 (2)
<i>*Organisational structure and governance</i>	5.63 (4)	7.26 (10)	3.69 (1)
<i>Lack of experience</i>	6.34 (5)	6.89 (7)	5.64 (4)
<i>Inadequate links with industry</i>	6.43 (6)	6.42 (6)	6.46 (7)
<i>Lack of physical resources</i>	6.69 (7)	7.11 (9)	6.19 (6)
<i>Inadequate cultural values</i>	6.79 (8)	6.00 (4)	7.69 (9)
<i>Clash with teaching objectives</i>	7.33 (9)	6.13 (5)	8.71 (12)
<i>Inappropriate reward system</i>	7.73 (10)	7.06 (8)	8.53 (10)
<i>*Traditional ways of teaching and training</i>	8.25 (11)	10.12 (13)	6.12 (5)
<i>Not a primary function of the organisation</i>	8.33 (12)	8.06 (11)	8.67 (11)
<i>Not in concordance with Institute objectives</i>	8.94 (13)	8.53 (12)	9.47 (13)

\*Difference between means is significant when t test; assuming equal variance is applied at 0.05 significance.

Ranked from 1 (most significant barrier) to 13 (least significant barrier)

The factor “organisational structure and governance” is also identified by Kirby et al. (2011) as the most highly ranked barrier to a university being entrepreneurial. The existing organisational structure (hierarchical) was also identified by some external interview participants (EP-1 and EP-3) as an inhibitor to a mixed sector provider having the capacity to build and support entrepreneurial capability.

SEP staff who participated in the focus group were not as forthcoming in identifying the barriers to entrepreneurship. Only one focus group participant identified a barrier to entrepreneurship at SEP, noting that SEP did not “allow the space or structure or the support mechanisms within the organisation to allow (entrepreneurial) ideas to become anything more than ideas” (IPS-11). This participant, who reported their role as being classified in the senior



leadership subgroup, reinforced in the focus group that organisational structure and governance is an impediment to SEP becoming an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider. It is also clear from the focus group that staff in leadership roles at SEP have a limited understanding of the role of entrepreneurship in education and are unable to explain how leaders facilitate entrepreneurship and respond to its barriers. There is a lack of shared understanding across SEP of what barriers to entrepreneurial activity would limit SEP's capability to attempt to support and build entrepreneurial activity. This matter cannot be addressed until staff in leadership roles gain a deeper understanding of how entrepreneurship works in tertiary education organisations. Ideally this would take place in structured leadership development activities.

### **6.3 Indicators of success**

Having identified what participants in this study regard as being the facilitators and barriers to entrepreneurship, attention is now paid to what participants regard as being the indicators that a mixed sector provider is entrepreneurially focused. In this study, the SEP participants gave "promote an entrepreneurial culture" the highest ranking of 16 indicators (Table 16). Participants identified it as the key indicator that a mixed sector provider demonstrates when it is entrepreneurially focused. Kirby et al. (2011) also identified that promoting an entrepreneurial culture was a key indicator of success for an entrepreneurially focused education provider.

When the weighted average rankings for the two leadership subgroups at SEP are reviewed, there are clear differences in how participants from each subgroup identify the success criteria for an entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider. The course leadership group also gave "promote an entrepreneurial culture" the highest ranking, followed by "efficient business rules and policies", and then "flexible organisation structure." However, the senior leadership subgroup gave the highest ranking indicator to "good links with

industry”, followed by “efficient business rules and policies.” The indicator “promote an entrepreneurial culture” was ranked as the fourth most important indicator of a successful entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider. The difference in the ranking of the indicator “flexible organisation structure” between the two leadership subgroups is statistically significant when a t-test is applied assuming equal variance at 95% CI.

Table 16

*Entrepreneurially Focused Mixed Sector Provider: Success Criteria*

<b>Success Criteria</b>	<b>All SEP Participants, n=35</b>	<b>Course &amp; Frontline leadership, n=17</b>	<b>Senior &amp; Departmental leadership, n=18</b>
	<i>Average weighted Response (Ranking)</i>		
<i>Promote an entrepreneurial culture</i>	5.49 (1)	4.56 (1)	6.60 (4)
<i>Good links with industry</i>	6.06 (2)	6.61 (2)	5.50 (1)
<i>Efficient business rules and policies</i>	6.91 (3)	7.22 (5)	6.588 (3)
<i>Graduates gain employment on graduation</i>	6.97 (4)	7.00 (4)	6.93 (5)
<i>Favourable staff attitudes toward entrepreneurship</i>	7.24 (5)	7.47 (6)	7.00 (6)
<i>*Flexible organisational structure</i>	7.80 (6)	<b>9.61 (12)</b>	<b>5.88 (2)</b>
<i>Generate entrepreneurs</i>	7.84 (7)	7.82 (7)	7.86 (8)
<i>Support for start-ups</i>	8.16 (8)	6.83 (3)	9.856 (12)
<i>Entrepreneurial teaching &amp; training methodologies</i>	8.21 (9)	8.94 (10)	7.44 (7)
<i>Entrepreneurial role models</i>	8.94 (10)	9.36 (11)	8.47 (9)
<i>Appropriate reward systems</i>	9.181 (11)	8.82 (9)	9.562 (11)
<i>Support for technology transfer</i>	9.78 (12)	8.719 (8)	11.00 (14)
<i>Minimal regulations for new ventures</i>	10.34 (13)	9.89 (13)	10.93 (13)
<i>Entrepreneurship courses for staff</i>	10.63 (14)	10.22 (14)	11.14 (15)
<i>Entrepreneurship courses for students</i>	13.42 (17)	13.41 (17)	13.44 (17)
<i>*No dependence on government funding</i>	11.31 (15)	<b>13.17(16)</b>	<b>9.352 (10)</b>
<i>Economic support for business creation</i>	11.76 (16)	11.78 (15)	11.73 (16)

\*Difference between means is significant when t test; assuming equal variance is applied at 95% CI.

An additional perspective on the indicators of an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider came from interviews with external participants in this study, and the focus group conducted with staff in leadership roles at SEP. Unlike the questionnaire administered to staff in leadership roles at SEP, the interview and focus group did not prompt the thinking of the participant; rather, the interview and focus group participants were responding to a question and were not prompted by a range of items to rank. As such the responses of participants to

this question relied on their understanding of entrepreneurship in the context of education and training provided by the mixed sector provider.

The focus group participants provided limited responses to this question. The common theme in each of these responses centred on building market share as a key indicator that SEP is an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider. Statements from SEP underpinning this theme included: “Understanding the change in the market place and meeting its needs” (IPC-1); “Do something to expand your business or to enable your client to expand their business” (IPS-8); “Finding new markets ahead of competitors” (IPS-5). This was not an indicator identified by Kirby et al. (2011), nor is understanding change in markets in which the education provider operates regarded as being a capability to build innovation in the organisation (Setser et al., 2015). Responses from external interview participants were also limited; however, their responses in respect to identifying the success indicators exhibited by an entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider were consistent with those identified by Setser et al. (2015). This response was within a wider context of leadership having an end-to-end business capability (EP-5). This highlighted the importance of staff having the capability to perform a range of leadership capabilities required in an entrepreneurially focused mixed sector provider. The whole of business approach was a consistent theme that came through in the responses from external interview participants. Their thinking also identified “efficiently utilising its resources to generate entrepreneurial outcomes” as a key indicator of success for a mixed sector provider. This included the effective utilisation of existing buildings, and what they do and how they structure their working day (EP-1). It was also identified that an indicator of success of an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider is that its organisational structure is no longer hierarchical; rather, it is externally orientated and networked (EP-5).

While none of the themes identified by external interview participants make specific reference to the success criteria identified in Kirby et al. (2011), external interview

participants recognise that the primary purpose of a mixed sector provider is not to generate income for its shareholders; rather, it is to be of benefit to the wider community. There is a recognition that mixed sector providers need to be entrepreneurial, but this is tempered by the social responsibilities an education provider has to its community (Keast, 1995). As such, the indicators of success by the external interview participants that incorporate the organisation's social responsibility are appropriate, and underpin the culture of the entrepreneurial mixed sector provider. While entrepreneurship is the capability of an organisation to operationalise innovation (Dyer et al., 2009), innovation is the process of building on existing practices, or introducing new ideas and processes to solve problems or create new opportunities (Setser et al., 2015).

#### **6.4 Building Innovation at SEP**

To enable staff in an organisation to be innovative, those in leadership roles in that organisation need to build and support the conditions that will enable innovation to take place. In undertaking this, leaders need to ensure the appropriate processes and resources are in place to support innovative activities (Tierney, 2014). This section identifies the factors needed to build innovation from the perspective of those in leadership roles at SEP, and the resources, processes, and values needed to support innovative activity from the perspective of external interview participants in this study.

Staff in leadership roles at SEP who participated in this study ranked eight factors that play a role in building innovative capability in education providers. To determine this ranking, participants rated the importance of each item on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 from lowest importance through to 5 for highest importance. All SEP participants identified "staff development and resource development" as being the most important factor required to create innovation at SEP. When the responses are reviewed by leadership subgroup, the course leadership subgroup also identified "staff development and resource development" as being

the most important factor to build innovative capability. However, the senior leadership subgroup identified “delivery of targeted skill sets that are meaningful to employers” as being the most important factor in creating innovation at SEP, and then “staff development and resource development.” Each subgrouping selected “state of the art equipment for use by students” as being the third most important factor. The average weighted response for each subgrouping for seven of the eight factors was between 4 and 5 (Table 17). The high ranking given by participants to all of the factors suggests they have no clear understanding of the factors that build entrepreneurial capability in a tertiary education provider. Of the seven factors rated as high by SEP participants, three are physical resource items which are the product of innovation, not factors that build innovative activity (Table 17). This may also be due to the different levels of leadership having a different understanding of what is innovation and what is required to build innovative capability due to their proximity and interaction with staff (Tierney, 2014). It is therefore critical to ensure that building the vision of innovation and entrepreneurship in any tertiary education provider is seen a key role of those in leadership roles (Gibb et al., 2013) and it is the role of those in leadership to instill those capabilities (Clark, 2000).

Table 17

*Importance of the Following Factors in Creating Innovation*

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>All SEP Participants Questionnaire (i) n=41</i>	<i>Course &amp; Frontline leadership Questionnaire (i) n=20</i>	<i>Senior &amp; Departmental leadership Questionnaire (i) n=21</i>
<i>Staff development &amp; resource development</i>	<i>Commercial</i>	4.63 (1)	4.75 (1)	4.50 (2)
<i>Delivery of targeted skill sets that are meaningful to employers</i>	<i>Commercial</i>	4.54 (2)	4.55 (2)	4.52 (1)
<i>State of the art equipment for use by students</i>	<i>Physical</i>	4.39 (3)	4.4 (3)	4.38 (3)
<i>Enhanced technology in teaching</i>	<i>Physical</i>	4.29 (4)	4.35 (4)	4.24(5)
<i>Improved learning spaces</i>	<i>Physical</i>	4.29 (5)	4.3 (6)	4.29 (4)

<i>Tailored support for individual learners</i>	<i>Commercial</i>	4.29 (6)	4.35 (5)	4.24 (6)
<i>Delivery of targeted skill sets that are portable</i>	<i>Commercial</i>	4.17 (7)	4.2 (7)	4.14 (7)
<i>Better student amenities</i>	<i>Physical</i>	3.88 (8)	3.85 (8)	3.90 (8)

## **6.5 Resources, Processes and Values to build and support innovation**

As with questions posed to SEP staff in respect to entrepreneurship, in addition to having these participants rank the importance of a series of factors that create innovation, they were then asked to explain what are: (i) the most important resources to support innovation at SEP; (ii) the most important processes required to support innovation at SEP, and; (iii) the most important organisational values required to support innovation at SEP. Each of these questions were open-ended and there was no word limit on the size of the response provided by a participant. In presenting the findings the key themes have been identified in responses from the participants and where appropriate quotes from SEP participants have been included to explain the perspective of a participant. The external participants were also asked the same questions in respect to the resources, processes and organisational values required to support innovation.

### **6.5.1 Resources**

On the question of important resources required to support innovation at SEP, there were 40 SEP participants who responded. 20 in the course leadership sub-group, and 20 participants from the senior leadership sub-group. The key resources identified to support innovation are: staff, leadership capability, technology, teaching and learning resources, financial resources, business systems and leadership. The staff at SEP were identified by all participants and by participant sub-group as the most important resource required for innovation. Leadership was explicitly identified by two participants in the course leadership sub-group, and only one participant in the senior leadership sub-group as another key resource to support innovation. However, an underpinning theme that came through in the comments

provided by participants was the need for leaders to allocate resources effectively and to ensure that the right people are doing the right job “The right people with the right skills utilising the right technology” (IPC-18). Leadership is also a key resource identified by the external interview participants who responded to the question: what are the appropriate resources required for innovation? The emphasis of the external participants was on the need of leaders to create a culture that supported innovation, and not a department that creates innovation (EP-4).

Participants from both the course and senior leadership sub-groups identified staff as the key resource to build and support innovation at a mixed sector provider, participants from the course leadership subgroup describe innovative teachers as capable teachers who hold the most current skills and knowledge about the latest technologies. Whereas responses from the senior leadership subgroup also include administrative staff in their description of innovative staff as being entrepreneurial, motivated, flexible, and effective. There was consistency in the responses between the two leadership subgroupings that financial support was required to build teaching resources and purchase supporting technology and equipment; however, it is the senior leadership of the organisation that ultimately determines how resources are allocated and used, whereas it is the people in the organisation who will create innovation. “People are the most important resources in an organisation to support innovation. Amenities and technology sit around the edge” (IPS-13). However, for innovation to take place may require leaders to restructure management processes and structures that will enable reallocation of resources to enable the desired organisational development to take place (Hamel, 2006).

### **6.5.2 Processes**

The processes used in mixed sector providers are structured to meet the bureaucratic reporting requirements set by government departments, rather than being structured to meet

the needs of learners (Sahni et al., 2013). For a mixed sector provider to be innovative, its processes need to support innovative activity, not meet the needs of bureaucracy. To determine what processes are required at SEP to support innovation, 38 participants responded to the question, ‘What do you believe are the most important processes required to support innovation at SEP?’ Of the 38 respondents, 18 are classified in the senior leadership subgroup, while 20 are classified in the course leadership subgroup. The external interview participants were also asked this question. Responses to the question have the following recurring themes: streamlined administrative processes; open communication; and processes for promoting innovative ideas. External interview participants were also asked if mixed sector providers have the right processes to innovate, and do these processes currently exist in contemporary mixed sector providers. In responding to this question, one external interview participant noted that a number of mixed sector providers have successfully developed and offered degree programs, and have been able to compete against universities despite not receiving the same government funding as universities (EP-1). This participant also noted that many of these mixed sector providers have been very successful in recruiting international students to programs that they offer. The interview participant did however identify that for a mixed sector provider to be innovative it needs to review its processes and adopt a systems thinking approach (EP-1).

When responses from participants are analysed by leadership subgroup, the processes identified by participants from the course leadership subgroup to support innovation are centred on communication channels and making staff responsible and accountable. These are: processes that enabled staff to present and promote innovative ideas to the institute’s senior leadership (IPC-12, IPC-25); open communication systems (IPC-29, IPC-28, IPC-22, IPC-16); those processes should enable staff to understand their responsibilities and how they will be made accountable (IPC-17, IPC-27). The responses from staff in the senior leadership



subgroup also identified processes that facilitated open communication and accountability, and processes to enable staff to understand the organisation's values and its strategic objectives (IPS-9, IPS-12). The senior leadership subgroup also identified that there needed to be processes to ensure recruitment of the right staff (IPS-11), and to provide the financial capacity to support innovation (IPS-13). The level of detail provided by the SEP staff in respect to business processes was greater than for any of the other questions posed to SEP participants in this study. However, the processes identified by SEP participants were internal business processes. Processes related to external communications and governance were neither identified nor addressed by SEP staff.

The need for appropriate governance processes was identified only by an external interview participant. EP-1 identified the importance of having the appropriate governance processes and structure in place to ensure the governing boards of mixed sector providers have an appropriate mix of people who can identify and implement the appropriate structure, values, and processes that will build and sustain a culture of innovation, which in turn impacts on the direction of senior management and its consequent impact on the rest of the business. While the level of analysis provided by the SEP participants in respect to business processes demonstrates that these staff are committed, it further reinforces the assertion of this study that staff in leadership roles at SEP prioritise operational activities, rather than prioritising activities that have an outward focus.

### **6.5.3 Values**

The values that leaders at SEP hold are established through responses to the question, 'What are the most important organisational values required to support innovation in your organisation?' In total, 36 participants responded to this question. Of these, 18 responses came from staff classified in the senior leadership subgrouping, with the remaining 18 classified in the course leadership subgroup. The key values all leaders at SEP were identified

as having are: support for innovation at all levels of the organisation (6 responses); open and honest communication across the organisation (5 responses); and valuing our customers and students (5 responses).

When evaluating key values identified by each subgroup as required to support innovation at SEP, the key value identified by course leadership subgroup is “open and honest communication across the organisation” (5 responses). However, “support for innovation at all levels” (5 responses) was the key value identified by participants classified in the senior leadership subgrouping. This value is also identified by one of the external interview participants who emphasized the importance of supporting innovation throughout the organisation (EP-4). It was also contended by external interview participants that the values demonstrated by SEP were appropriate to support and build innovation. However, in providing this support, leaders at SEP needed to understand the possible impact of two inhibiting factors. First, the interventionist role played by government in regulating and funding mixed sector providers will inhibit it from achieving a truly innovative approach in delivering its programs and courses (EP-3). Second, the importance of living the values desired by the organisation through making people in the organisation accountable (EP-1, EP-4). This need of staff to understand their role as a leader continues to be the key to providing effective leadership to staff to achieve the strategic objectives of SEP. Setser et al. (2015, pp.14-15) recognise that leadership plays a key role in building the entrepreneurial orientation of a mixed sector provider, through providing leadership that provides “a clear sense of purpose and strategic intent”, “effectively explaining and describing the goals of innovation”, and “investing in the team’s capacity to take on and execute innovation.” There was also a degree of caution from EP-5 about holding onto existing organisational values. EP-5 expressed a concern that leaders of mixed sector providers place too much value on setting values for now and not for the organisation in five or ten years, observing that these values

will enable the leaders of the future to effectively respond to changes in the future contemporary education landscape.

In summing up the resources, processes, and values required for effective leadership of innovation at SEP, there is a need to demonstrate and effectively communicate vision and values to all staff. In encouraging innovation, leaders at SEP need to demonstrate confidence in staff to be innovative in their approach. They also need to implement organisational structures and processes that enable innovative ideas to be communicated and implemented across the organisation (Hamel, 2006; Setser et al., 2015), and then be endorsed efficiently by SEP leaders should it be decided these innovations be adopted. Leaders need to appropriately resource technologies that effectively support the organisation's core business and administrative systems, to support innovative teaching and learning activities, and "establish a culture of innovation" (Alexander et al., 2019). Above all, those in leadership roles need to have the capability to support risk-taking and creativity (Tierney, 2014), and to demonstrate accountability and honesty (Gibb et al., 2013) when providing leadership and support for innovation.

## **CHAPTER 7: Discussion and Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the role of leadership and the interpersonal and personal capabilities demonstrated by staff in leadership roles at a mixed sector education provider. Previous studies have focused on the capabilities and role of leaders at either vocational or higher education providers, but there has been limited research on leadership in mixed sector providers. However, studies on how the role of a leader is shaped by the environment in which these providers operate, and the leadership capabilities required to build and support innovation and entrepreneurship is limited.

To respond to the research question posed in this study, a case study was undertaken at SEP, a mixed sector education provider operating in the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. The case study used a convergent parallel mixed methods design which enabled the researcher to gather qualitative and quantitative data which was then analysed to establish the findings of the study. These findings respond to the research question and enable presentation of the study's key contributions to a greater understanding of leadership of a mixed sector provider.

By studying how leaders perceive their leadership capabilities, and other factors related to their performance of their role as a leader at SEP, we have gained a deeper understanding of the leadership at a mixed sector provider. Specifically, this study has expanded our understanding of the leadership capabilities desired of, and demonstrated at, a mixed sector provider, and how the way a leader perceives their leadership role impacts on the manner in which they undertake their role. This then provides an insight into how we can prepare staff to undertake future leadership roles at mixed sector providers operating in the contemporary education landscape.

The study has taken the position that the responses participants have provided are shaped and developed by their understanding of the environment in which their respective

organisations operate (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Greene, J.C., & Hall, 2010). In the context of this study, the decisions made and values demonstrated by staff in leadership roles at SEP are formed by their understanding of how the contemporary education landscape shapes the operations of SEP. This study asserts that the contemporary education landscape is shaped by three primary drivers: government policy, market forces, and information and communication technology. These drivers have shaped a complex landscape that requires those who provide leadership at mixed sector providers to understand the structure and impact of quasi-education markets. They must respond to government policy at federal and state levels that is implemented through interventionist approaches in funding, regulation, and adjustment to market structures. Those in leadership roles also need to consider how developments in information and communication technology will impact on the role of the teacher and the systems that exist in an organisation that has a bureaucratically focused administration system and a hierarchical organisational structure. It is in the context of the contemporary education landscape that the overarching research question of this study was posed:

Do staff in leadership roles at a large metropolitan mixed sector provider have the appropriate capabilities to effectively lead innovation and entrepreneurship in the contemporary education landscape?

In responding to this question, it has been identified that staff in leadership roles at SEP do in most cases identify the leadership capabilities considered to be the most important by leaders at other tertiary education institutions (Scott et al., 2008; Coates et al., 2010). There are a number of key differences in the responses provided by participants in this study when compared against the findings of previous studies.

First, staff who reported their role as being in the senior leadership subgroup did not consider planning and policy development as being a major area of priority in their daily

work. This is considered to be the major area of priority of senior leaders at higher education institutions (Scott et al., 2008), and in the top three areas of priority in vocational education institutions (Coates et al., 2010). Second, staff in senior leadership roles considered their major area of priority to be managing staff. Staff in the course leadership subgroup regarded teaching and learning activities as being their third most important area of priority. This area is reported as the most important for staff in the course leadership category in both vocational education providers (Coates et al., 2010), and higher education providers (Scott et al., 2008).

When participants in this study were asked to explain and identify personal and interpersonal capabilities in the focus group, their responses were limited and they could not describe specific personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities desired of a leader. In examining the priorities and roles of those in leadership roles at SEP, the results indicated that these priorities were focused on activities within the organisation and in using an analogy to describe their role of leaders, only a minority of participants saw their role to direct and provide a vision for their work groups. The majority of participants either saw their role to fight for or balance the competing need for limited resources in the organisation. It is not clear from the data gathered in this study why the majority of staff in leadership roles at SEP describe their role in this manner, and warrants further research in respect to understanding why staff in leadership roles at SEP and other mixed sector providers describe their role as they do.

In responding to the research question, it is asserted that staff in leadership roles are able to identify the appropriate personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities they need to demonstrate to provide effective leadership. However, what is not clear is why they describe their leadership roles in this manner. Their priority in undertaking their role as a leader is focused on internal operational matters, rather than being externally focused to provide strategic leadership to build and support innovative and entrepreneurial activities that would

differentiate SEP from its competitors. This finding deserves further investigation to assist in better understanding leadership in the mixed sector provider.

### **7.1 Contributions from this study**

Three important findings have emerged from this exploration of leadership at SEP. Each of these findings contributes to our understanding of how staff in leadership roles at a mixed sector provider approach the way they provide leadership, and the capabilities they believe are required to build and support the innovative and entrepreneurial capability of SEP. The findings also make a contribution to the broader body of literature on leadership of mixed sector providers.

The first finding is that the way in which leaders at a mixed sector provider describe their role supports the assertion of Coates et al. (2010) that many staff who report holding a leadership position in a vocational education provider do not see their role as one to direct and support staff. This insight is then discussed in the context of how staff in leadership roles then perform their leadership role, and personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities they perceive are required to provide effective leadership at a mixed sector provider. How a leader perceives their role impacts on their capability to effectively lead not only their work area or department, but also innovative and entrepreneurial activity.

The second finding from this study has identified that staff in leadership roles at a mixed sector provider do not have a clear understanding of the process of innovation. They are able to identify innovative products and facilities, but their understanding of how to build and support innovative activity is not clear.

The third finding has established that the capability of leaders at a mixed sector provider can be developed; however, leadership development programs should be contextualised to the organisation for which they are being delivered. The program's delivery should be undertaken in a manner that the organisation desires its teaching and learning to be

undertaken, and participants need to have the opportunity to be either placed at, or to observe, organisations that demonstrate the leadership capabilities and approach the organisation desires to achieve.

### **7.1.1 The role of a leader**

The observation of external interview participants that leaders at SEP have limited capability to make their staff accountable and responsible is reflected in the perception that staff in leadership positions at SEP have of their roles as a leader (Table 11). In the classification of the analogies they used to describe their role as a leader, the majority of those staff in leadership roles perceive their roles as either fighting for their team or balancing the needs of the team within the organisation. Only a small minority (13%) of staff in leadership positions see their role as a leader to direct those in their team or across the organisation. Of those staff who identified their leadership role as one of providing vision and direction for their staff, a higher percentage of staff in the course leadership subgroup than the senior leadership subgroup described their role in this manner. Prior to undertaking this study, the researcher assumed the opposite. How a leader describes their role in turn impacts on how a leader communicates the vision and intent of the organisation to their staff. If the leader does not see their role as that to communicate the vision and set the objectives, and is instead focused on either balancing the needs of the organisation or team members or advocating for their team or department, their capability to communicate the vision, mission, and goals of the organisation is compromised. Likewise, their capability to make members of their team or department accountable and responsible for their roles is compromised when they do not have clarity about their own role in balancing the needs of competing for resources or fighting for their team or department (Mulcahy, 2003). To be effective, the study suggests, staff in leadership roles would ideally have the capability to use the personal and interpersonal skills this study identifies as being required of staff in leadership roles. This would then enable



them to motivate their team members and to make them aware of their responsibilities and how they will be made accountable.

### **7.1.2 Priority and capability**

The priorities a leader sets in their role would, in their purest form, only be guided by the organisation's mission and goals. These would be communicated to each staff member through a position description that outlines their responsibilities and accountabilities, each of which is based on specific strategic goals set for the organisation by its board. However, these priorities can be shifted by changes in the contemporary education landscape, and by the surprises and challenges in this landscape that they either identify or are made aware of. The setting of priorities may also change as a result of how those in leadership roles perceive their leadership function, be it to: direct staff to achieve the organisation's strategic goals; fight for resources, or for the survival of a work group or department; balance competing needs within and external to the organisation; or to achieve their own goals as they feel no longer connected or part of the organisation. In some cases, the priorities of an individual leader will be at odds with those of the organisation (North, 2005).

How a leader then performs their role to achieve these priorities is demonstrated by a combination of capabilities they consider they need to perform their leadership role effectively. It would be assumed that staff in executive and senior roles would prioritise a combination of capabilities that would enable them to plan effectively for the future, and to communicate this plan is key to performing this role effectively. Whereas staff in course and frontline leadership roles would place a priority on building and demonstrating the capabilities needed to lead teaching and learning systems, manage staff and administrative activities (Scott et al., 2008; Coates et al., 2010).

This study showed staff in leadership roles at SEP placed a priority on managing staff and networking with industry colleagues (Table 8). When reviewing these responses by

leadership subgroup, both subgroups (senior and course) ranked managing staff and networking with industry colleagues as their two most important areas of priority. For the senior leadership subgroup, the area of planning and policy development was ranked fourth of the five areas of priority. The course and frontline leadership subgroup ranked teaching and learning as the third area of most importance, and management and administration activities as the fifth (and therefore lowest) area of importance. The quantitative feedback from the SEP staff indicates the priorities SEP staff identified are not consistent with the findings of either Scott et al. (2008) in respect to the priorities of leaders in higher education institutions, or Coates et al. (2010) in respect to vocational education providers. This is also reflected in the qualitative feedback gathered from the external interview participants who asserted that those in leadership roles in mixed sector providers do not have an appropriate focus and need to alter their priorities to ensure the organisation can plan to respond effectively to changes in the contemporary education landscape. This lack of focus, according to one interview participant (EP-1), was demonstrated in the lack of accountability and responsibility demonstrated by staff at mixed sector providers. For this to be rectified, external interview participants identified that those in leadership roles in mixed sector providers need to have the capability to not only plan for the long-term but also effectively communicate these plans to all staff and other stakeholders. In communicating this to staff they must also explain how staff will be made accountable and responsible in achieving these plans. It was identified by two external interview participants (EP-2, EP-3) that to achieve this, leaders needed to understand what their role is in attaining the organisation's goals, and this in turn would require them to have leadership capabilities that would enable them to communicate the organisation's vision, build and create an innovative culture, and most importantly, manage change. The need for staff in leadership roles to communicate effectively with other staff and the wider community about the organisation's objectives, and to implement changes, requires

these leaders to demonstrate and execute the appropriate personal and interpersonal capabilities for the leadership role each staff member undertakes, be it a senior leadership or a course leadership role.

By asking SEP staff in leadership roles to rank a range of personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities in a series of quantitative questions, this study determined that these staff were able to identify the key personal and interpersonal capabilities required to provide effective leadership. The rankings for individual capabilities and their respective categories of capability (tables 23-24) are consistent with the findings of Scott et al. (2008) and Coates et al. (2010). However, when staff at SEP were requested to identify and explain these capabilities in the focus group, a lack of understanding of personal and interpersonal leadership capability was identified. During the focus group, SEP staff were requested to comment on any additional personal capabilities, and then asked to identify additional interpersonal capabilities. It was apparent from participants' responses that they did not have a clear understanding of, or were unable to broadly define, either personal or interpersonal leadership capabilities. In responding to the personal capability question, participants identified 15 capabilities. However, only five of these could be classed as personal capabilities; the others were classified as interpersonal capabilities. When responding to the interpersonal capability question, focus group participants identified six capabilities: three of these were personal capabilities, and three were interpersonal capabilities. This lack of understanding of what a personal capability is, as opposed to an interpersonal capability, indicates most participants in this study lack self-awareness of the personal they require to be an effective leader. For leaders at SEP, a lack of self-awareness about their leadership capabilities was also identified by external interview participants in their observations of leaders at SEP. In addition, it was identified by the high number of personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities the external interview participants identified as required of mixed

sector provider leaders to build and support innovation and entrepreneurship, as compared to the number of capabilities identified by the SEP participants in this study (Figure 9). One external interview participant contended that staff in leadership roles at mixed sector providers relied on the organisation's hierarchy and bureaucratic culture to define the accepted personal and interpersonal capabilities demonstrated by leaders at mixed sector providers. To build the capabilities of those in leadership roles at SEP will then require developing individual leaders in their personal and interpersonal capability. In addition, the organisation needs to shift its culture to one that supports innovative and entrepreneurial thinking and approaches, not a reliance on the existing bureaucratic mindset described by participants in depicting the dimensions of the contemporary education landscape. The understanding leaders have of leadership capabilities and how they can be deployed effectively is a weakness of leaders in the vocational education sector (Coates et al., 2010). Future leadership programs should focus on building this understanding if they are to build the capability of leaders of mixed sector providers to provide effective leadership of innovation and entrepreneurship.

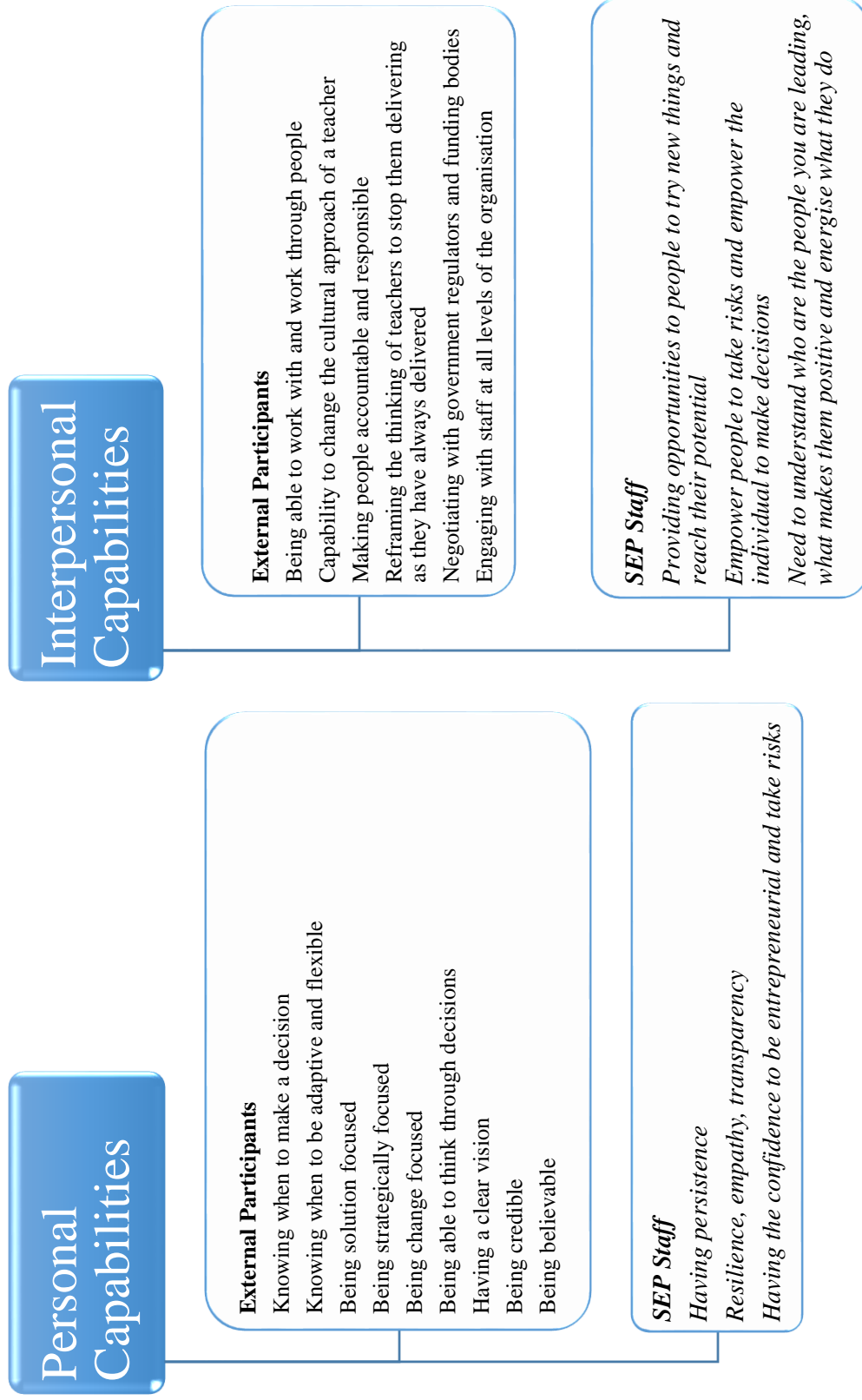


Figure 9. Personal/Interpersonal capabilities to lead innovation and entrepreneurship

### **7.1.3 Innovation and entrepreneurship**

The majority of SEP and external participants selected the same definition of what constitutes an entrepreneurially and innovative mixed sector provider: 60% of participants from both participant groups selected the Kirby (2002) definition of an innovative and entrepreneurial mixed sector provider. While the majority of participants agreed on the definition, the research question posed in this study required exploration of the capability staff in leadership roles have to build innovation and entrepreneurship in a mixed sector provider operating in the contemporary education landscape. In responding to this question, responses reflected that this capability is impacted by the way staff in leadership positions at SEP perceive their role. As noted earlier in this section, the majority of these staff perceive their leadership role as one of either fighting for their team/department, or balancing the competing needs of the organisation. Of those staff whose role was classified under the senior leadership subgroup, only 10% considered their leadership role as that of providing direction to staff. Of the staff whose role was classified in the course leadership subgroup, 17% provided a role analogy that was classified under this category.

A lack of role clarity among the majority of staff in leadership roles was evident, as they considered it was their role as a leader to either balance needs, or fight for their team or department, or they saw their role as loner and not as part of a team. This was highlighted in the responses provided by participants when ranking the importance of a range of factors needed to create innovation and entrepreneurship in a tertiary education provider. Staff from the senior leadership subgroup ranked the commercial factor “delivery of targeted skill sets that are meaningful to employers” as the most important factor to build innovative and entrepreneurial capability. However, participants in the course leadership subgroup selected staff development and resource development as the most important factor. This was identified in earlier research as the most important factor (Guerrero-Cano & Urbano, 2012). To address

this, Guerrero-Cano & Urbano (2012) assert that education providers need to develop frameworks that enable those in leadership roles to understand the key factors needed to build innovative and entrepreneurial culture in a tertiary education provider, and then develop their capability to embed these frameworks at all levels of the organisation.

Mixed sector providers whose leadership does not demonstrate the personal and interpersonal capabilities required to effectively direct and lead their teams/departments will not be able to effectively respond to changes in the contemporary education landscape. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the organisation will be innovative and entrepreneurial until two conditions are met: first, those in leadership roles develop the capability to direct and demonstrate to staff the mission, values, and goals the organisation desires to achieve; and second, staff need to understand their responsibility and accountability in achieving these goals. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to go and recruit people to take up leadership roles. As EP-3 expressed in the interview, working in a leadership role at a mixed sector provider is not seen as a great career option for an up and coming leader. Nor do the salaries offered by mixed sector providers compete with those offered for leadership roles in other industries. To obtain the leadership capability, and build the understanding leaders have of their role, these skills need to be developed within the organisation.

## **7.2 Developing leadership capability**

To develop the leadership capability required by a mixed sector provider for it to be innovative and entrepreneurial, its leadership programs need to be structured to deliver the capabilities the organisation needs in the future, not those capabilities currently required by the organisation. The program may be a combination of accredited and non-accredited training. It should be implemented in a manner that uses desired teaching and learning approaches as identified by the provider, and where possible participants need to be exposed

to organisations that demonstrate the leadership capabilities desired by the mixed sector provider.

To implement a leadership program in a mixed sector provider, it is clear from the findings that it is not simply a case of buying a program or a course, or enrolling staff in a course offered by an education institution. The mixed sector provider must carefully consider a range of aspects, including: governance of the program and those providing the governance; participant selection process; program content, including contextualisation; modes of program delivery; exposure or placement with other organisations; and reward to participants who complete the program. The program structure should model and demonstrate the values, mission, and goals of the organisation. The structure and delivery of the program need to be undertaken in a manner that demonstrates the desired approach to teaching and learning the organisation wishes to achieve, thereby equipping participants with the capability to provide effective leadership in the future, and not just in the present.

In developing program content, there is a need to ensure the mixed sector provider clearly defines the role/s of future leaders, and structures the program to build the personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities that would be required of these future leaders in ten years' time, not the capabilities required to undertake their current roles. This theme of preparing the future leader also comes through in the findings gathered in regard to selecting appropriate participants for leadership programs. It was contended that mixed sector providers need to stop selecting future leaders based only on their past achievements. Instead, providers need to focus their selection on the potential an individual has for future leadership, and then build the capabilities they will need for leading the mixed sector provider of the future, and not only the present.



### **7.3 Strengths of the Study Design**

The study has built on the limited research on leadership in Australia's tertiary sector, specifically the mixed sector provider, a tertiary education provider delivering mostly vocational education and some higher education. The focus of previous research was on either higher education providers (Scott et al., 2008), or vocational education providers (Coates et al., 2010). This study focused on leadership at a mixed sector provider requiring most of those staff in leadership roles to provide leadership for both vocational and higher education programs. The study provides an insight into the function of leadership in a mixed sector provider and adds to the limited body of research on leadership in Australia's tertiary education sector.

Building on prior research undertaken on leadership capability, the data gathered in this study from the staff in leadership roles at SEP was triangulated against qualitative data gathered from the interview participants who had an external perspective on the actions of the SEP staff and the manner in which they perform their role as a leader, along with field observations made by the researcher who holds a leadership role at SEP. The quantitative data gathered in the internal participant questionnaire was triangulated against the data presented in research projects undertaken by Scott et al. (2008) and Coates et al. (2010). The networks developed by the researcher also enabled him to access external interview participants who hold senior leadership positions in their own right, to understand the role of leadership in the tertiary education sector, and to observe/interact with the operations of SEP. This approach enabled the researcher to collect qualitative and quantitative data in parallel at the commencement of the study. The findings from this enabled the researcher to develop and refine the questions posed to the SEP staff who participated in the focus group. As the study was undertaken at one mixed sector provider, the design used in this study may be replicated

at similar education providers to gain a deeper understanding of leadership in a range of tertiary education providers.

#### **7.4 Limitations of this Study**

It is acknowledged that this study has its limitations. Although the study has enabled the researcher to gain a deep insight into leadership at a mixed sector provider, the number of staff in leadership roles at SEP, and the subsequent number of participants who completed the internal questionnaire, limits the statistical validity of some findings generated from the quantitative data. This is particularly so for the quantitative questions posed for the first time in this study about the contemporary education landscape. Replicating this section of the study at other tertiary education providers would assist in validating findings generated in this study in respect to this area. The researcher is also of the opinion that the data gathered from the focus group would have been enhanced had the SEP ethics committee permitted the researcher to conduct the focus group. This is relevant to the relationship between the perception staff have of their leadership role, and the performance of their role as a leader. The data generated from the focus group did not provide the researcher with an additional insight into the analogies provided by the SEP participants. Likewise, the limited response to questions posed in the focus group in respect to explaining leadership capabilities, innovation, and entrepreneurship, did not provide the researcher with the insight hoped to be gained using this data collection method. There are a number of possible reasons as to why this occurred. On reviewing the focus group transcript the facilitator of the focus group could have asked more follow up questions to either clarify the participant's response, or to have the participant expand on their response. This may have been due to the facilitator not having enough knowledge of leadership theory or that they thought the response provided was appropriate. A further reason is there may have been power issues between the participants in the room, as

there were staff from a range of leadership roles across the SEP hierarchy who participated in the focus group.

The role of the researcher as an insider (Greene, M.J., 2014) must also be considered as possible limitation in this case study. This limitation needs to be considered in respect to the key findings identified by the researcher, although the researcher has consciously tried to remove any bias held in respect to opinions held regarding the internal participants understanding of leadership, this bias may still colour the findings of this study. The data gathered from the external participants in interviews conducted by in the study may also be influenced by the existing relationships that the researcher held with the interview participants. This may be due to the researcher not being objective when conducting the interviews or any power differentials perceived by either the interviewer or interviewee. The impact of these limitations need to be tempered by the depth of data gather and analysis of data undertaken due to the researcher working with the organisation that was the location of this study (Guba, 1981).

These limitations should be considered in the design of any future research projects that explore leadership capability and approaches to the leadership of tertiary education providers.

## **7.5 Implications for Practice and Further Research**

This study provided an insight into leadership at a mixed sector provider, and explained the personal and interpersonal leadership capabilities demonstrated by staff in leadership roles at SEP, a mixed sector education provider. It also examined how these participants describe the contemporary education landscape, and the priorities, surprises and challenges of their role as a leader at a mixed sector provider.

The overarching issue played out through the findings were implications of how staff described their leadership roles, which for the majority of participants was either one of balancing the needs of the organisation, or fighting for their work group or department. Based

on these findings, it is asserted by the researcher that leaders at a mixed sector provider who do not see their role as one of directing their staff to achieve the organisation's goals are then unable to effectively communicate these goals to their staff, explain to staff their responsibilities, and subsequently do not hold their staff to account when the goals set are not achieved. These findings indicate that further research should be undertaken into why staff in leadership roles do not describe their role as one of directing or leading, and why their focus is on balancing and fighting on operational issues, or more worryingly, why they do not feel part of an organisation's leadership group (as indicated by the choice of analogy that convey being alone or isolated). This research should focus on the factors that make them view or describe their leadership role in this manner, and how leaders can build their capabilities to lead their team by directing them, and not being distracted by internal issues.

Further research should focus on staff in leadership roles across all levels of a mixed sector education provider, not only staff in senior leadership roles. Further validation is needed of the suitability of the contemporary education landscape as a tool for understanding how a leader of a tertiary education provider describes the environment in which they work. This validation process should consider the link between describing the contemporary education landscape and the priorities set by a leader at an education provider. As determined in the findings, there is a need to identify the capabilities the next generation of leaders will require to provide effective leadership that responds to the contemporary education landscape, that builds and supports innovation and entrepreneurship.

This study has also played a role in building my own capability as a leader at a tertiary education provider. Specifically, it has made me question how to demonstrate and present to staff the goals and mission of the organisation in the context of the role that each staff member undertakes, what their responsibility is in achieving the organisation's goals, and how they

will be made accountable. Above all, this needs to be done in an environment that allows and supports staff to be innovative and entrepreneurial.

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## APPENDICES





## **Appendix A**

### Ethics Approval



11 June 2015

**APPROVED - Project number 15-62**

Mr Ross Digby  
Faculty of Education, Science, Technology & Maths  
University of Canberra  
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Ross,

The Human Research Ethics Committee has considered your application to conduct research with human subjects for the project titled **Entrepreneurial leadership in a contemporary mixed sector education provider**.

**Approval is granted until 30 June 2016.**

The following general conditions apply to your approval.

These requirements are determined by University policy and the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2007).

<b>Monitoring:</b>	You must, in conjunction with your supervisor, assist the Committee to monitor the conduct of approved research by completing and promptly returning project review forms, which will be sent to you at the end of your project and, in the case of extended research, at least annually during the approval period.
<b>Discontinuation of research:</b>	You must, in conjunction with your supervisor, inform the Committee, giving reasons, if the research is not conducted or is discontinued before the expected date of completion.
<b>Extension of approval:</b>	If your project will not be complete by the expiry date stated above, you must apply in writing for extension of approval. Application should be made before current approval expires; should specify a new completion date; should include reasons for your request.
<b>Retention and storage of data:</b>	University policy states that all research data must be stored securely, on University premises, for a minimum of five years. You must ensure that all records are transferred to the University when the project is complete.
<b>Contact details and notification of changes:</b>	All email contact should use the UC email address. You should advise the Committee of any change of address during or soon after the approval period including, if appropriate, email address(es).

Yours sincerely  
Human Research Ethics Committee



**Hendryk Flaegel**  
Research Ethics & Compliance Officer  
Research Services Office  
T (02) [REDACTED] F (02) [REDACTED]  
E [REDACTED]

[www.canberra.edu.au](http://www.canberra.edu.au)

Postal Address:  
University of Canberra ACT 2601 Australia  
Location:  
University Drive Bruce ACT

Australian Government Higher Education Register  
Provider Number 108 0291 0001/04



## **Appendix B**

Informed consent: External Participants





UNIVERSITY OF  
CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA'S CAPITAL UNIVERSITY

26 January 2016

## Participant Information Form – External Interview Participants

### Project Title

Entrepreneurial leadership in a contemporary mixed sector education provider

### Researcher

Ross Digby

Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Education, Science, Technology & Maths (ESTeM),

University of Canberra, ACT 2601

Phone: (03) [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

### Supervisors

Dr. Misty M. Kirby, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, Science, Technology & Maths (ESTeM),

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Ph: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Dr. Mike Gaffney,

Professor of Education (Tertiary), Faculty of Education, Science, Technology & Maths

(ESTeM), University of Canberra, ACT 2601

Ph: [REDACTED]

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Ross Digby,  
Doctoral Candidate  
Faculty of Education, Science, Technology & Maths  
[REDACTED]  
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University of Canberra ACT 2601 Australia  
Location:  
University Drive Bruce ACT  
Postcode 2601  
Phone: (06) 2913 4100



### Project Aim

The aim of this study is to examine the existing management and leadership capability at Holmesglen Institute in order to identify the leadership capabilities required that will enable it to effectively:

- Meet the bureaucratic requirements of key government stakeholders in the mixed sector organisation;
- Develop an environment that supports an entrepreneurial culture within the mixed sector organization;
- Identify disruptive innovation and develop strategies to deal with it and use it to create advantage in the market.

### Benefits of the Project

Through the identification of the leadership capabilities that will be required by a contemporary mixed sector education provider to deal with the challenges of a contemporary mixed sector provider in becoming entrepreneurially focused, effectively counter the impact of disruptive innovation, and respond appropriately to government bureaucracy. These providers will be better placed to:

Identify appropriate leadership and management development activities to undertake to develop the leadership capabilities required in a contemporary mixed sector education provider;

Develop appropriate selection criteria when employing future leaders and managers to ensure they have the leadership capabilities required in a contemporary mixed sector education provider;

Provide clarity to the role that leaders and managers in a contemporary mixed sector education provider have in directing an entrepreneurially focused organisation that fosters innovation and can develop and implement strategies to effectively counter the impact of disruptive innovation

### **General Outline of the Project**

The tertiary education sector in Australia is undergoing significant change from the impact of change in government policy at the state and federal levels, and the impact of powerful and easily accessible information technology devices. These changes have affected the structure of the tertiary education market and the ways people can access knowledge and skill development. Coupled with disruptive change created by entrepreneurs in both existing and new education providers developing "new education products" mixed sector providers need to gain an entrepreneurial focus. This focus will be gained through organisations having the leadership capability to deliver change and respond to the demand driven tertiary education market.

This study will examine the leadership capabilities required to provide effective leadership to a contemporary mixed sector higher education provider and to identify and effectively counter changes in government policy and disruptive innovation.

### **Participant Involvement**

Participation will entail you completing a preliminary questionnaire and then being interviewed in person or via Skype, which may take up to 45 minutes. Afterwards, we will send you a summary of the interview in order for you to review and add any additional information (if you so choose). Member checking should take about another 30 minutes. A subsequent interview may be undertaken in order to gain clarification on any points raised in the interview and to gain an insight from you in regard to summary data gathered from the questionnaire and focus group undertaken by leaders and managers at Holmesglen.

Participation in this study will result in no more risk of harm than one would experience in everyday life. The researcher will protect the identities of participants and their institutions by referring to them as "a tertiary education leader". All data will be stored in a secure location during the study, and will be destroyed after the study's results have been shared through publication and/or presentation.

#### **Confidentiality**

Only the researchers will have access to information provided by participants. Privacy and confidentiality will be assured at all times.

#### **Anonymity**

Responses to surveys are anonymous.

#### **Data Storage**

The information collected will be stored for at least five (5) years on password-protected University of Canberra computers in a secure premises. The data will then be destroyed after this period.

#### **Ethics Committee Clearance**

The Human Research Ethics Committee has considered the application to conduct research with human subjects for the project titled **Entrepreneurial leadership in a contemporary mixed sector education provider** and approval is granted (Project number 15-02).

#### **Queries and Concerns**

Queries or concerns regarding the research can be directed to the Principal Investigator, Ross Digby, whose contact details are at the top of this form, or to Mr Hendryk Flaegel, Research Ethics & Compliance Officer, (02) [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

## Consent Form – External Interview Participants

### Project Title

Entrepreneurial leadership in a contemporary mixed sector education provider

### Consent Statement

I have read and understood the information about the research. I am not aware of any condition that would prevent my participation, and I agree to participate in this project. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my participation in the research. All questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

Please indicate your agreement to participate by signing below:

Name.....

Signature.....

Date .....

A summary of the research can be forwarded to you when completed. If you would like to receive a copy of the research, please include your email address below.

Name.....

Email Address.....



## **Appendix C**

### **Informed Consent: SEP Participants**



11 October 2015

## Participant Information Form – Internal Participants

### Project Title

Entrepreneurial leadership in a contemporary mixed sector education provider

### Researcher

Ross Digby

Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Education, Science, Technology & Maths (ESTeM),

University of Canberra, ACT 2601

Phone: (03) [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

### Supervisors

Dr. Mstly M. Kirby, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, Science, Technology & Maths (ESTeM),

University of Canberra, ACT 2601

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Dr. Mike Gaffney,

Professor of Education (Tertiary), Faculty of Education, Science, Technology & Maths

(ESTeM), University of Canberra, ACT 2601

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### Project Aim

The aim of this study is to examine the existing management and leadership capability at Holmesglen Institute in order to identify the leadership capabilities required that will enable it to effectively:

- Meet the bureaucratic requirements of key government stakeholders in the mixed sector organisation;
- Develop an environment that supports an entrepreneurial culture within the mixed sector organization;
- Identify disruptive innovation and develop strategies to deal with it and use it to create advantage in the market.

### Benefits of the Project

Through the identification of the leadership capabilities that will be required by a contemporary mixed sector education provider to deal with the challenges of a contemporary mixed sector provider in becoming entrepreneurially focused, effectively counter the impact of disruptive innovation, and respond appropriately to government bureaucracy. These providers will be better placed to:

Identify appropriate leadership and management development activities to undertake to develop the leadership capabilities required in a contemporary mixed sector education provider;

Develop appropriate selection criteria when employing future leaders and managers to ensure they have the leadership capabilities required in a contemporary mixed sector education provider;

Provide clarity to the role that leaders and managers in a contemporary mixed sector education provider have in directing an entrepreneurially focused organisation that fosters innovation and can develop and implement strategies to effectively counter the impact of disruptive innovation

### **General Outline of the Project**

The tertiary education sector in Australia is undergoing significant change from the impact of change in government policy at the state and federal levels, and the impact of powerful and easily accessible information technology devices. These changes have affected the structure of the tertiary education market and the ways people can access knowledge and skill development. Coupled with disruptive change created by entrepreneurs in both existing and new education providers developing "new education products" mixed sector providers need to gain an entrepreneurial focus. This focus will be gained through organisations having the leadership capability to deliver change and respond to the demand driven tertiary education market.

This study will examine the leadership capabilities required to provide effective leadership to a contemporary mixed sector higher education provider and to identify and effectively counter changes in government policy and disruptive innovation.

### **Participant Involvement**

Participation will entail leaders and managers at Holmesglen Institute taking one survey two separate times during the year: one prior to the delivery of the leadership development program and the other after the delivery of the leadership development program. Participants will also be invited to attend a focus group following leadership development program, of those who express an interest to attend, eight participants will be randomly selected

### **Confidentiality**

Only the researcher will have access to information provided by participants. Privacy and confidentiality will be assured at all times.

### **Anonymity**

Responses to surveys are anonymous.

### Data Storage

The information collected will be stored for at least five (5) years on password-protected University of Canberra computers in a secure premises. The data will then be destroyed after this period.

### Ethics Committee Clearance

The Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Canberra has considered the application to conduct research with human subjects for the project titled **Entrepreneurial leadership in a contemporary mixed sector education provider** and is approved (Project number 15-62). This questionnaire and the focus group have also been approved by the Holmesglen Ethics Review Panel (Project Number 016/2012).

### Queries and Concerns

Queries or concerns regarding the research can be directed to the researcher, Misty Kirby, whose contact details are at the top of this form, or to Mr Hendryk Flaegel, Research Ethics & Compliance Officer, [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]



### Consent Form — Internal Participants

#### Project Title

Entrepreneurial leadership in a contemporary mixed sector education provider

#### Consent Statement

I have read and understood the information about the research. I am not aware of any condition that would prevent my participation, and I agree to participate in this project. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my participation in the research. All questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

Please indicate whether you agree to participate in each of the following parts of the research (please indicate which parts you agree to by putting a cross in the relevant box):

- Be available to take one survey two times during the year: one prior to the leadership development program and one following the leadership development program
- Be available to participate in a focus group following the leadership development program

Name.....

Signature.....

Date .....

A summary of the research can be forwarded to you when completed. If you would like to receive a copy of the research, please include your email address below.

Name.....

Email.....



## **Appendix D**

### SEP Participant Questionnaire



## Internal Participant Survey

### Introduction

This survey aims to:

- Gain an understanding of the contemporary education landscape
- Identify the required leadership capabilities in a contemporary mixed sector provider;
- Key factors required to develop innovative capacity in the organisation;
- Identify the definition of a contemporary mixed sector provider;
- Rank the facilitators to, barriers against, and success criteria of an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider;

The findings of this survey will help to gain a greater understanding of the issues facing leaders and managers in a contemporary mixed sector education provider (SEP) working in a dynamic landscape and managing the impacts of disruptive innovation. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. This survey has been made available to all leaders, managers and other influencers working at SEP. The results of this survey will be used in a doctoral thesis being undertaken by Ross Digby.

Once the preliminary findings of this survey have been developed, we will be inviting all participants to a professional development program with a focus on leadership in the entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider. No individual who completes this survey will be identified in any analysis or papers resulting from this survey.



### *Your Background*

---

Your Gender	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your Age	Under 36	<input type="checkbox"/>	56 – 65	<input type="checkbox"/>
	36 – 45	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 65	<input type="checkbox"/>
	46 - 55	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Your Position	Executive Director	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dean/Associate Director	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Head of Department	<input type="checkbox"/>	Head of Administrative Department	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Course Coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher/Instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Administrative Officer	<input type="checkbox"/>		
How many years have you held your current role?				
	Under one year	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 – 3 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
	4 – 6 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	7 – 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>
	More than 10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Currently, how many staff report to you?				
	0 – 5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 – 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11 – 20	<input type="checkbox"/>	21 – 50	<input type="checkbox"/>
	More than 50	<input type="checkbox"/>		

---

## The contemporary education landscape

The table below sets out the key characteristics that define the environment in which the contemporary mixed sector provider operates. In your opinion, at which point for each characteristic does SEP currently operate?

Select a point on each continuum to reflect this

	All	Most	Some	Equally	Some	Most	All	
Funded by state	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Funded by Student
High barriers to entry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Low barriers to entry
Demand exceeds Supply	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Supply exceeds demand
Keeper of Knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Facilitator of knowledge
Fees set by regulator	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Fees set by market
Government as intervener	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Government as facilitator
High establishment cost	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Low establishment costs
Low product differentiation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High product differentiation
Stable technology platform	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Dynamic technology platform
Shaping technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Shaped by technology
Strategy set by government	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strategy set by board
Bureaucratic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Entrepreneurial

*Major Areas of Focus in Your Current Role*

<i>Items</i>	<i>Importance of this area to the delivery of my portfolio</i>				
	<i>Low</i>		<i>Medium</i>		<i>High</i>
<i>Managing relationships with senior staff</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Developing policy, procedure, business rules</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Your own professional development</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Managing and Reviewing the professional development and performance of staff</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Marketing &amp; promotion activities for courses</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Preparing reports for senior managers</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Setting, Monitoring &amp; Evaluating performance against budget and program profile</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Preparing for internal &amp; external audits &amp; reviews</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Evaluating &amp; reviewing teaching activities</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>General administration</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Dealing with complaints from staff &amp; students</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Strategic planning activities</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Identifying new business opportunities &amp; course development</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Networking with industry &amp; other education providers</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Other (please specify)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*The influences shaping your role*

Please rate the level of impact that each of the following has on your daily work

<i>Items</i>	<i>Impact on my daily work</i>				
	<i>Low</i>		<i>Medium</i>		<i>High</i>
<i>Changes to government funding</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Growing local competition</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Increased student grievances &amp; student attrition</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Greater government reporting and scrutiny</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Rapid changes in technology</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Pressure to generate new income</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Declining status of vocational education</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Pressure to achieve enrolment &amp; financial targets</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Increased student diversity</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Risk of litigation</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Attracting and retaining high quality staff</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Increasing responsibility to external groups and agencies</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Increasing dependence on business and industry</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Pressure to undertake continuous change</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Maintaining a specific institutional image</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Handling unexpected events</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Balancing work/life/family</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Dealing with the Institutes culture</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Managing difficult staff</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Understanding/Clarifying and implementing strategic directions</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Cumbersome administrative processes</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Lack of clear business rules</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Impact of quality assurance processes</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Other (please specify)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What analogy best describes what it is like to be in your current leadership role?

Being a leader in my area of SEP is like.....

--

What has surprised you about working in your current role?

--

Key challenges in your role

Briefly, what are the three most challenging aspects of your current role?

1	
2	
3	

## Leadership: Personal Capabilities

How important do you believe that each of the following PERSONAL CAPABILITIES is for effective performance in your role?

<i>ITEMS</i>	<i>Importance for effective performance</i>				
	<i>Low</i>		<i>Medium</i>		<i>High</i>
<i>Admitting to and learning from my errors</i>					
<i>Understanding my personal strengths and limitations</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Having the confidence to take calculated risks</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Remaining calm under pressure when things take an unexpected turn</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Deferring judgment and not jumping in too quickly to resolve a problem</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Having energy, passion and enthusiasm for education and training</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Preserving when things are not working out as anticipated</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Wanting to achieve the best possible outcome for the institute</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Taking responsibility for program activities and outcomes</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Taking responsibility for financial performance of cost centres</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Being willing to take a hard decision</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Pitching in and undertaking menial tasks when needed</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Maintaining a good work/life balance and keeping things in perspective</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Bouncing back from adversity</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Being true to one's personal values and ethics</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Other (please specify)</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Leadership: Interpersonal capabilities

How important do you believe each of the following INTERPERSONAL CAPABILITIES is for effective performance in your current role?

Items	Importance for effective performance				
	<i>Low</i>		<i>Medium</i>		<i>High</i>
<i>Empathizing and working productively with staff and other key players from a wide range of backgrounds</i>					
<i>Influencing people's behaviour and decisions in effective ways</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Empathizing and working productively with students from a wide range of backgrounds</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Listening to different points of view before coming to a decision</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Developing and using networks of colleagues to solve key workplace problems</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Understanding how the different groups that make up our Institute operate and influence different situations</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Working with very senior people in and beyond our Institute without being intimidated</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Giving and receiving constructive feedback to/from work colleagues and others</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Motivating others to achieve positive outcomes</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Developing and contributing positively to team-based programs</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Working constructively with people who are 'resistors' or are overly enthusiastic</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Being Transparent and honest in dealing with others</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>(Other) please specify</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How important do you believe each of the following factors are in creating innovation for the organisation?

<i>ITEMS</i>	<i>Importance for creating innovation</i>				
	<i>Low</i>		<i>Medium</i>		<i>High</i>
<i>Better Student Amenities</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Delivery of targeted skill sets that are meaningful to employers</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Delivery of targeted skill sets that are portable</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Enhanced technology in teaching</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Improved Learning Spaces</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Staff Development &amp; Resource Development</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>State of the art equipment for use by students</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<i>Tailored Support for Individual Learners</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*Overall, what do you believe to be are the MOST important resources required to support innovation in your organisation?*

*Overall, what do you believe to be are the MOST important processes required to support innovation in your organisation?*

*Overall, what do you believe to be are the MOST important organisational values required to support innovation in your organisation?*



## The Entrepreneurial Mixed Sector Education Provider

Which of the following definitions best describes your view on an entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider? Please place x in the box next to the definition you most agree with:

<input type="checkbox"/>	1, The entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider involves “the creation of new business ventures by university teachers/trainers, technicians, or students.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	2, “An entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider, on its own, seeks out to innovate in how it goes to business. It seeks to work out a substantial shift in organizational culture so as to arrive at a more promising posture for the future. Entrepreneurial mixed sector education providers seek to become ‘stand-up’ universities that are significant actors in their own terms.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	3, An entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider can mean three things: the provider itself , as an organisation becomes entrepreneurial; the members of the institute-faculty, students, employees – are turning themselves somehow into entrepreneurs: and the interaction of the institute with the environment, the ‘structural coupling’ between institute and region, follows an entrepreneurial pattern.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	4, The entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider is characterized by closer institute-business partnerships, by greater faculty responsibility for accessing external sources of funding, and by a managerial ethos in governance, leadership and planning.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	5, “As at the heart of any entrepreneurial culture, entrepreneurial mixed sector education providers have the ability to innovate, recognize and create opportunities, work in teams, take risks and respond to challenges.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	6, “Is nothing more than a seller of services in the knowledge industry.”

What, in your view, is required to make your organisation more entrepreneurial?

Rank from 1 (most required) to 13 (least required)

<b>Facilitators</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<i>Appropriate reward system</i>	
<i>Business Incubators</i>	
<i>Clear business rules</i>	
<i>Entrepreneurial role models</i>	
<i>Entrepreneurship courses for students/staff</i>	
<i>Favourable staff attitudes toward entrepreneurship</i>	
<i>Favourable student attitudes toward entrepreneurship</i>	
<i>Flexible organisational structure</i>	
<i>Links with Industry</i>	
<i>Minimal regulation for the creation of new ventures</i>	
<i>Seed funding</i>	
<i>Support for technology transfer</i>	
<i>Support measures for start ups</i>	

What, in your view, are the barriers to your organisation being entrepreneurial?

Rank from 1 (most significant barrier) to 13 (least significant barrier)

<b>Barriers</b>	<b>Rank</b>
<i>Clash with teaching objectives</i>	
<i>Government funding/dependence of government funding</i>	
<i>Government regulation</i>	
<i>Inadequate cultural values</i>	
<i>Inadequate links with industry</i>	
<i>Inappropriate reward system</i>	
<i>Lack of experience</i>	
<i>Lack of funding</i>	
<i>Lack of physical resources</i>	
<i>Not a primary function of the organisation</i>	
<i>Not in concordance with Institute objectives</i>	
<i>Organisational structure and governance</i>	
<i>Traditional ways of teaching and training</i>	

Success Criteria for entrepreneurial Institutes

What in your view are the key success criteria on which an entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider can be judged?

Rank from 1 (most important) to 17 (least important)

<b><i>Success Criteria</i></b>	<b><i>Rank</i></b>
<i>Generate entrepreneurs</i>	
<i>Graduates gain employment on graduation</i>	
<i>Promote an entrepreneurial culture</i>	
<i>Minimal regulations for new ventures</i>	
<i>Support for technology transfer</i>	
<i>Support for start-ups</i>	
<i>Not economic support for business creation</i>	
<i>Entrepreneurship courses for students</i>	
<i>Entrepreneurship courses for staff</i>	
<i>Entrepreneurial teaching &amp; training methodologies</i>	
<i>Favourable staff attitudes toward entrepreneurship</i>	
<i>Appropriate reward systems</i>	
<i>Entrepreneurial role models</i>	
<i>Flexible organisational structure</i>	
<i>No dependence on government funding</i>	
<i>Efficient business rules and policies</i>	
<i>Good links with industry</i>	

Thank you for completing the questionnaire

## **Appendix E**

### SEP Focus Group Questions



## **Focus Group Questions**

1. What are your understandings of the notions of “innovation” and “entrepreneurship” in educational contexts?
  
2. Based on your experience at SEP, is SEP an entrepreneurial and innovative mixed sector education provider? What does SEP do well to be innovative and entrepreneurial? What does it not do well when trying to be innovative and entrepreneurial?
  
3. How do you define leadership capability?
  
4. What leadership capabilities are required by SEP staff to effectively deal with change?
  
5. What personal capabilities are required by at SEP required in order to be effective in their role?
  
6. What interpersonal capabilities are required by leaders and managers at SEP to be effective in their roles?
  
7. Does SEP have the ‘right mix’ of leadership capabilities among its staff to be innovative and entrepreneurial? If not, what is missing?



## **Appendix F**

External participant questionnaire and interview questions





## **External Participant Pre-Interview Questionnaire & Interview Questions**

### Introduction

The data collection process being utilized in this research project will be used to gather data on:

- the contemporary vocational & higher education landscape;
- the required leadership capabilities in a contemporary mixed sector provider;
- key factors required to develop innovative capacity in the organisation;
- the definition of a contemporary entrepreneurial mixed sector provider;
- the facilitators and, barriers to, and success criteria of, an entrepreneurial mixed sector provider;

The findings from this research project will help to gain a greater understanding of the issues facing leaders and managers in a contemporary mixed sector education provider (SEP) working in a dynamic landscape and managing the impact of disruptive innovation. You have been selected to be interviewed based on your understanding of the vocational and higher education landscape and your knowledge and understanding of SEP. Your participation in the questionnaire and interview is voluntary, and you may withdraw your data from the research project, should you decide, prior to the publishing of the research findings. The results of the questionnaire and interview will be used in a doctoral thesis being undertaken by Ross Digby.

You may be requested to provide further input and comment on the data gathered from leaders & managers at SEP who will be completing an internal questionnaire and participating in a focus group in order to establish their understanding of the topics listed above. No individual who completes this survey will be identified in any analysis or papers resulting from the data collection process.

## Pre-Interview Questionnaire

The contemporary education landscape

The table below sets out the key characteristics that define the environment in which the contemporary mixed sector provider operates. In your opinion at which point for each characteristic does your organisation currently operate?

Select a point on each continuum to reflect this

	All	Most	Some	Equally	Some	Most	All	
Funded by state	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Funded by Student
High barriers to entry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Low barriers to entry
Demand exceeds Supply	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Supply exceeds demand
Keeper of Knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Facilitator of knowledge
Fees set by regulator	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Fees set by market
Government as intervener	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Government as facilitator
High establishment cost	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Low establishment costs
Low product differentiation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High product differentiation
Stable technology platform	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Dynamic technology platform
Shaping technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Shaped by technology
Strategy set by government	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strategy set by board
Bureaucratic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Entrepreneurial

## The Entrepreneurial Mixed Sector Education Provider

Which of the following definitions best describes your view on an entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider? Please place x in the box next to the definition you most agree with:

<input type="checkbox"/>	1, The entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider involves “the creation of new business ventures by university teachers/trainers, technicians, or students.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	2, “An entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider, on its own, seeks out to innovate in how it goes to business. It seeks to work out a substantial shift in organisational culture so as to arrive at a more promising posture for the future. Entrepreneurial mixed sector education providers seek to become ‘stand-up’ universities that are significant actors in their own terms.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	3, An entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider can mean three things: the provider itself, as an organisation becomes entrepreneurial; the members of the institute-faculty, students, employees – are turning themselves somehow into entrepreneurs: and the interaction of the institute with the environment, the ‘structural coupling’ between institute and region, follows entrepreneurial pattern.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	4, The entrepreneurial mixed sector education provider is characterized by closer institute-business partnerships, by greater faculty responsibility for accessing external sources of funding, and by a managerial ethos in governance, leadership and planning.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	5, “As at the heart of any entrepreneurial culture, entrepreneurial mixed sector education providers have the ability to innovate, recognize and create opportunities, work in teams, take risks and respond to challenges.”
<input type="checkbox"/>	6, “Is nothing more than a seller of services in the knowledge industry.”

## **Interview Questions**

### *Your Background*

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Please provide a brief background as to your experience in the vocational and higher education sector

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### *External Interview Questions*

1. What contributes to good leadership in a contemporary mixed sector provider?
2. What can we do differently and/or better in preparing people for leadership roles and the work of leadership in a contemporary mixed sector provider?
3. What do you think are the key challenges facing a mixed sector provider?
4. What are the 3 key issues facing leaders & managers in a mixed sector provider?
5. What is the key step to be undertaken to develop the leadership capability of future leaders in a contemporary mixed sector provider?
6. What do you believe to be the **most** effective methods for developing the capabilities of leaders in a contemporary mixed sector provider?
7. What do you believe to be the **least** effective methods for developing the capabilities of leaders in a contemporary mixed sector provider?
8. Do contemporary mixed sector providers have the right resources to innovate, and specifically does SEP have the right resources to innovate?
9. What are the most important resources do they require to be innovative?
10. Do contemporary mixed sector providers have the right processes to innovate, and specifically does SEP have the right processes to innovate?
11. What processes do they require to be innovative?
12. Do contemporary mixed sector providers have the right organisational Values to innovate, and specifically does SEP have the organisational Values to innovate?
13. What organisational values do they require to be innovative?
14. Do contemporary mixed sector providers have the right organisational Structure to innovate, and specifically does SEP have the organisational Structure to innovate?
15. What is the Organisational Structure they require to be innovative?



## **Appendix G**

### Descriptive Statistics





Table 18

*Total Sample Demographic: All SEP Staff in Leadership Roles*

Variable	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	29	50
Female	29	50
Skipped Question	7	
Total	65	100
Age		
Under 36	4	6.9
36 – 45	8	13.8
46-55	28	48.3
Over 55	18	31
Skipped Question	7	
Total	65	100
Position		
Executive/Dean/Associate Director	3	5.2
Head of Dept./Head of Administrative Dept.	24	41.4
Course leader/Program Coordinator	22	37.9
Teacher Instructor	2	3.4
Administrative officer	1	1.7
Not Stated	6	10.3
Skipped Question	7	
Total	65	100
Time in Current Role		
Less than 12 months	7	12.1
1-3 years	18	31
4-6 years	13	22.4
7-10 years	16	27.6
More than 10 years	4	6.9
Skipped Question	7	
Total	65	100
How many staff report to you		
None to 5	20	34.5
6 to 10	11	19.0
11 to 20	9	15.5
21 to 50	13	22.4
More than 50	5	8.6
Skipped question	7	
Total	65	100

Table 19

*Total Sample Demographic: Senior and Departmental Leadership Subgroup*

Variable		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	14	51.8
	Female	13	48.2
	Skipped Question	0	
	Total	27	100
Age	Under 36	0	0
	36 – 45	4	14.8
	46-55	12	44.4
	Over 55	11	40.8
	Skipped Question	0	
	Total	27	100
Position	Executive/Dean/Associate Director	3	11.1
	Head of Dept./Head of Administrative Dept.	24	88.9
	Course leader/Program Coordinator	0	0
	Teacher Instructor	0	0
	Administrative officer	0	0
	Not Stated	0	0
	Skipped Question	0	
	Total	27	100
Time in Current Role	Less than 12 months	3	11.2
	1-3 years	5	18.5
	4-6 years	8	29.6
	7-10 years	9	33.3
	More than 10 years	2	7.4
	Skipped Question	0	
	Total	27	100
How many staff report to you	None to 5	8	29.6
	6 to 10	3	11.1
	11 to 20	1	3.7
	21 to 50	10	37
	More than 50	5	18.6
	Skipped Question	0	
	Total	27	100

Table 20

*Total Sample Demographic: Course Leadership Subgroup*

Variable		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	16	51.6
	Female	15	48.4
	Skipped Question	0	
	Total	31	100
Age	Under 36	4	12.9
	36 – 45	4	12.9
	46-55	16	51.6
	Over 55	7	22.6
	Skipped Question	0	
	Total	31	100
Position	Executive/Dean/Associate Director	0	0
	Head of Dept./Head of Administrative Dept.	0	0
	Course leader/Program Coordinator	22	71.0
	Teacher Instructor	2	6.5
	Administrative officer	1	3.2
	Not Stated	6	19.3
	Skipped Question	0	
	Total	31	100
Time in Current Role	Less than 12 months	4	12.9
	1-3 years	13	41.9
	4-6 years	5	16.1
	7-10 years	7	22.6
	More than 10 years	2	6.5
	Total	31	100
How many staff report to you	None to 5	12	38.7
	6 to 10	8	25.8
	11 to 20	8	25.8
	21 to 50	3	9.7
	More than 50	0	0
	Total	31	100

Table 21

*Personal Leadership Capabilities*

Personal Capability	Theme	All Participants (n=42)	Senior & Departmental Leadership (n=21)	Course Leadership (n=21)
<i>Remaining calm under pressure when things take an unexpected turn</i>	1P	4.71 (1)	4.81 (1)	4.60 (2)
<i>Wanting to achieve the best possible outcome for the institute</i>	3P	4.66 (2)	4.67 (2)	4.65 (1)
<i>Being true to one's personal values and ethics</i>	2P	4.56 (3)	4.67 (2)	4.45 (6)
<i>Taking responsibility for program activities and outcomes</i>	3P	4.54 (4)	4.57 (3)	4.50 (3)
<i>Understanding my personal strengths and limitations</i>	1P	4.51 (5)	4.43 (5)	4.60 (2)
<i>Having energy, passion and enthusiasm for education and training</i>	3P	4.49 (6)	4.67 (2)	4.30 (8)
<i>Being willing to take a hard decision</i>	3P	4.49 (6)	4.579 (3)	4.40 (5)
<i>Admitting to and learning from my errors</i>	1P	4.41 (7)	4.33 (7)	4.50 (3)
<i>Bouncing back from adversity</i>	1P	4.39 (8)	4.43 (5)	4.35 (7)
<i>Preserving when things are not working out as anticipated</i>	3P	4.32 (9)	4.43 (5)	4.20 (10)
<i>Pitching in and undertaking menial tasks when needed</i>	3P	4.32 (9)	4.38 (6)	4.25 (9)
<i>Maintaining a good work/life balance and keeping things in perspective</i>	1P	4.32 (9)	4.29 (8)	4.35 (7)
<i>Deferring judgment and not jumping in too quickly to resolve a problem</i>	1P	4.31 (10)	4.15 (9)	4.47 (4)
<i>Having the confidence to take calculated risks</i>	2P	4.28 (11)	4.29 (8)	4.26 (10)
<i>Tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty</i>	2P	4.27 (12)	4.48 (4)	4.05 (11)
<i>Taking responsibility for financial performance of cost centres</i>	3P	4.05 (13)	4.38 (6)	3.70 (12)
<i>Other (please specify)</i>				

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*Pragmatism when required*

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X

Table 22

*Interpersonal Leadership Capabilities*

<i>Interpersonal Capability</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>All Participants (n=41)</i>	<i>Senior &amp; Departmental Leadership (n=21)</i>	<i>Course Leadership (n=20)</i>
<i>Being Transparent and honest in dealing with others</i>	2I	4.76 (1)	4.71 (1)	4.80 (1)
<i>Empathizing and working productively with staff and other key players from a wide range of backgrounds</i>	2I	4.63 (2)	4.52 (4)	4.75 (2)
<i>Motivating others to achieve positive outcomes</i>	1I	4.63 (2)	4.62 (2)	4.65 (3)
<i>Developing and contributing positively to team-based programs</i>	2I	4.46 (3)	4.48 (5)	4.45 (4)
<i>Influencing people's behaviour and decisions in effective ways</i>	1I	4.44 (4)	4.57 (3)	4.30 (6)
<i>Listening to different points of view before coming to a decision</i>	2I	4.37 (5)	4.38 (7)	4.35 (5)
<i>Giving and receiving constructive feedback to/from work colleagues and others</i>	1I	4.37 (5)	4.423 (6)	4.30 (6)
<i>Working constructively with people who are 'resistors' or are overly enthusiastic</i>	1I	4.26 (6)	4.24 (8)	4.26 (7)
<i>Understanding how the different groups that make up our Institute operate and influence different situations</i>	1I	4.07 (7)	4.19 (9)	3.95 (10)
<i>Working with very senior people in and beyond our Institute without being intimidated</i>	1I	4.07 (7)	4.010 (10)	4.05 (9)
<i>Developing and using networks of colleagues to solve key workplace problems</i>	1I	4.049 (8)	4.048 (11)	4.05 (9)
<i>Empathizing and working productively with students from a wide range of backgrounds</i>	2I	3.90 (9)	3.67 (12)	4.15 (8)
<i>(Other) please specify</i>				
<i>Ability to reflect on observations and actions</i>				X