The Recruitment and Selection of
Vice-Chancellors for Australian Universities.

by

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I certify that the thesis entitled: **The Recruitment and Selection of Vice-Chancellors for Australian Universities.**

submitted for the degree of: **Doctor of Philosophy**

is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis in whole or in part has not been accepted for an award, including a higher degree, to any other university or institution.

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Signed… **Signature Redacted by Library** …..Date…………………………..
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ABBREVIATIONS
AVCC  Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee
CAE    College of Advanced Education
CEO    Chief Executive Officer
DETYA  Department of Education, Training & Youth Affairs
DVC    Deputy Vice-Chancellor
HE     Higher Education
JD     Job Description
PD     Position Description
PVC    Pro Vice-Chancellor
VC     Vice-Chancellor
THESIS SUMMARY

This study addresses the gap in our understanding of the processes used to recruit and select Vice-Chancellors for Australian Universities. There are presently 39 recognised Universities in Australia and between them they provide the nation with the academically qualified leaders of the future. As such one would expect that not only would they be the vessels of our knowledge, but also that they would be managed and led in ways that were similar to those in use in the private sector.

The changes that have taken place in the higher education system have meant that additional pressures have been placed upon the senior executive of each University. The transition from a binary system to the current unified system, the advent of the global community, increased technology and new management practices have created the need for University management to adopt recognised management and leadership practices.

The Federal government has moved to reduce the dependence of the system upon recurrent funding and there has been an increase in managerialism within Universities. One outcome has been the need for the Chief Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor) to develop additional management and leadership skills in order to cope with the changes occurring and the rate of change.

In the United States, the selection criteria used to recruit Vice-Chancellors (or University Presidents) have changed to reflect the desire for candidates to have backgrounds in management and leadership. The role of the Vice-Chancellor is critical to the success of educational institutions that are now being managed as autonomous business units responsible for budget, growth, mergers as well as maintaining academic credibility.

A literature review revealed that the work undertaken by David Sloper formed virtually our entire knowledge base of Vice-Chancellors in Australia. Sloper identified
demographic and incumbency patterns, social characteristics, the legal basis for the role and what incumbents actually do. Thus we know quite a deal about the role and incumbents.

However the same literature review showed that while this data existed, it did not extend to the processes that were used within the Higher Education system, to target, identify and select suitable candidates. Clearly there was also no examination as to the effectiveness of such processes or how they could be improved if necessary. Given the importance of Universities in Australia and their role in Higher Education, this lack of knowledge provided the basis for this study and the systematic review of all available data.

The study also identified a paradox in addition to the lack of research on recruitment and selection practices in this unique microcosm. The paradox concerns the fact that many of the successful candidates do not come from a ‘business’ discipline as may be expected for a role considered to be the Chief Executive Officer of the institution.

Yet in Australia, previous research indicated that the ‘rules’ for recruiting Vice-Chancellors have changed little and that traditionally candidates have come from the science disciplines (Sloper, 1994). While this in itself does not indicate that incumbents are lacking in fundamental management and leadership knowledge and expertise, an obvious question arises. Why are Australian Vice-Chancellors not drawn from faculties where this expertise resides or why are they not drawn from the business community?

In order to further examine the processes in place and to a lesser extent the paradox, all available data was collected regarding the roles of Vice-Chancellors, the paths they have taken to the position as well as selection criteria, position outlines, job adverts and related material. This was thoroughly examined and then a brief questionnaire was forwarded to current incumbents and other involved stakeholders. Interviews were conducted to clarify specific issues and case studies prepared accordingly.
Thus this qualitative study thoroughly researches the recruitment and selection practices in use, attempts to determine their effectiveness and addresses the paradox in order to provide a detailed framework that allows these elements to be explained.
Chapter 1

THE CONTEXT OF THE RECRUITMENT OF VICE – CHANCELLORS

1.1 THE PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS RESEARCH.

The Australian Higher Education (HE) system is an essential component of the overall education system in Australia. In 1997, the HE system was comprised of 43 institutions, of which there were 39 Universities. For the same year, the HE system had a total number of 695,000 students (an increase of 67% over the last decade) and a funding base of approximately $750,000,000 (Andrews et al, 1999).

The bulk of these students and the funding base were associated with the 39 Universities spread over 130 campuses and employing over 77,500 full-time and fractional staff. The Universities of the HE system were therefore viewed as the equivalent to major organisations in the private sector. Many of these institutions were multi-campus, operating both domestically and overseas and as Federal funding has been reduced, had to operate in a very competitive and international arena.

Each institution was therefore large and complex and faced with similar issues to comparable organisations in the private sector, particularly in the areas of management and leadership. While a Literature Review yielded an abundance of studies undertaken on the Higher Education system and its components, there was little domestic literature on how the Chief Executives of these institutions were identified and selected. This contrasted strongly with the private sector where much has been written about the importance of Executive Succession and its organizational impact.

The research presented in this study attempts to fill that gap by applying recruitment and selection theory to the role of the Australian Vice-Chancellor. It therefore addresses a critical issue for Universities and the Higher Education system itself as 39 key individuals are responsible for a huge amount of public funding, staff and clients. The recruitment
and selection of these key executives is even more critical given the changing nature of
the environment and the real threat of a further reduction of federal funding, increased
global competitiveness, and the need for HE institutions to act as independent strategic
business units.

In the next three years there will be at least 20 Vice-Chancellors (Appendix D) whose
contracts will expire. While it is understood that some of these may be renewed, a
proportion may need to be filled either internally or externally (Ilting, 1999). The research
presented in this study may be able to form the basis for further research as these
positions are considered. Because these positions are so critical to their organisations and
the HE framework it is imperative that we learn as much about them as possible in order
to ensure the most appropriate processes are used and a close ‘fit’ between incumbent and
institutional requirements, is achieved.

1.2 THE PROBLEM OUTLINED

The 39 Universities in Australia in the 1990’s were subjected to severe funding cuts, were
subjected to market forces and any protection from competition was removed. The
internal structure of many Universities changed as did their operations as many explored
electronic delivery and overseas campuses as a means of achieving a sustainable
competitive advantage. The further threat of change did not abate.

The Higher Education system of traditionally complex academic institutions found itself
being asked to increase areas of funding (other than recurrent funding), to become more
economically self sufficient and to achieve greater internal economies of scale. The role
of Vice-Chancellors had been difficult enough however now they also needed to be the
chief academics, administrators, strategists and fundraisers. Changes were simultaneously
occurring internally and externally and the role of the Vice-Chancellor became more
complex and demanding requiring people with greater political “savvy” and diplomatic
skills.
The role of Vice-Chancellor required people with exceptional skills across all the areas associated with academia as well as the private sector. Vice-Chancellors were now the Chief Executive Officers of their institutions. Sloper (1985, 1986, 1987, 1989, 1994, 1996) investigated the complexity of the role, its legal basis and incumbency and demographic patterns, and concluded that only exceptionally talented people could fill such a complex role.

However, there is no other research evident in Australia that examines the Recruitment and Selection processes that are used to target suitable candidates, match the competencies and strategic intent of the institution with likely candidates and make a suitable selection. This study builds upon the data identified and examined by Sloper and attempts to fill the gaps. The study therefore attempts to answer the following questions:
1. What are the specific current recruitment processes used to target suitable candidates?
2. What are the specific current selection methods used to identify the most suitable candidate?
3. What criteria are used to select candidates and against which they can be benchmarked?
4. What are the key organizational characteristics that influence the processes and outcomes?
5. What are the key individual characteristics of candidates that are valued by selection panels?
6. How effective are these processes and can they be improved?

The above are the key questions that this study seeks to answer. However there are other questions that need to be answered as well, including:
1. Have these processes changed as a response to recent changes within the Higher Education sector and to what extent have they changed?
2. Will new Vice-Chancellors be recruited from non-traditional sources as a consequence of change?
3. Will gender inequities within the ranks of the Vice-Chancellors, be addressed?
It was anticipated that increased pressure to conform to performance criteria set by DETYA and the increased demand on the role of the Vice-Chancellor would necessitate those Universities seeking a new incumbent, to review the role and future of their University as well as the role of the Vice-Chancellor and address these issues. The study also set out to address the apparent paradox that exists for Vice-Chancellors.

1.3 THE PARADOX OUTLINED

The research reported in this study also addresses a paradox. During the 1980’s and 1990’s the Federal Government moved toward increasing the degree of corporatisation within the Australian Higher Education sector. As a consequence of this approach, Universities have had to adopt a wider range of management practices than was previously the case. It might therefore be expected that Australian Universities would appoint their Chief Executive Officers (Vice-Chancellors) from applicants with high levels of skill and expertise in these fields, possibly from a corporate environment and possibly even draw upon a pool of applicants from the private sector.

Yet evidence suggests they do not do this, or only to a small degree. An exception to the above was highlighted in November 1998, when Dr John Hood, the former senior executive of the Fletcher Challenge group of companies, was appointed Vice-Chancellor of Auckland University (Dunbar, 1998). The issue was also highlighted by comments made by Professor Ken McKinnon when he resigned as VC of Wollongong and he publicly stated that VCs were under-prepared for the role and needed formal training for the position (Carruthers, 1994).

Instead, as will be shown in later analyses, Australian universities have recruited applicants for the position of Vice-Chancellor almost exclusively from people whose predominant backgrounds have been as academics in Australian Universities. Further, during the 1990’s over 50% of persons appointed as Vice-Chancellors (VCs) have come from Social Science and Science based disciplines. While a great deal of research has
been undertaken in Australia on the role, function and attributes of Vice-Chancellors in Australia and on the Higher Education system, there has been little research on how VCs are recruited, what the selection criteria are and what practices are in place to ensure the most appropriate candidate is selected.

There is however a wealth of material available on recruitment practices in general and how executives are recruited within the private sector. As the head of a University, the role of the Vice-Chancellor is considered comparable to that of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in the private sector. This allows the recruitment practices of a University in finding a VC to be compared to those used by Industry to find a CEO for an organisation.

The paradox and the problem become entwined when, for example, academic musicians or chemists find themselves in the position of VC. The question then arises; how do these people become VCs? The paradox suggests that to date, selection panels have valued academic criteria extremely highly over other criteria. Such academic criteria could involve research and publication record, appointment as Emeritus Professor and the like. This research also attempts to address this paradox by answering the following three questions:
1. How do such people become VCs?
2. How well prepared/effective do they believe they are?
3. Will such trends continue?

In order to understand this paradox better, it was necessary to discover as much as possible about the role, function and purpose of the VC as well as the relevant environment, namely the University, within the context of the Higher Education (HE) system. Both the problem and the paradox were examined through the research that was undertaken. While the paradox is considered important, it is however secondary to the initial problem as outlined.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
The research methodology employed included undertaking a complete review of literature regarding Recruitment and Selection and more specifically that utilized for the recruitment of Executives and CEOs. However while there was a wealth of material for the private sector, there was less with regard to Australian material concerning the Higher Education sector. There was more material available with regard to the recruitment and selection of College and University Presidents in the US where the most specific research had been undertaken.

The US material, while predominantly descriptive, did yield an insight into the processes used to recruit College Presidents and some of the more common associated trends. The Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (AVCC) did produce Selection and Appointment Procedures (1993) for University academic staff in levels A-E. However, neither the AVCC nor the Federal Government department DETYA provided any guidelines for the recruitment and selection of VCs suggesting that selection panels required flexibility and greater latitude when selecting suitable candidates for this complex role. The absence of such material was considered important as it implied discretion was required by selection panels.

Several valuable studies were located including a report prepared for DETYA entitled *Effective Recruitment, Rules, Practices, Procedures* (ACM, 1994) and *Trends in Staff Selection and Recruitment* (National Institute of Labour Studies Inc, 1997). These provided a relatively recent review of Australian recruitment and selection practices and together with other researched material, provided a theoretical framework. This was then compared to US academic recruitment practices. It was also compared to contemporary private sector recruitment and selection practices where appropriate.

Material analysed by David Sloper provided essential background detail on VCs for the years 1963, 1973, 1983, 1993. However this present study reviewed all known public domain material related to all VCs for the periods: 1960, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000. In order to gain consistency, data was gathered that was similar to that gathered by Sloper, and this gave a consistent overview of relevant pathways used by
incumbents to obtain such positions as well as their backgrounds, previous roles, age and tenure, discipline base and related material.

The data was collected from a variety of sources including

- Who’s Who in Australia (1960-2000)
- The AVCC Senior Staff Lists (1970-2000)
- Commonwealth Universities Yearbook (1960-2000)
- Other bibliographic sources such as Contemporary Australians
- Media releases
- Direct contact with University archivists

The gathering of material from such a variety of sources enabled more relevant data to be assembled, gaps identified, and material to be correlated to ensure consistency. However, a very small number of VCs over the 40-year period had provided minimal details, leaving some gaps despite attempts to gather known public domain material.

The data was analysed, compared to the material presented by Sloper and will be discussed further within the study. Having established a theoretical basis for recruitment and selection theory, and establishing all known material on existing and previous VCs, each University was contacted in order to obtain any further material mainly in the public domain including:

1. Position and Person Specifications
2. Job adverts, selection criteria
3. Applicants details where made public,
4. Process outline, composition of selection panels
5. Academic Senate/Board minutes dealing with the position
6. The strategic plan/intent of each University
7. Set questions asked and related material
This material was requested for the last time a VC was recruited and where possible where the process was being used to find a new VC. The data was then analysed to determine any significant trends and compared to the theoretical framework and what was known about the position and incumbents.

Questionnaires were then designed, a pilot study undertaken and then distributed to VCs, university council members and other stakeholders in order to gather any relevant data, opinions and experiences. These questionnaires also enabled data to be gathered regarding the Paradox and related questions. As a final point of input, a small number of VCs and other senior staff involved in the process, were personally interviewed to clarify the data gathered and to cover other issues. These discussions also formed the basis for two case studies.

The methodology used to obtain this information together with the outcomes are discussed in detail in Chapter 4, along with the case study material that was used to clarify all other data. A number of other methodologies were employed to ensure accuracy and completeness of the data gathered.

This research is important as it reviews a part of society that is critical to the growth and development of the nation and to our country’s contribution to the global community. The 39 Vice-Chancellors throughout Australia are also responsible for the expenditure of a significant amount of government revenue, developing the “leaders and managers of the future” and for maintaining academic standards.

Finally, this study is predominantly based on qualitative research and is in line with the following characteristics outlined by Bogdan and Biklen (1982, page 27):
1. Qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct data source and the researcher as the key instrument.
2. Qualitative research is descriptive. The richness of words and pictures is valued above numerical data.
3. Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products.

4. Qualitative researchers tend to analyse their data inductively.

5. 'Meaning' is of essential concern to the qualitative approach. There is focus upon participant perspectives.

While a great deal of statistical data was gathered throughout the study, its use was to confirm or contest the qualitative data that was identified and analysed. A study concentrating on a topic such as Recruitment and Selection necessarily has as its focus the process employed and how effective this process has been in determining a successful outcome. The process entails a degree of subjectivity as participants are asked to interpret data gained from candidates and make an appropriate decision. Therefore the process needed to be fully understood before any assumptions could be made regarding the input or role of bias.

1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

A DEETYA report indicates quite clearly that Higher Education in Australia consists of much more than Universities. Included in HE are the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS), National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA), Avondale College, Marcus Oldham Farm Management College, Australian Maritime College, Batchelor College and the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA). The Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs report (Table 6, page 22) *Characteristics and Performance of Higher Education Institutions (A Preliminary Investigation)* (Andrews et al 1998).

In order to obtain consistency all 39 institutions have been included within this research. The omission of any institutions from the research would have given a distorted overview of the entire Australian HE system.
The Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (AVCC) consists of Vice-Chancellors from thirty-eight Universities including the private provider, Bond University and the Australian Catholic University (Osborne, AVCC Database Report, 2002). Notre Dame is not currently a member of the AVCC but is included in the data. The Universities included in this study appear in Appendix A. These Universities have been divided into the same categories as used by Sloper: 19th Century, Early 20th Century, Post War Institutions and New Institutions. Due to the advent of the Unified system, the study has an additional category for the Post 1988 institutions. This categorization is useful as it allows comparison between Universities established at different times of Australian HE evolution.

A number of the institutions were either established as Universities initially or have evolved from Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs) such as the University of Ballarat. All are provided with recurrent funding from the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) and were established by legislation in their respective states or by federal legislation in the ACT and Northern Territory.

The content of Legislation governing these Universities is common to each as are the reporting requirements of DETYA. As DETYA is the key funding body, it plays a very strong role in determining structure, roles and responsibilities, use of funds and also therefore in the depth and breadth of courses offered.

The legislation that governs these Universities contains sections that are common to all relevant Acts. Particular sections (see for example the Victoria University Act, 1990, section 23) concern the role and appointment of the Vice-Chancellor. Thus, as the sample institutions have similar requirements, this research can determine how this legislation has been interpreted, in respect of the role of the VC and can compare and contrast the outcomes, in terms of individuals selected as VCs.

Also while the research is focussed on the recruitment of VCs, it has been necessary to develop an understanding of the environmental context of the position. Thus while other
important topics are raised throughout this research as a result of discussion of these issues, they have not been discussed in depth as they were considered tangential to the main focus.

The questionnaires that were distributed were necessarily limited to those stakeholders normally involved in the recruitment and selection process and who were able to give a clear insight into the processes utilised. These included the current incumbents, selection panel members and other stakeholders who have input into the process and the final outcome.

This narrow focus allowed greater in depth data to be distilled, analysed and investigated further. Also the case studies provided another dimension to the research by allowing more insightful discussion to take place. Therefore at each level of inquiry there has been a distillation process that has clarified information, and given the required information for tabulation.

Unfortunately, as already alluded too, a number of VCs were not prepared to provide data for public use and analysis, resulting in a minor distortion of results but not sufficient to mask significant detectable trends.

1.6 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The role of the Vice-Chancellor has been variously described as complex, burdensome and requiring extraordinary skills. Zetlin (1994, page 62) in discussing Sloper’s research, describes the role accordingly:

“The authority of the office is burdensome and departing the office is a cause for celebration. The complexity of the organisation eludes the ‘fit’ of any single model and this complexity imposes upon Vice-Chancellors a multiplicity of functions beyond the expectations of leadership in most organisations. Adding to this complexity, it is characteristic of universities that leadership requires the generation of consent.”
This high degree of complexity appears to be the reason why researchers and legislation fail to adequately define the role of the Vice-Chancellor. In the U.K, Robbins (1963, page 221) commented on this fact and believed that it was fortunate that it was not clearly defined. It could rightly be argued that Robbins was voicing a common opinion, that the role of the VC is too complex to define, and any attempt to do so would be to limit the role.

Instead Robbins goes on to describe some of the key duties associated with the role such as being a key member of the Council and chairman of the main academic councils. The VC is the key contact with external authorities, is central to all policy-making discussions, the central representative with government and administrative bodies as well as the generator of income and opportunities through support for new initiatives.

Similarly in Australia, attempts to define the role of the Vice-Chancellor have resulted in descriptions of tasks and responsibilities. Gallagher (1994, page 80) describes the vice-chancellor as the “CEO of an academic enterprise” and later qualifies this by stating that the role also requires “…enhanced strategic planning and negotiation skills”. While the term ‘academic enterprise’ refers to the modern university “…whose effective administration calls for a special mix of academic legitimacy and corporate management skill” the term ‘CEO ‘appears to be used as if it is self-explanatory.

In Australia in 1991, the Remuneration Tribunal prepared a list of specific functions of the vice-chancellor (Appendix B) that were both broad and general in nature. However this Tribunal did equate the role of the vice-chancellor with that of a CEO. This equivalence has since been enshrined in University legislation where the vice-chancellor is referred to as the CEO or the executive officer.

While this was an attempt to place the role of the VC on a par with senior executives and CEOs in the private sector, the title may be considered equally ambiguous. The Australian Oxford Dictionary (1989, page 1270) defines the term ‘Vice’ as meaning ‘…person
acting or qualified to act in place of, or next in rank to...' The term 'Chancellor' is defined as "...state or law official of various kinds...non-resident head of university...chief minister of the State".

Thus the vice-chancellor is the resident head of a university and the role is an officially sanctioned role. The vice-chancellor also is appropriately qualified as determined by the State and apart from the chancellor is the most senior official within the university. As resident head of the university, the role has embedded in it certain rights, responsibilities and authority. The position is established by legislation and the parameters are determined by individual university Acts.

An example of the position of vice-chancellor being established by legislation, can be seen in section 15 of the University of Western Sydney Act (NSW) 1997 which states:

1. The Board is to appoint a person (whether or not a member of the Board) to be Vice-Chancellor of the University, and is to do so whenever a vacancy in the office of the Vice-Chancellor occurs.

2. The Vice-Chancellor holds office for such period, and on such conditions, as the Board determines.

3. The Vice-Chancellor:
   a. is the chief executive officer of the university and the academic and administrative head of the university, and
   b. is to exercise stewardship of the University on behalf of the Board, and
   c. has such other functions as may be prescribed by the by-laws or determined, subject to the by-laws, by the Board.

4. The Vice-Chancellor may establish committees to assist the Vice-Chancellor in the exercise of his or her functions under this act.

5. The Vice-Chancellor is a member of every committee that is established by the Board, the Vice-Chancellor, a Council or a principal executive officer of a University Member.
(6) The by-laws may provide that the position of Vice-Chancellor is to be referred to by a particular title (instead of or in addition to the title of Vice-Chancellor) and the use of that title has for all purposes the same effect as the use of the title of Vice-Chancellor.

The University of Western Australia Act (WA) 1911, Section 27 refers to the establishment and role of the vice-chancellor as follows:

27. (1) At the first meeting of the Senate held after the passing of this Act or as soon thereafter as may be possible the Senate shall proceed to appoint a Vice-Chancellor, who shall, subject to the statutes, hold office for a period not exceeding 10 years, but who shall be eligible for re-appointment for such further period as the Senate may deem fit.

(2) The Vice-Chancellor shall be the executive officer of the University, and shall possess such powers and perform such duties as may be prescribed by or under this Act.

(3) Subject to the Statutes, regulations and by-laws of the University, the Vice-Chancellor may, by writing under his hand, delegate any function or any power or duty conferred or imposed upon him (except this power of delegation) to any member of the staff of the University or person or persons or committee of persons.

Similar requisites are to be found in the Macquarie University Act (NSW) 1989 where Section 12 states:

12. (1) Whenever a vacancy in the office of Vice-Chancellor occurs, the Council must appoint a person (whether or not a member of the Council) to be Vice-Chancellor of the University.

(2) The Vice-Chancellor holds office for such periods, and on such conditions, as the Council determines.

(3) The Vice-Chancellor is the principal executive officer of the University and has the functions conferred or imposed on the Vice-Chancellor by or under this or any other Act.

A more thorough review of University legislation showed that the above examples are reasonably reflective of clauses throughout all relevant Acts. As can be seen from the above, the depth of the sections varies and typically is dependent upon when the
legislation was last reviewed and updated. Where the Acts were amended in 1997 or thereabouts the Acts refer to the VC as the CEO of the University

According to the Australian Management Dictionary (McLaughlin, 1990, page 21), the term CEO is “The term used to describe the person who has the responsibility for the day-to-day running of an organisation, according to the policies determined by the Board of Directors or similar body. The Chief Executive Officer may actually be called the General Manager, the Managing Director or even the Chairman of the Board.”

A search of the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations Dictionary (ASCO) 1987 showed that the term General Manager is clearly specified in terms of tasks and that the Chief Executive is a specialisation of this classification. According to ASCO (1987, page 8) the general overview of the role states that:
“General Managers develop and review company policy and organise and direct the major functions of an industrial, commercial, governmental or other establishment through subordinate managers.

SKILL LEVEL

The entry requirement for this group is a three-four year degree or diploma and 5-15 years experience in management or related areas.

DUTIES include:

- directing the operations of a company, authority or institution
- determining policy, either independently or by consultation with subordinate managers
- analysing economic, social, technical, legal and other data or trends
- consulting with subordinates and reviewing recommendations and reports
• preparing or arranging the preparation of reports, budgets and forecasts, and presenting them to governing bodies
• representing the organisation in negotiations at conventions, seminars and official occasions, and liaising with other organisations
• selecting or approving the selection of senior staff
• authorising funds to implement policies and programs
• co-ordinating subordinate units and staff, and instituting reporting, audit and control systems

The ASCO material goes into greater depth than the above, however the above does give an insight into the perceived role and tasks of the General Manager and its specialisation, the Chief Executive. In line with the ASCO classification, the University legislation clearly states that the Board or Council decides the tasks of the vice-chancellor together with the scope of the role, the levels of authority and responsibility.

However an idea of the role and scope of the position can be seen in the University of Western Sydney Act (NSW) 1997 where it clearly states that the VC is a member of ALL committees that are established by or involve the University. While the University of Western Australia Act (WA) 1911 just as clearly states that the vice-chancellor may delegate tasks and responsibilities in order to allow the VC to determine priorities. However ultimate responsibility still rests with the vice-chancellor.

The above differs somewhat from the definition by Perkins, of effective institutional governance as cited by Sloper (1989, page 189) as being “The process by which functions, actors and activities are brought together to assure that a society’s needs and goals are well served and the integrity and performance of the university are maintained and advanced”.

Certainly in 1984 the above definition would have been appropriate, however, as will be discussed further in the study, a number of significant changes have occurred within the Australian Higher Education system. As a consequence the role, tasks and functions of
both the vice-chancellor and universities have changed significantly, and so the Perkins definition now seemed to be far too broad and non-specific.

However in line with Sloper (1989), the position of vice-chancellor was found to be based in university legislation. The position while complex and therefore difficult to define can be reduced to a more meaningful form by isolating the individual terms, recombining them and equating them with other known terms such as General Manager. The role involves full responsibility for the day-to-day running of the university and in turn is fully responsible to Council and receives appropriate tasks, responsibility, authority and scope from Council.

1.7 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION THEORY

A review of contemporary management literature reveals a view that the 1990’s have been a time of significant change for all sectors of society. The increase in sophistication of technology, communication and the opening of previously closed economies has seen the birth of the global community. A new competitive landscape is now emerging and according to Hitt, Ireland and Hoskisson (1999, page 10) this means a more ‘perilous business world’.

A global community is supported by a global economy and global competition that transcends traditional regional and national boundaries. For those well placed in such an economy, there are a wealth of opportunities, but for those not well placed there are an increased number of threats. In any event, organisations need to adapt in order to survive and many are trying to achieve greater economies of scale to become more efficient.

Crawford (1991) explained this change as a part of the natural evolutionary process of society and argued that the world was now moving from an industrial base to a knowledge based society. This change, he believes, leads to a paradigm shift in the way we think, work, organise ourselves and also changes what society values. Crawford suggests that we are moving into a society that values knowledge, flexibility and the
ability to engage in continuous change. In this model, he argues that success will be
determined by the ability to acquire, distil and utilise knowledge and react quickly to
change.

This paradigm shift is supported by Michael Porter (1990) who expresses the view that
the hallmarks of change, innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship, are dependent upon
information that is not available to competitors. This information, he asserts provides the
basis for sustainable competitive advantage in the global economy. Senge (1994) also
espoused the value of knowledge but acknowledged that an organisation is a collection of
individuals and argues that organisations of the future will grow and develop only if the
collective allows and encourages individuals to learn, grow and develop.

In the business world, new issues of employee mobility and tenure have been raised along
with cultural diversity as organisations need to cross national and cultural boundaries.
Hofstede (1993) argues that the management of the multicultural organisation will be a
major challenge requiring managers to have a new range of competencies not previously
required. The Australian Government has long embraced the principle of multiculturalism
and this has raised cultural diversity questions even within primarily domestic
organisations.

Change is therefore occurring simultaneously and at various levels throughout society.
This change presents new challenges to organisations, CEOs, managers, employees and to
the educational institutions that strive to keep abreast of these changes and prepare the
managers and leaders of the future. However educational institutions themselves need to
be flexible and relevant in order to meet the changing needs of society.

These changes result in challenges for contemporary organisations to recruit and select
effective managers and leaders who can cope with and lead this change. Recruitment and
Selection practices have become far more widely accepted and practised and are
considered by some researchers to be the major challenge for the future. The terms
‘Recruitment’ and ‘Selection’ are generally considered to be fully interrelated processes
and can also be referred to collectively as ‘Staffing’ or ‘Hiring’. However it is also quite common for the terms to be used as equivalents and interchangeable.

The term, Recruitment has been defined by Wooden and Harding (1997, page 3) as the first stage of a two-part process:

“The first stage, recruitment, is generally defined as the process of searching for and obtaining job candidates in sufficient quantity and of sufficient quality to meet organisational human resource needs”. They also point out that the type of recruitment method and the desired standard jointly determine the nature of the pool of applicants.

The second stage of the process, Selection is therefore defined as follows:

“Selection is the process of gathering, collating and evaluating information about the knowledge, skills and abilities of individual job applicants in order to determine who seems to be best suited, and thus should be hired, for particular positions”.

Wooden and Harding (1997) also note that while the processes are designed to meet the needs of the organisation, it is now common in Australia for the processes to also identify and meet the immediate and long-term needs of the candidates. This, they argue, serves to increase the level of job acceptance, job satisfaction and morale.

It could therefore be asserted that effective recruitment and selection could be deemed to be measured against the ability of the processes employed to produce successful outcomes for both the organisation and the individual. In this instance, the immediate, medium term and long term needs of both the organisation and the successful candidate would have been identified, matched to produce ‘fit’ and these needs met to the best ability of both parties.

Once a vacancy has been identified, the processes associated with Recruitment are:

- Formal strategies are aimed at disseminating information outside the organisation through advertising internally and externally in regional, state, national or
international newspapers, via radio or television adverts, using agencies and consultants including executive Search consultants and other agencies.

- Informal strategies allow the organisation to utilise networking, employee contacts, business acquaintances, friends and relatives in order to communicate the existing or forthcoming vacancy.

- Internal strategies allow the organisation to identify potential candidates via succession plans, individual career maps and advertising the position internally. Many organisations have policies regarding the procedures to be used when vacancies arise at different levels, while there are expectations of Universities to be socially responsible and to ensure employment equity by advertising internally and externally simultaneously.

- External strategies involve identifying potential candidates outside the organisation via advertising, direct contact with candidates and searching established data bases as well as electronic means (Hodes, 1995).

- The actual searching process can also be broken down into two types:
  1. Intensive searching involves gathering information about specific job candidates such as screening tests, psychometric testing and assessment centres.
  2. Extensive searching involves gathering information about pools of candidates.

Compton and Nankervis (1998) list the specific functions of recruitment and Selection practices in Australia as identifying:

- the immediate and strategic direction of the organisation
- external forces operating on the organisation and the role
- the specific and general tasks, responsibilities and level of authority of the position (job Analysis) resulting in selection criteria
- organisational staffing policies, legal requirements, social responsibilities, construction of selection panels, time-frame, compensation and benefits to be offered
- the most appropriate sourcing methodology (external, internal, informal, formal)
- candidates to be shortlisted (extensive and intensive research)
• the most appropriate interview style (according to Compton and Nankervis (1998, page 177) the interview is empirically the most extensively used selection aid)
• the most appropriate type of testing for the position
• means of validating the interview
• appropriate reference checks methods and ways of authenticating candidate data
• matching candidate, position and organisational needs
• how the final decision will be made and by whom, the job offer, creating contracts
• appropriate induction formats,
• methods to evaluate the effectiveness of the process

Research findings similar to those presented by Wooden and Harding (1997) and Compton and Nankervis (1998) were also reported by the Australian Chamber of Manufacturers (1994), Heneman, Judge, Heneman (2000), Gatewood and Field (1998) and Levesque (1996).

Each of these researchers gives similar definitions and similar processes although these do vary slightly. Compton and Nankervis (1998) also include input from the Human Resource Management department (HRM), where one exists, and include areas such as Human Resource planning and Human Resource Strategy. However not all organisations have a human resource department and not all are involved in the recruitment of senior and executive staff, apart from playing an advisory role.
Figure 1: Typical Recruitment and Selection processes.

Source: Adapted from Compton and Nankervis (1998, page 224)
Other terms associated with the processes are defined by Compton and Nankervis (1998) as:

Human Resource Planning aims to ensure that organizational objectives are achieved by obtaining the right quantity and quality of employees at the right time, with an appropriate skills mix. It is therefore interrelated with and supports the corporate strategy devised from the vision and mission statement.

Human Resource Strategies include those activities designed to fully prepare the organisation for recruitment such as job analysis, strategic analysis and alignment of the position, competency profiling, succession planning and the like.

Applications: Large organisations that have a lot of staff turnover, use application forms as a means of gathering data and to initially screen candidates.

Resumes are the second most common ways of gathering specific data about applicants as they set out the qualifications, competencies and experience of interested candidates.

Interviews are the most frequently and extensively used aid to selection. They are a face-to-face meeting between employers and candidates and provide a two-way form of communication between both parties.

Testing such as general ability, specific aptitude, personality profiling and assessment centres provide crucial information about the skills, competencies and aptitudes of job applicants unobtainable from other selection device.

Medical examinations are rarely used as screening tools due to the possibility of discrimination but are usual for the purposes of superannuation, insurance and similar reasons.

Decisions involve making an objective decision as to the suitability of one or more candidates for the position based on objective assessment of candidates against selection criteria.

Appointment: The final component is the formal offer of the position to the candidate, the preparation of contracts, final negotiation over compensation and benefits, arranging commencement dates, induction and training and notifying unsuccessful candidates that
they were not successful. Colleagues within the organisation are also notified of the appointment.

The above provides an overview of the recruitment and selection processes as well as definitions of key terms and it is therefore useful to now list some of the research findings of Wooden and Harding (1997). These researchers surveyed 1448 Australian employers and conducted semi-structured interviews to determine the most common recruitment and selection methods and the results included the following:

- advertising in newspapers is the most common method of recruiting especially with regard to white-collar (management and professional roles) and it is also the most successful method.
- the next most common method was the use of informal networks with 40% of those surveyed using networking to fill vacancies.
- private employment agencies were important when filling white-collar positions.
- occupational patterns indicated that the use of consultants was more frequent for senior positions.
- the choice of recruitment method had a significant bearing on the number of applicants. Newspaper advertising generated large numbers of candidates while informal networking generated fewer but more appropriate candidates.
- the choice of recruitment method was also found to be related to organisational size. Larger organisations tended to use more formal methods than smaller organisations. Smaller organisations tended to place more reliance on informal networks.
- the selection process for filling blue-collar vacancies was found to be less formal and more rapid, and conversely more formal and slower for white-collar positions.
- the most important selection criteria were skills, attitude / motivation, and experience, though the type of the vacancy had a bearing on the weight assigned to the different criteria.
- three-quarters of respondents did not express concerns about recruiting from the long-term unemployed.
most organisations followed a similar approach when selecting potential applicants involving: (i) short-listing (on the basis of written applications and resumes); (ii) formal interviews; (iii) reference checks; and (iv) psychometric and/or skills testing.

- the type of recruitment method used was found to be dependent upon factors such as the volume of recruitment, the extent of networks within the community or industry and the reputation of the employer.

- two common characteristics of successful candidates were: (i) the importance of a high degree of work motivation and commitment; and (ii) the ability to contribute positively to work teams.

- a shift in methodology was noted indicating organisations are opting for the use of highly formalised selection procedures when filling positions, irrespective of what the job involved.

- the costs of recruiting were considered relatively small compared to the total investment being made in individuals and the organisation’s future and generally organisations were not greatly concerned with the direct costs associated with staffing an organisation.

Given the arguments that Australia has experienced significant changes in competition, the need for more highly qualified and competent staff, the above findings of the national survey are not all that surprising. The development of Recruitment and Selection theory explains the use of the processes in order to achieve the desired results. Also given the complexity of the Australian University and the role of the VC it was anticipated that the degree of formalisation of Recruitment and Selection practices, based on appropriate theory, would be extremely high.

However this expectation was severely challenged by Professor Don Aitkin (1994, page 106) who commented that “He or she may have been, if interviewed, asked to say what he or she thought could be done with the institution. But I’ll bet the task was hardly more specifically outlined than that, and some present vice-chancellors were not interviewed at all, at least formally”. Gatewood and Field (1998) put forward a strong argument that the
more formal and thorough processes of recruitment and selection will determine a closer fit between the organisation and the successful candidate.

This stark statement by Professor Aitkin who was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canberra at the time is in direct contrast with the research presented by Wooden and Harding (1997). This is especially so when one considers that the research was undertaken for DEETYA, the body with overall responsibility for Vice-Chancellors and Higher Education. Much of the theoretical framework was developed by academics in academic institutions in order to improve fit between organisations and successful candidates via effective recruitment and selection. This contrast will be explored throughout this study.

1.8 HIGHER EDUCATION AND UNIVERSITIES

Higher Education in Australia really commenced with the birth of Sydney University in 1850 and Melbourne University in 1853. The impetus to create Universities was not borne out of need but rather a desire to recapture the social order and similar institutions in the U.K. However as demand increased so too did the need for additional universities and by the start of World War 2, there were 10 Universities in Australia. Another four institutions were established immediately after the war and between 1964 and 1975 another 9 Universities appeared.

However the period post-1988 saw the greatest increase with another 20 institutions being created largely from former Colleges of Advanced Education bringing us to 39 recognised Universities in 2000. These changes mirror changes in government policies and public demand for access to quality education resulting in the current unified system we have today.

According to DEETYA (1998, page 45) the Higher Education Council (Appendix C) described the purposes of higher education in 1992 as:
• the education of appropriately qualified Australians to enable them to take a
  leadership role in the intellectual, cultural, economic and social development of the
  nation and all its regions;
• the creation and advancement of knowledge; and
• the application of knowledge and discoveries to the betterment of communities in
  Australia and overseas.

The same report also outlines the view of the Vice-Chancellors in 1997 as to the purpose,
distinctive nature and value of universities. Universities:
• discover, preserve, refine and disseminate knowledge;
• have a commitment to free inquiry and to being critics and consciences of society;
• develop intellectual independence in their graduates, together with a set of cognitive
  and social capacities which support active participation of graduates in society;
• have staff whose active engagements in scholarship and research both enriches the
  nation in itself, and ensures that students at both the undergraduate and postgraduate
  level learn from those at the forefront of knowledge, whether rhetorical or applied;
• are committed to making the best possible use of emerging technologies to ensure
  Australia provides high quality education to its domestic and international students
  wherever they are located; and
• meet international standards of teaching, research and scholarship.

While the purpose of higher education was relatively clear it quickly changed in the late
1990’s to include a more competitive approach and an emphasis on institutions within the
higher education system to be more self sufficient and less dependent upon recurrent
funding. This political policy was at first foreshadowed and then imposed upon higher
education and put it in conflict with the student / education focus of the vice-chancellors.

Meek and O’Neil (1990) highlight a section of the Dawkins Green Paper of 1987 where
there is a clear reference to the relationship between economic development and the role
of the higher education sector in providing a more educated and skilled workforce,
allowing Australia's economic performance to be compared to the performance of other OECD nations.

Thus while the Higher Education sector plays a critical role in determining national competence, it is part of a supporting infrastructure that allows economic development and the maintenance of social standards, values and expectations. This necessarily implies limited autonomy by the institutions involved and greater government control via the use of funding to influence specific areas of the sector and shift course and other significant issue emphasis (Potts, 1997).

However, while acknowledging that institutions have different missions and demographic and regional foci, the report by Andrews et al regarding Characteristics and Performance of Higher Education Institutions (1999) states quite clearly that the focus of the national report is on the performance of institutions. No doubt on occasions, the dilemma of being funded on set universal criteria may clash with the unique and specific needs determined by the demographic and regional foci. The VC would therefore need to be politically aware and adept in trying to juggle these conflicting demands.

The Australian higher education system has undergone a number of changes in its history as a result of government policy and funding alignment with perceived national and global needs and pressures. While the universal aims and goals are educationally directed, the higher education sector itself has moved away from traditional education structure and management to a more corporatized form.

Symes and Hopkins (1994) support this view and assert that in response to economic rationalist pressures universities have been marketised, unified, privatised and corporatised. They also state that the internal culture has also changed and is now similar to that of the private sector and that education is the trading commodity. This cultural change has been complicated due to the change from a Binary system to a Unified system of education and the transition of Colleges of Advanced Education (CAE) to stand alone universities as illustrated in Appendix A.
Another change that has occurred is the creation of multicampus institutions (Meek, 1992). Traditional stand-alone universities now face the prospect of managing multiple campuses and of establishing forms of governance that have not previously existed in this sector. These new forms of governance, structure and culture therefore require the role of the vice-chancellor to change and evolve.

Dr Peter North (1994) summarised the difficulties and challenges experienced both in Australia and around the world. Some of these problems were: government requirements, expansion, competition, funding, new technology and the provision of traditional services such as quality education and research.

However Gallagher (1994, page 88) emphasised the growth in the importance of efficiency and effectiveness by the “...improvement of university management and accountability through strategic planning”. These two perspectives clearly illustrate the conflict that exists within the modern university. On the one hand they are now measured on outputs and governmental expectations while on the other hand a new form of control and corporatization is imposed with the expectation that it be fully embraced.

The conflict between the operational and outcome expectations and the structural changes combined with the reduction of recurrent funding provide a dilemma for the management of the modern university. While change is not new to HE and the University system, the current changes are indeed symptomatic of similar changes in HE throughout the world.

Universities are being expected to carry out traditional functions and yet their executives are expected to engage in management and leadership practices previously only found in the private sector. This dilemma is even more pronounced in the role of the vice-chancellor or the CEO of the University who is responsible for all aspects of the institution. The recruitment and selection of the VC therefore becomes critical as the
success of the university is largely determined by the competencies, experience and knowledge of the incumbent.

While the focus of the study is on the Recruitment and Selection of vice-chancellors, the context for the study is within Australian Universities. Therefore a complete review of chronological developments within this sector will be given in Chapter 2 to set the context for the discussion of the role of the VC and the resultant recruitment and selection practices.

1.9 LITERATURE REVIEW

This study sought to thoroughly explore and explain the processes used to recruit and select the CEO of the modern Australian University-the Vice-Chancellor. The balance of this Chapter will discuss the key relevant studies undertaken to date that are important in the discussion of this topic. Finally recruitment and selection theory will be discussed in terms of Universities and Higher Education.

1.10 THE ROLE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

In 1996, Sloper reported on his extensive research into the activities and work patterns of 19 vice-chancellors. This was the first key research into vice-chancellor work patterns and attempted to replicate the research methodology used in the US by Cohen and March (1974). This research used the diary method as one tool to analyze what VCs actually do and participants were asked to record activities over a 14 day period, from 7.00am to midnight. The instrument was prior pilot tested in order to authenticate results.

The process utilized was similar to that used by Mintzberg (1983) who observed the activities of several CEOs and collated diary records of other respondents to determine what they actually did. The study by Mintzberg showed that the role of CEOs was characterised by a strong tendency to action and that activities undertaken were brief,
various and discontinuous due to the pace required to effectively undertake such positions.

The results of Sloper’s research showed that VCs work an average of 70.7 hours (net) a week including weekends. The hours worked ranged from a high of 95 hours (net) to a low of 48.3 hours. On average 35% of these hours were spent in the incumbent’s office, with 32.7% spent away from the campus, 13.2% at home and 18.9% on campus but not in the office. This indicated the degree of focus needed for the role together with the mobility and flexibility required to fulfill the position.

This was further highlighted by the analysis of where ‘off-campus’ time was spent. This showed that the majority of time was spent in car travel followed closely by being out of the city, in the city or on a plane. Throughout this period, Sloper found that the VCs spent the majority of their time alone (34.8%) and 29.2% of their time with more than six people present, 22.6% with one person and 13.4% of the time with two to five people. These figures were then broken down between office, home and elsewhere on campus, so that more detailed analysis could take place.

One of the conclusions that Sloper understandably arrives at through the interaction analysis is that the role is fundamentally social and is dependent upon interaction with people either internal to the university or external to it. This study compares to that of Cohen and March (1974) who reported that American presidents spent 28% of their time alone and 25% in their own study.

In discussing the time spent alone, Sloper (1996, page 219) states that “…vice-chancellors need time alone for policy analysis and formulation, for writing, for reading the massive volumes of printed material directed at and through a CEO’s office, and for that most valuable of activities, critical reflection”. The academic nature of the role was deemed to be demanding and requiring constant update and personal research. Other
activities such as meeting with other vice-chancellors, governmental bodies and beneficiaries were also demanding of time.

Aitkin (1998) in discussing the role, stated that no vice-chancellor at the time had an M.B.A or had been a Dean of business or management indicating his belief that VCs were in the main, ill prepared for the role which he described as a ‘puzzle’ to contemporary incumbents. Professor Aitkin (1998, page 121) kept a record of his time over a five year period and as an example showed how he spent 1994:

- **Absences** included three weeks recreation leave, 19 other absences from Canberra, four of them (30 days in all) overseas (two of them for the Commonwealth).
- **Scheduled committee meetings.** There were 139 committee meetings, 88 within the university, 37 of higher education bodies, 14 of local bodies.
- **Appointment with individuals or groups.** 378, of which 176 were with staff, 27 with students, 53 with deputy vice-chancellors and 38 with deans, of the 74 appointments with people external to the university, 62 occurred on campus; there were scores of other meetings which did not get recorded in the diary.
- **Speeches.** 50, plus 16 TV and radio appearances on short notice.
- **Functions.** He opened, closed or otherwise participated in 17 functions held in the university and 32 outside it.
- **Eating and drinking.** 143 lunches and dinners, in about equal numbers.

Professor Aitkin estimated that over the six year period that he and his wife had entertained over 1500 people, usually in groups of 12. He also argues, that from his experience, the VC must be rational, businesslike, calm and far-sighted. In line with Sloper’s findings, Aitkin believes that the VC needs to be visible, accessible and conscious of both internal and external politics. He emphasized that the VC needed to be a leader, a Manager and Chair and that “It follows that the vice-chancellor must have a sense of mission, an agenda, a vision, if the power of the office is to be employed productively” (Aitkin, 1998, page 123).
He believed that to be effective, the VC needed to be ‘captive’ to the university symbols, language and culture as well as cognizant of the university bureaucracy. Other important aspects of the role include raising funds, ‘defending’ the university from community and governmental concerns as well as representing the institution. Aitken (1998) also points out that the role requires extremely strong communication, negotiation and people skills.

These two studies are not only consistent they also support the previous arguments that the position is complex, demanding and is equivalent to comparable positions in the private sector. However this gives a good oversight as to the nature of the role and therefore it was anticipated that incumbents would have appropriate backgrounds.

1.11 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

In 1994, Sloper presented the characteristics of Australian Vice-Chancellors following his longitudinal study spanning 1963, 1973, 1983 and 1993. Previously he had described the average characteristics of vice-chancellors as being “…male, Australian by birth, aged 45-54, and married once with two children. Educated in a government school and in Melbourne or Sydney-definitely not Queensland or the Northern Territory-appointees are likely to have an undergraduate degree in science preferably from Melbourne University and a Ph.D. A career as an academic and present employment as a deputy vice-chancellor” (1986, page 83).

The characteristics also included a fellowship and service on government advisory and statutory bodies. In due course the incumbent would expect to gain an honorary doctorate. As female incumbents only entered the survey in 1993, there is no discussion regarding gender issues. In 1994, Sloper published the updated results including 1993. By the 1990’s the characteristics were:

- **Education.** Thirty-nine per cent of incumbents had attended local government schools compared to 31% who had attended school overseas. 25% had attended private schools.
Sixty-four per cent had achieved their undergraduate degree in Australia with 19% having attended Sydney University and 14% attended Melbourne. All incumbents had achieved a Ph.D.

**Major Academic Field.** Thirty-three per cent had a Science base and 25% came from Arts or Social Science.

**Major Career.** Ninety-seven per cent had a solely academic career.

**Activity Outside Major Career.** Forty-eight per cent served on government advisory and statutory bodies and 14% were involved in The Arts, Social Service and Philanthropy.

**Post Immediately Before Appointment.** Thirty-one per cent were Deputy Vice-Chancellor, 22% had been Pro Vice-Chancellor and 19% had already been Vice-Chancellor.

**Academic Experience.** Forty per cent had no previous internal experience, 30% had been both a student and a teacher.

**Country of Birth.** Sixty-seven per cent were born in Australia and 22% in the U.K. while the other 11% came from a range of nations.

**Country of residence immediately before appointment.** Eighty-six per cent were resident in Australia while another eight per cent were in the U.K prior to appointment.

**Age at Appointment to Incumbent Vice-Chancellorship.** In 1993, 53% were in the 50-54 years old range and 25% in the 55-59 year old range.

**Awards.** Nineteen per cent had an Australian award and 17% were Emeritus Professors.

**Membership of Clubs.** Twenty-five per cent were members of Major Metropolitan clubs.

**Sports.** 78% listed Sport amongst their nominated recreation and 42% listed Music, reading and the arts.

**Marital and Parental Status.** Thirty-one per cent were married with either two or three children while 3% were never married.
The incumbency and social characteristics described by Sloper are important as they indicate specific patterns in respect of the incumbents. These patterns indicate that there are types of backgrounds more highly desired by selection panels, than others. Recurring patterns also indicate that the probability of success or otherwise of a candidate can be determined prior to actual selection. Also Professor Aitkin’s assertion that few VCs are actually interviewed at least formally, leads to the belief that university selection panels rely highly on informal networks to identify, select and appoint suitable candidates. While the reason for this may be functional and interviews are subject to inconsistencies, evidence suggests they are still the most widely used method of determining candidate suitability.

As identified by ASCO, in the main, a General Manager needs at least ten to fifteen years experience and therefore Sloper’s finding regarding the age of incumbents would be expected. Because the role involves a very high level of entertainment, a married couple would provide stability and a partnership for such occasions although not all VCs are married. Knowledge of the industry or environment would be highly desirable if not essential, therefore a career in academia would be the norm. A knowledge of academic standards and the ability to achieve them would be demonstrated by the Ph.D. and having served in a senior academic role such as Deputy Vice-Chancellor would also indicate preparedness for an even more senior role.

Due to employment law in Australia embedded in Federal and State anti-discrimination legislation, it would be difficult to specify age, except by ‘requiring at least 10-15 years experience in a senior academic role’ in the job advert and thereby determining suitably experienced applicants. In this case an age range would be determined by the length of experience gained. Also marital status ie, the expectation that VCs’ should be married would be couched in terms of the role tasks such as by stating the role requires extensive social interaction, thereby inferring the type of social commitment required.
While there are various ways of constructing job adverts to achieve a desirable applicant pool, Sloper's (1994) data supports the assertion by Aitkin that an informal networking approach was previously used to fill such positions. Also, not all of Sloper's findings can be explained via the wording and construction of the job advert although it is recognised that job ads necessarily use unstated assumptions to reduce volume and complexity. If the networking approach is used then there is a high probability that specific candidates were targeted and approached or invited to apply rather than the position opened to all to apply. In this case the actual selection criteria may be quite different, even conflicting with the selection criteria in the job advert and job analysis material. This study sought to determine the actual processes used by contrasting the public domain material with the questionnaire results.

In a previous study, Sloper (1986, page 85) had identified a career path involving Science as a common route to the role of vice-chancellor. It involved the fact that scientists had “... demonstrators to assist in laboratory classes and research assistants and graduate students to help with research projects which would seem to free scientists to a greater extent than other academics to participate in institutional governance”.

However while Science had been the major discipline of origin of VC's, it is clear that it had declined from 58% in 1983 to 33% in 1994 while Social Sciences had remained constant at around 25% and Arts had also increased. The changes in discipline bases indicated the nature of the changing role and that the academic base was becoming less important than the skills and competencies exhibited by candidates and desired by institutions. The doubling of the number of universities in the late 1980s and early 1990s also led to the need for more vice-chancellors and perhaps new pathways to this position. As will be shown in Chapters 3 and 4, the role of the vice-chancellor is now supported by a greater range of Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Pro Vice-Chancellors and Deans, thereby providing an increased pool of potential applicants to draw upon.
The increase in these roles also allows the vice-chancellor to concentrate on the key strategic, political and governance issues while providing the option to delegate more of the day-to-day issues to subordinate understudies. The data identified and analysed by Sloper provides the basis for our knowledge of the role and characteristics of the Australian Vice-Chancellor and the findings show that this local role is somewhat different from that experienced in the US. The role of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and similar positions also allows for the development of, and the identification of future Leaders and Managers.

1.12 THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AS A LEADER AND MANAGER

There have been numerous attempts to describe the role and functions of management, originating from the turn of this century when Henri Fayol determined the functions of managers as planning, leading, organising and controlling. However as organisations grew and became more complex in response to the changing environment, so too did the role of the manager.

Henry Mintzberg (1973) identified three role clusters, *interpersonal, informational and decisional roles* as characterising the key roles that managers undertake. This contrasted with the functional activities proposed by Fayol and gave a clearer insight into what managers actually do.

However it was Leonard Sayles (1979) who associated management and managers with the changing environment. He addressed the role of managers as leaders, as change agents and investigated how managers motivated staff, used authority and started to clarify the rhetoric from reality. This distinction was further sharpened by Mintzberg (1983) when he undertook his seminal research into the roles that managers undertake. This portrayed the manager as a problem solver who undertook a variety of tasks simultaneously and who utilised other organisational staff effectively. Mintzberg showed the role of the manager was characterised by a strong tendency to action and that activities undertaken were brief,
various and discontinuous due to the pace required to effectively undertake such positions.

Hersey and Blanchard (1993, page 5) define management as “working with and through individuals and groups and other resources to accomplish organizational goals”. While this may be considered vague, it can be argued that the definition matches the phenomenon.

Alternatively, Sarros (1996, page 3) defines leadership as “…the purposeful behaviour of influencing others to contribute to a commonly agreed goal for the benefit of individuals as well as the organisation or common good.” Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1996) described future leaders as ‘cosmopolitans’ who could see across boundaries, provide vision, empowerment and inspire others to productive action.

However studies (Burns 1978, Avolio and Bass 1987, Bass, Avolio and Goodheim 1987) have distinguished between two different styles of leadership. Transactional Leadership involves the motivation of subordinates to perform at expected levels by the recognition of task responsibilities, identifying goals and gaining confidence to achieve.

Unlike Transactional Leadership which is path-goal oriented, Transformational Leadership involves motivating subordinates to perform beyond ordinary expectations to focus on broader objectives and encourages staff to transcend self-interest and seek greater self-actualisation.

It is the ability of Transformational Leaders to inspire staff to go well beyond the norm that has been associated with the changing role of the CEO who now becomes a facilitator for change and therefore is more likely to need to display Transformational Leadership qualities. Confidence, individualism and innovation are usually associated with this specific style of leadership that is believed to allow organisations to grow and achieve goals that were previously considered unobtainable.
Academic leadership was defined by Trow (1985, page 143) as follows: “Leadership in higher education in large part is the taking of effective action to shape the character and direction of a college or university, presumably for the better. That leadership shows itself chiefly along four dimensions: symbolic, political, managerial, and academic”.

Symbolic leadership he describes as projecting the character of the institution while political leadership he describes as being able to manage and resolve conflicting internal and external demands and gaining support for the university’s goals and purpose. Managerial leadership was seen as the capacity to direct and co-ordinate all internal support functions while academic leadership is exhibited through the recognition of excellence in teaching, research, knowing when to intervene to strengthen academic structures and through staff support.

Similar to the University Legislation clauses, the above role necessarily involves the vice-chancellor in all aspects of the institution and its external contacts. To this list can be added one other important facet of leadership - the ability to be flexible and change as well as to be able to encourage change in others (Kerr, 1973).

In terms of management, the vice-chancellor performs an administrative role which traditionally has involved two separate functions, the decision-making capacity and the implementation of the decisions made (Sloper, 1983). As has already been discussed, the VC now has a more strategic and social role and has been able to delegate the implementation aspect of the decision-making process to subordinate executives such as Deputy Vice-Chancellors.

The advent of managerialism into the academic system has caused a great deal of concern as the university’s internal structure and culture change. The vice-chancellor as the chief leader and manager therefore plays a pivotal role in establishing change patterns that are contrary to the long historical background of higher education. A Transformational
Leadership style is therefore desirable. In a study in the US, Birnbaum (1980) identified that College and University Presidents defined their leadership roles primarily in terms of behavioural traits and secondly in terms of the power and influence of their position.

The most common behavioral characteristics identified by this study were:
1. Involving institutional goals with terms such as ‘setting direction’, ‘setting goals’, ‘providing vision’, and ‘knowing where to go’.
2. Involving motivation of others and saw the use of terms such as ‘set the pace’, ‘mobilize’, ‘move people’, ‘stimulate’, ‘serve as a catalyst’.

While the above are part of US based studies, they are nevertheless considered by DETYA to be appropriate to the equivalent Australian roles. Trow’s (1985) seminal research is referred to by DETYA in its reports as being extremely relevant in the 1990’s. In terms of leadership, the Honourable Virginia Chadwick, Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs (NSW) succinctly summarized the role of the vice-chancellor when she said:

“The New South Wales Government values vice-chancellors who understand and accept that the State has a legitimate right, responsibility and duty to shape education (in partnership with universities as autonomous institutions) firstly as a provider of leadership in education to the State, and secondly as the major employer of university graduates.

The New South Wales Government values vice-chancellors who recognise the new reality: That we are not here to perpetuate traditions transplanted from another time and place, but to build a modern, world-class education system in response to the outstanding opportunities and challenges offered to us, in our region of the world.

The New South Wales Government values vice-chancellors who recognise the urgent need to remove any artificial barriers impeding the delivery of education services in our State, and welcomes those willing to establish new pathways linking sectors to ensure
equity and relevance in the delivery of services to students of all backgrounds and ages, through a lifetime of learning” (1994, page 132).

The above would not be possible to achieve if incumbents did not have strong leadership capabilities as outlined by Trow or the ability to set achievable goals and motivate staff and students to achieve them as outlined by Birnbaum (1981). The Minister’s comments about what the New South Wales Government values in a vice-chancellor reflect the qualities and characteristics found by researchers in the US.

In the non-academic arena, these expectations are not too dissimilar from the characteristics of the Learning Organisation and the type of leadership it required. Bhindi (1997, page 18) best summarised the characteristics of the new organisation when he said it is characterised by:

- A culture of continuous improvement
- Support and tolerance of risk taking
- People-oriented, facilitative leadership.

In such organisations:

- Learning is a habit
- Individual and organizational capacity are continually built.
- Collaborative learning and interdependence are recognised and encouraged
- There is a constant effort to improve, correct and excel
- Reflection-in-action becomes a part of the culture.

Similarly the importance of leadership has been emphasized in the commercial and industrial arenas. Thus while management competence is important, there has been a greater emphasis placed on the leadership abilities of executive staff. Zimmerman (1993) argued that the executive of the future would need to be both a leader and a competent manager. He argued that approximately 75% of existing staff would need to be retrained in order to be effective leaders/managers in the future. Zimmerman spoke of the
‘Complete Executive’ who displayed a range of competencies such as providing vision, motivation, flexibility, delegation and pro-activity.

Also as the nature of the role involves active participation and strong social skills, the leadership role becomes somewhat clearer as the VC acts as a catalyst for, and controller of, change. The nature of the change varies and can be imposed from external sources such as student demand, competition, innovation and government direction. Alternatively the change can be internally driven across the academic and administrative boundaries of the organization, its culture, structure and purpose. In any event the incumbent vice-chancellor needs to be an excellent leader across all aspects of the institution as well as an accomplished manger, strategist and facilitator.

1.13 THE ROLE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF VICE-CHANCELLORS IN THE U.S

According to Meredith (1970, page 588) who administered a Clinical Q Deck to undergraduate students in the US, the 15 attributes of the ideal University President are: 1-The ability to see to the heart of important problems, 2- Must be genuinely dependable and a responsible person, 3-Must be productive and get things done, 4-Is verbally fluent and can express ideas well, 5-Appears straightforward and candid, 6-Genuinely values intellectual and cognitive matters, 7-Behaves in an ethical and consistent manner, 8-Appears to have a high degree of intellectual capacity, 9-Has insight into own motives and behavior, 10-Has a wide range of interests, 11-Has warmth and the capacity to develop close friendships, 12-Has social poise and is socially at ease, 13-Is socially perceptive of a wide range of social cues, 14-Is calm and relaxed in manner, 15-Behaves in a sympathetic or considerate manner.

While the above list results from the perception of undergraduate students, who may have biased perceptions, within the US system, the attributes can roughly be accommodated by what is known about the complexity of the Australian counterpart and the characteristics of those who hold this office. However in 1991 McMillen wrote that Presidents were
being sought for their fund-raising capacity and expertise in strategic management. These were the two key factors influencing the selection of university presidents and were the most highly prized characteristics of successful candidates. Thus the high level of competition for students and funding between universities across the United States, dictated the characteristics considered most desirable in candidates for university presidencies. In this case the desirable characteristics reflect the requisites of the position.

Studies in the US have described key components of the role as involving raising funds and recruiting students (Kerr and Gade, 1989) and as in the case of Australia, this has necessitated a new infrastructure to support the senior executive. In Australia this has been achieved through the expansion of the number and type of Deputy Vice-Chancellors and pro Vice-Chancellors, while in the US the equivalent role is the Chief Academic Officer. However while these are the predominant activities of US counterparts, the Australian Vice-Chancellor retains a higher degree of involvement in academic activities.

On average US university presidents serve seven years in the position, 85% have a university administrative or faculty background while the other 15% come to the role from outside academic life with half of those having no previous academic experience. They usually commence their roles in their mid-forties (Kerr and Gade, 1989).

However the role also involves a range of responsibilities in addition to those already mentioned. These include responsibility for:

- setting goals
- determining priorities
- reviewing and changing of structure
- the assembly of an effective group of assistants
- the handling of unprogrammed problems
- the conduct of important internal and external relationships
- building morale
- the definition and defense of institutional integrity
• conflict resolution within the institution
• defense of the autonomy of the institution and the freedom of its members
• the assurance of long-term results.

Many of the above duties could also be attributed to Australian Vice-Chancellors, however the Australian public universities have far less autonomy and freedom as demonstrated by the comments of the Hon Virginia Chadwick. This political accountability and social expectations also make the role of the Australian VC more politically vulnerable and susceptible to greater influence than in the US.

However Riesman (1996) points out that the Presidents of State Universities believe that such too much power is associated with the position and are therefore held on a tight leash. Riesman believes that overall such power is overestimated within State and non-State institutions and that the power of the position is a common misperception.

Yet although the role is demanding, the job satisfaction rate appears to be high with McLaughlin (1996, page 6) reporting that “As the presidents who have contributed to this volume attest, the presidency is an invigorating, rewarding, and always interesting role”. Those who assume the position of university president are chosen because they have already been successful either within or outside the academic arena. It is therefore common in both Australia and the US for the equivalent role to be compared to its private sector counterpart—the CEO.

1.14 CHARACTERISTICS OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

As the role of the CEO has changed and indeed continues to evolve, the characteristics of the CEO have come under critical review. The preceding discussion has given an insight into the competencies that a CEO is \ will be expected to display. Thus when McManus (1990a) asked 390 subordinate officers to rate 68 CEOs, their strengths were seen to
range from Technical/Professional Knowledge, Problem-Solving and Delegation to Directing Others and Networking.

However their weaker points included, Communication, Organising, Interpersonal Skills, Planning, Time Control and Developing People. McManus (1990b) also reported that CEOs needed to be a catalyst for change and play a greater role in the development of staff and organisational creativity and innovation. This was supported by the survey respondents. There was a clear practical correlation between what this survey identified as being needed by CEOs and what was lacking, and the views of Senge (1994), Limerick (1992), Kanter (1996) and others that identified the emergence of a necessary new management paradigm. The role of the CEO has changed from that of a manager/administrator to that of a leader/facilitator.

Yet while organisations were seeking specific competencies from their CEOs, further research identified other characteristics that were important in the selection process. Dumaine (1993) noted the increase in the number of CEOs that were being appointed from outside corporations as opposed to ‘insiders’ being appointed to these top positions. Dumaine surmised that over time, insiders become very inculturated by their organisations and lose sight of perspective. Those from ‘outside’ the corporation seek to establish their reputation, are not a part of any internal politicking and they are outside cultural norms, which the organisation may have established.

While this was contrary to previous research that had established the value of hiring internal candidates over external candidates, research of 195 CEO successions by Datta and Guthrie (1994) showed a very strong relationship between poorly performing organisations and their propensity to appoint outside CEOs. It was found that performance was considered a more important factor in CEO succession than organisational tenure. Thus an overall downturn in performance (including profitability) due to environmental and competitive pressures had necessitated a search for external talent, preferably with a record of reversing this downward trend in other organisations.
This research established an empirical relationship between poor performance and the appointment of an outside CEO. The term ‘outsider’ can be misleading as it can also include executives who were brought into the organisation up to five years before succeeding to the role of CEO. In many instances these people may have been installed in the organisation with the intention that they would succeed as CEO as the incumbent had already signalled the desire to resign or retire from this position. Borokhovich, Parrino and Trapani (1996) argue that recruiting a likely successor early allows the board to determine strengths and overall suitability before making a final decision.

The findings of Datta and Guthrie (1994) also support evidence indicating that organisations undertaking growth strategies are more likely to appoint an outside CEO. This not only established a link between the type of CEO sought with organisational strategy, but also provided empirical support for a strong link between organisational demography and desirable CEO characteristics.

This research also revealed a wealth of other data including the following. Organisations with a stronger investment in Research and Development generally required CEOs with higher educational levels and technical functional backgrounds, although 62% of the one thousand executives surveyed had non-technical backgrounds.

Research undertaken by Boone, Goodnight and Harris (1996) also supported the trend to appoint ‘outside’ CEOs. This research involved a survey of 800 of the largest US organisations in 1992 and developed a general profile of a CEO. The research found that the median age of CEOs was 56 while six years earlier the median was 58 years. Trends indicated that more CEOs were under 60 years of age and the greatest rate of decline in the number of CEO’s occurred over the age of 60.

It was found that nine out of ten CEOs had an undergraduate degree while 50% had a post graduate qualification. The M.B.A was the most common postgraduate degree while only one in 25 had a PhD. The most common background was banking and finance with a
career in marketing being the next most common. Technical backgrounds were third. While it was found that women were represented on corporate boards, only one woman held the office of chief executive. Virtually all surveyed were born in the US.

Borokhovich, Parrino and Trapani (1996) studied 969 CEO successions and also verified the trend to appoint ‘outside’ executives. However they found board composition also had a determining effect upon CEO selection. It emerged that the greater the number of external directors sitting upon a board, the greater the propensity to appoint outside CEOs. However the role of the board and the CEO also came under scrutiny, in that the board can have its greatest impact when appointing a new CEO as it can then determine strategic imperatives and leave the CEO to implement the strategy and provide supportive policy structures.

This is in line with the findings of Datta and Guthrie (1994), who found that the board determines that change is needed in order to arrest deteriorating performance and where the determination and implementation of a new strategy is required. Thus it is suggested that boards seek a fit with strategic imperatives and contingencies during the selection and appointment of a new CEO. It offers a time for a complete change.

Borokhovich, Parrino and Trapani (1996) also found empirical evidence that when a CEO is forced from the position, there is a greater likelihood that the successor will be an outside appointee. It would therefore appear that organisational antecedents play an important role in determining CEO applicant characteristics.

Levinson (1996) raises interesting questions about organisational size and performance from the candidates’ point of view, and relates a story of an executive (non CEO) who joined a smaller organisation as its CEO. It indicates how those poised in senior ranks in larger organisations may move to smaller organisations in order to gain necessary experience before furthering their careers in larger organisations.
However Levinson (1996) points out the cultural and operational differences that exist between large and small organisations and how each can have its own unique and exclusive set of issues to be resolved. Executives whose goals are not met, suffer from burn out or have been passed over for promotion, may tend to seek other more rewarding roles as CEOs of smaller organisations. While this can be mutually beneficial, it can also be mutually damaging if the reasons for such a move are not fully and carefully explored.

Further research by Guthrie and Datta (1997) developed areas in their previous research. This time they specifically addressed the hypothetical ‘fit’ that exists between organisational antecedents and CEO characteristics. While explored in theoretical discussion, they attempted to prove the framework shown in Figure 1.2. This framework expresses the relationship between organisational characteristics and requirements together with the characteristics of potential CEO applicants.

While ‘Fit’ is a common term used in regard to executive recruitment, Guthrie and Datta (1997) set about empirically proving the relationship between an organisation and applicants for the position of CEO. This relationship, once explored could then form the basis for a recruitment and selection model.
Figure 1.2
CEO Selection ‘Fit’ with Organisational Antecedents.

Source: Guthrie and Datta, 1997, page 540

The results of this recent study confirmed the findings of previous studies and showed that organisations with relatively low profitability are more likely to appoint an outside CEO. Such organisations were also more likely to appoint an executive with a functional background related to finance and accounting, production / operations experience or a process engineering background.

The greater levels of risk associated with an organisation, the more likely a younger CEO will be appointed. It was also found that smaller organisations have a propensity to appoint younger CEOs while larger organisations appoint older executives. Also they discovered that organisations employing a differentiation strategy used advertising intensity to attract candidates with backgrounds in marketing, sales, merchandising or research and development. Such appointees also have less firm-specific experience.

It was therefore established that the argument of organisational / candidate ‘fit’ appeared to be relatively strongly supported empirically. While Guthrie and Datta (1997) refer to previous studies that support these findings from an anecdotal or even an intuitive
perspective, this survey provided empirical evidence to support the theoretical framework and model provided above.

Finally, in recognition of the changing nature of organisations, Mahlon (1998) highlights the need for CEOs to travel regularly and still communicate with subordinates and carry out the normal range of expected duties. He uses a real life example to show that communication technology (web technology…) has allowed senior executives to travel, but still remain in constant contact from various parts of the world. Such technology allows the executive to receive needed information, provide reports and allow for direct communication in order to provide guidance and advice.

The ability to telecommute indicates how technology and technical competence has allowed organisations to become more diverse and disparate networked organisations. Executives will therefore need to be technically literate in order to lead and manage such organisations in the future.

1.15 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF CEOs

The impact of a change of the CEO can be quite an unsettling period for an organisation. If performance has been of concern then it is probable that a younger CEO from outside the company will be appointed. If performance has been good and the board has an equal representation of internal and external directors, then it is probable that an older long serving director will be appointed. Apart from being a costly exercise, the role of the CEO in strategic determination and implementation is critical to organisational success. A degree of synergy between a CEO and the board is also highly desirable.

The Economist (1997) and Robert Cox (1986) President of PA Executive Search Group, both report that planning for CEO succession takes place long before the actual event and that many boards devote several meetings a year to the topic which is included in CEO annual performance reviews. This planning includes deciding the strategic direction that
the board may wish the organisation to take or deciding they need a strong strategic oriented CEO to guide them.

However an organisational review is recommended in order to determine the appropriate fit as outlined by Guthrie and Datta (1997). A determination of organisational demography assists in determining the needs of the organisation. McCanna and Comte (1987) argue that CEO succession provides an organisation with the opportunity to overcome adverse circumstances, once they are identified, so that appropriate strategic modifications can be made by the incoming CEO.

McCanna and Comte (1987) argue that if it is found that the organisation has no acceptable strategy then suitable applicants must come from the same industry and have a thorough knowledge of relevant technology and industry practices. Thus an internal review can be used to determine where applicant pools should be generated. They also point to the range of pressures present when determining a CEO successor (Figure 1.3). These include the influence of powerful internal factions, the need to meet immediate and short-term objectives, the type and nature of strategy employed and the stage of organisational evolution.
Selection of CEO Successor.


Cox (1986, pp 15-16) then describes the process that the board would undertake in finding the successor. This process includes:

1. Background assessment and analysis. This includes finding as much reliable data about the selection pool as possible.

2. Evaluation interview. This is usually a personal meeting designed to elicit in depth material about candidates, including body language, communication competence, interest, rapport with senior managers and technical competence.
3. Analytical questionnaire. This is a testing instrument, usually a psychometric test or battery including assessment centre data, designed to give an insight into the individual’s personality, leadership and management style and other trait characteristics.

4. Analytic background inquiry. This is a longitudinal nonjudgmental review of performance including a review of strengths and weaknesses, reference checks and a final determination of congruence between individual(s) and the board.

Cox (1986) believes that those organisations that use a systematic rational methodology to select senior executives will be those that succeed and thrive in existing turbulent times. Hallagan (1991) refined and expanded upon the above and argued for a seven step process.

1. Reassess vision, major strengths and weaknesses.

2. Identify the critical success factors

3. Determine what skills and character traits, experience, track record and desired management style are required together with any ‘soft side’ needs.

4. Target current companies and positions where suitable candidates may be found.

5. Is a trade-off needed? What are the absolute necessities versus the desirable traits and characteristics?

6. Review internal candidates against determined benchmarks.

7. Review outside candidates against benchmarks and the most suitably qualified internal candidates.

While Job Analysis usually determines step three, Wilde (1993) argues that a job profile is necessary. This profile outlines the key role aspects and allows them to be weighted on a form, which provides the basis for interviewing. Results from each candidate’s response are tabulated and compared so that a relative degree of objectivity is established as all candidates are compared, based on responses to similar questions derived from the criteria identified by the profile.

Nash (1994) concurs with the outline proposed by Hallagan (1991) but includes an emphasis on other important issues. These include determining if a specialist or a
generalist is required, the need to seek personality compatibility with the board and a thorough induction in order to properly orientate the new CEO, reduce anxiety and therefore the likelihood of early resignation or termination.

Yowell (1993) examined the search process undertaken by banks to find a CEO and suggested that Executive Search consultants should be considered as they can advertise, review existing talent banks of potential candidates or they can identify and make direct contact with likely candidates.

He notes that potential applicant lists can be drawn up from existing directors and senior staff who have developed extensive personal networks. Such staff will be able to identify potential successors using their networks and knowledge of the industry. An interesting point, he notes that there are fewer adverts for CEOs as advertising creates a flood of applicants, many of whom are unsuitable and the trend is now to create a small highly targeted applicant pool.

Also the use of ‘Head Hunters’ and search consultants has blossomed as a means of identifying and contacting suitable candidates. Such methods offset the narrow focus of targeted recruitment and their growth illustrates the enthusiasm with which they have been embraced.

O’Neal and Thomas (1996) surveyed over 80 CEOs and directors and found that the identification of suitable applicants was almost totally restricted to referrals from the Chairperson and incumbent directors. They also found that decisions on recruitment rested with the Chairperson or selection committees.

It is noted by Yowell (1993) that selection committees should determine specific objectives for the CEO to complete, together with timetables so that job expectations are realistic and ‘fit’ is easier to achieve. He also recommends systematic interviewing but
suggests that successful applicants should be placed on renewable contracts as is the current trend for CEOs.

Chuck Sweet, director of AT Kearney Executive Search and Michael Wellman, Managing Director of Korn/Ferry the world’s largest search firm, in an interview with Greco (1997) stated that more organisations are looking outside their own organisation and industry for the new CEO. When recruiting they seek individuals who stand out by being quoted in the press, write articles, give speeches and clearly indicate that they are important players in the field. A recruitment campaign for a CEO on average takes four months.

The preceding material outlines some of the formal procedures and the more informal rules for the recruitment of CEOs. It is acknowledged that these are norms and as such there will be variations by organisations and industries depending upon experience, resources and needs. However they give a clearly indicative view of the overall processes generally undertaken when recruiting a new CEO either by the organisation or by the use of executive search firms on their behalf.

1.16 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF VICE-CHANCELLORS

Studies into the recruitment and selection practices of Australian higher education have shown consistency across universities for levels A-E. Crothall (1997) found that Heads of Departments used the following methods: 95% of those surveyed used both national newspapers and word of mouth to fill positions, 70% used international newspapers, 60% used academic journals and 57% approached specific individuals.

The methodology used included: determining selection criteria, Interviews, short-listing, and the conduct of referee checks. Baker et al (1994) found the fundamental qualification for a Lecturer B was at least a masters degree if not a PhD. These findings at the middle to lower end of academic positions indicate that the criteria are well accepted, known and used and that minimum standards exist that must be achieved in order for candidates to be
successful. Therefore in the case of the appointment of the VC it was anticipated that the recruitment and selection processes would be extremely thorough.

The search for the university president in the US has been well studied (McLaughlin and Riesman, 1989, 1990, Riesman and Neff, 1992, O'Banion, 1992) and the search process itself has been overshadowed by the impact of the Sunshine Laws. These exist across 50 States and require the management of public institutions to be open to public view, which has tended to dilute the efficiency of search committees.

However the Sunshine Laws require openness and therefore presidential vacancies are generally advertised nationally. Frequently there are two selection panels formed: The first level consists of members of the board of trustees while the second panel has a constituency from faculty, students, nonprofessional staff, alumni and members of the community.

The trustee-based panel empowers the campus-based panel to advertise and recruit likely candidates, to conduct initial interviews and prepare a shortlist with evaluations of individual candidates. These are forwarded to the trustee-based panel for the final selection. The selection criteria are prepared and after appropriate consultation, the trustee-based panel approves the criteria.

The identities of the candidates are kept confidential although final candidates are invited to the campus and are met by members of both panels. The membership numbers of the panels can vary and may involve more than 20 members. The board of trustees can commence consideration of presidential succession up to two years prior to the actual departure, so that research can be undertaken concerning the direction of the institution and the presidential competencies identified. It is this introspection and evaluation (McLaughlin and Riesman, 1985) that makes some searches more successful than others.
Although the use of Search Consultants is not wide-spread, Rent (1990) and Heller (1987) note that the use of consultants does occur and could possibly increase as the need for ‘quality’ candidates increases. These recruitment and selection practices for CEOs and University Presidents in the US contrast with what is known about the practices employed in Australia.

Australian universities vary in size, location and adjacent population concentrations and the only study into Australian practices was undertaken by Sloper (1989b) of 8 universities in 1984-85 that were recruiting at the time. The findings of the study are summarised as follows:

- Notices were placed in local and national newspapers, the *Times Higher Educational Supplement* and the Association of Commonwealth University publication *A Bulletin of Current Documentation*.
- The vacancy was also brought to the attention of the Secretary General of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, Australian academics and the CSIRO.
- The Chancellor would consult fellow Chancellors to determine suitable candidates.
- No Search Consultants were used.
- Adverts were noticeably brief, lacked specific detail and varied between being a notification of a vacancy and the more normal vacancy style advert.
- Interested parties were generally referred to the Chancellor or the Registrar or the Secretary of the Selection Panel.
- Selection Criteria involved four main categories-
  1. Characteristics Appropriate to the Institution (Knowledge of academic system)
  2. Personal Attributes (Leadership, academic prestige...)
  3. Task Skills (Academic and management skills)
  4. Interpersonal Competencies (Record of involvement and achievement)
The order of emphasis was placed on criteria 2- Personal Attributes, then 1 & 4 jointly with Task Skills the least emphasised.

Expected age range was between 55-57 and the spouse was viewed as an important social partner.

The Chancellor through Council generally determined all main activities and gave final approval

Selection Procedures were developed in conjunction with the AVCC or other universities with all members being provided with background material.

In one instance two selection panels were established with a similar purpose to the US system.

Membership of Selection Panels ranged from 10-12 and apart from the Chancellor and Deputy Chancellor had equal numbers of academic and non-academic representatives.

Candidates were sent information packs

Short lists of no more than three were prepared and referees consulted

Candidates were interviewed and shown campus facilities, meetings arranged with senior campus staff and shown the vice-chancellorial residence.

The process generally took at least 15-18 months as successful candidates gave at least six months notice to their existing employer.

Where candidates were asked for a brief statement of suitability, the questions posed were generally:

2 What qualities do you possess that make you suitable and why?

3 What in your opinion should be the role of a major university in the twentieth century?

The latter question is reminiscent of Professor Aitkin’s (1998) comment that this was probably the only question asked. As the Australian system lacks the overt public scrutiny of the American system, doubt can be cast on the quality of the process and its depth and breadth. Sloper also alludes to this in his study.
If this is the case, then one can assume that while social responsibility and political accountability demand that equitable practices be employed to select vice-chancellors, the fact that the networking method is so prevalent indicates that the two processes are used simultaneously. However the lack of actual depth of questioning, testing and other selection devices indicates that the network method has been used to target the most suitable candidates with the belief that one of them will be selected.

Thus while the formal processes are necessarily employed, their contribution to the actual decision may be quite limited. This is also supported by the fact that Sloper (1989b) identified the greatest emphasis being placed on the personal characteristics of the candidates while the task skills associated with the role were barely mentioned, let alone pursued. Therefore differentiation occurred on the basis of personal characteristics rather than functional competence.

The caveat to the above is that Sloper's (1989b) research was undertaken with only a limited number of universities some fifteen years ago. The natural assumption could be made that increased competition and the changing skill base of the VC should indicate a higher degree of sophistication in selection processes in the contemporary university. Also the change in legislation would limit direct questioning about marital status as is evidenced by the 5% of single vice-chancellors in office at the commencement of 2000.

1.17 A MODEL OF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The studies undertaken by Sloper (1989b), Wooden and Harding (1997), Compton and Nankervis (1998), Datta and Guthrie (1997) and Guthrie and Datta (1997) provide a consistent and coherent theoretical framework that explains the processes used in the recruitment and selection of staff, particularly senior staff such as CEOs and Vice-Chancellors.
Wooden and Harding (1997) found similar factors influencing the selection process as did Datta and Guthrie (1994) some years earlier. The size and strategic direction of the organisation influence the age, background and expertise considered desirable in successful candidates.

Effective recruitment and selection processes have been defined as those processes that lead to a successful fit between organisational requisites and incumbents’ needs in the short, medium and long term.

While Sloper (1989b) has shown that the accepted framework of recruitment and selection practices were employed in the selection of vice-chancellors a decade and a half ago, he has not shown the degree to which such practices were employed or their effectiveness from the organisational or incumbent perspective’s. He did however highlight commonalities, dissimilarities and trends.

This research is therefore able to build upon the previous studies of Wooden and Harding (1997), Datta and Guthrie (1994), and Compton and Nankervis (1998) to provide a synthesised model of their components against which current and previous practices can be contrasted. The model shown in Figure 1, can be taken in the context of the Guthrie and Datta (1997) model which will allow for a greater range of aspects to be investigated.

It may be examined if, for example the *Sandstone Universities* require older candidates with a stronger focus on academic aspects of the institutions. The smaller organisations may be examined to see if the size of the organisation is a crucial determinant of characteristics sought. Also those universities with an aggressive strategic intent may seek a person with more strategic background and experience.

The inclusion of the Guthrie and Datta (1997) context shows what aspects have affected the selection of CEOs. If vice-chancellors are the equivalent of chief executives in the
private sector, then one could expect similar trends or emerging patterns allowing for the possibility of industry and organisational lag.

The knowledge of the higher education system and the role and characteristics of vice-chancellors in Australia and the US provide additional elements that can be added as fundamental assumptions for subsequent testing. However there is a need for discussion of two other matters.

1.18 OVERSEAS APPLICANTS & GENDER ISSUES

Sloper (1996) showed that in 1963, only half the VCs in Australia were born in Australia, with the figure dropping to 47% in 1973. However in line with the increase in the number of universities with increased diversity of characteristics, the number increased to 58% in 1983 and 67% in 1993. Also in 1993, 14% of incumbents came to Australia to assume the role of vice-chancellor. This shows that the earlier belief in the superiority of overseas qualifications and calibre of universities, has slowly dissipated.

The number of universities in Australia as well as their increasing complexity reflects the need for international flavour and skills in the highly competitive Australian higher education system. However the growth of the support infra structure means that there is an increased number of Australian born deputies entering the pool from which future VCs may be drawn.

However this would seem to be at odds with the current industrial trend to draw candidates from the global arena in order to gain the very best competitive advantage through the importation of quality leadership and management skill bases. Many Australian organisations such as Ford Australia, Westpac, Telstra and Optus have taken this route.
The recruiting of Rob Joss to Westpac is a case in point where the bank decided to embark on a globalisation policy in the wake of the deregulation of the Australian Banking Industry. The subsequent mergers within the industry and the impact of the Wallis report have seen similar industry players seeking appropriate skills overseas in order to maintain their competitiveness.

In the case of Westpac, knowledge of the international banking arena was important as was the ability to lead and implement appropriate change to the organisation. There is still a very strong belief that international experience is now necessary in a time of globalisation and therefore of increased global competition in domestic markets. Again, as in the case study by Sloper (1989b), an emphasis appears to be placed on personal characteristics, however functional requisites are just as important in the non-academic arena.

On the basis of private sector trends it might be anticipated that universities would currently draw more heavily on the international community than in the past. Logically, it might be expected that the selection of new vice-chancellors would draw on a greater number of overseas applicants. However it might be argued that while the higher education system may lead the way in the development of new management practices, because of the institutionalised traditions and community expectations of conservatism, academia lags in the implementation of these activities.

Another clear point that needs to be examined is that no female vice-chancellors appear in the research until the early 1990s (Trent, 1994, p 51). In fact at the commencement of 2000, only 15% of Australian vice-chancellors were female. Similar patterns have been noted in the US where it is only of recent times that women have ascended to the role of CEO. While commensurate with the findings of other studies, the proportion of females in the role across the US and Australia appears very low.
Conclusion:

The purpose of this Chapter was to outline the main objective of the study and to provide an overview of the research methodology. The Chapter also introduced and defined the key terminology and reviewed the main relevant literature associated with the topic.

Chapter 2 will cover the chronology of events within the Australian higher education system in order to provide further context regarding the evolution of the environment in which the vice-chancellor operates.

Chapter 3 will return to the role of the vice-chancellor and the associated attributes so that a complete understanding of the environment and the role will be given before discussing the results of the research presented in this study.
Chapter 2

THE CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS IN THE AUSTRALIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Chapter is to provide a chronology of the major events that have helped shape the Australian higher education system. This chronology will provide the context within which the vice-chancellor operates and the key forces that are active within this particular environment. An understanding of the HE system is essential if one is to fully understand and appreciate the role of the VC and environmental factors influencing the recruitment and selection of candidates.

An understanding of the context in which the vice-chancellor operates will allow one to understand the sectorial dynamics, political accountability and the constraints placed upon the role. These in turn will further assist in identifying the necessary criteria that need to be considered in the selection phase.

Also, while the complexity of the role of the VC has been identified and discussed, it has not been fully discussed in the context of the higher education sector. The key changes that have helped shape the HE system, continue to dominate and shape the sector, the universities within the system and the vice-chancellorial incumbents.

2.2 THE EARLY HISTORY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, 1850-1900

When the University of Sydney was founded in 1850, it had three professors who were chosen by the best academic judges in England. As student numbers grew so too did the number of part-time assistants. The first full-time position of reader was created in 1866
and in 1880 two full-time lecturers were employed, another in 1884 and yet another in 1888 (Williams, 1990).

Meanwhile the University of Melbourne was established in 1853 and under the dominance of the founding Chancellor, Redmond Barry, began to adopt a more utilitarian approach to education than the British model from which it grew. The Minister for Public Instruction, Pearson, created a blueprint for comprehensive institutions in 1877 that strengthened the role of the professoriate at Melbourne and saw the basis for Chairs in a wide range of disciplines (Poynter, 1990).

As the cities of Australia grew so too did the need for additional universities and as a result the University of Adelaide was founded in 1874 and the University of Tasmania in 1890. However the early universities remained small and distanced from the rest of the populace until after the Second World War. The early universities were created to resemble English Universities (DEETYA, 1993). Yet, paradoxically, because they had to adapt to the ‘colonial setting’ these same universities adopted more Scottish University features.

Following on from this, daytime lectures were delivered in line with the Scottish practice, however the early universities did not follow the Scottish curriculum, nor did they establish close links with the community. These early universities were a hybrid of the English and the Scottish systems and developed their own unique style of education. While standards at the universities varied, Melbourne flourished due to its broad utilitarian base, Sydney was seen as lacking due to its narrow range of offerings and Adelaide at one point was seen as an expensive enterprise that would eventually merge with Melbourne University.

It was not until the 1880’s that there was a substantive growth in the Science based disciplines and a greater emphasis placed on research. It was also at this time that Teacher Training Colleges were established in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales.
Many of these early Teachers Colleges would later merge with universities or gain university status independently. An additional educational stream was created in the 1870s and 1880s with the establishment of Technical Colleges, particularly numerous in Victoria, with the first commencing in 1873 in Ballarat. These were the precursors to the current TAFE Colleges and remained separate for quite some time. Women were also admitted to Melbourne and Sydney Universities for the first time in the 1880s.

The creation of these three streams created a degree of internal competition as the various institutions sought to determine their particular niche within the growing education system. Thus each stream began to differentiate itself from other streams and within each stream, individual colleges and institutions began a program of differentiation that led to the creation of different strata.

By the 1880s’ admission to a university was not seen as a means of determining social status, but was seen as a means of allowing career development and upward social mobility for a small number of males from the middle and lower class (Anderson, 1990). This change in emphasis from social status to career mobility, reflected the change from Pastoralists and Landowners to Traders and Business people as the more powerful emerging class with more members seeking careers.

Advocates such as Hackett, were successful in rallying for free or minimal tuition in order to allow the poorer members of the emerging class access to quality education and therefore economic and social opportunities. Free or minimal cost education was as an aid to universities as they were not attracting the quantity of students envisaged despite their graduates being highly regarded within the community. The view that education was only available to elite wealthy classes gave way as the proletariat gained access to higher education and similar resultant opportunities. It also became common for students to complete their studies without attending any lectures as they continued to work and combine higher education studies. (Anderson, 1990).
During this period, universities developed their respective directions and were quite independent of the balance of the education system such as the early Schools of Mines, Secondary Colleges and other institutions. They were certainly not over-subscribed with a strong student base and by 1900, there were only four universities in Australia. In order to continue to attract students and to offset financial difficulties, universities began to source students using a variety of mechanisms, apart from not having to attend daytime based lectures. Fendley notes that it was not uncommon for students to visit their university only on examination day. (Anderson, 1990).

The universities of this period were reactive and driven by social and economic trends, were conservative, small and steeped in academic colonialism. They were symbolic of European tradition and had distanced themselves from the community and despite the institution of free education, remained small. However the growth of alternative post-secondary education sectors and the diversion of government funding from universities to these growth sectors, ensured that universities began to adopt a more open and entrepreneurial approach to the delivery of programs.

It was in 1904 that the contemporary universities first enrolled students who could attend evening classes but, with an entrenched traditional culture, it was considered that students needed to be enrolled on a full-time basis even if they rarely attended classes. The need to cater for part-time based students had not yet been considered.

The University of Tasmania was created despite the relative poverty and small population size that existed there at that time. The Premier of the day, Sir Edward Braddon was determined to reduce costs during the national economic decline and was opposed to setting up the university and absorbing associated costs. The first Vice-Chancellor therefore came from the local community. Walker was in fact a local lawyer with limited exposure to academia (Davis, 1990). The role of the vice-chancellor at this university was in part social, administrative and the incumbent was necessarily an adept political
exponent. The emphasis was on sustaining the fledgling institution's life via government support with minimal financial support from other fields.

2.3 HIGHER EDUCATION, 1900-1960

The utilitarian view that the early universities provided support for the community, persisted well into the next century and complemented the view of the 'liberal university' training the intellect and producing gentlemen. (Richardson, 1972). However following Australia's independence from Britain in 1901, the young nation embarked upon a course of creating wealth through education and prior to World War I, two more universities were established to meet the needs of the growing community. The University of Queensland was established in 1911 and the University of Western Australia in 1913.

Queensland made a name for itself as the first university in Australia to offer off-campus undergraduate courses and furthered the liberal perspective by offering courses to all interested parties and in a convenient format. The University of Western Australia had encompassed the notion of free tuition from its foundation but was less entrepreneurial than its Queensland counterpart.

Despite attempts by universities to develop viable student bases, they had failed to establish very strong links with the community and so by the time of Federation, less than 0.07% of the populace attended university. This figure had increased to 0.2% by the commencement of the Second World War. (DEETYA, 1993).

The role of the university as an examining body with limited outside influence began to change by 1914 as each State had developed systems of government High Schools and Teacher Training Colleges. The need for academic credibility at these institutions created the need for close links between universities and the teacher colleges. This relationship grew so close that the Universities of Sydney, Melbourne and Western Australia established Professorial roles in their respective Education Faculties and the Principal of
the Teacher Training College was appointed to the dual role of Professor of Education and Principal.

Similar relationships developed with Technical Colleges while the commencement of World War 2 created a need for technically competent and qualified people throughout the community. Initially universities granted remission for entrance into specific courses to those who had been educated within the Technical Education system. However both the State and Commonwealth governments realised the role that universities could play in the long term development of Australian industries as well as contributing to the creation of wealth for a nation with resources that had been stretched by the war effort.

Until the Second World War, each State was responsible for funding and developing universities within their respective boundaries. However, having realised the strategic importance of universities to the economy and social development, the Commonwealth Government committed itself to matching state contributions to universities. During the late 1940s and 1950s, four new universities were established to assist this strategic drive. The involvement of the Commonwealth was also seen as necessary by the Murray Committee in 1957, which included recommendations to establish formal funding bases.

The key legislation resulting from the Murray Committee recommendations were the *States Grants Commission Act* of 1959 and the *Australian Universities Commission Act* also of 1959. These complemented the role of the Commonwealth Grants Commission that was established in 1933 to advise parliament on the need for special grants to be made to the states with respect to universities. (Jones, 1982). This was a major shift in Higher Education as it created a lasting relationship of accountability for universities between the states and the Commonwealth. It also allowed the Commonwealth to more heavily influence higher education sector programs, structures and policies and so broadened the role and scope of universities. (Tomlinson, 1982).
The impact of Commonwealth funding allowed universities to grow and to explore the need to develop a broader range of courses to meet the changing needs of the post war community. Following the Murray Report and its impact on funding and the need to establish more universities, enrolments increased sharply.

The increase in enrolments, a wider range of program offerings and the need for more qualified staff necessarily led to greater formalisation of university structures and entrenched an academic culture supported by both State and Commonwealth funding. Internal hierarchies were developed as staff levels increased and were stratified within bands and the role of academic senates increased in influence and scope.

Such upward pressure also created the need for senior management to adopt a stronger academic leadership oriented role while continuing the need for a politically adept individual as vice-chancellor.

In 1960 there were ten universities each with an appointed Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor. The emerging senior structure of universities in 1960 was characterised as follows:
Two universities had Pro Vice-Chancellors as intermediaries between the Vice-Chancellor and the Deans of Faculties, two had deputy Vice-Chancellors, one had a Deputy Vice-Principal and an Assistant Principal while the other five universities had no major intermediary between the Vice-Chancellor and the Faculty Deans. The structure was therefore reasonably flat with the role of the vice-chancellor being largely hands on, and providing academic leadership and direction. (Tomlinson, 1982).

2.4 HIGHER EDUCATION, 1960-2000

The post 1960 period was to be one of rapid growth and consolidation in the Australian higher education sector. The Murray Report had made a substantial impact on the
Menzies government’s view of higher education and the role that the Commonwealth should play in terms of funding.

In 1961 the British government had determined that it needed to review higher education (Robbins Report, 1963) throughout the country to determine long term strategies that could be implemented to ensure relevance of that education sector. The final report was presented to the British Parliament in 1963. Hence it was deemed appropriate, that following the Murray Report in Australia, the Commonwealth government should proceed in the recommended direction of that report and await the outcome of the Robbins Report to determine if different options presented themselves.

The Australian Universities Commission had provided universities with seed funding to develop University Colleges in cities outside of the State capitals. The Commonwealth body was urging expansion and providing the funding to achieve it and soon the student population had trebled. As a consequence, no less than nine new universities emerged between 1964-1975 and of these, four had been University Colleges.

The Martin Committee (1961-1964/5) was created to review the potential of an advanced education sector in Australia. The committee consisted of university based individuals and there was minimal involvement of people from the non-tertiary sector. Initially Martin reviewed the American College system that, if adopted in Australia, could be located at a level below universities and would cater for vocational education.

The final recommendation put to parliament favoured a tripartite system. In addition to universities, the states would oversee technical colleges and teachers colleges and that a new body the Australian Tertiary Education Commission be established to advise on the sector as a whole. (DEETYA, 1993).

The Minister rejected the proposal in 1965 but saw merit in developing the technical education sector. This saw the beginning of the binary system of higher education in
Australia as colleges of advanced education (CAE) were introduced as a means of providing vocational based education, initially to the level of diploma. However with increasing enrolments and funding, it was not long before they were offering degrees and engaging in applied research.

This increased demand led to the need for a broader range of course offerings, the development of part-time and external mode delivery to meet community expectations and new forms of academic structures, as well as a greater awareness of community needs in terms of higher education. (DEETYA, 1993).

Tuition fees were completely abolished in 1974 and the Commonwealth Government absorbed the cost of higher education while in 1977 the Tertiary Education Commission was created to oversee the TAFE sector, CAEs and universities. The teachers colleges became CAEs in 1973. In 1979 the Williams Committee recommended that growth and development be emphasised in the CAE & TAFE sectors and that universities focus more on research and post-graduate opportunities.

This focus created competition for funding and resources and challenged the role and function of the university. Between 1967 to 1978, growth in student enrolments of almost 60% occurred within the colleges of advanced education. (DEETYA, 1993). In 1977 there were over 100 CAEs and some of these were relatively small in size and as a consequence of increasing funding pressure, the Commonwealth Government set in train a series of amalgamations and reclassifications to reduce the number of CAEs. Many CAEs merged with existing universities or joined to form a new university as in the case of Deakin University.

The 1980s saw a decline in the economy and a subsequent reduction in funding for higher education. This period was of major concern to the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC) as the strain on higher education became more apparent, compounded by continuing increases in enrolments. Growth in the CAE sector caused
tension amongst the institutions, as the larger wanted to differentiate themselves from the smaller CAEs and to achieve the same privileges and status of universities.

The Dawkins era commenced in 1987 when John Dawkins became Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, succeeding Senator Susan Ryan. Minister Dawkins was quick to outline his philosophy and in 1987 released a document outlining the challenges that higher education faced in Australia. This document outlined the Minister's belief that higher education needed to become less reliant on recurrent funding and that it should seek new non-government funding bases and that a reform of institutional management, decision-making, structure and culture needed to occur. (Dawkins, 1987). It was also at this time that the flaws identified with the binary system were addressed by the Minister.

The policy document outlined the need to abandon the binary approach and to move toward a unified system that would be funded on educational profile instead of institutional title. Institutions wanting to participate in the unified system had to have a sustainable EFTSUs base of 2000 although 5000 was considered more realistic. This gave institutions the opportunity to compete for funding based on common performance criteria. These criteria encouraged mergers to occur between CAEs in order to gain mutual benefit from increased efficiency, greater course offerings and increased responsiveness to community trends. (Task Force Report, 1989).

As a result of this policy statement, a Task Force was created in 1988, with a brief to make recommendations on amalgamations within the higher education sector as well as addressing a range of other equally important issues of funding (Task Force Report, 1989). The outcome was a reduction in the number of colleges of advanced education and created an additional twenty universities taking Australia to its current total to 39 universities. No fewer than 16 of these universities had previously been established as CAEs.
A further change of Federal Government and the West Report (1998) saw Minister Vanstone continue the pattern of reduced federal funding and the need for universities to establish new non-traditional funding bases. In keeping with this policy, the 1999-2001 Triennium Report reasserts the Federal Government’s determination to reduce centralisation to promote institutional flexibility and autonomy. The report also discusses the need for the development of strategic directions by individual institutions in line with federal strategies. These Federal strategies included a focus on internationalisation, collaboration, the use of information technology and tailoring programs to suit regional needs. (DETYA, 1999).

The higher education sector has undergone periods of stagnancy, rapid expansion and growth as well as periods of consolidation. These periods have been tempered with differing levels of funding support, competition between institutions and a gradual change from an introspective approach to an outward looking perspective, with acute awareness of the need to be proactive in determining and satisfying community education trends.

The vice-chancellors of the older universities had very different emphases to those of the Principals of the CAEs, some of whom became Foundation Vice-Chancellors when their institutions were granted university status. The nature of the institution, its history and funding base all had a strong influence on the structure and culture of the institution and importantly also upon the requisite competencies of its leader-the vice-chancellor.

The role and approach of a Foundation Vice-Chancellor who was also Principal of the CAE before it became a university, would be vastly different to that of a newly appointed Vice-Chancellor from within the university system when taking leadership of a former CAE. While links between CAEs and universities were strong prior to mergers and university status being granted, there were cultural and educational philosophical differences. CAEs had a strong vocational emphasis and had closer links with the community while universities satisfied a different need and a different sector of the community.
It is therefore reasonable to argue that different institutions have required different leadership and management competencies as a function of their role in the community, their evolutionary stage within the education system, their history, culture and focus. However the merging of universities and CAEs has also allowed a broader range of individuals with different backgrounds to become vice-chancellors, such as Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Pro Vice-Chancellors and Deans from within the system. Separate subordinate strata have created new pathways to the role of vice-chancellor.

Other vice-chancellors have been principals of CAEs that have achieved university status or have come from within the government bureaucracy as this background may have provided valuable knowledge of the ‘system’ and how to best operate within it. Another group of universities has drawn their leadership from industry as a means of acquiring a working knowledge of strategic management and opportunities. However before discussing these issues further, it will be useful to discuss some of the main sector-based issues that have helped the role of the vice-chancellor evolve to the point it has in 2000.

2.5 THE BINARY AND UNIFIED SYSTEMS

The implementation of the binary system in 1965 effectively separated vocational and technical education from the other key institutions in the higher education sector, the university. “The binary system not only prescribed separate educational functions to universities and colleges, but also set in place an elaborate structure that, amongst other things, enforced differential levels of funding”(Meek and Goedegebuure, 1989, page 6).

The Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies recognised in the 1960s that Australian universities were still based on the traditional nineteenth-century model and that the growing social and political pressures for expansion, required major modification to the system. Alternatives to university education were desirable to the government due to budgetary considerations and the emphasis on CAEs, as recommended by the Martin

The initial separation of universities and CAEs allowed each to develop independently and it was hoped they could each focus on different segments of the community seeking access to higher education. However as the Commonwealth Government anticipated growth in student demand for CAEs, appropriate finances were redirected towards this field. The outcome was that universities and CAEs were in direct competition for funding from the same sources although they targeted different community segments.

Another difficulty that arose was the difficulty that the CAEs were disparate in terms of size, background and location. The majority had been technical colleges or teaching colleges with quite narrow and specific areas of education. The Martin Report attempted to contain the development of Advanced Education by creating an umbrella under which non-university colleges could be kept. This allowed better coordination of the development of new programs but also created a place for the specialist institutions such as teachers colleges, schools of nursing and agricultural colleges. (Richardson, 1972).

Other colleges such as Canberra were created to provide a broad range of vocational and professional courses. The Wark Committee in 1969 found that such directions as those undertaken by Canberra were acceptable as universities could be further distinguished from such colleges. Universities could also engage in vocational education but placed a higher priority on the discovery and expansion of knowledge. However later reports such as the Sweeney Report recommended that research be undertaken at colleges, but under stringent supervision and conditions, thus reducing the distinguishing characteristics of CAEs and universities.

The colleges of advanced education under the binary system were operating at different levels with different foci and purposes and were quite often meeting different needs of different segments of the community.
The culture and structure of CAEs varied, however as many moved to provide degree and postgraduate studies and cement a relationship with a university, a new void was created. As colleges moved towards providing higher degrees they were eager to drop their involvement in areas such as apprenticeships and adult education in order to be seen as quasi universities. The Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector filled this gap and in 1977 was included in the tertiary sector under the supervision of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission. (Meek, 1991).

Political ideology and budgetary constraints had created multi-layered education rather than a binary system; Australia developed a ‘trinary’ system of education. This increased competition between the three levels and amongst them for slices of the same budget source. The structure and cultures that emerged were also dependent on the educational ideology of the institution as well as issues such as size, geographical location, student base and scope/focus of programs on offer.

It was no doubt possible for a city-based college such as Canberra, that offered a broad range of programs and higher degree awards, to differentiate itself from a rural college that was previously a teachers college or agricultural college. The structure and culture at Canberra CAE would have been similar to that of a university while the rural CAE would have had an appropriate structure and culture that revolved around a competency based approach.

Further Commonwealth intervention was seen in 1981 when, having created the binary system and its resultant multi-layering, the political ideology and budgetary emphasis were changed again and 30 CAEs were identified by the government and told they had to amalgamate. While merging institutions was intended to achieve program synergy, they were not able to achieve cultural or structural synergy, which created further strains on the leadership of the institutions.
The Dawkins era heralded a different political ideology and budgetary emphasis and radical reform was seen as necessary. Institutions could voluntarily join the new system where growth would be more certain or alternatively they could remain outside the system but would lose access to resources. This period was, according to Meek (1991), when higher education got caught in a web of economic rationalism.

In exchange for joining the unified system, institutions needed to become more economically efficient and more competitive in an open academic market. Institutions were required to strengthen management in line with major private sector Corporations and through improved public accountability. Colleges and universities would need to become more like business enterprises. Statutory coordinating bodies were also reduced in higher education as a means of reducing budget constraints. (Meek, 1991).

The political ideology underpinning the changes was that market driven forces would stimulate growth, efficiency and change. Amalgamations were allowed, not dictated and at this point, Australia’s first private university, Bond University was created and the Australian Catholic University commenced. The marketised approach meant the government wanted fewer institutions overall but wanted those that were left to be larger and more entrepreneurial with less dependence on government funding. These changes are indicative of the neo-liberal philosophy that has been common to both Labor and Liberal Federal Governments since the 1980s. This philosophy has been more pronounced with the Howard government and has underpinned much of its legislative and policy changes.

The incentives of the Hawke government were effective in reducing the number of colleges of advanced education, many of which merged to create new universities. However the need for survival within a politically and economically changing climate was the main force behind the amalgamations rather than the desire to achieve internal
efficiencies and synergy. Again, this brought into direct contact, a diverse range of cultures, philosophies, teaching methodologies, hierarchies, structures and cultures.

The shift to the binary system had caused difficulties for institutional leaders and the change to the unified system did likewise. However amalgamations did not stop, but indeed continued as universities continued to try to become more competitive. One predictable outcome of this was that universities such as VUT and Ballarat merged with TAFE colleges to provide a complete range of educational offerings to the community. This in turn created multi-sectoral and multi-campus universities that provided even more challenges for vice-chancellors.

The older universities in particular were concerned about the rate and type of change. Due to their age, the older universities tend to have a concentration of senior staff in ranges of their middle ranks. As the older universities were at one time the sole residence of tertiary education within their respective communities, they developed specialised courses to suit such as Arts, Science, Agriculture and Dentistry. However as the emphasis changed to vocational and educational courses, the depth and breadth of courses preferred by funding providers such as the Commonwealth, meant acquiring new staff and establishing new programs accordingly (Willett, 1972).

Internally this created new faculties, new hierarchies and also tended to draw away funding from the traditional areas and therefore caused increased competition between faculties for funding. This competition inturn led to increased tension between the staff of older faculties and those of the newer faculties. This horizontal growth created further administrative costs as the older universities resolved to absorb the newer course offerings alongside their existing programs.
2.6 CHANGING UNIVERSITY STRUCTURES

It is clear the universities in Australia have undergone periods of substantial and rapid change while at other times, particularly up to the start of the Second World War, they experienced relatively stable and quiet times. It may therefore be argued that the organisational type and structure of the universities would have changed accordingly.

Organisational Theory provides a range of different models that can be used to describe organisations in relation to their environment and can also be used to highlight the characteristics of such organisations. “It is structure that gives an organization order, system, and many of its distinctive characteristics. The Structure establishes a pattern of authority and collegiality…” (Owens, 1981, page 88).

As indicated earlier, a review of the hierarchy of universities in 1960 found that there were relatively few senior levels between the vice-chancellor and Faculty Deans. If an intermediary existed at all, there were only one or two levels such as Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Deputy Principal. Thus it can be assumed that the university structure was reasonably flat as the vice-chancellor undertook a hands on role. However as universities grew, so too did their complexity and hierarchy.

Several theories have been put forward to explain the nature of the organisation at given times in its evolutionary stages. An early theorist, Max Weber developed a conceptual form of the organisation called the Bureaucracy. The bureaucratic model saw the ‘ideal’ organisation as being characterised by the division of labour, a clearly defined hierarchy, detailed rules and regulations and impersonal relationships.

According to this model, staff were selected on the basis of technical qualifications, demonstrated by education, training or formal examination, while managers were professional officials who worked for fixed salaries, pursued careers within the organisation and were not owners of their work units. Weber stressed that this model was
one that could not be achieved as it was an ‘ideal’ organisation but considered that it was the goal to which successful organisations could aspire. However the model was a response to the inefficient and ineffective organisational forms that he saw in use at that time. (Robbins, Bergman & Stagg, 1997)

The model is most effective in a stable and predictable environment and is weakest in a turbulent and changing environment. It is understandable therefore that in the 1960s, the bureaucratic model was seen as the appropriate model to describe contemporary universities. They were heavily proceduralised, formal and somewhat hierarchical, however it would not be applied beyond this period due to the excessive and constant change occurring.

It is rightly noted however that the model does have a number of deficiencies. It does not explain how policies and purposes are formulated, how governance operates and the origin of power. (Sloper, 1994). Yet in the 1960s and earlier, the level of authority was hierarchical and governance was determined by legislation as it is today. It would therefore appear that while the exactness of the model was inappropriate in earlier periods of university history, the spirit of the model could have applied.

Such a view that, in the past, universities have been legitimately labelled as bureaucratic, gains support from a number of researchers (Baldrige 1978; Blau 1973; Stroup 1966; Kerr & Gade 1986) who have undertaken research into higher education institutions. Related studies also indicate leaders of identifiable bureaucratic institutions tend to be rational with a focus on producing results and defining problems and solutions rather than motivating staff or collegiality. It is not surprising therefore that the same research found that in such instances, academic senates were administratively bound.

The power base was found to be dependent on hierarchical position with the vice-chancellor being seen as the most prominent leader with a supporting competency based hierarchy. Referent and expertise based powers were therefore seen to reside within the
role of the vice-chancellor within ‘bureaucratic’ universities. The research also indicated that while the charismatic or heroic leader appeared to be cherished by contemporary ‘bureaucratic’ universities, the role was actually more concerned with motivation and gaining commitment while the administrative functions have been delegated to an increased number of administrative support officers.

An alternative to the bureaucratic model is the Collegium. The collegiate model assumes that all members of the organisation have equal status and that governance is by consensus. Behaviour is determined by group norms and professional competence and standing are considered the keys to peer acceptance and inclusion in the shared power/status base.

Leaders within the collegiate are selected by peers, as they are believed to have superior professional competence and personal qualities. They are elected for limited terms to serve the interests of the collegiate and achieve desired goals through influence, discussion and persuasion and by sharing the decision-making. (Bensimon, Neuman & Birnbaum, 1989).

Certainly the involvement of academics in decision-making regarding teaching and research, has been verified through comparative studies by de Boer and Goedegebuure (1995). The same study found that the selection of new administrators and professorial staff was reasonably decentralised to the appropriate bodies rather than centralised, with Councils playing a predominant role.

However more recent research has indicated that the perceived degree of collegiality, at least within the eighteen Australian universities that participated in the study, was relatively low. McInnes (1998) reports that of the 1621 academics that were surveyed 46% disagreed with the statement that collegiality in their university was strong. These findings support the assertion by Baldrige (1982) that collegial governance has been a universal myth that if practised at all, was extremely rare.
The perception of the collegium with perhaps limited shared governance and control of basic relevant fields such as research and teaching is reminiscent of Friedman's limited autonomy. This form of control creates the perception that participants have autonomy while in effect it is a form of focussed control that provides limited autonomy within clear parameters.

The collegiate model based upon academic equality and freedom has been further eroded by Federal Government ideology and interventionist strategies. The outcome is the managed university that is built around standardization of teaching, learning and research in order to meet market based demand, which leads to the greater erosion of collegiality and the collegium model. (Marginson 1997; Seddon 1997; Baldrige 1981). The collegiate model has therefore been abandoned in favor of managerialism that allows a more appropriate structure and control to meet the demands of external pressures.

Thus while Marginson and others would argue that the collegiate model is non-existent or at least severely eroded in contemporary Australian universities the characteristics of leaders in this particular system can be inferred. Vice-Chancellors in this model would gain their 'authority' through their ability to orchestrate consultation. They would also use processes and structures that involve staff who would be most affected by the decisions made. Those small US universities that have been identified as collegial have been found to have positive campus outcomes, however conflict arises between the university leader and faculty leaders who have different roles and philosophies. (Bensimon, Neumann & Birnbaum, 1989).

However as universities consist of faculties and schools that are now in direct competition for resources, different cultures and leadership traits can form. These can present difficulties to the collegiate based vice-chancellor who seeks participation and agreement on goals, priorities, outcomes and approaches. Thus for a pure collegiate model to exist consensus must not only be achieved but also comparable participative leadership styles
throughout all academic and administrative areas of a university, must also exist. While this is extremely difficult to achieve, consensus can also be viewed as an absence of strong centralised leadership from the vice-chancellor.

The dualistic nature of the role of vice-chancellor as chief academic and organisational CEO can therefore cause conflict which undermines attempts to achieve consensus and a true collegiate based university. Hence the perception that the collegial approach is an attempt to make outcomes appear rational rather than political in nature. Certainly existing economic and competitive forces would put such a model under severe strain.

The third model that has been discussed in terms of higher education is the Political model. The focus in this system is on developing and implementing processes that commit the organization to specific goals and by setting appropriate strategies to achieve them. Conflict is a normal condition and increases as resources become scarce. Policy making is left to administrators and participation is fluid as participants move in and out of the decision-making process while those who are persistent will be successful. The persistent also become the political elite who determine most of the decisions. Formal authority can therefore be severely limited by pressure from the various stakeholders.

The creation of a political elite causes a separation of power and influence that does not necessarily equate with role or position. Such inequity between faculty/school heads causes conflict in the equitable distribution of resources, the resolution of issues and the determination of critical issues. Thus personal and professional relationships can be affected as participants move from the ‘elite group’ to the ‘non-elite group’ depending upon importance to the leader and the issues. As long term unresolved concerns arise and go unchecked the more disenfranchised participants become.

Within this framework, the leader becomes the negotiator, mediator or the key catalyst. Such leaders are willing to compromise on means but not on ends, they will concentrate on building support from stakeholders, establishing joint objectives and fostering respect.
Their power is based on the control of information and the manipulation of expertise rather than from positional authority or outright respect from colleagues. (Whetton 1984: Birnbaum 1988).

A variation of this model is the democratic-political model proposed by Walker (1979) whereby presidents and vice-chancellors are seen as problem solvers rather than bureaucratic decision makers. In this instance problem solvers do not make tough decisions for themselves but instead preside over a process where the power brokers negotiate, compromise and put forward suitable alternative solutions. However leaders pursuing this style need to be sensitive to ‘giving and sharing credit with others’, value patience, perseverance, criticism and fairness. They need to be excellent communicators.

Critics of the political model argue that polycentric authority is not an appropriate set of checks and balances but instead has proven to be a system that is organized to stop things getting done. Others point to the role of the leader in resolving power blocs that are deemed essentially to be a conspiracy against the institutional leader. Such blocs are a means of a united political elite challenging the overriding role of the leader within the established framework and are not uncommon in universities under economic and cultural strain as they are in Australia. (Walker 1979: Kerr and Gade 1989).

The political model is therefore dependent for its success upon monitoring the mood of the campus, appropriate timing of announcements, advanced notice of planned actions, keeping participants informed and the leader personally soliciting support where necessary. It is very dependent upon the interpersonal and communication competencies of the vice-chancellor as well as the incumbent’s political astuteness and ability to judge others accordingly.

This becomes important given the changes to universities in recent times. The academic role has necessarily been widened and the business culture sees management and employees in conflict. The increased multiplicity of demands on academic staff means
that established traditions and practices are no longer appropriate, nor can they be maintained by institutions.

Entrepreneurial activities are desirable as they attract new funding, preferably from non-traditional sources and this conflicts with the academic who views the work relationship as an exchange of salary for intellectual effort. (Moses, 1997). Such realities complicate the effectiveness of the political model on one hand but almost make it essential on the other.

At this point it is worth noting the direct link between the structure of the organization and the appropriate leadership style. The structure and culture of the institution will determine the most appropriate form of leadership necessary in order to be internally efficient and effective in times of stringent change.

Compatibility between institutional leader and internal structure and culture would therefore be expected to be high in terms of selection criteria of a vice-chancellor. This in turn would logically necessitate a selection panel to determine the type of structure and culture at present as well as the forms Council and other stakeholders such as governments deem necessary. Failing the establishment of this knowledge base, a selection panel may set forth to find an individual who can determine and achieve the most effective internal forms. Such actions concentrate predominantly on the internal while the strategic and external interface issues then need to be imbedded into the incumbent’s role and traits.

The fourth model that pertains to higher education is the Organized Anarchy or Symbolic model where the role of the leader is even more prominent. In this model, the leader is more subtle and uses negotiation and facilitation to channel activities. The incumbent provides a sense of purpose and orderliness through interpretation, elaboration and most importantly through the reinforcement of the institution’s culture. (Baldrige 1978: March 1982).
This model requires leaders to adopt a certain style or approach in order to create the appropriate structure and culture. This approach includes being persistent in order to avoid ultimate rejection of ideas, suppressing the need for sole recognition by allowing others to share in the credit, overloading the system with proposals to decrease close scrutiny and by engaging in incremental rather than large scale change.

Other suggested tactics include seeking active participation in problem solving by critics and opponents in order to reduce expressions of discontent, providing mechanisms to resolve associated but minor issues that can distract from the concentration on key issues and by ensuring the minutes of meetings and other records are prepared long enough after the event so that they can be written to appear consistent with present directions and activities. (Cohen and March 1974).

Because this model emphasizes the expressive side of the organization rather than the imposition of rational control it is subject to major criticisms such as the lack of strong directive leadership. However the support infrastructure needed in this model has to be highly effective as the number of issues to be resolved is high and the actual time frame to reach resolution can be slow.

Success is less dependent upon political status and more on persistence and compromise, but issues would be treated equitably. In order to resolve issues quickly, participants would push hard to have issues aired so that some action would be taken and to expedite that action compromise would allow at least a partial resolution to take place. The increased need for effective administrative support and a focus on negotiation and processes and procedures to air and resolve issues appears common in universities and research by Dill (1984) who also found this model to be quite common in the US.

While the four models discussed to date form the basis for the bulk of structural research in higher education, it has been noted that differentiation between the models can be
difficult as they share common components. It should also be stated that a university may experience each of the preceding models depending upon its size, location, direction, evolutionary stage and other characteristics. Thus the cybernetic system has been proposed as a means of integrating key components of these individual models.

“Within this model, institutions are seen as controlled in part by negative feedback loops created and reinforced in the institution’s (bureaucratic) structure and negative feedback loops created and reinforced in the institution’s (collegial) social system. The balance and relative importance of these loops are mediated by systems of (political) power and cultural and cognitive (symbolic) elements unique to the institution.” (Bensimon, Neumann & Birnbaum, 1989, page 63).

In this model, the role of the leader is much more complex as he/she must move between the requirements of the individual models depending upon the needs of the situation and the organization. This situational model requires the leader to have a thorough knowledge of both the expressive and cognitive sides of the institution, the infrastructure, culture, power brokers and other stakeholders. Such an organization as this would most definitely need the dualistic role of vice-chancellor as chief academic and CEO in order to provide the flexibility to respond to the various situations that arise.

The structure of such institutions would need to be developed so that it was supportive of a leader that monitored and intervened only when necessary. A leader that adopts a low profile depends on administrative and structural support that has adequate processes and procedures in place to ‘run themselves’. With appropriate structures and support in place the VC would not only be able to monitor and intervene when necessary, but it would also allow the incumbent to concentrate on the strategic development of the institution. This would contrast with those incumbents who are more heavily involved in the day-to-day tasks associated with a large university.
In this instance, characteristics of the university would perhaps be indicated by a number of Deputy Vice-Chancellors charged with specific functions and supported by Pro Vice-Chancellors and Directors, responsibilities would be determined by the VC and a degree of autonomy granted to each incumbent in order to fulfill their roles. Below this level would be the Faculty Deans responsible for schools and their respective heads. This type of structure is extremely common in the larger Australian universities that have undergone change in response to both external and internal pressures and competitive forces.

Within the framework of each of the models discussed, each university has also adopted an appropriate hierarchical structure. All Australian Universities operate either on a faculty or school basis and are supported by service branches and administrative functions and in fact there is minimal variation within these approaches. It is interesting to note that, as expected, larger universities have a hierarchical and mechanistic structure, while the smaller universities are flatter, more fluid in nature and executives have smaller spans of control. Some universities such as Ballarat have attempted to pursue a matrix approach but with varying degrees of success.

The models that have been discussed are those that are most commonly used to discern the unique characteristics of higher education throughout the world. They are appropriate because they allow for the uniqueness of the sector, however Organizational Behaviour Theory contains a number of generic models that could also be used to discuss the structure of universities.

The standard definition of a mechanistic organization is that it is characterized by higher levels of bureaucratic control, rigid hierarchical relationships, fixed duties, high formalization, formal communication channels and centralized decisional authority. In this sense the definition would apply to most if not all universities in Australia as per previous discussion.
The organic organization however involves both horizontal and vertical collaboration, more flexible and adaptable duties, low levels of formalization, informal modes of communication and decentralized decisional authority. This type of organization is often referred to as an adhocracy and is associated with organizations moving towards reengineering or becoming learning organizations, neither of which are characteristics of Australian Universities. (Robbins, Bergman, Stagg, 1997)

2.7 CHANGING ROLES WITHIN UNIVERSITIES

As the environment in which universities operate becomes more complex and more dynamic, it is not only internal structures that have changed in response but the rate and scope of change has meant that roles of various participants has changed as well. The impact of increased competition between universities for diminished funding, government interventionist strategies and attempts to marketise higher education in Australia have caused concern and even more change.

At the macro level, universities must seek access to non-traditional funding bases and attract traditional funding for innovative and entrepreneurial-based educational activities. DETYA accountability is based upon such strategic initiatives and thus universities are seeking to extend their student base by entering into offshore markets to provide a range of education services. They are being asked to more closely resemble corporatised organizations in the private sector, to reduce costs and to be more income self-sufficient and economically aware. Such attempts to be self-reliant are evidenced by the University of Melbourne’s public float of its IT Company in 2000 and the establishment of Melbourne Private, however both are enjoying only limited success at present.

The result of these forces is internal change. If universities are regarded as professional organizations, then academics may be regarded as professionals with the necessary autonomy to adequately carry out their tasks. Traditionally these tasks have included teaching, research, administration and public service with high levels of self-regulation,
autonomy and flexibility. Surveys in Australia have always found that university academicians work particularly long hours. (McInnes, 1992; Meek 1995).

A dichotomy therefore exists between professional autonomy and attempts to introduce managerialism (and management prerogative) and corporatisation. The imposition of structure on a professional organization creates conflict of interest and confusion about roles.

Role ambiguity is further strengthened as universities become larger, more complex and therefore more reliant upon administrative services. Universities are constructed around faculties/schools with groups of academics in specific disciplines charged with achieving the traditional functions mentioned previously.

However each discipline and each school/faculty is in direct competition for the same scarce resources, which conflicts with the collegiate model, but in turn promotes competition at the fundamental academic levels. As economic pressures impact at this level, competition for tenure increases and entrepreneurial academics may be favoured in such a situation compared to a traditional academic. Also the move towards fee-for-service education created the need for academics to adopt a customer service approach rather than a focus on the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge. (Marginson, 1996).

At another level, Deans and Heads of Schools (HoS) are also under new pressure as they become the interface between the changes occurring with both their staff and their own superiors. Deans and Heads have administrative authority and positional authority however they must deal with staff enjoying professional autonomy and authority. Therefore trying to change the traditional culture may become a priority in order to align organizational goals with faculty/school goals and individual academic goals. The role of Dean may be made more burdensome as such senior staff usually hold professorial status and received this due to competence in the ‘traditional’ culture of universities. (Henninger, 1998).
Deans therefore receive multifaceted requests that often compete and put them in direct conflict with either their subordinates or superiors. The dualistic nature of the role is similar to that of vice-chancellor and would impact upon all professorial staff who are expected to take on both an academic and administrative leadership roles. Henninger (1998) argues that the complex role of Dean has become even important as they necessarily take on the role of change agent in order to solicit subordinate support for new institutional imperatives.

As the role of the professoriate changes in response to both upward and downward pressure, the collective of such staff, the academic senate/council or board, has also changed. Prior to the Dawkins era, the professoriate undertook the role of academic guardian, however more recently, structural changes and institutional survival have created a conflict between the academic rigor of programs and research, and the need to provide customer driven programs and activities, often at short notice.

Again as institutions have increased in size and complexity, a separate administrative hierarchy has blossomed along side the academic side. As managerialism and corporatisation have increased, the administrative functions have increased in power and authority, often to relieve senior academics of such responsibilities. The result is a higher degree of reliance by academicians on administrative functions.

The role of the academic senate has therefore been diluted as the expanded administrative functions take on greater responsibility for the business and reduce many of the academic roles to administratively controlled functions. The ability of the academic senate therefore is diminished as its role in the more substantive business and strategic issues is further eroded.

Nevertheless, the senate plays an important role in preparing participants for academic leadership but does not assist in preparing them for the multiplicity of conflicting tasks and outcomes that will eventually be expected of them. (Trow, 1990).
The changed roles that have been discussed are not indicative of specific changes unique to those roles. Instead they are indicative of the changes occurring at both the higher education sector level and at individual university level. They are indicative of the dualism that has been introduced into the sector and in terms of role ambiguity, subordinate roles reflect the ambiguous nature of the vice-chancellor.

2.8 THE EVOLVING CULTURE

The culture that results from the change caused by the forces discussed in the preceding sections is one that is still evolving and defining itself. It is therefore necessary to discuss the causes of change as well as the outcomes of change in order to understand the context within which vice-chancellors operate. In fact researchers point to the role of good academics in broaching new frontiers and extending knowledge across political, geographical and technological boundaries. (van Ginkel, 1995).

Organizational culture can be defined as a system of ‘shared meaning’ that largely determines how employees act. There can be an overall culture and several sub-cultures in large organizations and hence an in-depth discussion of culture may be quite complex. In higher education there is evidence that institutions have tried to create an appropriate culture amongst staff using a variety of mechanisms. As could be expected, the recruitment and selection processes allow senior staff to convey ‘acceptable standards and practices’ to potential and new staff.

This can take the form of specifying desirable qualifications, relevant experience, research interests, career and promotion prospects and the ability to contribute to institutional goals and objectives. In short, these form a part of the offer of employment and therefore there is an expectation of compliance. Lack of compliance can also be penalized where necessary. (Potts, 1997).
In order to stimulate conformity amongst existing staff it is postulated by the same research that a number of sanctions and rewards, including promotion can be used effectively. Potts (1997) found that survey respondents believed that higher qualifications were almost mandatory for promotion and that this had become an accepted part of the value systems of their respective institutions.

Culture can also be reinforced by determining which areas of a university will be funded and those where funding will be decreased or withdrawn. This is normally undertaken based upon the strategic directions desired by the institution and favourability communicated to staff via funding. The incentive is then made clear to staff if they wish to increase their value to the university and certainly staff approaching their mid-fifties would be so motivated to avoid involuntary early retirement.

The attempt by institutional management to seek conformity (appropriate culture) is therefore a function of the external forces acting upon the university such as government funding and intervention, global competition as well as a determination to align internal direction and activities to meet perceived challenges. While a common cultural thread may permeate higher education, each institution will develop a specific culture unique to its direction and purpose depending on whether it is a liberal arts university, research institution or a vocational or hybrid institution.

It has been noted that this period of transition has resulted overall in increased unionization, and a more intense period of enterprise bargaining and industrial conflict. This is against the backdrop of the education community and academics trying to reconceptualise what is now meant by the term ‘university’. The role of the academic has been broadened and is now more entrepreneurial and commercially oriented and the role of the academic as the repository of intellectual property is now being challenged. The new infrastructures that have evolved to cope with the change create an administrative dependence and can both help or hinder academic autonomy and advancement.
The academic must now face quality audits, is now more accountable and employment conditions are now more highly regulated. The challenges facing academics include developing new curricula, new methods of face-to-face and distance delivery, engaging in interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary studies and coping with advancements in information and communication technology. (Moses 1997: Harman 1997).

Thus as each university in Australia decides what type of university it is, what its strengths and strategic directions are, then they will begin to deal with each of these issues and ideally an appropriate culture will be formed accordingly. Central to the formation of this culture is the vice-chancellor, who has responsibility for ensuring the achievement of internal strategic directions as well as meeting external accountabilities and levels of performance to underwrite the university’s funding base. (Pennington, 1997).

The dualistic nature of the position of vice-chancellor places the incumbent in a critical position. On the one hand the person is vice-chancellor and therefore the chief academic of the institution and charged with maintaining academic rigor, the integrity of programs and the reputation of the university as a quality provider of education.

However the role of Chief Executive Officer means the person is charged with the responsibility of economic sustainability, external financial and overall performance accountability and the strategic development of the business. Often the business culture and the academic culture can be in conflict and hence the pivotal role of the vice-chancellor becomes imperative to organizational success as the incumbent is responsible for the ultimate direction of the university and the resolution of internal conflict.

2.9 THE ADVENT OF MANAGERIALISM

The term ‘managerialism’ refers to an ideological belief in the effective management of organizations. In the Australian higher education context, it refers to the belief that
effective and efficient management practices, beliefs and values can be successfully applied to universities and other institutions so that they can ‘self-govern’ within limitations set by government. There are two distinct forms that managerialism can take: soft and hard, however in Australia the two forms are rarely differentiated.

“The soft concept sees managerial effectiveness as an important element in the provision of higher education of high quality at lowest cost: it is focused around the idea of improving the “efficiency” of the existing institutions. The hard conception elevates institutional and system management to a dominant position in higher education: its advocates argue that higher education must be reshaped and reformed by the introduction of management systems which then become a continuing force ensuring the steady improvement in the provision of higher education.” (Trow, 1994, page 13).

Managerialism in professional organizations leads to the potential conflict between quality and cost, control and autonomy, institutional ‘freedom’ and accountability. Also in order to ensure that managerialism is appropriate and used in accord with government directives, a number of incentives and sanctions can be implemented in order to ensure some degree of compliance. In Australia, these are controlled by the Federal Government, which uses decreased recurrent funding and a system of competitive bidding in order to achieve the underlying neo-liberal philosophies.

The concept was introduced in Australia along with the unified system during the Dawkins period. The Federal Government was aware that the binary approach had not worked and also of the trend towards an increased student base across all sectors of post-secondary education. The government was also acutely aware that despite prioritizing funding, as previously discussed, there was a limited amount of funding available that could be directed to the education sector to meet the increased demand. This followed the lead in Britain where the government released a white paper on Higher Education in 1991 that predominately supported the hard managerialism approach.
The overseas trend toward managerialism in higher education offered the Australian government an opportunity to deal with long term funding and structural issues. Creating the business leader of a university or CEO allowed the government to provide universities with greater scope but also allowed them to hold universities more accountable for their business activities.

The dual role of the vice-chancellor created a degree of comparability between universities and their private sector counterparts and the government was then able to demand that in exchange for the increased scope over activities, the CEO should also be held accountable for institutional performance against DETYA criteria. Also the device of guaranteed funding was a strong incentive to adopt increased responsibility and accountability.

Government policy documents in the form of the Review of Efficiency and Effectiveness in Higher Education (1986), the Green (1987) and White (1988) papers and the Performance Indicators in Higher Education (1991) all clearly indicated the direction that the sector was going to take and the corporate ‘ethos’ that was coming. The promise of greater flexibility in exchange for greater accountability and the impact on staffing conditions (casualisation) to contain costs provided the guiding principles for institutions that wished to participate. (Bradley, 1995).

The notion of cost effectiveness led initially to casualisation in some segments of some universities and hence Bradley (1995) also reports that the main ‘corporate’ concern of department heads were the internal competition for resources and the effective management of their budgets. The corporate ethos also saw the increase in the need for highly structured administrative functions. In 1996, the newly appointed Federal Liberal Government did not abate the trend toward managerialism but instead accelerated the process and reduced the total budget available to the higher education sector.
The impact of this was increased competition between universities for reduced recurrent funding and intensified the desire to increase overseas full fee-paying student numbers as well as conducting programs overseas. Other initiatives included delivering programs electronically as well as universities such as Deakin, giving increased attention to their commercial arms as a means of generating additional funding.

The momentum continued and internal funding was transferred from a very opaque approach to a standardized approach using formulae similar to DETYA. Formulae were introduced in many institutions where performance and potential were rewarded and new internal policies and procedural mechanisms were introduced in order to ensure funding went to the appropriate areas.

Formulae based on quality and performance were seen as being more transparent and internally, faculty/schools had to justify their claims based on agreed criteria rather than more vague criteria. A replication of the corporate sector was in place. (Piper, 1995).

The reduction of funding and the scope for greater self-governance also imposed a responsibility for institutions taking more responsibility for their long-term development and being held accountable for it. This necessitated particular attention to revenue-generating activities and non-revenue-generating activities such as cost minimization programs, the determination of a mission statement, goals and objectives and strategic direction.

The respective administrative functions grew and the corporate ethos was in place and the clash of academic and business cultures could then be dealt with. Further decentralization only served to increase the momentum and competitive grants and government performance indicators reinforced the trend.

However the advent of managerialism required vice-chancellors to display competencies in areas many that had not been exposed to previously, such as the development of a
complete formal strategic business plan. It also meant that many found the CEO aspect the most difficult part of their role despite having achieved their positions because of their excellence in academia. This prompted one respondent to the research questionnaire to comment that at present ‘Vice-Chancellors are academics first and CEO’s second. This will reverse.’

In terms of soft or hard managerialism, researchers in the field support the belief that Australian higher education has adopted the hard approach. Research by Marginson, Bessant, Considine and Boston (1996) focused on three areas of higher education reform: economic, knowledge and power in Australian universities. In line with declining funding bases and a scarcity of resources, they found a sharp decline, compared to historic standards, in student-staff ratios indicating drastically reduced staff numbers. (Marginson, 1996).

A form of economic rationalism was introduced that assumed university objectives could be reduced to economic inputs and outputs and hence the application of formulae. However Marginson argues that qualitative objectives cannot necessarily be reduced in this way and that in fact because they do not meet the newly established criteria, are often factored out of the equation. It is also argued that those with less than a contextual knowledge of contemporary management practices would adopt the Fayol approach of planning, leading, organizing and controlling.

In order to internally reform university structure, culture and practices, Marginson (1996) argues that there has been a greater emphasis on the aspect of management control in order to establish a relationship of power. This business culture then conflicts with professional academic freedom, but the issue can only be resolved internally rather than via further Federal Government intervention. Thus the funding base means that senior university staff must deal with such problems in order to sustain funding.
To some extent the situation becomes circular as vice-chancellors strive to restore balance. However the added dimension to their role makes the position more complex and makes the selection of an appropriate candidate an imperative for institutional survival. The comment referred to previously illustrates the perception that the role of CEO is overtaking that of the chief academic as it is the business side of being a university that must be addressed. Thus incumbents with a greater array of competencies are sought for the role.

2.10 THE IMPACT OF FUNDING CUTS

While the concepts of managerialism and economic deregulation in higher education were introduced during the Dawkins era, it was not until the Liberal Government was elected in 1996, that the concepts were not only fully implemented but they were accelerated. In part this was due to trends overseas and in part it was due to the recommendations of the West Report. In August 1996, Roderick West was appointed by the government to make recommendations on higher education policy and funding for the next two decades and the final report was tabled in 1998.

The Report adopted a hard managerialist approach and supported the creation of a fully-fledged economic market in higher education with a focus on low cost, high volume forms of program delivery such as technology-based distance education. It also adopted a consumer approach by suggesting that the buyer-seller relationship would allow any difficulties regarding quality and content of programs, to be resolved. An ideal-market model was proposed that could be used to guide institutions in the sector and a shift toward this model could be facilitated by a commitment to economic deregulation. (Marginson, 1998).

Previous reports such as the Martin Report saw public education as necessarily being funded by the government, however the West Report adopted a more radical approach in
that it made several recommendations that were out of step with previous reports. These included

- Giving institutions limited ability to set their own fee, subject to a cap
- Government subsidies would be extended to accredited private universities
- Government funding would be based on realised student demand
- All schools leavers and eligible mature age students would be entitled to government funding, exchangeable at any institution. (West Report, 1998).

While the Report maintained that government funding should be maintained, the discussion regarding university determined fees and subsidies instead of direct grants gave avenues for the reduction of government funding levels. The HECS system was seen as a useful approach to attracting a continual student base and a further move to massification and decline in elitism in higher education. The spirit of the recommendations to decrease reliance on government funding was in the spirit of the neoliberal philosophy underlying much of government policy.

The reduction of government funding became the catalyst for the acceptance of change within higher education and at the university level. However these changes were not solely directed at education, instead they formed part of the overall economic reform strategy designed to reduce spending across the public sector in order to address national economic decline. Thus certain aspects of government funding were targeted for reduction and in the case of education, alternatives to full government funding dependence were reviewed. (Dixon et al, 1996).

The shift in the economic paradigm had economic rationalism as its basis. This assumed that any government intervention in the workings of markets always produces a worse situation than no intervention at all. Alongside this belief is the view that an economy’s performance can be enhanced by exposing as much of it as possible to market forces. The introduction of managerialism made the concept of economic rationalism easier to introduce and the compatibility of the two concepts was also assisted.
The impact of the economic reform was felt at many levels. Certainly less funding meant that institutions had to become more entrepreneurial and innovative. However at a deeper level, the changes resulted in ‘instrumentalism’, exposure of educational services to direct market forces and a new level of accountability. Instrumentalism refers to the emphasis on enhancing economic performance by the introduction of education reforms in higher education.

Many of these reforms have already been mentioned but they include the establishment of the unified national system, the development of formulae for funding teaching activities, competitive research funding, fee for service courses, the development of new programs, cost effective delivery methodologies and the like. In terms of market forces, the change challenged the view that education services were unique or distinctive and therefore not subject to market forces of supply and demand or direct competition. The prevailing view changed to treating education like any other marketable service and using government funding to subsidize on the grounds of equity or externalities where necessary. (Karmel, 1995).

Accountability can take two different forms. The first form of accountability is the accountability to the government in exchange for greater control over financial and other resources and future direction. This was a part of the expectation that participating universities agree to the different forms of economic and performance criteria, thereby providing the government with a greater power base and making universities accountable for their own actions.

The second form of accountability is within the market framework. In this sense, universities are accountable to market participants and stakeholders. A market orientation is also associated with a customer focus in order to be competitive and hence issues of quality and cost become as important as content. Also increased competition from local and overseas universities ensures that an entrepreneurial spirit is imbedded in the culture
of the institution that wishes to differentiate itself from like institutions, based on quality, cost, convenience and issues likely to sustain the desirable market share.

Other stakeholders in the market include all potential students, other local and overseas universities, the increasing number of accredited private providers, corporate universities such as the Coles Institute at Deakin University, state governments, various industries and the community as a whole. In order to maintain market accountability, universities will accept quality audits and set performance criteria in order to illustrate their competence in the provision of education services.

The role of the vice-chancellor becomes critical in establishing new directions for a university and resolving the issue of quality and cost, internal accountability and academic freedom. The incumbent is also responsible for marketing the new concepts internally and seeking academic support for agreed goals and objectives. Again this role becomes critical to the success of a university in the recent reformist era. The competency base, experience and knowledge of the incumbent become important in regard to selection criteria for prospective vice-chancellors.

The introduction of government funding cuts had a far deeper impact on the higher education sector than was originally anticipated. It allowed an acceptance of a market-driven philosophy to be embraced together with a degree of self-regulation. At the same time and from a political perspective a clear message was sent to the broader community that education would be treated like any other asset/expense, as an economic commodity. While similar changes occurred in other areas such as health, the message was the same, that major reforms with an economic basis would be introduced.

The desired impact was achieved as it introduced concepts that had previously not been applied to the higher education sector. Self-governance came at the price of greater accountability. However the aim was to deregulate and reform the sector and to provide a range of incentives to stimulate universities towards excellence. In this regard the
government has reduced funding to the sector and caused participants to find alternate sources of funding and to restructure their institutions. Without regard to the appropriateness of the actions taken by the government, the overall aims have been largely met.

2.11 THE IMPACT OF THE GOVERNMENT

Different state and federal governments that are elected bring with them their own ideological perspectives, beliefs and value systems which are then translated into policy decisions that set in train mechanisms to achieve desired outcomes. The changes that are regularly made by governments in many instances are relatively minor.

However the major changes that have impacted upon the higher education sector are those of an ideological nature such as the change from elitist education to massification, the introduction and abolition of the binary system. Other major changes include the introduction of the unified system, self-governance and deregulation and the introduction of managerialism, corporatism and economic rationalism.

Universities are vital to the social, cultural, economic and scientific development of the nation. They provide important scholarship in the way of discovering, preserving, refining, applying and disseminating knowledge for use by governments, industries and the community as a whole and provide a sustainable global competitive advantage. It is therefore in Australia’s best interests to develop an internationally competitive knowledge-based economy with highly competent graduates as its foundation. (Gale, 1997). Certainly the most recent ideologically based changes are considered to be the most radical.

However higher education and universities are regularly subjected to change due to global pressure and international competitiveness. Yet due to their importance to the community as a whole, governments have been reluctant to make anything other than moderate
changes. The major ideological based changes that have been made have generally followed overseas trends either from Britain or more recently from the US.

The early impact on vice-chancellors in 1996-97 was also interesting as they tackled the outcome of the changes in the form of negotiations with staff. The very practical outcome was the reduction of funding and the need for universities to confront issues of staffing levels, tenure, salary increases and cost containment. During this period, several vice-chancellors received votes of no confidence, as programs were cut and the process of restructuring commenced. Two vice-chancellors resigned from universities experiencing financial difficulties, indicating the personal and professional confrontation that occurred for senior academics. (Sharpham, 1997).

It should be noted that historically Australia is at the bottom of the OECD in the proportion of GDP, which goes to public expenditure, and it was generally accepted that the taxation system in place prior to the introduction of the GST, was a mechanism that prohibited increased funding. The changes made by successive Federal Governments are also reflective of changes made by state governments in terms of privatization and opening up utilities for sale and outsourcing. Therefore the philosophy and concepts implemented post 1996 by the federal government are not unique to the federal arena or to a particular political party. (Aitkin, 1997).

One of the key issues that has come out of these changes has been the renewed healthy discussion about the nature, role and purpose of an Australian University. Irrespective of government philosophy and policy, it has been argued that universities have distinctive characteristics. While issues such as structure, managerialism and economic rationalism may cause radical changes overall, the core characteristics will remain intact but perhaps modified. These characteristics include:

- The provision of a wide range of disciplined modes of inquiry, taught at an advanced level and contributed to through research and scholarly work.
As teaching and research complement each other, applied research can be set in the context of relevant general theory.

The core object of the teaching program is to provide an advanced liberal (or general) education for all students and emphasis is placed on the development of intellectual virtues.

Education provides a general utility in relation to practical knowledge and skills, and helps to form a well-rounded individual.

The provision of vocational studies within a theoretical framework.

Decision-making is based on a collegial basis and is appropriate in relation to anything that affects its distinctive work.

Academics should be protected by a special right of freedom in teaching and research. (Crittenden, 1997).

Crittenden (1997) argues that these characteristics are generic and cannot be changed even by major radical reform. The argument continues that these characteristics can be combined in different ways in order to meet the challenges of the future. This is a constructive perspective that views government intervention as impacting upon systems and processes but not necessarily upon the spirit of universities or the ultimate role they play.

Therefore the impact of government interventionist strategies has certainly challenged traditional concepts about higher education and introduced concepts that affect the systems, processes and structural levels. However because there is a deeper conceptual level, it has challenged the stakeholders to redefine fundamentalist beliefs about the role of universities in society. Because Australian universities were developed at different times with different purposes, it is difficult to define all universities in the same way as this would detract from their individually unique characteristics.

The challenge has been for each university to define its own unique characteristics, its strengths and future direction. This may be difficult for former CAEs’ that have a
vocational approach, unlike their sandstone cousins. Regionally based universities face the task of satisfying specific needs relevant to their region and therefore lack the true diversity of larger capital city based universities and are less likely to have a substantial research record.

The impact of both state and federal government ideologies therefore maintains higher education in a state of perpetual change, but more recently the type of change has been more radical and the rate of change has increased significantly. Certainly the results of the federal election in 2001 may see a change of policy again, however as both major parties share a commitment to neo-liberalism, it is unlikely that the underlying concepts would change dramatically. Yet with an easing of the pressure of government revenue generation, maintenance or even a slight increase in funding to higher education may be likely.

The deeper impact of government ideological reform is felt most at the conceptual and fundamental levels where universities may need to redefine themselves and their future roles in society. This will also cause stakeholders to determine the role and type of leadership best suited to lead that specific university. Also as funding is symptomatic of a deeper conceptual government framework, government strategies will take the lead in determining the role of higher education and potentially for individual universities. Again this highlights the critical role of the vice-chancellor.

2.12 GLOBAL CHANGES

Historically changes that have occurred to universities in Australia have been as a result of similar changes in universities overseas. Predominantly Australian higher education has followed similar changes in the UK and more recently the US. This has been as a result of the small population size of Australia and reflects the fact that major trends are developed in countries with greater population density and with larger more experienced
universities. Australian governments and universities have followed overseas trends rather than led them.

Certainly in the case of managerialism, the UK and the US were well advanced down this road prior to Australia following the trend. The research undertaken by Trow (1994) provided a sound foundation for the basis of redirecting Australia’s higher education to a similar direction. Canada, New Zealand and OECD Europe have also adopted the American model of the global university. While Australia still follows Britain, the higher education sectors of both nations follow the US, and the respective governments have restructured their education sectors accordingly.

While Australia is not the only nation to follow overseas trends it does indicate that future trends will no doubt be directly influenced by trends in Britain and the US. This historical trend has led to the argument that it is better for an Australian university to be a ‘second rate’ Harvard or MIT than to try to develop a uniquely Australian approach. In fact it is this approach that leads to the next argument that Australian universities do not have any uniquely Australian characteristics as they are all based predominantly on overseas models. (Marginson, 1996).

The concern expressed by Marginson (1996) is that the models adopted by countries such as Britain and the US may be appropriate for those countries given their size, history, potential student bases and access to government and private sector funds. However Australia has a population of less than 20 million people, has 39 universities and is considered to be an older style economy. The implication is that such models may not be fully transportable into the Australian economy, political system or cultural environment because they lack characteristics unique to Australia.

However it is these same factors that have impeded the growth of some overseas trends. While the number of private universities in other countries have increased, only two have developed in Australia with no government funding. Bond and Notre Dame Australia
have survived against the other thirty-seven universities and the large subsidies that they receive. In this environment these two universities must be conscious of price, quality and cost but have still been able to attract a growing student base and have developed reputations that see continued growth. (Stanley, 1997).

Another popular overseas trend that has gained impetus in Australia is the emphasis that the corporate sector is placing on training and education. It is estimated that in the US in 1995 corporate spending on education was $US 50 billion. However while the corporate sector has been creating strategic alliances with universities, a growing number of large organizations have been investing in their own Corporate Universities that are sponsored by the Training & Development departments of the organization. (Stanley, 1997).

These in many respects provide direct competition to existing universities as the latter are seen as not being able to provide the training and education necessary by organizations today. This trend has picked up momentum in Australia since the creation of the Coles Institute in Melbourne. The Coles Myer group created a strategic partnership with Deakin Australia and graduates receive an internal Coles Myer award and a Deakin University Degree where appropriate. The term ‘University’ can only be awarded by parliament in Australia thus the term ‘Institute’ is used.

Stanley (1997) also points to the use of technology in the provision of educational services, as a growth area internationally. The use of technology in the form of Internet technology such as chat rooms, videoconferencing, videostreaming for lectures and tutorials as well as CD-ROMs open up new opportunities for universities. They also provide opportunities for those who live in isolated communities or who cannot attend classes due to work and other commitments during normal hours. Thus connectivity programs have already commenced in Australia to service these growing opportunities.

However these create new issues for all universities that pursue these same opportunities. While this technology opens up new opportunities for Australian universities, they open
up the same opportunities to all universities throughout the world especially those with
access to sophisticated levels of technology and funds, such as the University of Phoenix,
which can place Australian universities at a distinct disadvantage. The reputation, and
ability to attract large numbers of prospective students, associated with the larger
European and American universities would be difficult to offset by even the most
respected Australian Institutions.

While the use of technology is a growing worldwide trend, any distinctiveness as alluded
to by Marginson (1996) would be lost in a ‘faceless’ education system. It also raises
concerns over access to intellectual property as academics voice concerns about Internet
accessibility especially when US texts are prescribed for courses in domestic universities.
In order to address these questions the role of the academic in the modern university
needs to be addressed, as does the role of the university itself.

In terms of structure and ideological changes, research indicates that Australia is
following overseas trends of the US and the UK. In Britain, universities have undergone
the restructuring that domestic universities are now undergoing. There has been a change
from elitism to massification and there has also been change from a binary system. A
period of expansion (similar to Australia) and a brief period of consolidation followed
this.

Issues such as intellectual values, professional practices and institutional structures,
processes and systems have all been challenged in the early 1990’s. A small number of
universities became ‘elite research universities’ while the balance attempted to find
different niches, as they could not compete on a research basis. Britain has also followed
the US approach as the higher education sector is restructuring along extremely similar
lines, and while Australia lags, it does follow directly. (Mackay, Scott & Smith, 1995).

As well as managerialism, notions of Total Quality Management and Investors In People
and other management programs and practices have become common terms in UK higher
education administration. Universities have determined mission statements, goals and objectives as well as management by objectives. Administrative functions have bloomed and senior academics have adopted planning and strategic management roles and in exchange for greater self-governance, there has been an imposition of increased accountability.

The decentralization of power and authority and the first attempts at deregulation created initial instability in higher education but these principles accompanying managerialism were again symptoms of the neo-liberal philosophies pursued originally by successive US governments and UK governments. The result has been an intensive review of the role and purpose of universities, academics and higher education from both the political and social perspectives.

While these trends continue to dominate the leading global higher education institutions and government philosophies, they will continue to influence comparable higher education institutions in Australia. Perhaps the age of perpetual change will be a characteristic of higher education well into the future as a mechanism to continually challenge accepted practices, processes and concepts. A “Kaizen” approach of this nature is typical of organizations in the corporate sector attempting to continually improve their products and services.

2.13 THE ROLE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR IN CHANGE

One of the constant forces in the preceding discussion has been the dominant facilitative role played by the vice-chancellor as a change agent. The impact of the vice-chancellor can be appreciated when it is considered that had the vice-chancellors of the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne refused to join the Dawkins Unified National System, then it was possible that the Minister may have had to fully re-negotiate national higher education restructuring. The vice-chancellor can either be an agent for change or a barrier to change at the national or institutional level. (Sharpham, 1997).
The vice-chancellor is the interface between government conceptual and practical change, community and overseas trends as well as the academic and business functions of the university. Through involvement with the AVCC, vice-chancellors can discuss major contemporary issues and trends and come to an agreed approach or philosophy. The AVCC being the peak body of vice-chancellors in higher education can then act as a forum to lobby political support or to voice a uniform opinion that individual universities otherwise may not be able to achieve by themselves.

The role, style and personal characteristics of the vice-chancellor therefore become critical in this instance. The vice-chancellor is the person who facilitates the determination of a mission statement, strategic direction, goals and objectives. This in turn means resolving the issue of what the role, purpose and function of a specific university will be and also what type of university it will be. The questions implicit in this also need to be resolved by the chief academic and these questions include; what is the role of the academic? The CEO must resolve the business ethos, administrative bureaucracy issues and the like.

Other issues that need to be resolved are the potential conflict between the business culture and philosophy with the academic culture, autonomy and philosophy. The nature and structure of the organization include being based on a collegial, symbolic or other suitable model and being able to adopt the most appropriate leadership style. The structure of the institution in terms of mechanistic or organic, spans of control, degrees of decentralized authority and responsibility must also be resolved as well as keeping the reputation of the university intact.

Because the role of the vice-chancellor is a boundary spanning role, the incumbent would also be expected to continually scan the external environment, be sensitive to emerging trends and demands and translate these into viable university activities where appropriate. This would mean being active throughout the community and personally being able to
foster a sense of approachability by various segments of the community so the incumbent and university were both seen as active interested and involved members of the community.

The resolution of conflicting internal demands and sensitivity to community trends needs to be done against a backdrop of government policy and philosophy, and therefore the person would need to be politically astute and an able lobbyist able to protect the interests of the university. An awareness of overseas trends particularly in America and Britain but also in New Zealand and Canada and elsewhere would also be necessary to anticipate concepts and reforms yet to be introduced into Australian higher education.

The incumbent would also be expected therefore to effectively contribute beyond the organizational boundaries to Australian higher education overall and government policy. Such contributions not only enhance the reputation of the individual but also the university the person leads and the role of the vice-chancellor itself. This may become somewhat self-fulfilling as more and more is expected as more and more is achieved which may account for the perception of the role and the workload discussed in Chapter 1.

The range of personal characteristics drawn upon by an incumbent vice-chancellor is necessarily extremely broad while the dualist nature of the role increased that range many fold over and draws upon different competencies and knowledge of multiple disciplines and experience. However if the vice-chancellor is the change agent, then the incumbent may need to be able to galvanize support across the university and inevitably this will depend upon the respect for the individual and the office. Alternatively the vice-chancellor may facilitate change and instead of being its champion, may identify another within or external to the institution who can act as change agent and champion the cause with the support of the VC. (Robbins, Bergman & Stagg, 1997).
In either case the competencies of the incumbent VC are called upon. In the latter case, the judgment and decision-making competencies of the VC need to be highly refined in order to identify the nature and type of change required and the best person to facilitate that change. While the support of the vice-chancellor would be necessary where major change is required, the determination of the individual and the resolve of that person is also important in order to achieve success. This is important in a field where change is becoming continuous.

“Current vice-chancellors differ from their predecessors by having to deal with a different rate of change, a different quantum of change, a different industrial climate, a different group of students wanting to come to university from a broader background.”

“Nine years ago my colleagues had to deal with dramatic growth in the system—a quite different matter altogether from cuts and contraction. Fifteen years ago they probably had some time available to sit down to reflect, build and think and grow (they might have thought differently at the time), but I do not know too many colleagues who have that opportunity now—however much we might need it.” (Professor Ian Chubb, Sharpam, 1997, page 81).

Professor Chubb believes that because of the complex range of topics that vice-chancellors are now involved in, their expertise will reside in deciding what advice to take note of, rather than trying to be an expert in all areas. He also reflects that there has been enormous change over the last five years let alone over the last fifteen years. The amount of expert advice available to the VC is therefore important as well as access to the expertise and the management of the knowledge and information systems. The VC also needs a greater range of direct subordinates to whom the incumbent can effectively delegate tasks and be confident of achieving desired outcomes. (Sharpam, 1997).

These comments are reflective of the increasingly complex role played by the vice-chancellor and the multiple complexities of the reformed and emerging higher education
sector in Australia. Certainly Professor Chubb (1997) indicates that he believes the responsibilities of the role will increase as they have continued to do so and that the role is increasing in stature. This view is consistent with that of Penington (1997) who points out the during the Dawkins era, greater management authority was vested in vice-chancellors which in turn gave their respective universities increased freedom as a consequence of vice-chancellors taking on this responsibility.

The role of vice-chancellor becomes critical as a key to social, economic and political reform undertaken by recent governments. However from 2001 there are almost twenty experienced vice-chancellors who will have their positions reassessed. Some of these will remain in positions however others will cease their role and a new vice-chancellor will be appointed as in the case of RMIT and the University of Ballarat.

Given the complexity of the education sector in which they operate and the increased levels of responsibility and authority of the role of vice-chancellor, then the development of effective recruitment and selection strategies to find a new vice-chancellor, become imperative.

Conclusion:

The purpose of this Chapter was to examine the Australian higher education sector to determine the chronology of key events and the key trends that are occurring, their causes and impact. An analysis of the sector was undertaken in order to better understand the history and development of the sector, where it is heading and having constructed the context, finally the role of the vice-chancellor was given within this context.

The key changes that have taken place include the early development of the sandstone universities, the introduction and abolition of the binary system and the unified national system. The development of Colleges of Advanced Education was explored, as was the merger of many of these to form the 39 universities we have today.
Particular attention was given to the Dawkins period and the impact this had on universities. The change of government in 1996 saw the acceleration of neo-liberalism, the introduction of managerialism, economic rationalism which not only caused a change of structure but necessitated a complete redefinition of the role of the university in Australia today and the role of the academic. The type and nature of change was then discussed in order to further highlight the importance of recruiting and selecting an appropriate new vice-chancellor.
Chapter 3

THE ATTRIBUTES OF VICE-CHANCELLORS.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The first Chapter introduced the basic concepts of higher education, universities, recruitment and selection theory, CEOs and the role of vice-chancellors. That Chapter was designed to introduce the key components for this research and to establish the research methodologies to be employed as well as the parameters of the research. Chapter 2 built upon the first Chapter by concentrating on the chronological history of higher education in Australia and the key issues and trends that have helped shape the sector. This was to provide the context regarding the environment in which vice-chancellors operate.

This Chapter will examine the attributes and characteristics of vice-chancellors and the career paths that incumbents have used to ascend to the position. This will assist in determining how people reach the office of vice-chancellor and it will also examine common patterns that may emerge such as age, qualification and other important criteria that have been researched via public domain material. Once the attributes of existing and previous vice-chancellors has been fully discussed and analyzed, these will then be viewed in the context of the environment in which they operate (Chapter 2).

Chapter 3 will then set the context for the environment in which vice-chancellors operate and what we know about them. Chapter 4 will then return to the question of what processes and procedures are used to actually determine the most suitable applicant; what was discovered. Examining the results of questionnaires and interviews with incumbents, previous office bearers and other key stakeholders will achieve this.

The aim of this Chapter is to examine what we actually do know about vice-chancellors.
Much of this information was acquired from various editions of Who's Who in Australia (1960-2000), the AVCC Senior Staff Lists (1970-2000) and the Commonwealth Universities Yearbook (1960-2000). As much data as possible was gathered on vice-chancellors from 1960 to 2000 in five year increments in order to provide as much useful data as possible. Data regarding all incumbents in those years was gathered. Where possible, data was collected from similar sources at similar times (data was collected at the commencement of each of the years surveyed) in order to ensure consistency and to diminish the risk of error or distortion.

However in some instances the data was incomplete and so a review of university media releases was also undertaken to fill in any gaps such as date of birth. University archivists were also contacted but in many instances were reluctant to release further details. Thus some data remains in the ‘unknown’ category. Data in this field was either unobtainable via conventional methodologies, could fit into a number of categories or was vague at best. The absence of minor pieces of data did not adversely impact upon overall trends obtained as it was contained on average to no more than two individuals throughout the sample at any one time. It was anticipated that some data regarding incumbents in the 1960s and 1970s would be difficult to obtain.

A summary of the base data is contained in Appendix E while a complete set of Tables for the data is contained in Appendix F. Appendix G contains a complete list of all senior university staff (position titles) from 1960-2000 in five year increments and Appendix H contains a summary of data collected from universities such as position descriptions, advertisements and other requested material. Universities were also asked to release to the researcher copies of job adverts, selection criteria, a list of questions asked and related material. This data is also summarized in Appendix H.

Where possible, this data was prepared in accordance with the university groupings established by Sloper (1993), however because the increment periods and overall time frame differed from that of Sloper only limited correlation is possible between the results
of the two pieces of research. This collation and analysis of this data allowed the author to measure relations between social variables in accordance with established research methodologies. (Kidder, 1980).

3.2 CATEGORIES OF UNIVERSITIES

The clustering of universities into distinct categories based on foundation periods allows universities to be compared within and between these categories to determine if discernible trends or patterns are evident. Therefore the groupings established by Sloper (1993) were used in this research in order to examine the characteristics of vice-chancellors within these particular bands. It may be appropriate to expect that the older universities may demonstrate varied vice-chancellor characteristics compared to universities more recently established.

Various characteristics were analyzed in order to determine if such trends were apparent, however not all characteristics were analyzed within the clusters as they were deemed to be common to all vice-chancellors across all categories such as professorial status. It was possible to determine the mean not only within bands of universities but also summary means to indicate macro trends across the sector. In some instances there were major fluctuations as in the case of tenure, where the appointment of three-five new vice-chancellors with tenure of a year or less, would drastically reduce the overall mean for that year and give a highly skewed outcome. However, allowing for these there were still distinct trends apparent.

The first characteristic to be examined involved the ages of vice-chancellors. These were analyzed not only across the five clusters of universities but also from 1960 to 2000 in five-year incremental periods. The five university clusters follow those given in Appendix A. This material is presented in Table 3.1.
Table 3.1. The mean age when incumbents became vice-chancellor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>19th C</th>
<th>Early 20th</th>
<th>Post War</th>
<th>New</th>
<th>Post 1988</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>51.25</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>55.25</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>53.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>53.25</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>56.25</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>49.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the exception of 1985, the 19th Century universities show an overall gradual but incremental increase. The vice-chancellors in this group were relatively young when appointed to their roles, however the 1990 mean returns to the expected pattern indicating that either many left the sector, or that they moved to take up similar roles in the newly formed universities (Post 1988). Vice-Chancellors in the ‘New’ groupings were all appointed when relatively young and this band certainly has the overall youngest vice-chancellors except for 1965-1975 when they were striving to establish their own reputation, credibility and niche.

The age of appointees in the Early 20th Century and Postwar groups, indicates that appointees in these groupings show a steady increase in age when appointed, particularly as eligible staff in the 19th Century group move to vice-chancellors’ roles, as such roles become more competitive in their own band. This is most notable in the ‘Post 1988’ group in 1995, when vacancies were filled by those from other bands where promotion was both highly competitive and slow.

The overall mean also indicates that incumbents have been appointed at incrementally increasing age levels as the range from which to choose incumbents increases, opportunities diminish somewhat and a greater range of experience and competencies are
required to meet the needs of distinct universities. This is supported from data presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2  The mean age of incumbent vice-chancellors in the year of survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>19th C</th>
<th>Early 20th</th>
<th>Post War</th>
<th>New</th>
<th>Post 1988</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>55.25</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>56.25</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td>55.1</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>56.75</td>
<td>55.56</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>60.75</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>59.25</td>
<td>55.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>55.75</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>54.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>53.25</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>51.75</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>55.0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While Table 3.1 details the mean age when incumbents became vice-chancellors, Table 3.2 illustrates the actual mean age of incumbents for the years surveyed. The 19th Century universities again show a high mean age in 1985, as discussed previously, but there is a decrease by almost eight per cent in 1990. There are also marginal declines with the same years in the next three categories. The Post 1988 universities show mean age levels at the upper end, above the overall mean for 1995 and 2000 and only marginally below in 1990.

While many of the newly formed Post 1988 universities appointed the previous CAE director as vice-chancellor, there appears to have been a migration of eligible vice-chancellors from the older universities, particularly the 19th Century band, to the newer universities as opportunities arose. Another noticeable trend is that of the older universities in the 19th Century band to move towards younger incumbents from 1990 to a point where they are well below the overall mean age.
A similar pattern to that observed in Table 3.1 emerges in this table where the ‘New’ band of universities also appear to appoint younger vice-chancellors and the ages are consistently below the overall mean. The trend for the overall mean, allowing for new appointees and older incumbents leaving the system entirely, appears to illustrate that the older age levels of incumbents in the Early 20th Century, Post War and Post 1988 bands have a significant impact upon the overall mean and increase it accordingly.

The age analysis and the variation in age levels across bands may also give an insight into the strategic direction being adopted by the bands of universities overall. One likely scenario of younger vice-chancellors being appointed in the 19th Century and ‘New’ university bands may be that these universities are trying to be more entrepreneurial and establish a specific niche in the sector rather than relying on the traditional role of the university to continue. This would be important for the ‘New’ universities trying to differentiate themselves as per government directives and policy during and subsequent to their foundation.

Again the Post 1988 mean age is above the overall mean indicating that older applicants are attracted to the new opportunities offered by this group of universities. However both Tables 3.1 and 3.2 demonstrate the ability of the sector to meet the needs of individuals across a broad range of ages. Those who were appointed vice-chancellors achieved this in a mean age range stretching from a low of 46.5 to a high of 58.5 years when appointed. The actual mean age during the years surveyed ranged from 51.75 to 64 years.

These age ranges are not too dissimilar from those reported by researchers in Canada where the median and mean of incumbents when appointed, was calculated for the years 1967, 1968, 1970, 1970 (second survey) and 1980 where the average age range was between 45 and 50 years when appointed. The Australian equivalent mean range for this period was 46.5 to 53.5 years. (Muzzin and Tracz, 1981).
However while the age of incumbents appears to have increased over time, it is also apparent that the length of tenure of incumbents is declining. In order to analyze potential differences between bands of universities, the average tenure of incumbents in the role was also reviewed and is presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Mean tenure of incumbent vice-chancellors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>19th C</th>
<th>Early 20th</th>
<th>Post War</th>
<th>New</th>
<th>Post 1988</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>6.0*</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8.75</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* New appointments lowered the actual tenure rate substantially.

It is quite apparent that the overall tenure rate has declined dramatically perhaps as a method of continually injecting new ideas and approaches into universities as they experience constantly increasing rates of change. Overall, the mean has dropped from 13.3 years in 1960 when there were 10 universities to 7.2 in 2000 when there were 39 universities.

In 1990 when the trend to lower tenure duration was entrenched in most bands, the Post 1988 band commenced with a low rate as a reflection of these contemporary trends. However the most noticeable decline exists in the 19th Century band where the duration dropped from a mean of 14 years to one of five. While the decline was in many respects gradual, it was constant and did not alter. It is interesting to note that the 19th Century band has a very distinct characteristic of employing relatively younger vice-chancellors for shorter periods.
It is also useful to note that between 1985 and the beginning of 2000 three of the four vice-chancellors in the 19th Century universities had held a similar role previously. Both the vice-chancellors of the early 20th Century universities had been VCs before, while one incumbent of the four Post War universities had also been a VC. With regard to the nine ‘New’ universities, two vice-chancellors had held that role previously, while the Post 1988 universities had all vice-chancellors who held this role for the first time. Certainly vice-chancellors who have held the role before, dominate the older universities rather than the most recently founded universities.

The three middle bands have relatively similar patterns, which appear to have been initially influenced by the 19th Century band, while the end of these cascades influence the Post 1988 band. While some distinct patterns do emerge from the different bands of universities, those institutions that were formed as a consequence of the Dawkins era, sometimes referred to as Dawkins universities, are of particular interest as these were predominantly CAEs previously.

3.3 FORMER CAEs

With the exception of Bond and Notre Dame Universities, virtually all the universities established from 1987, referred to as the Post 1988 band, were CAEs prior to being proclaimed universities. As the most recently founded universities in Australia, these universities are also the most numerous and account for nineteen of the thirty-nine universities today, and provide a useful insight into how these universities have reacted to the trends that exist in higher education.

These universities have not had the time to establish their reputation, academic credibility and educational niche but they have been subjected to the same trends as the more established universities, which is reflected in the attributes found in their vice-chancellors. An example can be found in the tenure rate where the mean for VCs in the
‘New’ band in 1990 was 10.4 compared to 7.8 in the Post 1988 band for the same period and 12 for the Early 20\textsuperscript{th} Century. However the sheer number of Post 1988 universities ensures that they create opportunities for prospective incumbents who may otherwise find themselves in a promotional bottleneck in the other universities.

Also while the mean age of the vice-chancellors was 59.2 years in 2000, the range was from 51-66 with nine incumbents being 60 years or older. While four of these had been at the institution in a different role previously, two of the other incumbents each came from the ‘New’ and Post War bands with the ninth coming from the Early 20\textsuperscript{th} Century band. Thus five of the older vice-chancellors had come from other university bands but not from the 19\textsuperscript{th} Century group, confirming the migration of older staff from older universities to new opportunities in the Post 1988 band universities.

With regard to the remaining appointments in universities surveyed in that year, one came from the ‘New’ band and one from the Post War band while all other appointments were internal candidates. Also, as can be seen from Table 3.4 the mean age has increased over the three periods surveyed. The table also presents the role of incumbents prior to being appointed vice-chancellor.

\textbf{Table 3.4} Post 1988 band statistics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age range (years)</td>
<td>51-66</td>
<td>56-72</td>
<td>47-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age mean (years)</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVC</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PVC</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Director</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Academic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1990 57% of the new vice-chancellors appointed were formerly the heads of their institutes when they were CAE’s. In 1995 the appointment of the director as vice-chancellor accounted for 30% and 20% in 2000. Where the classification was uncertain or could fit more than one category, these were relegated to the unknown category to avoid unnecessarily contaminating known data. It is interesting to note that all external appointments, except one, came exclusively from the ‘New’ and Post War bands.

A comparison with incumbents in the 19th Century universities indicates that at the beginning of 2000, two incumbents came from the University of Adelaide, one from the University of Tasmania and one from the University of Sydney. All incumbents came from the same 19th Century band and there were no vice-chancellors in this band who had come from another band of universities. Also none of the vice-chancellors in the former CAEs had been a vice-chancellor previously but in the 19th Century band, three of the four had held the office of vice-chancellor previously.

There is some evidence therefore to support the argument that the Post 1988 university band has provided an easing of promotional bottlenecks for experienced senior academics in the Early 20th Century, Post War and ‘New’ bands of universities. Certainly it appears that older senior academics, predominantly Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Pro Vice-Chancellors have made the migration to the Post 1988 universities to establish their credentials as worthy vice-chancellors.

It is also apparent that with regard to the 19th Century band, there is a strong preference for senior academics who have come from this band, who are younger and have the greatest wealth of experience and knowledge to offer. Thus while the former CAEs have been subjected to the same pressures as other universities, they have been able to reward their CAE directors for excellence and also draw upon the experience of senior academics from older and larger universities. They have been able to some extent to ‘buy-in’ credibility as a university while developing eligible staff internally.
A further comparison of the CAEs and the 19th Century universities can be made with regard to the discipline bases of the respective vice-chancellors. In 2000 the discipline bases of the vice-chancellors in the 19th Century universities included Mathematics, Engineering, History and Psychology. With regard to the Post 1988 broad discipline bases varied from Accounting, Education, Political Science, Music, Physiotherapy, Chemistry, Community Health and others. There was certainly a more diverse range of discipline bases ranging from the traditional to the more modern disciplines indicating that discipline bases for the Post 1988 band were a less important selection criteria than, perhaps, in the older universities.

The former CAEs offer a wide range of senior academics a wide range of new opportunities. For those senior academics in promotional bottlenecks, they have offered opportunities to ascend to the role of vice-chancellor. They have also allowed older senior academics to move and therefore create opportunities for younger academics. The Post 1988 universities have also created similar academic hierarchies as other bands and this has also created opportunities for former CAE staff to advance to the role of Dean, DVC and PVC.

Also incumbents of these roles in other bands have moved to these roles in the former CAEs to create internal heirs to the role of vice-chancellor. The Post 1988 band therefore becomes an important group that can develop future vice-chancellors to fill future roles in this and similar bands. However while different bands may display distinct attributes in their vice-chancellors, there are general trends that are common to all vice-chancellors across all bands.

3.4 WHAT WE DO KNOW

A review of all public domain material available on vice-chancellors to the beginning of 2000 revealed a wealth of information that can be used to give a profile of incumbent vice-chancellors at different periods (and bands) of evolution of Australian universities.
Apart from the age and tenure of incumbents there is information regarding gender, role held prior to the appointment when surveyed, the major academic fields and material that provide a clear profile of vice-chancellor attributes. In terms of gender, it was not until 1990 when female incumbents emerged in this survey time frame.

Up to 1990 in this survey, the role of vice-chancellor had been the exclusive domain of male incumbents. In that year, the survey showed Professor Di Yerbury as the VC of Macquarie University and Professor Fay Gale had commenced as VC of the University of Western Australia both in the middle band universities. In 1990 female incumbents accounted for eight per cent of vice-chancellors and in 1995 this figure was five per cent. At the beginning of 2000, the survey revealed that Professor Mary O’Kane had become VC of the University of Adelaide, this was the first time a female incumbent appeared in the 19th Century band universities.

While Professor Gale had left the University of Western Australia in 2000; Professor Ingrid Moses had become VC of the University of New England; Professor Yerbury was still in place at Macquarie University. Professor Janice Reid was the VC at the University of Western Sydney and Professor Millicent Poole was VC at Edith Cowan University. This saw five female incumbents (15%) providing an even distribution across all bands except the Early 20th Century band and even this had a female incumbent in the previous survey of 1995. Professor Denise Bradley was appointed in 1996 to the University of South Australia and Professor Ruth Dunkin was appointed to RMIT in 2000.

A review of the data regarding the role held immediately prior to the current position, for the year in which they were surveyed, again yielded some common paths taken across the period of the survey. This data is presented in Table 3.5 below.

Table 3.5 Role of incumbents immediately prior to current appointment (%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 1960-65 not all universities had DVC’s and PVC’s, instead it was common for Faculty Deans to report directly to the vice-chancellor with no intermediaries. It is no surprise therefore that no incumbents had held such roles previously. However four of the ten universities in 1960 did have such roles and this explains some of the movement from DVCs to VCs in 1965. The most common sources of VC’s in those years were Deans, senior Government staff and overseas appointees (30%) who were highly desired by domestic institutions as they provided instant credibility.

By 1970, PVCs, senior academics and senior administrators provided the basis for selection to the role of vice-chancellor. This year also saw Sir Zelman Cowen move from his position of VC of the University of New England to a similar position at the University of Queensland. While the pattern was followed in 1980, the precedent was established and followed from 1985 and has not declined since as it allowed vice-chancellors greater mobility due to the increase of the number of universities. Achieving the role of vice-chancellor no longer necessarily signaled the end of a career.

1980 was a watershed year as it saw the decline of other senior academics (Deans etc) assuming the role of vice-chancellor. It was also the year that saw an increase in the number of Deputy Vice-Chancellors becoming VCs and a gradual decline in senior administrators such as directors (of research, international programs...) moving into the
role. Such trends continued in 1985 however there were again a number of vice-chancellors who moved to different universities but held the same role.

By 1990 another seven universities were created and an increased number of PVCs were shown to have ascended to the role of VC. The number of senior administrators moving into the role had also increased as the spread and diversity of activities in universities had increased under the Dawkins influence. However 1990 also saw a peak and subsequent decline in the number of senior administrators moving into the role of VC and this decline was effectively offset by the increased number of DVC positions within universities and the increased number of DVCs becoming vice-chancellors.

In 1995, the majority of vice-chancellors had either been a DVC, PVC or other academic prior to becoming VC but by 2000 incumbents had either been DVC, other academic or a VC prior to their current role. A distant fourth role was shared between PVC and senior administrators. Thus while these same positions were common grooming positions for future vice-chancellors, the increased competencies required of VCs ensured that the spread of grooming positions could be broad therefore providing a greater range of potential incumbents from which to choose.

Allied with the career path used by incumbents to reach their role are the discipline bases of the incumbents. This data is displayed in Table 3.6 below.

Table 3.6  Major Academic Field of incumbent vice-chancellors (%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
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<td>Business</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>Health</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Science</td>
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<td>53</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>Vet Science</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above classifications are produced as discipline clusters in accordance with DETYA publications (1998b see page 12 for example; 1999) and reflect the broad discipline bases of incumbents for those years surveyed only. Incumbents of other disciplines, who were in the role in non-surveyed years or since the beginning of 2000, will not be recorded.

The most common academic fields since 1960 have been Arts, Science, Education and Business while Engineering has declined in recent years. What is of interest in regards to the paradox discussed in Chapter 1, is that while it could have been assumed that Business, as an academic basis for senior university appointments would have increased since 1960, instead it has declined. There has been an increase in Arts and Education and a slight decline in Science recently.

While Science and Engineering have been traditional sources of vice-chancellors they have also been the largest discipline bases over time, have attracted more staff and funding. Thus a decline of bases for incumbents can be attributed to two potential factors. Firstly these two disciplines have suffered enormous declines in student numbers in recent times and a consequent reduction in funding and therefore staffing, reducing the number of potential staff in the field. Secondly the growth of ‘new’ programs has attracted increased funding and staffing thereby increasing the number of potential staff who can progress to the role of VC.

However the Business field has been considered a growth area and includes traditional areas such as Accounting as well as new growth areas such as Marketing and Human
Resource Management. The popularity of MBA programs can attest to the increased growth of the Business field, which is also the field that covers Strategic Management in-depth, an area seem as essential for an incumbent vice-chancellor. This topic will be explored further in Chapter 4. However a profile of a contemporary vice-chancellor would suggest that there was an almost 80% probability that they came from one of four broad academic fields.

A review of the major careers of incumbents prior to becoming vice-chancellor indicated that there was a 94% probability that they were career academics. A further 3% probability is that they were in government service such as a ministerial advisor or Statutory Officer or a three per cent chance they came from another non-university role or from industry. A clear profile can therefore be gained of past and current vice-chancellors that shows specific paths have been followed in order to become vice-chancellor. Other attributes will be discussed in the following sections of this Chapter.

3.5 THE OPEN MARKET

The open market in this sense looks at the distribution between incumbents coming from within the university of which they became VC compared to the number of successful external candidates. A review of public domain data was undertaken to determine how even the ‘playing field’ was in the selection of a new vice-chancellor. This was not achieved by determining how long a candidate had been with a university in terms of the Guthrie and Datta (1994, 1997) discussions but by determining the role held immediately prior to being appointed vice-chancellor.

Public domain data would not give an insight into successful candidates recruited earlier into subordinate roles to be groomed as heirs to the role of vice-chancellor. The inside ‘outsiders’ could not be determined in this way. A review of each of the years surveyed was analyzed for overall trends and patterns within the specific university bands. The overall figures are presented in Table 3.7. The Table indicates if the incumbent came
from the same university immediately prior to appointment, was a Director of the institute previously or came from another university (including overseas applicants) prior to appointment.

**Table 3.7** Which universities incumbent vice-chancellors came from prior to appointment (%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directors</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
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The Table clearly shows that in 1960 the trend was toward internal promotion for candidates as they had a known and proven track record within their own institution and with only ten universities in existence at that time, there were fewer options. In 1965 there were another four new universities and the trend for internal appointment was moderated by the need for growth and the need to establish an independent reputation and niche such as a research institute, vocational orientation and such.

Prior to the Dawkins era, the trend toward selecting a vice-chancellor from an external source including overseas appointments, peaked at 89% while the declining trend of appointing internal candidates to the position, also plateaued. By 1990 the number of universities had again grown by seven and the number of suitable internal applicants had grown and were rewarded with internal promotion while the number of external appointments fell.

This trend continued to 2000 however in that year at least 62% of incumbents had come from a different university immediately prior to appointment as vice-chancellor. Certainly there are a number of forces at work to explain these trends. Mobility has been seen as
necessary in order to allow new leaders to introduce new practices, procedures, ideas and methodologies. However it has also been recognised that many of these approaches are a function of the traits of the incumbents themselves and that internal development programs can identify and groom likely candidates.

The growth of new universities between 1985 and 1995 created opportunities to resolve promotional bottlenecks for suitable incumbents but it also demonstrated to a greater range of academics that a long-term career path could now be obtained for suitably equipped candidates. The growth of universities necessarily entailed a growth in career opportunities at more senior levels for staff wishing to move into academic administration.

Interestingly no particular band has evolved a trend of either selecting predominantly internal or external candidates. Certainly in specific years the Post War band has had all four incumbents selected from external universities but the survey years prior and subsequent to that period have seen a return to an even situation. The data shows that more candidates are selected from other universities and thus indicates that there is indeed an open market where candidates are not given preference because they are internal candidates for the role of vice-chancellor.

Instead the data illustrates a clear preference for external candidates over internal candidates, possibly for the reasons already mentioned. However in 2000 there was a 62% minimum probability that incumbents came from another university immediately prior to appointment as vice-chancellor. The trend to internal appointment however, while not dominant, shows a gradual and continual increase and at some time in the future will no doubt plateau as it did in 1980 and 1985. Also any increase or decrease in the number of universities in Australia in the future will alter the current balances of candidate sourcing.

3.6 SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS
From a sociological and research perspective social characteristics, heterogeneity and urbanisation characteristics provide a useful insight into individuals and groups of individuals. They provide an insight into the social preferences of incumbents and their lifestyles assist in understanding the values and beliefs systems that they bring to their roles, and what factors help create these systems. Thus activities such as personal leisure activities can indicate the degree of socialization or the degree of alienation experienced by incumbents, the social and peer pressures upon them and the outcomes.

(Edgar, Earle, Fopp 1993).

The social characteristics of vice-chancellors also provide a useful insight into the people that occupy this particular role. In the 2000 survey there was at least an 82% probability that incumbents were married, possibly with two or three children and almost a 50% probability that they played sport. There was also a 50% probability that they were a member of at least one or more clubs and a 77% probability that they had been awarded a Fellowship.

Table 9 in Appendix F illustrates the marital and parental status of incumbents since 1960 where there was at least an 80% probability that the incumbent was married with two or more children. While the marital status data have not changed since 1960, to any extent it underlies two fundamental points. Sloper (1994) determined the role of the incumbent’s spouse to be of importance as the role was fundamentally a social one requiring constant interaction with a range of internal and external contacts.

Secondly it can also illustrate that incumbents, having achieved the role of VC in their late forties (at the earliest) have established their family lives and may be more likely to achieve a balance between career/position demands and family life. They are more likely to be settled and intent on supporting the family unit by hard work, dedication and enthusiasm measured in quantifiable ways, which result in long term family stability.
In 1990 the survey revealed the first single vice-chancellor since 1960 in this research and this trend continued till 2000 where two incumbents publicly described themselves as single. However another five incumbents did not list in any public domain material their marital or parental status. This coincides with a time when public sentiment did not dictate a preferred marital or parental status but indeed was more impartial. Nevertheless the overwhelming trend of selecting married candidates continued.

The survey also indicated that incumbents are able to engage in a range of recreational activities, the most popular being sport. Table 20 in Appendix F shows the nominated recreations of incumbents. Some of the recreations have been nominated more than once by vice-chancellors and so the percentages do not add to 100%. The activities listed by incumbents may not have been in priority order, hence the Table shows only the percentage of times recorded by incumbents.

However as the majority of incumbents were able to list a number of recreational activities, this again demonstrates the social nature of the candidates and the degree of interaction with others. The profile of the vice-chancellor then becomes one of a family member with the capacity to engage in non-university activities of either a single (gardening) or group (sport) basis. As 49% nominated sport as the key recreational activity, it would appear likely that team or group sports such as tennis and golf dominate.

The ‘other’ category of this table includes activities such as watching tennis or motor car racing rather than participating in the event. Irrespective of active or passive participation incumbents display a wide range of interests, general competencies, social competencies and mechanisms to reduce the stress levels associated with their role.

Almost 50% of incumbents also listed themselves as members of various clubs. Table 21 in Appendix F shows the range of clubs of which incumbents are members. Again in some instances incumbents listed membership of several clubs so the percentages do not necessarily add to 100%. The most common clubs were the major metropolitan clubs and
in 2000, 23% were members of such clubs. Interestingly membership of such clubs has been in decline since 1965 while membership of a broader range of clubs has increased.

Membership of University Clubs has increased since 1980 while membership of UK clubs has been fairly constant due to the number of incumbents from Britain, over the years. It is characteristic that the past-times of those involved in socially oriented roles also involve social recreational activities and club membership. As the majority of incumbents report club memberships, this is a common characteristic.

Also by engaging in team/group recreational activities and by being involved in a range of clubs, interpersonal interaction is increased. This is a useful way of developing and maintaining networks. Networking appears to be a method used extensively in higher education and thus such mechanisms can be employed to enhance the networking capability. The public domain material gives no insight as to those with whom incumbents interact with at clubs and recreational activities, however it would be unlikely that it did not include peers and colleagues that the incumbent would interact with within a business sense.

Another common characteristic shared by incumbents over the span of the survey is the number of honours and awards bestowed upon them. Table 19 in Appendix F shows the type of awards and honors distributed amongst incumbents over the period of the survey. A number of incumbents had more than one honour and therefore percentages do not always add to 100.

The most dominant form in this category is the Fellowship. The Fellowship has dominated this category since 1960 and while there has been a slight decline in this since 1990, in 2000 77% of incumbents were Fellows. The University Fellowship recognises superior peer performance and as such is highly regarded by academics. In 2000 only three incumbents had no award or honor listed at all while 15% held the title of Emeritus
Professor. This has also declined in use as a means of recognising superior performance however it was still the second most common honor used in higher education.

Honorary Australian degrees and Australian Awards have also declined in numbers distributed throughout vice-chancellors. However the most spectacular decline has been that of the Knighthood. In 1960, 70% of incumbents had been awarded a Knighthood however by 1980 this had declined to just 11% and has since declined even further. While it may have been anticipated that this decline would be offset by an increase in Australian Awards, this has not been the case. Since 1980 there has been a gradual increase in the number of incumbents listing no honors or awards at all.

Thus external recognition of the contribution made by vice-chancellors has declined. The higher education community has however endeavored to maintain internal or ‘industry’ recognition via the use of the title Emeritus Professor, the provision of Fellowships and Honorary Australian degrees. The decline in external recognition has therefore driven internal recognition in line with DETYA’s policy of achieving excellence. While there have been minor changes in the social characteristics of incumbents, the changes in demographic characteristics are more definite.

3.7 DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics can be defined as the study of human populations with a focus on size, composition, distribution and change. Similar to social characteristics, demographics allow an in-depth analysis of different segments of our population and the cultures associated with these factors. The analysis of these figures that are all from consistent reliable sources means that societal changes can be monitored and evaluated over time with the outcome being a reliable and valid tool telling us more about incumbents. (Edgar, Earle & Fopp 1993; Kidder 1981; Trice, Beyer 1993).
A review of secondary schools attended by incumbents from 1960 to 2000 shows a broadening of scope similar to the social characteristics. Table 11, Appendix F shows that in 1960, 40% of incumbents attended a government school, 30% attended an overseas school, 20% an independent school and 10% were not listed. However by 2000, these figures showed that 28% had attended a government school, the same number had attended an independent school, 33% an overseas school and 11% were not listed.

The increase in the use of independent schools indicates an increase in the socio-economic ability of families to avail themselves of the more costly forms of education which promise greater social and career prospects long-term. Independent schools also have a stronger bias toward religion and building strong ethical characters amongst students. Those who attended overseas schools either because they were born overseas or because their family unit moved overseas for a period of time would be more culturally aware and very flexible in thinking and approach having experienced multiple cultures and influences.

Table 12, Appendix F displays the undergraduate university attended by incumbents. In 1960, 50% of incumbents had degrees from one of the first four universities established in Australia and it was not until 1985 that a person who had not attended one of the first six universities established in Australia, became a vice-chancellor. However the overwhelming majority of vice-chancellors who attended an Australian university had attended either the University of Sydney or the University of Melbourne.

In 2000, 23% of incumbents had attended these two universities, 47% had attended one of the first six established universities and only 15% had attended another Australian university. The first six universities account for the first two bands in Appendix A and were established between 1850 and 1913. If age can be equated with reputation then these six would be seen as providing the most academically rigorous education to the most prestigious student base. In this case it is not surprising that the first two universities established in Australia have produced more vice-chancellors than any other universities.
With regard to the overseas universities 40% of incumbents had attended an overseas university in 1960 however in 2000 this had declined to 38%. The universities from which incumbents from overseas more were commonly drawn from Oxford University, Cambridge University and London University. Since 1980 other U.K universities have accounted for no more than 10%, while other overseas universities attended have generally been within the range of 5-20%. It is therefore characteristic of incumbents to have attended the most prestigious universities predominantly in Australia and to a lesser extent in the U.K. These universities would also attract the top students as they offer prestige, career and social prospects.

While approximately 94-100% of incumbents had chosen academia as their major career the range of activities outside of the major career varied. In 1960 only 10% engaged in academic related activities, 20% had been engaged in government service either on a full or part-time basis, while 40% had been employed in industry perhaps as consultants or advisors. Table 14 (Appendix F) shows that 20% of incumbents had been involved in government advisory bodies and 10% as members of boards of management in the Arts and other forms of social service. All incumbents were quite active outside of their major role indicating individuals who were socially fully integrated.

By 2000, involvement in Industry had rapidly declined to just eight per cent and government service had been halved to 10%. Involvement in government advisory bodies had increased to 36% and academic related activities had increased to 26%. There was a slight increase in active involvement in the Arts and social service at 15% and 5% respectively, two incumbents listed no major secondary activity. Thus while the spread and percentages had changed, active participation in activities outside of the key role had not declined.

The decline in Industry involvement is of concern, as most university graduates will move into this segment. It is also of concern as a decline in Industry contact may effectively
alienate universities from the important private sector that has already embraced the concept of the Corporate University. As pressure mounts on universities to seek non-government funding, it would be expected that an increase in participation and involvement would occur. However it is indicative of how universities are forming a segregated sector of their own as they turn inward rather than outward.

Two possible reasons can account for such active participation by VC’s. The social characteristics and demographics analysed to date all indicate individuals who are social by nature and socially motivated. They are fully integrated individuals with a wide and diverse range of activities and interests and are therefore socially dynamic. The second explanation is that such activities are a function of the role itself.

In Chapter 1 a number of pieces of research were discussed that indicated that the role of vice-chancellor is both socially oriented and highly demanding. Research by Sloper (1985) indicated this to be the case with vice-chancellors in Australia. Aitkin (1998) kept a diary of events supporting the social nature of the role and the need for incumbents to be involved in a wide range of social activities both within the university and across the broader community. The role therefore necessarily entails a high level of social interaction and incumbents must comply in order to be successful in the role. The third option is that a role requiring a great deal of social interaction, attracts socially oriented candidates.

A review of academic achievement (Table 15, Appendix F) shows that of the nine separate years surveyed, there were only two periods where all candidates had a Doctorate. However since 1990, the lowest this has fallen is 97%, indicating that academic achievement and reputation are highly desirable attributes. However in all years surveyed all candidates had been students at an academic institution and had also gained experience as lecturers. This high level of academic involvement of all successful incumbents illustrates the desire by selection panels to maintain academic credibility by ensuring academic experience.
This contrasts with the US experience, where the emphasis is on ability, particularly to generate income rather than academic experience. It is therefore possible to have a University President in the US who has never lectured but does have an exceptional reputation in industry and excellent networking systems.

Between 1960-1970 all incumbents had either been born in Australia, the UK or another Commonwealth Country (Table 17, Appendix F). By 1975 the first US born VC was in place and in fact in 2000, 97% of incumbents had been born in Australia, the UK, another Commonwealth Country such as Canada and, the US. In 1960, 70% of incumbents were born in Australia compared to 67% in 2000. The growth in diversity of country of birth, to some extent, mirrors the growth pattern in the number of universities at any one time.

While more incumbents in 2000 were born overseas, 97% of incumbents actually lived in Australia prior to being appointed vice-chancellor with only three per cent living in the UK immediately prior to appointment. The percentage of incumbents living in Australia immediately prior to appointment has steadily increased from 70% in 1960 indicating that incumbents were becoming more familiar with the Australian higher education system, enhancing their credentials and proving their suitability for the role.

It would appear that overseas candidates, while highly regarded by selection panels, are expected to have a thorough working knowledge of the Australian system. It would also appear that Australia is seen as a desirable career destination as candidates are prepared to meet the informal demands of selection panels.

The analysis of social characteristics and demographics do show that discernible patterns in incumbent attributes are present. These patterns range across the Tables presented in Appendix F and support the findings of Sloper (1985) that a reasonably accurate profile of the desirable attributes of a vice-chancellor can be determined from such research. While the profile changes slightly in each of the years surveyed in this research, the
contextual background of changes in government policy and funding, sectoral changes in higher education and universities in particular, can explain the changes and evolution being demonstrated.

The fact that such a profile can be given means that university selection panels have sought common attributes amongst candidates. A step further suggests that candidates with the attributes discussed to date will have a higher probability of being successful candidates. This not only gives an insight into selection panel preferences but also demonstrates the importance of these informal attributes that do not form part of any position advertisement or position description. The attributes also give an insight into the nature and background of incumbents (successful candidates) and what universities consider important in a vice-chancellor.

These common attributes can be further used in the analysis of formal selection criteria and position descriptions that, while they set out the formal criteria in terms of experience, knowledge and background, actually result in the reinforcement of the selection of the attributes termed ‘informal’. They are termed ‘informal’ attributes because they are the attributes sought in candidates, but may resemble few of the formal criteria and may be difficult to associate with questions asked at interviews. As the attributes include common work backgrounds a review of common career paths may determine further common aspects.

3.8 COMMON CAREER PATHS

The fact that in 2000, 62% of incumbents came from a different university as illustrated in Table 3.7 suggests that mobility between universities is considered an advantage. In fact since 1970 there has been a definite preference for ‘outsiders’ over ‘insiders’ and incumbents appointed from the same university, have accounted for no more than 23% since 1970. This high level of external appointment tends to support Datta and Guthrie’s (1994) argument that organizations seeking growth or differentiation strategies will tend
to appoint externally. Those satisfied with their strategic direction are more likely to appoint an internal candidate.

In 2000, 75% of incumbents from the 19th Century universities, came from a different university previously, in the Early 20th Century band, 100% came from different universities, in the Post War band this was 50% and 89% in the 'New' band. In the Post 1988 band 45% came from another university, 20% were the previous directors of the CAE and 10% did not disclose relevant details prior to appointment. Thus across all bands, except the Post War band, there was a distinct preference to appoint vice-chancellors who came from other universities.

Those that come from an Arts, Science, Education, Business or Engineering background tend to dominate the major field bases of vice-chancellors. Also, the most common role prior to appointment in 2000 were DVC, other academic, vice-chancellor, PVC or senior administrator. They tend to have studied at one of the older Australian universities or at a UK university and are engaged in other academic activities, serve on government advisory bodies or they are active supporters of the Arts and other forms of social service such as membership of charitable institutions.

Academically they have been rewarded with a Fellowship, an Honorary Australian Degree usually a doctorate or have had the title Emeritus Professor bestowed upon them. There is a 50% chance that they will also be active participants in sport, be members of a major club or other recreational activity that extents networks and makes the person known to the wider higher education community and the community in general. In 2000 all incumbents had the title of Professor which marked them as successful and respected academicians.

Of the eight vice-chancellors who had held the role elsewhere previously, seven had held the position once only before their current appointment and one had held the position twice previously. The tenure in these previous positions ranged from two years to six
years with a mean of 3.6 years. A review of all incumbents in 2000 revealed that seventeen had held the position of DVC in their careers, not necessarily immediately prior to the current appointment. Fifteen incumbents had held the role once while two had held the role twice. The tenure of these roles ranged from one to eight years and had a mean of 3.5 years.

With regard to the role of PVC, 14 incumbents had held this title at some stage during their careers and their tenure in this role had a mean of 2.9 years. Thirteen incumbents had held the role once and one had held it twice. Six incumbents had held both DVC and PVC roles during their careers. It is becoming more common for senior staff to go from the PVC role to that of a DVC as it is expected that in many cases the role of PVC is used as a developmental role where appropriate.

In previous discussions the role of Dean has been seen as a pivotal role in ensuring faculty and school support for concepts and directions embraced by the vice-chancellor. It has also been seen as the role that markets such ideas and proposals to subordinate staff and aligns faculty needs with university policy and direction. The role of Dean therefore encompasses the need for strong equitable leadership and the use of responsible management practices.

A review of incumbents in 2000 showed that fifteen had held this role in their careers. All had held the position only once. The tenure ranged from one year to seventeen and had a mean of 4.1 years. A further investigation of the career paths of incumbents showed that of those who had held this role, only four had moved to the role of vice-chancellor without also holding the role of DVC or PVC or both.

As a developmental role this position allows the university community to determine suitability for promotion to an academic administration role. As such three incumbents had held both the role of Dean and a PVC role while five incumbents held both the role of Dean and later a DVC role. Another three incumbents had sequentially held the role of
Dean, PVC and DVC. The position of Dean therefore becomes an entry point into the very senior academic roles.

A similar analysis was then undertaken of the Head of School (HoS) role with the expectation that holders of this role would move to that of Dean prior to any other promotion. Instead only one incumbent of the 2000 survey followed this route to that of VC. Two had gone from the HoS role to that of DVC and another had gone from this position to that of Director of the institution. Another had moved to full-time consulting before returning as VC while the sixth incumbent had moved from HoS to vice-chancellor.

It should also be noted that in the public domain material, the use of the term ‘Professor’ was most often attached to the appointment to the role of Dean and Head of School. Sixteen incumbents separated the title of ‘Professor’ to an exact period such as this. Three incumbents did not list the HoS, Dean, PVC or DVC roles in their career lists while one incumbent published no major details at all.

The most common career paths involve progression from lecturer to senior lecturer, Associate Professor and then Professor. At this point it is common for incumbents to have been appointed ‘Professor and HoS’ or ‘Professor and Dean’. These roles appear to be the pivotal point in the careers of incumbents as they attain a position where they can prove their value to the university in their leadership, management and academic competencies. From this level the most common move is to become a DVC, however other branches allow incumbents to strive for a PVC role or the role of VC depending on the size and structure of the university.

The position of Professor recognises the academic competencies of individuals and sees the holder of this position ready to engage in higher level academic activities such as becoming a member of Academic Board/Senate or Council. The person may also be involved in sub committees such as Curriculum Committees and other standing
committees. The role of HoS or Dean puts the person in a position where they can experience and develop academic administration competencies as well as give an insight into their own potential.

As most universities in Australia have faculties that consist of separate schools it is more common for the role of Dean to be the pivotal role. However for those universities that have separate schools then the HoS would be the pivotal role. In the case of faculties the HoS role is the role from which the Dean would be chosen if an internal appointment was made. The role of Dean requires the incumbent to have a hands-on approach in regard to the daily administration of the faculty as well as determining the strategic direction and approach of the faculty.

However the role also involves incumbents liaising with the university executive on matters of budget, profile, staffing and providing input into the strategic direction and approach of the university as a whole. Therefore the Dean is able to establish internal networking systems and is able to be noticed by those responsible for senior staff succession. The Dean is able to display a wide range of competencies and therefore suitability for further advancement.

The university size and structure will then determine if the next position is that of a DVC or PVC. Tenure in the various roles appears to be longer in the lower level positions, HoS has a mean of 5.3 years and Dean has a mean of 4.1 years. This contrasts with the shorter tenure in the more senior roles such as PVC with a mean of 2.9 years and DVC with a mean of 3.5 years. Tenure is also associated with opportunity and career ambition and it is recognised that actual tenure in a position will be dependent upon a number of variables. Also as only 15% of incumbents in 2000 held the title of Emeritus Professor, it did not appear critical that all incumbents need attain this prestigious honour.

From the analysis of the more common career paths it would appear that there are at least two critical positions that have been held by incumbents depending upon university size
and structure. The first of these is the role of 'Professor and Dean' that challenges incumbents entering the lower levels of senior university executives. It can also be argued that the next critical position in the common career path to becoming a VC is the position of Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor is the immediate subordinate to the vice-chancellor and therefore is the person to whom the VC delegates a range of major university functions. A review of the AVCC Senior Officers list (1/99) showed that there were thirty-eight members of the AVCC and member universities employed fifty-nine DVCs. The most common position title being Deputy Vice-Chancellor without any further position descriptor. This accounted for twenty-eight positions while next most frequently used descriptor was that of DVC (Research) which accounted for another eight positions.

Another seven positions were accounted for by incumbents responsible for a particular campus of a university while DVC (Academic) accounted for another five positions. The title DVC (International) accounted for only three positions and DVC (Administration) for another two. The other positions of DVC were quite specific to particular universities and included descriptors such as Resources, Development, Senior, Operations and other terms unique to a specific university’s focus.

This contrasts with a review of PVC roles from the same source that showed that the same universities employed ninety PVCs. The most common was PVC (Research) (seventeen positions) while the next most common descriptor being that of a faculty accounting for thirteen positions. PVC (Academic) accounted for ten positions, PVC (International) for six positions and PVCs’ responsible for External, Teaching and Learning, Information Services & Technology, specific campuses and TAFE each accounted for four positions. Also, only four PVC roles had no descriptor attached at all.

The other positions have a wide range of descriptors. However while there are only four PVC roles without a descriptor there is a strong contrast with the DVC role where there
are twenty-eight positions with no descriptor. Also where a university has DVC and PVC roles, the former always report directly to the vice-chancellor with no intermediary. However the PVC roles always appear subordinate in hierarchy to the DVC role.

While many of the DVC and PVC descriptors are common to both positions, the DVC role appeared to be the less well defined of the two. The PVC role covers an extremely broad range from Resources to Employment Relations and appears to be the more general of the two senior roles, while the DVC role appears to be the more specific. The DVC role may be less clearly defined as it operates at a higher level than the PVC role and higher level projects would be delegated to this role. The PVC role appears more specific and administrative based whereas the scope of the DVC role appears to reflect a more strategic component of the VC's role.

3.9 THE APPRENTICESHIP

While there are common career paths within the backgrounds of incumbents as indicated by the analysis of data in 2000, a form of apprenticeship also appears to exist for aspirants. The apprenticeship commences with the appointment as Professor and Dean. While a review of the AVCC Senior Staff list (1/99) revealed that thirty-two universities listed 211 Deans amongst their senior staff, four universities listed seventeen Heads and one university listed twenty Chairs as well as thirteen Deans amongst their senior staff.

As not all of the thirty-eight universities listed Deans or HoS positions, the result is indicative of the larger number of such roles within universities. Data was not collected from Notre Dame, as a different source would have had to be used and overall reliability and validity of results compromised. However the ratio of the positions discussed so far yields a not unexpected result: Deans 211, PVC 90, DVC 59 equates to 4.22:1.8:1.18. This indicates that not only do the first two roles form part of the apprenticeship for senior academics but they also provide a filtering mechanism.
Because there are so many positions at the lower end of the academic hierarchy they are filled with more people. No doubt there are a lot more HoS positions than roles for Deans. However due to internal competition between incumbents, far fewer will advance to the role of Dean. A large number of HoS will not progress beyond that role. Only those that are recognised as having the potential and display the requisite competencies will advance to the more senior role. The apprenticeship has begun.

An apprenticeship is a structured process by which individuals become skilled through a combination of tutelage from a master ‘craftsman’ and on-the-job training. This “learn as you go” approach is useful as HoS incumbents have already distinguished themselves academically in order to have achieved that role. Those who distinguish themselves further both academically and administratively, in terms of management and leadership roles, are then considered for advancement to senior roles. (Dessler, 2000).

The concept of the academic apprenticeship is not new. In providing a profile of the ‘typical’ university president in the US, early researchers also described the stages that aspirants go through in order to achieve this position. Apart from addressing social and demographic characteristics, such profiles generally described incumbents becoming instructors in the social sciences in large universities and were then appointed professors (equivalent to lecturer or senior lecturer in Australia). They then moved to a smaller institution where they were appointed department chairman, moved upwards to the position of dean in that or another university and then at a third university, were elected president after two or three years.

They spent no more than ten years in the role of president before moving to another similar position elsewhere. They are described as being bank directors and/or trustee of a boy’s preparatory school and have served on federal government committees. Thus while some of the apprenticeship is slightly different due to cultural and social differences, much of it is very similar in that there are common career paths followed and common social and demographic characteristics that are identifiable. The larger number of
universities in the US also means that there are some major differences between the attributes of presidents of large, medium and small universities. (Demerath, Stephens, Taylor 1967)

In both the US and Australia there are common demographic and social characteristics as well as career paths that ensure a higher probability of success in becoming a university president or vice-chancellor. These commonalities suggest that the apprenticeship path is real and a high proportion of candidates have followed this path. In order for this to occur, over time it also suggests that selection panels have deemed this process of experiential learning the most conducive to producing a successful aspirant. They have continued to identify this apprenticeship mechanism in candidates.

While Sloper (1994) discussed the importance of the demographic and social characteristics, the relationship to the apprenticeship mechanism was not explored to any great extent. However this approach allows researchers to identify those currently in their apprenticeship and those who will enter it in the future. By looking at those who will be eligible to enter the apprenticeship it is possible to forecast either excesses or deficiencies of suitable aspirants and any new potential promotional bottlenecks that may arise in the future.

Candidates for the position of vice-chancellor post 1995 would have come from the tenured group of 1991, when there was a total pool of 2041, with 858 of those being aged between 35-44. This is due to the mean age of appointment to the position. However of the 2041 in the ‘above senior lecturer’ group, only 10% or 206 were female and of the 858 in the appropriate age grouping 95 or 11% were female. Thus it was inevitable that post 1995 appointments of vice-chancellors would continue to be dominated by males. However since then the number of eligible females has increased. (Gallagher, 1994).

Gallagher correctly identified the correct cohort that would most probably move into either DVC or PVC roles or the position of vice-chancellor itself. This group being above
senior lecturer level and in the right age groupings were already undergoing a part of their apprenticeship where opportunity, internal competition and career aspirations would determine those who were considered the most suitable for promotion. As retirements occurred such aspirants would be promoted to more senior roles, either in their own university or another as part of their grooming.

A review of similar data in 1998 showed an overall increase in the number of eligible candidates in the same cohort. In 1998 the number of staff above senior lecturer level had grown to 2265 with 18% of those being female, while the number in the same age cohort used by Gallagher had grown to 898 with 18% being female. Thus overall numbers have increased along with the prospect that more females will be appointed from 2005 approximately. (DETYA, 1999b, Table 14, page 44).

The same source shows that overall there were 8,047 staff at the level of senior lecturer and 11,464 at lecturer (level B) range. Thus despite the amount of downsizing that occurred in 1996 and beyond, each cohort contains a sufficient number of staff who may seek promotion. However if the numbers stay at these levels, but the number of universities remains constant or even declines, then similar promotional bottlenecks will occur as they have in the past and internal competition will intensify markedly.

While it can be argued that there is an expectation by university hierarchies that eligible staff complete this apprenticeship before being considered for promotion it can also be argued that this process is too informal. The promotion system has been built around academic merit and therefore those that excel in areas of research and publication have tended to prosper. Thus in the field of Science where there are laboratory assistants and technicians to assist staff, there has been greater opportunity for research and publication records to be developed. This in turn has meant that more prosperous fields have produced the greatest number of vice-chancellors.
However as the apprenticeship for vice-chancellors is not formalised and as promotion is dependent upon academic criteria, there is little attention given to the development of management and leadership competencies except a learn-as-you-go approach. As these competencies appear to be becoming the more dominant competencies, it can be argued that the apprenticeship needs to be formally supplemented with a focus on these necessities. Such an approach would then tend to add another dimension to internal competition and the suitability for advancement and would address the real concerns raised by McKinnon. (Aitkin 1994; Gallagher 1994).

It is recognized that individual universities and the AVCC do attempt to address this issue however it is usually done once aspirants are in roles already requiring such competencies. These roles include the HoS position and that of the dean where management and non-academic leadership competencies are required in addition to academic leadership. The argument put forward is that such competencies need to be developed and nurtured before such roles are attained so that competencies can be applied not developed.

The apprenticeship is a real if not informal phenomenon that exists within universities and is evident from the commonalities explored to date. It is also an informal mechanism that does not appear in selection criteria or position descriptions but nonetheless is a requirement. This is one way in which selection panels can determine the likelihood that candidates will not only be able to meet the selection criteria but will also be able to successfully handle the enormous range of competencies required by the position. A part of this apprenticeship at times involves undertaking the role of PVC or DVC and joining the "vice squads".

3.10 THE "VICE SQUADS"

The vice squads consist of the immediate subordinates of the vice-chancellor, namely the DVC and PVC roles. As has already been discussed it is extremely common for VCs to be drawn from these sources as they are at the very end of the apprenticeship and the result of internal
competition leads to the appointment of new vice-chancellors, as positions become available. Those within these positions have already distinguished themselves academically and in terms of management and leadership competencies.

The vice squads are therefore the culmination of careers for many incumbents. Also as tenure in these roles is far shorter than in the case of HoS and Deans' roles, there is increased pressure for those wishing to achieve their final promotion. It is in these two roles that incumbents are directly delegated to by the vice-chancellor and therefore share in that person's responsibilities and to some extent their authority. Such roles are more strategic and involve policy issues as well as administration and development.

A review of all available AVCC senior lists between 1960-2000, and correlated with the Commonwealth University Yearbooks for the same period, illustrated the growth of the vice

![Number of PVC roles since 1960](image)

**Figure 3.1** Number of PVC roles since 1960 illustrates the increase in PVC roles in five year increments from 1960-2000


squad since 1960. It is recognised that these publications are made at a certain time and that the data may change if analyzed at a different time. It is also noted that universities may not always list all key staff as some universities listed neither HoS or Dean positions. However overall the figures show the consistent increase in the use of both roles.
The figure shown above illustrates the rapid increase in the PVC role over the last forty years. Certainly of the DVC and PVC roles the latter has the larger number of jobholders and it also has the widest range of duties and responsibilities. It is also not uncommon for the PVC in some universities to be the main subordinate of the vice-chancellor. In such cases promotion from PVC to VC within the same university is common.

However for those that follow the common career path it is usual for incumbents to move to another university where they are appointed to the role of DVC. Where these two roles exist at the same university the DVC role is seen as the more senior position. However as these roles report directly to the VC they are excellent developmental mechanisms for future vice-chancellors. The existing incumbents will usually delegate to these subordinate roles and therefore how well these tasks are managed can give a good indication of how that subordinate would react if promoted to VC.

The smaller incremental increases in the number of PVC roles from 1960-1985 can be accounted for by the corresponding increase in the number of universities. It can also be accounted for by the increase in student numbers and increases in staff to develop new growth areas to provide individual niches compared to other universities. However between 1985-1990 another seven universities had been created and hence the large increase in PVC roles.

By this time the Dawkins era was in place and the need for universities to be more entrepreneurial and creative was a requirement for survival. Between 1990-1995 another thirteen universities were created and the CAEs had merged and had been transformed into new universities. While no universities were created between 1995-2000, the advent of managerialism, competitive grants, neo liberalism and quality control mechanisms were in place through government policies and funding cuts.
However while PVC roles increased during this latter period, all other roles including DVC, Dean and HoS roles declined due to the new economic and political realities. Also at this time DETYA had introduced its funding requirements and performance criteria for both universities and their senior executive. Universities were also encouraged to develop mission statements, strategic plans and an emphasis on acquiring and developing new funding avenues were also highly encouraged.

The role of the VC was taken up with more strategic developments and initiatives than previously and to reduce the previous focus on the day-to-day activities, more responsibilities had to be delegated to immediate subordinates. The role of the professor, Dean and HoS all changed as has been previously discussed. However the role of the PVC had grown as an effective role to which to delegate major operational responsibilities and authority leaving the VC to concentrate on key long-term issues.

Even those universities that had both the DVC and PVC roles in place increased the number of PVC roles in order to reduce the pressure on the VC and the DVC(s). These universities appear to have used the PVC role as the more basic of the senior academic roles. Thus the spread of responsibilities in the PVC role is extremely broad and covers most areas of administration of a modern university.

From the developmental perspective, this breadth provides PVC incumbents with an insight into political limitations on university administration, the strong legal emphasis that is present and also exposes them to external social trends that impinge upon university activities. It is natural therefore that the PVC should, via the common career path apprenticeship, seek appointment as a DVC, most likely in another university.

As would be expected, there has also been a corresponding increase in DVC roles since 1960. However the rate of increase in numbers has been far less than in the PVC role.
In 1960 one in three universities had a DVC but in 2000 only one in 1.5 universities had a DVC as the number of universities had risen faster than the number of DVC roles.

**Figure 3.2** Number of DVC roles since 1960 illustrates the increase in roles between 1960-2000.


actually increased over the same period. Figure 3.2 illustrates the growth in DVC roles.

Till 1985, the increase in the number of DVC and PVC roles was comparable, however from 1990 the former’s rate of increase started to lag and this continued until 2000. However while both the DVC and PVC roles have been expanded to support the VC in the administration of the university, the DVC role has actually contracted. Both roles are extremely important in taking on high level responsibilities and authority but it would have been expected that the DVC role would have increased. (Gallagher, 1994).

One possible explanation for this decline is that with no more universities being created, fewer senior staff are required as there is nowhere for them to go. But with fewer
numbers, natural attrition and promotion for some, it would allow the apprenticeship to continue and heirs to be identified and developed earlier. The higher number of PVC’s would, after allowing for natural attrition, ensure a constant and large pool from which to choose DVC candidates.

The PVC role is where incumbents are free from “micro” responsibilities in terms of running a school or faculty and instead they are introduced to “macro” level administration and the impact of external influences. Given the array of descriptors attached to the PVC title, it can be assumed that incumbents would become heavily involved in a range of challenging activities that would continually expose them to new issues. Where the role of DVC does not exist in a university it is also usual for a PVC to assume the role of acting vice-chancellor when that incumbent is absent.

This necessarily means that in this instance the PVC role can be equated with that of the DVC role in some other universities, as the PVC takes over full responsibilities even for a short period of time. It also means that in order for this to occur, the PVC must be fully conversant with all current and potential issues that may arise and the university policy or appropriate response to such issues.

In those universities where the DVC position exists either alone or with a PVC(s) as well it is also usual for the DVC to assume responsibilities when the vice-chancellor is absent. This incumbent must also be aware of any potential issues that may arise and the appropriate university response. These two positions therefore are clearly distinct from the role of HoS or Dean that may have been held. They now work closely with the vice-chancellor, the University Council, DETYA officials and others with whom they may have had little contact previously. They form part of the university executive and the Office of the Vice-Chancellor.

The incumbents of the DVC and PVC roles have completed their apprenticeship. Their roles and titles have separated them from previous colleagues and peers while their levels
of responsibilities and authority introduce them to macro and strategic activities. Also assuming full responsibility for a university when necessary means that incumbents are ideal candidates for the role of vice-chancellor. They have followed the most common career paths and completed their apprenticeship and if they are in the appropriate age group, have networked and displayed sufficient competencies then there is a high degree of probability that they will be promoted.

Also the small number of vice-chancellors drawn from overseas immediately prior to appointment indicates that the university community accepts if not prefers the common career path and the apprenticeship system. Certainly overseas applications continue and it is not uncommon for position advertisements to be placed overseas to create a wider ranger of eligible applicants.

However the trend is moving away from making direct appointments of overseas candidates and in regard to overseas applicants, is moving toward placing them within the final stages of the apprenticeship system in PVC and DVC roles in order to better acquaint them with the university and Australian higher education. Another favoured trend is for Australian academics to spend time overseas before returning to a more senior position. This provides candidates who are culturally aware and who bring with them a knowledge of overseas and global trends in higher education and other factors influencing this field.

3.11 THE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE 1990s

The modern vice-chancellor of the 1990s’, 2000 and beyond is in many respects a very different individual to previous incumbents. Until the 1980’s vice-chancellors were exclusively male and had a dominant focus on academic matters while government funding, policies and philosophy were not a threat to the role, purpose and function of universities. However the rate and type of change has increased rapidly meaning that vice-chancellors today face different issues to their predecessors. (Sharpham, 1997).
While vice-chancellors are slightly older when they are appointed, the average tenure in the role is almost half what it was in 1960. The apprenticeship that they went through pre 1990 was also different. It was likely that many were Deans or HoS prior to appointment as VC. While from 1990-2000 it is likely that the common career path and apprenticeship included approximately 4 years as a Dean, almost 3 years as a PVC and 3.5 years as a DVC. They probably have changed universities two or three times, have a Fellowship, are Emeritus Professor and hold an Honorary Degree from an Australian university.

As incumbents are being appointed when they are slightly older and as they have experienced a greater range of roles, universities and issues, they are perhaps appointed at a time when they most need to bring stability and maturity to the role. Maturity need not just refer to age but also to the experience they bring to the role. Although the key academic fields that best nurture future vice-chancellors have not changed, the range of such fields is slowly broadening.

Another common theme is that most incumbents, like their predecessors, will have obtained their first degree from either the University of Sydney or the University of Melbourne. The modern vice-chancellor will be a career academic, have a doctorate and have served on government advisory bodies and related academic bodies. The modern incumbent will not have a Knighthood or military decoration and will be very astute in the use of networking and will use major clubs and a range of sporting activities to help achieve this. There is also a possibility that the incumbent will have held the position of vice-chancellor elsewhere.

However the modern vice-chancellor, in addition to being the most senior academic in the university, is also the CEO of the university and has a far greater degree of flexibility and autonomy than previous holders of the role. The recent incumbent is now responsible for the strategic development of the university as well as necessarily being responsive to, and understanding, the legal framework of the modern university.
The very structure of the university is now very different and requires a strong support team of expertise in planning, finance, human resources and other business practices common to the private sector. Industrial relations negotiations and union demands for increased salaries and benefits must be factored into the budget on a university by university basis and the modern VC must determine the most appropriate way to respond to such claims as well as how to incorporate the cost of compromise.

The impact of cost-cutting on morale and the balance between academic autonomy and freedom must be weighed up against the need for revenue generation through mass education and the provision of a fee-for-service facility where demand dictates academic response. The greater complexity of the environment and the belief that education is a marketable and tradeable commodity like other resources, now challenges the traditional view of the need for governments to make higher education accessible to all parts of the community at an affordable cost.

This dichotomy places the vice-chancellor at the crossroads between a view that sees the responsibility for funding higher education as the sole responsibility of governments against the neo liberal view that universities should be less reliant on government funding and more resourceful in achieving greater self-funding. The modern vice-chancellor must also consider increased local and global competition in the provision of tertiary programs and needs to be creative, innovative and entrepreneurial in generating new sources of income.

The focus therefore shifts from the traditional purely academic governance role to one of managing and leading a business in a way that more closely resembles the private sector. In order to achieve this the modern incumbent needs to divest more operational responsibilities to a broader range of senior reliable staff who understand the academic context in which they operate. Thus there has been a significant increase in the role and number of DVC and PVC positions in Australian universities in order to accommodate
this increased need for delegation. However universities are still recruiting aspirants from basically the same sources as they were in 1960. This dilemma is reflected in the following comment.

“The role of the modern VC has changed from being predominantly an academic leader to being an effective manager and strategist. The VC must have a background of creditable academic performance but the leadership role is more akin to and requires the talents of those of a successful corporate CEO” (Written response to a survey question by a current Chancellor).

3.12 ATTRIBUTES OF THE ROLE

In March 2000 a letter (Appendix H) was sent to all 39 vice-chancellors requesting a variety of information regarding position descriptions, job advertisements and selection practices. Fourteen universities (36%) responded by forwarding as much relevant information as they had while another sixteen universities responded verbally with information they had, forwarded emails with useful information or informed the researcher that such information could not be divulged.

Many of the universities that had not recruited a vice-chancellor in the past ten years did not have complete records (none in some cases) of the requested information. However as 77% of universities responded with as much information as was available to them sufficient material was generated that could be gainfully analysed.

In essence position descriptions and person specifications were provided but were found in the same document. Only one university separated the two while another three universities actually referred to their documents as position descriptions. Only one of the fourteen universities did not have such a document while another university that communicated via email confirmed there was such a document in use. Generally the title
given to such a document was ‘The role of the Vice-Chancellor’ or ‘Statement of Responsibilities’.

The length of the documents varied from half an A4 page to five full pages, thus the degree of specificity varied greatly. The oldest document (1989) contained only four lines regarding the position of vice-chancellor under the title ‘Duties’. This document (University 1) equated the role of VC with that of Principal and CEO, made clear that the incumbent reports to Council and finished with a broad statement. This stated that the VC is responsible for academic and administrative affairs as well as maintaining and promoting the good order and efficiency of the university.

A contrast with one of the most recently prepared documents (2000) titled ‘Role of the Vice-Chancellor’ cited the university Act and Council’s ability to appoint a vice-chancellor, the process in place when the term of office expires and the ability of the VC to delegate. The material also states the VC is also the CEO. The second part of the document (University 3) refers to the University Statutes and that the VC is an ex-officio member of all boards, committees and other bodies and that the title of ‘Professor’ will be bestowed upon the incumbent.

One paragraph outlines the reporting relationship to Council and similar to University one has a broad statement that the incumbent will be responsible to Council for all academic and administrative affairs and for maintaining, reviewing and promoting the effectiveness, efficiency and good order of the university. This approach is very formal, legalistic and minimalist in the amount of useful information it provides.

While this traditional approach may be expected of the older universities, university three belongs to the Post 1988 band of universities and is therefore one of the more recently founded universities. University one on the other hand belongs to the ‘New Institutions’ band and gives a more succinct version of the half page document from university three.
A job description is a list of duties, responsibilities, reporting relationships, working conditions and supervisory responsibilities that assist job holders to understand the requirements of the roles and how to successfully undertake the assigned tasks and responsibilities. The job description gives an incumbent direction and purpose by creating the context, in which the role exists, why it exists and what it achieves. This is an important document as it also defines the scope and parameters of the role for the incumbent and the organization. (Dessler, 2000).

With regard to the four universities (5, 11, 12, 13) that titled their documents ‘Position Description’ three of those are from the ‘Post 1988’ band and the fourth is from the ‘New Institutions’ band. The position descriptions were prepared in 1995, 1996, 1997 and 1999. Only one of these refers to the legislative basis of the role but all four define the role in terms of being the CEO. Three outline the reporting relationships both above and below the role of VC and two refer to Council’s ability to delegate responsibilities to the VC and for the VC in turn to delegate these tasks to subordinates. Only two define the nature and scope of the role, as well as the dimensions of the role including gross asset value, annual revenue, staff and student numbers.

In terms of direct responsibilities, all four refer to academic and administrative leadership. One refers to the need for the VC to undertake direct responsibility for the planning and audit functions as well as achieving mission directives and university goals. This particular document also defines other responsibilities as including appropriate structural change and harmonious integration of such change. Another refers to leadership in strategic planning, directing and planning resources, development of an appropriate internal environment, representing the university and being responsible for the welfare and discipline of both staff and students.

The third of these documents was one of the most comprehensive and not only included reporting relationships, dimensions and the nature and scope of the position but also
included some general responsibilities. These included representing the university in a range of external groups, both social and professional and also required the incumbent to be a member of the AVCC, government policy bodies impacting upon universities and other important and relevant bodies. The position description then gave a range of specific accountabilities.

University 12 outlined the specific accountabilities, which included leadership across all activities of the university and external to it. It was the only document to include the necessity for ensuring legal and ethical compliance in all aspects of university activities and was also the only one to hold the incumbent accountable for the development and management of a strong support team.

University 11 prepared the most comprehensive document in 1999. At five pages it was also the longest document but included a Primary Objective, a section on Freedom to Act/Autonomy, University Dimensions, Context, Direct Reporting Relationships, Inter-Relationships, Challenges, Knowledge/Skills/Experience Requirements and Outcomes. This detailed and clearly written document provided the greatest depth of information to aspirants and gave the clearest overview of the role and its scope.

Other specific accountabilities included securing adequate and appropriate funding, enhancing the reputation of the university in the community and directing corporate planning activities. The final responsibility was the development and maintenance of teaching, research and community activities to the highest standards. This position description was the closest to the definition given above and also covered the widest range of duties and at two full A4 pages, was also the longest.

Similar themes permeated the other position descriptions, such as providing strategic direction and initiatives and providing leadership across all university activities. Other common responsibilities included diversifying and sustaining the funding base, achieving
set goals and mission statement imperatives and appropriate change management strategies.

However there were a number of unique responsibilities spread throughout the other position descriptions. These included: evaluating performance; providing a common sense of purpose; striving to be an employer of choice; providing a sound decision-making base; coordinating multi-campus activities and providing a clear vision. Others included fostering a good environment for staff and a good learning environment; creating opportunities for new initiatives; maximizing the university potential and resources; improving the quality of staff and students.

The position descriptions gave a wide range of activities and responsibilities and varied widely in terms of quality. The unique aspects tend to reflect the focus of the university at the time the document was written. Also it was clear in only one instance that the position description was written by the Director of Human Resources at one university however others may have been also. Also only one document contained a section titled ‘Desirable Attributes’.

The ‘Desirable Attributes’ was written in 2000 by university two (Post War band) and the attributes matched the responsibilities given in the position description. These attributes included the need for the incumbent to have and share a vision for the university, a knowledge of and experience in strategic management, a person who could lead and instill change, strong interpersonal skills and a person recognized externally as a high profile leader. This was the only university to attempt to match personal attributes with role characteristics and therefore structure the recruitment strategy accordingly.

Overall there were nine documents that listed strategic management or planning activities as key elements of the role while the same nine also listed leadership as a key component as well. Nine universities also listed the need for the incumbent to be able to represent the university at external social and academic functions, on government advisory boards,
within the community and the media. Six universities considered improving or at least sustaining the funding base as a key role and only three considered legal compliance a key responsibility of the vice-chancellor.

The range of common and unique responsibilities confirmed the breadth and scope of the role and signaled leadership, strategic management competency, interpersonal and communication skills as essential parts of the vice-chancellor’s role. These responsibilities are taken from recent and contemporary position descriptions with ten of the fourteen documents dated from 1996 to 2000.

The brevity of the majority of position descriptions (PD) is reminiscent of the brevity of the job adverts analyzed by Sloper (1989b). Sloper commented that the brevity inferred that universities believed that suitable aspirants would know what was expected in the role. Therefore the adverts were designed for those who knew what was expected and deterred others from applying. The absence of phrases and sentences explaining how the responsibilities are to be accomplished and why, lends itself to a similar view that those capable of undertaking the role would know what was involved.

Except for two PDs’ all refer to fields in general terms such as ‘leadership of academic and administrative activities’ however there is a distinct absence of a clear explanation of precisely what this means and how it is to be accomplished. An incumbent that had previously held the position would know what would be needed and may be one reason why there has been an increase in the number of VCs moving to other universities.

Those within the apprenticeship system such as a DVC or PVC would know what was required. Those outside of academia would not know and would therefore be severely disadvantaged if they applied. From a system perspective this would ensure that senior academics, even if they came from overseas, would probably have preference from someone totally outside the higher education field. Those within DETYA and senior level
would also know what was required but vagueness would ensure that the apprenticeship system continually supplied new VCs.

The attributes of the role are somewhat vague in many respects and any unique aspects peculiar to certain universities would need to be addressed by the learn-as-you-go approach. It is accepted that at the CEO level PDs are vague as a reflection of the constantly changing environment in which the CEO operates and this approach would apply in several industries. However it is clear that strategic management, leadership across a broad range of academic and non-academic activities, strong interpersonal and communication skills, a knowledge of the legal framework and revenue generation are key aspects to the role.

Therefore it can be inferred from the PDs that these key requirements are generic and fundamental to the role itself. Incumbents must not only have these competencies but must be able to apply them. The application would be to academic and non-academic activities and a knowledge of the internal working of a university would be beneficial in order to overcome the difficulty of turning an education institution into a business that provides educational services. This combined knowledge of universities, academics and business would be necessary to strategically realign a university seeking new funding bases.

3.13 RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

An examination of recruitment and selection practices actually used to appoint VCs were analyzed using material supplied by universities. The material discussed in the previous section was a part of that material. All material provided had actually been used to appoint a vice-chancellor. The material requested (Appendix H) included selection criteria, position advertisements, and selection panel details and related material.
With regard to the job adverts all universities advertised in *The Australian Higher Education Supplement* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and this was the case for all positions, including those pre 1990. All advertisements were block ads from double column @ 13cm to triple column @ 24cm thus all were large ads and compared favorably to an advert for a vice-chancellor for the University of Lincolnshire & Humberside in the UK. This ad was over four columns wide @ 19cm long, an extremely large advert.

The other key newspaper was the Saturday *Age* as well as state specific newspapers. Typical of overseas adverts were those placed by university 11 in 2000 that advertised in the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (United Kingdom), the *Chronicle of Higher Education* (USA), the *Straits Times* (Singapore) and the *Globe & Mail* (Canada). Recently advertised positions were also placed on the Internet to attract aspirants who may miss the traditional media formats.

Two universities confirmed that the Chancellor wrote to all other Chancellors prior to the advert being released in the media. This contact sought assistance as well as the option to provide specific names and contact details. One university used Who’s Who in Australia to gain an insight into suitable applicants and to provide an overview of the pool of suitably qualified men and women.

As well as questions asked of the other universities that responded verbally, and a separate review of position adverts acquired from newspapers, no more than three or four had used consultants. However the interviews indicated that the use of consultants is becoming far more common that these figures indicated. Unlike the findings of Sloper (1989b), no universities reported notifying the CSIRO, even those that rang or emailed material when asked, said this had not occurred.

Thirteen advertisements were chosen for analysis to determine the most common ad type and style used. These adverts were placed between 1989-2000. Six of the thirteen commenced by stating they were seeking a successor to the retiring vice-chancellor while
another two announced the retirement of the current incumbent in the most traditional form that Sloper noted in 1989. Five of the adverts were in the usual position vacancy format that called for applications from interested parties to fill the position.

While the difference may be subtle, in the traditional format the emphasis is on the retiring individual and a possible replacement that can measure up. In the more contemporary format the emphasis is on the vacant position and calls on candidates who believe they can successfully undertake the role. However in order to ascertain if the traditional approach is still commonly used to recruit CEOs a review of six adverts for vice-chancellor positions from overseas universities and several CEO adverts were reviewed. In no case was the traditional format used.

Ten of the thirteen advertisements required interested parties to contact the Chancellor for further information and also to forward applications to the same person. Two required applications to be forwarded to a consultant while the third requested that applications be forwarded to the Director of Human Resources of that university. The bulk of most adverts were taken up with descriptive material regarding the university in terms of size, location(s), history, awards and in some cases the major activities of the university.

While it was anticipated that all adverts would outline the specific duties of the incumbent and perhaps desirable attributes against which aspirants could measure their potential for success, this was not the case. University one listed no duties whatsoever and the advert was predominantly concerned with announcing the retirement of the VC and how to apply for the position if people were interested. This same advert required applicants to forward a CV and the names and contact details of at least three referees.

University 15 advertised in 1995 and it also listed no duties in the advert. The bulk of the advert was about the university and listed some current activities, and it was left to the reader to infer from this what the priorities might be. University eight also left it to the reader to infer what personal characteristics might be required for the position as well as
what the position actually entailed. University four called for both applications and nominations for the position and was the only university to use this approach.

Universities 2,3,7,9,13 were reasonably specific in outlining the role and also the desirable attributes of suitable candidates. The material used by universities two and three were also extremely similar. The specific attributes from these five adverts included phrases such as:
‘...Influential in national research and higher education policy development’
‘...leader of change and successful management of human resources and financial strategy’
‘...commitment to the region’ and ‘...high profile leadership’ ‘...represent the university at the government, business and community level’, ‘...experienced in university administration’, ‘...proven record in planning and management ...and a knowledge of higher education’.

While the above may still need some interpretation, they are self explanatory and give a limited insight into the role and the requirements of the incumbent. These phrases can be contrasted to those used by another group of universities in their advertisements, where the requirements are more vague and very general. Universities 4,6, 14, 16 and 17 used this style which is characterized by such phrases as:
‘...management and development of the university and...promote the university’
‘...provide visionary leadership and management skills to achieve the university purpose’
‘...record of achievement at senior management level...excellent academic credentials’
‘...responsible for the conduct of business and development’ and ‘...promote the interests and development of the university’

At best the two groups contrasted above are at extremes of the very general range and attempt to give a brief overview of the role and expectations. This generality can be interpreted as being sufficient for those likely candidates within the apprenticeship system to understand what might be required. This provides a limited pool of suitable candidates.
However a more generous rationale may be that the very vagueness of the advertisements invites a wider range of applicants to find out exactly what it means by inquiring further and procuring a position description.

As seven of the advertisements directly refer to the role as both vice-chancellor and CEO there is an attempt to equate the position with a role (CEO) which, while vague itself, probably gives the reader a better idea of the level of the position and likely calibre of the candidates. However as both an academic and business title are used the impression is still conveyed that suitable candidates will be academics first and business leaders second thereby ensuring senior academics are the primary applicants. Also the positioning of the advert in the *Higher Education Supplement* of the Australian newspaper ensures that the target audience is academic and provides a reasonably strong and clear message to non-academics.

This could be somewhat misleading as the term President is more commonly used in Asia, Europe and North America while the term Vice-Chancellor implies the person is second in charge. Thus some universities now refer to the position as VC and President to clarify the role.

Only two adverts from universities two and three made any real attempt to give a clear insight into the role and personal attributes of candidates. This contrasts with the advert placed by the University of Lincolnshire & Humberside. This advert is targeted specifically at academics as typified by statements such as ‘Candidates will believe firmly in the University’s mission, possess a management style which fosters academic achievement and a sense of collegial responsibility…’

While this research is not based on international comparisons, this large advert serves to illustrate how clear and concise an advert for a vice-chancellor can be. The attributes clearly outline the dimensions of the role and the type of experience necessary in order to successfully undertake the role. This is expressed by requiring individuals with strong
academic backgrounds who have a proven track record of the successful management of resources on a large scale. Candidates also require integrity, drive, openness, enthusiasm, good humour and ‘...an enormous capacity for hard work.’

This advert also states that the university seeks a person of the highest calibre to provide academic and executive leadership and the two terms are used jointly as in Australian adverts to ensure senior academics apply. The advert was also placed in the Higher Education Supplement which again establishes the pool from which desirable applicants might apply and could positively discourage non-academics from applying. In this way no university advert could be seen to be actively discriminating against general sectors of the employment market.

In all instances it was reported that candidates were forwarded an information package that provided a wider range and greater depth of information. Invariably these packages were professionally produced glossy booklets with an average of approximately 13 pages long and a maximum of 20 pages. Only 18% contained an introduction and while the order of contents varied significantly, 91% commenced with an overview of the university, which expanded upon the brief details in the advert. This overview gave the history of the university and in most cases outlined initiatives and strengths and even awards presented to the university.

The next most common section contained in these packages was that of Conditions of Employment, also at 91%. Typical items included in this section were brief statements regarding housing, superannuation, leave, travel, salary and allowances, vehicle, tenure or duration of the contract and in some cases assistance for the partner in re-establishing themselves in a new environment. In one case tenure was offered to the successful candidate while in all other instances, a contract period of five-six years was offered along with the possibility of renewal via mutual negotiation. This material was necessarily descriptive but certainly gave prospective incumbents a clear indication of the rewards for this senior role. These packages were all later than the pre 1990s when
universities were penalised if they paid VCs more than the standard salary set by the Remuneration Tribunal.

As would be expected 73% included sections regarding How to Apply and it was in this section that candidates were required to supply the names of three referees and other specific details were requested. Such details included background and history rather than the candidate’s view of how the role may be approached or their views on where higher education was headed that may elicit a deeper understanding of the candidate. Thus a traditional rather than targeted resume was sought from candidates which in turn indicated a traditional approach to recruitment methodologies. 73% of packages also contained another copy of the original advert.

It was expected that all packages would include selection criteria so those candidates could measure themselves to see if an application was in fact viable. However only 64% actually included the selection criteria in the package. One possible explanation for this is that the selection panel did not wish to limit or restrict applications but wished to draw a wider pool of applicants from which to choose a candidate, akin to a smorgasbord approach. The other side of this approach is that it may draw too large a pool and include potentially a larger proportion of unsuitable candidates.

Another 64% included sections on the Role of the Vice-Chancellor and covered the reporting relationships to and from the position and some of the key functions of the role. In many instances such functions were covered briefly and informed candidates that they would represent the university both internally and externally, but rarely discussed how performance was measured or what desired outcomes were desired or appropriate. There was also no discussion regarding the differentiation between personal beliefs and those to be expressed on behalf of the university and no packages attempted to cover such demarcations.
Sixty-four per cent of packages also included a section entitled *Further Information* that would inform candidates of who they could contact in case questions arose. Only 55% included specific discussion on the organization and its governance by including organization charts or by discussing both academic and functional administrative branches, their roles, budgets and major activities. In two instances only were these covered to any great depth while the balance adopted a descriptive approach. Also only 45% provided candidates with a timeframe that outlined when interviews took place and when an appointment would be made. In most instances brevity won out. Candidates were not given any other detail except when the appointment would be made.

Only 36% gave the names and titles of the members of the selection panel and therefore of the interview panel. This may not have been considered important by the selection panel. However candidates would want to know who was going to interview them so that they could do some preliminary research especially if some selection panel members where known to have specific predispositions that may emerge via questions asked of candidates. Also only 27% included a copy of the Position Description and Mission and Goals of the university.

It would be important for candidates to know the mission and goals of the university in order to determine the appropriate underlying strategy and the direction in which the university was heading. This would allow candidates to infer priorities as well as the competencies and experience necessary to maintain or enhance the strategic impetus. Alternatively candidates would be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of such initiatives and perhaps determine likely modifications. The knowledge of the university mission and goals would provide an excellent contextual basis from which candidates could better understand the needs of the university and therefore their own suitability.

Another document that candidates may feel is necessary is the PD. However as only three universities included this in their packages it could be argued that essential details were lacking. In some cases candidates could request a copy, otherwise the position was
described to them during interviews as many universities believed that candidates should ‘know’ what the position entailed, according to those who verbally responded to the request for information.

In terms of change, only one package contained a segment outlining the direction of higher education in Australia and the major issues that the successful incumbent might be expected to address. This segment would be particularly important to overseas candidates but may also give local candidates an insight into the issues considered important by the university. One package contained a section on significant changes within the institution and the current status of that change, while only one gave a clear outline of the financial status of the institution. Also only one university considered research to be of such importance as to warrant a segment of its own.

While all of the above would be considered important by different candidates, it is clear that the amount and depth of information provided to candidates varied widely. This is further highlighted by the fact that only one package contained a section entitled Desirable Attributes. This particular university outlined the characteristics of the ideal candidates and the attributes considered essential in order for the incumbent to be successful in the role. This university also included a position description and selection criteria in the package thus giving candidates a good indication of the individual the university would consider suitable for the position.

3.14 SELECTION PRACTICES

Much of the information that was originally provided by various universities was in the form of written material while others responded verbally or via email. Those that provided written documentation could not necessarily supply all data such as explanations and clarifications of the approaches taken and the outcomes. However it was intended that such material would be obtained via the interviews conducted and reported in Chapter 4. Not all selection practices are therefore covered in this section.
There were fourteen universities that supplied the necessary material, while another six universities declared the research being undertaken to be so sensitive that they could not possibly supply any data at all or participate in completing the questionnaires. Other universities reported they did not keep such material while a third group was happy to supply material verbally so that required information could be gained clearly and without the need for interpretation.

In all instances it was reported that the Chancellor chaired the selection panel, as would be the equivalent case in the private sector. In general the size of the selection panels ranged from six to thirteen members with an average of just over nine members. One of the reasons given for the larger numbers on these panels was that the university was trying to canvas input from as many major stakeholders in the university, as possible. Thus 57% of selection panels had representatives external to the specific university seeking a new vice-chancellor. The panels were dominated by males and there were usually no more than two external members.

Seven universities invited a current or former vice-chancellor to participate as an external member on the selection panel. Such an appointment would no doubt be seen to add academic credibility and experience to the process and this person would probably work closely with the Chancellor. In three cases members of the community were invited to be part of the selection panel to provide a truly external perspective and a non-academic perspective. Such an approach provided for a wider range of input from a wider cross section of the community. However it also increased the size of the panel to almost unmanageable numbers.

Again in all cases the selection panel was determined and approved by the Council of each university and the panel took responsibility for all processes including short-listing candidates. The panels were required to provide progress reports to council at each meeting of council. No documentation mentions the further input or guidance that may
have been forthcoming from council however with the Chancellor as chair of both council and panel it was suspected that the Chancellor would incorporate useful proposals from council.

Only one university established a sub-committee of the selection panel to formally seek input from all staff as well as provide feedback to staff. This liaison committee was a two-way conduit for communication and information. Two other universities indicated that regular emails were provided to keep staff abreast of progress. Three universities also acknowledged that prior to advertising the position, staff input was actively sought and incorporated into the recruitment or selection processes where appropriate.

Documentation supplied by one university showed that council took time to consider the strategic direction of the university and the desirable traits of the individual who could maintain the impetus of the strategy. In this instance council considered alternate strategies as well as continuing their existing strategy and thus addressed the significant issues that would arise as a consequence of the appointment. Certainly this may have occurred in other universities but it was not presented in their council minutes or provided to the researcher.

The fact that this university revisited the strategic direction of the university is indicative of the importance attached to strategic management competencies in the last ten years. In terms of decision making it was reported that the selection panel would nominate a preferred candidate to council who would then ratify the decision as final. With selection panels determined and constructed, timeframes and processes were determined but there was no discussion of a review of the position responsibilities.

The reported timeframes varied from a low of five months to sixteen months with a mean of eleven months. Where the processes were specified, these included:

- determination of selection panel
- draft selection criteria, position description and job advert
• finalize draft documents, remuneration
• place local advertisements
• place overseas advertisements
• source and search
• preliminary review of candidates
• complete interviews and reference checks
• prepare shortlist of candidates
• selection panel informs council of preferred candidate
• negotiations with preferred candidate are completed
• commencement date finalized and formal announcement made

The above appears to be the common format for the recruitment and selection processes that are undertaken and this was confirmed by six universities that responded verbally to the request for information as well as those universities that provided written documentation.

Two universities noted in their minutes that the selection panel needed to prepare a set of questions that would be asked of all applicants while another four universities responded that they had also used set questions but could not provide them. Thus only one university was able to supply the set questions that they asked of all candidates. These questions were linked directly to each of the selection criteria and while seeking explicit responses allowed the candidate enough freedom to introduce related items that could then be explored by the panel.

This particular university handled the task admirably by listing each selection criteria separately and followed with open-ended questions. An example of this is:

**Selection Criteria (1)**

Demonstrated successful leadership of a large and complex organization, of a kind appropriate to the internal and external responsibilities of a Vice-Chancellor.
Questions.

1. Can you provide the Committee with a brief description of your experience in providing leadership within a large multi-discipline organization?

2. What role do you believe the Vice-Chancellor should play in leading a large multi-discipline organization such as [this] university?

The above questions provide the candidate with the opportunity to respond with a well considered reply that would allow the candidate to illustrate how he/she could fulfil this criterion. The candidate also has the option of going into more depth to show the effect and desirable consequences of effective leadership.

The more the candidate speaks (80/20 rule where the interviewer only speaks for 20% of the time), the more opportunities will arise that will allow the panel members to ask further questions of the candidate and explore areas of professional interest (Compton and Nankervis, 1998). In all cases, panels were formed and candidates were interviewed by these panels so that the collective panel could discuss individual member’s interpretation of candidate attitudes and responses.

Another example of the questions used is:

Selection Criteria (8)

Demonstrated skills in strategic management and quality assurance.

Question

1. Can you provide the committee with an overview of your effectiveness in strategic management and quality assurance?

The above question is designed specifically to elicit information from each candidate that the selection panel members can use to rate against the criteria and other candidates. Thus the panel can then rank each candidate against each criterion to determine the most suitable applicant(s) overall who can then be shortlisted. The particular university that used these questions carefully determined the appropriate selection criteria, constructed
the advertisement using these and then developed basic open-ended probing questions to elicit specific responses and to create further opportunities for more in-depth questioning.

Selection criteria are an important part of the selection process. They are arrived at after much internal consultation and review of the position so that the resulting selection criteria adequately reflect the attributes and characteristics necessary to successfully undertake the role. Selection criteria can be used to measure candidates against the needs of the position and can also be used to differentiate between candidates so that the most suitable candidate is chosen and a close ‘fit’ achieved between the needs of the role and the attributes of the candidate. (Compton and Nankervis, 1998).

It was anticipated that selection criteria would be included either in the advertisements, candidate information package or in other related material forwarded however this was not the case. In two cases the selection criteria had to be inferred from the advert, package and council material and specific criteria were noticeably absent. A brief discussion with the Council Secretary in each case confirmed that such criteria were ‘vague’ and were not formalized to any extent. These two universities also had not advertised since 1990 but the other universities that had sought a vice-chancellor more recently had, in the main, formalized selection criteria.

However a comparison between the selection criteria and the position advertisement showed that in four cases, there was no evidence of the selection criteria in the advertisement. These adverts were brief and made no mention of the specific selection criteria but focused on describing the university and how to apply for the position. In one case there was limited evidence of the selection criteria in the advert that contained a brief statement regarding the attributes of suitable candidates. In all other cases the selection criteria were clearly embedded in the advertisement. These adverts were generally longer as well.
A review of the selection criteria themselves also illustrated some interesting material about what were considered selection criteria and their purpose in recruitment and selection. For instance one university listed the reporting relationship to council amongst its criteria, while another university that advertised in 2000 deliberately omitted providing any criteria at all so that potential applicants would not feel constrained or limited in their applications! These examples give an insight into the thinking of those who wrote and authorized the packages and adverts, and contrast sharply with the accepted role and purpose of selection criteria.

Several universities were unique in that their criteria included items not listed by any other university. This does not mean the criteria listed could be unique to the characteristics of the university itself, instead many of these criteria showed a deeper insight into selection practices as in most instances they focused on personal attributes. These included a commitment to academic quality, development and freedom, the ability to motivate staff across a university, and a commitment to the values and principles of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO).

Other criteria used only by one university, not the same university, included the need for an entrepreneurial flair, the ability to instill values amongst staff, and demonstrated organizational skills. The final criterion used by a single university mentioned the client base of the university, its students. This criterion required a person with an understanding of both staff and student needs and issues. This was one of the few occasions where there was a mention of students while issues regarding staff tended to be many.

Two universities (14%) required applicants who could demonstrate leadership specifically in regard to change as distinct from other forms of leadership, while another two sought a ‘high profile leader’ but failed to elaborate on what they deemed this to mean. Interestingly, only three (21%) universities sought applicants with a strong background in, or knowledge of, strategic management. Certainly throughout the candidate packages, competencies such as planning were mentioned but in the actual
selection criteria, only three clearly stated their need to find candidates with strong strategic management backgrounds. Such a need could be implied from references to planning but also should have been explicit in the criteria.

Five universities (36% of the sample) required applicants, who could articulate a vision for their university, represent and promote the interests of the university, and who could create the appropriate internal culture amongst staff at their university. Five also wished applicants who were ‘distinguished academics’ to apply but again failed to define their terminology. Another five referred to appropriate academic qualifications as being essential and five also stated that a knowledge of contemporary Australian Higher Education as being necessary. In each instance the statement was made and left to the reader to interpret or infer.

The most common criteria were listed by seven universities and again were statements that lacked any further explanation in the majority of cases. These criteria included the need for excellent interpersonal and communication skills and ‘leadership ability’ which, in one case, was associated with a large complex organization, and management skills. While it would be expected that these be included in selection criteria for a vice-chancellor it was anticipated that specific context for these may be given rather than left as generalities and vagaries.

There is a tendency across all industries for lower level positions to be more specific and for the more senior roles to be couched in more general terms to provide greater scope and flexibility. In the case of a vice-chancellor, the competencies required are more business related and less academic based and this will be discussed further in Chapter 4. As universities are run as businesses there has been a trend for industrialists to be appointed as university Chancellors as in the case of RMIT and Mr. Smorgon.

The US has tended to move away from traditional academics in the role of University President or vice-chancellor and, as has already been discussed, an industrialist has been
appointed vice-chancellor at a New Zealand university and more recently at Cardiff in the
U.K. It can therefore be argued that if Australia continues to follow overseas trends then
there is a possibility, albeit slight, that in the future a non-academic or industrialist may
be appointed as a vice-chancellor.

If this were to occur then traditional general selection criteria may not apply. Instead such
an individual would need specific information as to what was required, why it was needed
and how it could be applied. In order to attract such an individual the criteria would need
to be stated so individuals were not deterred from applying as they may be at present.
Therefore job adverts, packages and especially selection criteria would need to be
carefully considered and appropriately worded in order to be effective.

Such documents could be made even more vague than they are now or could have
references to academic experience and qualifications either deleted or reworded. In this
case it may become even more difficult to determine precisely what attributes are being
sought in prospective candidates. The alternative would be to use highly specific
documents that would attract rather than deter appropriate candidates. However the view
that suitable candidates would ‘know’ what is required because they are already part of
academia or related fields, would need to change.

Conclusion:

The attributes of vice-chancellors in Australia have changed since the 1960’s as the
higher education sector has changed in response to social, political, economic and global
changes. However as the sector has changed and competition for students and funding has
become more common, so the attributes of the leader or CEO, the vice-chancellor have
changed, not in anticipation of change but as a lagged response to it. In 1960 it was
possible to provide a reasonably accurate profile of the average VC and in 2000 it is still
possible to determine an accurate profile despite changes over 40 years.
It is possible to plot the social and demographic characteristics of VCs' because there are discernible trends that can be determined. These trends illustrate commonalities between VCs of the same period. The fact that these common characteristics such as age, experience, career progression and other attributes exist, means that people with similar backgrounds have been consistently selected for these positions.

The logical inference is that university selection panels have similar selection criteria against which they compare and select candidates. They are therefore searching for similar people with similar attributes. The selection processes are similar and in many instances the criteria are similar and it is reasonable that similar people are chosen for the position of vice-chancellor.

What does appear to differ are the size, location and focus of each university. Those smaller universities in a rural location may require a VC with slightly different attributes than a large metropolitan university that is trying to focus on enhancing its reputation as a research university. While these specific differences in focus require different attributes from the VC in order to achieve them it does not mean that universities are seeking vastly different individuals.

While universities require different foci from their respective vice-chancellors they are drawing candidates from the same source or pool. Universities then seek from this pool, candidates who can apply the specific focus that university strategies require. If this argument has even some validity, it begs the question of what universities do if the applicant pool does not provide a range of suitable candidates or even one suitable candidate.
Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The material that was analysed in Chapter 3 consisted of public domain material such as advertisements and candidate information packages that were distributed to applicants. This material was readily available as was material obtained from Who’s Who in Australia and the Commonwealth Universities Yearbook and the AVCC website provides the current list of members. The only material not readily available to the public was council documents and selection panel material that provided an insight into the processes used and other details not presented in the candidate packages.

A number of universities responded with emails or verbally and provided details that were either not otherwise available or considered too sensitive to be released. The data that was generously provided by these universities yielded much useful information. However in order to obtain more data a number of questionnaires were developed and forwarded to current and former participants to the processes being researched. These questionnaires provided the opportunity to put questions to a range of participants that were more focused and in-depth. A summary is presented in Table 4.1.

A questionnaire was forwarded to the 39 Australian vice-chancellors and a separate questionnaire to the 39 University Chancellors. One hundred questionnaires were forwarded to the 20 universities that had recruited a vice-chancellor most recently. Each of these universities received five questionnaires and were forwarded to the Council Secretary with whom this research was discussed prior to forwarding the questionnaires. Thus each Council Secretary was made aware of the research, its purpose and what would be required and in each case they had agreed to distribute the questionnaires subject to approval from the vice-chancellor or the Chancellor.
Table 4.1 Summary of research methodologies involving interviews and questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of questionnaires sent out</th>
<th>* Number returned but not completed</th>
<th>Number returned and completed</th>
<th>Number interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vice-Chancellors</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former VCs</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chancellors</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former Chancellors</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection Panel Members</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVCC</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A number of Universities returned questionnaires as their Councils' considered the topic too sensitive

Another 38 questionnaires were forwarded to former vice-chancellors and 37 were sent to former Chancellors. Six former VCs returned their questionnaires with notes saying that they were unable to participate as they had not held the role for some time or considered their memories of such distant events unreliable. One former VC had passed away in late 2000. This left a total of 32 distributed questionnaires and 15 or 47% of those responded.

In the case of the former Chancellors, two had passed away in late 2000 while another seven returned their material for similar reasons to those given by the former VCs. This left 28 distributed questionnaires and seven or 25% of these responded. With regard to the selection panel questionnaires, 100 were distributed, five universities returned them as it was considered to be inappropriate for them to be distributed by the VC or Chancellor, thus 25 completed questionnaires were returned. A total of 23 responses were received or 31% of those successfully distributed.

While 39 questionnaires were distributed to Chancellors, 3 returned them with attached notes stating that the person had not been in office when the last VC was recruited or that it was considered inappropriate to complete the questionnaire. Thus 36 questionnaires were successfully distributed and 13 responses or 36% were received. Again 39 were sent to VCs, six returned these saying they could not participate in the survey and of the 33 distributed questionnaires, 15 or 45% responded.
The response rates were far lower than anticipated but this was foreshadowed in April 2000 when some universities considered the disclosure of such details as recruitment and selection practices as being far too sensitive. An alarming number of universities via the vice-chancellor responded that they could not participate but wished the researcher every success in this endeavour.

A small number indicated that Council policy effectively prevented disclosure of such practices and that otherwise they would happily participate in research they too considered important. In one instance the matter was referred to the Chancellor for a decision. Such a response ensured the questionnaires were deemed non-threatening and necessarily easy to respond to, otherwise it was felt that few or no responses would be made given the highly sensitive nature of the topic.

The questionnaires were prepared in early 2000 and submitted to the Deakin University Ethics Committee for approval and to the AVCC for review and their support for the survey. Drafts were also presented to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Ballarat for independent scrutiny and comment. The Vice-chancellor discussed the material with peers and a small number of Chancellors. This provided the basis for an informal pre-test of the questions used and the overall design.

This was in place of a formal pilot group, as it became impossible to get either two VCs, two Chancellors or one VC and one Chancellor together in a focus group or pilot study. Thus the AVCC clearinghouse acted as a final source of comment and approval on behalf of those to be surveyed. While not necessarily totally satisfactory this approach was deemed acceptable by those concerned due to the inaccessibility of all the major participants.

In terms of the questionnaires themselves, two basic forms were constructed. One was designed for vice-chancellors and contained sections about themselves, the role, the
recruitment practices and the selection practices. A separate questionnaire was then constructed for former VCs. The latter was similar to the first however questions were generally in the past tense such as ‘Did you have a position description?’ This was done so that the results of the two questionnaires could be independently analysed and then compared.

A similar approach was taken with the questionnaires that were sent to the Chancellors, former Chancellors and selection panel members. The same questionnaire was sent to all three groups so that each could be separately analysed and then compared. This form was also sent to selection panel members as the Chancellors and former Chancellors had chaired these panels and thus it was an opportunity to contrast the different perceptions of the same event.

This ability to independently analyse questionnaires and then contrast the different groupings provided the basis for the interviews. All participants, except selection panel members, were given an invitation to be interviewed further and to receive a copy of the key findings of this research. The interviews created the opportunity to investigate issues in-depth that were raised by the questionnaire results.

Thus a multi-layered approach was adopted to this research. At the basic level was the accumulation and analysis of public domain material while at the second level was the additional material such as position descriptions that were requested. At the third level were the questionnaire results and at the fourth level were the interviews and at each level the complexity of information gathered and analysed, increased. Each layer built upon the previous layer and produced more information. The interviews were thus structured and consistent questioning was used where possible.

The questionnaires were designed to be user friendly and time efficient. The AVCC was concerned that individual universities could be identified if coding was used that indicated in which grouping a university that responded, was placed. The AVCC
representative therefore requested that no coding of any type be used, individual universities named or implied unless in very general terms and that the same apply to vice-chancellors and Chancellors. This included appointment dates and any other material likely to identify an individual or university. This further compounded the research as it necessarily limited more in-depth analysis.

The researcher however agreed to this and the AVCC approved the questionnaires and endorsed the research. A copy of the AVCC letter of approval was forwarded to all participants. The impact of the AVCC request was that universities could not be grouped as per the groupings in Appendix A for comparison and inter-grouping comparison. While this limited the interpretation of some of the data, the overall feedback was not compromised.

The questions were designed to investigate the findings of Sloper and the international researchers discussed in the previous Chapters. The methodology employed was to restrict questions to those considered critical and to ensure that the format was effective and time efficient for the benefit of the participants. Feedback from those participating in the pre-test and the AVCC was that the questionnaires needed to be easy to answer and definitely not time consuming. (Oppenheim, 1992).

The questions were posed using Likert Scales, both open and closed type questions while some required the participant to simply tick a box. The open-ended questions allowed the participants to expand on answers if they wished in order to ensure that the interpretation by the researcher was that intended by the participant. The responses to the questions also provided the basis for investigation in the interviews as some participants commented that they would prefer to explain their responses so that the proper context was provided. (Bryner and Oppenheim, 1979).

4.2 SELECTION PANEL MEMBER RESPONSES
While 100 questionnaires were distributed throughout Australian universities a total of 23 completed forms were returned. Another 25 were returned but not completed giving a response rate of 31% (23/75) of those who received them. A total of thirty-four questions were posed on the questionnaire (Appendix I) and most candidates responded to all questions.

Participants were asked to rank the importance of several factors upon the recruitment and selection process. The results indicated that 70% (Q1) of respondents believed that the strategic direction of the university was critical to the recruitment and selection processes, possibly because they highlight the necessary personal attributes of suitable candidates. Another 68% believed that the performance of the university was critical while 48% believed that the size and complexity of the university impacted upon the recruitment and selection practices.

Eighty-eight per cent rated legal implications of the role and processes as less important. 100% believed that prevailing economic conditions and budgetary foci were important as critical impactors upon the processes. Also prevailing social trends and political ideologies were considered less important despite the major influence of government strategies.

Also while 36% (Q2) stated that Council began planning for the recruitment and selection of a new vice-chancellor 6-12 months prior to implementing appropriate strategies, 68% of respondents said Council planning occurred between 1-12 months earlier. These activities (Q3) included forming a selection panel (100%), setting selection criteria (100%), setting the recruitment and selection processes to be employed (91%) and the time-lines (91%). However only 59% of respondents believed that the existing role of the VC was thoroughly reviewed while only nine per cent sought assistance from the professional body- the AVCC.
In all cases the Chancellor (Q5) chaired the selection panel. Eighty-three per cent (Q6) used networking as a means of contacting suitable candidates and 65% (Q7) invited specific candidates to apply for the position. However 43% (Q8) stated that the successful candidate was one of those invited to apply. It may be that candidates were invited to apply in order to provide the selection panel with known benchmarks against which other candidates could be measured. Not all candidates (Q11) completed an application form (38% did not) while 90% (Q12) did not require candidates to undergo any assessment such as psychological testing. Also five per cent (Q14) did not check references and 64% reported 10 (Q15) or more candidates applied for the position.

Seventy-three per cent reported that four-five candidates (Q16) were short listed for the position with 50% short listing five aspirants. The actual number of members of the selection panels were reasonably large with 70% (Q17) having six or more members which prompted some respondents to comment in writing upon the unwieldy size of the panels. Despite the size all members were involved (Q18) in the interviewing process (100%) and 91% (Q19) indicated that candidates attended no more than two interviews.

While it was anticipated that Council would ratify any recommendation made by the selection panel, the perception of the respondents (Q20) was very different. Only 57% agreed that Council made the final decision on who the successful candidate was. Four per cent believed that the Chancellor in consultation made the final decision yet 39% believed the decision was actually made by the selection panel rather than making a recommendation to Council for approval. While all recommendations were forwarded to Council it was therefore assumed the recommendations would be accepted and fully endorsed by Council.

Ninety-one per cent used set questions (Q21) that were asked of all candidates. Also 74% indicated that their university had a growth strategy (Q22) in place prior to appointment while 13% felt the strategy was unclear prior to appointment. While some respondents indicated that two or more strategies were in place concurrently prior to the appointment
it is reasonable to infer that the strategic direction of the university determined the attributes sought in the successful candidate. This is also consistent with the outcome of Question 1, where 70% indicated that the strategic direction of the university did influence the processes used to appoint a new VC.

In line with this inference, 43% of appointments (Q23) were in fact external candidates while 57% were successful internal candidates. However it was initially assumed, following the research of Datta and Guthrie (1994, 1997) that the proportion of external candidates applying for a position with a university employing a growth strategy, would have been much higher. Questions 24 and 25 followed this investigation by inquiring about the quality and quantity of candidates for the position. The outcome was that 17% (Q24) believed the number of candidates generated by the recruitment processes was insufficient while 22% (Q25) did not believe the processes generated the quality of candidates that was expected.

Overall the process from implementation to appointment took between 10 weeks and 6 months (Q25). In terms of effectiveness of the processes more were satisfied with the selection process than with the recruitment phase. Question 28 required respondents to indicate how effective they believed the selection processes had been. Forty-seven per cent (Q28) considered the selection phase to be extremely effective. Question 27 required respondents to indicate how effective they believed the recruitment processes to have been and 35% considered these to have been extremely effective. In line with this, nine per cent did not consider the recruitment phase to have been effective at all compared to just one per cent who did not consider the selection phase to be effective. Such areas were then further explored during interviews.

Question 29 was a rounding question that asked how satisfied respondents were with the processes overall and 95% responded that they were satisfied overall. However despite the changing HE environment 65% (Q30) believed that the recruitment and selection practices used to appoint a new VC had not changed in response to externally imposed
change. Only 35% agreed that such external change had necessarily changed the processes used to appoint a new VC.

Respondents were then asked to rate the importance of selection criteria that had previously been identified from the material supplied by the universities themselves and Sloper (1989b). Eighty-three per cent (Q31) rated commitment to the role as a critical selection criterion, followed by the ability of the successful candidate to set the strategic direction of the university (82%). Aligned with this, 61% of respondents saw that knowledge of strategic management was a critical factor in determining suitability for the role. Leadership style was critical according to 57% of respondents and the same number considered the candidate’s management ability as critical.

Another 56% of respondents believed that the candidate’s communication skill was a critical selection factor yet only 17% believed that candidate compatibility with senior university staff was critical while 57% considered it highly important but not critical. Service on a government advisory body was considered less important by 40% with no respondent believing it to be crucial. Likewise 48% of respondents did not believe the academic field of applicants to be of great importance while 39% believed that academic reputation was of only moderate importance. Also while 65% of respondents saw the candidate’s personal motivation as critical only 43% considered being a ‘senior academic’ as crucial.

Respondents considered networking ability (52%) as more critical than demonstrating political adeptness (36%) despite universities rating this highly in their position descriptions and selection criteria. Academic reputation was considered crucial by 17% of respondents but 31% considered academic leadership as crucial. The need to already hold the title of “Professor” was crucial to only 39% of respondents while a thorough knowledge of Australian higher education was considered crucial by 52%. Thus in some areas the selection panel member responses were at odds with the material provided by

Only 13% of those surveyed said their partners were involved in selection practices (Q32) while 60% (Q33) of respondents did not believe that future VCs would have similar backgrounds to those of today. Various written responses provided the rationale for this thinking but common themes did emerge. One common theme was that the emphasis on academic background and ability will diminish in favour of leadership, strategic and financial abilities. One perceptive observation was that in addition to changes in the required attributes of vice-chancellors, the roles of DVC and PVC’s will change in order to relieve the VC of daily management activities so that the VC would have more freedom to concentrate on external and strategic activities.

The other key theme was that the corporate sector model will be used as the norm. Others elaborated on this and thought that the competencies required by corporate sector CEO’s will be those that universities seek in their vice-chancellors. Another theme was that with the decentralization of Australian HE, the environment will force universities and their senior staff to change as HE responds to community and global trends. As one respondent (14) stated ‘We are looking for super managers with super skills and super personalities. They will be harder to find!’

Question 34 allowed respondents to make any other comments about the topic that previous questions may not have catered for. The need to keep selection panels small and manageable was again a recurring theme. Also the make-up of the panel was deemed important with the need for a more ‘professional’ approach seen as necessary. Another point of interest was that one respondent considered that academics might still view the role of the VC as it was many years ago and could hold ‘notions of collegiality and academic excellence’ that might be ideals rather than practically achievable in the current HE environment.
The relationship between the VC and Council was also deemed important by one candidate, as the environment becomes more rather than less ambiguous. Another respondent highlighted the role of the Chancellor in the selection process and the private interviews afforded candidates with the Chancellor of that specific university. Yet another commented on the role of the Chancellor’s partner in hosting the partners of candidates. In this situation if could be inferred that the partner of the successful candidate would be expected to play a similar role when the university was appointing senior staff such as a DVC or PVC.

4.3 FORMER CHANCELLOR RESPONSES

The second group targeted to receive the questionnaire (Appendix J) was former Chancellors. While the selection panel members provided an insight into the processes used to recruit and select a new VC, former Chancellors were surveyed as they provided a different perspective. They not only chaired the selection panels as well as university Councils but also played an important role in determining selection criteria and candidate suitability.

While reduced government funding had been mooted as a major factor needing to be addressed by vice-chancellors, no respondent deemed it a critical factor that impacted upon the recruitment and selection processes. Forty-four per cent (Q1) did think it reasonably important but not critical. However 56% of respondents considered the strategic direction of the university as a critical factor impacting upon the processes by determining the attributes required for successful candidates.

The performance of the university was seen as a critical factor by 28% of respondents while 14% considered both the size and complexity of the university and the financial/budgetary circumstances of the university as dominant issues. In contrast to the selection panel member responses these four items alone were considered to have a major impact upon the recruitment and selection processes used to appoint a new VC.
In contrast to those issues considered critical to determining the appropriate processes such as necessary attributes, questions asked of candidates, background profiles and such, were those considered least important. Twenty-eight per cent of respondents did not believe that the prevailing political climate or ideology was critical while 14% did not consider reduced federal government funding, current social trends (that dictate HE policy), the nature of Australian higher education or the legal complexity associated with the role as being important.

Those issues considered reasonably important by respondents included the impact of international competition (72%), the economic climate (58%) and the size and complexity of the university (72%). Question 2 revealed that in 58% of responses Council began preparing 12-18 months to seek a new VC, prior to the incumbent VC’s departure. Another 28% began planning 6-12 months beforehand. This type of preparation (Q3), in all cases, took the form of determining the selection panel, setting the recruitment and selection strategy to be used, setting time-lines and determining appropriate selection criteria.

Fifty-eight per cent used the services of a consultant while only 42% actually reviewed the role, duties and responsibilities of the incumbent to determine if any change or modification was necessary. No respondent sought advice from the AVCC. Fourteen per cent (Q4) did not advertise the position as vacant, while 83% advertised the position within their own university and overseas but all advertised externally throughout Australia. In all cases (Q5) the Chancellor chaired the selection panel.

Seventy-two per cent of respondents (Q6) stated they did not use networking to attract candidates however 58% (Q7) also reported that they invited specific candidates to apply. These were therefore known to the Chancellor or selection panel and may have included internal candidates. In 50% (Q8) of cases the successful candidate was one of those invited to apply. All candidates (Q10) were required to submit a resume but only 72%
(Q11) completed an application form. Fifty-eight per cent (Q12) were required to be assessed or undergo psychological testing, 86% (Q13) were required to nominate referees and 86% (Q14) were checked.

In terms of applicants, 58% (Q15) of respondents stated they received between 10-20 applicants while the other 42% received between 1-10 applicants. Twenty-nine per cent (Q16) shortlisted either two or three candidates while 14% shortlisted four, five or six or more candidates. In terms of selection panel members (Q17), 72% had six or more members, all of whom (Q18) were involved in the interviewing process. Seventy-two per cent (Q19) interviewed only two candidates despite shortlisting many more in some instances. The Council was reported to have made the final decision as to candidate success in 86% of cases while 14% indicated that the Chancellor made the final decision in consultation with the selection panel and Council (Q20).

In 83% of cases (Q21) those surveyed said set questions were asked of all candidates while 58% (Q22) of respondents reported they had a growth strategy in place for the university prior to the appointment of the new VC. The relationship between strategy type and appointment (Q23) was strengthened when 86% of former Chancellors reported that the successful candidates were from outside their own universities.

Seventy-two per cent of respondents reported they believed that the recruitment processes had generated a sufficiently large pool from which to draw candidates (Q24) and that the quality of candidates that did apply (Q25) was appropriate. Eighty-six per cent (Q26) reported that on average the processes once in place took on average 6 months before the successful candidate was chosen.

In terms of effectiveness 14% of those surveyed believed that both the recruitment practices (Q27) and the selection processes (Q28) were not effective while 14% also considered that both were extremely effective. The responses by the former Chancellors contrasts markedly with the responses given by selection panel members. Overall
however 86% were satisfied (Q29) with the processes used. Also 60% of respondents (Q30) did not believe that recruitment and selection processes used to appoint a new VC, had changed over the years.

Question 31 asked respondents to rate the importance of selection criteria. Seventy-two per cent believed that suitable candidates should be able to set the strategic direction of the university and have excellent leadership and management competencies. Fifty-eight per cent believed that knowledge of strategic management was a critical selection criterion however the same percentage believed that a candidate’s academic field was not important nor was service on a government advisory body. In fact 14% did not consider being a ‘senior academic’ or having the title ‘Professor’ (29%) as important. Yet 44% considered academic leadership as a critical selection criterion.

Commitment to the role and communication competencies were considered critical selection criteria by 42% but overall general experience was not considered to be a major issue. The selection criteria considered dominant by former Chancellors were highly focused therefore into strategic management ability, leadership and management competencies, academic leadership and personal qualities such as commitment and communication competence.

Academic reputation was considered critical by only 28%. Contrasting this focus, the spread of importance was greater amongst the selection panel member responses possibly as a further contrast between the greater in-depth knowledge of the role and its requirements by the then Chancellors.

Eighty-six per cent of respondents (Q32) did not involve the partner of applicants in any activities and similar to selection panel member responses, the majority (72%) did not believe that future VCs’ would have similar backgrounds to those of today. Only four written responses were offered to explain why this would be the case and no respondent
took up the opportunity to make comments about issues that had not been adequately covered.

Those who believed future VCs' would have different backgrounds to those of today did however provide some insight as to changes in the processes and higher education by former Chancellors. Management competence, leadership skills and business acumen were the common themes running through these brief responses. However to provide context for these changes, two respondents referred to the changing higher education environment leading to a changing role for future VCs', the broader vision necessary for today's universities and new demands. Another respondent linked the need for academic competence and business acumen as gaining greater emphasis in the future while another respondent believed that the role the partner and family of prospective incumbents would play in future would also diminish.

Those former Chancellors that responded to the questionnaire gave an insight into how the recruitment and selection of vice-chancellors has been undertaken in the past. However because many of them still regularly interact with their former university or other universities, they have been able to give a very succinct overview of the key changes that they have observed taking place since leaving their roles. Therefore the third group that was given this questionnaire to complete was current university Chancellors. Because all three groups completed the same questionnaire, inferences could then be drawn from the similarities and dissimilarities between group responses.

4.4 RESPONSES BY CURRENT CHANCELLORS

The current Chancellors (Appendix K) provided a contemporary view by those most heavily involved when the need to recruit and select a new vice-chancellor occurs. Those who responded had all been involved in such processes while some of those who did not respond gave the reason that they had not been involved in these processes during their tenure as Chancellor. The views of the existing Chancellors reflected the current forces
impacting upon the role of VC as well as the attributes considered necessary to successfully fulfill the role.

The Chancellor responses were similar in spread to those of the former Chancellors and again contrasted with those of the selection panel member responses. Both the Chancellors and former Chancellors responses had a reasonably tight spread of responses and fitted the bell shaped curve with small tails indicating extremes in responses. Thus while the averages provided useful information it was the extremes of both criticality and least importance (tails of the curve) that were of most interest. (Sanders, Murph and Eng, 1980).

In question one only five topics were considered as having a critical impact upon selection processes and criteria. The most significant with a response of 85% was the strategic direction of the university. At 31% both the size and complexity of the university and its performance were also considered critical while at eight per cent both the nature of Australian higher education and reduced government funding were also considered critical. These responses are not too removed from the former Chancellor responses.

Those issues considered least important in impacting upon recruitment and selection processes were headed by 38% indicating that political ideology was of least importance in line with former Chancellor responses. At 25% reduced government funding was next least important, again in line with former Chancellor responses followed by 23% indicating that the legal implications of the role and HE impacted less on processes. The two groups differed in the next level of responses as 15% indicated that both current economic conditions and the need to focus on tighter budget control were considered less important by current Chancellors than their predecessors.

Eight per cent of Chancellors did not consider the nature of Australian higher education or social trends to be important factors that influence recruitment and selection processes. Thus the bulk of Chancellors or 84% considered the nature of higher education to be
reasonably influential but not critical nor least important. Also 54% of respondents (Q2) indicated that Council began preparations 6-12 months prior to the incumbent leaving office while 38% commenced 12-18 months prior and eight per cent, 18 months or earlier. These figures mirror reasonably closely those of the former Chancellors and indicate little change in practices.

The type of preparation that took place at these early stages (Q3) included all respondents indicating that when the formation of a selection panel took place, the recruitment and selection strategies were determined along with appropriate time-lines. Ninety-two per cent determined the selection criteria to be used and 85% did review the role, function and responsibilities of the role, possibly indicating a further change to practices more recently.

Fifty-four per cent reported seeking assistance from a consultant (in line with former Chancellor responses) and 92% did not seek advice from the AVCC, only one respondent approached this group. This consistency across respondents to date indicates the AVCC is not necessarily viewed as a resource that can be effectively utilized in such processes.

In all cases the Chancellor chaired the selection panel (Q5) while all respondents advertised the position (Q4) internally and externally and 92% advertised overseas. In major contrast to former Chancellor responses, 92% of current Chancellors reported they did use networking (Q6) to contact potential candidates while the same number invited specific candidates (Q7) to apply. In 54% of cases it was reported that the (Q8) successful candidate was one of those invited to apply, a similar proportion to former Chancellor responses.

Sixty-nine per cent of respondents (Q9) reported that they did informally notify potential candidates that the position would be made available. This is in line with material discussed in Chapter 3 where a small number of Chancellors notified Chancellors of other universities of the forthcoming vacancy in case senior staff were interested in applying.
Thus the 31% that did informally notify other Chancellors is consistent with the discussion in Chapter 3. This is different from using networking channels to contact specific targeted candidates which appears to be the more common contemporary approach used.

All candidates supplied a written resume (Q10) while 62% completed an application form (Q11) and 85% reported that candidates were not formally tested or assessed (Q12). All candidates supplied referees (Q13) and these were checked in all reported instances (Q14). Former Chancellors reported that between 1-20 candidates applied in all cases, however current Chancellors (Q15) reported that in 77% of cases between 20-40+ candidates applied possibly indicating an increase in candidates again in line with discussions in Chapter 3. This trend confirms the cohort analysis of Gallagher (1994) and the results of a similar analysis by the author indicating an increased cohort from which future vice-chancellors could be drawn.

Thirty-one per cent reported that they shortlisted five candidates while 23% of respondents shortlisted either three or more than six candidates (Q16). The selection panels consisted of 6 or more members in 77% of instances (Q17) and all members were involved in the interviewing process (Q18). Candidates were interviewed twice according to 54% of respondents (Q19) and only once in 46% of cases. Council was considered by existing Chancellors to have made the final decision in 69% of cases reported and the selection panel (Q20) made the decision in the other 31%. This may indicate that as the Chancellor was the chair of the panel, with most members being Council members as well, Council fully empowered the selection panel and confirmed the panel’s decision.

Thirty-six per cent of Chancellors reported they did not use set questions to ask each candidate (Q21), and 69% of respondents reported a growth strategy was in place (Q22) prior to the appointment of the new VC. Regional strategies accounted for 38%. In this case 77% of successful candidates were external appointments (Q23) supporting the theory of Datta and Guthrie (1994, 1997) that organisations undertaking a growth strategy
tend to seek an external CEO. Eighty-five per cent of respondents believed that the recruitment had generated both a sufficient pool of applicant’s (Q24) and a suitably qualified pool of applicants (Q25).

Eighty-five per cent of respondents reported the process, to completion, took on average 7 months while 15% estimated an average of 16 weeks (Q26). Question 28 required respondents to indicate how effective they believed the selection processes had been and 62% believed them to be extremely effective. Question 27 required respondents to indicate how effective they believed the recruitment processes to have been and 23% believed these were extremely effective. Eight per cent considered the recruitment processes to be ineffective. Overall (Q29) 92% were satisfied with the processes with 8% being dissatisfied with them.

Seventy-five per cent believed that recruitment and selection practices (Q30) had not changed in terms of appointing a new VC. Respondents were then asked to rate the importance of selection criteria (Q31) and 82% considered that the ability to set the strategic direction of the university was a critical selection criterion. Seventy-three per cent nominated a knowledge of strategic management as being critical, 59% nominated personal motivation as critical and 50% stated that commitment to the role and academic leadership were critical. Personality, academic field and service on a government advisory body were not considered critical.

Seventeen per cent believed that holding the title of ‘Professor’ was not important while academic field and service on government advisory bodies were not considered important and attracted responses of 41% and 25% respectively. Another 8% considered networking ability, overall general experience, academic reputation and being a senior academic, as important. Seventy per cent did not involve the partner of the candidates (Q32) in any activities while 58% did not believe that future vice-chancellors would have similar backgrounds to those of today (Q33).
There were seven written responses (Q33A) that explained why it was considered that VC backgrounds would be different in the future. Three responses commented on the trend for VCs’ to be more of a CEO and less an academic leader or academic. Other common themes were the need to become better leaders and managers and one placed the context for this as the changing higher education environment.

Three respondents also took the opportunity to make other comments (Q34). The first respondent reported using five Council members to set the procedures and choose a short list but used 17 Council members to actually conduct the interviews and ‘make the decision’. This apparently worked well despite the large number involved in the interviewing process.

The second respondent believed that advertising would be reduced in importance in terms of attracting potential candidates and that head hunting would become the norm. This may link to an earlier comment stating that selection panels seek ‘super’ people for the role of VC and that these will no doubt become more difficult to find. The final comment was that choosing a new VC was a matter of chance! The justification for this perspective was that in the respondent’s opinion and experience, new VCs’ do not necessarily state their true agendas in interviews and may ‘clean out a lot of senior people.’

The responses from Chancellors mirror those of former Chancellors (Q33A) reasonably closely however there have been some dissimilarities noted as well. It has also been noted that these respondents have also differed in some areas to those of the selection panel member responses. These similarities and dissimilarities are explored in the following section.

4.5 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FIRST THREE QUESTIONNAIRES

This analysis can be successfully undertaken as the respondents to the three surveys analysed to date, all completed the same questionnaire. This was a deliberate attempt to
survey the key participants and chairs of the selection panels both past and present. This
difference in perspective can be used to highlight differing views such as between
Chancellors and selection panel members as well as highlighting changes in practices
between former Chancellors and current Chancellors.

There was surprising synergy between responses from the three groups. It was expected
that not all responses would be identical and that percentages would vary, in the
overwhelming number of responses there was overall agreement on topics considered
either most critical or least critical. With regard to major issues (Q1) impacting upon the
recruitment and selection of a vice-chancellor, there was relative agreement that there
were three main areas: the strategic direction of the university, the performance of the
university and the size and complexity of the university.

There was also relative agreement on the issues considered least important and which
have least impact upon the processes. These include prevailing political ideology, the
nature of higher education, the legal implications associated with the role, contemporary
social trends and reduced government funding to universities. The overwhelming majority
(Q2) commenced preparation to recruit a new VC between 6-18 months beforehand.

All three agreed that (Q3) the type of preparation included forming the selection panel,
setting the recruitment and selection strategies, setting time-lines and selection criteria.
The majority also sought advice from consultants and reviewed the existing role fully so
that modifications could be made. The majority, in excess of 91% in each case did not use
the resources of the AVCC.

The greater majority advertised (Q4) internally, externally and overseas while only one
respondent reported that the position was not advertised. The Chancellor chaired the
selection panel in every instance and selection panel members and current Chancellors
used networking to a very high level to contact potential candidates while relatively few
former Chancellors used this. Between 58%-92% of universities were reported to have
invited specific candidates to apply and on average in 50% of cases, the successful candidate was one of those invited to apply. However only a small number of respondents informally notified candidates of the potential vacancy.

All candidates (Q11) supplied written resumes while between 62-72% completed an application form. Selection panel members and existing Chancellors did not use any forms of assessment or testing of candidates however former Chancellors reported in 58% of responses that this did occur. The majority of candidates were required to provide referees and again in the majority of cases the selection panel checked these.

In terms of the number of candidates that applied, variation was expected as the location, size and focus of each university were factors that could influence the number of applicants. Former Chancellors reported that there were between 1-20 applicants (100%), selection panel members reported between 1-30 applicants in 82% of cases, while Chancellors reported that 10-40 applicants (100%).

Chancellors and selection panel members were consistent in that both groups reported shortlisting five candidates in the majority of instances while former Chancellors shortlisted either two or three candidates in most cases. Between 70-77% of all respondents had 6 or more members on selection panels and in all instances each group reported that all members were involved in the interviewing process. Overall candidates were interviewed twice and one interview only, accounted for the majority of the balance of responses.

In the majority of cases it was reported that Council actually made the final decision of who to appoint while the next most popular response was the selection panel. Responses also indicate, across all respondents, that set questions were asked of all candidates. The most common strategy in place prior to the appointment of a new VC was a growth strategy, this was commonly in addition to a regional strategy, however the growth
strategy was still the most common strategy being undertaken in all instances. The next most common response after these was that the strategy was unclear if it existed.

Chancellors and former Chancellors reported that between 77%-86% of appointments were bestowed upon external candidates while selection panel members reported that 43% of successful candidates were external. Respondents believed that the recruitment processes generated a sufficient pool of applicants in 72%-85% of responses by all three groups. The same percentages, overall, believed that the processes also generated a sufficiently qualified (quality) pool of applicants.

Respondents also reported consistency in determining the duration of the processes once they were in place. Those that calculated the duration in weeks reported averages between 10-16 weeks while those that calculated the duration of the processes in months reported averages of between six-seven months. In terms of the effectiveness of the recruitment processes the groups believed that these processes were effective in the order of 56%-72% overall with extremely effective being reported being between 14%-35%. Similarly respondents reported the selection practices as being effective in the range of 38%-72% and extremely effective in the range of 14%-62%.

The question regarding overall effectiveness resulted in respondents reporting that they were satisfied with the processes in 85%-95% of cases. The question (Q30) seeking to determine if recruitment and selection practices had changed resulted in agreement from respondents in no more than 25% of cases from Chancellors, 40% from former Chancellors and 35% from selection panel members.

The selection criteria considered most critical to the recruitment and selection of new vice-chancellors were firstly the ability to set the strategic direction of the university and a knowledge of strategic management, in that order. While the degree of importance of other criteria varied, others considered important were commitment, leadership style, management ability and personal motivation. With regard those considered least
important the most commonly agreed criterion was the academic field of applicants followed in order by service on government advisory bodies. Other criteria considered less important than most others were the necessity of being a senior academic and having the title of ‘Professor’.

Also between 70%-86% of respondents had not involved the partners of candidates in any activities while only selection panel members (13%) and existing Chancellors (15%) had deemed it necessary to include them and in the balance of instances there was no partner to be involved. The majority of all respondents did not believe that future vice-chancellors would have similar backgrounds to those of today. As stated earlier there was a high degree of uniformity in the responses from respondents across all three groups however variations between former Chancellors and the other two groups may be explained due to the smaller number of responses.

There were consistencies within the written responses (Q33A) as to why future vice-chancellors would not have similar backgrounds to those of today. Across all groups the most common themes included placing greater emphasis on CEO skills and a corresponding reduction in emphasis on academic background and competence. The most common competencies described as being necessary in the future were leadership ability, management competence and financial planning skills. These written responses are in line with the survey results.

Another common theme was that of the changing nature of higher education. This issue was seen as necessitating internal change for universities and therefore possibly different roles and duties for vice-chancellors of the future. However in the questionnaire this was not reported as having a dominant impact upon recruitment and selection practices at present. But it appeared that candidates believe it will have greater impact in the future.

While no former Chancellor took the opportunity to provide other written responses (Q34) the responses from selection panel members and Chancellors provided a good
context to how the recruitment and selection processes are carried out. The selection
case members believed that the number of members on panels should be kept small,
considered the make-up of the panel important and the comment was made inferring that
academic representatives were still seeking vice-chancellors with ideal rather than
practical attributes such as collegiality.

It was also noted that the relationship between the new VC and Council was an important
consideration yet overall compatibility with senior university officers was not seen as
highly critical in the responses to the questionnaires (Q31, criterion O). The Chancellors’
responses included a view that dependence on advertising will diminish and the role of
head hunters would increase. One respondent noted that what candidates say and propose
during interviews and related processes may be very different to what they actually do and
implement once appointed.

4.6 IMPLICATIONS OF RESULTS

The results of these three questionnaires have been discussed individually and responses
compared and a high degree of consistency was found overall. This consistency can then
be used to re-examine the research that formed the basis of the questions used to
determine if they support such research or hypotheses outlined in the first three Chapters.
These results can then be further analysed in contrast to the results of the responses made
by former vice-chancellors and incumbent vice-chancellors. The results of all five
questionnaires can then be used to confirm expected recruitment and selection practices
or to show deviations and explore the rationale for these.

Question one was designed to determine the impact of the major contemporary issues on
the practices used to appoint a new vice-chancellor, it was not designed to determine the
impact on the higher education system itself although a degree of correlation would be
expected.
The strategic direction of the university was believed (Datta and Guthrie, 1994: Guthrie and Datta, 1997: Karmel, 1995: Marginson, 1996) to have a strong impact on the search for a new VC or CEO and this issue was also considered the most critical issue by all three respondent groups. Datta and Guthrie (1994) also noted a strong link between organisational performance and CEO succession and this was also considered the next most critical issue by respondents.

The size and complexity of the university was considered to have a major impact on succession (Sharpham, 1997: Zetlin, 1994) and adverts, selection criteria and position descriptions discussed in Chapter 3 highlighted this issue as well. In fact all three respondent groups again considered this to have a major impact upon the selection processes. The impact of other major issues such as international competition (Dawkins, 1987: DETYA, 1999), economic conditions (Symes and Hopkins, 1994), tighter budgetary focus (McMillen, 1991: Meek, 1991) while considered important did not appear to be critical to the selection processes. It was expected that these issues would in part determine the attributes to be sought in candidates and become imbedded in selection criteria however this was not necessarily the case.

Political ideology (Gale, 1997: Marginson, 1996: Meek, 1991: Potts, 1997), community or social trends (Meek, 1991: Task Force Report, 1989:) and the legal implications of the role as outlined in the analysis of position descriptions in Chapter 3 were not considered critical or overly important to the appointment processes themselves. Although the nature of higher education (Illing, 1999: Marginson, 1996) and reduced government funding for universities (Dixon et al, 1996: Kerr and Gade, 1989: Meek, 1991: Symes and Hopkins, 1994) were put forward as potential major impactors, there was a lack of strong evidence to support this. This may change in the future however.

Professor Ian Chubb in his interview with Sharpham (1997) commented that higher education in Australia had been subjected to constant change over its history. This change has included structural, cultural, political, social and philosophical changes. Both federal
and state governments have initiated change, introduced new concepts and impacted upon funding, staffing and even curriculum issues.

Thus while Chubb notes the increase in the rate and nature of these changes he also notes they are a part of the system and thus those within the system would be used to change. Selection criteria can include reference to specific forms of change, as the selection criteria and position descriptions discussed in Chapter 3, however changes to HE, reduced funding, increased legalities associated with the role of VC and changing political ideologies are not new. However since 1987 the rate and pace of these changes has increased markedly.

There was strong support for the assertion that preparation for CEO succession (Q2) takes place long before the actual departure of the incumbent (Cox, 1986: Sloper 1989b). The type of preparation (Q3) that took place supports, in part, the findings of Sloper (1989b), Cox (1986) and Hallagan (1991) while another trend appeared to suggest that fully reviewing the existing role was becoming more common. The findings of Chapter 3 did not indicate that the use of consultants was common however the results of the questionnaires suggest that the use of consultants has increased (O’Neil and Thomas, 1996: Yowell, 1993).

While there was no initial data regarding the use of sector-based associations such as the AVCC, other groups such as the ACM (1994) have produced guidelines for recruitment and selection across a range of levels. However the AVCC being the only key industry sector organisation appears to play no part in securing the appropriate staff for member universities despite those appointed becoming representatives on that same body.

All respondents, except one, advertised (Q4) the position in line with the findings of Sloper (1989b) and Compton and Nankervis (1998). Also in all instances (Q5) the Chancellor chaired the selection panel and confirmed the previous findings of Chapter 3 and Sloper (1989b). The results of Questions 6-9 confirmed the findings of Wooden and
Harding (1997), Yowell (1993) and the findings of Chapter 3 that networking is used as a means of contacting potential candidates, yet this results in only 50% of those invited to apply actually being appointed. This supports the earlier observation that this practice may be used to gain a benchmark against which other candidates can be measured otherwise there would be a higher proportion of those contacted and invited to apply, being successful.

All candidates supplied written resumes (Q10) and supports the process overviews put forward by Compton and Nankervis (1998), Sloper (1989b) and Wooden and Harding (1997) while the majority also completed application forms (Q11). However contrary to the findings provided by these researchers, a large majority of respondents did not require applicants to be formally tested (Q12) or assessed in any way. The exception to this trend were the former Chancellors who reported in just over 50% of cases that any assessment was undertaken. This may indicate that the selection panel members were addressing other facets such as academic credibility, leadership and strategic capacity rather than personality, communication competence and the CEO attributes.

Questions 13 and 14 indicate that the majority of candidates were required to provide details of referees and that these were checked and concurs with the findings of Sloper (1989b). In the majority of instances between 1-20 applications (Q15) were received, the actual number shortlisted varied. Selection panel members reported that in 50% of cases five candidates were shortlisted and 31% of Chancellors also shortlisted 5 candidates. This result contrasts with Sloper’s findings that no more than three candidates (Q16) were ever shortlisted. This may be explained as the requisite skills become broader and the number of candidates with the majority of competencies declines as discussed by some respondents in their written responses.

Sloper (1989b) also reported that there were generally 10-12 members on selection panels and this research confirmed that 70% of respondents reported 6 or more members (Q17) and all were involved in the interviewing process (Q18). Aitkin (1994) suggested that
interviews were few and indeed this research also indicates that candidates are rarely interviewed more than twice (Q19). The research also suggests the final decision does rest with Council (Q 20) although the selection panel makes the recommendation.

While this contrasts with the conclusion of O’Neil and Thomas (1996) who contend that the chair of the selection panel makes the final decision as to success, it must be noted that the Chancellor chairs both Council and the selection panel. Therefore if council members believed that the Chancellor was satisfied with the recommendation of the selection panel then they would support the decision. Respondents were however able to cite at least three occasions when Councils had rejected candidates nominated by selection panels chaired by Chancellors. Also set questions (Q21) were asked of candidates in the majority of cases and this supports the findings of Chapter 3 that this was a common practice.

Dumaine (1993) noted the strong trend towards appointing ‘outsiders’ to the role of CEO and Datta and Guthrie (1994) also noted that organisations with poor performance or undertaking growth based strategies tended to appoint ‘outsiders’. An outsider is a person appointed to a senior position within an organization and has not been employed by that organization previously. An outsider can also be classed as a person who has been appointed to a position within an organization but remains outside the mainstream culture even for some years and is destined to succeed, in this case, the CEO.

Results from question 22 show that between 58%-74% of respondents reported that prior to the appointment of a new CEO their universities were pursuing a growth strategy. Question 23 shows that overall the majority of respondents reported that the successful candidate was an ‘outsider’ indicating strong supporting evidence for the hypotheses of Dumaine (1993), Datta and Guthrie (1994), Boone, Goodnight and Harris (1996) and Borokhovich, Parrino and Trapani (1996) and Greco (1997). These results confirm this practice is cross-sectoral and impacts upon the appointment practices used in industries to appoint a new CEO and within the Australian higher education sector.
Cox (1986), Hodes (1995), Wilde (1993) and Wooden and Harding (1997) argue that if systematic rational recruitment and selection practices are used then organisations are more likely to generate a sufficient recruitment pool and an appropriate selection pool. All respondents (Qs’ 24 and 25) overwhelmingly concluded that the processes used to locate and appoint a new vice-chancellor had generated both a sufficient quality and quantity of applicants. These characteristics of the processes are also cross-sectoral and are used to appoint a new CEO in industry or a new vice-chancellor in higher education.

Sloper (1989b) found that the processes usually lasted for 15-18 months allowing that successful candidates had to give notice to their existing employers. This research did not allow for the period of notice but indicated that once in place, the processes to appointment took on average 6 months. If a period of notice of 6-12 months is then added, the time frame is close to Sloper’s results that to the candidate’s commencement, the processes took 15-18 months.

When determining the effectiveness of recruitment (Q27) and selection (Q28) practices Wooden and Harding (1997) argue that effectiveness is achieved when the ‘fit’ between the needs of both the candidate and the organisation are met. This element of ‘fit’ equating to effectiveness is also apparent in the models proffered by McCanna and Comte (1987) and Guthrie and Datta (1997). Thus if effectiveness is equated with ‘fit’ then the large majority of respondents believed that both the recruitment and selection practices were either effective or extremely effective. Relatively few respondents considered them to be ineffective however this was not the case during the in interviews, either on or off the record. No university discussed in Chapter 3 provided evidence that the overall process of appointment would be reviewed to determine effectiveness.

Related to these results, question 29 asked respondents overall how satisfied they were with the processes and no less than 86% reported they were satisfied with the processes used thus indicating that effectiveness or ‘fit’ had been successfully achieved. It was not
surprising therefore that being satisfied in respect of effectiveness and the processes overall (Q30), less than 40% believed that recruitment and selection practices had actually changed yet many responded that the role had changed.

This indicates that respondents believed that the processes were effective but the position role and selection criteria would change but the same processes could still be used to identify candidates with the new requisite skills. Also respondents may consider issues such as testing and assessment of candidates as being minor rather than major modifications to the processes.

Gallagher (1994) and McMillen (1991) have both argued that strategic management and the ability of vice-chancellors to set the strategic direction of universities have become critical parts of the new VC’s role. This was also found to be the most critical selection criterion by all respondents (Q31) and is consistent with the review of selection criteria and position descriptions in Chapter 3. Respondents considered knowledge of strategic management the next most critical criterion. The commitment of candidates and personal motivation were given as desirable attributes by some universities (Chapter 3) and these were also highly regarded by respondents.

However despite the findings of Sloper (1986) the criterion considered to be of least importance was the academic field of candidates. Also the findings of Sloper (1985) that service on government advisory bodies was a common characteristic of vice-chancellors was not supported as this criterion was considered to be the second least important. Sloper (1989b) found the partners of candidates were considered an important part of the selection process and were involved in activities, however the larger majority of respondents did not involve the partners of candidates (Q32) in any activities. This may be a reflection of changed social norms and tighter anti-discrimination legislation.

In the US, McMillen (1991) reported that the backgrounds of vice-chancellors and university Presidents have changed and in Australia Chubb (Sharpham, 1997) also noted
that change has occurred in the role of vice-chancellors. This research (Q33) adds support to these reports as the majority of all respondent groups agreed that future vice-chancellors will have different backgrounds to those of today.

The reasons given have already been discussed but fall under two broad categories: competencies and environmental. The new competencies required of vice-chancellors include a working knowledge of strategic management and the ability to use it in practice, stronger leadership both closer to the corporate sector model of the CEO. In terms of the environment the nature of higher education continued to change and therefore create new challenges and in response to these, the nature, size and complexity of universities are also changing.

These explanations as to why vice-chancellors will necessarily have different backgrounds to those of today support the research already discussed in this section such as the importance of strategic management to the modern vice-chancellor (Gallagher, 1994; McMillen, 1991). However these explanations also serve to support much deeper theoretical models. The legislative impact of equating the role of the vice-chancellor with that of a CEO has allowed, if not encouraged, the shift from academic leadership to that more closely aligned with that of the corporate CEO.

The term ‘Vice-Chancellor’ is predominantly associated with academia while the term ‘CEO’ is associated with the head of an organisation, more commonly a profit driven enterprise. The transfer of focus from the traditional role of vice-chancellor to that of a modern business person in the form of a CEO has also led to the need for different appropriate management and leadership competencies. According to Gallagher (1994, page 80) the vice-chancellor is the “CEO of an academic enterprise.”

The need for competencies such as non-academic based leadership and exceptional strategic management competencies occurred when the focus on academic competence declined and business competence increased in line with the requisite skills of the CEO.
Such a shift allowed the neo-liberal philosophy to be embedded in higher education via economic rationalist pressures and managerialism (Symes and Hopkins, 1994). These changes are also consistent with the need for change as a natural social evolutionary process as expressed by Crawford (1991), Porter (1990) and Senge (1994).

The corporate CEO model has been transposed from the industrial sector to the higher education sector and is a characteristic of DETYA reports such as the 1999-2001 Triennium Report (DETYA, 1999) as well as the selection criteria and position descriptions discussed in Chapter 3. The changing nature of higher education and universities is reflected in global trends as Australian universities now compete on a global rather than national basis. These macro changes result in changes at the micro level as systemic change occurs to produce consistency and synergy. The cornerstone of these changes in higher education revolves around the role of the vice-chancellor.

This argument goes some way to explaining the changes in the role of the vice-chancellor, the attributes of incumbents and the differences found between this research and the findings of Sloper (1989b). No university for example in this study reported advertising in the Commonwealth University publication A Bulletin of Current Documentation, via the Secretary General of the Association of Commonwealth Universities or the CSIRO (refer questionnaires and material supplied by universities in Chapter 3). Also only a very small number of Chancellors reported contacting other Chancellors to locate suitable candidates.

In addition, unlike the findings of Sloper (1989b), there has been an increase in the use of consultants, as the level of sophistication of the processes increases and the level of expertise required also increases. The partners of candidates are no longer considered important to the processes or the final decision. Some components of the processes have not changed including the Chancellor chairing the selection panel. It is common in industry for the Board Chairperson also to chair the selection panel seeking to appoint a new CEO thus this practice is common across different sectors (Yowell, 1993).
As would be expected, information packs are still forwarded to potential candidates, referees are checked and from the analysis of Chapter 3, panel interviews take place and it is common for a range of set questions to be asked of all candidates. While other aspects have also not changed, the changes that have taken place ensure that the recruitment and selection practices used to appoint a new vice-chancellor are similar to those used in non-education sectors identified by Compton and Nankervis (1998), Datta and Guthrie (1994), Gatewood and Field (1998), Guthrie and Datta (1997), Heneman, Judge and Heneman (2000), McCanna and Comte (1987) and Wooden and Harding (1997).

4.7 FORMER VICE-CHANCELLOR RESPONSES

Those incumbent vice-chancellors and their predecessors formed the next two groups that were surveyed and received similar questionnaires with appropriate changes of tense for former incumbent questionnaires. Questionnaires were forwarded to 38 former incumbents, six uncompleted forms (Appendix L) were returned and 15 questionnaires were completed giving a response rate of 47%.

The first section of this questionnaire was designed to gain information about the respondent’s discipline base, age, gender, country of birth, the position held immediately prior to appointment and the university that position was with. This information was then used to confirm the details held in Appendix E. In accordance with AVCC wishes, the respondents’ universities were not identified.

The discipline bases ranged from Accounting (1), Biochemistry (1), Chemistry (2), Economics (3), Education (1), English (1), Geology (1), Mathematics (1), Medicine (1), Physics (1) and not listed (1). Twenty-seven per cent of respondents were aged between 40-49, 60% were aged between 50-59 and 13% were aged 60 or over when they were first appointed vice-chancellor. The spread of discipline bases and the predominant age range is in keeping with previously discussed findings.
All respondents were male, 53% were born in Australia, 27% in the UK and the balance spread equally between Canada, New Zealand and South Africa. The position held immediately prior to appointment showed that four had been DVC’s, two had been PVC’s, six were Professors and Deans while the balance had titles such as Director of Research, Secretary General and Commission Chair. The second part of the questionnaire was about the position itself.

Only 40% had a position description (Q1) while 66% reported they worked an average 60 plus hours a week in the role (Q2), 27% worked an average of 50-60 hours and only seven per cent reported working an average of 40-50 hours a week. Former incumbents were then asked if they considered the role of vice-chancellor to be equivalent to that of a CEO in the private sector and 57% responded that they believed this equivalence to be accurate (Q3).

However to clarify this further, respondents were asked if they considered the role of VC to be more or less challenging (Q4) than that of a private sector CEO. Sixty-seven per cent believed the role of VC to be more challenging while 33% considered it to be just as challenging. No respondent considered the role of VC to be less challenging. Respondents were asked if they believed the role was changing and if so how (Q5) and 92% responded they believed change had occurred.

Interestingly and contrasting to the three previous groups discussed, former incumbents most strongly agreed with the key issue being economic focus (53%) indicating that reduced funding had possibly impacted more upon incumbents than other groups appreciated. Forty-six per cent attributed change to the growing complexity of higher education while only 33% gave the increased focus on strategic management skills as the reason. The growth in the administrative nature (25%) of the role was considered the least important factor causing change in the role.
Eighty-seven per cent reported they were adequately informed of the complexity of the role (Q6) while the same number also reported they were adequately prepared for the complexity (Q6a) of the role. There were only two areas where respondents strongly agreed that they were not prepared (Q7) and these were the depth and breadth of the role (9%) and the political constraints imposed on the role (9%). Those areas considered most prepared for included leadership (80%), working hours (70%) and administration (56%).

In regard to the previous discussion regarding discipline bases, former incumbents were asked if they considered that their discipline base was important in their appointment and 73% agreed that it was (Q8). Written reasons given why it was important (Q8a) included that subordinate academics needed to know your academic standing prior to appointment as well as the quality of leadership that was brought to the role. Proof of academic credibility was considered necessary and the main duty of the VC was seen by one respondent to be that of providing academic leadership.

Forty-three per cent of respondents (Q9) reported that they believed that prospective incumbents should receive greater training and preparation for the role. The type of preparation (Q9a) included more exposure as a DVC or PVC and a better grasp of the changing higher education environment. Another respondent stressed that strategic management and people skills as well as financial skills were now essential requisites while another believed that media skills and conflict resolution skills were also necessary. Yet another suggested that the AVCC take a stronger proactive role in preparing prospective incumbents.

Seventy-five per cent of respondents agreed that incumbents (Q10) should have experience outside of academia yet 90% (Q11) believed that a specific background in Business was not essential for an incumbent. Given the small number of incumbents with a background in Business it is understandable that those who do not have such a background, may see such a preference as precluding them from the role. However 56%
did agree that a background in Business (Q11a) would indeed be beneficial to newly appointed vice-chancellors. This question appeared to be regarded as less threatening.

The next section dealt with the recruitment and selection practices specifically. Seventy-one per cent reported (Q12) that they were specifically invited to apply for the position and only 53% were informally told the position would be vacated (Q13). Only 38% of respondents (Q14) reported that they responded to an advertisement for the position, thus networking appeared to have been successful in attracting the majority of former incumbents in the past. Also of interest (Q14a) is that only 12% reported the position was advertised internally and 44% said it was advertised either externally or internally.

No respondents were approached by a consultant (Q15) nor were any interviewed by a consultant (Q16) while 87% reported that they submitted a written resume (Q17). Eighty-seven per cent nominated referees (Q18) and the same number reported that these referees (Q18a) had been contacted. Only two respondents did not supply referees. No respondent was required to undergo any form of assessment or testing (Q19) and 60% had only one interview. One candidate had no interview (Q20) another had 3 interviews and only 4 candidates were required to attend 2 interviews. Eighty-seven per cent (Q21) were interviewed by a panel but only 50% (Q22) met all university senior staff during the process of selection.

Respondents reported that the processes took from a minimum of three weeks to a maximum average of 3.75 months (Q24). The role of the former incumbents’ partners was considered important in the processes by 64% of respondents (Q26). However 57% reported that their partners were not included in any activities such as social activities during the appointment process (Q25). Only 36% reported that their partners had been included in any activities at all while one respondent reported that the question did not apply.
Thus despite the low rate of involvement of candidates’ partners, a large percentage still considered that the role of their partners, no matter how small, was still considered important by the selection panel throughout the selection and appointment processes. The most recent former respondents would have been VC’s no later than 1995 and these responses will be contrasted with those of contemporary vice-chancellors in the following section.

Eighty per cent reported that the selection criteria were made clear to them (Q27) while 3 respondents (20%) did not believe that they were made fully aware of the selection criteria for the role. However 93% of respondents reported that the appropriate time lines and processes were made clear to them (Q28). This indicates that greater focus was actually placed on the administrative function involved in the processes rather than the fundamental selection criteria themselves that give candidates a benchmark against which they can measure their abilities. However the majority of these respondents were invited to apply for their positions indicating that they may have had a higher probability of success than those not invited.

The next two questions (29, 30) were designed to further explore the increased role of strategic management in the life of a vice-chancellor and to determine if a clear relationship existed between the need for strategic direction or change and the appointment of a new CEO (Datta and Guthrie, 1994: Guthrie and Datta, 1997). The pattern that did emerge was quite clear and distinctive. Seventy-three per cent did not believe that their universities had a clear strategic direction (Q29) prior to their appointment but 86% (Q30) responded that following their appointment they did need to provide a new or different strategic direction for their universities. Also from the data supplied by those in the ‘About you’ section approximately 73% of these respondents were external appointees.

Respondents were also asked if the recruitment and selection practices were formal, informal or a mixture of both. Sixty per cent reported (Q31) that they underwent a
mixture of both formal and informal processes while 20% reported formal processes and 20% reported informal processes. In terms of the effectiveness of the processes used (Q32) 80% either agreed or strongly agreed that the processes were effective and 20% slightly disagreed that they were effective. Forty per cent strongly agreed they were effective and no respondents strongly disagreed that the processes were effective.

Respondents were given the opportunity to make any other observations or comments (Q33). One respondent commented that the selection of the new vice-chancellor should be more ‘stringent’ and based on more detailed knowledge and that it should draw upon more expert procedures. Another believed that 20 people on the selection panel was far too many while another believed that broad representation and thus larger numbers on selection panels, was appropriate. The final respondent commented on the role of the Chancellor and its importance as the former incumbent determined the viability of the working relationship with the Chancellor with the latter’s role in the appointment processes.

The responses from the former incumbents in some areas support the responses from the first group of respondents (selection panel members, Chancellors and former Chancellors) but give an insight into the processes from the candidate perspective. The candidate then having been appointed VC has had the opportunity to reflect upon the processes employed and perhaps been involved in them since to aid other universities seek a new vice-chancellor.

4.8 VICE-CHANCELLOR RESPONSES

The spread of incumbent (Appendix M) discipline bases was just as broad as those of former incumbents. Disciple bases included Agriculture (1), Anatomy (1), Business (1), Education (1), English (1), Health (1), History (1), Management (1), Mathematics (2), Neuroscience (1), Science (1) and Sociology (2). These are the disciplines as listed by
respondents and show a far greater breadth of bases than was previously reported by Sloper (1986, 1987).

The age range patterns were also similar to former incumbents with 71% being in the 50-59 years range and only eight per cent in the 40-49 age group compared to 27% of former incumbents. Twenty-one per cent of respondents listed their age as 60 or greater compared to 13% of former incumbents supporting the shift to, on average an older incumbency pattern (Chapter 3). Similarly 71% of respondents were male compared to 100% of former incumbents while 29% of incumbents were female compared to none in the former incumbent grouping. This is in line with the findings of Trent (1994) and also of this research (Chapters 1, 3).

In terms of Country of birth, 50% were born in Australia, 43% in the UK and 7% in Wales. While the overall spread between Australian born and non-Australian born has not changed between incumbents and former incumbents, the proportion from the UK has certainly increased. Also despite two per cent more former vice-chancellors being born in Australia than their contemporary counterparts, it cannot be claimed that more overseas-born candidates are being chosen now than in the Industrial sector (Chapter 1). The pattern would appear to have stabilised at approximately 50%.

The position held immediately prior to appointment had changed little from that of former incumbents. Five respondents had been DVCs, one was a PVC, three were Deans, three were Directors and one was a Commission Chair. The exception was one respondent who had been a VC at another university and while this does not constitute statistical proof, it does further support the results of the analysis in Chapter 3.

Unlike their predecessors, 93% of respondents did have a formal position description (Q1) compared to just 40% of former incumbents. Again this supports the notion that appointment processes are being formalised and brought in-line with the practices of other industries. Compton and Nankervis (1998) argue that job analysis is the basis for
the position description and Datta and Guthrie (1994) argue that this results in a closer ‘fit’ between what the role requires and the attributes of the incumbent (Chapter 3).

Eighty per cent of respondents (Q2) reported that their average weekly working hours were 60 or more while the other 20% reported working between 50-60 hours a week. Sixty-six per cent of former incumbents also reported working 60 or more hours a week. These high average weekly working hours are reflective of the findings of Cohen and March (1974) in the US, as well as Sloper (1996) and Aitkin (1998) in Australia.

This confirms the level of commitment needed by incumbents and the pressure they are subjected to. It also indicates that incumbents may need high energy levels or be highly organised in order to successfully undertake the position. The high energy and stress levels associated with the role provide a guide to some attributes candidates would need but these criteria may not appear in selection criteria or position descriptions.

Eighty-seven per cent of respondents (Q3) also believed that the role of VC was the equivalent to that of a CEO in the private sector compared to 57% of former incumbents. Seventy-one per cent believed that the role of VC (Q4) was more challenging than that of a CEO in the private sector compared to 67% of former incumbents. Thus from the perspective of incumbents and former incumbents equivalence was deemed appropriate or the role of VC even more challenging than that of a private sector CEO. No incumbents deemed the role to be less than equivalent.

Question 5 asked respondents if they thought that the role of the VC was changing and 100% of respondent incumbents agreed that it was compared to 92% of former incumbents. Therefore it can be safely asserted that from the incumbents’ perspective, the role is definitely changing. The nature of this change placed the emphasis on strategic management as the major area of change (74%) compared with 33% of former incumbents.
Sixty-one per cent believed the complexity and change of higher education was a major factor causing change in the role, compared to 46% of former incumbents. Fifty-four per cent believed the focus on economic viability was important (53%-former incumbents) and 40% reported that the political impact upon the role as important compared to 25% of former incumbents. Both groups considered the administrative nature of the role as important in change.

Thus from the perspective of incumbents and former incumbents, the same four issues were the major forces causing change to the role of VC. While actual percentages varied, these four were highlighted by both groups. The change alluded to by Chubb (Sharpham, 1997) has been confirmed by all groups that responded to the various questionnaires. Also the importance of strategic management (Gallagher, 1994: McMillen, 1991) to the modern vice-chancellor has been confirmed.

The impact of the political system and prevailing political ideologies (Gale, 1997: Marginson, 1996: Meek, 1991: Potts, 1997) have also been confirmed by the incumbents and their predecessors. The impact of the economy and reduced funding (Dixon et al, 1996: Kerr and Gade, 1989: Meek, 1991: Symes and Hopkins, 1994) and the continually changing nature of higher education (Illing, 1999: Marginson, 1996) have been confirmed as major forces causing change in the role of the VC.

Understanding the forces causing change and the resultant type of change allows universities to prioritize the impact of these changes and determine the attributes most desirable in suitable candidates. Thus there is a major relationship between these forces of change and the recruitment and selection practices used to appoint the person who will take ultimate responsibility for their impact upon the appointing university.

Eighty-seven per cent of respondents reported they were adequately informed (Q6) of the complexity of the role compared to 87% of former incumbents, while 73% reported they were adequately prepared (Q6a) for the complexity of the role compared to 87% of
former respondents. There was a greater range in the aspects that incumbents did not feel prepared for than in the case for former incumbents. Fifty-four per cent felt less than adequately prepared for the legal issues that constrained much of the position and the strong social nature of the role. 50% were not prepared for the amount of administration while 45% were not prepared for the strategic nature of the role, the working hours or the political constraints on the role.

An explanation for the differences between the responses of incumbents and former incumbents is that incumbents may in many instances still be coming to terms with these issues while former incumbents have dealt with them and considered they were perhaps not as challenging as they initially considered, upon reflection. Incumbents also noted issues of succession, financial planning and media skills as areas that they agreed they were not adequately prepared for.

The majority of respondents 64% did not consider that their discipline base was important (Q8) compared with 73% of former incumbents. The reasons given why the discipline base was important included (Q8a) that academic leadership provided an insight into the role and that VCs’ must be managers as well as academic leaders. The high degree of literacy and numeracy also required some academic background but one respondent commented that while his discipline base helped he did point out that other vice-chancellors with different backgrounds are just as successful.

In terms of preparation for the role 77% of respondents (Q9) believed that prospective incumbents should have greater preparation. This included (Q9a) greater interaction with governments and the community, more exposure to legislation and political networking, management training and the opportunity to ‘shadow’ others ideally as a DVC is excellent experience. One respondent considered that much of the learning occurred on the job but commented that candidates need a basic knowledge of industrial Relation, budgets and commonwealth government interest in HE. Another considered time in a senior (DVC or PVC) role as critical.
Fifty per cent of respondents (Q10) considered experience outside of academia as beneficial, while 30% did not see it as necessary and 20% answered both ‘yes’ and ‘no’ depending upon the person and the university. Seventy-five per cent of former incumbents believed experience outside academia to be of benefit. With regard to question (Q11) as to whether incumbents should have a background in business, 70% responded negatively compared to 90% of former incumbents. However in the responses of incumbents and former incumbents 56% responded that a background in business would probably be of benefit to a newly appointed VC.

Sixty-four per cent of respondents were formally invited (Q12) to apply for the position and 50% were (Q13) informally notified the position would become vacant. As in the case of the former incumbents this confirms the use of networking to attract likely candidates supporting the findings reported in Chapter 3 as well as those of Wooden and Harding (1997) and Yowell (1993). Seventy-nine per cent responded to an advert (Q14) compared to only 38% for former incumbents indicating that networking is not a guarantee of appointment.

Ninety-one per cent reported (Q14a) that the position was advertised externally, 45% reported the position was advertised overseas and 36% stated it was advertised internally. These results are not too different from the responses of former incumbents. While no former incumbents were approached (Q15) by a consultant or interviewed (Q16) by one, the results are different for incumbents. Fifty per cent reported they were approached by a consultant but only 29% reported being interviewed by one.

This indicates that the use of consultants has increased (Yowell 1993) but they are playing a predominant role only in the recruitment phase such as advertising and creating a pool from which to interview and select. This may also reflect the view by Chancellors and other senior university staff that they are the best people to decide suitability and shortlisting, not consultants. Ninety-three per cent submitted a written resume (Q17)
compared to 87% of former incumbents and the same number (Q18) nominated referees (87% of former incumbents) and 100% responded that these were checked (Q18a).

Also all former respondents reported they were not required to undergo any form of testing or assessment (Q19) however 21% of current incumbents did indicate the commencement of more rigorous appointment processes. Similar to former incumbents, 44% of current vice-chancellors reported they had only one interview (Q20), 21% had three interviews and 14% had either two or four or more interviews. One had no interview while 93% reported (Q21) the type of interview was a panel interview (87% in the case of former incumbents).

Sixty-four per cent (Q22) reported meeting all senior university staff during the appointment process while it was reported that the duration of the process varied from an average of 10 weeks to just under three months (Q23). While 93% of former incumbents (Q24) were not required to give a presentation or any other such activity, 31% of incumbents reported they did, thus increasing the transparency of the process and adding to the rigour involved.

Forty-six per cent (Q25) reported that their partners were not included in any activities, 23% were and the not applicable category rose to 31% from the former incumbent figure of just seven per cent. This may indicate that there are more VCs who do not have a partner at the time of appointment. Eighty-five per cent reported that the role of their partner (Q26) was not important during the processes.

Ninety-two per cent (Q27) reported the selection criteria were made clear to them compared to 80% of former incumbents while 85% reported that the processes (Q28) and time lines were made clear to them. This is almost the reverse of the figures for the former incumbents indicating that selection criteria are now possibly considered more critical than the administrative processes and time lines.
Seventy-three per cent of former incumbents reported that they did not believe the university had a clear strategic direction in place prior to their appointment and following their appointment 86% reported providing a new or different strategic direction. In the case of incumbents (Q29) 62% reported the university did have a clear strategic direction but 92% (Q30) also reported that following their appointment there was still a need to provide a new or different strategic direction.

This indicates that their predecessors worked hard to provide appropriate strategies but these needed changing in response to external and possibly internal changes. In any event the importance of strategic management is still highlighted as critical. Also there were more internal appointees in this group of respondents.

Sixty-nine per cent of respondents (Q31) reported that the processes were formal, in line with previous trends, while the other 31% reported the use of a mixture of formal and informal processes. In terms of effectiveness (Q32) 62% strongly agreed the processes were effective, 23% agreed and 15% were in between, however none disagreed. Respondents were then asked if they wished to make any further observations or comments (Q33).

The first response indicated concern that ‘headhunters’ regularly showed a bias against internal candidates while another believed the composition of the selection panel was critical and that members need training and support for this role. Yet another commented that the use of a search firm was useful as representatives were able to reassure selection panel members when necessary. Another incumbent was asked by the selection panel to help them seek and appoint a new vice-chancellor however they then suggested he apply and he was not asked to assist by commenting on the suitability of candidates. One respondent noted that confidentiality was essential and that his experience was a good one.
4.9 CONCLUSIONS FROM RESULTS OF ALL QUESTIONNAIRES

The results of the five sets of questionnaires overall provide a reasonable degree of consistency and confirmation as well as a relatively small number of inconsistencies. Together they provide a clear insight in the recruitment and selection practices used to appoint vice-chancellors from the perspective of incumbents, former incumbents, members of the various selection panels and their current and former chairs—the Chancellors.

The implications from the first three questionnaires were that the role of the vice-chancellor is critical and pivotal to the continued success of Australian universities. It also suggested that the role is necessarily responsive to external trends and pressures, which must be translated into appropriate strategies that best serve their respective institutions. The results from the incumbent and former incumbent questionnaires also support this conclusion.

At the macro level, global trends are incorporated into national policy and government legislation. Underlying these are fundamental philosophies such as economic rationalism that have been embraced by western societies. The addition of the term CEO to that of the vice-chancellor in university legislation allowed a transfer of emphasis to occur and the need for universities to acquire vice-chancellors with CEO attributes was encouraged. This encouragement came in the Dawkins era and was reinforced by Minister Vanstone in 1996. The form this encouragement took was the promise of greater flexibility and control in exchange for accepting imposed performance criteria.

DETYA required greater strategic planning from universities and as government funding was reduced, Australian universities became initially more competitive nationally and due to our small population, began to look at competing in the global market to offset declining funding bases. They also had to become more entrepreneurial and innovative.
However the responsibility for strategic development rests at the very top of an organisation-with the CEO or vice-chancellor. The vice-chancellor now needed to consider managerialism as a mechanism to achieve economic viability as well as embracing non-traditional funding opportunities.

This created an identity crisis for each university and academics who were caught between the traditional rigour and research of academia against a newly forming fee-for-service approach that revolved around the customer not the curriculum. This in turn necessitated an organisational hierarchy and administrative function similar to those commonly found in industry. Vice-chancellors also needed skills not previously required to cope with the rate and type of external change as well as the new emphases necessary in their roles.

Overall this indicated that Australian higher education was changing, the role and purpose of universities was changing and that traditional methods of managing and leading universities was also starting to give way to different methodologies more commonly associated with the corporate CEO model. As vice-chancellors vacated positions a re-assessment of their roles and requisite attributes needed to be undertaken, position descriptions were rewritten if not created for the first time. The burgeoning responsibilities needed new selection criteria to be included and obsolete ones deleted.

As selection panels undertook the task of appointing a new vice-chancellor they began to seek assistance from consultants as evidenced from the responses of former and current incumbents. Set questions were prepared, panels created and more detail given to the selection criteria while the use of networking became more important to identify potential candidates. Rigour was required of the recruitment and selection processes and thus candidates were now required to be tested and assessed unlike their predecessors, referees were checked and the processes became more formalised in order to get it right as success of the university depended upon accuracy of candidate ‘fit’.
Overall in order to determine new strategic directions, more external candidates were appointed to give a fresh perspective. However as Guthrie and Datta (1997) note it is now common in industry at least for successors to be appointed well before the incumbent CEO leaves the position. The internal ‘outsiders’ then have the opportunity to become familiar with the university, its issues and the people and barriers involved. Thus before they become fully enculterated within that university and become ‘insiders’ they are appointed VC. This period may take two-three years but it also gives key university officers the opportunity to determine suitability over that period.

It is therefore of little surprise that the findings to date are different to those identified by Sloper (1983, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1989a, 1989b, 1994, 1996). The social characteristics, incumbency patterns, preferred discipline bases, the legal basis, demographics and recruitment and selection practices have all changed in response to external and internal pressures. These changes compared to the findings of Sloper (1989b) include:

- Advertisements for the position are placed in a range of media including electronic media.
- Sources such as the CSIRO and Association of Commonwealth universities are not widely used.
- Chancellors do consult each other but far less frequently than previously.
- Search consultants are used.
- More recent adverts, while still reasonably brief appear to be improving in quality.
- The Chancellor still chairs the selection panel and may still field enquiries from interested parties.
- The order of preference in selection criteria appears to be Personal Attributes, Interpersonal Competencies, Characteristics appropriate to the university and finally Task Skills. This contrast with the findings of Sloper (1989b) who found the order to be Personal Attributes, Characteristics appropriate to the Institution, Interpersonal Competencies and Task Skills.
- The expected age range has increased and partners play a less important role.
The selection panel makes recommendations and these are either modified or accepted by Council.

The AVCC is almost never consulted or involved in the processes.

It is common for selection panels to have large number generally more than six members.

Candidates are still sent information packs.

Short lists are prepared and usually consist of two-three but may consist of five or more candidates.

Candidates are interviewed by panels.

Set questions are asked and go into far more depth than previously.

The above list contrasts with the findings of Sloper (1989b) that were presented on pages 57-8 of this research. However this research has attempted to fill in any gaps in the knowledge of the contemporary recruitment and selection processes used to appoint a new vice-chancellor and a summary of these processes is attached in Appendix N.

4.10 THE INTERVIEWS

A number of respondents to the questionnaires agreed in writing to confidential interviews and all were interviewed either in-person, electronically or via telephone. Two former Chancellors or 28.5% of the survey sample were interviewed together with twelve former Vice-Chancellors or 80% of the sample. Seven Chancellors (54% of the sample) and eight Vice-Chancellors (53% of the sample population) were also interviewed including one vice-chancellor from New Zealand.

In addition, a former senior executive of the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (AVCC) was interviewed as well as an incumbent senior executive of the AVCC. Also in order to get a broad range of input, two partners of a search firm that has ten years experience in sourcing VC candidates, were also interviewed. Both have been involved in some fourteen VC appointments over that ten years.
There was a marked contrast between the questionnaires and the interviews. The questionnaires provided basic information and it emerged that many respondents were only prepared to answer in neutral terms to avoid misinterpretation and putting sensitive information in writing. During the interviews however the majority were both specific and blunt in their responses regarding the recruitment and selection practices, other VCs and Chancellors, the role and HE. While an extremely useful amount of information was gathered, much of the “juicy” and more meaningful material was ‘off the record’ and therefore could not be reported in this research.

All interviews were either recorded by tape or by written notes with the consent of the interviewees. A number of questions were asked of all those interviewed. However while topics were common, the focus of each interview varied depending on who was being interviewed and their role in the processes. The topics and basic questions asked of respondents are contained in Appendix O. The interviews were semi-structured only and the questions in Appendix O were not necessarily asked of all respondents due to time constraints and the emphasis on information from those interviewed.

The questions were divided amongst eight topics dealing with the processes themselves, the formal and informal selection criteria as well as the ‘Fit’ between candidate attributes and institutional antecedents. Other topics included improving the processes, the role of VC and its future, the paradox, while the eighth aspect allowed interviewees to discuss aspects not already covered or to make any other observations and comments.

All respondents were given feedback with regard to the analysis of the questionnaires and public domain material. The common career path undertaken by vice-chancellors to achieve that role did not surprise the majority of the 32 people interviewed. Amongst the former VCs, respondent 11 believed that different cohorts have different characteristics but overall agreed with the view of a common apprenticeship used to become a VC. Both the current and former AVCC executives also believed this was the case.
However VC number three believed the apprenticeship was coincidence. The remainder of all respondents used this feedback to discuss the perceived change in emphasis from academic to management and the more recent diversity of VC backgrounds. VCs used as examples in this area were Don Aitkin, Denise Bradley, Glyn Davis, Ruth Dunkin, John Hood, Ken MacKinnon and the recent appointment of Professor Roger Dean at the University of Canberra.

In all, nine respondents commented with regard to the feedback on the move away from the need for a purely academic VC to one that has academic credibility but has experience or talent in management, leadership and strategic management. These were contrasted in each case with academic leadership, management and strategy. This theme is discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

The size and make up of the selection panel was deemed important as this body was given the responsibility for recommending a successful candidate to Council. Respondents also considered it one of the more problematic areas. Chancellors believed that the smaller selection panel the better. While three on a panel in the recent case of Canberra was considered too small, 15-22 was considered far too large and unmanageable.

It was also pointed out that it is easier to caucus in large groups and this appeared to be common particularly with those elected to the panel by staff, either academic or general. There was also agreement that external representatives were important. Many considered the ideal size of panels to be approximately six to eight people but as one respondent stated, ‘There is no magic number’. It was a noticeable trend however that the role of staff representation was seen to be declining in importance as the incumbent VC reports to and is employed by Council. In many instances it was therefore not considered essential to have broad staff representation.

However the issue of representation created concerns as those universities trying to secure broad representation and hence some ‘ownership’ of the decision to appoint the
successful candidate, also led invariably to large panels and the need for the Chairperson to provide stricter control. The Chancellors were reported to chair the panels in all instances.

The role of the Chancellor was viewed as extremely important as candidates tried to determine if they could form a solid working relationship with him or her. Many respondents noted that the panel members also took their cues from the Chancellor, as this person would work more closely with the incumbent than other members of either the panel or Council. The issue of staff representation was also seen by incumbent VCs as less important as they pointed out that Council employs them. Therefore Council needs to be satisfied with the appointment and that it would be extremely difficult to please all internal and external groups.

This also raised questions about the appointment of the Chancellor and Council members. The role of the Chancellor was continually reinforced during the interviews with all parties agreeing that before you could appoint the appropriate VC, you needed to appoint the appropriate Chancellor and that Council members needed to be knowledgeable, experienced and appreciate the uniqueness of university culture and challenges. The role of students on selection panels was strongly questioned by all respondents as was the use of Council members lacking university understanding and a knowledge of management and leadership. Only two respondents overall saw the need for students to be involved at all. As such it provides a challenge to established conventions. The larger the panel the more controls and procedures necessary to focus panel members away from single agendas.

Many incumbent and former vice-chancellors said that only a VC knows the complexity of the role and how important the relationship between the VC and Chancellor/Council actually is. Thus it was put to me that it is important that the entire ‘team’ be chosen properly so that the Chancellor, VC and Council members are all working together and appreciate their respective roles within the university.
Two respondents commented that in the case of the ‘gumtree’ universities if you have an inexperienced Chancellor, possibly inappropriate Council members will be appointed and they will not necessarily appreciate the strategic challenges facing the university and perhaps a candidate lacking the competencies needed by that university, will be appointed. The same respondents commented that it is less likely to occur in universities based in major capital cities, as they are more likely to have more experienced Councilors because they have a larger pool from which they can attract members.

The argument of selecting an appropriate Chancellor and Councilors before you can appoint the appropriate VC is both intuitively strong and consistent with the research of Datta and Guthrie (1994). If these are not in place then the probability of selecting the right VC with the right competencies for a particular university at a certain evolutionary stage and facing perhaps unique challenges, is reduced. However if all three are chosen wisely then there should be greater internal consistency and the ‘team’ should be better attuned to the challenges facing the university.

It was also stated that apart from caucusing being a problem, selection panels can be stacked. At least six respondents commented that they were aware of, or had been exposed to panels with a specific agenda consisting solely of people supporting that agenda. Examples given included universities seeking a female VC having panels with members all committed to finding a female VC and deliberately excluding members who did not endorse this view.

Other examples included staffing the panel with research oriented staff to ensure a VC with such a background was chosen. When asked if this was a function of Council policy, respondents replied that the issues were not previously discussed by Council and therefore were based on the views of the Chancellor. One respondent also believed that an in-built conservatism was the reason why so many academics were chosen as members of
the selection panel while others stated the mix of internal/external members and academic/non-academic membership was changing.

The balance of respondents stated that as the context of the university was academic it was reasonable that academics should be on the selection panel. However later questions challenged the perceived validity of this view. The issue was further clouded as some governments such as the Queensland State government determine Council representation and therefore influence the selection panel constituency.

Two respondents also noted that in their case Council had appointed a large selection panel with one smaller search panel. This was also the case in New Zealand where several small panels were used quite effectively. This allowed for candidates to be double interviewed with both the smaller panel(s) initially and finally with the full panel. It was also noted by many, that Industry based organisations do not use selection panels to appoint a CEO as this inhibits the process rather than assists it.

Another issue that arose from the size and focus of the selection panel, was that of confidentiality. It was stated by several respondents that the larger the panel, the less confidentiality will be maintained as ‘leaks’ occur. The overwhelming majority of respondents commented that a lack of confidentiality was responsible for the better candidates not applying but instead waiting to be contacted and invited to apply.

Where an existing VC applies for a similar role in another institution and is unsuccessful it was stated that it can undermine that person’s credibility in their own institution. One Chancellor commented that most of those who do apply ‘have been round the track a few times’. A number of candidates have applied for several positions and not been successful and it was expected that if a position was vacant then they would apply.

However the serious candidates were concerned about the potential lack of confidentiality and would not apply unless it was guaranteed. This has implications for the transparency
of the processes and perhaps the Sunshine laws of the US as many respondents believed the processes should in some respects be more confidential and the appointment only announced when finalised. Most Chancellors, when asked, supported the view that a perceived lack of confidentiality due to panel size and constituency deterred the serious candidates they wanted to attract.

The processes used by different universities varied markedly and many respondents commented that this was quite understandable given the diverse locations, sizes and foci of Australian universities. Former VCs commented that in some cases the selection criteria were unclear or did not exist, that the advertisement was the main source of recruitment and that in the 1980s or earlier the processes were extremely secretive. In some cases the universities conducted interviews off-campus or the candidate was ‘whisked’ onto campus immediately prior to the interview.

There was generally only one interview that lasted approximately one hour and questions were many and diverse in nature. There were comments that personality persuaded many selection panels with poor results later, as performance did not match rhetoric. The majority believed the panel members had little experience in senior appointments and that they attempted to ‘tick off candidates against criteria’.

The use of presentations or seminars was not uncommon although the former incumbents were concerned the audience could gain little insight into the presenter in the role of VC. Presentation skills rather than quality of content clouded their judgment. Other were just as concerned that many of these presentations or seminars were on their discipline base such as Physics or Economics rather than how they would act as a VC. Only two respondents were approached by the Chancellor of the university seeking the new VC.

Amongst the Chancellors and incumbent VCs there were two perspectives; those who had used search firms and those who did not. Those that had not used a search firm typically advertised the position, had one or two interviews with the selection panel, the candidate
may visit different faculties with feedback passed back to the panel, written references were sought and the decision made.

As one respondent noted, ‘Any university that relies too heavily on the interview has problems’. This view is shared by Graves and Karren (1996) and most others (eg Compton and Nankervis, 1998) who argue that the interview is only one selection device and that a range of integrated selection devices need to be used for any real effectiveness to be achieved.

Those who used a search firm followed a different process. The consultant will have worked with the Chancellor, Council and the panel to help them determine the attributes needed by the university at that time and to assist it to face the challenges of the future. The result will be a focus on strategic issues and as one Chancellor reported of the search firm ‘They impose order on otherwise potentially chaotic processes’.

The outcome would be a leadership statement or a statement of intent outlining the current status of the university, its strategic direction, known or forecast challenges and the desirable attributes candidates would need in order to be successful. While advertisements were used, little would be expected to come from them. The search firm may be given specific names to follow up or they may attempt to source candidates themselves either domestically or overseas.

Potential candidates would be contacted confidentially to discuss their possible interest. Confidentiality would be paramount and the candidate’s name would not be given to the Chancellor without the person’s permission. If there was interest a confidential meeting would be held, generally in the offices of the search firm, between the Chancellor, the potential candidate and the consultant of the search firm. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chancellor would be expected to indicate if it was in the person’s best interest to apply or not. If the Chancellor invited the candidate to apply, it would be expected that the person would be interviewed but no further guarantee would be given.
Despite the involvement of this process the Chancellor still has paramount impact. One Chancellor who used a search firm still commented that 'I liked him (the candidate), I ran him by my wife and she liked him so the interview was where I 'sold’ him to Council'. The search firm would then provide the panel with an extensive list of possible questions to ask and the Chancellor would then organise different panel members to ask different questions based on areas of interest such as research and teaching. This ensured focused questions and avoided the asking of inappropriate and non-task related questions.

Once a short list was prepared the search firm would, with the candidate’s permission, provide the Chancellor with comments made by referees. The search firm would have undertaken extensive background research on candidates, even knowing their likely referees so that any candidate put forward would be technically competent in the role. At this point the consultant would play less of a role and rarely would they state preferences or concerns to the panel that is charged with making the final recommendation to Council. The search firm partners interviewed could each recall a small number of occasions where in their opinion the better candidate was not appointed.

Incumbent VCs confirmed that in most instances they would not apply for a position but would wait until they were approached. Two incumbents believed that where search firms are used, internal candidates have to work harder. The view given was that where such firms are used in Industry, they are used when there is no suitable internal candidate and the search firm must source candidates elsewhere. However in HE, search firms can be used to confirm that the internal candidate is the best candidate, provide benchmarks against which the panel can measure candidates and it also substantially increases the pool of possible candidates.

However in Industry, selection panels are rarely used to appoint a CEO and written references are not held in high esteem. It was stated that selection panels are designed to inhibit the process of proper selection as broad representation can lead to hidden agendas,
caucusing and as another respondent stated ‘Members feel they need to earn their keep and ask silly questions or incorrectly interpret words, concepts or body language’.

Incumbent VCs reported questions asked about academic credibility, leadership style, how they manage change, knowledge of the university and Australian HE, administrative experience and key priorities. Other questions included how they would develop consensus, their sense of vision, established networks (political and academic), their people related skills, ability to think laterally and empathetically as well as strategic competence.

Behavioural and situational based questions were common to determine how candidates had handled difficult situations or how they would deal with them. Most VCs reported that where double or multiple informal interviews were conducted, these were highly beneficial as candidates could glean important issues from panel members and speak more freely. One respondent commented that a single one hour interview was not sufficient to allow a panel to make a recommendation and believed that two or three one-hour based interviews with small sub-committees of the main panel would overcome this concern.

VC number three believed that 60% of the decision was made prior to the interview based on knowledge of candidates and their applications while 20% was made when the person entered the room and the other 20% following the interview. Referring to contemporary recruitment research he agreed that most interviewers do make up their minds in the first two to three minutes of meeting the person for the first time.

Earlier research has established that unskilled interviewers make up their minds in the first four minutes of the interview eg, by Springbett (1958). However more recent research has confirmed that this can occur within the first four to nine minutes of the interview and thus interviewers need to be trained thoroughly to avoid unnecessary
subjectivity compromising the outcome of the interview. (Tucker and Rowe, 1977, Tullar, Mullins and Caldwell, 1979, Buckley and Eder, 1988).

One respondent noted that there were discrepancies between the selection criteria used by the search firm and the university. The result was that the interview with each flowed in very different directions but believed the selection panel of the university was closer to the criteria determined by Council. This candidate like many others commented that the processes were subjective, at least those they had been exposed to.

While it was agreed that intuition and subjective perception played a large part of the processes, the majority considered that intuition flawed the processes and therefore reduced the likelihood of an appropriate appointment. This intuition and subjectivity was generally linked by respondents to inexperienced panel members. However the search firm partners believed that as academic and technical competence had allowed candidates to be placed on the short list, they conceded that the final decision was often made based on intuition such as who the Chancellor believed he/she could best work with.

Respondents did believe that in fact there were two sets of criteria; those that are set out in the adverts and brochures and those that are more subjective and cannot be contained in such documents. This was not a hidden agenda. VCs reported that early in the interview the panel established academic credibility, leadership and management competencies. However later or in subsequent interviews the focus tended to shift toward personal attributes, beliefs and value systems.

Chancellors reported they wanted to envisage how a candidate would appear on television or in the print media. They also delved into personality, diplomacy skills, ability to work with others, personal philosophy, longer term ambitions, industrial and public relations skills. Thus some commented that they had to perform and display the great range of talents that a VC would be expected to have. In some instances these were imbedded in
formal criteria but former and current Chancellors did frequently use informal criteria as the final determinant of suitability.

Thus the panels actually looked for a wide range of skills, knowledge and experiences. These included the degree of democracy in leadership, how they would gain acceptance, political views, strength of character, confidence, personality, positive focus, moral leadership, resilience and diplomacy. Other aspects included a sympathy for and understanding of academia, respect for academic values and the ability to encourage and unite others.

Once candidates had passed the threshold of credibility the panel wanted to know the vision of candidates and their ability to move the university aims forward or to develop an appropriate strategic direction. There was agreement, sometimes reluctantly, that criteria had moved from that of an academic of high stature to that of the leader/manager of a business oriented enterprise. There was also agreement that this change in focus led to changes in the roles of the DVC and PVC, structure and overall university governance as well as the focus of Council. This view, while strong, did not prevail in the views of all respondents.

While the majority of respondents currently considered a Ph.D. essential, it was agreed that different universities needed candidates with different attributes as they evolved, grew, changed or consolidated strategic direction. Thus one VC could be exceptionally effective in one university but less than effective in another.

The big eight could afford to choose an existing VC from another band of universities if that person was considered to have the essential attributes desired for their universities. Thus as circumstances change for individual universities so too do the attributes successful VCs need. This was given as one possible reason why contract periods have recently been reduced from seven years to just five years on average as a recognition for constantly changing circumstances requiring different people with different attributes.
There was also agreement in general on this point, that different bands of universities seek different skills in their vice-chancellors given their unique circumstances. It was seen that the big eight with established credibility could afford to choose VC’s who had served their apprenticeship either within that band or at a smaller university. Such positions were deemed the plush pinnacle of success. On the other hand views were mixed with regard to the more recently established universities, the post 1988 band.

The prevailing view was that the range of applicants was more limited than the older universities, thus they were prepared to appoint younger VCs with a greater diversity of backgrounds. It was also stated that newer universities need to establish themselves and therefore needed VCs with different skills to make them robust enough to determine an academic strategic direction. Many respondents associated with the newer universities were highly critical of strategies designed to make these universities into a mini-Melbourne or Sydney university and believed such strategies were doomed in the long term.

Another interesting view was that the newer universities viewed the old reputation of the university (academic rather than vocational) as a bankable commodity. This respondent could appreciate why some newer universities did try to replicate the sandstones, as they wanted VCs who could embody that perception within the community. This usually meant appointing a DVC or PVC from a larger university as their VC. Respondent VC seven described these as “fantasy appointments”. This can be contrasted with the Universities of Technology that have all appointed their own deputies as VCs in recent years as these have chosen a different strategic direction. It was also stated that newer universities are more business-like and more closely aligned to the corporate model.

Former Chancellors reported that they did not attempt to review the institutional antecedents to determine desirable attributes or address future challenges and match these with candidate attributes. This view was supported by former VCs as only two believed
there was any attempt to do this when they were appointed. Only two of the twelve former VCs believed there was any attempt at all, even informally. However all agreed it was necessary and that it appeared more common now. Many respondents maintain contact with their former universities and were able to contrast previous and current practices.

Only one Chancellor had organised this review to be undertaken formally in order to ensure both Council and panel members fully understood what attributes they needed in a new VC and why. Interestingly, following this review it was decided that the role was that of a CEO as in the corporate sector and to a lesser extent an academic oriented role. Two Chancellors stated that this was done individually or informally while the balance did not review the antecedents or the job and therefore determine the necessary attributes necessary for candidates to display.

In terms of current VC responses only four respondents believed there was a genuine attempt to match antecedents with candidate attributes. VC three believed that overall ‘We have lowered the bar as far as needing to be a distinguished academic and researcher are concerned.’ This respondent believed that where this review took place, the role was viewed as a CEO as in the corporate sector. Chancellors agreed, with one stating that the VC is the leader and manager of an enterprise with all the characteristics of a large organisation similar to those in the private sector. It therefore needed to be led and managed in a similar way but with regard to the academic context.

A number of incumbents also believed that this lack of original ‘fit’ of institutional antecedents with candidate attributes at the time of appointment may have been a factor in the number of VCs not being re-appointed when eligible. This view was also supported by Chancellors although it was acknowledged that a number of factors can contribute to the decision not to reappoint, such as a change in direction of the university.
Other factors contributing to the lack of fit were stated as panels not asking appropriate questions, being influenced by personality, taking written references on face value and not undertaking any reference checks at all. Examples of each of these were given. Chancellors reported other Chancellors and VCs contacting them to say they were aware that their deputies were applying for the position of VC.

The context of the conversation was that the callers needed to know the likelihood of success so they could provide a reference in accordance with the appointing university’s intent. If appointment was likely, they would provide a good reference, if not they would prepare one accordingly. Cooper and Robertson (1995) confirm that reference checks are subject to abuse and error due to perception, knowledge and motive.

The search firm partners and others reported that at times there were major disparities between written references and face-to-face discussions with referees. At times a person providing a glowing written reference for a candidate, would in face-to-face discussions say quite the opposite. This was said to be as a result of the working relationship between the candidate and his/her referee.

In terms of how the processes could be improved, most agreed they could, but found it difficult to say exactly how this could be achieved. However those who did proffer suggestions did so after considering the issue at length. Confidentiality was given a high priority as was ensuring universities appointed the appropriate Chancellor, Councilors and selection panel members. The use of search firms, while expensive, was seen as essential by those who had used them either as Chancellor or candidates. The use of networks was seen as yielding more results than advertising.

Respondents also stated that antecedents, university strengths, opportunities and challenges need to be addressed in order to determine the critical and desirable candidate attributes sought. The majority of respondents agreed that Australian VC compensation
packages did not equate with their private sector counterparts and that this situation deterred many potential overseas applicants.

The double or multiple interview with small selection panels or small sub-committees were also preferred, but presentations if used would need to be in the context of the role of the VC. As VCs had a proven track record, psychological appraisal or other means were not considered necessary although one respondent considered the use of an assessment centre as possibly beneficial. Those candidates who had been an Executive Dean with responsibility for budget and staff were considered to have undertaken the best career path prior to seeking appointment as DVC or PVC and finally VC.

In terms of developmental activities, the approach used by Professor Gus Guthrie was held as a sound model. Prof Guthrie had a term in his contract an agreement that mid way through his term as VC he would take a six-month sabbatical. This meant giving one or more deputies the opportunity to move into his role for a lengthy period. Deans who were interested in academic administration would move into their roles and so on down the chain. Thus the university was able to provide opportunities for those interested in such positions and gave the person and university the opportunity to determine suitability. Those who had attended them also valued courses run by the AVCC for new VCs and subordinates.

However this topic raised issues such as succession planning, mentoring, performance contracts and appraisals. Former Chancellors and VCs believed that succession planning was not common and considered it a problem. Many believed that the need to recruit externally meant that succession planning could not be used, however in industry this is not the case. It is used to identify potential executives both inside and outside organisations and can be used to highlight succession and competence gaps. This group also conceded that succession planning is used extensively in other parts of the public sector as well as in the private sector.
Chancellors reported that succession planning was used at lower levels but tended to comment that 'universities did this badly'. Only one Chancellor reported that this was undertaken at all and in this case informally. Vice-Chancellors agreed overall that the issue of succession for VCs did need to be addressed. One respondent specifically commented that the AVCC could assist in developing staff once universities had identified potential successors. While the majority of respondents had not previously considered succession planning they did believe it should be pursued either by individual universities or by the HE system as a whole.

Only one VC that was interviewed had an informal arrangement that could loosely be described as mentoring. Former VCs believed that mentoring would have assisted them greatly in their role, while current VCs were unsure how it could be undertaken. Most assumed that the mentor had to be a current VC as well, however when it was put to them that the mentor could be a former VC they were comfortable with the idea. The difficulty of having an existing VC as mentor for a newly appointed VC is the more intense competition between universities for scarce resources. Discussions with former VCs revealed a willingness to participate in such a mentoring program and they suggested this could be facilitated by the AVCC.

Performance contracts were not as common as expected and a current VC who investigated this area recently, supported this view. The respondents who were given performance-based contracts had all requested them. Such contracts are common in New Zealand, Europe and the US. Former VCs commented that they were only given feedback at annual salary reviews or that colleagues had found out how their performance was viewed when they were not re-appointed to their roles.

The search firm partners recommended their clients use such contracts and believed that while such contracts had only been used for ten years or so for vice-chancellors, they were becoming more common. Performance appraisal was also viewed as a useful tool by many while two believed it would be too expensive to have external assessment. Most
believed the Chancellor assisted by the deputy Chancellor and/or a Councilor could best appraise performance and give regular feedback on performance. Perhaps due to the number of VCs not being re-appointed, more were actively seeking constructive feedback so that they could continue to improve and grow into the role.

While networking was used to identify potential candidates, one former Chancellor and two former VCs believed the decision regarding the most suitable candidate was made prior to the interview. Another respondent in this group would only go as far as to comment that certainly many candidates are ahead of the others prior to the interviews taking place.

This was in part attributed to the extensive gathering of data that takes place prior to interviews occurring. One current VC confirmed that during the interview it became apparent the Chancellor wanted her in the role. However all other Chancellors and vice-chancellors stated the final decision was made after the interview but in some instances agreed that they were aware some universities identified a particular person and went to great lengths to secure that person. This practice was less common now but does still occur, according to respondents.

With regard to better preparing or training potential VCs, respondents were able say what traits and characteristics are necessary for the role. These included being a strong strategic thinker, a manager, a team player, good communication, public relations, political, financial and industrial relations skills. It was agreed that being an Executive Dean responsible for budget, strategy and staff was an excellent developmental role. Others suggested that learning is all on-the-job or that mentoring could assist potential VCs. The AVCC was seen as the central body, by those interviewed that could facilitate specific programs for this group.

The AVCC has run and continues to run programs for academic administrators at various levels in universities however it was evident from incumbents that many universities
provide DVC and PVC incumbents with a predominantly internal focus. Others echoed
this feedback indicating that universities could provide greater focus to the potential
leaders of the HE system in the future by increasing the range of tasks and focus.
Respondents again considered the issues of succession planning, training and
development were areas in need of greater emphasis.

The question of the addition of the title CEO to that of VC evoked mixed reactions.
Several respondents remarked that the title Vice-Chancellor caused confusion in the
community with two incumbents recently being asked if they would seek promotion to
the role of Chancellor one day instead of remaining the ‘deputy’! The title also caused
confusion in North America where visiting vice-chancellors were often regarded as
Deputy University Presidents. Thus titles such as President or Principal in addition to the
title of Vice-chancellor, were regarded as more appropriate titles.

However a number of respondents believed that the title CEO actually describes the
reality of the role. Six former VCs, three Chancellors and four VCs specifically identified
the title CEO as appropriate as it indicated the nature and function of the role clearly to
the academic and external community. Other respondents commented that the VC ‘runs a
business of between $300-800 million so whether you like it or not you are running a
business’. Another commented that ‘I fear the academically sound VC is almost gone’.
Thus others supported the view that the title CEO is appropriate but not as explicitly as
others.

Two incumbent VCs did not believe there was any impact from the use of the title CEO
in addition to that of VC. However four incumbent VCs believed the role was definitely
and irreversibly moving away from an academic role to that of the management of a
business enterprise while others indirectly held this view. “You are responsible for the
bottom line and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).” Therefore the academic discipline
base of the incumbent mattered little compared to management, leadership and strategic
competencies.
The paradox outlined in Chapter One therefore did not exist in the minds of respondents. Academics with different discipline bases were as much expected as discovering an accountant, marketer or engineer to be the CEO of a private sector organisation. Incumbents displayed innate talents throughout their apprenticeship and these were developed and enhanced. Where such talents were lacking, universities went outside the traditional academic sector to seek those with transportable competencies in fields allied to the HE sector. These included the political and government sector, private sector researchers and industrialists with a Ph.D.

The Ph.D. was considered important as it provided the basis for academic credibility and also meant that the holder had been subjected to academic rigour and therefore understood to some extent the culture of academia. Thus few respondents considered there to be a paradox as previously described in Chapter 1. The appointment of Dr John Hood to the University of Auckland was used as an example where academic appreciation combined with transportable management and leadership competencies and personal attributes came together to produce a successful VC tackling tough issues.

Respondents believed that in the future the conservatism would give way and similar appointments could be made in Australia. Also as resources become scarcer the development of the VC role as the chief fundraiser similar to the US trend, was also considered likely. Most believed the Australian Vice-Chancellor was becoming less an academic appointment and more a managerial appointment. However while former incumbents believed this trend had moved further away from the academic role, others believed it has not moved far enough away and that tradition and conservatism limited the potential of the role and universities. Also while most believed the HE system overall was trying to find a balance between academic and managerial appointments for the role of VC, many believed in the future that a VC without a Ph.D. or major interaction with HE, could be appointed. Background will matter less and personal attributes and transportable management, leadership and strategic competencies will grow in emphasis.
In terms of final observations or comments many respondents reiterated points made earlier. These included the absolute need for confidentiality, keeping the selection panel small, getting the right Chancellor and Councilors on Council. Other comments included the belief by at least one respondent that the ‘whole HE system is too inbred.’ (Former VC eight) Other comments centered on the role and function of the AVCC.

The AVCC plays no part in the recruitment and selection of vice-chancellors now. However it was seen as the body that could best facilitate discussion regarding issues on the preparation and training of potential VCs, mentoring, succession planning and performance management. Chancellors had little interaction with this group and therefore did not tap into the informal networks that the AVCC creates for member VCs.

In fact Chancellors seemed to have little interaction amongst themselves, thus respondents gave views based on their individual universities rather than from the perspective of the HE system overall. One respondent did comment that the broad representation of the AVCC meant that it could not cover all relevant issues or needs, but forums such as that organised by the big eight filled this void.

However a dominant comment was that practices used in other industries were not common in HE which tended to use the same recruitment and selection methodologies that has been used for many years. The respondents did refer to specific cases of the processes being determined by subjectivity of key selection panel members, how personality has also allowed candidates to be appointed who otherwise would not, the stacking of panels and how astute candidates can use these facets to their advantage. The difference in perception of Chancellors and consultants about the objectivity of the processes also highlighted that they were, in some instances operating to different agendas.
4.11 THE CASE STUDIES

The two case studies contained in Appendices P and Q illustrate many of the aspects already discussed in this Chapter and the previous Chapter. Both universities consented to provide information and gave final approval of material to be included in their respective case studies. In case study one, both the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor were interviewed and material from these interviewed supplemented the material provided by the Council Secretary. In the second case study only the Vice-Chancellor was able to be interviewed and data from this interviewed was used in the study.

The material supplied by the universities has been edited, with their permission, to exclude specific names of the universities or individuals, gender or other information that could easily identify the universities or that was considered too confidential to be disclosed. The case studies therefore provide the framework for discussion and analysis compared to the material gathered and evaluated to date. The need to protect the identities of the universities and individuals involved should not have compromised the value of the case studies in any way.

Both universities discussed in the case studies are from the Post 1988 band and both were established long before being awarded university status. In both instances the outgoing incumbent was the Foundation Vice-Chancellor and had served between six to eleven years. The Chancellor in the first case study is an established and well-respected member of the business community while the Chancellor of the second university has a long history in academia in large universities throughout Australia.

The differences between the universities are many. The first university is located in the central part of a capital city while the second is located in a regional area. The size of the first university is greater than the second by approximately 10,000 students locally and internationally. The first has seven faculties, some 40 departments, seven schools, two
Institutes all spread between higher education and TAFE sectors, and over 30 research based centres. The second has nine higher education schools, six TAFE division schools and some research centres.

Both universities had undergone the transition phase to university and the second had also merged with a TAFE college some four years after gaining university status. In each case the universities were losing their Foundation Vice-Chancellors who had steered them through this transition phase. In the first case the outgoing VC was the previous director while in the second the incumbent had been drawn from a larger university to take up the role. In this previous university the incumbent had been DVC and had established a reputation both as an academic and as an academic administrator.

The processes follow reasonably closely those outlined by the partners of the search firm during their interview. However different consultants were used by the two universities and may explain the differences in the processes as different consultants bring different perspectives and support rather than directing the Council or the Chancellor.

Also while both appointments resulted in the internal candidate being nominated, they were in effect appointed for very different reasons. In the first case study, the Council determined the role to be a management and CEO oriented role while in the second, it was deemed to be predominantly an academic role.

In both cases the universities decided that the resources available to them would not allow them to create a substantial pool of applicants from which to choose a new VC. In neither case did the Chancellor contact other universities or ask the consultants to target or approach specific individuals. In both cases there was one internal candidate and all other candidates were external. Also it is evident that in case study one, the university was satisfied with the overall strategic direction forged by the outgoing VC.
However in the second case it appears that Council wished to pursue a different direction from that previously followed. The Council of the university in case one wanted a CEO who could operate in an academic context and had academic credibility while the Council in case two wanted an academic for an academic administration role. This may also be a function of the Chancellor as in the first case the Chancellor was a prominent businessman and in case two the Chancellor was an academic and former VC.

In both cases the consultants worked with the Chancellor, the Council and the selection panel and assisted them to focus on what it was they wanted the VC to do and to identify the attributes necessary to achieve this. Both appointees commented on the benefits of having the consultants involved although in case study one, the consultants appeared to be working with a different set of selection criteria than the panel. This resulted in both confusion and concern for the candidate.

However it is unlikely that the consultants determined the views of the respective Councils but rather translated the immediate and strategic needs of the universities into the essential and desirable attributes that candidates would need in order to be successful in the role. Certainly the material made available for the first case study and the interviews confirmed the university took almost 12 months to determine the appropriate role of the incoming VC, the strategic direction of the university and the necessary attributes the successful candidate would need to display.

It is interesting that the panel in the first case did not ask set questions but the panel in the second did. The consultants who were interviewed did not recommend the use of set questions because they considered them inappropriate, yet these were the consultants used in case study two. This indicates that the role of the consultant is to recommend only, and if Council has strong views then these will prevail. Hence once the university has determined its own need the consultant appears to work within this framework.
This was determined early in the process by the universities as the information packages and the advertisements were internally consistent. In the second case, if Council wished to pursue a new direction then by not setting selection criteria, the candidates were put under increased pressure and had to perform to the expectations of the panel with minimum stimuli or guidance. Thus those capable of setting their own priorities and direction would have been clearly evident.

In keeping with more recent approaches the panels was chaired by the Chancellors and the size of the panels were kept small, six and seven respectively. Also the members of the panel in case one were all experienced in senior appointments and six of the seven in case study two. The number of applications was within the range previously discussed, as were the numbers who applied and were interviewed. In case one, two candidates were considered appointable and three in case study two.

This supports the view that while the application pool locally may be increasing, the growing complexity of the role can actually narrow the number of appointable candidates. As one respondent Chancellor stated: “It is difficult getting a large pool of interest. Most universities are quite delighted if they have a serious choice to make. You can expect the better candidates to be approached rather than apply and the advertising method is almost certainly not going to succeed.”

Another aspect of consistency is the role of the partner. The partners of candidates played no part in the processes at all and neither panel believed they should. Candidates were interviewed for approximately an hour and a half and while the panel met five times in case study two, they met only once in case one. This was because the Council of case study two had been meeting for almost twelve months to discuss the future of the university and the role of the VC. Thus the areas to be investigated would have been relatively clear at that time due to the focussed discussion. The single meeting would therefore have been to confirm questions and allocate them rather than to construct them fully.
It is also of interest to note that the consultants who were interviewed indicated they recommend the use of performance based contracts however the university that did use them in case study two decided to reject this approach. However the University of case study one that used another search firm undertook its own investigation of the nature and use of such contracts and the appointee actually sought such a contract. Again it is clear that the wishes of the Chancellor or Council prevail.

However the most intriguing differences are in the backgrounds of the Chancellors and the view of the respective Councils on the role of the VC. This highlights the role of the Chancellor in the process together with the impact on the final decision as to who is appointed and why. In the interviews, the impact of the Chancellor was highlighted regularly along with the concept of the formation of a working team consisting of both the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor.

In case study one the Chancellor was an extremely high profile businessman with an international reputation. The Council consisted of other high profile business practitioners who were all familiar with the concepts of private sector corporate governance. While academic staff also held Council positions, the Council took the role of appointing the VC as seriously as they did appointing a corporate sector CEO. The Council was well equipped to appoint a senior executive.

However while they believed that the university exhibited all the characteristics of a large private sector business, they still imposed the threshold of academic credibility. This was expected as the Chancellor commented that: “Generally speaking you need people with some experience and knowledge of what they are going to be doing. They will not get that if they have not been in the sector. You would not expect the CEO of BHP to come from the university sector. It would not happen.”
They therefore required candidates to have a Ph.D. and to come from the HE sector or an allied sector such as Health. This meant familiarity with the sector, its culture and practices. However having established the threshold of academic credibility they did not believe they required an academic immersed in core activities such as curriculum design and development, be involved in extensive research or have been teaching recently. Instead the Chancellor believed that VCs are involved less and less in these areas and more and more in the management and leadership of the enterprise.

It was considered that such activities could be delegated to DVCs and PVCs while overall responsibility would remain with the VC. This echoes the view that emanated from the interviews, that the role of the VC determines the role and purpose of subordinates, university structure and governance (Marginson and Considine, 2000). This view is consistent with that expressed by a number of respondents to the questionnaires who referred to the flow on impact of appointing a new VC. In some respects it resembles the initial stages of the development of the University President and the Provost system in the USA but here the DVC or PVC undertakes the role equivalent of the Provost.

Thus the Chancellor and Council were predominantly business practitioners experienced in corporate sector governance. The view of the appointee was that the VC was indeed responsible for the ‘bottom line’ in all areas of performance including fundraising, investment strategy and the efficient use of property.

It was noted that most universities are now dependent on third party commercial agreements for more than half their income and there are more legal obligations for taking money from third parties for the provision of services. This is now similar to the private sector and as universities have all the characteristics of a large business, they need to be managed in a similar way. Thus with an annual turnover of A$400 million, 50,000 students and 3,000 staff, Council determined it was in the best interests of the public to have this enterprise managed in the most efficient manner, similar to the private sector.
The views of the Chancellor and to a lesser extent of Council may have led to the strong partnership between the Chancellor and the appointee as there appeared to be overall agreement that the university needed a CEO in the sense of the corporate sector. The background, knowledge and experience of the Chancellor undoubtedly influenced the processes to some extent and led to the appointment of the candidate who exhibited the attributes identified to successfully fulfil the role.

In case study two, the Chancellor was himself a former VC and a distinguished academic. The selection Committee had three academic members while the two external members of Council had a long history of association with education. The other two members were the two Deputy Chancellors. Thus it is reasonable to assume that there was a predominantly academic perspective within the panel.

The appointee also held strong views that the role was predominantly an academic one and voiced this opinion in the ten minutes afforded him at the commencement of his interview with the panel. The advertisement also refers to the position as one of a leadership position in teaching, tertiary education and funding. Thus if the successful candidate believed the role to be fundamentally an academic one, then as this person was successful, Council agreed with this perspective.

In this appointment Council appears to have favoured a strong academic with management and leadership qualities or at least saw a balance between the two in this candidate. In these two case studies the fact that the backgrounds of the two Chancellors was reflected in the appointments may be put down to coincidence. However it does reflect the views of those interviewed that the Chancellor, directly or indirectly, plays a pivotal role in the determination of the role of VC and the subsequent appointment processes.

Another factor is the size of the two universities. The smaller regional based university may still be trying to establish its academic credibility within the community. It is similar
to the pattern discussed earlier where its foundation VC was drawn from a much larger
and older institution, as was its DVC who was finally appointed VC. It was noted earlier
also that the image of the older university may be a bankable commodity that newer
universities try to replicate to their advantage.

The other interesting point is the strategic direction adopted by each university. In case
study one the university was satisfied with the strategic direction of the university and its
reputation was firmly in place. There was no desire to introduce major change and hence
the Council accepted the proposal of the panel to appoint the internal candidate, who
could best follow this direction.

In the second case the university believed change was needed but not necessarily radical
change. It had a DVC with seven years experience across two universities and while he
did not consider himself to be an “inside outsider”, Council may have viewed him as
such. However he had a strong grip on the major issues facing the university, could
evaluate previous strategies and could put forward viable alternatives.

The processes exhibited in the two case studies are similar but both contrast with the
processes used by universities in the past or those that have not engaged a search firm to
assist in the appointment processes. In these cases the processes were considered by
participants to be less than confidential, often involved presentations, meeting faculty and
senior staff and were rather lengthy and dominated by comparatively large Selection
Committees.

Chancellors used networks extensively to identify potential candidates or relied on
advertisements to attract candidates. They relied heavily on written rather than verbal
references and a number of participants to the processes conceded there was no emphasis
on determining university antecedents and matching these with the desirable attributes
sought in candidates.
Selection Committee members did not always have experience in senior appointments and brought an overly subjective aspect to the processes, appointing the wrong candidates for the wrong reasons on occasions. Former Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors themselves were highly critical of these processes and believed they needed to change. The contrast between the more recent processes and these less frequently used processes is evident.

Conclusion:

This Chapter has discussed and analysed the results of the questionnaires, interviews and case studies. The material built upon the discussion of previous Chapters and in many respects has confirmed that data. There does appear to be an accepted or common, but not exclusive, path to being appointed VC. Informal selection criteria do exist according to Chancellors and the use of search firms is becoming far more wide spread despite the higher costs.

The material from previous chapters was also compared to the findings of the data analysed in this chapter. This allowed the same material to be analysed from several perspectives in order to gain a complete and thorough comparison. It has allowed areas of synergy to be identified as well as areas where conflict is evident and such conflict has been explored. The analysis of the five sets of questionnaires, the interviews and the case studies combined give a consistent and coherent insight into the topic being researched.

In the last decade Australian higher education has changed as more pressures impact upon the system as resources become scarce and competition for these resources intensifies. The size, complexity and focus of universities have become more diverse as different universities in different bands establish their reputation and pursue branding and niche strategies to differentiate themselves from competitors.
Preparation could begin 12-18 months before the expiry of the incumbent’s contract. Where a search firm is used, Council would be encouraged to review the function and nature of the role of the VC, identify challenges and opportunities and the appropriateness of existing strategies. These would be reviewed in the context of the size, complexity and focus of the institution and the outcome would be a thorough understanding of the role and the essential attributes sought in candidates.

Selection criteria, a PD, leadership statement and other essential material would be produced and internally consistent. Informal criteria may also be identified but excluded from information packages. Timelines, objectives and the determination of the constituency of the panel would take place.

Where a search firm was not used it would be likely that at best an informal review of university antecedents and candidate attributes would take place. Timelines would be established together with selection criteria, which may or may not be used to prioritise candidate suitability. Informal criteria would be constructed and may play an important role in the processes.

In terms of the recruitment processes where a search firm is used this entails advertising, direct contact, networking and targeting likely candidates and using the consultant to encourage them to apply where it is warranted. Where a search firm is not used the university would generally advertise the position, the Chancellor would most likely contact other Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors or the university may contact specific individuals. Generally the use of a search firm creates a larger pool of suitably qualified and experienced applicants.

The selection stages would also be very different. The search firm would produce a list of questions that could be asked, the interviews would be slightly less formal and more flexible, confidentiality would be paramount and extensive research on each candidate would be undertaken. Referees would be interviewed face-to-face and perhaps
preliminary meetings arranged between the Chancellor and potentially interested parties. Set questions would not be asked but all short listed candidates would need to pass a threshold of academic credibility. The processes would be short and multiple interviews may be used.

Where a search firm was not used, the selection process would be more likely to involve meeting senior staff, making presentations and the panel would be large and members could bring personal agendas to the processes. Set questions would be more likely to be used, the interviews more formal and lengthier. Written references would be accepted and confidentiality less likely to be maintained due to the nature of the process and the number of people involved.

Thus this Chapter has identified the common practices used in the recruitment and selection of vice-chancellors for Australian universities. The Chapter has introduced material from participants to the processes and this material analysed and contrasted to the theoretical models where possible and the reasons for variations explored to gain a thorough understanding of the processes and the rationale for their use.
Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous four Chapters complete the presentation of the findings of this research. This Chapter will revisit the original statement of investigation presented in Chapter 1, discuss the analysis of the findings overall and draw the research to a close. It will also address areas that are outside the bounds of this research that nevertheless warrant further investigation.

5.2 THE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESSES

Research into incumbency patterns and VC characteristics by Sloper (1985, 1986, 1987, 1994, 1996) illustrated that there were commonalities in the backgrounds of Australian vice-chancellors. The findings of this research also support this view. It was discovered that these commonalities highlight the use of an accepted apprenticeship used by VCs to attain their roles.

Typically this involves being in the higher education sector, having a Ph.D. and holding the title of Professor, having a high public profile and being recognised as a credible academic via research and publications. The gender of the appointee would generally be male and incumbents would be in their early fifties and would serve an average tenure period of five years. They were probably a DVC prior to their appointment as VC and had a discipline base in the Arts, Sciences, Education or Business faculties.

They will have come from a different university from the one that appointed them VC and if they were Australian citizens then they probably attended either the University of Melbourne or Sydney and were career academics. They would possess one or more
fellowships and an Honorary Australian Degree and perhaps the title of Emeritus Professor and thus be a highly respected academic.

While this pattern was still basically true in 2000, different trends were emerging. More females were being appointed to the role of VC and more internal appointments were starting to be made. Thus if the above material and that presented in Appendix F are held as benchmarks in the year 2000 then discernible changes can be noted. Those undertaking research into this or related areas in the future could use this material as just such a benchmark.

The identification of a typical VC profile indicated that selection panels were seeking similar people for the role of VC and used similar selection criteria and practices. This may have been appropriate up till 1996. Beyond that time frame it appears that universities have sought to differentiate themselves further by seeking VCs with different competencies than those sought previously. This is in line with the shift toward a CEO type role rather than a purely academic role and appropriate recruitment and selection practices are now emerging.

However over the period of the research it was evident that variations did occur and that some degree of change was taking place in the higher education sector. These changes led to the variations in the backgrounds of vice-chancellors and the route they took to get to this office. It was noted that change in VC characteristics and attributes commenced in the mid 1980s. This was the Dawkins era that had a major impact on the structure of the HE sector, the number of universities and their competitiveness for funding.

The next dramatic period of change was in the mid 1990s when the Liberal National Coalition was elected to office in the federal election. The new government quickly introduced a number of neo liberal policies that impacted directly on university funding. The impact of these changes was in a sense to deregulate the sector, funding was reduced,
competition intensified and resources became scarce. Universities were offered greater freedom but it was at the cost of greater accountability.

The aspect of accountability and the addition of the title CEO to the title of VC in many universities allowed the government to introduce a high degree of corporatism. The impact was a shift in emphasis from the role of the VC as head of an academic institution to a role more similar to that of a CEO in the private sector and the management of the business enterprise. This included being held publicly accountable for this management.

Also following the Dawkins period more universities emerged and in 2000 there were 39 universities in Australia. These could be grouped in bands as presented in Appendix A. However while there were more universities than previously, the changes to the system as a whole meant that the attributes needed by VCs changed accordingly. Datta and Guthrie (1994, 1997) proposed a model that indicated the antecedents of the organisation or university had an impact upon the attributes sought in the CEO or VC.

The research confirmed that this model applied to the Australian HE sector. The size, growth rate of the university, strategic direction and performance all playing a key role in determining the necessary attributes of candidates for the position of VC at a specific university. Questionnaire respondents confirmed that antecedents including strategic direction, performance, size and complexity all impacted heavily upon the recruitment and selection of vice-chancellors. These findings are presented in Appendix N.

The reasons for these changes, according to the literature, were the changing nature of higher education. In Europe, North America and New Zealand universities have been far more entrepreneurial as evidenced by the appointments of Dr John Hood as VC for the University of Auckland and Alec Broers as VC of Cambridge University. Such appointments may be seen as a consequence of the shift in political policies and a move to make universities less dependent on public funding.
The reduction of public funding in Australia has also led to universities seeking 30-50% of their income from other sources. This means universities interact more frequently with the private sector and become more dependent upon it for funding. The private sector, being profit driven, seeks a return on its investment and so increased performance of universities is expected.

DETYA also required universities to adopt a stronger strategic focus and to take full responsibility for the control of costs including staffing levels. The role of the VC therefore started to become more concerned with strategic and funding issues and in the case of some universities, respondents believed it moved away from academic based issues and more closely resembled the role of the CEO in the private sector. This meets the growing accountability requirements of DETYA and the members of the private sector that partially fund university activities but it also allows universities to better understanding the private sector and how best to work within that system.

These changing external conditions were also reflected in the recruitment and selection practices employed by universities to recruit a VC. Having established that to the year 2000 universities tended to seek specific candidates with specific but common attributes not found in selection criteria, the research then undertook a complete analysis of former and contemporary practices used to appoint a new VC.

The model proposed by Compton and Nankervis (1998) together with the models proposed by Datta and Guthrie (1994, 1997), Wooden and Harding (1997) and others were used to contrast with the findings of Sloper (1989b). In the main the research confirmed that these models could be applied to the appointment of a VC, however it also highlighted differences. These differences were found when comparing the findings of Sloper (1989b) with the findings of this research undertaken in 2000.
Selection panels are becoming smaller, position descriptions and selection criteria are being used more frequently as more is expected of appointees. University Councils are adopting a stronger strategic focus and respondents report that much of the time of the VC now involves more focus on external issues including fundraising. It was found that while a threshold of academic credibility exists, once met, Selection Panels focus on determining appropriate attributes including grasp of strategic concepts, leadership and management capacity. The personal attributes of candidates are also fully explored and many of the informal criteria are used at this point to determine candidate suitability.

In many instances Selection Panel members are being nominated because of their experience in senior appointments and their grasp of the strategic issues facing their universities. Far more time is being spent determining the antecedents of the university and using this as the basis to determine essential and desirable attributes of candidates. However as Australian universities are diverse in their focus, culture, direction, size and needs, the antecedents at the specific level will vary from university to university.

The processes employed in the 60s and 70s were described as ‘highly secretive’ and even ‘clandestine’ however this changed in later years where candidates gave seminars, presentations and candidate anonymity was not considered important. However more recently it was found that such transparent processes actually deterred the better candidates from applying. Thus more recently processes have been employed which ensure that panel members are more conscious of confidentiality and candidate anonymity is held paramount. These processes together with the withdrawal of the AVCC as an active participant in appointments saw an increase in the use of search firms in the late 80s and early 90s.

The high costs of engaging a search firm have deterred many universities from using them. However over 38% of recent appointments have involved the use of search firms. There are universities that use search firms and therefore the processes they employ and recommend as well as those that do not. Two different processes have emerged and these
were presented in Chapter 4. These different processes do still contain elements of the models mentioned however it is in the effectiveness of these processes where the differences can be found.

The majority of respondents reported that the processes used to appoint a new VC were both effective and efficient. However in discussions with Chancellors and incumbent VCs, they raised concern at the number of vice-chancellors not being re-appointed at the expiration of their contracts and despite eligibility and the wishes of the incumbents. Many respondents believed this was a consequence of universities not previously taking sufficient time to match antecedents and candidate attributes. However it was also noted that there were other reasons for not re-appointing the incumbent including a lack of fit as the university changed and required different competencies in its VC.

While there are fundamentally two different types of processes used, participants of each found them effective. However the approach used by the search firm more closely resembles that used in the private sector to find a CEO. It was also noted however that in the private sector selection panels are not used, as the issue of representation is not considered. The CEO is appointed by the Chairperson and endorsed by the Board and it is the Chairperson who makes the final decision and the appointment.

Respondents noted that the resources and networks of the search firm are far superior to those available to all but the largest universities. Therefore when a search firm is engaged it is unlikely the Chancellor would necessarily contact other Chancellors or vice-chancellors to seek potential candidates. It was also noted however that if a Council determined it wanted a specific candidate then it would go to great lengths to get that candidate. This included appointing those to the selection panel that supported the candidate’s nomination.

These findings to some extent supported the assertions of Aitkin (1994) that few questions were asked of candidates during interviews and that few VCs at that time were
even interviewed at all. This was clouded as in some cases, state legislation provided that the Director of a CAE or Institute would become its foundation VC once university status was granted. Therefore no appointment processes were necessary. In other instances respondents, including current Chancellors confirmed that if they wanted a specific candidate appointed, then that candidate was generally appointed.

Several other factors influence the outcome of the appointment processes. These include the influence of the Chancellor, single agendas of panel members, the experience of the panel members and the status of the university. The group of eight universities were found to have a different focus on appointment than other universities. Due to their status these universities attract a far greater pool of applicants than other universities. Some of the applicants are vice-chancellors at smaller universities in other bands. The position of VC at one of these universities is considered the pinnacle of academic success as they appoint the 'best'.

Thus a trend analysis indicated that these universities tended to appoint deputies from within this band as VC or an existing VC from another university. There were exceptions to this trend however this trend prevailed, as did the trend for universities of technologies to all appoint their deputies to the role of VC. However in line with the model of Datta and Guthrie (1997) where no major change is required to strategic direction, organisations tend to appoint from within.

Respondents commented that search firm consultants help focus panels on key issues and bring order to the processes. As one respondent commented “They cut through the nonsense”. However ultimately the university Council must determine the future of the university, its strengths, opportunities and challenges to help determine necessary candidate attributes. Search firms play a greater part in assisting universities undertake this review and by gathering data on each candidate. They are present at the interviews but do not interact with candidates or influence the interviews or processes at all. Instead they act as a resource that the panel can access if members wish.
The processes used by the consultants are quite clear and focussed. A great deal of time is spent on preparation particularly in regard to the matching of antecedents and direction with attributes sought in candidates. The consultants believe the role of VC is that of a CEO and that incumbents actually spend little time on academic issues and this may be the perspective put to a Chancellor, Council and Selection Panel. Yet it appeared that if the Chancellor viewed the role as fundamentally academic, then the consultants would respect this and seek a person with higher academic credentials and place less emphasis on strategic ability, management and leadership.

The group of eight universities did place a much higher emphasis on academic respectability than more recently established universities. Respondents reported that this was a function of having the strongest academic reputation amongst Australian universities. In contrast respondents viewed newer universities as more flexible and less bound by established tradition.

However the perspective of the Chancellor and to a lesser extent Council, is critical as it determines if the role is considered an academic or management position. This in turn determines the selection criteria, perhaps the constituency of the Selection Panel, questions to be asked of candidates, the construction of the advertisement, PD and all other related areas.

The role of the Chancellor becomes important in the appointment of a new VC and even if a search firm is used, the views of the Chancellor prevail. This was reported to be the case by interviewees and in the case studies. In the discussion regarding the case studies it was noted that in case study one the Chancellor wanted a CEO with academic respectability and a person was appointed accordingly. In case study two the Chancellor, with a very strong academic background, appointed a strong academic with management experience.
In both cases the perspective of the Chancellor determined the outcome of the appointment processes to some extent. The research highlighted the importance of the Chancellor in influencing the processes and noted that post-appointment, the new incumbent forms a strong partnership with the Chancellor. Respondents noted the importance of this working relationship and the prerogative of the Chancellor to decide the person he/she could best work with.

The role of Chancellor is also important, as it is a part-time role that is isolated for much of the time from the key issues facing universities. Many Chancellors have been drawn from the judiciary and other fields that rarely interact with the HE sector and therefore only deal with these issues during Council meetings. The same can be said of many Council members who rely on the VC for guidance and confirmation from the Chancellor. These members will tend to take their cue from the Chancellor and rely on that person’s judgment.

The role of the search firm consultants is to provide support to the Chancellor, Council and the Selection Panel members. However the consultant will comply with the views of the university officers involved and these parties will make the final decision. This suggests that the consultant’s role is limited but can still provide guidance in the development of the processes and in sourcing candidates that meet the university’s requirements.

Therefore providing the Chancellor provides constructive and appropriate influence and input, then the consultant may be able to find the right person. Conversely if the input is incorrect then the consultants will be required to find candidates that meet these requirements. The search firm representatives can therefore only make recommendations. It should also be noted these same consultants also operate in the private sector sourcing for the role of CEO.
Where a consultant is not used the processes are similar but the research suggests that they are less focussed. The role of the advertisement and networking become more important as they provide the fundamental means of sourcing candidates. These processes also tend to attract a smaller candidate pool except in the case of the group of eight universities as already mentioned. Universities that not do use consultants do not necessarily attract the better candidates either as many respondents commented that they would not apply for a position at all. Instead they would wait to be approached.

If the university seeking the new VC does not have an extensive network of contacts then it may not tap into the potential candidate pool. The research also found that search firms build up an impressive knowledge of potential vice-chancellors as they undertake more assignments in higher education. This increases their own pool of potential candidates that they can draw upon when the need arises.

It was also found that many vice-chancellors also built up their own lists of potential successors as they moved through a number of universities. These informal lists generally contained similar names for similar reasons as likely candidates became known for their academic status, leadership and management capabilities. While some VCS were accused of empire building for creating such lists, others were considered to be undertaking a serious developmental role that benefited the higher education system as a whole.

The fact that search firms have increased in use when appointing vice-chancellors and that individual VCs created their own successor lists, indicates that there was a gap in this area that needed to be filled. Till the 1990s the AVCC assisted universities identify potential candidates however when this role declined, this void was filled by search firms and by the creation of individual informal lists.

Respondents therefore believed that universities not using a search firm in the appointment were not maximising the potential available to other universities. Further, the respondents commented that the universities 'going it alone' limited the potential for
the role by having a smaller limited applicant pool. It was also suggested that some
universities would not use search firms because an academic was sought not a CEO. The
perception of the Chancellor and Council become important in the processes again.

If a model were to be constructed to explain the recruitment and selection processes used
to appoint a new VC, it would be an extremely complex one. It would incorporate
external elements such as global trends in HE, domestic political, social and economic
considerations as well as funding and focus issues. The research indicated that Australia
has followed the HE approaches used in Europe and North America but it has been more
conservative and has not necessarily adopted all aspects incorporated overseas.

However both major political parties have adopted neo liberal philosophies similar to
those held in other countries. This market driven approach challenges the role and
purpose of Australian universities and determines if a massification or elitism approach is
adopted. Are universities meant to be fully accessible to the public and meet the needs of
the community? Are they public institutions in the main? The answers to such questions
dictate education policy in the HE sector and impact upon the major issue of funding and
resources.

These influences impact also on the role and focus of the Chancellor and Councilors. The
model would need to take into consideration the number of Councilors, their
backgrounds, familiarity with Australian HE together with their perception of the role of
that particular university and of the vice-chancellor.

These details in relation to the Chancellor would be especially important due to the high
degree of influence the Chancellor exerts over the processes and the outcome. The degree
of influence that the Chancellor exerts over other Councilors and the relationship with the
incumbent VC would also be important.
Other factors that need to be incorporated include the size, location, academic focus, history and strategic direction of the university would also be important. A member of the group of eight would be large, established and have a strong emphasis on academic credibility. It would also have access to larger funding pools and probably to the private sector as well. Its strategic direction may be very different to the University of Notre Dame (Australia) or other smaller universities.

Also universities such as RMIT, VUT, Sunshine Coast and Ballarat not only are located in vastly different parts of the country but they are all multi-sectoral in nature. A growing number of universities are also multi-campus, which adds to the size, focus and complexity issues of each. As universities increase in size and complexity their academic focus and strategic direction may need to change accordingly to meet the greater demands on resources. The competencies, knowledge and experience required of a VC also increase as a consequence.

These factors all help drive the processes and create the context in which they occur. At this point the involvement of the search firm exerts influence on those involved in the processes but not necessarily the outcome. The factors discussed above will determine the prevailing needs and beliefs of those who will make the final decision. However the direction and perceived effectiveness of the outgoing incumbent also influence the processes.

If the incumbent has not set a direction that is fully supported by the Chancellor or Council, the working relationship has broken down or that person’s leadership and management competencies are queries, then this also has a significant impact. Council may decide that a very different type of person is needed simply to reverse any negative perceptions associated with the role of VC. The reason the incumbent is leaving is also most important.
If staff did not support the VC, the new VC that is sought may be extremely different to the predecessor to reverse and appease staff views and to bring a period of greater stability to reverse potential strategic damage and to refocus the university. Of course there are also other reasons for appointing an opposite of the incumbent including external community concerns. It is interesting to note that during interviews these factors were used by respondents to accurately predict the new VC of universities that were appointing at that time.

The appointment of the Selection Panel would also need to be considered together with its size. While the Chancellor exerts influence over the panel, the constituency appointed or elected can take its cue from the Chancellor, allow the inclusion of single agendas and the issue of objectivity and intuition will be determined. If the panel is chosen based on member expertise, knowledge of HE and the role of VC and experience in senior appointments then it is more likely to be successful. Ideally the panel should kept small, to a level between six or eight.

The belief systems of the panel members also need consideration as a small, united panel will focus more easily on key issues. The issue of stacking was raised by the research and so the panel constituency can be used to ensure not only broad representation but also objectivity and focus. However should the HE sector move closer to the private sector approach, the composition of selection panels would change accordingly.

The model would then identify areas of strategic importance that the Council and panel would need to address in order to achieve the best possible outcome. These include past, current and desired future performance as this commences the review of where the university is currently, where it is headed and what is needed of the VC to move the university in this direction.

Following the model proposed by Datta and Guthrie (1994, 1997) the antecedents of the specific university would be reviewed and would include the external factors such as
political, social and economic considerations as well. The objectivity and thoroughness of this review is paramount as from this flow the selection criteria, position description, role and leadership statement, advertisement and the basis for questions to be asked of candidates. At this point it would become clearer if networking would be of use and the capacity of the university resources to adequately identify and appoint the appropriate person.

The use of a search firm may be of use as consultants assist Councils and panels to focus on the key issues without adversely effecting them. However an external facilitator of some description may also be of use to assist this process of focus and discovery. While this process of external facilitation may not alter the outcome, it may assist participants to ask the right questions and discover the key issues needed to be addressed. This has been done informally by Chancellors who have invited an existing or former VC to become a member of the panel.

Respondents identified the informal discussions held with Chancellors as extremely useful but still waited to be approached to apply. The better candidates rarely respond to advertisements. However the Council/panel need to determine the nature of the role of their VC. It is not a matter of determining if a CEO or management role is appropriate as it entails a degree of both thus the overall emphasis needs to be determined.

The vast majority of respondents to the research believed that it was inevitable that in the long term emphasis will be on the management capacity of the role and that deputies would take up more of the academic roles to support their CEO. However the research indicates that a balance between the role as seen as that of a CEO and that of an academic role, has not yet been established. Universities are dealing with this issue individually rather than as a system as a whole. The pattern overall fits this concept of seeking balance but varies from university to university based on the complexities already identified.
Contact with desirable candidates appears to be successful otherwise they might not apply.

Candidate confidentiality needs to be fully maintained and little is expected to come from advertising the position. The creation of the information package creates the image of the university for candidates although requiring candidates to research the university and its future direction may be encouraged. The use of selection criteria was recommended although in 2000, one search firm did not construct these in collaboration with the appointing university. Also in 2000 another consultant was working on a different set of selection criteria to the panel.

A model would also note the creation of questions where appropriate or the use of an unstructured interview where questions vary depending on the candidate’s responses, application and biodata. The time and number of the interviews would be addressed as well and the multiple interviews for an hour to an hour and a half were seen as extremely useful. Also an experienced panel would allow the interpretation of responses to questions to be objective and free from any unfair or inappropriate perceptions.

The processes do consist of the components contained in the model of Compton and Nankervis (1998) except that psychological assessment is not considered necessary as candidates have already proven their worthiness for consideration. This is in fact similar to the appointment of a private sector CEO. The differences are that in the case of a CEO appointment, unstructured interviews are used, no testing takes place, the interviews are informal, there are no selection panels and verbal face-to-face references are used.

The model would also need to account for the use of both formal and informal selection criteria. The formal criteria provide the threshold of academic credibility however the research indicates that the final appointment is then based on the informal criteria. The assumption is that if all candidates pass the threshold of credibility then the decision will be based on subjective differences between the candidates.
It was also found that where the processes are objective and well considered, it still does not guarantee the correct decision will be made. The quality of the review, preparation, recruitment and selection phases of the process are important. Thus the processes can be undertaken but should these be done poorly then the outcome may be inappropriate.

The two key components appear to be ensuring the outcome of the antecedent review is accurate and that intensive gathering of background material of applicants takes place. If these are undertaken correctly then it is more likely that a satisfactory outcome will emerge. The process should also be undertaken reasonably quickly but thoroughly to ensure the right candidate is not offered a position elsewhere.

Also a crossover period should be allowed for if the appointee is internal. However it is also evident from the research that a systems approach to appointing a VC does not exist. No university reported undertaking a thorough evaluation of the processes once they were completed. There was no determination of developmental requirements prior to appointment either. Therefore if a candidate excelled in certain areas but was lacking in others then he/she would overcome these almost exclusively by on-the-job learning.

An effective model would look beyond the final decision stage and identify a mechanism to overcome areas found lacking. This need has been met by the AVCC in the past, which has run a number of training and developmental programs for recently appointed incumbents and those involved in academic administration. While one respondent suggested potential VCs undertake an MBA, the research indicated that it was left to the incumbent to undertake activities to overcome deficiencies. This included visiting other universities both domestically and internationally or in New Zealand seeking a mentor.

The research indicated that many VCs who have a performance-based contract generally sought such a contract themselves rather than the Council or panel requiring it. Those who did seek such a contract wanted constant objective and constructive feedback to
assist them to improve their performance. Respondents noted colleagues who discovered how their performance was viewed only when their initial contract was not renewed. Others reported increasing output prior to salary review and so were driven to maintain or enhance their remuneration rather than their overall performance.

Succession planning was rarely used for the role of VC but was used at lower levels. The research identified the approach taken by Professor Gus Guthrie as an extremely effective developmental activity that develops all levels of subordinates. An effective model would also identify means of allowing mentoring, succession planning, and performance appraisal and performance based-contracts to be considered.

The model proposed here would by necessity be complex, contextual and specific but would not stop once the appointment was made. A systems approach would ensure a constant monitoring of performance and effective fit as well as developmental needs. These would then be considered in the context of the original appointment and improvements to the processes made to ensure a continual improvement approach was adopted.

The brief summary and the development of a possible model for the recruitment and selection of vice-chancellors for Australian universities has served to highlight the array of issues and the degree of complexity of this topic. It has also been a vehicle to discuss some of the findings of the research. However there are a number of implications flowing from this research.

The Australian higher education sector is diverse, dynamic and continually changing and the processes needed to appoint a new VC need to be similar and not static. Australian HE has followed parts of trends from overseas but not fully, therefore overseas appointment practices may not be fully transportable and appropriate in the Australian context. Therefore a VC who excels at one university may perform poorly at another because the fit is inappropriate.
Universities should continually review their antecedents, strategic direction and academic focus to ensure complete alignment. This will not necessarily universal agreement amongst interested constituencies. This forms the basis of the processes. However universities need to ensure that they appoint Chancellors and Councilors appropriate to the current and expected needs of each university.

While this research has provided a base of significant information, the research has indicated the growing complexity of the role of VC. As government funding diminishes, the VC must try to be chief fundraiser, administrator and financier. The role has shifted from that of a purely academic role and now incorporates a wide range of tasks comparable to those of the private sector CEO.

The role has continued to grow and evolve both academically and in terms of management. As the role still contains an academic component the VC is still regarded as the chief academic of the institution although the research indicates that in some universities that role is diminishing and being delegated to subordinates.

The modern VC is responsible for staffing, budgets, investments, industrial relations, property management, counseling, developing subordinates, performance of the university in all areas and achieving agreed targets. The role has a dualistic internal and external focus and interacts with the business community, government bureaucrats and politicians and is accountable for the use of public and third party funds.

The role has expanded from the part-time roles of the 1950s to a full time high-pressured extremely diverse role. The attributes of the incumbent must therefore spread across an equally diverse range of competencies. As noted earlier, this differs markedly from overseas universities that have recognised the growth of the role and effectively divided it into the University President who takes ultimate responsibility for all facets of university operation, and the Provost who takes responsibility for the academic facets.
In Australia the Vice-Chancellor must be all things to all people and as the role continues to change then even more competencies are required. This makes the role of recruiting and selecting a new VC ever more complex, as panels need to seek competencies needed currently and in the future.

Respondents noted with concern that such a complex and important decision was left to part-time Councilors who mainly interacted with the university via Council meetings and who were generally isolated from the complexity of the role of VC and the university itself. The Council also tended to rely heavily on the VC for updates on issues and guidance in what needed to be done and how.

As the role is changing so much it was no surprise to note that there were slight changes in VC backgrounds that started to become more frequent. These included the appointment of more women and meant universities had to draw on a much greater pool to acquire the competencies required for the role. The list of desirable attributes in a VC has grown considerably and continues to grow still.

An argument can therefore be put forward to suggest that the processes used to recruit and select a new VC need to change accordingly. The Chancellor, Council and panel all need appropriate incumbents. The use of consultants suggests that universities are recognising the complexity and importance of appointing a new VC and are therefore seeking constructive input and assistance.

Selection Panels are becoming smaller and confidentiality is better maintained. However while the applicant pool has increased, those with the actual range of competencies required for the role, has actually diminished. Fewer people display the vast array of talents universities seek in a new VC, and so they must look further afield. In doing so the processes employed need to change also.
One university did not create selection criteria which forced applicants to research and prepare. Some have abandoned the use of set questions and formal interviews while informal preliminary discussions between candidates and the Chancellor are also becoming more common. But how far should the processes change?

Recent changes to the processes indicate that they are dynamic and changing to meet the increased demands of the role of VC and of universities in general. These changes have been fully explored previously however the implications are that such changes are continuing and will continue to do so in the future.

The processes are coming more into line with contemporary human resource management theory and models and are beginning to resemble the equivalent private sector processes used to recruit a CEO. While the addition of the title CEO is cosmetic to some, the majority of respondents indicated that is precisely what is being sought when appointing a new VC.

The research supports this perspective and suggests that as the role moves closer to that of a CEO then the recruitment and selection practices will do likewise. This research has answered the initial hypothesis and the questions in Chapter 1 and has also gathered a large database on the processes employed to appoint a new VC. How the role is viewed will determine if a academic or a CEO is sought and the processes employed will differ slightly in terms of antecedent review, selection criteria and questions.

The research has highlighted implications for higher education, individual universities, and aspirants to the role of VC, the dynamic processes employed and other related areas. University governance is heavily impacted upon by these issues as are the structure and academic focus. The conflict between school and faculty academic and senior management issues such as fee-for-service programs also are influenced by the outcome of the recruitment and selection of vice-chancellors.
The VC’s of the future will be different to those of today. In the future a VC will not necessarily have to come from an academic background. The minimum qualification will be the Ph.D. which provides evidence of scholarly potential and exposure to academic rigour. The new VC will be a business practitioner with a strong support staff of DVCs and PVCs who will take responsibility for academic programs. This will be similar to the University President and Provost roles used overseas.

However as the role of the VC continues to change and evolve, new recruitment and selection procedures will be needed. Selection criteria will need to include knowledge of strategic management, political and business networks, leadership, marketing capability, the ability to implement constructive change and to access new avenues of funding. A creative, innovative even charismatic business leader will be required and the practices used to identify such a person will mirror those used in the private sector.

Selection panels will become much smaller and will undergo more intensive training before joining the panel. Panel members will be identified on the basis of knowledge and experience rather than because of tenure or political faction alliances. Advertisements will become less important as a recruitment tool as younger aspirants undertake the apprenticeship, create networks and learn that they need to be contacted rather than apply. A new informal system may therefore evolve.

Universities will need to pay greater attention to likely candidates and they will be encouraged to nurture, develop and prepare them via promotion and other forms of experiential learning. While a number of potential VCs will be drawn from overseas there will be a sufficiency of numbers locally to ensure succession occurs. Greater emphasis will be placed on performance and interviews may need to be unstructured rather than structured and questions will be more focussed.

The use of assessment centres may be introduced and performance-based contracts will become more common as the depth and breadth of the VC role increases. The role of the
Chancellor will continue to be important and Chancellors may commence meeting each other more frequently and discussing common key issues. These potentialities may all be extrapolated from the findings of this research.

5.3 THE PARADOX

The paradox as outlined in Chapter 1 was also fully investigated in the research. The paradox concerned academics promoted on discipline base competence and eventually being appointed vice-chancellor. It was noted that VCs have a variety of backgrounds yet in this role incumbents find themselves managing and leading institutions the equivalent of medium to large business enterprises in the private sector. The question then arose as to how an Historian, Chemist or Economist could fit into a role which engages few of their academic areas of expertise.

This topic was investigated via the questionnaires and interviews. In the case of incumbents coming from a school within the Business Faculty, there was a clear connection with the role of VC. Economists had a good understanding of the financial aspects of their university as well as budget issues and controlling costs.

However Sociologists found the human interaction component interesting and understood the relationships that were formed. Those from the political sciences understood the impact of the political climate on university management while those from the Arts understood the history of their institutions and how facets of evolution had impacted upon the university.

Different respondents were at times able to comment on the relevance of their backgrounds to the role of VC. Overall however respondents reported that discipline bases of VCs mattered little. The reason for this was the nature of the common apprenticeship route identified by the research.
However the research identified that the academic background or discipline base is not critical or even important to the role of VC. A VC can come from any discipline base. Respondents noted however that those coming from the larger disciplines have been exposed to more peer interaction and discourse as well as a greater internal political emphasis and empire building.

This acquaints participants with the realities of collegiality and prepares them for more rigorous challenges throughout their academic life. It helps them to learn the rules associated with being an academic and therein lies its importance. The actual discipline is irrelevant provided it exposes incumbents to these internal dynamics.

Comparisons were drawn with industry to illustrate the equally diverse backgrounds of CEOs. Like a VC the corporate sector CEO undergoes an apprenticeship where the person learns the rules and is able to demonstrate increased technical competence. In academic terms moving through the discipline allowed the incumbent to develop technical competence as well as to prove themselves academically credible in terms of teaching, research and publications.

The academic credibility included being awarded a Ph.D. and promotion was determined by this credibility to the role of Head of School or Dean. However the research indicated that incumbents at this level had exceeded the threshold of academic credibility. Suitability for further promotion to PVC and DVC was more dependent on the informal criteria, the attributes of the incumbents themselves.

Senior academics that had demonstrated academic credibility had been promoted to a certain point in their career based on this technical competence. However further promotion was dependent upon leadership and management ability, grasp of internal and external issues, ability to successfully influence others, strategic competence, personality, presentation and amiability.
These issues combined with a high propensity for work, ability to cope effectively in pressure situations and the diplomatic nature of the individual may see them as likely candidates for the role of VC. Having achieved academic status, personal attributes then determined further ability to be promoted within the area of academic administration.

However the paradox is further challenged by the introduction of incumbents such as Dr John Hood who, while having a Ph.D, had little experience in academia except as a member of Council. Respondents believed that what differentiated him were his personal attributes and the excellent executive competencies he had. He was able to effectively transport these competencies from one industry to another. While this may be the exception rather than the rule, similar examples can also be cited suggesting that universities are now looking further afield when seeking a new VC.

Interview respondents noted the importance of the personal attributes of candidates as a major factor in determining appointability and success in the role. It was noted that some incumbents naturally grasp strategic issues, exhibit charisma and can effectively lead and manage staff. However different types of personal attributes are required for each individual university.

The paradox was therefore explainable in terms of how different individuals developed the competencies necessary in order to undertake the role of VC. The antecedent review identified the technical competence required of the VC and the personal attributes sought to meet the specific and forecast needs of the university.

As the needs of the university changed so too did the personal attributes of the vice-chancellor. One university might require a very entrepreneurial thinking VC while another may need an ambassadorial VC and yet another may need a person who can develop certain strengths of a university and diminish deficiencies. Each situation would require an individual with attributes best suited to that situation.
In seeking these attributes, the discipline base of the candidate becomes irrelevant. If the person understands the context of the university and has the personal attributes deemed desirable in a VC then discipline base matters little. Such a person could be an Historian, Sociologist, Economist or Scientist. What would be sought is academic credibility and the personal attributes the role required.

Many respondents did comment that candidates are better prepared if they come from larger discipline bases however there was overall agreement that the perceived paradox did not exist. The paradox could be fully explained and the explanation applied not only to the higher education sector but to all industries.

5.4 SUGGESTED FURTHER RESEARCH

The research also highlighted a number of areas related to this topic that may form the basis for further research. Respondents noted with concern that there was very little research into such facets of Australian HE as most tended to focus on governance and performance issues. However future research could track the changes that will no doubt occur in VC appointment processes based on the findings of this research.

The importance of the role of the VC to the HE community and indeed the broader Australian community was identified in this research but surprisingly few researchers have investigated this area recently. The most necessary research would be to track future appointment practices to determine if there is a shift towards the practices used in the corporate sector to appoint a CEO. Evidence suggested that this was beginning to occur in 2000.

The use of consultants to facilitate the processes could also be tracked in order to determine patterns that emerge and the degree of ‘success’ compared to the use or absence of consultants in the processes. Also the research identified a lack of attraction of
overseas candidates and those in the private sector. One reason given for this was the comparatively low remuneration packages paid to VCs.

Thus VC remuneration and incentives would be another area that could be thoroughly investigated. A comparison between private sector counterparts and VCs could be undertaken and could compare the levels of responsibility and authority, working conditions, hours and expectations. The research of Sloper (1983, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1989a, 1994, 1996) could form an excellent starting point together with the findings of this research.

Another review of the appointment processes could also be undertaken in the future to determine if specific methodologies had changed. Such specifics would include the degree of networking used and its effectiveness, the structure and nature of the interviews, the type, relevance and diversity of questions and the effectiveness of advertising.

Other areas could include the role of the Chancellor. The Chancellor can have a profound impact on the appointment of the VC and therefore upon the university itself. Yet little is known about the backgrounds, knowledge, experience, role and impact of the Chancellor. Even less is known about how they are recruited and why. A longitudinal study could review these aspects over a lengthy period of time to identify patterns in recruitment and background.

This research has established that a common apprenticeship type of system is in use by incumbents seeking to be appointed VC. While this is the most common path, it is not the exclusive route to the office of vice-chancellor. Therefore using this research as a basis, future researchers could determine if this pattern is continuing or eroding as the needs of individual universities change.

Another aspect may be why universities operate independently and why the component universities of the Australian HE sector do not determine issues such as how to appoint a
VC, as a whole. The system exists but appears to consist of individual non-integrated components.

Respondents noted that succession planning, mentoring and performance appraisal/contracts were not common but that they should be used. One concern was the lack of thorough understanding of the concepts by respondents. In terms of mentoring it was believed to be a good idea but it was stated that the mentor would need to be an existing vice-chancellor.

A human resource management based researcher would be able to determine what the perceptions of such practices were, the limitations and usage of such concepts and how they could be successfully implemented.

Further research could also be undertaken into the preparation of potential VCs and how developmental opportunities could be provided to such aspirants. The training of potential incumbents as well as for these new to the role could also be researched.

From the education perspective research needs to be undertaken as to the changing role of the university in Australia. Should the modern Australian university be considered an academic institution or a business enterprise? Other issues flowing from this include the role of DVCs and PVCs, the structure of universities and the potential clash between academic autonomy and academic business practice.

Certainly one of the most pressing areas of investigation is that of the role of the VC. Is the role of the VC an academic role or a management role equivalent to that of a CEO in the private sector? Universities respondent to this research addressed this fundamental question and different universities drew different conclusions for different reasons.

However this research indicated a shift toward that of a CEO, but as it was outside the fundamental scope of this research was not thoroughly investigated. Yet the answer to
this question drives the appointment processes that were investigated. This important area deserves further research as it underpins the nature of the university and addresses the impact of the VC on university governance. Thus another area of research could be the impact of the appointment processes on university governance and structure.

The role of the AVCC was continually questioned by respondents and deserves consideration from interested researchers. The AVCC has separated itself from the industrial relations issues with the formation of a new body to deal with this. However the group of eight also has its own body that deals exclusively with issues related to these universities. As universities become even more diverse in academic focus and strategic direction they seek to identify with groups of universities with similar characteristics.

The AVCC therefore represents an extremely diverse range of universities and while it deals with HE wide issues it has also played a role in the development of academic administrators. The role and purpose of the AVCC could be examined to determine if it is indeed meeting the needs of such a diverse constituency and how it could play a more active role in the development of potential appointees.

This research has addressed the questions posed on pages three to five in Chapter 1. However while these have been fully researched and answered, the research has discovered a range of important topics that need to be investigated and new questions answered. The Australian higher education sector is critical to the community and warrants far more research than has been undertaken in that area to date.
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