The professional identity formation of Career Change Academics and their perceived contribution to Higher Education Institutions.

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Doctor of Education in Higher Education

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Thesis Abstract

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A literature review shows there is an evidence gap regarding the experiences of Career Change Academics in Higher Education (HE). The sector has faced multiple changes over the past few years with the introduction of a neoliberal approach to measuring quality including new Research Excellence Framework (REF), and adjustment to online learning in response to COVID-19. This research explores the transition experiences of Career Change Academics, asking what they believe they contribute to HE.

As I sought to explore lived experiences, I selected a qualitative phenomenological approach utilising Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2022) and semi-structured interviews to explore the experiences of Career Change Academics as a case study of one Robbins Group university. Through data analysis, I generated four Group Experiential Themes, 'I felt like an outsider', 'I get by with a little help from my friends', 'My professional identity is a work in progress' and 'I am here to teach future practitioners'.

This study highlights, that as a consequence of the REF, Career Change Academics feel as if they are second class academics. The thesis suggests that it can take five years to form a merged professional identity and that narrating one's identity transition supports interpersonal and intrapersonal acceptance. Building support networks helped the formation of a merged professional identity and the participants found that studying for HE teaching qualifications supported their pedagogic development as well as providing opportunities to create informal networks. In conclusion, the Career Change Academics in this research were motivated by teaching future practitioners in support of student employability, student outcomes and real work impact through knowledge exchange, all of which support HE institutions with their submission for the new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), the new Knowledge Exchange Partnership (KEF) and the National Student Survey (NSS).

Key words:
IPA; REF; TEF; Career Change Academic; Identity Formation; Identity Complexity.

Dedication

For Holly
My role model for resilience.

Acknowledgements

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full Text
BERA	British Educational Research
CCA	Career Change Academic
CofE	Church of England
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
EdD	Educational Doctorate
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
KEF	Knowledge Exchange Framework
OfS	Office for Students
MEd	Masters of Education
NSS	National Student Survey
PICO	The Population, Intervention, Comparison, and Outcomes
PIS	Participant Information Sheet
PGCert	Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education
PGDip	Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
REF	Research Excellence Framework
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Aims and background

The number of people changing careers throughout their working life has substantially increased in recent years (Herrmann, Hirschi and Baruch, 2015; Nesje, Canrinus and Strype, 2018), leading to increased interest in the impact of career change on professional identity formation (Ibarra, 1999; Hess, Jepsen and Dries, 2012; Reay *et al.*, 2017). Research suggests that changing career can predict job satisfaction and a positive attitude towards work (Herrmann, Hirschi and Baruch, 2015). However, "relatively little is known about the factors that predict positive outcomes associated with a career transition" (Ahn, Dik and Hornback, 2017, p. 49). The aim of this research is to explore the lived experiences of Career Change Academics, including the impact on their identity formation and their perceived contributions to Higher Education (HE).

Research on the formation of an academic's professional identity has increased in the last decade but the majority of this research focuses on Early Career Academics and teacher educators rather than Career Change Academics who are transitioning to HE for a second career (Kompf *et al.*, 1996; Connelly and Clandinin, 1999; Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004; Bullough *et al.*, 2008; Cohen, 2008; Timoštšuk and Ugaste, 2010; Pillen, Beijaard and Den Brok, 2013; White *et al.*, 2014; Edwards and Edwards, 2017). Within these studies, an Early Career Academic is defined as an academic who has progressed to employment directly after, or during, a higher degree. This is sometimes referred to as a 'traditional' academic. The experiences of Career Change Academics however, are likely to differ from those of Early Career Academics because Career Change Academics bring the experience of their former work with them to their new role, albeit at what may be a substantial decrease in pay (Ahn, Dik and Hornback, 2017). Crow *et al*., (1990) refers to Career Change Academics as "trading in the success measured by career-ladder advancement and financial gain for the rewards of a people-oriented career that promised greater personal satisfaction" (Crow, Levine and Nager, 1990, p. 197). There is minimal literature focusing on the experience of Career Change Academics. The literature that does exist calls for further research in this area (Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). This thesis focuses on a case study of one university from the Robbins group, hereafter called The University. In contrast to Russell group universities, Robbins group universities are former technical colleges with a high focus

on inclusion and employability (Robbins *et al.*, 1963). There is currently no research on the lived experience of Career Change Academics within Robbins Group Universities. As such, this study aims to fill this gap in the literature. My interest in this study stems from my own experience as a Career Change Academic, which is discussed in-depth in the Methodology Chapter.

Conceptual Underpinning

The conceptual framework and orientation of this thesis is phenomenological as it seeks to investigate and reveal the experiences of Career Change Academics as they explore their transition to working in an HE environment. Within the range of possible phenomenological approaches, a qualitative, phenomenological approach utilising Interpretative Phenomenological Analyses (IPA) (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) was employed. Such an approach was considered suitable because the research focused on individuals making sense of their lived experiences in their transition to teaching in HE. As such, this research is idiographic and epistemologically interpretivist; it focuses on people making sense of specific experiences in specific contexts. Within the research, I explore phenomenology and the concept of Being, specifically drawing on the work of Merleau-Ponty (1945/2014) in discussing the dynamic through which identity formation transcends the concept of time. Heidegger's focus on the concept of existence, Being, or as he calls it *Dasein*, is also discussed as it relates to the lived experience and identity formation of Career Change Academics (Heidegger, 2019). This is discussed in depth in the Methodology Chapter (Chapter 3).

Theoretical underpinning

The theoretical underpinning of this research is that of Social Identity Complexity (Roccas and Brewer, 2002), Ibarra's theory of provisional selves (Ibarra, 1999) and subsequent theories including identity work and play (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010). These theories describe identity as a transient and tangible state of being that can be developed and represented by the extent to which individuals differentiate and integrate social identities against levels of integrative complexity (Suedfeld, Tetlock and Streufert, 1992; Roccas and Brewer, 2002; Baker-Brown et al., 2009).

Setting the scene

To provide context for this research there are significant changes relating to HE that must be understood. The first is the shift to new managerial practices that require quality to be assessed using regulatory metrics such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), and in 2023 the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) (Morrish, 2019). The second is the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on working practices in HE. These two situational changes will now be addressed in turn.

The metric-driven neoliberal university

The first significant change is the introduction of a culture of value-driven metrics such as the REF, TEF, and KEF. These trio of metrics have forced competition and radical reorganisation in order to meet predetermined metrics and values that are underpinned by what is described as a "neoliberal ideology" and "public management" (Watermeyer and Olssen, 2016). The shift to this reorganisation is associated with an increase in student fees driving the requirement for HE institutions to prove that they are delivering a product that is of value both to the student and the economy. Universities that rank highly in these assessment metrics can charge higher student fees resulting in increased funding.

The first of the metrics that was introduced was the REF which replaced the Research Assessment Exercise (Office for Students, 2022a; Research England, 2022). The substantial change that is relevant to the lived experience of Career Change Academics is that since 2021, HE institutions must include all employees whose contracts include research in their REF returns, rather than selected lecturers, as was the case in 2014 (Arnold *et al.*, 2018; *Research Excellence Framework*, 2019). As REF assessments started in July 2020 for the 2021 cycle (UK Research and Innovation, 2020), HE institutions will have been preparing for these new requirements since the changes were announced in 2014. The 2021 REF results included all staff with a significant responsibility for research which resulted in a 46% increase in the number of staff that were included (UK Research and Innovation, 2020). It is argued that as a result of these changes new management practices that are designed to maximise an institution's REF ranking would be more likely to employ people with high research

outputs at the cost of employing staff with experience of industry (Pilcher *et al.*, 2017; Dickinson, Fowler and Griffiths, 2022). To ensure they are not considered in REF data, it could be suggested that Career Change Academics (who are likely have fewer publications in favour of increased industry experience) are more likely to be employed on teaching contracts, rather than as lecturers whose contracts usually require both research and teaching. As a result of an increased teaching load, Career Change Academics on a teaching contract are likely to have less time to publish their experience of working in industry. This links to a concern from literature that Career Change Academics could be viewed as 'second-class' academics (Dickinson, Fowler and Griffiths, 2022). However, a decrease in lecturers with industry-facing experience could have a negative impact on both the student experience and employability which is high on the agenda for TEF ratings (Office for Students, 2020). As the new REF launched in 2019, published journal articles are starting to appear which consider the impact REF may have on staff. There is a need for subsequent research to review the implications that the changes in REF rankings have had on employment terms, and therefore the identity formation of Career Change Academics and how Career Change Academics are viewed by their academic colleagues and students. The Literature Review Chapter (Chapter 2) outlines existing literature that focuses on the experience of Career Change Academics and highlights that none of the empirical research that is published in peer reviewed journals discusses the experience of Career Change Academics that were employed after the 2014 changes to the new REF.

New TEF indicators were published in September of 2022, replacing the former TEF metrics of 2017. The TEF controversially measures graduate salaries as well as the quality of teaching in each institution (Morrish, 2019). Application of the new TEF is now in its first iterations. Robinson and Hilli's (2016) research, although not related to identity formation per se, focused on the early developmental stages of proposed changes to the TEF exploring perceived tension between the desire to deliver excellent teaching as well as producing research (Robinson and Hilli, 2016). Robinson and Hilli's research highlighted that staff felt under pressure to publish and that this affected the amount of time they could use to support students. Their research stated that of all of the findings, the "most significant was the idea that teaching was not as highly valued as research, as reflected in opportunities for promotion" (Robinson and

Hilli, 2016, p. 162). The former iteration of TEF measures in 2017 used existing quality metrics to decide the HE insitutions' TEF classification (Robinson and Hilli, 2016). After the next round of TEF, in 2023, universities that score highly can charge higher fees in line with inflation. With part of the TEF metrics rating graduate salaries there is a sense in which the governement has imposed neoliberal ideals attributing worth to higer paid employment (Morrish, 2019).

The new Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) has not yet been released but it is speculated that the KEF will require HE institutions to demonstrate that they are serving the economy, local communities and businesses. This is a metric that Career Change Academics could support and collaborate with in order to utilise their knowledge of the workplace and industry. This will be an area of interest for the future but the KEF metrics were not finalised at the time of writing and so cannot be included as part of this thesis.

In conclusion, the introduction of new value-based metrics has resulted in an imposition of neoliberal aims on HE. It is argued that there is subsequently an increase in staff with teaching only contracts, which is seen as being synonymous with inhibiting one's potential for promotion, with the recently increased stigma of being non-research active and no longer useful for REF metrics (Morrish, 2019). Watermeyer and Olssen (2016) take this further stating, "As new public management technologies have embedded within the governance of higher education, numerous deleterious and debilitating effects on academic identity and practice have been observed" (p. 202). It is too soon to analyse the full impact of the new TEF and the sector does not yet have data to publish other than circumspect theories. However, these structural and situational changes highlight a shift towards neoliberal aims that define value in the HE sector, and so therefore, in the experience of Career Change Academics. Within this changing context it is likely that the difference between Career Change Academics and traditional academics will be even more heightened if we presume that Career Change Academics may not be aware of, or prepared for, the quality metrics that their work will be evaluated on.

COVID-19

The second significant change at the time of this research is that academics across the UK were forced to change their traditional working and teaching patterns in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Ali, 2020; Netolicky, 2020). The onset of COVID-19 in 2020 resulted in universities across the UK losing over £800m from income generators such as student accommodation and catering (Filho *et al.*, 2021). In addition to financial pressures, significant changes were seen in terms of working practices. Staff were required to work from home in line with the government guidance. However, little was known about how this would impact HE staff or what challenges they would face. At the time of the ethics application for this research, there was just one peer reviewed publication outlining the shift to HE staff working from home, and no research on the lived experience of newly appointed Career Change Academics navigating the changes.

While literature tells us that training such as inductions, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), networking and spending time with peers are positive events for academics in the formation of their identity (Izadinia, 2014; Lankveld *et al.*, 2017), many of these events either did not happen during COVID-19, or were switched to online delivery. While there is a paucity of literature examining the level of CPD that staff engaged with during the lock-down, there was a significant increase in training related to digital technology and online learning (Dinu *et al.*, 2021). Exploring common themes within CPD that were of benefit to Career Change Academics whilst working remotely could enhance and expand current CPD provision, utilising the newly increased digitial literacy of academics through technology enhanced learning (Donnelly and O'Rourke, 2007).

The timing of this research also coincides with fears for the economy. Consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are resulting in a reduction of graduate jobs across the board (Kamaruddin *et al.*, 2021). With newspapers stating that students are graduating in a global recession (Hillman, 2020; Parr, 2020; Reidy, 2020) it could be argued that never before has the need to teach skills from industry, in support of employability, been so acute. The focus on student employability within a global recession aligns with the government shift in measuring quality using the REF, TEF and KEF metrics

outlined in the previous section. A Career Change Academic brings the combination of work-based experience combined with teaching tools within HE to support the students in understanding how the theory relates to practice beyond HE. Dickinson et al. recommend that HE institutions should employ colleagues with expertise from the work place as this will positively impact the student experience (Dickinson, Fowler and Griffiths, 2022).

Academic Identity Formation

Throughout this thesis the concept of identity is foregrounded by precursory words that direct the reader to consider a particular facet of an individual's identity such as; professional identity or social identity. When we refer to identity, we may refer to one of a range of concepts. One of the most well-established psychological conceptualisations defines identity as the work of exploring, identifying and integrating past and present experiences (Erikson, 1968). This idea of identity as dynamic and effortful is also reflected in (Faircloth, 2012), which defines identity as the "ongoing negotiation of participation, shaped by and shaping in response the context(s) in which it occurs" (Faircloth, 2012, p. 186). Others place a stronger emphasis on the social function of identity: Ibarra and Barbulescu suggest that "Identities are the various meanings attached to an individual by the self and by others" (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010, p. 137). The similarity in these definitions is that they all theorise that identity formation is an ongoing process rather than a state or outcome to be achieved. Professional identity within the context of HE is described by Barbarà-i-Molinero, Cascón-Pereira and Hernández-Lara, (2017). Hughes (2013) referred to professional identity as being the identity they recognise and claim in their work place, combined with experiences within the wider world. Throughout the scholarly literature, and in the Literature Review Chapter (Chapter 2) of this thesis, the terms 'professional identity' and 'identity' have been used as interchangeable terms with the context determining the meaning.

Structure of the thesis

Following a thorough and focussed review of relevant literature (Chapter 2), the Methodology Chapter (Chapter 3) outlines the research questions derived from gaps identified in current knowledge. Chapter 3 further explores the role of phenomenology

in offering a methodology and approach to the research interviews that I carried out. It outlines the use of IPA as a method for designing and conducting interviews as well as analysing the data.

The Analysis Chapter (Chapter 4) presents four Group Experiential Themes (GETs) which capture the patterns of meaning in the interviews. The four GETs are as follows: 'I felt like an outsider', 'I get by with a little help from my friends', 'My professional identity is a work in progress' and 'I am here to teach future practitioners'. I present these themes with a phenomenological and hermeneutical approach. This then leads to the Discussion Chapter (Chapter 5). Here I consolidate and underscore the answers to the two research questions by discussing the findings from this research in the light of existing peer reviewed empirical research, relevant theory, and wider literature. This chapter then offers recommendations for practice as well as suggestions for further research. This is followed with a reflection on limitations of the research and on my role in the research ending with a brief conclusion.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

A. Introduction

This chapter starts by reviewing literature from an initial scoping search and subsequently provides a narrative review of literature focusing on the lived experience of Career Change Academics as they transition to teaching roles within Higher Education (HE).

B. Scoping Search

A preliminary scoping search identified two significant systematic reviews of literature that focus on the formation of an academic's professional identity. The first is by Lankveld et al. (2017) who reviewed 59 studies exploring professional and teacher identity in HE (Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). The second is by Izadinia (2014) whose review included 52 studies that focused on the identity formation of academics in HE who teach student teachers, termed teacher educators (Izadinia, 2014). This section will now review and compare these two reviews asking how these inform our understanding of Career Change Academics in an HE environment.

Lankveld *et al'.s* (2017) systematic review of literature concluded that developing a teacher identity in HE is not a simple task but that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) supported identity formation by building confidence, and that teaching excellence should be rewarded. Figure 1 below is a conceptual summary of Lankveld *et al.'s*, (2017) review.

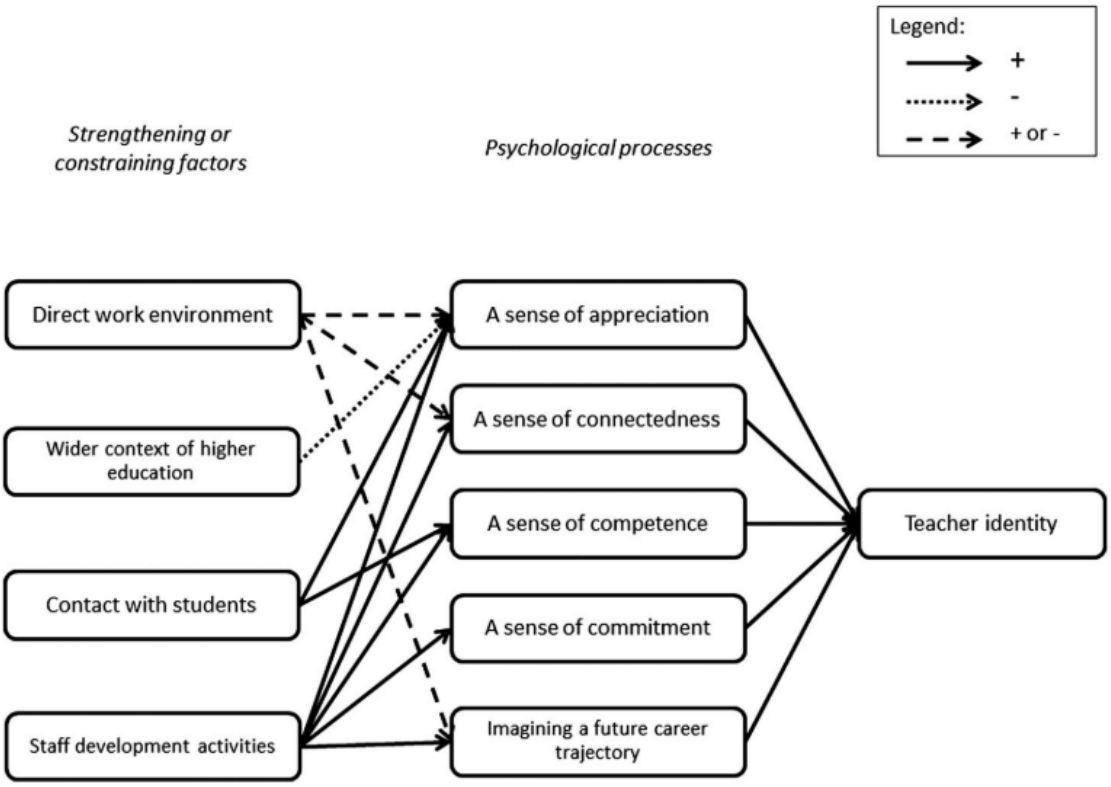


Figure 1: Identity development of university teachers (van Lankveld et al., 2017, p. 332).

Figure 1 outlines the experiences and psychological processes of academics who are new to their role, but states that there is no such literature focusing on the experience and psychological processes of Career Change Academics (Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). This is the only review of literature identified to date which explicitly links psychological processes with the lived experiences of academics in the formation of their identity. The studies used to create Figure 1 were, predominantly, focused on Early Career Academics (ECA). A small number of papers included a few Career Change Academics who strongly identified with their former profession for the first two years as an academic (Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). Lankveld et al. referred to the term of *expert novices* as being a widely accepted term meaning an individual who has moved from a position of expertise in a former career to a become a novice in a new context (Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). They recommend that future research is conducted on the role of CPD in the identity formation of those who have changed careers to become academics.

The second systematic review of literature was conducted by Izadinia (2014) who concluded that teacher educators developed negative opinions regarding their professional identities but that self-support and community support enabled their confidence to grow and subsequently the formation of their professional identity. Figure 2 below is taken from the second systematic review of literature that focused on the experiences of teacher educators.

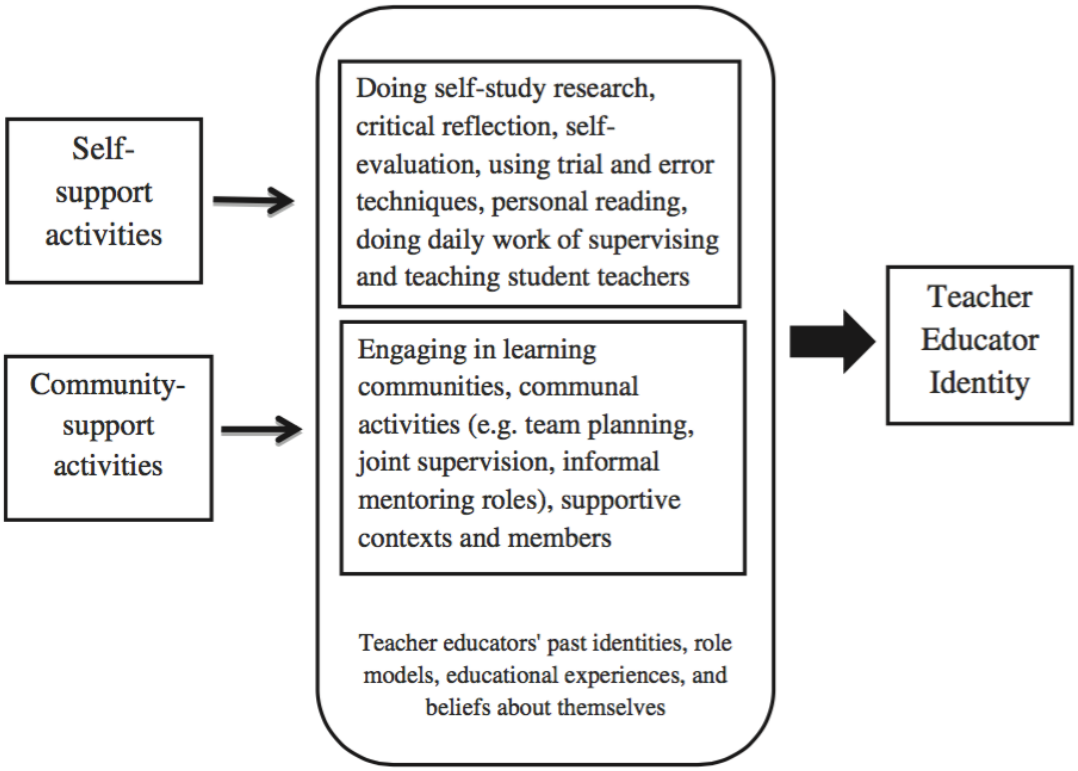


Figure 2: Factors influencing teacher educator's identity development (Izadinia, 2014, p. 434).

A significant difference between the two literature reviews is that although both set out to review literature regarding the identity formation of teaching academics, Lankveld *et al.* (2017) also consider the positive and negative emotional processes experienced within the factors that impact identity formation. While Figure 1 focuses on the relationship between past experiences and the subsequent impact on identity formation, Figure 2 groups experiences in two sections, self-support and community support, and lacks depth in the exploration of the underlying mechanisms and

processes involved in identity formation. Although both reviews summarise useful information regarding the development of identities, a more in-depth study is required to examine the necessary components of the transitionary process specific to Career Change Academics.

In addition to these two key reviews, there are two recurring themes in associated literature examining the identity formation of academics. These are the role of CPD and the role of emotion. Izadinia (2014) states that CPD functions best within learning communities (Wenger, 1998) and that such communities should be supportive, professional, and include reflective practice. The role of CPD in affirming the identity formation of academics is a theme from multiple empirical studies (Clouder *et al.*, 2020). Boud (2001) adds that Career Change Academics should receive training specifically in research and publishing (Boud, 2001). An area requiring further enquiry from Figure 2 is the difference between self-support activities and community support activities.

The second significant theme across literature is the symbiotic relationship between emotions and identity (Zembylas, 2003; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Izadinia, 2014). The findings from Izadinia's (2014) systematic review were that new teacher educators tended to develop negative self-views about their abilities and professional identities. Self-support and community support activities were found to facilitate teacher educators' transition and enhance their identity development. Emotional tensions included difficulty forming an identity as researcher, doubt about identity as an academic, feeling deskilled and uncertain, stress levels, and failure to establish academic credibility (Williams, 2010; Izadinia, 2014). The literature identifies a significant gap between the emotional processes and lived experiences of those transitioning through a career change into HE and the impact this has on their professional identity (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009; Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010; Williams, 2010; Izadinia, 2014; Winkler, 2018).

While these two systematic reviews offer a background to the identity formation of HE academics, they do not offer information regarding the lived experiences of Career Change Academics. To address this gap, I conducted a focused literature review to

explore what is known about the experiences of Career Change Academics in the UK, given the recent changes in the new REF, TEF and KEF (See Chapter 1). I carried out a systematic search across eight databases to identify papers on this topic.

A systematic style was chosen for the literature *search* in order to accurately locate existing literature around the fields of HE and to identity formation as it relates to those who change careers.

C. Literature Review Search Protocol

In this section, I begin by outlining the systematic approach to searching literature, and then report the review of relevant studies. A total of 23 articles met the inclusion criteria, 17 articles relate to the general identity formation of academics in HE and six met the full inclusion criteria. The six studies were analysed in-depth using a thematic grid to identify common themes that focus specifically on the experience of Career Change Academics, see Appendix C. This chapter concludes by highlighting the gaps in literature as they relate to the experiences of Career Change Academics. At the end of this chapter, I present the research questions for my empirical study.

In this literature review the terminologies of professional identity and identity are used by authors interchangeably. While some use the term identity to incorporate both their personal and professional identity others see professional identity as being associated with the professions that usually require the practitioner to meet certain professional standards (Brown and Edmunds, 2020). This literature review seeks to understand how professionals in the capacity of a Career Change Academic form their identity. As such, when a profession is listed, such as academic, practitioner, or Career Change Academic, I have not included the word professional in addition to the title.

The aim of this research is to explore the lived experiences of Career Change Academics. To achieve this, the following question guided my literature search: What are the experiences of individuals who have changed careers to become academics within HE?

C.i Method and Eligibility

In light of ongoing changes to the Research Excellence Framework (REF), the initial literature search was restricted to a time frame of 2014 to the present day so as to focus on the lived experience of Career Change Academics following changes to the REF and any subsequent impact on employment terms of the formation of their professional identity. This initial search, however, only returned two journal articles (Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016; Dashper and Fletcher, 2019) focusing on the identity formation of Career Change Academics after the changes to the 2014 REF, and no literature focusing solely on Career Change Academics within a Robbins Group university. Eligibility for inclusion was therefore broadened to incorporate relevant literature within the wider field of academic identity formation with no restrictions applied to the date for exclusion. This meant that the task of manual sorting was significant, but a trial search showed that this was a worthwhile exercise.

The results of the search were screened against pre-determined inclusion criteria stating that the literature needed to be related to the formation of an academic's professional identity. The majority of the literature was not relevant; for example, an academic at the start of their paper who described their role in HE before starting the core material would be included in the result of the data search. The inclusion and exclusion criteria are as follows:

Inclusion criteria:

- Peer reviewed published articles
- Articles that focused on the identity formation of teaching academics within UK HE institutions
- Articles that focused on the experiences of Career Change Academics

Exclusion criteria:

- Articles that focused on HE institutions outside of the UK
- Literature focusing on primary or secondary education
- Articles that were not written or translated into English
- Articles that focused solely on the identity formation of students

C.ii Search strategy

The Population, Intervention, Comparison, and Outcome (PICO) (The Joanna Briggs Institute, 2015) tool was used to guide the development of a search strategy. It provided a structure that supported the generation of aligned search terms that enabled a broad but focused search of relevant literature. Table 1 outlines the way in which PICO was used to structure the database searches. A full list of databases and search terms is found in Appendix A.

PICO Rationale	Examples of search terms
Population Academic staff with titles including Teaching Fellow or Lecturer. I had initially included a stem of the word academic but even with the combined search terms below this brought back millions of results. The search was restricted to HE Institutions within the UK as the question asks the experiences	"Teaching Fellow" OR lecturer* OR "Teaching Fellows" AND HE OR Higher Education OR "Higher Education Institutions" OR HE OR HEI OR Universit* AND UK Or United Kingdom OR Wales OR England OR Scotland OR Great Britain
Intervention, Comparison, and Outcome These three elements were combined in two search fields. The concept of identity formation with the Boolean OR was designed to broaden the search to include the identity formation of academic staff and/or the experiences of those who have changed careers to work in HE.	AND (identi* NEAR/3 (form* OR chang* OR transit* OR professional* OR complex* OR social*)) OR (Career* NEAR/3 (chang* OR transition* OR mov* OR shift* OR switch*)

Table 1: PICO Rationale

C.iii Databases

Eight databases spanning education and social science research were searched using the systematic approach outlined above in August 2022. The databases searched are listed in Table 2.

1. Web of Science
2. Education Resources Information Center (ERIC)
3. EBCSO
4. ProQuest
5. Scopus
6. Education Resource Complete

7. Education Research Abstracts 8. Education Administration Abstracts (Alerts set databases 1-5)

Table 2: List of searched databases

Databases 1-5 were accessed via my university. Weekly alerts were set up to ensure no new publications would be missed. Databases 6-8 were specialist HE databases and I was granted access to them as a one-time opportunity in August 2022 and so was unable to set alerts. The section exploring gaps in literature includes chained articles from adjunct literature.

C.iv Study Selection

As a result of the search outlined above, a total of 6,051 records were retrieved in August 2022, with 3,122 duplicates. The remaining articles (2,929) were manually screened. Although this was a high number, trial and error showed that refining the search terms resulted in the exclusion of significant articles.

Using the inclusion/exclusion criteria, a search of the titles and abstracts brought the total down to 148 articles. Full text of the remaining 148 articles were then read in light of the inclusion criteria, leading to 125 being excluded. The remaining 23 articles focused on the literature relating to identity formation of academics. The 23 articles included in this review contain articles with two levels of relevance to the research question. Out of the 23, a subset of 17 are concerned with the wider identity formation of academics in HE. In this chapter, I refer to these as the 'General Identity Papers'. A further six are specifically related to the identity formation of Career Change Academics. I refer to these as the 'Specific Career Change Papers'. In this review, I treat these two subsets of the literature as distinct, and subject them to different degrees of evaluation and synthesis, based on their relevance to the aim of the review. Of the 23 articles 15 were conducted using qualitative methods, two used a mixed methods approach, three were literature reviews and three were theoretical articles. The six 'Specific Career Change Papers' reported empirical studies using qualitative methods. All articles were peer reviewed.

C. v Critical appraisal

The six 'Specific Career Change Papers' were critically appraised for their quality using a quality grid described in Appendix B. This was inspired by the five questions presented in the Critical Appraisal Qualitative Checklist (Panchal and Damodaran, 2017). Whilst multiple tools have been designed to assess the quality of qualitative research, the combination of rigour and simplicity of the questions in the Critical Appraisal Qualitative Checklist made it appropriate for this review. The Critical Appraisal Qualitative Checklist incorporates elements that aligned with the nature of the research in question, such as the appropriateness of the research design, the data collection, the appropriate choice of the methodology and the recruitment strategy. These central tenets of the checklist aligned with the exploration of identity development. All six articles met the criteria for having clear aims of research, for an appropriate use of a qualitative methodology and for the appropriate design to explore the research aims. In addition, all six articles recruited appropriate participants to meet the research aims and collected data effectively to address the research aims.

The seventeen 'General Identity Papers' were not subjected to the same level of scrutiny, because they are included primarily to provide theoretical and empirical context to the six 'Specific Career Change Papers'.

D. Literature Review Findings

This section provides an overview and critical evaluation of findings from the 17 General Identity Papers, including some chained references from these articles. The literature in this section predominantly relates to the identity formation of HE academics, but additional literature examining the concept of identity formation is used when this supports exploration of the research. This is then followed by a closer examination of the six Specific Career Change Papers that are qualitative studies. These two groups are then reviewed together in the discussion section of this chapter.

E. i. Overview and evaluation of the literature on identity formation in HE

This section critically evaluates the 17 General Identity Papers in terms of the methods, participants and the methods of analysis. Contribution of these papers to understanding the experience of Career Change Academics is briefly discussed. The

General Identity Papers included empirical research, conceptual proposals, theoretical proposals, systematic reviews of literature and reviews of research. A cross-cutting theme across these articles was the identity formation of academics within HE. Heterogeneity within the papers regarding what was being measured in relation to identity formation made it difficult to compare quantitative studies, given that they operationalise concepts inconsistently. The papers were therefore synthesised narratively.

Eight of the 17 General Identity Papers presented empirical research (King et al., 2014; Lopes et al., 2014; Sharp et al., 2015; Barbarà-i-Molinero, Cascón-Pereira and Hernández-Lara, 2017; Lam, 2020; Dinu et al., 2021; McCune, 2021; Whitchurch, Locke and Marini, 2021). A common method of data gathering within the empirical research papers was semi-structured interviews (Lopes et al., 2014; Sharp et al., 2015; Lam, 2020; McCune, 2021; Whitchurch, Locke and Marini, 2021). Two empirical studies took a mixed-method approach (Sharp *et al.*, 2015; Dinu *et al.*, 2021), one paper described an intervention (King *et al.*, 2014).

Although the use of interviews was common across the empirical papers there was less uniformity in terms of who was being interviewed. Across the papers there was little consideration regarding who was being researched, how long they had been working in HE and the length of the research itself. There was also a broad range in terms of the numbers of participants within the empirical research, from an individual auto-ethnographical study to much larger sample sizes within longitudinal research (Hughes, 2013; Whitchurch, Locke and Marini, 2021). In addition to the number of participants there was a significant difference in the length of time the participants had worked in HE. For example, Lopes (2014) outlines that they interviewed 14 academics but it is unclear who had been in-post three years and who had been there 37 years (Lopes et al., 2014). This is of interest as the literature suggests that the length of time it takes for an identity to re-form is approximately 3-5 years (Ahn, Dik and Hornback, 2017; Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). Lack of consensus regarding the level of experience of the academics being researched and the amount of time they have been working in HE meant that it was difficult to compare the results of the research.

Two papers were conceptual proposals (Hughes, 2013; Lewis, 2014). Hughes (2013) conducted autoethnographic research exploring their professional development and described their identity as being in flux. This is of interest to this research but the autoethnographic nature of the research reduces the potential for transferability. Lewis (2014) offers a conceptual framework regarding his doctoral thesis on the identity formation of administrators in HE and so does not focus on the experience of Career Change Academics.

Three papers were theoretical proposals (Roccas and Brewer, 2002; Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010; Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010). Roccas and Brewer (2002) conducted a literature review and describes taking an investigatory approach to analyse the literature resulting in a theory titled social identity theory. This theory has been subsequently utilised to conduct multiple forms of research (Miller, Brewer and Arbuckle, 2009). Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) and Ibarra and Petriglieri (2010) both offer theoretical proposals as a result of reviewing literature. The critique and discussion of these three theoretical proposals continues later in this chapter.

Three of the papers were literature reviews. Lankveld's (2017) systematic review of literature included studies published between 2005 – 2015 and performed a qualitative synthesis of 59 studies; covered in depth in the initial scoping review in this chapter. Lankveld's systematic search offers a rigour and quality in that the search can be replicated. Trede *et al.,* (2012) offered a systematic review of literature that focused on the role of student employability (Trede, Macklin and Bridges, 2012). This paper took a systematic approach to a literature review and analyses in depth 20 articles that discussed professional identity published between 1998 – 2008. This review took a philosophical and hermeneutic approach, utilising a textual critique of literature to explore the links between a student's studies and their identity formation. This is of interest as it discusses identity formation within an HE setting, but the focus is on the professional identity of students and not academics. The third review of literature is Winkler's 2018 paper which offered a review of qualitative literature including 129 studies published between 2000 and 2016. Although not a systematic review, the search protocols were clear and the focus was on empirical literature focusing on the incorporation of emotions in identity work. The review did not focus specifically on the

identity work of those in HE and so does not take into account the contextual complexities of professional identity formation in HE. However, the role of emotion in identity work relates to general identity formation and, as such, is considered further in the discussion section of this chapter.

One of the 17 papers is a review of two research projects conducted by the author, Henkel (2005). This paper did not list the number of participants involved in the projects and focused, in the majority, on detailing the context of academic identity and autonomy in a HE environment that is responding to changes at management level. This paper does not offer the rigour of a systematic review, but it sets the scene for academics with the changing context of HE as it is driven towards a new managerial quest in assessing quality. As such, this paper is discussed further in the discussion section of this chapter.

Each of the 17 General Identity Papers took a different approach to what they were researching when they explored the identity formation of academics. The majority of the papers looked at the way that academics responded to contextual issues such as Dinu (2021) who explored the impact of COVID-19 on the identity formation of academics, or Lam (2020) who explored the concept of boundaried identities between nurses and academics. These lenses have resulted in a broad range of data, but they do not promote a unified approach or collective understanding as to what is being measured when we explore the identity formation of academics in HE.

Consequently, identity formation of academics would benefit from further research utilising a unified approach as to what to measure when researching the identity formation of academics in HE, ideally using validated quality measures. This could be further enhanced using longitudinal studies in order to map the progression of the identity formation change process. The next section focuses on a definition of identity and the conceptual understanding of identity highlighted in the 17 General Identity Papers, before moving on to the six Specific Career Change Papers.

The 17 General Identity Papers are organised thematically in Table 3 to represent the thematic spread of the articles

Theme	**Number of peer reviewed articles**
Identity formation of Academics in HE (including two systematic reviews of literature)	6
Identity formation of Academics relating to HE policies	1
The future of the career in HE has changed	2
Identity complexity	2
Professional Identity Formation in HE	1
Student employability	1
The implications of the new REF	2
What industry can offer HE institutions	1
The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on academics	1
Total	**17**

Table 3: Table of themes from General Identity Papers

Within the expanding field of identity formation there is a gap in research that focuses on the lived experience and contribution of Career Change Academics within HE (Albert, Ashforth and Dutton, 2000; Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010). There is a systematic review of literature covering 22 empirical studies that focuses on the formation of a teacher's identity, but the review includes research from both Secondary Education (SE) teachers and HE academics (Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004). As such, we are unable to take these themes as solely representing academics' identity formation in HE. Although this article discusses both SE and HE it is acknowledged in this review for the transparency of the literature search findings and used as a wider view of the concept of identity formation. Beijaard et al.'s (2004) systematic review concluded that there are three main areas of research focusing on identity formation: the formation of the teacher's professional identity, the characteristics of a teacher's identity, and the way in which a teacher's identity is presented through story. In order to study the experiences of Career Change Academics it is essential to critically review theories of identity formation.

D. ii. Three conceptual areas of identity formation

Multiple identity formation theories share three widely recognised recurring themes: see Figure 3 below. The first considers how an individual sees themselves in the light of their past experiences; the second is how they see others and the context in which

they work; and the third is how the individual imagines themselves to be in the future (Ibarra, 1999; Vuorikoski, 2001; Geijsel and Meijers, 2005; Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010; Williams, 2010; Kaplan and Flum, 2012).These three conceptual areas will now be addressed.

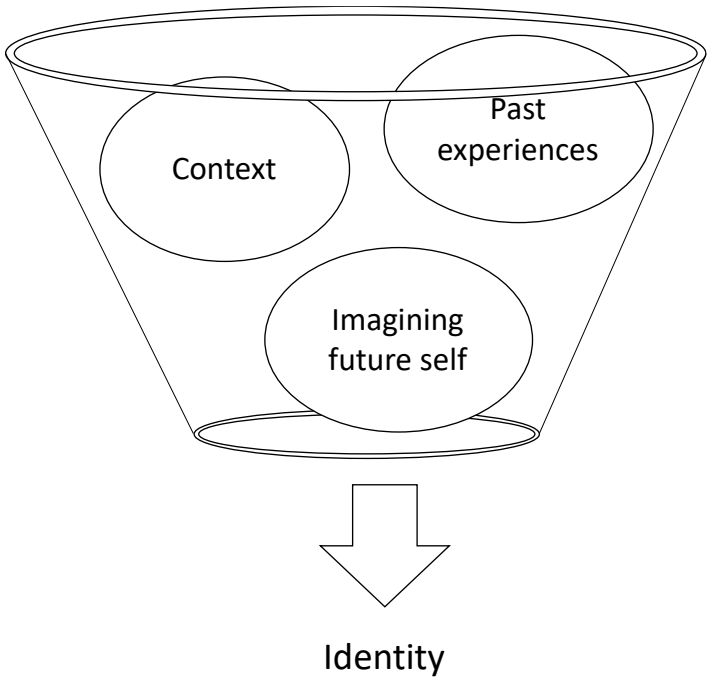


Figure 3: Three conceptual areas of identity formation.

The first conceptual area relates to how the individual sees themselves in the light of their past experiences (Roccas and Brewer, 2002; Boyd and Harris, 2010; Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010; Lewis, 2014; Lankveld et al., 2017). A theme within five of the 17 articles is that an individual's past experiences impact their current identity. Examples can include experience of being a student (Williams, 2010) as well as any former work environment (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010; King *et al.*, 2014). Lankveld *et al.,* (2017) conducted a systematic review of literature, calling for a need to include past experiences and skills within the pedagogy for Career Change Academics that enables the individual to incorporate their past experiences in the formation of their teaching identity (Lankveld *et al.*, 2017).

The second conceptual area, identified in nine of the 17 articles, concerns how the context in which an individual works will directly influence their identity formation

(Roccas and Brewer, 2002; Henkel, 2005; Izadinia, 2014; King *et al.*, 2014; Lankveld *et al.*, 2017; Winkler, 2018; Lam, 2020; McCune, 2021; Whitchurch, Locke and Marini, 2021). If identity is formed, in part, from the culture of the HE community it is then important to investigate the cultural experiences faced by Career Change Academics. In the case of the Career Change Academic the context could include relationships with colleagues, the wider institution, the subject field, and the wider HE environment. A previous review of this literature has reported that new teachers in HE feel stressed, doubtful and inadequate when working in a new context (Lankveld *et al.*, 2017).

The third conceptual area is how the individual views themselves in the future (Roccas and Brewer, 2002; Henkel, 2005; King et al., 2014; Lewis, 2014; Lankveld et al., 2017; Winkler, 2018; Lam, 2020; McCune, 2021; Whitchurch, Locke and Marini, 2021). Nine of the 17 papers contribute insights here. Two interesting terms proposed by Ibarra and Petriglieri are 'Identity Work' and 'Identity Play' (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010). Ibarra states that Identity Play is necessary as one "must convey a credible image long before they have fully internalised the underlying professional identity" (Ibarra, 1999, p. 764). The theory of Identity Play has been described as the threshold between past and future identities (Nesje, Canrinus and Strype, 2018). Geijsel and Meijers offer similar terminology of trialling identities as Identity Learning (Geijsel and Meijers, 2005). Connelly and Clandinin refer to this concept as shifting selves (Connelly and Clandinin, 1999). Beijaard *et al.,* (2004) refer to identity as being a relational phenomenon rather than a fixed attribute (Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004). The future self could therefore be described as an ever-evolving identity where individuals interpret and then reinterpret who they want to become(Markus and Nurius, 1986; Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop, 2004; Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). Winkler highlights that although Ibarra and Petriglieri's theory of Identity Play refers to the role of positive and negative emotions in identity formation there is minimal research conducted on the role of emotions in identity formation (Winkler, 2018). A second area within literature is that of anticipatory reflection. Conway takes this further, stating that anticipatory reflection should be used as a tool to help new academics reflect on their anticipatory identity to set a path they may follow in search of their identities (Conway, 2001).

Having discussed the definition of identity formation, reviewed the literature on the 17

General Identity papers and examined literature on the three conceptual areas of identity formation, this literature review now turns to focus on the qualitative studies of the six Specific Career Change Papers.

D. iii. Qualitative studies on the experience of Career Change Academics: a synthesis

Having summarised the overarching claims from the 17 articles that focus on the identity formation of academics, we now move on to review in more detail the subset of six qualitative studies which specifically explored the experience of Career Change Academics in HE Institutions. The research methodologies and methods varied across the six articles. One used Grounded Theory, two used a phenomenological approach and three used Thematic Analysis. Five used semi-structured interviews, and one an online survey with long and short answers. Information about the six articles is outlined in Table 4 below.

It is first worth noting that none of the studies reported in these six papers were conducted in a Robbins Group University, and that out of the six only one (Dashper and Fletcher, 2019) referred to the experiences of Career Change Academics following 2014 changes in the REF. While the Dashper and Fletcher (2019) article does not state how many of its 16 participants were employed since the changes in the REF were announced, it does state that some participants had been in post for 10+ years. The article outlines that the 16 Career Change Academics struggled with claiming their identify as academics because they were teaching a new subject, in a new university with a mix of traditional and Career Change Academics. Some of the participants felt that publishing would be a sign that they were proper academics (Dashper and Fletcher, 2019).

Table 4: Table of 'Six Specific Career Change Papers', focusing on the identity formation of Career Change Academics

	Title, Name, Date	Method	Participants	Analysis	Findings
1	'Don't call me an academic': Professional identity and struggles for legitimacy within the vocational field of events management higher education. (Dashper and Fletcher, 2019)	Thematic Analysis	16 Events Management Academics from a New University in the UK, Interviews.	A Narrative review was undertaken by experienced academics.	Three narrative strategies were identified to describe their identity: 1. The anti-academic; 2. The traditional academic; 3. The blended professional.
2	Changing professional identity in the transition from practitioner to lecturer in higher education: an interpretive phenomenological analysis. (Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016)	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis	Semi-structured interviews with five professional practitioners Post-1992 University.	Hermeneutic approach.	Research findings: 1. A shift from referring to an identity in transition identity as a liminal state; 2. There is a hierarchy of knowledge, preferring knowledge from research rather than experience.
3	Nurse to educator? Academic roles and the formation of personal academic identities. (Duffy, 2013)	Grounded Theory	14 interviews Nurse Educators both pre and post 1992.	Three paths of coding: open, focused, and theoretical.	Nurse academics identities encompassed five stages: pre-entry, reaffirming, surmounting, stabilising, and actualising.
4	Becoming an academic: the reconstruction of identity by recently appointed lecturers in nursing, midwifery and the allied health professions. (Smith and Boyd, 2012)	Qualitative	146 lecturers. Online survey of questions. Data was collected in 2008.	A thematic approach resulting in a coding index and themes.	Three key stages were named in the forming of the participant's identities. They are: managing self, activities, and support.
5	Being in two camps: Conflicting experiences for practice-based academics. (Shreeve, 2011)	Phenomenographic Approach	16 interviews of HE practitioners in the Creative Arts.	Activity theory (Engeström, Reijo and Punamäki, 1999).	That universities should develop effective support networks to build links between academic practice and the practitioner.
6	International Journal for Academic Development Academic induction for professional educators: supporting the workplace learning of newly appointed lecturers in teacher and nurse education. (Boyd, 2010)	Thematic Analysis	Semi-structured interviews of 9 Health Care academics.	Qualitative content analysis using Interviews alongside 10 institutional documents.	Results of study said that new academics 1. Felt new. 2. Reconstructing pedagogy – teaching primarily but also looking to research. 3. Sought credibility in new work. 4. Seeks support.

Wood, Farmer and Goodall (2016) conducted empirical research applying Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to semi-structured interviews with five practitioners who now teach in HE. This study focused on the relationship between knowledge and influence concluding that HE institutions preferred knowledge gained from research to knowledge gained from industry experience (Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016). The concept of professional value based on research ability, and subsequent income generation, appears to assume priority over tangible work-based experience. Wood, Farmer and Goodall (2016) published after the 2014 changes in the REF: the article was received in 2015 and published in 2016. They do not specify how long the Career Change Academics had worked in HE and so it is unknown to what extent the participants would have been affected by the 2014 changes in the new REF. Given the date the article was received by the journal, it is likely that the participants were employed ahead of the changes in the REF. Wood, Farmer and Goodall (2016) concluded that participants described their identity as being in a liminal state, rather than a reformed identity as a result of a transition period as suggested by Ibarra (Ibarra, 1999). They recommend that further research focuses on the lived experiences of Career Change Academics with a view to developing processes and training that support their identity formation so that they can fully contribute their previous experiences within HE. Neither the Dashper and Fletcher paper (2019), nor Wood, Farmer and Goodall (2016) paper are explicit about the impact of the changes caused by the REF on the identity formation of academics who have changed careers to teach. Nevertheless, participants in these studies felt pressure to publish and that a lack of publications was a sign that they were not authentic and part of the academic 'ingroup' (Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016).

The remaining articles are dated 2010 – 2013, one of which had data gathered in 2008, and so were written before the changes to the new REF had been announced. Three of the articles focused on the identity formation of those who have changed careers to teach students in the field of Health Care (Boyd, 2010; Smith and Boyd, 2012; Duffy, 2013). Duffy 's (2013) research offers a conceptual model stating that nurse academics described their identity as encompassing five stages: pre-entry, reaffirming, surmounting, stabilising, and actualising (Duffy, 2013). Smith and Boyd (2012) similarly name three key stages in the formation of the participant's identities: managing self, attending activities, and finding support (Smith and Boyd, 2012). These

conceptual stages link with wider research stating that identity formation is not sequential, and that people can experience their identity differently dependent on their past experiences, context or how they imagined their future might be. The conceptual models offer stages in identity formation that one might experience when they change careers. However, these models are not distinctive to the case of the Career Change Academic in helping them consider the formation of their identity. The final article by Shreeve took a phenomenographic approach using Activity Theory (Engeström, Reijo and Punamäki, 1999) to analyse interviews with 16 participants who identified as practitioners and HE teachers in the creative arts. Shreeve described the creative arts academics' positions as being in two camps; “tutors working in a creative practice-based activity and in an education activity system” (Shreeve, 2011, p. 82). This article concludes that academics struggle with a sense of perceived worth, that HE is a new culture which must be learnt, and that being part of a community helps artist academics to identify with the world of HE.

Cross-cutting themes of the Six ‘Specific Career Change’ papers

To analyse the literature across these six key journal articles I created an analysis grid (Appendix C) based on Noblit and Hare’s method of translating idiomatic themes across the literature to create an analysis matrix (Nobit and Hare, 1988). The first step of this analysis was to extrapolate the key themes and concepts from the six articles. This analysis grid was then reviewed to look for cross-cutting themes. These four themes were coded and then presented below in Table 5.

The first theme was that of the Career Change Academics feeling as if they were *straddling two worlds* regarding their former career and their new role as an academic. This theme was present in five of the six articles. The second theme, found in two of the articles, highlighted that Career Change Academics *struggled to maintain their former practitioner credibility*. The third theme is the only theme common to all six articles: the sense that *motivation is the supporting factor* behind the Career Change Academics’ identity. The fourth and final theme is that of *Academic status* which was located in five out of the six articles. This fourth theme is related to the notion that academic status is significant to Career Change Academics. These four cross-cutting themes will now be discussed within the context of the wider literature regarding the

identity formation of Career Change Academics. The colour coding in Table 5 relates to the thematic coding in Appendix C.

Paper	Theme 1: Straddling two worlds (Blue)	Theme 2: Struggle to maintain credibility (Yellow)	Theme 3: Motivation is behind my identity (Green)	Theme 4: Academic status: A two sided coin (Pink)
Dashper and Fletcher 2019	☑	☒	☑	☑
Wood, Farmer and Goodall 2016	☑	☒	☑	☑
Duffy 2013	☑	☒	☑	☑
Smith and Boyd 2012	☒	☑	☑	☑
Shreeve 2011	☑	☑	☑	☑
Boyd 2010	☑	☒	☑	☒

Table 5: Thematic coding of the six 'Specific Career Change Papers'

D. iv. Experiences of Career Change Academics: Synthesis

This section discusses the six Specific Career Change Papers alongside the wider 17 General Identity Papers to discuss the link with relevant and related literature materials which will then lead to a section that highlights the gaps in literature.

Career Change Academics straddle two worlds

Five out of six articles contributed to this first theme (Table 5) about Career Change Academics feeling like they were straddling two worlds. There was a sense of a tug of war between their former and newly-forming identities (Boyd, 2010; Shreeve, 2011; Duffy, 2013; Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016; Dashper and Fletcher, 2019). For example, Shreeve (2011) stated that the role was like trying to wear two hats at the same time: it does not work or feel comfortable. Language used by participants from these articles is predominantly negative or uncomfortable. Their imagery is of tension, segregation, struggle, feeling ineffective and having a sense of oneself as an imposter. While some seemingly referred to themselves positively as a 'blended academic', others referred to this as a sense of pull between the situated self in HE and their substantial self in their former practice. It is well documented that those who transition to become Career Change Academics struggle with the transition (Shreeve, 2011). This sense of struggle is mirrored in the wider literature on the identity formation of academics (Izadinia, 2014; Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). Stetson (2020) referred to the experience of Health Professionals in joining HE as being comparable with starting a new life (Stetson *et al.*, 2020).

There were also two significant factors in this literature that contributed to the sense of separation, or segregation between their former and new professional identity. The first was the amount of unexpected administrative work, with its own language of acronyms, and the second was that the Career Change Academics felt under pressure to publish (Shreeve, 2011; Smith and Boyd, 2012; Duffy, 2013; Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016; Dashper and Fletcher, 2019). While some felt that a lack of research experience and publications led to questions of their legitimacy as academics (Shreeve, 2011; Duffy, 2013; Dashper and Fletcher, 2019), others felt under pressure to undertake doctoral study (Smith and Boyd, 2012). This aligns with a theme from the literature data grid (Boyd, 2010; Shreeve, 2011; Duffy, 2013; Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016; Dashper and Fletcher, 2019) which showed that the Career Change Academics felt their acceptance as an academic was contentious because they were not considered to be traditional academics.

Struggle to maintain credibility

Two out of the six articles contributed to this second theme (Table 5) that Career Change Academics struggled to maintain credibility as practitioners. The theme of struggling to maintain credibility is related to the first theme but focuses this on the relationship the Career Change Academic has with their former career and identity. It is of interest that this theme is only present for Smith and Boyd (2012), whose data came from a study in 2008, and Shreeve (2011). These papers are two of the older papers from the Specific Career Change Papers. These papers do not specify if this sense of the struggle to maintain practitioner credibility relates to the time in which these studies took place. However, the theme is distinct with solely negative terminology that refers to teaching as a parasite that drains the practitioner (Shreeve, 2011). The theme has an undercurrent of struggle with the expectations of HE, such as admin and research. The struggle with perceived sense of worth is multi-dimensional, meaning that their decreasing credibility in their former practice is mirrored by their lack of credibility as academics as they struggle with completing research and the heavy teaching load (Shreeve, 2011; Smith and Boyd, 2012). For Shreeve (2011) the focus of this theme was the mismatch between the ethos of teaching and the amount of admin which Shreeve described as being a parasite that drains the practitioner. The Smith and Boyd article (2012) related to this theme as nurses felt the need to maintain their credibility as Heath Care staff whilst also feeling under pressure to research.

The struggle to maintain former practitioner credibility was not mentioned in the remainder of the 23 articles. The literature spoke of those in transition feeling they were facing turmoil, feeling emotional or that their identity felt fragmented (King *et al.*, 2014; Winkler, 2018; Herman *et al.*, 2021), but not that they struggled to maintain their former credibility.

A sense of motivation is behind my identity

All six of the Specific Career Change Papers contributed to this third theme (Table 5) that highlights the relationship between the motivation of teaching and identity formation and appears in the wider literature of academic identity formation (Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). For Dashper and Fletcher the motivation to change careers related to

training the next generation of events managers, rather than to be an academic. The title of the Dashper and Fletcher paper includes the phrase 'Don't call me an academic' as a sign that the Career Change Academics in their research are distancing themselves from the traditional title. The article explains that there is a gap, or distance, between the Career Change Academics and the traditional academics that both groups desire to maintain. The Career Change Academics are proud of their practitioner experience and do not want to be considered as a traditional academic. Conversely, traditional academics are proud of their research and status and do not want to be considered practitioners (Dashper and Fletcher, 2019). There is a clear theme across these articles of participants wishing to use their experience to teach and prepare students as future practitioners (Boyd, 2010; Shreeve, 2011; Smith and Boyd, 2012; Duffy, 2013; Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016; Dashper and Fletcher, 2019).

Given the strong theme of motivation to train practitioners of the future it is surprising how rarely students were mentioned, with almost no reference to whether or how students impact the Career Change Academic's sense of identity. However, Smith and Boyd (2012) refer to a sense of satisfaction that their participants felt from nurturing new professionals. The overall sense from the literature is that the transition from practice to teaching in HE is tough. It is the motivation to teach future practitioners that gives the Career Change Academics the strength and determination to navigate larger admin loads than were expected and to navigate their experiences as their identity develops (King *et al.*, 2014; Lewis, 2014; White *et al.*, 2014; Winkler, 2018; Herman *et al.*, 2021). All of the six Specific Identity Papers referred to their transition as a humbling experience as the participants needed to re-learn the HE language and its related procedures. It was the motivation beneath the surface that acted as a driver enabling the Career Change Academics to face the challenges related with their career change.

Academic Status: a two-sided coin

Five out of the six Specific Career Change Papers relate to the theme of Academic Status (Table 5) which is seen as a two-sided coin. At one end of the spectrum, Career Change Academics viewed traditional academics as frauds because they could not

incorporate practitioner experience to a vocational subject (Dashper and Fletcher, 2019). The other side of the coin is that Career Change Academics feel that traditional academics treat them as if they were the frauds as they do not know the contextual language and had minimal experience of working in HE. Williams refers to this as being an expert novice in HE (Williams, 2010). The theme of academic status is contentious, both internally with the Career Change Academic as well as the way in which they are viewed in the wider HE environment.

A significant thread within this theme is that Career Change Academics felt they lacked academic clout because they did not have as many publications as their traditional academic peers (Shreeve, 2011; Smith and Boyd, 2012; Duffy, 2013; Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016; Dashper and Fletcher, 2019). For example, Dashper and Fletcher's participants felt the pressure to publish and referred to the quality environment, attributing their university's understanding of quality to prefer research excellence than teaching excellence. These papers do not show us whether the changes in the REF, and the increase in teaching-only contracts, have affected the way that Career Change Academics understand their academic status. The same sentiment of valuing knowledge by research, rather than industry knowledge, was also shared by Wood, Farmer al Goodall (2016). Boyd (2010) referred to their participants as feeling like small fish in a big pond. In their former role they would have been considered a big fish in a big pond and would experience the respect afforded with such a position. However, this practitioner experience was not valued in the same way in HE and this felt like a threat to their sense of academic status. If their experience was not valued, then this left their personal sense of value open to question. This was mirrored by Wood, Farmer and Goodall (2016) who reported that Career Change Academics did not feel they were viewed as being of equal worth to traditional academics. Their participants felt that knowledge achieved via research was seen as more valuable than knowledge gained by experience (Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016).

An unanswered question within these papers is to what extent Career Change Academics assimilate their former and new culture within their identity. Do Career Change Academics feel pressured to conform to a pre-set understanding of how an academic behaves, talks and engages with the wider HE community? The

phenomenon of imposter syndrome is well documented in literature with regard to the identity of new academics, who feel like an imposter until they feel competent and experienced in their work (Bothello and Roulet, 2019). The literature shows that Career Change Academics prior to the changes in REF felt they had to match the expectation to publish with that of their traditional peers.

Wenger (1998) describes the process of learning identity as an awareness of the way we are formed in context (Wenger, 1998). An area of interest is to what extent Career Change Academics feel they have retained their core values and feel able to bring their expertise to a new work culture. Immersion in multiple cultures can result in a positive impact on psychosocial processing and well-being (LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton, 1993). However, there is also the concern that adopting a uniform approach to fitting in, be that subconsciously, consciously, or by coercion, Career Change Academics may lose their cultural autonomy resulting in lost opportunities for sharing former skills and expertise (Barnett *et al.*, 1954).

Having discussed the cross-cutting themes from the six Specific Career Change Papers in the light of the wider 17 General Identity Papers, the next section focuses on a critical discussion of these papers.

E. Discussion

E. i. Critical evaluation of the literature through a theoretical lens

This section of the literature review offers a critical review using two key theories as a lens to underpin identity formation in the literature above. The first theory that works as a lens is Ibarra's (1999) theory on provisional selves. The second theory is that of integrative complexity; this is a psychometric measure that maps the extent to which individuals differentiate and potentially integrate different points of view, or in the case of this research, identities (Suedfeld, Tetlock and Streufert, 1992; Roccas and Brewer, 2002; Baker-Brown et al., 2009).

The first key theory identified within the 17 General Identity Papers and the Six Specific Career Change Papers, was the theory that an identity is something that can be worked upon, that one could *do* "identity work". This was coined and developed by

Ibarra (Ibarra, 1999; Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010) who offered a theoretical proposal based on reviewing literature on identity work. The theoretical proposal offers the concept of identity play as a method of trialling different identities as a means of exploring who they may become. Ibarra is a well-established author in the field of identity formation and discusses identity formation as being dynamic and something that is receptive to change (Ibarra, 1999). Ibarra is also the co-author of another paper with Barbulescu (2010) proposing that people draw from their personal narratives in order to form identities. Ibarra proposed that the task of forming a new identity involves observing role models for potential identities, experimenting with a provisional identity narrative, which is then followed by the individual evaluating the success of their provisional identity against internal and external acceptance of their identity (Ibarra, 1999). The language of Identity work, and an identity narrative, is used by many authors to mean the task of ongoing negotiation to form one's identity and is referred to within the six Specific Career Change Papers. The concept of identity formation as being dynamic aligns with the cross-cutting themes from the six Career Change Papers as being a struggle, straddling two worlds with two sides to their identity that is powered by their motivation.

The theme of identity work is discussed in Trede *et al.,* (2012) regarding the professional identity of the student. Although not mentioning Ibarra, the research ends with recommendations that assessments and class activities replicate authentic work-place activities where students will experience what it might feel like to be provisional practitioners. Barbarà-i-Molinero et al. (2017) takes a similar approach quoting Ibarra's (1999) theory of provisional selves in their article focusing on role of HE in the identity formation of students. At first glance these papers appear to focus on what one might imagine to be undergraduate students. However, one of the 17 General Identity Papers focused on graduates from a Postgraduate programme that was designed to teach the subject of HE. The research proposed four possible characteristics of academic identity, which are: The multifaceted whole, the layered self, the interlinked self, and the fragmented self. These four possible characteristics show a resemblance to the four stages of social identity complexity which are intersected identity, dominant identity, compartmentalised identity, and merged identity (Roccas and Brewer, 2002).

The second theoretical lens that is apparent throughout the 17 General Identity Papers and the six Specific Identity Papers is that of identity complexity and the level of integration, or differentiation between facets of their identity. The theory of integrative complexity is only cited in the Roccas and Brewer (2002) paper as it underpins the theory of social identity complexity. However, the language of multiple identities, complexity, and facets of identity is explicit in the majority of the papers.

Integrative complexity is a psychometric measure designed by Suedfeld, Tetlock and Streufert (1992) that measures the structure of someone's thinking on a topic using paragraph completion tests to numerically score the structure of an individual's thinking as to what extent an individual is able to differentiate and integrate their structure of thinking on a topic. The theory of integrative complexity has been utilised by many theories that require a tool to structure, and or measure, the extent to which someone has integrated and/or differentiated within a culture or concept. Ibarra's (1999) theory of identity work, and an integrative complexity, is aligned with Lam's theory that the success of an adopted identity depends on the extent to which an individual internally accepts, and others externally accept their new identity (Lam, 2020). Lam (2020) used the phrase 'hybrid identities' as defining academics who worked both in HE as well as in their practice. Pracademics is another term that is used across literature is a term used for those who are simultaneously working in their field as well as teaching (Lam, 2020; Dickinson, Fowler and Griffiths, 2022). The literature Lam uses to underpin their research is that of outward and inward boundary connections linking the way an individual connects a new identity with their existing identity (Watson, 2008). This theory has similarities with social identity complexity (Roccas and Brewer, 2002), the idea that identities are like boundaries that can overlap if the individual wishes.

Integrative complexity has been used to research the cognitive implication of biculturalism (Tadmor and Tetlock, 2006), acculturation (Tadmor, Tetlock and Peng, 2009), and the concept of social identity complexity (Roccas and Brewer, 2002). The underpinning role of integrative complexity means that there are similarities within the following models. The acculturation complexity model offers five steps of acculturation that maps an individual through the stages and any pressure they feel to join and assimilate with another culture. A Career Change Academic may see themselves as

having a bicultural identity like Shreeve (2011) wearing two caps, or pracademics, such as nurses who retain their professional title and continue to work as a nurse as well as in HE (Boyd, 2010; Smith and Boyd, 2012; Duffy, 2013). In contrast, social identity complexity proposes that an individual has multiple identities at any one time, such as Christian and Scottish, and that these identities can integrate or differentiate in terms of the link between the two identities (Roccas and Brewer, 2002). Roccas and Brewer (2002) describe this, stating that “Social identity complexity is the product of a process of recognizing and interpreting information about one's own ingroups” (p. 93).

Social identity theory is attributed to Tajfel (1974) and has been subsequently developed by many social science researchers and theorists. As outlined in literature, our past, present, and future experiences all form our identity (figure 3). How we identify cannot be extrapolated out from our social experiences. A critical review of social identity theory outlines the key concepts that underpin our social identity as including in-group and outgroup relations, status equality, self-esteem hypothesis, ingroup bias, homogeneity and stereotyping (Brown, 2000). These facets of social identity theory were implicit throughout all six of the Specific Identity Papers.

There are multiple theories that refer to the formation of social identity (Tatum, 2000; Hogg and Reid, 2006; Jenkins, 2008), however, it is the correlation of integrative complexity and the lens of integration and differentiation of identities within the literature that results in a focusing on social identity complexity as a lens for discussion within this chapter.

This literature review has outlined the wider literature on identity formation from the 17 General Identity Papers formation which was then followed by a thematic analysis and synthesis of the six Specific Career Change Papers relating directly to the experience of the Career Change Academics. Findings of the review show that Career Change Academics do not feel fully accepted by their traditional academic colleagues. The straddling of two worlds shows that they feel what Shreeve (2011) described as conflict in terms of their identity as well as their daily work and relationships with colleagues. The cross-cutting analysis also highlighted that Career Change Academics felt that they struggled to maintain credibility. This implies that it was still important for the participants in these studies to maintain their former practitioner identity rather than

looking to form a new hybrid identity (Shreeve, 2011; Smith and Boyd, 2012). This relates to the next cross-cutting theme referring to the concept of an academic status as having two sides of a coin, or two sides to a Career Change Academic's identity that do not touch, like two sides of a coin. The Six Specific Career Change Papers focus on the identity formation of those who have transitioned form a former career to teach in HE. However, there are two distinct papers within the Specific Career Change Papers that speak of participants who consider themselves to be Career Change Academics, rather than pracademics. These two papers are Dashper and Fletcher (2019) and Wood, Farmer and Goodall (2016). These papers discuss the implicit links between the level of integration with the former and new professional identities. Instead of sitting in two cultures these Career Change Academics describe being in a liminal state of identity formation (Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016), or a segregated state (Dashper and Fletcher, 2019). This discussion of literature has shown that there is a gap in literature regarding the lived experience of academics and how they end up describing their identity as needing to wear two caps, being in two different camps, or face up to the fact that their two identities are not combining in to one identity.

E. ii. Summary

Bridging the gaps

This section below examines adjunct literature in exploring two gaps in literature. Recommendations include a warning that HE institutions should resist recruiting traditional academics in order to maximise research income and favourable REF rankings (Pilcher *et al.*, 2017; Dickinson, Fowler and Griffiths, 2022) and are encouraged to focus on employing colleagues with experience that will positively impact the student experience (Dickinson, Fowler and Griffiths, 2022).

The first gap to be addressed is the lack of literature regarding specific lived experience of those who have changed careers to teach in HE. Writing of her experience as a Career Change Academic, Empson (2013) highlights how this lack of literature concerning the lived experiences of Career Change Academics prolonged her feelings of identity conflict as she struggled to reconcile her conflicting identities (Empson, 2013). Empson described the navigation of her professional identity as a "complex intertwining of positive and negative experiences, bound together with

ambivalent experiences that were exacerbated as I cycled repeatedly between these polarised positions" (Empson, 2013, p. 243). It is because articles such as this are rare that this project focuses on the lived experiences of Career Change Academics.

A Career Change Academic may not have considered the impact that changing career could have and may find themselves in a perpetual liminal state (Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016) of being an expert novice (Williams, 2010). Empson writes "In the process of interaction with practice, we academics may be forced to address uncomfortable or unresolved questions about our own identities" (Empson, 2013, p. 246). Winkler agrees stating "there is more research required to understand the mutual constitution of emotions and identity work" (Winkler, 2018, p. 129). Flum and Kaplan state that identity is "an integrative concept and it is developed in the space between the individual and the social context" (Flum and Kaplan, 2012). Winkler points out that no study using the theory of identity play (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010) investigates the role of emotion in identity formation (Winkler, 2018). The lack of research and subsequent literature regarding the lived experiences of Career Change Academics has provided a focus for this research. As such, the role of identity work within the identity formation of Career Change Academics will be investigated as part of exploring the lived experiences of the transition made by Career Change Academics.

The second gap in literature focuses on the the perceived contributions that Career Change Academics bring to a HE institution. A Career Change Academic brings with them their career experience and expertise which can potentially benefit both the student and the HE institution. Adjunct literature on individuals who internalise more than one culture reveal that they are more capable of intergrating different perspectives. Empirical research using the quantitative psychometric measure integrtive complexty (Baker-Brown *et al.*, 2009) as a basis for a model titled social identity complexity (Roccas and Brewer, 2002) demonstrates that those who have internalised more than one culture are more capable of integrating different worldviews than someone who has experience of only one culture (Tadmor, Tetlock and Peng, 2009). With this in mind a Career Change Academic be described as having a hybrid set of skills that could enhance the student experience within HE.

Employability is high on the agenda for HE institutions with implications on rankings

such as the TEF (Office for Students, 2020) and the National Student Survey (NSS) (Office for Students, 2022b). A Career Change Academic is likely to have the experience of the work place as well as subject knowledge, generic skills and the tools within academia to reflect with the students on their experiences of work. Dickinson, Fowler and Griffiths (2022) refer to the role of Career Change Academics as being "well-positioned to support students in becoming knowledge-able, not knowledgeable" (Dickinson, Fowler and Griffiths, 2022, p. 2). With an increasing pressure to embed employability within the curriculum (Smith and Paton, 2014) it is notable how little literature there is on the contributions Career Change Academics perceive they bring to HE. Conversely, there is an argument for traditional academics to go on work experience placements with the aim of keeping their subject knowledge up to date. Adopting such practices would model to students the importance of practice and experience in employability (Dickfos, 2019).

Literature highlights a gap in research regarding the role of the HE insitution in supporting Career Change Academics in their transition to academia. (Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016) suggest that in order to enable Career Change Academics to contribute fully HE insitutions have a responsibility to support their professional development. One research project focusing on the thoughts of pracademics stated that "participants believed that their employer had responsibilities to provide them with support to help address this painful transition" (Dickinson, Fowler and Griffiths, 2022, p. 9). (Boyd and Harris, 2010) state that such support tends to be found within informal networks. (Gourlay, 2011) in agreement wrote that more attention should be given to "developing confidence around the academic side of the role for practitioners" (Gourlay, 2011, p. 600).

In summary there are two significant gaps within literature which are outlined below

1. Concerning the lived experiences and processes involved in the identity formation of Career Change Academics

2. Concerning the understanding of the perceived contribution Career Change Academics make to HE and how this relates to experience from their former career.

E. iii. Theoretical framework

As a result of a thorough review of literature, the theoretical framework below outlines gaps in literature and leads on to the proposed research questions for this study.

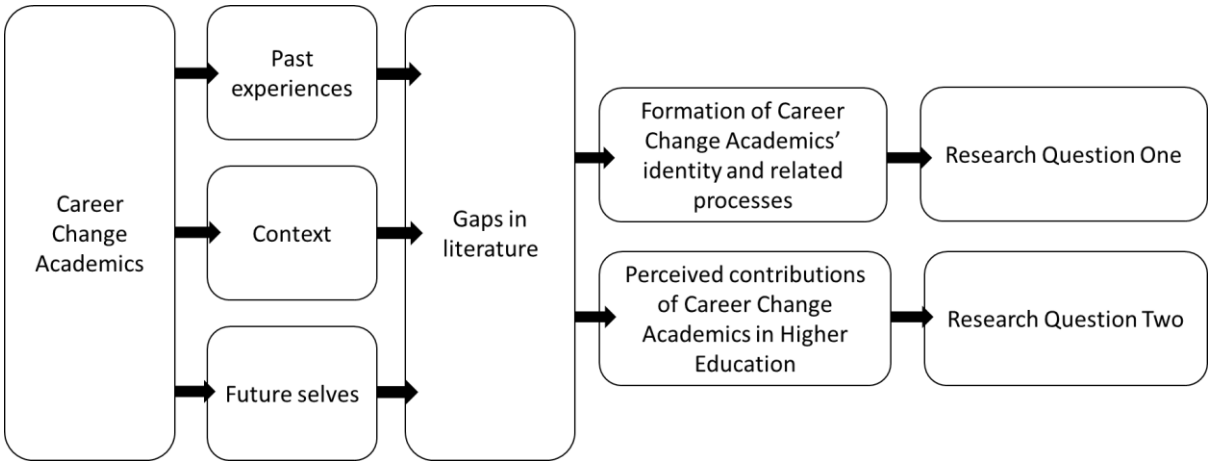


Figure 4: Theoretical Framework

E. iv. Research questions for the empirical study

Research Question1: What is the lived experience of Career Change Academics in the formation of their professional identity?

This first research question aims to address the gap in literature regarding identity formation of Career Change Academics. This question considers the background processes, emotions, experiences, training, chance encounters, and any experience that a Career Change Academic considers as having impacted their identity formation.

Research Question 2: What do Career Change Academics perceive they contribute to HE?

The second research question is intentionally open as it seeks to explore to what Career Change Academics believe they contribute to their HE institution, examining to what extent these contributions are influenced by their former profession.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Having reviewed the existing literature related to identity formation, as well as that which is specific to the identity of Career Change Academics, this chapter outlines the methodology for this research, detailing the ontological and epistemic position of the research, and my reflexive and emic approach as the researcher. As stated in the introduction chapter, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was chosen as the methodology because the idiographic nature of the research is the lived experience of individuals. This chapter outlines the process undertaken to justify this choice. I start by exploring multiple methodological approaches focusing on the development of Phenomenology and finally my alignment with Heidegger's double hermeneutic and the use of IPA to answer the research questions.

The focus of the study was clear early on, but it took time to find a methodology that enhanced the research rather than dictating or restricting the subject. Several methodological approaches were considered when designing this research. Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1969) and Ethnography (O'Reilly, 2011) were considered but it became clear that the experience to be researched was the phenomenon of transitioning to teaching in HE, and the perceived contribution of Career Change Academics. An ethnographic approach would have guided the research to observe the participants in situ as an outsider looking in and observing their environment. The gap in literature is the lived experience of Career Change Academics and as the researcher I felt it was more appropriate to examine the participant's perception of their lived experience which was not synonymous with a pure ethnographic approach. Grounded Theory was also considered as a methodological approach; however this approach is relevant where there is a lack of published literature in the field. While literature exists on the subject of the identity formation of academics in HE, there is little peer reviewed literature that focuses on the specific lived experience of those who change career to teach in HE. Therefore, a phenomenological approach was chosen as this specifically enabled me to gather data relating to individuals' lived experiences. This decision is expanded on below.

Phenomenology

Studying phenomenology brought me to the work of the philosopher Edmund Husserl and his student Martin Heidegger. Husserl is attributed with developing a philosophical approach called phenomenology (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). The term Phenomena comes from the Ancient Greek route of three words; φαίνω (pronounced phaínō) meaning *show* or *appear*, νόημα (pronounced noema) meaning what is thought about or judged, and λέγω (pronounced lego) is the root word for λόγος (pronounced logos) meaning singular 'word'. Husserl brought these words together and coined the term phenomenology. Beyond its etymological definition Husserl used phenomenology as the study of the appearing thought and judgement that leads to a perception of understanding. Heidegger later developed Husserl's theories with a distinct focus on interpretation and meaning.

Husserlian Phenomenology

Husserl famously stated that his philosophical goal was to pursue the pure phenomena of experience, as being separated from the individual experiencing them. Husserl called this, being in pursuit of *the things themselves* (Husserl, 1931/2012). To achieve this Husserl utilised the term ἐποχή from Ancient Greek, pronounced epocé, meaning the suspending of judgement. Husserl used this term within phenomenology to mean bracketing (suspending) previous presuppositions about the world to allow the researcher to experience the object or item as accurately described first hand. Husserl argued that one could bracket their presuppositions on a topic resulting in pure conclusions, the reduction, of a phenomenon.

Husserl's work focused on the object being experienced rather than the subject (person) experiencing it. There are two interwoven elements for discussion here, the first is of the Cartesian theory that the subject (phenomenon) and object (person) can be separated (Heidegger, 1962/2019). The second element is the extent to which a researcher can isolate their experience from the analysis of a phenomenon. These two elements outline significant differences between Husserl and Heidegger's philosophical approach to phenomenology and the role of the researcher in the development of logic. Husserl proposed the process of phenomenological reduction

to establish logic, while Heidegger believed that it was necessary to discover logic through the process of induction and hermeneutic interpretation.

The aim of the research was to explore the lived experience of Career Change Academics, rather than to reduce an individual's experiences by a method of abduction and deduction (Van Manen, 2014). Heidegger's philosophy requires both the consideration of the subject and object as it is experienced by the individual. It is this perspective which led to further exploration of Heidegger's philosophy.

Heideggerian Phenomenology

In contrast to Husserl, Heidegger proposed the importance of interpretative analysis to understand an individual's experience of a phenomenon. Heidegger challenged Husserl's philosophy in his work *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1962/2019) that a person's experience and the object being experienced could not be separated. To borrow Husserl's terminology, Heidegger explored phenomena by interpreting the experience of the subject with the object, rather than attempting to bracket the subject's experience to discover the essence of the object. Unlike Husserl's *a priori* of meaning, Heidegger believed that a phenomenon could not be experienced aside from the subject that was embedded in that experience. Heidegger explored what it means to exist as a situated being. His ontological situational focus subsequently shaped interpretative phenomenological research (Horrigan-Kelly et al, 2016).

Heidegger steered away from using previously known terms such as soul or identity, and used his own terminology, presumably to differentiate his phenomenological approach from that of former philosophers. While philosophers such as Kierkegaard and Husserl referred to one's soul it was said of Heidegger that "he replaces God with Being" (Macquarrie, 1968, p. 51). Writing in German, Heidegger coins the term *Dasein* to describe the situatedness of identity, being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 1962/2019). *Dasein* when translated into English is signed to the reader as Being with a capital letter to differentiate *Dasein*'s Being as a distinctively situated (in-the-world) and processual (moving through time, towards death) phenomenon. While Descartes famously said "I think therefore I am" (Brown, 2010), Heidegger, arguably, could have stated, *Dasein.* To expand, I am Being-in-the-world and therefore I am. Following this

practice the capitalisation of B in Being, to denote *Dasein*, is adopted in the write-up of this research to define Heidegger's Being from the standard English word being.

Heidegger sees the task of exploring *Dasein*, who we are Be-in-the-world, to be fundamental ontology, meaning it is an essential task of human beings, rather than a mere phenomenological assignment (Macquarrie, 1968). Heidegger outlines that *Dasein*, Being, exists within three ontological states of Care. Heidegger uses the word Care (*Sorge* in German) to mean concern or worry for the things that matter to the individual (van Deurzen, 2009). These three states of Care (Figure 5) are not necessarily experienced sequentially and are temporal. Each new experience, or lived-world, has the potential to alter *Dasein*. The first state of Care is **Thrownness**, the idea that an individual is thrown into the world, or as Heidegger also puts it, Being-in-the-world. The second state of Care is **Fallenness** which describes an inauthentic existence where one chooses to copy or join the views of others, Being-with-Others in an inauthentic and undifferentiated *Dasein*. The third state of Care is **Existence**. Heidegger explains that an authentic *Dasein* is one who knows that life and existence is not eternal and that it is in facing one's mortality that one is free to exist as an authentic self. "Our temporality and thus our mortality is the ultimate truth of our being" (van Deurzen, 2009, p. 59), Heidegger refers to this as Being-towards-death. Where Fallenness implies one is adopting an identity through the context or cultures of others, existence points towards a self-awareness and sense of vision with an ontological purpose to *Dasein*.

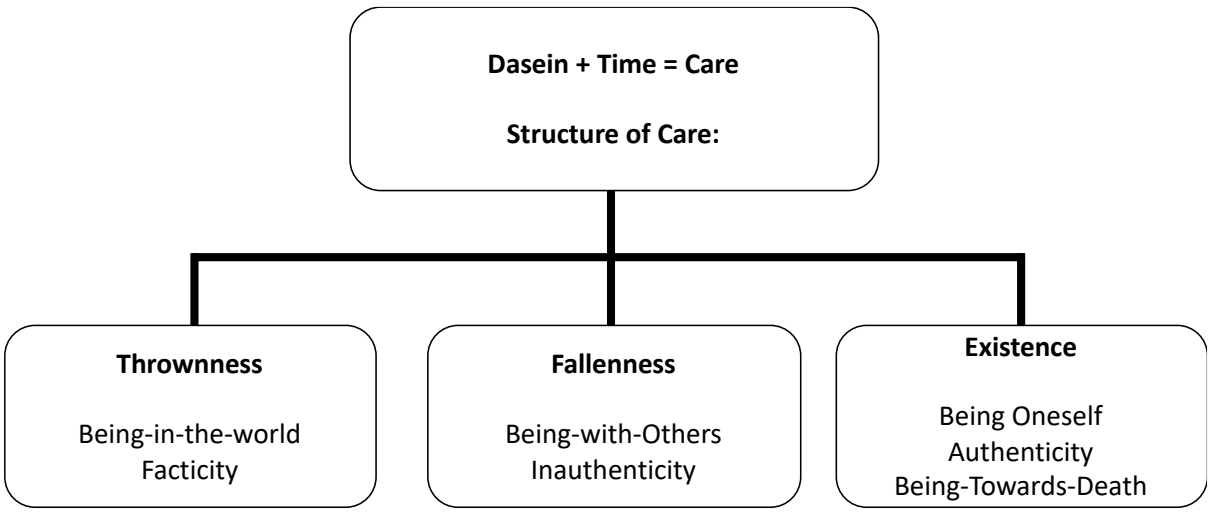


Figure 5: Structure of Dasein taken from (van Deurzen, 2009, p. 62).

The Structure of Care as three modes of *Dasein* aligns with the literature reviewed in the previous chapter in terms of the elements of identity formation. The three elements are the combination of our past and present experiences along with imagining one's future self. While there is no direct overlap, *Dasein*'s three modes of Care and the elements of identity formation, there is a relation between one's experiences and state of identity that can be mapped against the three models of Care.

Heidegger acknowledged that authentic *Dasein* is a temporal state because who we are, our experiences, and our located context are constantly changing. It is the combination of *Dasein* as an evolving identity, and the interpretivist and descriptive phenomenological approach that resulted in Heidegger's interpretive sense of *Dasein*, or Being, as the phenomenological approach to this research. *Dasein* is contextual for Heidegger and each Being is impacted by their context and the situated environment in which individuals exist (Heidegger, 1962/2019). Heidegger later used terms such as Technology to mean a way of revealing something to come into being. This is in Heidegger's later work, 'Questions Concerning Technology' (Heidegger, 1954). By this time Heidegger was moving towards a more *nostalgic* take on culture and aligning it with his anti-modernist take on authenticity. However, it is the earlier work of Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* which is most pertinent to the research.

Heidegger's Hermeneutic Approach

As a former student of Ancient Greek and as an experienced reflective practitioner I was drawn to the concept of Heidegger's hermeneutic approach. Hermeneutics comes from the Greek work ἑρμηνεύω (pronounced her-menuo) meaning the interpretation of delivery, linked with the name of the Greek messenger-god Hermes.

The concept of hermeneutics originated with biblical texts, as readers would need to translate ancient texts into their language and then interpret how that translation of the text could be applied to everyday life in different time and culture. The process of biblical hermeneutics could be described as having three stages; first asking what the texts said, then asking what the words meant for those to whom they were originally addressed, and finally reflecting on how this knowledge translates to us today. Heidegger, as a former theology student, takes the concept of multi-layered biblical

hermeneutics and transposes this historical approach in order to reveal meaning from an individual's experience. While biblical hermeneutics was invented to discover meaning, and therefore instruction, Heidegger borrowed the stages from the textual hermeneutic but used it to reveal how an individual makes sense of their experience and therefore what the researcher understood the experience or phenomenon. Heidegger transitioned textual hermeneutics from a tool used to contextualise ancient languages to a tool that can be used to find meaning, or phenomena, within an individual's experience. The next section explores how IPA has expanded beyond Heidegger's concept of the double hermeneutic.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) follows the lead of Husserl and Heidegger but utilises Heidegger's concepts to interpret the experience and subsequent meaning of phenomena (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2022). It was Heidegger's hermeneutical approach that guided the design of IPA as a method of analysis (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009; Horrigan-Kelly, Millar and Dowling, 2016). In order to retain the focus of the hermeneutic approach I intend to remain close to Heidegger's hermeneutical method as I adapt the Heideggerian approach, alongside IPA as the methodology for this research.

IPA is a relatively new method of enquiry with the first published guide produced by Smith, Flowers and Larkin in 2009. IPA is growing in popularity amongst qualitative psychology and a recent article sets out to review the quality of research using IPA. Nizza, Farr and Smith (2021) state that the four quality indicators for IPA are: "Constructing a compelling, unfolding narrative, developing a vigorous experiential and/or existential account, close analytic reading of participants' words, and attending to convergence and divergence"(Nizza, Farr and Smith, 2021). The most common method of gathering data with IPA is in-depth semi-structured interviews (Smith, 2011a). The design of the semi-structured interview questions is unpacked in the Method section of the Methodology Chapter (Chapter 3).

IPA as a research approach and method is not without critique. Van Manen questions is IPA is phenomenological, or if it is actually interpretative psychological analysis (Van

Manen, 2017). The transition story from Husserl and Heidegger to the IPA used in this research is mapped above and is focused around the lived experience of the individual. IPA is an exploration of the experience that reveals phenomenon as it is experienced by individuals, and potentially across a wider sample. The strength of the IPA relies on both the quality of the data, interviews and subsequent analysis of data. The level of skill required to conduct successful interviews that result in rich IPA data should not be underestimated (Smith, 2011a).

IPA recommends purposive homogenous sampling approach in the guidance for IPA studies (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). The aim of this approach to sampling is to explore a particular lived experience within the same, or similar context. Smith states "I have consistently argued for small sample sizes and for depth of analysis" (Smith, 2011 b). IPA requires idiographic sampling with a commitment to homogeneity in the sample in order to deal with the complexity of the data. This is addressed below in the Method section of the Methodology Chapter (Chapter 3).

IPA focuses on idiographic data and so does not produce population-wide generalisable findings. The scope of IPA is that it produces a rich verbal data with descriptive and reflective content that can help the researcher, and subsequent readers, to make judgements about transferability. The idiographic tradition lends itself to a rich description of context that research can support others in the judgement of how and where the data may be able to be transferred.

An IPA approach begins by inviting participants to re-tell their uniquely situated experiences and to reflect on the related emotions. It has been developed to offer an idiographic (microscopic, context-sensitive) approach to understanding the experiences of an homogenous group. Thus, IPA provided an overarching structure for the methodology and conduct of this study because it was a good fit with the aims for the research.

The current research explores the lived experiences of individuals and treats their accounts as experiential and socially constructed empirical data. Smith et al. state that "the meaning which is bestowed by the participant on experience, as it becomes experience, can be said to represent the experience itself" (Smith, Flowers and Larkin,

2009, p. 33). As such, the research aligns with a qualitative approach. This research is therefore epistemologically interpretivist and phenomenological. This approach acknowledges the world as experienced is accessed by the researcher via a combination of perspectives, meanings and reflections, explored in collaboration with participants, as an intentional process.

Reflexivity

My experience as a Career Change Academic

My name is Nicola Shephard, and I am a Career Change Academic. There is a sense in which I feel the need to declare my identity not just in this research but also when I am at work. I have worked in HE for eight years, four years full time, and there is usually a point in time with each colleague when they realise that I have not taken a traditional path to academia. This often feels as if this was a revelation or a surprise to my colleagues. I do not know if this surprise is that I am also a Priest in the Church of England (CofE) or if they had presumed I had always worked in HE and was 'like them'. With the title Reverend on my emails and my photo of me in a clergy shirt on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), I am not trying to hide; it is a significant facet of my identity. Either way, I am usually left with the impression that they don't quite know how to peg me in the pecking order of HE and possibly that they feel they have been deceived.

Over the past four years I have experienced academic processes to be built around the assumption that academics would have followed a traditional career path from a PhD through to full time lecturer. It was the combination of these experiences that led me to wonder if other Career Change Academics felt similarly and if there was something more we could give to HE institutions and its students in terms of practitioner experience and employability skills.

My career has transitioned through the past few decades as a former Youth and Community Worker, a Priest in the CofE, a Chaplain within HE and now a Teaching Fellow in Learning Innovation and Professional Practice also in HE. Having taught in HE for eight years when someone asks me what I do for a living, I should answer that I am a Teaching Fellow in HE but my heart wants to tell them that I am a Priest in the CofE. There are multiple titles for someone who is ordained in the CofE: Deacon,

Priest, Vicar. A Vicar is a Priest who vicariously cares for a parish on behalf of the local Bishop. As I am a volunteer Priest; I do not have a parish but I am still a Priest. It is worth noting that I identify as a Priest because when someone asks me what I do for a living I feel as if they are asking me who I am. How I describe my identity is my prerogative, how others perceive me is not. Who I am and what I do for a living are linked, but they are not the same. There is a distinction between how I describe my personal identity and how I describe my professional identity. These identities are not schismatic but rather facets, or faces, of my one person.

When I was ordained in the CofE, I suddenly had a globally recognised uniform of a clergy shirt. I felt initially as if I was dressing up and had even been stopped on a standard suburban road to ask if I was a real Vicar or if my dressing up pointed to a more dubious career! However I was received, there was one thing that people had in common, they knew how to relate to someone who looked like me. My reality was that in the early days I did not know how I related to myself in this new career. I might know what the visual of Nicola looked like in my new uniform, but I did not know what it meant for me to be a Priest. The transition experience was severe, and I remember the sense of delayed identity recognition as I fought to catch up with everyone else who seemed to know who I had become. To use Heidegger's terminology, I had been Thrown into a new existence. My parishioners seemed to expect I would adopt a predetermined stereotype, which Heidegger would have called Fallenness / Being-in-the-Word or inauthentic (van Deurzen, 2009). I had received and started working in an inauthentic state of *Dasein* as I had not yet learnt what this change meant for my Being. This is not because I had unquestioningly conformed to others' expectations of what Priest should be, but because I had not yet learnt what an authentic identity with Nicola and a Priest looked like. I remember wondering why my training had consisted of theology, pastoral skills and reflective practice with no opportunity or encouragement to think academically about the practical effect this change would have on my life and identity, other than the rules and oaths I needed to follow.

When I changed careers to work full time within HE I wrongly presumed, having previously experienced a major change of career, that the transition from Chaplaincy and part-time academic to full time academic and volunteer Priest would be smooth. I had years of experience of teaching and knew what it meant to look like a Teaching

Fellow in HE. The difference this time was that I had done the Postgraduate Diploma (PGDip) in Learning and Teaching in HE and I had reflected on my philosophical approach to my identity as a Career Change Academic. I already had the 'uniform' of a staff badge and a lanyard in my HE institution. The difference in this career change was that it was those around me that did not know how to relate to me.

My experience of Logos and Hermeneutics

As a Priest with previous experience of HE-level hermeneutical study in biblical scholarship, I was drawn to Heidegger's method of a double hermeneutic. The principle of first reviewing the text and then returning for a wider reflexive hermeneutic felt like a natural transition from previous study and was a concept I was used to practising in my former career. IPA enabled me to manage the task of interpreting the participants' data while acknowledging and regulating the emic nature of my role as a researcher.

My experience of biblical hermeneutics and my understanding of ancient Greek has led me to reflect on the wider use of the word *logos* (λόγος) and its origins. As an Educationalist and Theologian I cannot ignore that one of the first places humans have recorded the use of the word *logos* is in the Christian Gospel of John which was written down and recorded around 70-100 AD. It reads: "In the beginning was the Word (*logos*), and the Word (*logos*) was with God, and the Word (*logos*) was God" (*New Revised Standard Version Bible*, 2007).

ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ **λόγος,** καὶ ὁ **λόγος** ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ **λόγος.** οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

The implication here is that God is Word, the capitalisation of the 'W' in the English text signals to the reader that Word is a name for God in this Christian Gospel. In this Bible passage God spoke and things existed, a textual hermeneutic here suggests that the Word (God) always existed and that Words brought the world in to existence, or in to Being. It would be remiss to refer a verse from the Bible but not to mention that it is from the New Revised Standard Version which is, of course, a translation of the original Ancient Greek and this is a result of contextual biblical hermeneutics. The translation of *logos* as Word restricts the English reader to imagine a single word but

it is the exploration of hermeneutics that draws our attention to the capitalisation of Word to mean God.

It is of interest that Heidegger, a former theologian before he became a philosopher, sought to take his philosophic approach to phenomenology away from the Christian faith yet he refers to language, words, as the house of Being. Heidegger would have undoubtably known and very likely translated the Bible verse above, yet he chose a secular use of *logos* as meaning multiple words and discourse as being the house of Being, the descriptive home of the individual in the world.

The word *logos* has been used by philosophers and theologians across the years. Aristotle and Plato made a distinction between *logos*, meaning singular word, to logos as meaning a discussion, rhetoric and therefore as word or reason (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2022). It is not surprising that Aristotle linked the concept of words and subsequent rhetoric as the 'thing' that makes us human and separates us from other species. Heidegger uses multiple different Ancient Greek words to underpin his definition of *logos* and thanks Plato and Aristotle for these comparisons. In Ancient Greek the context often determines meaning, but I do wonder if the hermeneutical leap from *logos* to other Greek words meaning (discourse and truth) might be a more of a significant step than we realise.

My situatedness

As a Career Change Academic, I am situated as an academic practice professional based in the Education Department on a teaching contract. I am aware that my experience as a Career Change Academic as well as a pedagogic specialist has influenced my understanding of the central task of HE and its academic staff.

The use of IPA as a methodology takes into account, and regulates, the reflexive account of the researcher. As a Career Change Academic myself I am aware that I must identify and manage my personal preconceptions of bias by focusing on each participant's individual experiences and not presuming I understand their experience or context. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2019) highlight this dual role as the researcher makes sense of the participants' experiences, albeit while acknowledging insider knowledge and potential bias within their own experiences within the research.

The concept of bracketing the experience of the researcher to focus solely on the experience of the participant is debated by philosophers, as few believed they could truly suspend their judgement when researching phenomena. It would be unrealistic to presume that I could bracket my experiences to reduce participants' experiences to the pure object of a phenomenon. As a result, philosophers have offered variations on Husserl's bracketing concept. Dahlberg et al (2008) used the term bridling, as opposed to bracketing, which is described as restraining the researcher's pre-understanding. The aim of bridling is to remind the researcher not to make definite that which is not proved as definite, and to hold their experiences in tension rather than to attempt to forget them when reviewing data. It is Dahlberg's concept of bridling that I used while analysing the participants' data.

The process of analysis, outlined in the Method section below, guides the researcher through the multi-layered hermeneutical steps to ensure the data is first analysed on the words of the participant before a second level of hermeneutic analysis takes place.

Final comments on my positionality

I cannot complete this reflective account of my positionality in this research without stating my disquiet and horror at the later work of Heidegger and the way in which he used his philosophy to condone criminal acts in World War II. I do not condone or approve of Heidegger's later philosophy. However, having explored the philosophy of his contemporaries in the field such as Sartre (Sartre, 1943), Merleau-Ponty (1945/2014), Gadamer (Gadamer, 1989), and more recently Dahlberg (Dahlberg and Dahlberg, 2020), it is Heidegger's double hermeneutic and understanding of Being that aligns with this research. This research affiliates with three areas of Heidegger's work, in particular, the concept of the interpretative double hermeneutic and the influence this had on the creation of the IPA methodology. The second is Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* / Being as an experiential word to describe the thereness of an individual's sense of identity. The third element of Heidegger's work that resonates with this research is the three states of Being as un-thrown, inauthentic and authentic.

Method

Study Design

This research is qualitative in nature and underpinned by IPA which is an interpretivist approach to analysing data. As a methodology, IPA takes a more detailed and nuanced, micro analysis of the lived experience of a smaller number of people.

As the researcher it is was my duty to ensure that the participants, myself, and the research were all protected and so I turned my attention to semi-structured interviews (BERA, 2018), which was the preferred method by other researchers utilising IPA (Goodall, 2014; Ahn, Dik and Hornback, 2017; Willis, 2017; Guihen, 2019). The choice of semi-structured interviews provided offered the opportunity for me as the researcher to be invited to view the experiences of the participants whilst allowing for some flexibility at the guidance of the researcher. Semi-structured interviews aligned with the phenomenological approach as the focus is on a person's experience in an unfolding and unprompted narrative rather than a restrictive structured interview (Gullickson, 1993; Robson and McCartan, 2016). Individual interviews offer the participant the opportunity for reflection and can be experienced as a therapeutic process (Birch and Miller, 2000; Rossetto, 2014).

Having selected semi-structured interviews as the method of data collection for this study, it is important to recognise the limitations of all methods of interviews. As a solo researcher the task of interviewing and transcribing recordings is time intensive. Even the best planned questions, if not well utilised, could restrict the gathering of data. To counteract these concerns, the interview questions and process was trialled within a pilot interview. The interview was transcribed, and the data reviewed by myself and my supervisor to ensure that the questions were appropriate and elicited effective data.

Guidance for the number of interviews for professional doctorates using IPA as their methodology is between four and ten interviews irrespective of the number of participants (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Researching similar educational doctoral studies affirms this advice with numbers ranging from four to eight participants (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Examples include Goodall, 2014; Ahn, Dik and

Hornback, 2017; Willis, 2017; Guihen, 2019, who all used semi-structured interviews ranging in time between 45 – 90 minutes.

The aim of a qualitative research interview is to gather insights from the experiences of another. The development and delivery of the semi-structured interviews is commonly used with IPA studies and suited to the methodology (Morse *et al.*, 2002; Smith, 2011a). In utilising the IPA methodology it was important to recognise my role as a researcher as a significant instrument in data collection (Shenton, 2004). I have experience of using semi-structured interviews as a method within previous postgraduate research.

The interview questions were designed to elicit rich verbal data that would result in both descriptive and reflective content. The order of interview questions was intended to be effective for gathering data by starting with relaxing and open questions. The interview questions were developed with reference to the research question and published literature. They were then submitted with my Qualifying Report (QR) as a progression task in my studies. The QR *viva* involved a discussion around the style of questions and this experience helped me to shift the design of the interview questions from initially focusing on what I wanted to know *e.g.,* 'how would you say your professional identity developed' to 'can you tell me about a memorable event or milestone in the formation of your current professional identity?' This change in approach encouraged the participants to tell stories which, in turn, resulted in rich data that aligned with the IPA design and approach to gathering and analysing data. A list of the developed interview questions can be found in appendix H.

In addition to the input from the QR viva, the interview questions, content and design were reviewed by academic peers and piloted on a volunteer who was a Career Change Academic but did not meet all of the sample criteria, as outlined later in this chapter (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, p. 36). The semi-structured interviews followed the five steps according to Robson and McCartan (Robson and McCartan, 2016):

1. Words of Introduction;
2. Warm up questions;
3. Main body of the interview;

4. Cool off, final questions, opportunity for clarification;
5. Closure, asking if there is anything else they want to add.

(Robson and McCartan, 2016).

In line with the methodology, I added a sixth step, namely capturing field notes, which took place after the interviews to record post-interview senses and reflections. This additional step ensured time was factored in to the interview process in order to record communication that may not have been recorded such as expressions or body language as well as my experience of the interview (Silverman, 2004). Given the pandemic and the Government requirement to work from home, the interviews took take place online. The software used to record and store the interviews was approved in the ethics application and made clear to the participants. Digital and visual recordings were deleted when the transcription was accurate and names or known attributing factors were changed to anonymise the participants. The participants were sent post-interview letters via emails that were approved as part of the ethics applications as outlined below.

Sampling

The aim for the sample size was to interview four to eight participants with purposeful sampling as per recommended guidelines for professional doctorates (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). This figure is in the upper bracket of advised interviews for IPA research and is in line with similar educational doctorates also using IPA. The sample size is inspired by the concept of information power (Malterud, Siersma and Guassora, 2016) meaning that the richer and more relevant the material, the fewer interviews are needed. (Morse *et al.*, 2002) highlights the importance of ensuring participants meet the selection criteria to promote both quality and relevant data reiterating the robust design and delivery of the research. The concept of purposive sampling offered the structure for the selection criteria.

Selection Criteria

Literature around the formation of academic identities states that it took two years of being a teacher for this to become part of an academic's identity (Lankveld *et al.*,

2017). Studies focusing on the emotions experienced in career change have focused on those in the first three years of a new career (Ahn, Dik and Hornback, 2017).

Given that some professions demand a prerequisite number of hours to retain registration with their professional body it is important for these professionals to continue their practice in order to retain their credibility to teach. I included professionals who have a chosen career change to teach in HE on the understanding that the hours spent in teaching within The University exceed their hours of professional practice, with the majority of their week in the academic role.

Original sample criteria:

The original sampling strategy involved purposeful sampling seeking to recruit a homogenous sample of Career Change Academics who met the following criteria:

- Teach as part of their role;
- Have started employment at the University within the past five years;
- Must have had a former career outside HE institutions;
- The participant must have been employed for at least three months within their academic role within the University;
- The hours of teaching must be greater than those of their professional practice.

When planning the criteria, I knew that it was possible that individuals might have had a first role as an academic in another HE institution and so working at The University might not be their only experience of CPD or induction type training in HE. I discussed this with my supervisor and a peer using a similar methodology and decided that it would be best to leave the sampling strategy open and to make a decision about who to include in the research when people showed interest. Although a small sample could not be a test case the hope was that it would highlight the good and not so good training opportunities, or lack thereof, to help Career Change Academics in their career transition. In order to resolve this issue, I asked in the interviews what experience and training the participants had received in their former institutions.

Recruitment of Participants

The participants were recruited from one HE institution as per guidance in homogenous samples using IPA methodology (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). I advertised using the approved wording, outlined in the ethics section below, using the staff bulletin email but it elicited no responses. I spoke with my supervisors and line manager who suggested a few potential participants and I sent them the same email and the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) (Appendix F); however they also did not meet the criteria. The first four Career Change Academics I made contact with via networks had worked for a short time in a former HE setting, and for some this included completing an HE teacher training qualification. A few senior colleagues were keen to take part but had been employed longer than the five years set in the sampling criteria. Although interesting to hear the experiences of Career Change Academics in senior management roles it was beyond the sampling criteria and the scope of this research.

Reflecting on the experience of recruiting volunteers it is not surprising that Career Change Academics are likely to have had some level of teaching experience before securing a teaching position. I was interested in this subject because I consider myself to be a Career Change Academic and I was employed to teach part time before I started my full-time job as a Teaching Fellow. A chance conversation I had while networking led to an email from someone who had been told about the research by their colleagues who was keen to take part. I then received emails from two more potential participants and the final participant heard about the research at a work function and contacted me to find out more. However, three of these individuals had some experience of teaching in HE prior to starting at The University. After talking with my supervisor, I decided to have initial conversations with those who had shown interest, who appeared close to the person specification, but had some prior experience of working in HE. This revealed that three of those who were interested had less than three months experience of working in a different HE institution. The fourth and final participant had no experience of teaching in HE.

Ethics

This section outlines the ethics application process and addresses the potential risks that were assessed concerning the participants, myself and The University. Permission was sought from my Head of Department as well as the formal ethics

approval process (BERA, 2018). I applied for ethics approval in December of 2020 and received approval in the same month (See Appendix E) (REC ID: [225-11-20-Shephard], [1], [14.12.20]). The submitted ethics application paperwork included a copy of the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) (Appendix F), the recruitment staff bulletin advert (Appendix G), a draft interview schedule (Appendix H), participant consent form (Appendix I), and participant debrief sheet (Appendix J). I received high praise on the detail and rigour of the application.

Potential participants in the research were sent the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) which included the selection criteria. If they were still interested, they were sent a link to an online Qualtrics© form that included the consent form and the information sheet. These documents included a section to ask the participants for the data outlined in the PIS (Appendix F). Participants were informed of the research project through the introductory letter within the PIS, via emails, word of mouth, and were advised to contact me if they wished to take part. Briefing documents including the PIS, consent form and debrief sheet were made available outlining my commitment to them as the researcher and explained the requirements of the study. The PIS included the interview method, the time length of interviews, the participant's right to withdraw, the methods of data collection, storage, analysis, and confidentiality including data management (BERA, 2018). The PIS also included information concerning the support available at The University. At the end of the interview participants were emailed a debrief document (Appendix J) outlining their right to withdraw from the study as well as the additional support available.

Ethical concerns regarding the participants

Given the amount of time I have taught in HE institutions it was possible that a former or current student could have asked to take part in the study. The risk was low because the students I have taught would be unlikely to meet the sample criteria. If this had been an issue, my ethics application stated that if such a student requested to participate in the study, I would have signposted them to the PIS which outlined that participating in the research was optional, and that all information given in the interview would remain confidential and not be discussed at any time after the interview. This was not an issue as no students I had taught took part in the research.

It was not expected that the interview schedule or questions would induce psychological stress or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the experiences of normal life. It was possible that participants may review their experience of their transition and so feel their reflections could have impacted their ongoing professional relationships with their colleagues. To mitigate against this the participants were reminded at the start of the interview, in addition to the PIS, that they could withdraw from the study. In addition, the debrief sheet included contact details of places and individuals where participants could receive support if required.

The research did not focus on those for whom English was not their first language. However, it was possible that participants may not use English as their first language. All participants would be teaching staff at The University and so it was expected that they would be able to participate in English.

Participants were told in the consent form that they were able to withdraw their involvement up to two weeks after their interview. This was outlined in the participant debrief sheet as well as the participant information sheet, both of which are in the Appendices.

Confidentiality

All possible arrangements were made to ensure anonymity of the participants. However, as in all similar research, there is always a small risk that someone could be identified from a direct quote in a way that the researcher could not have foreseen. To mitigate against this risk the participants were given gender neutral pseudonyms and in the Analysis Chapter the gender-neutral pronouns ‘they/their’ were used. All interviews were recorded and saved as a password protected file on a password protected laptop and any notes were kept in a locked filing cabinet in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the United Kingdom (UK) Data Protection Act of 2018. The interviews were transcribed by an Aston University approved transcription service, who only received audio files, and once transcribed and confirmed the original recordings and any notes were destroyed.

Participants

To protect the anonymity of the participants I describe the composition of the sample rather than the individuals. The four participants ranged from 29–55 years old and were from different academic fields at The University. Two identified as female and two identified as male. The four participants were all from different ethnic groups. Their fields included biosciences, applied humanities and health professionals. One had a more senior position than the other three but all four met the person specification as outlined above.

Data collection

As a result of the global pandemic all interviews were conducted online with video using Panopto ©, as per the ethics application. The details of the method of interviews and data transcription and storage was outlined to the participants before they agreed to take part and participants were asked to sign the consent form electronically using a Qualtrics© consent form.

The interviews were recorded and stored on my personal drive at work and were only accessible to me. I wrote anonymised notes after each interview as a reflective exercise to capture any emotions or perceptions that may not have been caught on the recording. As the researcher it was my role to explore the detail of the experiences of Career Change Academics in search of common themes which I then cross referenced across multiple interviews for similarities and differences. The video interviews were deleted when I had watched them and the transcripts had been checked for accuracy as per the ethics application.

Data analysis

The use of the double hermeneutic in this research enabled the researcher to analyse both the words and the context of the participants. The participants were asked to reflect on areas of their experience and how they view their identity as Career Change Academics. These reflections resulted in participants having what could be described as an internal conversation or reflection while they consider how they would like to respond. The role of the interviewer is to notice both what is said and the implications behind pauses, reflections and the structure and tone of the participant's responses.

Interpretative analysis of the data followed the eight steps of IPA as outlined by (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2022).

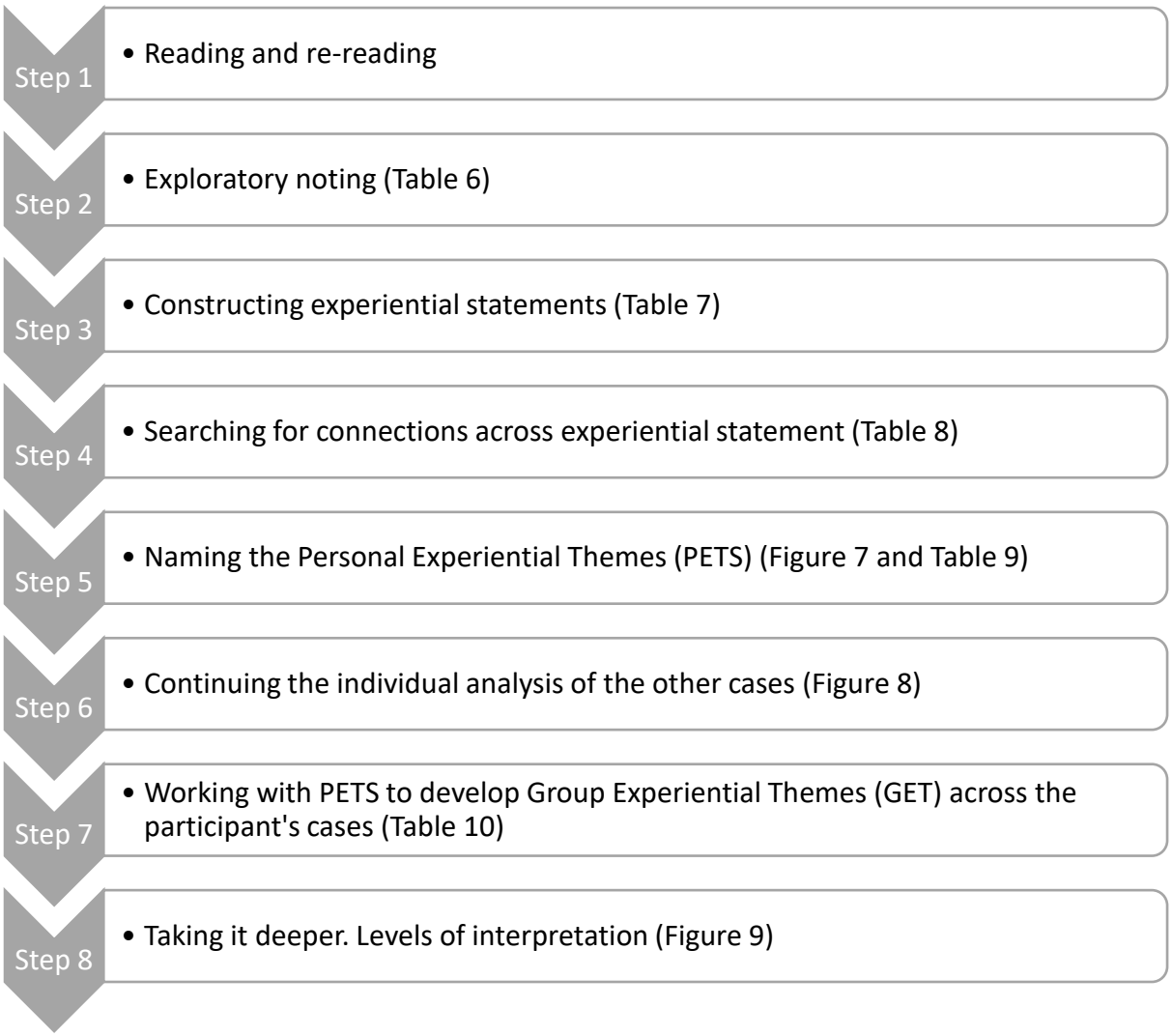


Figure 6: Diagrammatic representation of the eight steps of IPA (J. A. Smith et al., 2022)

Step 1:

The first step in the analysis phase was to focus on the interview data by reading the transcript while listening to the recording of the interviews. This ensured the accuracy of the transcript as well as noting recollections of the interview. The aim of this first step was to focus on the experience of the participant ensuring that I did not bring my own experience of career change into the analysis. As stated above I harnessed Dahlberg's concept of Bridling (Dahlberg and Dahlberg, 2020), rather than Bracketing (Husserl, 1931/2012; Heidegger, 1962/2019). The concept of bridling acknowledged

that I had thoughts and reflections of my own lived experiences, that I made note of in my study journal, but that the focus of the analysis was purely on the experience of the participant. I later incorporated relevant reflections into the reflexivity part of this chapter, this enabled me to acknowledge my experience in this area but ensured that the focus of the analysis for each participant was their lived experience.

Step 2:

The second step focused on the writing of exploratory notes in a close analysis of the text. An example of this note taking appears in the right-hand column of Table 6. The left-hand column contains the transcript for this participant. This step included describing the story shared by the participants, noting their language. The second step was a descriptive step where I highlighted and summarised the lived experience of the participant. This descriptive text includes any comments or visual cues that I observed as I rewatched the interviews. This is the first hermeneutic cycle where, as the researcher I explored and captured the participant's story. This step focused on the text and story offered by the participant.

Table 6 below shows an example of step 2 with a participant quote highlighted saying, "it's always nice to get praise from students". The description highlighted the fact that the participant kept to their marking deadline from a place of integrity rather than from policy, that they are motivated by and for students.

So for example I mean I've always got essays back to students in time, but if I'm concerned that I won't be able to I will email them rather than hiding it. Um, if I want feedback I know that I can speak to them, um, and I think it's very much a two way thing. Um, so I think that's always been great, it's always nice to get praise from students and like, you know, the cards that you get and the emails that you get and the feedback that you get on modules, like it means so much and I think it's, er, a driver and a motivator for doing what I do.	Adheres to 4 week marking deadline from a place of integrity – rather than because it is policy. "it's always nice to get praise from students" Motivated by and for students.

Table 6: Example of Step 2

Step 3:

The third step involved constructing experiential statements from the interview utilising the double hermeneutic, as coined by Heidegger (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2022). In the first hermeneutic in step 2 I looked at what the participant said, while in the second hermeneutic my task was to analyse the data for participant level experiential statements. As in biblical hermeneutics no one sentence or concept was taken in isolation but was read and analysed as part of the whole interview.

In this step, the analysis has moved from the transcript and then description to an experiential statement. In the step 3 example below the column on the right adds the experiential statement that the student experience is the participants' driver and motivation, they refer to the praise of students as being a validator for their work.

So for example I mean I've always got essays back to students in time, but if I'm concerned that I won't be able to I will email them rather than hiding it. Um, if I want feedback I know that I can speak to them, um, and I think it's very much a two way thing. Um, so I think that's always been great, it's always nice to get praise from students and like, you know, the cards that you get and the emails that you get and the feedback that you get on modules, like it means so much and I think it's, er, a driver and a motivator for doing what I do.	Adheres to 4 week marking deadline from a place of integrity – rather than because it is policy. "it's always nice to get praise from students" Motivated by and for students.	Feels an affinity with the students as well as with some staff. Lights up when talking about students. Noticeable difference in energy and smiling Refers to the cards, feedback, and praise of students as the driver and motivator it's, er, a driver and a motivator for doing what I do" Student praise is a validator

Table 7: Example of Step 3

Step 4:

In step 4, the right hand column of example Table 7, the 'constructing experiential statements' column, was pasted into a new document (see Table 8) and the lines were numbered and put in 1.5 spacing. Each sentence or statement was cut into individual strips. The numbering of each line enabled me to check each statement with ease against the original transcript.

213	Refers to the cards, feedback and praise of students as the driver and motivator it's, er, a
214	driver and a motivator for doing what I do... I feel like it's also validation".
215	Student praise is a validator.
216	P3 is the professional body lead and works with graduate students who are now working in
217	industry.
218	students are a huge reason for how I've shaped my personal, er, professional identity.

Table 8: Example of Step 4

Step 5:

Step 5 involved the slow and careful consideration of each experiential statement whilst searching for connections across statements. Each statement was treated with equal importance and multiple different examples of themes were organised (Figure 7). After gathering themes across the experiential statements I returned to the transcript to check that the theme clusters were representative of the data and they did not feel as if any clusters or themes were missing.

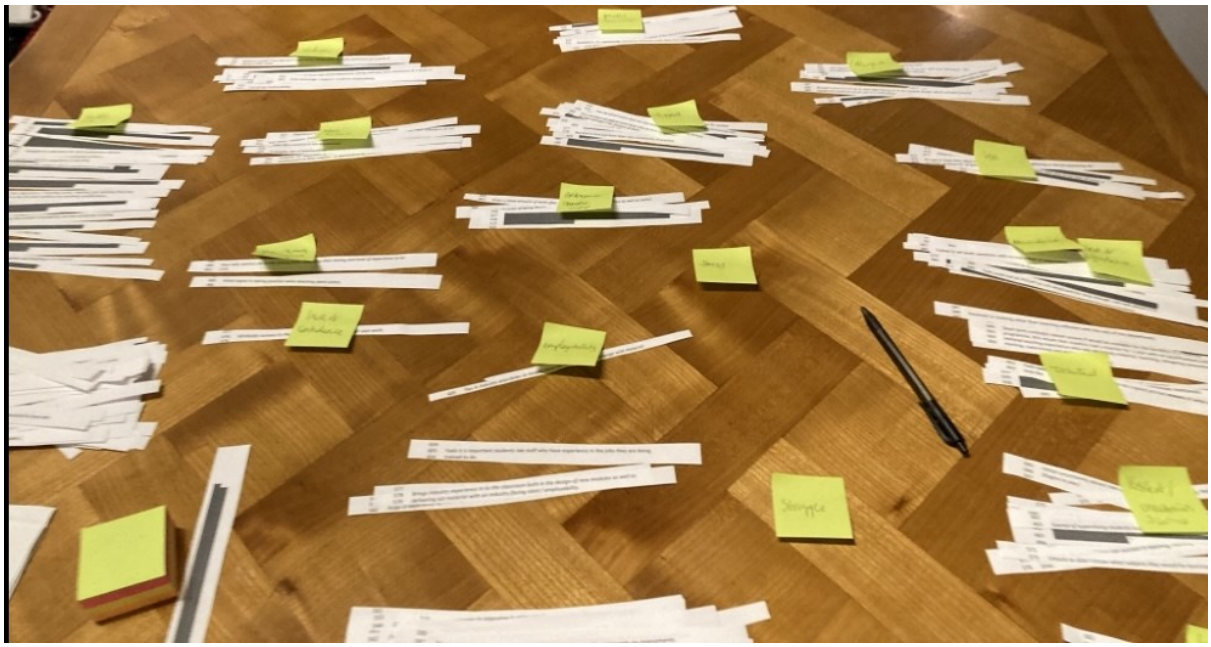


Figure 7: Step 5. Example 1

Each of the Participants' Experiential Themes (PET) were read as a whole to ensure that the thematising of experiential statements was coherent (Table 9). The experiential statements were then copied, using the numbered lines as a guide, to compile the clustered themes in a word document. The clusters were then reviewed

together to search for related themes that could sit under a larger cluster theme. Each participant's data were analysed into PETs.

Extract of a sub-theme for one participant: Students are a huge reason for who I've shaped my… identity
students are a huge reason for how I've shaped my … professional identity. (218) what I was doing… students would turn around and be like oh my god, Blackboard looks so much better now. (158-159) Students are the biggest reason P3 does the job. (206) (students) they're the reason why I do the job, um, I love working with the students, I love seeing them grow". (207-208) Feels an affinity with the students as well as with some staff. Lights up when talking about students. Noticeable difference in energy and smiling. (209-210) Student experience is their driver and motivation. Talks of learning from former tutors and mentors and channelling the openness, transparency and honesty to the students. (211-212) Refers to the cards, feedback and praise of students as the driver and motivator it's, er, a driver and a motivator for doing what I do… I feel like it's also validation". Student praise is a validator. (213-215)

Table 9: Step 5. Example 2 Step 6:

Step 6:

Steps 1 through to 5 were completed for each of the participants to create the PETs. Each PET document was then printed on coloured paper with a colour assigned to each participant (Figure 8). This meant that at a glance I could clearly see which participants' themes I was reading. I read through the numbered lined PET statements and themes to check each quote to ensure rigour in terms of the administration of the hermeneutical process.

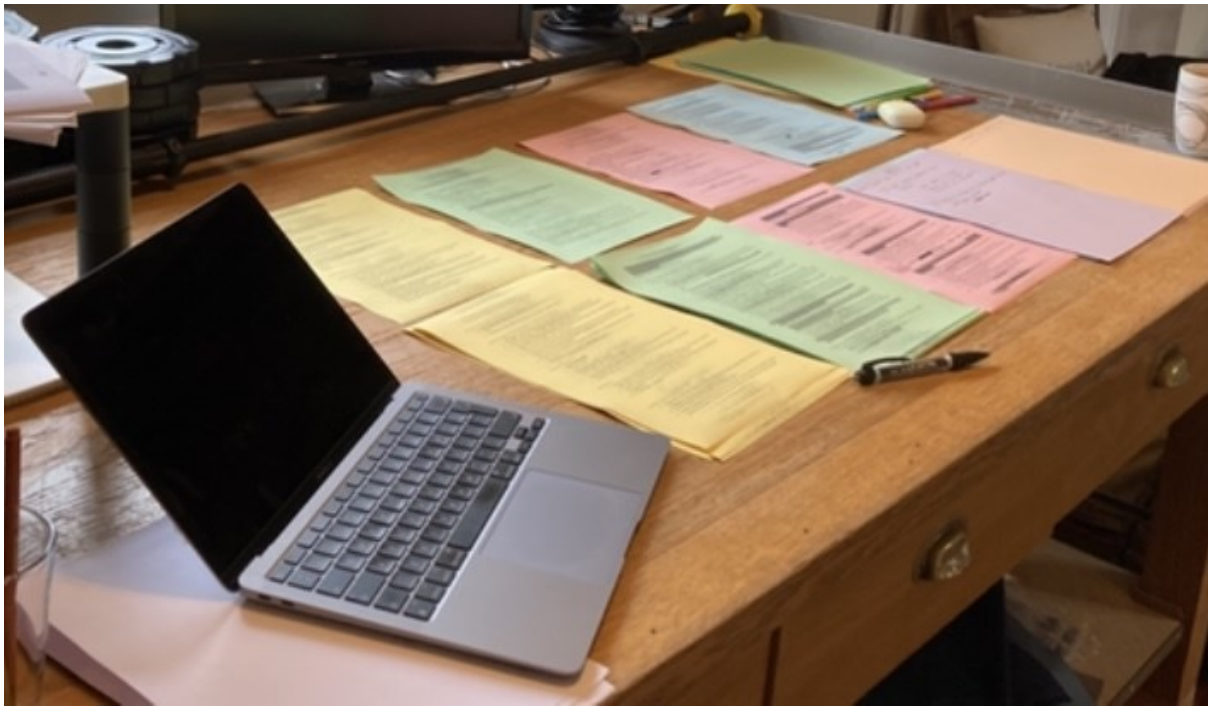


Figure 8: Example of Step 6

Step 7:

Step 7 involved working with the PETS to develop group experiential themes across all cases. Following the method of analysis for IPA (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2022), I looked for similarities and differences between the PETs to consider Group Experiential Themes (GET) (Table 10). The example below shows the gathering of experiential statements within PETs to compile a GET. Some of the GETs came together quickly, whereas others took time to become formed.

Compiling a sub-theme across participants: **GET: I felt deceived.**
"I think just the role was never clear when I started and I created my own role. I kind of found something to do." "I'm different to most of the academics in my department who, who have a different background to me, who go on, who work, you know, who do teaching…I'm I guess a minority within the department" "I've heard as I say since we, since we've been off campus how people were saying "who's this person? What do [they} know about university? [They've] not been here for thirty-five years. What's is, what's going on?"

“the previous head of department did not value industrial experience as much as us as a traditional academic background and actually made a comment that they thought that I wouldn't be able to teach”

Table 10: Example of Step 7

Step 8:

In step 8 I took time to read through the GETs and re-view the PETs. This was to ensure that no theme had been forgotten or misrepresented. I also listened to the interviews again and started to take notes on the interpretative analysis of the phenomena. The image below (Figure 9) shows each PET in its related colour side-by-side as I made notes on paper of another colour to capture the GETs.

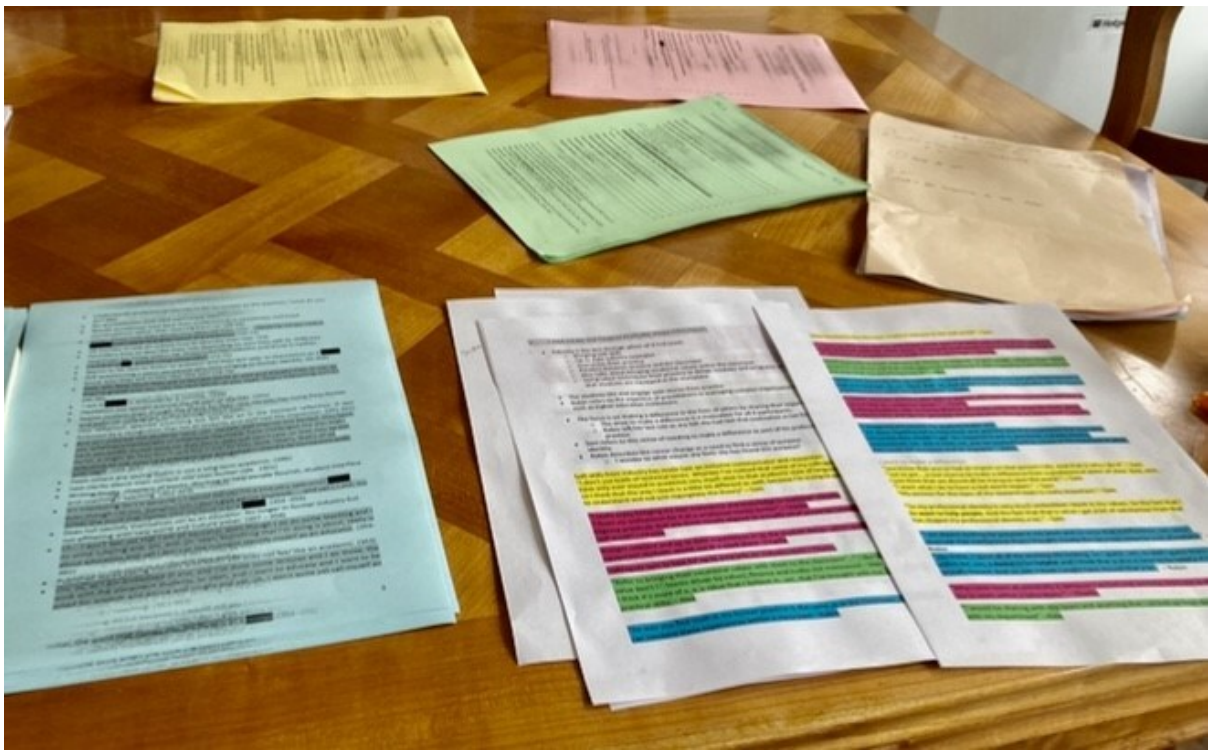


Figure 9: Example of Step 8

Rigour

Care was taken at each stage of the analysis to stay true to the participant’s experiences as well as the IPA method of analysing data. Before separating the experiential themes from the analysis columns I read across the page from transcript, to description and then experiential statements. This was one of the ways I sense checked to make sure that I was not missing key data through my own interpretation and to make sure that the experiential statements, in the right column, were representative of the participants’ experiences and that I was not missing data.

Every PET was presented and then discussed with my main supervisor to ensure I was harnessing the experiences of the participants whilst following the steps of IPA. The first PET table was anonymised and presented to a phenomenology network group as a progression task in my role as a student on the Educational Doctorate. I explained the IPA process and hosted a discussion focusing on the PETs. This process was repeated a year later in the study when I presented to the same phenomenology group the anonymised GETs. Talking through the GETs helped to process and crystallise the focus of each theme. The group offered reflective questions and reflections that helped me to focus the data.

In addition, participants in the study will be invited to view the outcomes of the study via the email address they provided in the consent form (Appendix I). The results of the study may also be published in relevant journals as outlined in the participant information sheet (Appendix F).

Chapter 4: Analysis

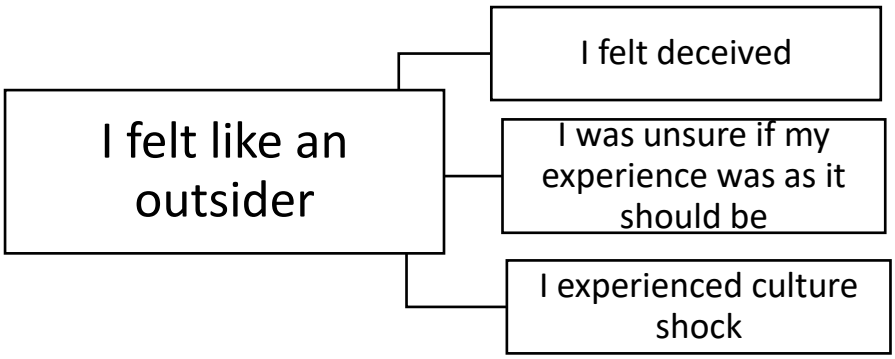
Data analysis generated four experiential themes: I felt like an outsider; I get by with a little help from my friends; My professional identity is a work in progress; I am here to teach future practitioners (Table 11).

Theme	Subtheme
I felt like an outsider	• I felt deceived • I was unsure if my experience was as it should be • I experienced culture shock
I get by with a little help from my friends	• I rely on a support network • Informal mentoring helped
My professional identity is a work in progress	• I associate with my former profession • My professional identity is developing • Students have a big impact on my professional identity • Studying helps me know who I am
I am here to teach future practitioners	• Industry is the lens through which I teach • I want to have a real-world impact

Table 11: Table of Group Experiential Themes

Theme 1: I felt like an outsider

The first theme describes the participants' sense of feeling like an outsider. This theme is underpinned by three sub themes: I felt deceived; I was not sure if my experience was as it should be; I experienced culture shock.



I felt deceived

Participants shared that their expectations of working in HE had not become a reality. Three of the participants were sought out by The University for their industry experience and suggested that because of this, they had expected to be both

supported and respected in their transition to HE. Instead, the participants felt that they had been conned or gaslighted into their new roles.

For example, Alex was appointed to run a new project but when Alex started they said that the project was ‘stolen’ by a traditional academic who thought the experience of a traditional academic would make them better suited for the task. Alex experienced a mismatch between the job they had been offered, and accepted, and the reality of what they ended up doing once they had started. Alex stated:

> *“The job that was advertised and the job that I was actually doing weren’t the same at all… the role was never clear when I started, and I created my own role. I kind of found something to do”.*

Alex started a new role with excitement and expectation but was pushed aside and left to find their own path. The language portrays a sense of loneliness as Alex finds something to do with no mention of support and a sense in which their expertise and practitioner experience was not valued. There is a sense of rejection regarding the extent of which Alex’s experiences were valued and applicable.

Similarly, Charlie also shared a sense of disappointment and abandonment. Charlie asked for reassurance prior to starting employment that they would be supported in their transition to HE as they worried about being out of their depth and unsupported:

> *“It has been ‘this is the work that needs doing’ and it’s just been, I’ve learned from what I’ve done I guess myself. And it was, it very much was that from day one”*.

Charlie’s hesitant language has a sense of confession in not wanting to speak negatively against The University. Charlie hesitated as they reflected on discrepancy between the support they were promised and the reality their feelings of abandonment.

There is a disconnect for both Charlie and Alex between the initial recognition of the value of their industry experience and the reality of their experience of working with their direct colleagues. Charlie’s promise of support was unfulfilled, and Alex’s exciting role was taken away. These experiences left both Charlie and Alex feeling as if they had been deceived with unfulfilled promises leaving them feeling betrayed.

Robin and Sam were also both told that their practitioner experience would be respected and invaluable. However, their experience led them to feel rejected from the 'in-group' of traditional academics. Sam felt that their industry experience was considered of lesser value to the institution than that of a traditional academic:

> *"I'm judged negatively because of my industrial experience". "The previous head of department did not value industrial experience as much as us as a traditional academic background and actually made a comment that they thought that I wouldn't be able to teach."* (Sam)

Looking back over their experiences, Robin and Sam felt they felt they were predestined to be considered as second-class academics. Robin said when they started that there was a sense of surprise that a practitioner would be appointed as an academic. Robin stated that their colleagues referred to them saying *"who's this person? What do [they] know about university? … What's is, what's going on?"* The language used conveys a sense of indignation that an 'outsider' had been appointed to a job that they considered should belong to an 'insider', possibly someone from the 'in-group' like them? Appointing somebody on the basis that industry experience was of equitable value to that of a traditional academic could threaten the status quo of those who have been working hard to establish their reputation and career progression.

Considered as an outsider, and or a threat, colleagues had predetermined that Robin was unlikely to understand the culture and have similar skills and values as the group. This, in part, was evidenced by a colleague presuming that they would not be intelligent. Six weeks in for example, Robin heard an academic saying, *"yeah, I had a good meeting, [they're] actually quite intelligent".* The fact that a colleague was surprised that a new colleague was intelligent speaks of either a mistrust in those appointing new staff and or a belief that only those with relevant academic expertise would be intelligent.

The sense of being an outsider was felt by all four Career Change Academics. They described feeling like a foreigner in a new culture and did not feel accepted by their colleagues. In some cases, this was quite extreme. Two participants described feeling lonely and isolated as they did not feel they were treated as a valuable part of the work community. Having been enticed with promises of respect, and the potential to

influence future practitioners, they instead felt that the job they had signed up for had been misrepresented. All participants felt deceived, confused, abandoned and treated like an outsider.

I was unsure if my experience was 'as it should be'

All of the Career Change Academics were united in a sense that they were feeling unsure if their experience was as it should have been. Participants wondered if they had been forgotten, with three describing instances of not being invited to, or attending any kind of induction and the fourth not mentioning an induction when listing any training. Charlie and Alex had not been invited and Robin was unsure if the short event they went to was supposed to be an induction. All four participants seemed embarrassed to say that they had not received an effective induction process.

> *"I feel bad for saying it but I don't think, I don't feel like I've had an induction" …"September comes around or October came and I was teaching straightaway and I got very little opportunity to see how others are doing it."* (Charlie)

> *"Then 4 months later there was, um, an afternoon session with new joiners … it was very much, uh, a, um, broadcast rather than a, a two-way conversation." "The lack of a handover meant I was just dropped in it … things were gearing up for the new term and so people were busy."* (Robin)

> *"I didn't get an induction."* (Alex)

Alex referred to receiving no training other than being shown where a module was on the Virtual Learning Environment that they were expected to teach on. This lack of induction and basic training left the Career Change Academics feeling vulnerable and lost in a new working environment.

> "*I think there would have been lifebelts if I'd have, um, you know, if I needed them but, um, as before I'm quite an independent soul and so I would have rather worked it out myself."* (Robin)

There are two striking features about Robin's quote. The first is that Robin uses the term lifebelt which is a life saving device for an individual who is alone in an expanse of water and at risk of drowning, rather than a lifeboat which is designed to save many. This sense of aloneness at sea is supported by the wider double hermeneutic that Robin felt isolated and in a new world without the tools required to build and with little solid ground or safety.

All participants described feeling alone or isolated at times, but there was a sense of loneliness that came through in Charlie and Robin's interviews, as if their role had been to find their way alone while lost in a new landscape. Robin states, "there was no handover, no, no, nobody there to help me find my feet". The participants rarely referred to the language of community or membership of 'us' or 'we' when describing their work.

Robin and Charlie had spent more time working from home than on campus because of restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. Feeling alone, Charlie struggled to identify whether their transition experience was tough because of the pandemic or if it would have been this tough even without the requirement to work from home:

> *"I have found the transition a little difficult and sometimes I, into teaching and sometimes I try and distinguish is that because of my being new to teaching or is that because of the pandemic or is that because of both?"* (Charlie)

Charlie's language confirmed the sense of isolation as they say that they were unsure if they struggled more than their peers when starting at The University.

Robin was expected to continue the work of their predecessor without an induction to the role or a handover and described the career transition as being severe. At 18 months in, Robin described their experience as "*it feels like it's that sort of, um, you know, unknown-unknown".* Robin is saying that at 18 months they did not feel settled in their new role. Robin stated, *"I drew comfort from the fact that people assumed I knew more than I did."* The lack of acceptance and integration of practitioner knowledge resulted in Alex, Charlie and Robin all feeling unsure if it was meant to be this difficult and felt ill-equipped for the job they had been appointed to.

In addition to feeling ill-equipped and isolated, Charlie shared their concern that the lack of training might have an impact on the students:

> *"am I assessing students properly? …I think maybe a bit more maybe hand-holding would, for use of a better word, would have been beneficial for me, mm". "I really need to have a support structure to make sure that the teaching I do is going to be the best as it can be to students".* (Charlie)

The phrase 'hand-holding' promotes images of someone being unsafe, vulnerable or needing care, often a child. In addition to the safety aspect there is a physical intimacy

in holding hands. There is a sense that Charlie had little in-person contact with their students or colleagues, potentially that they were missing the comfort of being in community. Charlie stated: *"sometimes it could feel a bit… I guess you can feel a bit isolated because if you want, if you're trying to, uh, it's nice to be able to have somebody to clarify things with, um,".* Charlie had originally looked for support at The University, but they eventually found a virtual hand to hold with Career Change Academics at another HE institution as a result of networking.

Although all four Career Change Academics felt ill-equipped, none of the participants specifically blamed The University for this. There was a sense in which Alex, Robin, Charlie and Sam did not want to make a fuss about being forgotten or misunderstood. It is as if the Career Change Academics felt embarrassed about being forgotten or feeling lonely and did not ask for support because they themselves had an element of self-doubt. This is mirrored with a sense in which each Career Change Academic felt safer finding things out on their own rather than drawing attention to their ignorance or lack of training.

I experienced culture shock.

All four Career Change Academics described experiencing significant changes in their transition to working in HE. Sam and Charlie felt like foreigners navigating a new world:

> *"Navigating the academic world was quite difficult…because it is very different to that to the industrial world. So the hierarchies, the nonsense politics and all of the publish or perish kind of stuff that that is quite, was quite tricky to navigate, to start off with. Because it's yeah, it's very, very different."* (Sam)

Sam's language of finding themself in another world implies a sense that they felt lost in an unknown world where new norms and politics needed to be learnt and navigated to become a citizen of the new culture. Sam felt there was only space for traditional academics with publications and a long track record in HE. There was no mention of Sam sharing their experience of a former world, only an emphasis on the difference between their former world of work and the new academic world. Charlie, like Sam, felt like a foreigner and eventually found comfort with other expatriates outside of their HE institution, *"it's nice to know that there are other people who are also, in a similar situation to you, albeit at different universities"* (Charlie).

All four Career Change Academics experienced a steep learning curve in understanding a new language of terminologies and acronyms used in HE. Robin and Sam described their experience with a focus on the language of a new academic culture. Robin was an experienced practitioner in industry, but described feeling lost in a new work culture that spoke in a language of acronyms. *"The language, you know, is different of course, different culture, different, um, different community has different norms, different languages, different terminology".* One example was when Robin was given a calendar of events to help navigate their new role, but they did not understand the language or significance of the events and so this was seen as little more than a map without a compass in a landscape with no familiar landmarks:

> *"Somebody was kind enough to do a calendar with dates but, but it didn't really mean anything because it was full of words that I didn't understand. If somebody had said "there are three big things that are the big dramatic moments of the year…that would have been really helpful… it just looked like a, you know, it just looked like a calendar… a pleasant view but it meant nothing to me."* (Robin)

The description of an unknown view or map promotes images of Robin feeling like a foreigner without a tour guide, or like an expatriate abroad.

In addition to language, a second cultural difference experienced by Sam and Charlie was that of The University having a different currency in terms of what experiences were valued. Although appointed because of their practitioner experience, Robin, Sam and Charlie felt like outsiders whose experience was not comparable to that of a traditional academic.

The value attributed to the participant's experience in their appointment process was not aligned with Career Change Academics' experiences of structures and policies such as the induction process, grant proposals and promotion process. Sam went on to explain: *"I think that, that it [practitioner experience] is really valued on the front line as you go further up the tree, it is almost irrelevant".* Sam felt their situation was unfair stating, *"if you don't have that long track record, you're less likely to get the funding".* Rather than feeling like a career change to academia is a promotion it felt like a demoting experience. Sam was emotional when recalling the decision regarding their promotion decision. Reliving the story, Sam explained that they had asked "*am I going*

to be negatively impacted because I don't have as many publications, because I spent so long in industry?". Sam's choice of words here show that they were concerned ahead of their application. Sam was assured that their experience would be looked at as a whole, and that if an applicant exceeds in other criteria, then this will outweigh falling down in other areas. Sam was unsuccessful at their promotion application and the reason given was that Sam did not have enough publications. Sam repeatedly said the process was biased against Career Change Academics and that the advice Sam sought was not in line with the promotion feedback they were given.

Sam felt that the promotion process had disagreed with their claim and sense of their financial worth and status. Sam was emotional while sharing this story. To Sam, the feedback told them that their experiences did not carry the same value as their traditional academic peer's experiences. Sam had been invited to work at The University as a specialist and given a senior workload but felt treated like a junior academic and experienced the sense that Career Change Academics were being forced to adhere to traditional processes.

Alex's experiences were different to that of Sam, Charlie and Robin. Alex was one of many Career Change Academics in their department and so they were, to an extent, an exception to the rule in terms of the sense of culture shock.

Across this first theme we have journeyed through the lived experience of the Career Change Academics extrapolating their feelings of being duped, misled and conned to transitioning to a career in HE. Sam, Charlie and Robin felt that they had gone from being respected in their field to an unknown, and an often suspicious, entity. They experienced a language barrier, a sense of uncertainty around expectations in the HE landscape. Robin stated:

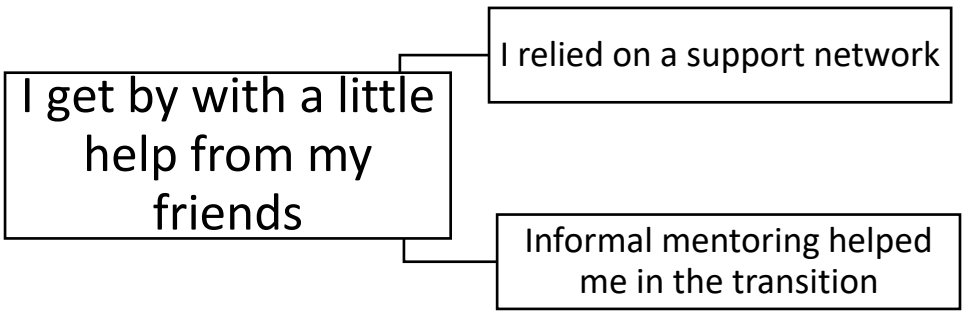
> *"I think coming in to teach is harder than, than, than, than practicing professionals might think … higher education is complex, and also, uh, highly professionalised. The student feedback and the satisfaction scores and so teaching is a complex thing, uh, not to be entered into lightly."*

Sam, Charlie and Robin were promised that they would be treated as respected practitioners and that their experiences would bring comparable value to The University. Instead, they felt that they were viewed as second-class academics. The

experience of not understanding the language of their peers left them feeling like an alien abroad, pre-determined to be a member of an out-group because of the question regarding their worth at the University. All four Career Change Academics wondered if they had been forgotten in terms of their lack of induction and organised support. This left them feeling abandoned, alone, vulnerable, and like an outsider.

Theme 2: I get by with a little help from my friends

The second theme describes the way in which participants relied on the support of friends and colleagues in their transition to working at The University. The theme was described by all participants, but their underpinning experiences were not the same. The theme is underpinned by two sub themes: I relied on my support network, and informal mentoring helped me with the transition.



I relied on a support network

All the Career Change Academics referred to their need to rely on support networks that they created; it should be stressed that these support networks were self-appointed and were not created by The University as support mechanisms for them. Sam and Alex, for example, spoke of informal networks they developed as a result of studying on the Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education (PGCert). Alex and Sam also referred to the friendships and support networks they gained from attending the taught programmes that were delivered by the centralised Education Department. The wider impact of the PGCert is outlined in a later theme (theme three) but the network and communities of support were significant for Alex and Sam and so also feature as part of this theme. Sam stated "*I'm still friends with quite a few people that were on my*

PGCert from different departments". Alex and Sam specifically named the support offered by the former programme director of the PGCert throughout the early years teaching at The University.

Sam attributed the care of their support networks as the reason they were still working as an academic:

> *"I think that surrounding yourself by a group of people that support you and provide you with, sort of, objective help and advice is the only reason I'm still here…the job can be so difficult, erm especially over the past, like over the past year, for example, with everything that's happened for the pandemic. I think that without that support network, I think that we all would have just lay down and given up."* (Sam)

Sam used extreme language with connotations of defeat or surrender to the extent that they give up or stop trying. This could be understood as giving up at work but could also be interpreted as feeling physically unable to work. The language suggests a sense of surviving, rather than thriving, and attributes survival to their support group.

Sam referred to their support community as being each other's "first point of call for a rant", and "each other's cheerleaders". Sam found this community while working on campus and said that this continued through lockdown with regular coffee meetings on Teams. Sam and Alex both spoke in the present tense about the support and sense of community that they continued to receive from colleagues they met during the PGCert.

Robin and Charlie had not attended the PGCert but both described the significant role that others had on their transition experience. While Sam and Alex found their support communities through friendships made at CPD events, Robin and Charlie had spent more time working remotely than on campus because of the pandemic and referred to much smaller support networks than Alex or Sam.

Charlie felt the need to look for support outside of The University as they said they felt like *"a rare breed"* in their department. It is of interest that Charlie did not find the support they needed at The University and felt the need to source their own support.

> *"There are other people who are similar to me, they're a little bit, they've been in teaching more than I, longer than I have so I've got to learn from that, from their own experiences…I think it's the people that have particularly supported*

> *me and helped in developing my I guess identity, uh, as a teaching only member of staff."* (Charlie)

Charlie found affirmation for their identity by spending time with others 'like them'. Charlie struggled through the interview with the term academic. They did not see themselves as an academic and after a hesitation described themselves as a 'teaching only' member of staff.

> *"I guess understanding what their identity is, as well as my own, and they would say of the five or six people the two that I speak to the most they have said the same, they consider themselves to be practitioners first, um, and, but they're in a teaching role."* (Charlie)

It is of interest that those in Charlie's support network also described themselves as being in a teaching role, rather than being an academic. Charlie sought out others with similar experiences and has arguably aligned with the identity of others who have previously shared similar experiences. It is as if Charlie was trying on the descriptive identity of practitioners-that-teach, as if Charlie were in a changing room looking for a new outfit or wardrobe to capture and convey their new image or brand. An unanswered question would be whether Charlie described themselves as a teacher because they have not met other Career Change Academics who describe themselves as academics.

In addition to external support, Charlie referred to an experience of collegiate working with traditional academics in their department as a result of a need for an urgent shift from face to face to online delivery of teaching. The experience of working as part of the in-group was described by Charlie as a time when they felt accepted as part of the community and felt that they were developing professional friendships and networks. Working together on a common issue enabled Charlie to feel part of an already formed team, which begs the question, would this have happened in the same way if there was not an emergency with a need to adjust to online teaching.

Robin described the smallest informal network of all the Career Change Academics, naming only individuals they would turn to, rather than a group that gathers. Robin stated that they relied on this support in order to be able to do their job.

Informal mentoring helped

The role of mentors and role models was a common theme across all four interviews. This sub-theme outlines the role of mentors as well as intentional, or unintentional, role models and the effect they have had on Career Change Academics in the formation of their professional identity.

Charlie refers to two unofficial mentors in their department, one of whom Charlie described as a former Career Change Academic. This is of particular interest as Charlie considers this mentor to be an academic and uses the past tense to refer to them as a former teaching practitioner. This leads us to the question, if, for Charlie, being a practitioner is a liminal state with an aim of being considered part of an in-group of academics. If so, is this because Charlie thinks it is necessary to acclimatise to the perceived norm of being a traditional academic, or because they no longer want to feel isolated as a "rare breed" as they described earlier? Charlie relied heavily on their unofficial mentor, stating:

> *"I don't know how well I would have done if I didn't have that support" …"[they've] been a key influence into supporting me and helping me get to grips with this teaching role."* (Charlie)

Contrary to Charlie's experience of transitioning to be like the in-group, Sam spoke with pride when describing themselves as a Career Change Academic. While Charlie sought support from outside The University, Sam specified learning from those in their immediate work community. There was a sense for Sam that forming and maintaining their identity was a battle to be fought in the foreign territory of traditional academics. Sam similarly spoke of the significant role that an unofficial mentor had in supporting them in the transition to being a Career Change Academic: *"I looked up to her a lot and used she has had a big influence on how I project myself from a professional point of view."* (Sam)

Alex referred to informal mentors, but also described a significant negative experience with a senior peer who had been chosen by Alex as a mentor to support their learning for a time-limited activity. This person was a role model, but they over-reacted to a minor and easily fixable mistake. This left Alex upset and doubting their ability to do the job. Alex's negative experience with this role model had a significant effect on their self-belief and resulted in their questioning the career change. As a result of the lack

of peer support and negative experiences with a role model Alex informally took it on themselves to mentor and support a new member of academic staff to protect a new colleague from not having to go through the same negative experiences as they had experienced.

> *"I feel like I fast-tracked everything I've done in like four years, or three years into their one year"* (Alex.)

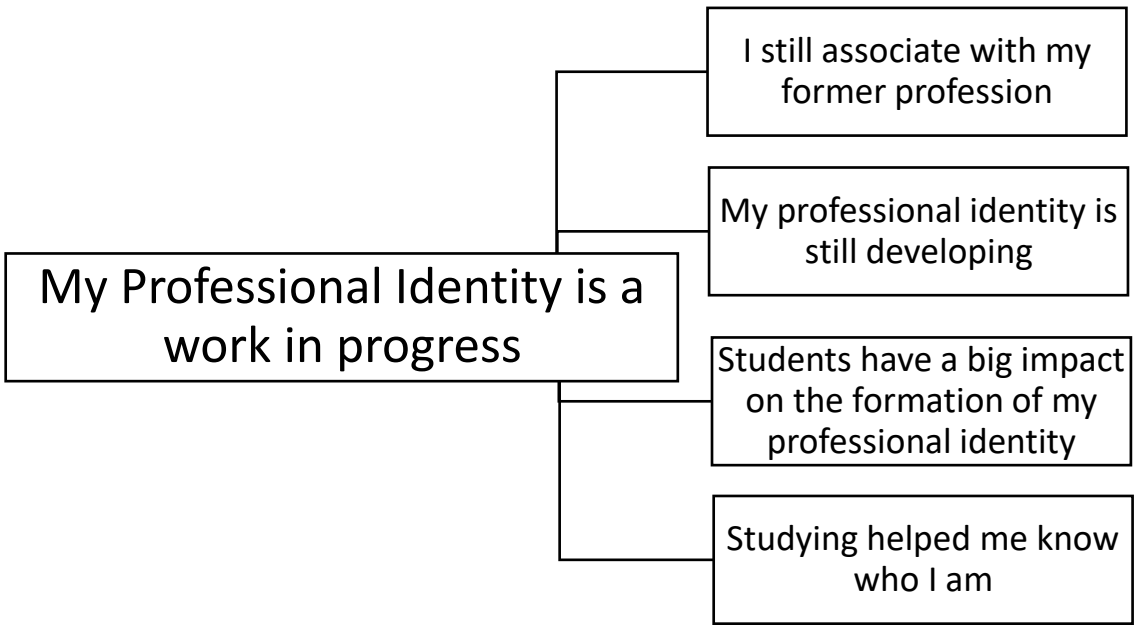
Robin also described the importance of a mentoring relationship that they described as being informal but as promoting *"fabulous conversations, uh, that are inspiring and to an extent, you know, challenging and to an extent, affirming"* (Robin). Robin spoke the least about role models and or mentors and had a smaller support network than the other Career Change Academics and the effect of this is explored further in the next theme.

In this theme we have seen how the Career Change Academics felt the need to locate support from unofficial networks in order build a supportive work culture. Having explored in theme one that the participants felt misled in terms of the support offered and value attributed to their experience it is not surprising that they felt they needed support. It is noteworthy here that the support participants valued the most were informal networks and mentors. Alex and Sam shared experiences of localised support groups developed by networking at CPD events. Robin and Charlie referred to smaller networks and were not given the opportunity to join the PGCert. There is a sense in which new staff members need to be structured in terms of networking but allowed to create their natural and self-appointed networks and mentors.

All four Career Change Academics attributed the fact that they remained in their position and were surviving, to the support of their work friends and official mentors. There was a sense of frustration that little support was given in creating these networks. With Robin and Charlie spending more time working online than in person they had less opportunity to socialise with academics beyond their departments. Given the changes in dynamic working this is an area worth exploring.

Theme 3: My professional identity is a work in progress

The third themes outline how the participants associate their professional identity with their former profession; that their professional identity is developing; that students have a big impact on the formation of their professional identity; and that studying helped participants to know who they are.



I still associate with my former profession

When asked how they would describe what they do for a living, all the Career Change Academics referred to their former industry title as their current job title, irrespective of the amount of time they have worked at The University.

> *"I would still say I'm a [practitioner] even though I'm not. [Laughs] … and yet I, I still, my initial, the word that comes into my mind is as [practitioner]."* (*Robin)*
>
> *I'd probably just say [practitioner]. Yeah. And then and then I would say, oh, I teach it or I research it. So I probably just identified first as a [practitioner]."* (Sam)
>
> *"I'm a [practitioner] in the world of teaching."* (Charlie)
>
> *"I'm a [practitioner] that works at a university."* (Alex)

The time span that the participants had worked at The University ranged from six months to five years, yet they all identified primarily as practitioners with the addition of teaching as an afterthought. Taken in isolation the participant quotes above read as if the Career Change Academics prioritised their experience as practitioners over their role as teachers in HE. However, the role of the double hermeneutic is significant here as it brings context to this sub theme. All four quotes above signal that the Career Change Academics identify with their former profession. The sub theme below highlights the positive role that students had in the formation of their identity as teachers. The last GET also highlights that the Career Change Academics have transitioned to teach in HE because they want to have an impact on the lives of students and positively impact their future career. The Career Change Academics in this sub theme focus on their former identity as but are beginning to identify as teachers in HE with a significant motivation to teach future practitioners, this is explored in the GET 'I am here to teach future practitioners'. The extent to which participants describe their professional identity is analysed further in the sub themes below.

My professional identity is still developing

All participants shared a sense that their professional identity was still developing, irrespective of the amount of time they had worked at The University. There was not a sense in which the Career Change Academics felt they had claimed or completed a transition.

Three of the Career Change Academics were given junior job titles, such as Support Officer and Teaching Associate, that they felt did not match their responsibilities and teaching load. The Career Change Academics felt that their junior job titles affected the way that their colleagues viewed their status and experience. These ambiguous titles resulted in them feeling as if their industry experience was not of comparable worth. Being seen as less valuable than their colleagues, but with the same work-load, resulted in the Career Change Academics questioning both their decision to change careers and the legitimacy of their practitioner experience for their role at The University.

All four participants reflected on their identity throughout the interview. At the end of the interview, I asked if they considered themselves to be an academic. Charlie and Robin, who had been employed for the shortest time out of the four, struggled the to associate with the term. Robin wondered if they might use the term in the future. *"I don't quite yet call myself an academic or an educator … Mm, that's interesting. We should repeat the interview in three year's time and see whether I've, um, changed"* (Robin). Similarly, Charlie stated, *"I wouldn't classify myself as an academic…sometimes I feel like an imposter"* (Charlie). It is well documented that new starters in the workplace can experience a sense of feeling like a fraud, often referred to as imposter syndrome (Bothello and Roulet, 2019). However, Charlie took this a step further, referring to their place of work as a new world in which they were an imposter, a sense that they do not belong in that world and might get found out.

Having been employed for the longest, Sam and Alex had a different response to the same question. Sam seemed initially uncomfortable with the question but used their words to test what it would feel like to call themselves an academic; *"er, yes I guess I am, Yeah, I'm an academic. Yeah"* (Sam). Sam sat a little taller and smiled while they reflected and claimed their identity as an academic.

Alex, along with Charlie, had preconceived, yet different, ideas about what it meant to be an academic. While Charlie considered an academic to be someone who was publishing research, Alex believed that to call yourself an academic you needed to have a PhD. This was in part because three of the Career Change Academics were unsure if they could call themselves Lecturers because of a recent policy change at The University. Stating that only those who were already conducting research could be on teaching and research contracts. Alex also evidenced a sense of progression when describing what they do for a living.

> *"I view myself as a bit of everything, so a bit of a [practitioner], bit of a teacher, um, so it's like an amalgamation of lots of different parts of an identity…I think up until last year I'd always tell people I'm an [practitioner] that works at a university, um, whereas now I'm a bit more like, ooh I'm a teaching fellow , and I don't always use the term lecturer because within [The University] I'm not a lecturer, but I know now you're allowed to use the term lecturer, um, I'm just still unsure as to whether I can or can't use it."*(Alex)

Alex described themselves as an amalgamation of many identities as if they were a multi-tool that can be useful in multiple contexts. Even with the confusions regarding the use of the title Lecturer, Alex still articulates a multifaceted dynamic identity.

For Alex, Sam and Charlie the combination of being given junior job titles and then being unsure if they can call themselves lecturers or teaching fellows happened while staff were changing contracts from teaching and research to teaching only. As noted earlier in this thesis, this shift was echoed across the sector to boost HEI's REF scores. The Career Change Academics referred to this as a creating two streams, or a two-tiered system of academics.

Robin and Alex shared that recognition of their achievement and of their new job titles came from outside The University. A formative event for Alex to help them feel ownership of their new professional identity was when a family member introduced them using their new job title. For Robin, affirmation came from the respect given to the new title by a colleague in their former profession. Robin shared, *"so to have that affirmation from somebody I would deeply respect, it seemed to be more significant than if I had been introduced as a [practitioner]".*

Robin and Charlie both referred to their work environment as a new world. Where Charlie felt like an imposter in their new world, Robin explored the relationship between past and current world:

> *"I'm just toying with the idea of how, how, um, how much they are in my new world as well and actually they're not, so they're guests into my, into my new world, so yes. Yeah. That's interesting isn't it? You know, the affirmation from the old world for the move. Um, mm."* (Robin)

It is of interest that stories that affirmed Alex and Robin's identities involved input from their wider support network including family and colleagues from their former career. There were no stories of affirmation of their identity that originated from their line managers or traditional academics.

Sam showed a high level of self-awareness when discussing the formation of their professional identity. Sam described three distinct stages: looking for role models in their context, considering the image they wanted to portray to others, and imagining

how their values and principles defined who they imagine themselves to be in the future. Regarding Sam's lived experience of the first stage, they stated:

> *"When you first start off, you're just trying to like, you don't really know who you are… I think it's just something that that over time from learning from other people around you about how they behave and the erm, kind of professional that you want to be."* (Sam)

Sam described professional identity as, *"it's really like this, the image that you portray to others"* (Sam). The language of portraying elicits images of a portrait being painted or an image and identity that has yet to be created or decided upon. The third stage in Sam's identity formation was combining their experiences with their personal values to imagine who they wanted to be in the future. Sam stated that professional identity was *"what your job means to you, which I think is more about your own values and passions and stuff like that"* (Sam).

Sam was both self-aware and confident in discussing the influences on their forming professional identity. This could be, in part, as they had been employed at The University for the longest out of the participants and they described how reflecting on their identity as a teacher in HE was part of the PGCert qualification.

Students have a big impact the formation of my professional identity

All four Career Change Academics shared the significant impact that students had in the forming of their professional identity, both positively and negatively. The desire to work with students was a clear motive held by all four Career Change Academics. The relationship of teacher and student had a significant impact on the professional identity of the Career Change Academics, describing satisfaction when they feel they have reached their altruistic goal of helping others:

> *"My professional identity is very much embedded I think in my values. So the fact that I do want to help people….that is what I get a lot of satisfaction from. That has shaped my professional identity a lot… If you're teaching them and then they want you to keep teaching them, I think that you can't ask for anything, anything more positive."* (Sam)

> ***"****Students are a huge reason for how I've shaped my personal, er, professional identity…they're the reason why I do the job, um, I love working with the students, I love seeing them grow".* (Alex)

Alex and Sam both referred to advice given to them by the director of the PGCert to keep thank you cards and emails from students and to return to these when work was difficult. Alex and Sam thus attributed praise from students as the fuel that keeps them motivated when work is tough. The act of remembering praise and thanks from students validated their success as Career Change Academics.

A second significant event for both Alex and Sam was seeing their students graduate. Sam stated, *"I graduated my first PHD student last year … I'd say it's been like one of the best things that I've done"* (Sam). Alex shared that all graduation ceremonies helped to focus their mind on their role but that the most significant for them was the first cohort of students that they had seen through from day one to graduation*:*

> *"Graduation felt like sort of the accumulation of everything that they've been through, everything that I'd been through, um, and I remember sitting on stage in my gown clapping like a crazy person because I was just that excited."* (Alex)

Speaking of their students at the graduation ceremony, Alex said *"these are my people"*. The language of ownership implies that this is something Alex takes credit for, that they supported students through to graduation. It is as if the students are part of Alex's in-group as they now have the experience of studying in HE and are becoming practitioners. Alex spoke with passion, pride and purpose as they described the motivation behind cultivating future practitioners.

Having been at The University for a shorter amount of time, Charlie and Robin did not share any stories about graduation ceremonies. However, they did both share the experiential theme that students impacted their identity formation. Charlie said of students that they "*have helped me realise that actually I really enjoy what I do and I'm really glad that I've made the transition into teaching."* Robin shared their excitement prior to starting at The University, *"I was really looking forward to fresher's, … I'm going to tell them that I was once like them … they're going to think I'm so cool"*.

Given the impact students had on the Career Change Academics it is perhaps not surprising that negative comments and feedback were taken to heart. Robin experienced a student questioning their credentials as a practitioner and so the value of their teaching:

> *"The student said "so could you not hack it then? Is that why you've come to a university? Were you just not very good?" So I kind of came to earth with a bit of a crash".*

Robin unpacked this saying that they thought the student did not understand why someone would transition to HE from industry, rather than the student questioning the viability of their career change. However, Robin uses language that refers to a crash between expectation and reality. Robin described their motivation and drive for teaching to be working with the students and so this student's comment could have been challenged their decision to change careers. The reality for Robin was that the respect that they had anticipated was contrasted with a student questioning the success of their former career and therefore their viability as an educator in HE.

Sam describes a similar experience stating: *"I don't think they realise how much of an impact they have". A bad comment in student feedback is "like being stabbed in the heart"*. Sam's language here is extreme and could be interpreted as students having the ability to wound academics at the centre of their being. The heart is the organ that gives life and sustains the body, Sam refers to negative feedback as endangering the ability to continue to live and work.

Charlie also uses extreme language regarding student feedback saying: *"I guess I can allow some negative feedback to really kind of throw me a little bit and I probably focus upon that and then I let that spiral out of control"*. The language Charlie uses here is spiralling out of control, eliciting images of being unable to manage their thoughts and emotions because of negative feedback. For Sam and Charlie there is a sense in which their value and identity is so tangibly linked with the feedback of students that their survival as academics is dependent on the opinions of the students.

Despite these experiences all four of the Career Change Academics stated that their incentive to change careers was the desire to work with students. There was also a link between student success and the extent to which Career Change Academics feel they are successful. The relationship between the students and the Career Change Academics feels pregnant with expectation regarding the role of the student voice in the identity formation of Career Change Academics.

Studying helped me know who I am

Studying professional development courses at The University helped Alex and Sam marry together their industry experience and professional practice within HE. The PGCert that they both mentioned included teaching and assessments that are designed to support new academics in reflecting on their professional identity whilst providing time to network with new colleagues across The University. Alex and Sam referred to these programmes as the place where they met their support communities from across The University, and the role of the support network has already been unpacked in the second theme. This sub-theme focuses on the wider role that study and CPD has had on the participants.

Teaching qualifications run by the Education Department were cited as being the most significant training in relation to the formation, understanding and ownership of professional identity for both Alex and Sam. The training programmes they attended ranged from the Introduction to Learning and Teaching Practice (ILTP) in Higher Education programme, the Post-Graduate Certificate (PGCert) in Higher Education and the Master of Education (MEd).

Alex found the programmes beneficial because they focused on professional identity formation within HE which helped them review their career transition.

> *"The running thread through all of it was, you know, what kind of teacher are you, how do you sort of support students. What's your sort of, you know, philosophy and outlook."* (Alex)

Alex named the Master of Higher Education (MEd) programme as a seminal time in which they felt their identity was reforming:

> *"That's when I kind of sat down and I was like I don't feel like a practitioner but I am a practitioner, but I think I'm a teacher now… so I think that kind of journey has just solidified my identity as like, you know, a teaching fellow, a teacher, or whatever it is that I am [laughs]".* (Alex)

The last part of the sentence above was said with humour in a form of recognition that they know that they are now part of many worlds or work cultures, simultaneously a teaching fellow or teacher who still feels like a partitioner. Alex described themself in a way that implied there is a related process within their transient identity.

Sam was pleased to have completed these programmes before they had a significant teaching load.

> *"All of that pedagogical stuff so that that was very different because being from such a [practitioner] background and I loved it all the stuff, all of the teaching theory and all of the more psychology side of things and thinking about how people work and all of that kind of stuff was really, really interesting….for when I got thrown in as a lecturer … because I imagine that if you're teaching and trying to learn all that at the same time, it would be really different.* (Sam)

The knowledge gained through these programmes equipped Sam and Alex with tools that they have used throughout their time working at The University. The programmes acted as bridges between their practitioner experiences and the expectations of teaching academics. This knowledge helped Alex and Sam get promoted and has enabled them to reflect and assimilate their experiences of industry with their teaching role at The University.

It is noteworthy that Robin and Charlie have not undertaken either of these training opportunities. The current policy regarding the accessibility of these programmes means that Charlie and Robin were either unable, or unlikely to be encouraged to consider taking the programmes. At the time of the interviews Charlie and Robin had been in post for under two years. It is impossible at this time to know how they will describe their professional identity in another two years' time. This contrasts with Alex and Sam who had completed at least one or two of the Educational Department qualifications within their first two years and who ascribe their greatest confidence boost in terms of their professional identity formation to these educational programmes.

All four Career Change Academics refer to HE as a new work culture to be experienced. Sam and Alex used the knowledge and contacts from these courses to help them navigate this transition. However, Robin and Charlie referred to the career change as being a new world and have struggled to navigate this world without the academic programmes that they were not able to access.

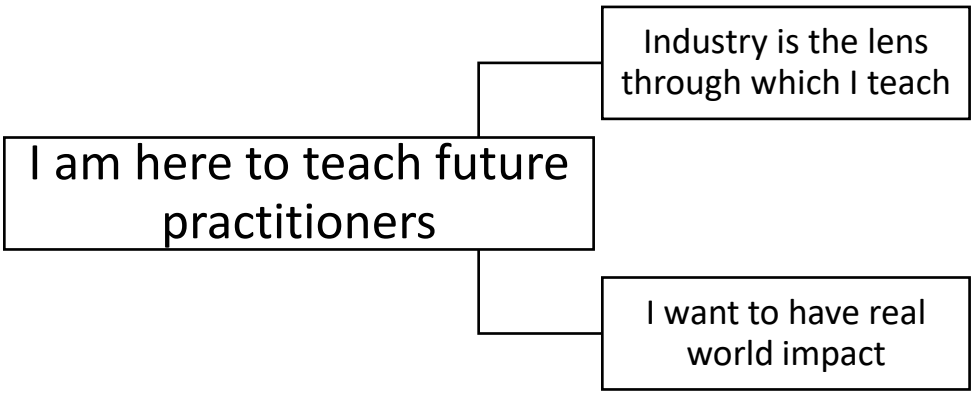
This third theme is slightly larger as it reflects the experience of those who are still navigating their professional identity. This theme shows that the formation of the Career Change Academics' identities is a transient and ongoing process, rather than

transitioning to become something different. The participants still associate strongly with their former profession but recognise that the way in which they describe their professional identity is changing.

As the students are named as a significant reason for changing career it is not surprising that they have a significant impact on the way that Career Change Academics view and describe themselves. But what may be surprising is the extent of which the students had the power to damage or put challenge the participants' professional identity. The Career Change Academics rely on the students, more than their new colleagues, to recognise their worth. The final section of this theme highlights the difference in experiences between Alex and Sam who had undertaken CPD and created networks pre-COVID19 and Charlie and Robin who did not have the same opportunities.

Theme 4: I am here to teach future practitioners

The fourth and final theme reflects the sense that participants have changed careers so that they can teach future practitioners. This theme is supported by two subthemes; that industry is the lens through which they teach, and that Career Change Academics want to have real world impact.



Industry is the lens through which I teach

All four participants spoke with passion about their experience of industry working as a lens through which they taught students. As such, there was a sense of joy and pride in the language used:

> "*I think it's more of a, a, a value that I believe in, um, that I've brought with me, as well as the practical skills.* (Alex)
>
> *"They [students] like the how I make it relevant to the real world".* "*My passion for the topic of my research topic is really important*." (Sam)

Alex shared that they bring their professional practitioner values to their work, and that there is a sense of pride in their former experience as a practitioner. Sam referred to the work-place as the real world and uses their experience to bring this culture of industry to life within the classroom.

Irrespective of the amount of time each Career Change Academic had worked at The University, they all spoke about the need to bring the teaching materials, examples or resources up to date. All participants explained that their colleagues were using redundant theories, tests and or language that would not be used in the workplace. Although not significant in terms of numbers it is of interest that all four departments represented by the Career Change Academics were using what was perceived as out of date resources.

> *"I think it's really good for students…to hear how these things work, for people to bring insight from their, their practical experience…because that brings it to life and it gives it kind of colour and, um, and energy."* (Robin)

Charlie instigated buying new equipment so that the students would be learning practical stills that were found in the workplace. *"I have brought relevant and up to date experiences into the module design which included buying equipment students would use in a workplace".* (Charlie)

There is a sense of achievement in the language of all the Career Change Academics that, because they are teaching through the lens of a practitioner, the students receive up to date materials and resources that enhance their employability. The driver for their passion is the student, rather than any specific university level policy. Sam states, *"I put my heart in to it… you know that you've had an impact on that person's life. And that is why I do it"*. Alex echoed this sentiment stating, *"I know what I'm on about and*

that other people are listening to it and respecting it and students are the ones that are benefiting from it."

In addition to materials and resources, Sam shared how they designed authentic forms of assessment that used the language of industry rather than a purely academic style of language.

> *"I've noticed that some of my colleagues who have only ever stayed in academia very much stick to that academic style of language. And so I think that the way I teach is a little bit different as well, because I'm trying to get them to understand and not just regurgitate the theory."* (Sam)

Teaching the students is a joyful and enthusiastic activity for the Career Change Academics and all four mentioned staff or students turning to them for examples of tests that they can incorporate into their classes and or studies. The Career Change Academics saw their role as supporting, educating and forming the practitioners of the future. "*I hope my enthusiasm for it as a profession comes across…the degree programme is to train the next generation of, ultimately of [practitioners] to think about those things."* (Charlie)

This sub-theme of industry being the lens through which Career Change Academics teach is peppered with short snappy quotes. This is reflective of the clarity of mind with which the Career Change Academic spoke of their sense of vocation to teach through the lens of industry in order to form the next generation of employable practitioners.

I want to have real-world impact

This final sub-theme outlines a philanthropic thread in which the participants all shared the feeling that they wanted to have an impact beyond both their former industry role and beyond HE. This sub-theme appears at the end of this Analysis Chapter as it has materialised as a predictive goal or intended swan song of the Career Change Academics.

All four participants shared a sense of wanting to have a real-world impact, but it was of interest that Robin and Sam, who had the longest careers before moving to HE, focused on this phenomenon more than the other two Career Change Academics. Sam captured this essence stating, "*we've got…a real chance to make a difference from a professional point of view. And, erm, I just think that we should all be trying to*

save the world"…"I want what I do to have a real world impact" (Sam). Alex and Charlie spoke about the impact that their students would have when they start their career in industry, but this goes further. Like Sam, Robin describes a need, or sense of responsibility, to help, if not to change the world.

> *"I spent all of my working life helping. So I guess, um, so well I guess there is within me, um, a desire to be helpful and I think that is also a need to be helpful if I'm being brutally honest."* (Robin)

It is unclear from the interviews if this world level change is expected to be the result of teaching the next generation of practitioners or having an academic breakthrough that is made possible because of their experience as practitioners and research from within The University.

Robin shared that it was a sense of indifference that led them to change careers in order to continue to have an impact on the world. *"I am always looking for purpose in my work and so once that indifference, um, once I observed that indifference then I thought maybe the time has come to look elsewhere."* (Robin)

This fourth and final theme takes the Career Change Academics' experiences full circle. The desire to have a real-world impact and to teach the practitioners of the future was the driver and passion for then move to teach in HE. It is the desire to have a real-world impact as a result of investing in the lives of students that gave the Career Change Academics both a sense of calling to change careers, as well as more significantly a vocation strong enough to navigate new cultures, meet new expectations, and to be willing to re-form their sense of identity to enable students to have a real-world impact.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined four themes titled; I felt like an outsider, I get by with a little help from my friends, my professional identity is work in progress, and I am here to teach future practitioners.

Throughout the themes, the reader is carried along the journey of four Career Change Academics as we explore their lived experiences and related phenomena as they change careers to work at The University. The journey starts at one end with a sense

of being conned in to changing careers, through to the point in the journey where the Career Change Academics discussed philanthropic goals, including saving the world, as a result of their experiences and situatedness as a Career Change Academic at The University.

The Career Change Academics discover that their expectations of changing careers to teaching in HE were not met and that it was as if they had been deceived. It is as if they were too embarrassed to admit that they felt forgotten and left to fend for themselves. Upon arrival to a promised land, they discovered they were viewed as second-class academics and needed support. All four Career Change Academics attribute their survival in this new world of HE to their work friends and informal mentors. These friends fill the gaps that were created by a sense of loneliness and questioning their sense of worth within The University. These informal support structures provided information and translated a new work culture and language.

As the participants' length of employment ranged from six months to five years it is not surprising that the participants describe themselves as being at different stages in their professional identity formation. Rather than a transition to be completed, the Career Change Academics experienced what could be described as a bicultural and transient experience as their identities continues to re-form for up to five years. It is significant that the Career Change Academics still described their identity as their former profession. Three out of four participants have struggled with job titles that they did not feel reflected their work, promoting a question regarding the process by which job titles are allocated and agreed upon.

The strongest voices effecting the formation of the Career Change Academics' professional identities were former colleagues from their professions, family members, and students. While the Career Change Academics took affirmation and a sense of worth from student feedback this was a double-edged sword where students' comments could hinder as well as enhance their professional identity. Another notable difference is that Sam and Alex were more able to reflect on and describe their professional identity and attribute this to the academic study they were encouraged to undertake. The terms of employment meant that Robin and Sam were not able to attend the same CPD as Alex and Sam.

It is of particular interest that the four Career Change Academics often appear as two sets of two. While Alex and Sam started work a few years before the pandemic, Charlie and Alex had spent more time working from home then they had on campus. Analysing this further was beyond the researcher's control but it is interesting that despite divergent experiences there were four clear distinct phenomena experienced by all Career Change Academics. Where Alex and Sam detailed their large support network at The University Charlie and Robin also detailed support networks, albeit smaller, and all four attributed the same need for an informal support network to help them navigate the career change.

Across all four Career Change Academics there was a unified view and philosophy that the Career Change Academics had changed career in order to teach future practitioners and to have a real-world impact, no matter the cost of changing careers to teach in HE.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Research findings

This research offers four experiential themes that were attributed as phenomena by the Career Change Academic participants. These themes were: I felt like an outsider; I get by with a little help from my friends; My professional identity is a work in progress; I am here to teach future practitioners.

Through this empirical study, I set out to explore two research questions to fill two gaps that I had identified in the literature. The first research question asked what was the lived experience of Career Change Academics in the formation of their professional identity? This question is answered in the Group Experiential Themes (GET) 'I felt like an outsider', 'I get by with a little help from my friends', and 'my professional identity is a work in progress'. Taken together, we have gained a sense that the experience of transitioning to a career in HE was not what they had expected; their imagined future was not their reality. The Career Change Academics felt lonely and sought support through networking and Continual Professional Development (CPD). The Career Change Academics felt their professional identity was a combination of former and new experiences and shared the sense that their identities were still forming.

The second research question asked what Career Change Academics perceived they contributed to Higher Education (HE). This research question was answered by the fourth group experiential theme, 'I am here to teach future practitioners' and a sub theme from the third group experiential theme, 'Students have a big impact on my identity'. The focus and motivation for the Career Change Academic was that of supporting the students using their practitioner experience as a lens to teach future practitioners. They brought to The University up-to-date experiences that informed the design of programmes, as well as bringing real-life examples of work practices within the learning environment.

The two research questions will be answered further in this chapter by discussing each of the four themes in turn as they relate to the Literature Review (Chapter 2) along with wider empirical research, concepts and theories. The first research question is

intensive and incorporates most of the GETs as well utilising empirical research and theoretical concepts. The themes are discussed in light of three recognised theories from Merleau-Ponty (1945/2014), Roccas and Brewer (2002), and Heidegger (1962/2019) and are, in the majority, sequentially ordered to follow the narrative experiences of the Career Change Academics. The chapter then ends with a discussion of implications of the findings, followed by reflections of my own development and areas for further research.

Research Question 1: What is the lived experience of Career Change Academics in the formation of their professional identity?

I felt like an outsider

This section covers the first theme in the Analysis Chapter, 'I felt like an outsider'. This section incorporates the sub-themes 'I felt deceived' and 'I was unsure if my experience was as it should be' and 'I experienced culture shock'.

The Career Change Academics in this research felt alone and were unsure if they had been forgotten, unsure if their experience of transitioning to teaching in HE was as it should have been. This was underpinned by a mismatch between their perceived expectations of working in HE and their lived reality. The most significant area underpinning the subtheme of feeling deceived is that they were enticed to change career and work at The University because of their value as practitioners, but, in reality, they discovered that their experience was regarded as being less valuable than the value attributed to the research of traditional academics.

A significant question left unanswered by the literature concerns the effect of the new Research Excellence Framework (REF) on the lived experience of Career Change Academics (Torrance, 2020). Participants in this research all had a focus on teaching at the start of their employment with no contractual requirement to carry out or publish research. As such, I was interested to see if this clarity of role and focus enabled the Career Change Academics to feel accepted by their traditional academic colleagues because they had a different specialism of being a former practitioner who teaches. Even without the pressure to publish they experienced the policies and processes to be biased against those without research experience and publications. Policies, such

as the promotions procedure and grants application forms, were designed for traditional academics resulting in the Career Change Academics feeling undervalued and betrayed. The University has separate career tracks and different promotions criteria for those who are on teaching contracts as opposed to those who have research as part of their contract, yet despite this the participants felt the process was designed for traditional academics. The participants felt their status and identity was belittled and valued less than their traditional academic peers. Research conducted by Wood, Farmer and Goodall (2016) found that knowledge gained via research was considered as higher quality than knowledge gained from practitioner experience. This research highlights the case of the Career Change Academics that are viewed as being 'other', differently valued, to the traditional academics.

The difference between literature explored in the Literature Review (Chapter 2) and this research is that the Career Change Academics described within the existing literature referred to themselves as feeling like frauds because they did not match up to the expectations of a traditional academic in terms of publishing their own research. In contrast the Career Change Academics in this study shared a sense of being considered as a second class of academic whose worth and value is lower than that of their traditional peers. The concept of different understandings or values placed on academics and their status links with the existing literature based on research that took place before the changes in the REF (*e.g.,* Shreeve, 2011; Smith and Boyd, 2012; Duffy, 2013; Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016; Dashper and Fletcher, 2019). The shift from feeling like a fraud to identifying as a second-class citizen is important and worthy of further exploration.

The timing of the release of the new REF, ahead of the new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), is also worth considering. Changes in the new REF have already altered employment practices (Pilcher *et al.*, 2017; Dickinson, Fowler and Griffiths, 2022). The sector is just beginning to hear the implication of the new TEF as this research is being prepared for submission, as such we do not know what the implications of the new TEF will mean for academics or for students. Henkel highlights that HE is at the mercy of changes in policies at university level (Henkel, 2005). It is worth noting that The University has spent approximately five years preparing to meet the requirements of the new REF and that all four participants in this research started

working at The University within this time frame. A substantial discovery within this research is that we now know that the new REF had a significant effect on the lived experience of the Career Change Academics at The University. The participants were unaware as to what the new REF might mean both for their career transition and professional identity formation as they did not expect to feel like second class academics. This is a substantial discovery as until this research was conducted, there was no empirical research highlighting the experiences of Career Change Academics who were employed on teaching contracts without the requirement, or pressure, to publish. In contrast, the new REF metrics evaluate the impact of publications and so Career Change Academics with industry experience could be likely to have a positive impact as their experience of practice can be applied to the research.

As we await the first iteration of the new TEF we cannot do more than speculate what effect this may have on the future dynamic between teaching and research in HE institutions. This research has shown that the introduction of metrics such as the REF and TEF have an impact on the lived experience and work of staff and that close attention should be paid to the way in which the new TEF is explained to staff, considering the impact this may have on the institution, an individual's work and therefore their professional identity.

A sub-theme resonating with all four participants was that they were unsure if their experience was as it should have been. As outlined in the Literature Review (Chapter 2) it is widely understood that there are three integral concepts within identity formation and that our identities are formed by our past experiences, our context and what we imagine our future selves might be like. The mismatch between their imagined provisional selves and their lived experience is explored using a theory developed by Husserl (Husserl, 1931/2012) and Merleau-Ponty (1945/2014).

Merleau-Ponty (1945/2014) developed Husserl's (Husserl, 1931/2012) theory of protention and retention regarding experiences, meaning past experiences and imagining future experiences, more specifically stating that a preserved perception continues to exist (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2014). The concept of preserved perception is helpful when considering Career Change Academics who were found to be unsure if their experience of transitioning to HE was as they thought it should have been and

that they experienced culture shock. This uncertainty caused them to review their preconceived ideas and could therefore create new future imaginations, or protention experiences. This is relevant because imagined experiences, such as how an industry specialist might be received in HE, is a living internalised memory, or protention experience for the Career Change Academic.

The concept of preserving protentive experiences whilst retaining new experiences is complex. Figure 10 below shows how a person at a fixed point on the horizontal line can look back at retentive experiences that help them make sense of the current situation. The dotted lines above have been added by Kozak (2020) to show that imagining how one might look, or who one might be, in the future can influence who we are today (Kozak, 2020). In the case of the Career Change Academic, they might imagine how students will receive them as an industry specialist but this protentional memory may need to be developed when they first experience a class full of students and retain a new memory.

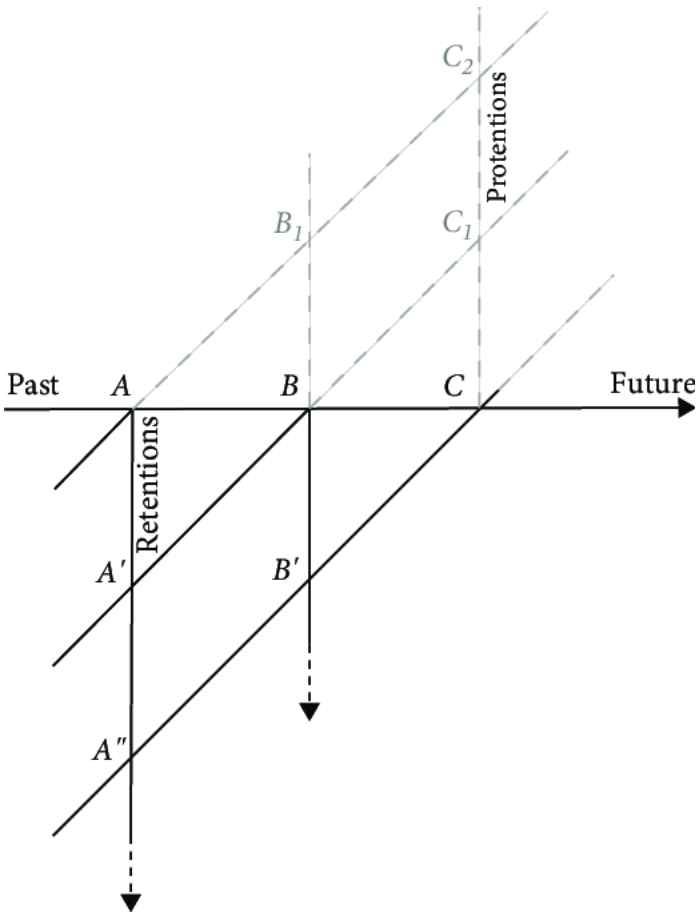


Figure 10: Model of Protention and Retention. Merleau-Ponty (1945/2014) edited by Kozak (Kozak, 2020, p. 27)

Mearleau-Ponty refers to time as if it were a lens through which we see our concrete experience stating, “whatever is past or future for me is present in the world” (Merleau-Ponty 1945/2014, p.473). In this way, experiences are temporal and interact with each other, like a continually growing portfolio of snapshots of events that we continue to experience in their preserved and present state. This model fits with the Career Change Academics' experience because it recognises the significance of provisional selves and its role in the formation of one’s identity (Markus and Nurius, 1986; Ibarra, 1999).

Identity formation is an ongoing process and the identity work conducted by the academic transcends time and delves into personal experience and imagination. Dashper and Fletcher state:

> *“Academic identity is an ongoing process through which individuals attempt to present themselves in relation to a variety of available discourses within academia, their subject or discipline, their institution and their department”* (Dashper and Fletcher, 2019, p. 2).

The Career Change Academics in this research were navigating not only their imagined identities but also a new work culture and new currency where knowledge by publication was considered more valuable than knowledge from experience (Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016). They entered a new world where their task was to navigate their expectations as well as a new work culture. This leads to the second and third group experiential themes which discuss the Career Change Academics' lived experiences as they pertain to their identity formation and the significance of support from their colleagues.

My professional identity is a work in progress and I get by with a little help from my friends.

This section discusses two group experiential themes; the third theme ‘My professional identity is a work in progress’ is answered, in part, by the second experiential theme ‘I get by with a little help from my friends’. These two themes are therefore considered together. The largest group experiential theme in the analysis was that the Career Change Academics felt that their professional identity was a work

in progress and that ‘Students had a big impact on my identity’. These GETS are explored with Roccas and Brewer’s (2002) empirically designed findings that offer a theoretical concept called social identity complexity which has been used as a theoretical concept for empirical research (Brewer and Pierce, 2005; Miller, Brewer and Arbuckle, 2009). It is the concept of a multi-faceted understanding of differentiation and integration between identities that has led to the use of the work of Roccas and Brewer as a tool to scaffold the discussion between empirical and theoretical literature alongside the findings of this research. This discussion then considers how the structures of multiple ingroup identities could be utilised to upscale this research.

The literature says that Career Change Academics describe their identity as being in a liminal state as they no longer feel they fully identify with either their former or their new identity (Ibarra, 1999; Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016; Stetson *et al.*, 2020; Herman *et al.*, 2021). Heidegger (1962/2019), Merleau-Ponty (1945/2014), and Roccas and Brewer (2002) all propose that the formation of one’s identity is not a unidirectional transition where an individual travels from one professional identity to another, rather it is a multidimensional journey where individuals shift between multiple understandings of their identity. This Discussion Chapter pushes beyond the question of liminality to ask how the Career Change Academics identities are structured and if their status as being between two identities is a permanent condition.

As discussed in the Literature Review Chapter (Chapter 2) Roccas and Brewer’s (2002) social identity complexity theory proposes that an individual can be a member of multiple groups, or identities, at one time. These identities can differentiate or integrate according to the way the individual identifies with their complex identities.

Figure 11 offers four alternative forms of identity complexity and diagrammatises the extent to which they overlap.

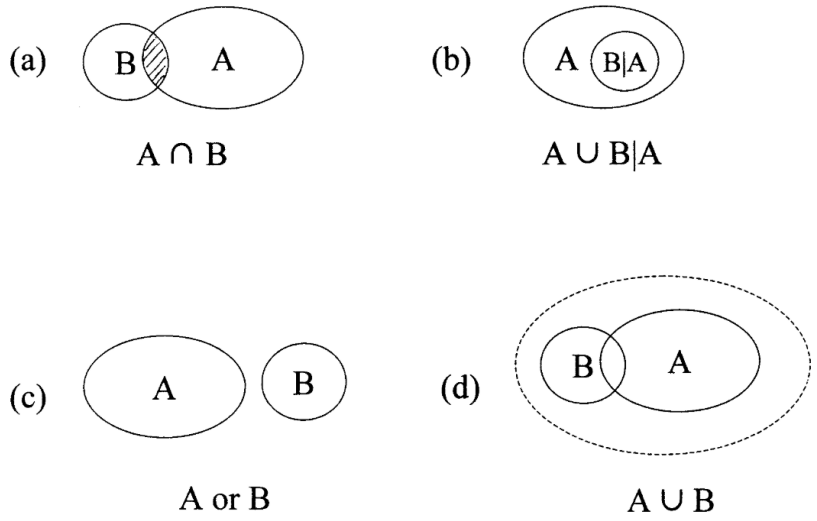


Figure 11: Structures of multiple ingroup representations (Roccas and Brewer, 2002, p. 89).

The structures of multiple ingroup representations within the social identity complexity theory are described below with examples of identities that reflect that of a Career Change Academic who are both former practitioners and new teaching academics. It is worth noting here that the social identity complexity model does not limit the number of identities but depicts two identities, titled A and B in upper case, for diagrammatic simplicity. The four ingroup representations are labelled (a)-(d) and enclosed in brackets.

Figure 11(a) **Intersection.** Two identities overlapping to create an in-group, such as practitioner and academic. The shaded intersection, or in-group, is practitioner academics and is low in complexity, someone is in the ingroup or out of the ingroup.
Figure 11(b) **Dominance**. The dominant identity is practitioner, with multiple other identities, such as academic, that are subordinate to a dominant identity. Figure11(b) is also low in complexity; one identity is claimed as dominant, or superior to other identities.
Figure 11(c) **Compartmentalisation.** The two identities are apart from each other. Practitioner identity is differentiated from academic identity. One identity might be more prominent than the other but there is no intersection or ingroup between the two. Someone from identity A or B could be in the in-group at any one time. This representation has a mid-level complexity score as the separate identities recognise

that there is difference between the two identities. Compartmentalisation is higher in complexity than the previous two structures but lower in complexity than Figure 11(d). Figure 11(d) **Merger.** There are multiple overlapping identities that are combined within a holistic identity that transcends divisions between individuals, or groups, and their opinions and or experiences. An example of a merged identity in this research could be someone describing themselves as a teaching fellow who uses their practitioner identity and experience to teach as an academic within HE (Roccas and Brewer, 2002).

When the Career Change Academics were asked how they would answer the question, 'what do you do for a living?', all four participants stated their former practitioner title. Sam, Charlie and Alex followed this with a sub-clause stating that they are a former practitioner that now teaches. In contrast, Robin described their identity by naming their former profession with a recognition that their professional identity has changed but that they did not have a label for their second form of professional identity.

Sam, Charlie and Alex describe an intersection as depicted in Figure 11 (a) with the prevailing identity being their former profession which is then intersected with their new identity as teaching in HE. It could be argued that Robin is at a pre-intersection stage with an unknown, not yet titled second identity depicted below in Figure 12 (-a).

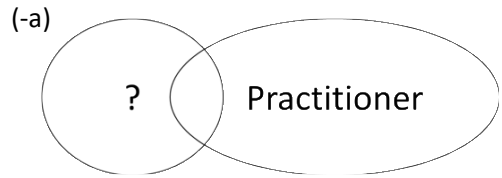


Figure 12: (-a) unknown in-group representation

The interview schedule was designed to ask the participants at the beginning as well as the end of the interview how they would describe their professional identity, to see if reflecting on their transition to HE affected their description (see Appendix H for the interview schedule). The result was that Robin and Charlie used the same description of their professional identity at the start and end of the interview, whereas Alex and Sam used different terms to describe their professional identity.

Sam went from describing themselves at the start of the interview as a practitioner who teaches, to describing themselves at the end of the interview as a lecturer with practitioner experience who both teaches and does research whilst keeping up with practitioners in industry. Sam's second description is in line with Figure 11(d) depicting a merged identity with a holistic approach in describing their identity, while integrating multiple identities and experiences to form part of their merged identity. Alex similarly went from describing their identity as a practitioner who works at a university at the start of the interview, to stating at the end of the interview: *"I view myself as a bit of everything, so a bit of a [practitioner], bit of a teacher, um, so it's like an amalgamation of lots of different parts of an identity"* (Alex). Alex described the integration of their multiple experiences and identities within a wider description of their identity as a teacher in HE; a description that also fits the structure of merged identity in Figure 11(d).

When considering the disparity between the level of social identity complexity attained by the Career Change Academics, we should also then consider the impact of variable experiences that resulted in different structures of identity. There are two situational differences between the experiences of Alex and Sam, compared with the experiences of Robin and Charlie. The first is the amount of time they have worked for The University and the second is the disparity of opportunity the participants experienced with developing support networks by participating in Continuing Professional Development (CPD), in particular, assessments that result in varying levels of Fellowship with AdvanceHE. These two differences will now be addressed in turn.

The first area to be discussed is the difference in the length of time the two sets of participants had worked at The University. Similar empirical research and accompanying literature reviewing the identity formation of academics states that it can take three to five years to form a new professional identity (Boyd, 2010; Smith and Boyd, 2012). Utilising Roccas and Brewer's (2002) model of identity structure representations we might infer that Alex and Sam describe a merged (Figure 11(d)) identity which coheres with theory that identity formations take around five years to consolidate after a time of change. In comparison, Robin and Charlie had worked at The University for under two years, the majority of which was working from home

because of the pandemic. Their description of identities is aligned with an intersected identity (Figure 11(a)).

It is noteworthy that the majority of this timeframe included working from home because of the COVID-19 pandemic and so it is valuable to explore how this experience could have influenced the identity formation of Career Change Academics. Smith et al (2022) conducted research exploring the effect of the pandemic in academic identity. The research resulted in three key themes; identity disruption, sensemaking resources for identity work, and nostalgia for what had been lost (Smith *et al.*, 2022). Alex and Sam both spoke of the changes they experienced in needing to meet students online instead of in person. The teacher and student dynamics are discussed later in this chapter but were cited by Alex and Robin as a significant part of their identity formation. This aligns with the sense that the need to shift online was a disruption, rather than a change that resulted in not meeting students. Charlie, Robin, Alex and Sam all spoke of a sense of achievement when they not only transitioned their teaching to online but spoke with pride about the changes and improvements they made as they learnt to utilise the new digital resources. The final theme from Smith *et al.,* (2022) was the nostalgia for what had been lost in the transition to teaching online with particular reference to the reduced opportunities for informal networking and socialising with peers (Smith *et al.*, 2022). These findings were echoed in a cross-sectional study led by Filho *et al.,* (2021) stating that academics felt socially isolated as a result of not being able to work on campus, but balanced this with a statistic stating that 60% of academics valued the additional time they had at home with family (Filho *et al.*, 2021). Charlie commented that it felt good to work alongside others while adjusting teaching for online delivery, but apart from this comment there was a sense in which the Career Change Academics had wanted to be in person and on campus with their colleagues.

Research conducted on the mental health and wellbeing of HE staff during the pandemic further revealed that while the majority of academics felt supported by their HE employers, there were discrepancies in terms of the awareness of technology enhanced learning that related to age, employment status and social identity (Dinu *et al.*, 2021) and that this left some academics feeling isolated. Dinu *et al.,* (2021) also suggested that those with stronger social identities were more likely to predict

enhanced wellbeing (Dinu *et al.*, 2021). Alex and Sam noted that they continued to keep in contact with their networks by using MS Teams® chat function as well as attending and organising online coffee catch ups with their departments and wider network of colleagues. Charlie and Robin also spoke positively about the use of online working but felt they were missing opportunities to network in-person, as they did not have significant support networks before they transitioned to working from home and were unsure what support and CPD was available for them. In sum, having worked at The University for nearly five years Alex and Sam built multiple support networks and spoke multiple times about how effective these networks were in helping them both in their day-to-day work as well as in forming their merged identity. In contrast, Charlie and Robin had worked at The University for under two years with the majority of time working remotely and spoke of individuals and much smaller networks. Charlie and Robin described what Roccas and Brewer (2002) would call an intersected identity. Having discussed the impact of the different amount of time the participants worked at The University this discussion now turns to the second situational difference.

The second situational difference between the experiences of Alex and Sam, in contrast to that of Charlie and Robin, was the varying level of support received from colleagues through support networks. All four participants referred to the need to rely on support from their work friends, which formed the second group experiential theme in the Analysis Chapter, 'I get by with a little help from my friends'. While Alex and Sam shared multiple examples of times they have relied on colleagues for support, Robin and Charlie shared a few examples of supportive colleagues but named a greater number of times where they felt they needed more collegiate support than they had received. One example is that Charlie said they would have appreciated being able to physically drop-in on someone as they might have done prior to the pandemic because they were unsure if they were assessing students properly. This example suggests that a lack of opportunity to create effective support networks could result in a poor or lower quality student experience. This research highlighted that Career Change Academics felt that they had to create their own support networks. While individual mentors were mentioned in interviews the most significant area of support was that of informal mentoring found within informal support networks. A common thread throughout this theme was that unofficial mentoring had a positive effect on identity formation. This is aligned with the literature suggesting that mentoring has a

positive effect on the identity formation of academics in HE (Clouder *et al.*, 2012; Izadinia, 2014; Lankveld *et al.*, 2017; Herman *et al.*, 2021).

Alex and Sam attribute their success to the support of their collegiate support networks, even stating they would not have survived their career transition without them. Alex and Sam named the Education Department's taught programmes as helping them both to create these support networks; this links with the subtheme in the Analysis Chapter, 'studying helped me know who I am'. Alex and Sam referred to the material and assessments of the HE qualifications as key activities that helped them to reflect and internally negotiate their career change and that these reflections were shared with their peers on the taught programme as well as forming part of their assessment for credit. It is these conversations and experiences that Sam and Alex reflected on when describing their merged identities. They both spoke of the assessed tasks and related feedback that scaffolded their understanding and enabled them to reflect upon and share their decision to transition into teaching in HE. The programme director was named as someone they both turned to as an informal mentor long after their programmes had finished. Upon successful completion of the programmes Sam and Alex received a HE teaching qualification and fellowship with AdvanceHE which is a recognised teaching qualification across the sector. In contrast, Robin and Charlie were unable to undertake these programmes because the contracts they were on meant that they were not eligible and/or supported to undertake the programmes. As a result, Robin and Charlie did not hold HE teaching qualifications and so did not have the same opportunities as Alex and Sam to create support networks through these programmes or hold teaching qualifications that could have added legitimacy and intrapersonal acceptance between their intersected identities.

This discussion now asks what it was about the differences in the length of time in post, along with larger support networks, that has resulted in different structures of social identity complexity. Ibarra and Barbulecu (2010) attribute successful identity work to be linked with successful narratives that have been accepted by both the narrator and the recipients of the story. This is in line with Alex and Sam's experience of reflecting and processing their identity with colleagues on the taught programmes. The taught programmes are usually attended by all new teaching staff and so would have comprised Career Change Academics as well as traditional academics. It is

within this context that Sam and Alex reflected and shared their journey to becoming teachers in HE. The task of reflecting on one's identity and reviewing it in the light of their new employment aligns with Ibarra's (1999) theory of provisional selves, which was followed by a subsequent theory of the role of narrative identity work and play, in particular the role of using stories to narrate their journey to a new professional identity (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010). Having their career change stories accepted by peers in their new context links with the wider literature on identity formation that identities are formed as a combination of our past experiences, current context, and imagining the future (see Figure 3, Chapter 2). The acceptance of their narrated identity both by their peers and through the marked assessments resulted in an internal acceptance, or intrapersonal acceptance between their identities. Linking to the literature around the formation of identity as being made of past, present and future Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) state, "Stories help people articulate provisional selves, link the past and the future into a harmonious, continuous sense of self, and enlist others to lend social reality to the desired changes" (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010, p. 138).

There is therefore a link that should be explored between social identity complexity (Roccas and Brewer, 2002) and narrative identity theory (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010). Narrating one's identity connects the concept of the self-narrative as a link between interpersonal acceptance, others accepting one's story, and subsequent intrapersonal acceptance of their identities. This is of significance as we explore the link between the length of time spent working at The University and the extent to which Career Change Academics had the opportunity to network and narrate their transition experiences as they explored their provisional selves. Wood, Farmer and Goodall draw links between Ibarra's (1999) theory of narration as a form of identity work that enables the storyteller to trial their provisional selves as a constructed story to see how they, and others, respond to their stories, or provisional selves. Ibarra and Barbulescu offer the concept of narrative identity work as a tool for enabling those who change careers to rehearse and negotiate their identity. The authors theorise that "narrating the self-changes the self" (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010, p. 150). A stumbling block that all four participants mentioned when narrating their identities was that they were unsure if they should describe themselves as teaching fellows or lecturers because some departments call all teaching staff Lecturers, where other departments use their titles within their contract, i.e. Teaching Fellow or Lecturer. This

recent change happened within the past two years and the lack of consistency across The University compounded confusion for the Career Change Academics who were in a formative stage in terms of naming their identity in the transition from a former career. This confusion was still felt by the participants who were five years into their role, and as such, will feature in the recommendations section later in this chapter. This lack of certainty regarding their professional titles left the Career Change Academics feeling different, or othered, from their colleagues.

There is a link between the participants not knowing which title they should use to refer to themselves and the discussion focusing on theme one of this research, 'I felt like an outsider', and subsequently feeling like a 'second class' academic. Not knowing which title should be used while narrating their identity story would affect both the way the story is received and therefore how the story was internalised. Ibarra and Barblescu (2010) suggest that incoherent, or rejected narratives, have protracted the transition from a format to a new identity. The change in titles for those on teaching only contracts othered the Career Change Academics in this research and they found that neither they, nor their colleagues knew how to name their identity as they had not followed a traditional career path. The success of a provisional narrative depends on the ability to narrate their identity, their story being accepted by others as well as being accepted by the individual narrating their story. Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) propose that those who change careers who are not following an institutionally normative career path require an enhanced internal and external narrative of their identity formation proposing that "In work role transitions, self-narratives that contain elements of cultural archetypes are more likely to achieve authenticity and validation outcomes" (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010, p. 143).

The acceptance of their identity stories by their colleagues and the students enabled them to resolve intrapersonal identity conflict resulting in a merged identity. However, this research has also shown that without interpersonal identity acceptance there is likely to be a lack of intrapersonal identity acceptance. This discovery sheds light on the research conducted by Wood, Farmer and Goodall (2016), which stated that Career Change Academics describe their identity as being in a liminal state, neither former identity nor academic but somewhere in between. This research begins to develop this research and suggests that not all Career Change Academics are

destined to permanently inhabit a liminal identity. Sam and Alex were given time and supportive networks and described merged identities. This research has shown that the phenomenon of being-with colleagues and relying on support networks has enabled the Career Change Academics to narrate their transition between multiple identities.

The GET, 'My professional Identity is a work in progress', includes the subtheme, 'students have a big impact on my professional identity'. This theme is discussed in more depth in the response to the second research question but also merits mentioning in response to answering this first research question regarding the lived experience of Career Change Academics. The stories about students acted, in the majority, as a positive influence on their identity formation. The Career Change Academics shared stories of anticipation as they waited to start their new roles so they could meet their students. The thank you notes and any negative feedback given by students were all taken personally as if they were critiquing the essence of their identity. Overall, the Career Change Academics felt that the students both accepted and valued their practitioner experience.

Dasein and the lived experience of the Career Change Academics

The Methodology Chapter outlined the Heideggerian concept of three structures of Care, or concern, within *Dasein* as Thrownness, Fallenness, and Existence. Remembering Figure 5 in the Methodology Chapter, Heidegger viewed the structure of Care to be the result of the influence of time interacting with *Dasein* that would result in a state of Care. These three states of Care are temporal and are not necessarily experienced in sequential order as every activity or experience has the potential to affect an individual's structure of *Dasein*. These three structures of Care will now be discussed in relation to the lived experience of the Career Change Academics, continuing the discussion of the role of interpersonal and intrapersonal identity acceptance as its link with narrative identity theory (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010) and social identity complexity theory (Roccas and Brewer, 2002). Drawing parallels between Heidegger's phenomenological theory that who we Be is temporal Figure 14 has shown that the Career Change Academics experiences are temporal.

Being-in-the-world

The first structure of Care Heidegger named as Being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 2019). This first theme directly links to the first GET in this research, 'I feel like an outsider'. For Career Change Academics this would be the time when they were thrown into a new work culture and environment with new languages and currencies of worth and felt like second class academics. The Career Change Academics experienced the additional structure of identities that I offered as an *a priori* structure of identity that precedes those offered by Roccas and Brewer (2002) in their social identity complexity model. This is depicted in Figure 13(-a) below, as well as earlier in this chapter, and depicts the state where the Career Change Academic cannot yet name their new professional identity and so does not know who is in their in-group. An example within this research is that of Robin who shared they had minimal opportunities to network with other new academics and find role models and or others who had similar experiences of transitioning careers to work in HE. This is in line with Ibarra's (1999) theory that people feel uncomfortable and not authentic when they cannot draw a continuous link between their former and new identities (Ibarra, 1999). In addition to this, Robin had reduced opportunities to undertake CPD or engage in HE teaching qualifications as their career path, and contract, had not followed a traditional academic career path. The lack of opportunity to narrate their career change and new identity, arguably, has resulted in a lack of interpersonal and intrapersonal acceptance of a multifaceted identity structure.

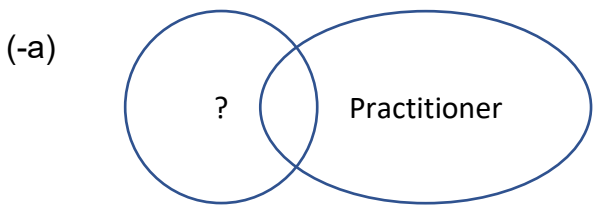


Figure 13: (-a) unknown in-group representation

Being-in-the-world is an undifferentiated state resulting in a polarised in-group identity resulting in score a low score in both social identity complexity as well as on the Integrative Complexity scale that social identity complexity is based upon (Baker-Brown *et al.*, 2009). This research suggests that Career Change Academics who have small support networks, little opportunities to meet other Career Change Academics, and or engage in CPD may be less likely to integrate a new academic identity with their former practitioner identity.

Being-with-others

The second structure of Care is Being-with-others (Heidegger, 1962/2019). This state of Being directly relates to the second Group Experiential Theme, 'I get by with a little help from my friends' as well as the third theme, 'My professional identity is a work in progress'. The participants in this research, along with traditional academics in literature, searched for others who looked like them. Career Change Academics in this state of Being, or *Dasein*, looked for their in-group who could act as role models, or even as proof of concept. This is depicted as either an intersection of their identities as practitioner and academic, in the greyed-out area of Figure 11(a), or a dominant identity, Figure 11(b) which depicts that identity A is a dominant identity and that within that there is an ingroup of (A) and (B) but what within this in-group the practitioner identity comes before the academic identity.

Figure 11: Structures of multiple ingroup representations (a), (b) (Roccas and Brewer, 2002b, p. 89).

Heidegger referred to the concept of copying or looking to others to help define identity as an inauthentic *Dasein* or a fallen state (Heidegger, 1962/2019), meaning that an individual would fall in to, and adopt, a culture or way of Being that others offered rather than defining their own Being. This research, along with the social identity complexity theoretical model (Roccas and Brewer 2002) suggests that the being with others, finding an in-group, is a natural stage in identity formation and forms part of the three themes of identity formation as a combination of past experiences, present context, and imagining future experiences (Ibarra, 1999; Vuorikoski, 2001; Geijsel and Meijers, 2005; Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010; Williams, 2010; Kaplan and Flum, 2012; Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016). Charlie, Alex and Sam described themselves initially as practitioners who teach, describing an intersection or ingroup within their identity. For Alex and Sam an intersected structure of identities was a transitional stage in their identity formation as they explored and developed their understanding

of their identities with others through narrative identity work (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010) and intrapersonal reflection.

In this research, Charlie described their identity by referring to others they consider to be part of their 'ingroup' that they found at another HE institution. This smaller interpersonal network enabled them to Be, *Dasein*, with others who had made similar career changes. As Charlie had worked at The University for less than two years at the time of the interview, spoke of smaller support networks and was not able to undertake CPD in HE teaching qualifications, it is not surprising that the intersected identity best describes Charlie's structure of ingroup identities. This research suggests that Charlie could benefit from expanding their support network, and informal mentors, within the institution and that they could be supported to explore the expectations and HE teacher training in order to support their contextual awareness and provide opportunities for networking.

Being-oneself

Heidegger refers to the third structure of Care as being authentic existence (Heidegger, 1962/2019). This third structure of Care is existentially oriented towards the reality that life, in itself, is temporal. However, the subject of this research is the lived experience of Career Change Academics and their transition to teaching in HE, and as such as is situational identity rather than a ontological understanding of mortality or as Heidegger called it Being-towards-death.

The link between Heidegger's understanding of being-oneself is that Alex and Sam described a holistic identity that aligned with Roccas and Brewer's (2002) definition of a merged identity.

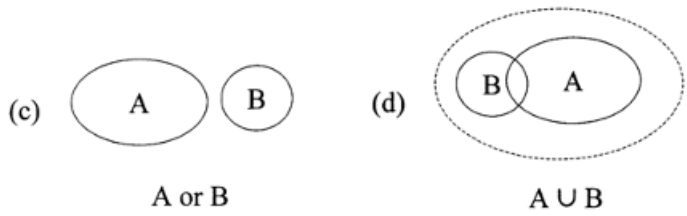


Figure 11: Structures of multiple ingroup representations (c), (d) (Roccas and Brewer, 2002b, p. 89).

The Merged identity Figure 11(d) depicts a meta-awareness of the situated Career Change Academic. Alex and Sam described acceptance of their merged identity by their peers as well as a self-acceptance. Using social identity complexity as a model one can see how an individual could shift between different structures of identity each time an identity is challenged, or a new identity is introduced. This research uses social identity complexity to explore in depth what is happening during the liminal stages of identity formation as described by Wood, Farmer, Goodall (2016) whose research stated that the participants in their research were in liminal state of identity. White *et al*., (2014) research stated that academic identity formation is a career-long process. This research shows that everyone has the latent potential to shift into a liminal state of identity but that Career Change Academics are not sentenced to a perpetual liminal state between identities.

Conceptual diagram

As a result of this research Figure 14 is offered as a conceptual model for interrelation, and internal factors that affect identity formation. This conceptual model shows that identity formation is both situationally and epistemologically interpretivist, meaning that an individual's experiences are analysed within their context. The model combines the three themes in literature focusing on the role of past experiences, present context and the role of imagining the future self on identity formation. These three themes are filtered through the individual's interpersonal and interpersonal acceptance resulting in one of five levels of identity structure which is a development of Roccas and Brewer's (2002) social identity complexity in adding offering a preceding structure of identity. The five structures of identity are: Unknown Intersection (-a), Intersection (a), Compartmentalisation (b), Dominant (c), and Merged (d). The addition of Unknown Intersection (-a) incorporates the experiences of Career Change Academics who do not yet know how to name their second identity.

The cyclical structure of the arrows in this diagram shows the transitional nature of identity formation. At any point in time an individual can be influenced by memories of past experiences, experience something in their present context, or develop their concept of their provisional selves. This conceptual diagram shows that the transitional and dynamic structure of identity formation as fluid and multi-dimensional. As such, an

individual can transition between multiple in-group representations which could be described as social identity flexibility.

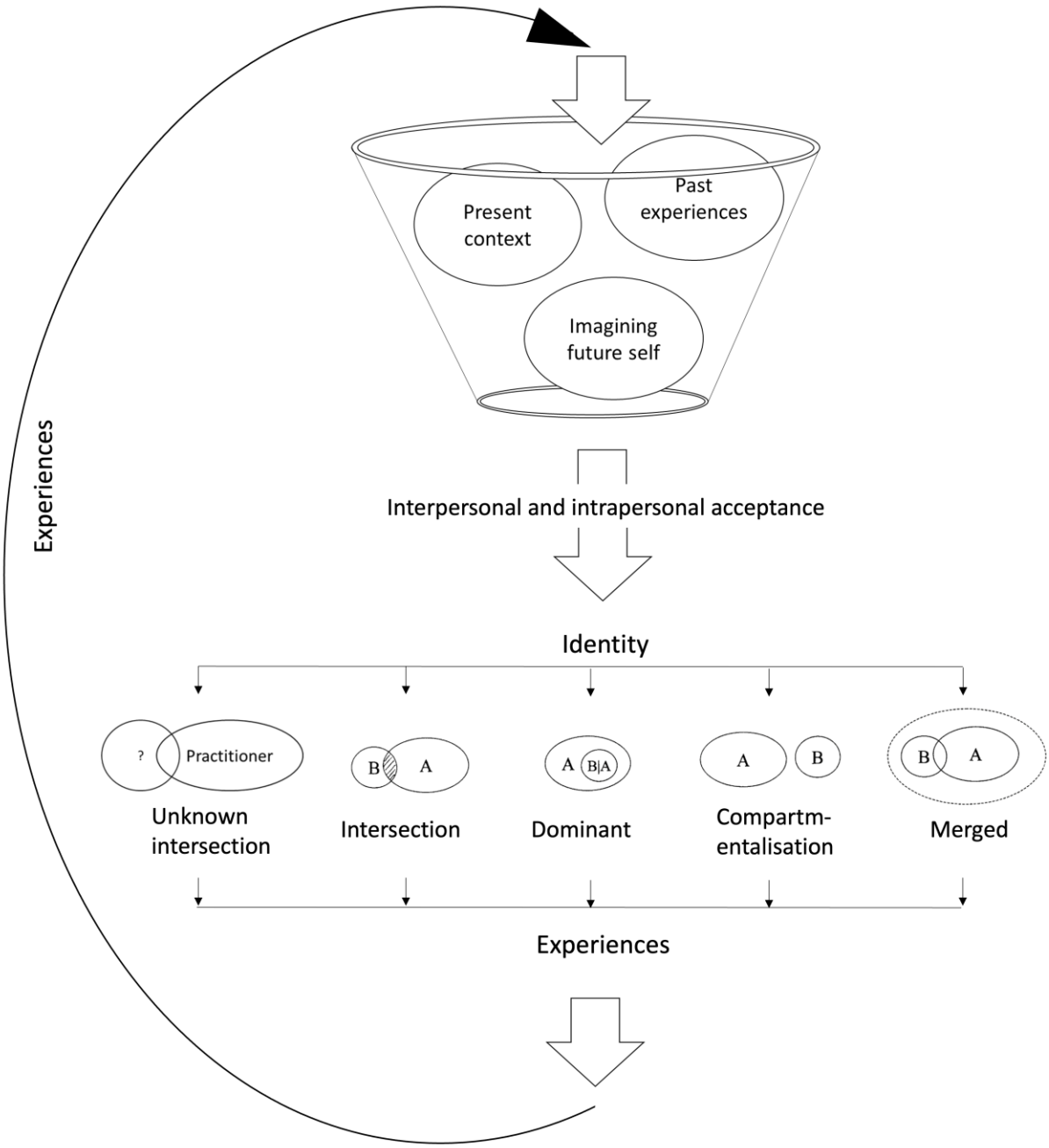


Figure 14: Conceptual diagram of the identity formation cycle

The first research question asked: What is the lived experience of Career Change Academics in their transition to HE? This research has shown that the Career Change Academics felt like outsiders and were surprised that their experience was not what they thought it would be.

This discussion has shown that the changes in the REF resulted in their feeling as if they felt like outsiders and considered to be second class academics by traditional academics, with institutional policies and processes that had not caught up with the changes in policies in terms of hiring new staff with different job titles as a result of the changes in the REF.

All four Career Change Academics relied on their informal networks to provide support as they explored their identity formation. Within two years Robin and Charlie's identity structure could be described as an unknown intersection, or intersectional identity. This is likely to relate to their being at The University for under two years, having smaller support networks, and not having been able to study for HE teaching qualifications. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the requirement to work from home impacted all four participants but had a significant impact on the identity formation of Charlie and Robin who felt isolated and ill-equipped with only small networks. In contrast Alex and Sam who had been in post for five years at the time of the interview described merged identities and ascribed this to their support networks and the HE teaching qualifications.

In summary, Career Change Academics experienced feeling like outsiders when they started at The University, they felt deceived and as if they were unsure if they had been forgotten. The changes in the new REF resulted in their feeling as if they were treated as second class academics. In addition, this research has shown that the identity structure of Career Change Academics can move between multiple different structures of ingroup identities. This is contrary to the findings of Wood, Farmer and Goodall's (2016) whose research showed that Career Change Academics occupy a liminal state of identity. The findings of this research are illustrated in Figure 14 that offers an expanded and encompassing conceptual model of identity formation. The diagram shows how the lived experience of Career Change Academics encompasses their past experiences, present context and their imagined provisional selves as they

trailed their identity as a form of narrative identity work as they explored the level of interpersonal and intrapersonal acceptance.

Research Question 2: What do Career Change Academics perceive they bring to HE?

The strength of the answer to the second research question is captured in the title of the fourth Group Experiential Theme, 'I am here to teach future practitioners'. This section is underpinned by three subthemes, the two subthemes, 'Industry is the lens through which I teach', and 'I want to have a real-world impact' are from the Group Experiential Theme, 'I am here to teach future practitioners'. The third subtheme, 'Students have a big impact on my identity' is borrowed from the third Group Experiential Theme. At first glance this theme seems to belong in the answer to research question one, and it does feature there to an extent. However, this theme offers an ontological twist in the reciprocal relationship between the Career Change Academic's motivation to teach students, and the subsequent impact that student success has on the identity of the Career Change Academic, as such this is best discussed in tandem with the contributions Career Change Academics bring to HE institutions.

This section outlines that in order to teach future practitioners the Career Change Academics felt they acted as role models. This is followed by a discussion around the ways Career Change Academics sought to enhance the student experience and student outcomes. Finally this second question is answered by outlining the real-world impact that the Career Change Academics seek to create as part of their contribution to The University and the wider field of their former practice.

I am here to teach future practitioners

The motivation to teach future practitioners was the only theme that was common to both the interviews with the four Career Change Academics and across the six empirical research journals discussed in the literature review (Boyd, 2010; Shreeve, 2011; Smith and Boyd, 2012; Duffy, 2013; Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016; Dashper and Fletcher, 2019). The uniformity across empirical literature and the findings of this

research is noteworthy, even though this motivation is not unique to the position of the Career Change Academic (Lankveld *et al.*, 2017). The Career Change Academics felt that their role in The University was that of a role model and an embodied example within the classroom of the kind of career that can be achieved as result of achieving HE qualifications. The Career Change Academics in this research spoke of being role models that aimed to support students in providing them with the up-to-date skills and practices in order to support the development of the student's professional identity. There has been an increase in universities looking to support students in the development of their professional identities throughout their studies (Barbarà-i-Molinero, Cascón-Pereira and Hernández-Lara, 2017). There has also been an increase in peer mentoring and facilitation in order to develop peer facilitation by working with students who are in the final year of their degree in supporting those who are in their first year (Clouder *et al.*, 2012). These developments show that HE institutions are keen not just for their students to achieve their qualifications but to develop a professional identity that increases student employability. The Career Change Academics believed that they acted as role models and taught through the lens of teaching future professionals and colleagues, rather than teaching students to pass assessments.

Enhancing the student experience and employability

A significant metric that universities are measured against, in surveys such as the National Student Survey (NSS), is that of the student experience and student outcomes (Office for Students, 2022b). Having spent five years preparing for the changes in the new REF, HE institutions are now following the latest guidance for the new TEF and submitting information to provide evidence of excellence in teaching, learning and student outcomes, including employability (Office for Students, 2022a). The potential impact of the TEF has begun to appear in literature questioning the pressures that the TEF would bring for academics with research as part of their contract (Perkins, 2019). A theme that the Career Change Academics all discussed is the ways in which they have worked to support student employability. An example in this research is that all the participants shared examples of bringing up-to-date examples of practitioner experience. The Career Change Academics all shared that their traditional academic colleagues turned to them for advice with updating their

taught materials and or physical resources, such as equipment or skills that are used in the work place.

In addition to being approached for advice the Career Change Academics proactively sought to update processes and equipment. Charlie discovered that The University was using equipment that was considered redundant in the workplace and so advised the department on the equipment used in industry so that students would get to grips with technical skills that directly related to the tasks they would perform as practitioners as well as replicating the kind of tasks students would be expected to complete in workplace interviews. The increase of these forms of authentic assessments are being encouraged across the sector to increase student employability and is an example HE institutions can point to in their TEF submission (Miller and Konstantinou, 2022). In a similar way Robin updated old teaching material, and Alex supported their teaching with stories and examples from their experience encouraging the use of language that would be used in the workplace.

The Career Change Academics felt they had succeeded when their students had graduated and secured employment. This is evidenced by the reciprocal subtheme, ‘students have a big impact on my professional identity’. Sam and Alex spoke with pride about the students they supported from day one to graduation and employment sharing a sense that supervising their PhD student through to completion was one of their high points in their career as an academic.

Sam and Alex spoke with pride as they detailed the jobs their former students had gone to after graduation and shared stories that their students had told them about their new jobs they had secured when catching up with students after graduation ceremonies. In contrast, Charlie and Robin had not been at The University long enough to see students through a programme to graduation but they both spoke of the ways in which they felt motivated and enthused when they could see the positive effect they had on their students. Smith and Boyd (2012) refer to a similar sense of satisfaction that is felt by the Career Change Academics in their research when they can see they have nurtured new professionals.

Real-world impact

A theme expressed by all four Career Change Academics was that of having altruistic goals that would result in real-world impact. They considered they could have real-world impact in two ways. The first was by supporting the students and empowering them to be able to go into the workplace and make a difference. Robin and Sam spoke of the soft skills such as line management that they brought to their day-to-day work. Lewis (2014) referred to this as 'academic empathy' when referring to practitioners from industry who worked alongside academics bring skills such as experience of management theory to support effectivity within HE departments (Lewis, 2014). It is noticeable that the language used by the Career Change Academics consistently referred to altruistic motives and not on personal achievements such as the quantity of publications.

The second way the Career Change Academics felt they could effect change was to conduct collegiate world-changing research, which would result in good press for The University as well as providing evidence for a REF and KEF application. Henkel (2005) makes the point that although a university is a community of scholars it also has the responsibility as a public service to respond to the needs of the wider market as well as publishing to meet the needs of internal policies and systems. The Career Change Academics are ahead of the curve as they spoke in practical terms about real-world issues that could be resolved if HE institutions worked with the public sector and other institutions with an aim of global change, rather than providing success for one institution. Although not yet finalised the new KEF will rank universities as to the extent that they are working with partners both from the public sector and or other HE institutions (Brown and Edmunds, 2020; Research England, 2022).

In sum, the Career Chance Academics bring a practitioner lens to The University with the view that they are teaching future practitioners. This includes positive change in the design and delivery of teaching, learning, and authentic assessment within The University, with the potential to enhance the student experience, student outcomes and support the latest TEF submission as well as NSS ratings. The Career Change Academics acted as role models, or proof of concept, as the students see tangible examples of career options within their degree subject. This supports the forming professional development of the students in preparing them for employment. In turn,

the Career Change Academics discovered that supporting students through to graduation and employment left them feeling that their professional identity as academics was affirmed. In addition, Career Change Academics bring a philanthropic drive to realise real-world impact, in the support of training future practitioners and as a responsibility and public service.

The Career Change Academics contribute to multiple assessment metrics including the NSS, TEF, REF and KEF which could result in an increase in terms of the ranking of The University. There is a link between university fees and the success in these frameworks and as such the support of Career Change Academics in these areas could result in bringing in financial value, as well as real-world impact to the list of contributions from the Career Change Academics. Although the answer to this second research question is less complex than the first the central theme of motivation and drive within this section is strong and inspires the Career Change Academics to maintain the stickability to face some of the challenges that were outlined in the answer to research question one, in order to be able to teach the future generation of practitioners.

Contributions to Knowledge

Looking at this research as a whole, there are two key themes running throughout the thesis; the role of context within acculturation experiences and social identity. One of the ways we make sense of these themes is to consider what they add to existing knowledge in terms of their fit with the theory of integrative complexity (Baker-Brown *et al.*, 2009; Suedfeld, 2010) as it underpins both acculturation (Tadmor, Tetlock and Peng, 2009) and social identity theories.

The experience of acculturation was an interesting part of the puzzle as Career Change Academics explored what it meant to exist in multiple work cultures with institutional structures and norms that were arguably designed around traditional academics. In the context of this research the acculturation could be defined as the two, or multiple, work cultures and the extent of which their exposure to a new culture resulted in the assimilation or integration of their work cultures (Ward and Kennedy, 1994; Tadmor, Tetlock and Peng, 2009). The Career Change Academics in this

research found the policies and promotion process to be tailored towards The University's goal in achieving a high-quality research outputs that contribute to REF ranking, rather than realising the worth of their industry experience for student employability (Lynch, 2006; Morrish, 2019; McCune, 2021). It is possible that Career Change Academics could contribute significantly to the introduction of the KEF by utilising their experiences both as practitioners and academics.

The Career Change Academics felt they had been betrayed and conned in to changing careers to teach in HE as they had been led to believe that their practitioner experience would be of equal value to the experiences of traditional academics. This link between imagined expectations or and the experience of reality was supported in literature by Merleau-Ponty's (1945/2014) theory of the protention and retention of experiences as they discovered that their protentive expectations were not realised. This resulted in demolished expectations when they discovered that the staff, policies and structures of The University were unprepared for Career Change Academics.

The second key theme throughout this research is the theory of social identity. Social identity theory permeates through this thesis from Tajfel's (1974) concept of in-group, out-group, in-group bias, and self-esteem hypothesis which have all remained central tenants in social identity theory (Tatum, 2000; Hogg and Reid, 2006; Jenkins, 2008; Islam, 2014). These tenets of social identity were developed alongside integrative complexity and underpin the theory of social identity complexity (Suedfeld, Tetlock and Streufert, 1992; Roccas and Brewer, 2002; Tadmor, Tetlock and Peng, 2009; Suedfeld, 2010). This research has combined literature from Ibarra's theory of identity formation to highlight the importance that a successful interpersonal and intrapersonal narrative can have on the identity formation, and identity flexibility of academics (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010).

This thesis proposes an amendment to Roccas and Brewer's (2002) model of social complexity theory in adding a precursory stage to the development model to diagrammatise the status of those who have an intersectional identity where the title of their new identity is unknown, see figure 14. While the concept of an imagined future self is already documented as part of an individual's identity formation, this research has shown that Career Change Academics who have transitioned to working in HE

may not have the language to describe their new identity. The concept of social identity complexity flexibility promotes an understanding that individuals can move from an unknown-intersection of identity to a merged identity and any of the stages in-between. The language of identity flexibility could support individuals to understand that any experience has the potential to impact the way an individual identifies. This adapted model could be used to support reflection regarding the identity formation of any academic within HE. The adapted model could be used as a tool within a workshop to support managers or team leaders to understand the stages of identity formation of the academics within their departments.

In conclusion this study presents the following contributions to knowledge:

- That the lived experience of Career Change Academics is an area within literature that is underrepresented;
- An awareness of the lived experiences of Career Change Academics at one Robbins Group University;
- That the neoliberal changes to managing quality of HE has resulted in The University assessing quality in terms of excellence in research above practitioner experience;
- A recommendation that the policies and processes, such as the promotion criteria, should be reviewed to ensure equality of opportunity for those on non-traditional career paths to be able to evidence their value to The University;
- The concept of social identity flexibility using the newly adapted social identity complexity model.

Recommendations for Research

The relationship dynamic between those on teaching-only and those on teaching-and-research contracts is an area that warrants further research, both in terms of collegiate working dynamics, and the way in which the policies and related paperwork varies between differing academic career paths. This could align with research to explore what value stakeholders at The University put on the practitioner experience of Career Change Academics. Coordinating the timing of this research to coincide with the TEF guidance would be helpful. It is possible that the introduction of the new TEF may, to

an extent, balance out the sense that those without research in their contract are viewed as second class academics. Robinson and Hilli (2016) suggested that universities needed to improve the parity of esteem between research and teaching and suggested that the introduction of the new REF and subsequent TEF had the potential to close this gap. The timely nature of this research shows that the introduction of the new REF guidelines has arguably changed the relationship between academics employed on teaching and research contracts. It seems likely that the changes in employment and the focus on the new REF since 2014 has had an impact on the way in which Career Change Academics identify but further research with a larger sample size will need to be conducted for this to be confirmed.

This research highlights the early stages of experiences of Career Change Academics in one Robbins Group university. It is recommended that this research is repeated on a larger scale across multiple HE institutions, particularly with HE institutions in a similar political and regulatory context. In the case of the Career Change Academics in this research the change in employment terms relates to the need to achieve a desired REF ranking. It is unknown what effect a change like this would create across the sector and the long-term effect of this change on the identity formation of academics and their HE institutions.

Further research should be conducted into the role of narrative identity and the link between interpersonal identity acceptance and intrapersonal acceptance. This could be a mixed methods study to review both the participants' experiences along with the psychometric measure of Integrative Complexity to measure the structure of the participants' thinking as to how they understand their identity and to what extent their identity is differentiated and or integrated (Suedfeld, Tetlock and Streufert, 1992; Miller, Brewer and Arbuckle, 2009).

This research could be extended to include a larger sample size by utilizing Roccas and Brewer's (2002) social identity complexity model to explore on a larger scale the journey through the structures of ingroup identities to complement the in-depth analysis of individual's experiences as outlined in this research.

Recommendations for Practice

As a result of the research, it is recommended that The University reviews their induction programme ensuring that all staff know about it and that all staff have opportunities to attend. This could be supported by a clear explanation about the multiple types of contracts that academics have and how The University attributes value to all academics. A list of terminologies and acronyms could be made available on staff virtual learning environments that all staff can access in order to support staff learning a new language of academia.

It is recommended that The University includes information on the role and value of Career Change Academics within staff inductions and management training. This training should include information regarding the REF, TEF and KEF metrics highlighting the variety of roles and responsibilities within the University and how different experiences and roles meet their universities strategic goals and key performance indicators. This training should include clarification as to how academics can and should refer to their title. Is everyone on a teaching and or teaching and research contract encouraged to call themselves lecturers or is this just for those with research responsibilities? All staff who have a teaching responsibility should have access to the Education Department's taught programmes with the accredited HE teaching qualifications, or supported to apply through The University's teaching scheme to AdvanceHE for the appropriate level of fellowship.

New staff should be encouraged, and allocated time, to develop informal mentoring relationships and to build support networks to help support their identity formation and to create a supportive community of practice. The University could consider how Career Change Academics can be supported to utilise their experience in order to enhance the student experience and employability. The adapted social identity model could be used as a tool to scaffold staff in reflecting on their identity formation.

Reflection and limitations

The introduction of the new REF has changed the way that career change academics feel they are viewed. Where previously in literature, Career Change Academics have felt like frauds, this research has shown that the participants in this study felt as if they were treated as second-class citizens. The result of incorporating the newly reviewed

REF had a significant impact on the professional identity formation of Career Change Academics and it is unknown what changes the TEF will have on the identity formation and reception of Career Change Academics, and if the new TEF metrics could cause similar issues with the identity formation of staff whose main responsibility is research. The timing of this research is that the 2023 TEF submissions are being written as this research is being submitted and the KEF metrics have not been finalised. As such, it is not possible to include interviews or data on the subsequent impact of these metrics.

This research utilises IPA because its idiographic focus enabled an in-depth exploration of individuals experiences. In order to ensure rigour, there are extracts from each of the participants in each of the GET (Smith, 2011a). The research is interpretative and the themes converge and diverge as appropriate. I have ensured that the participant quotes have enough space within the Analysis Chapter (Chapter 4) to allow the reader to see the depth of the theme in relation to the participants quotes. The sample size of four participants would be considered small for a standard piece of qualitative research but it is in line with Smith (Smith, 2011b) suggestion of small sample sizes to allow space for in-depth analysis.

A limitation and area for further study is that this research does not focus specifically on the differences in experiences between the gender or ethnicity of participants in their transition to HE and experiences of professional identity formation. This is because the participants did not focus on their gender or ethnicity in the interviews. As such, this is an area for further research. In order to detect subjects such as gender or ethnicity in future a research design would need to be considered that foregrounds the intersectional lens between the environment of the participant and their gender or ethnicity. In order to support this a focused research question could guide the research in order to give both permission and the opportunity for a different set of interview questions.

The data collected in this research is a case study of one university and as such is a snapshot of experience and is therefore not generalisable. However, there is potential for transferability of the research findings, particularly for HE institutions working in similar political and regulatory contexts. The social identity complexity model, and the concept of social identity flexibility could also provide a tool for researchers

transitioning to full time posts as academics, or as a reflective tool for academics in considering their identity. As mentioned in the recommendations section, this could be upscaled for longitudinal research utilising mixed-methods such using a larger sample of questionnaires where responses could be coded using automated integrative complexity coding (Conway *et al.*, 2014) alongside semi-structured interviews utilising the adapted social identity complexity model (Roccas and Brewer 2002).

Reflection on my role in the research

My transition to teaching in HE was not the same as it was for the four participants in this research. My former career informs my professional identity but I am not teaching students at The University how to be a faith leader, a Chaplain or a Youth Worker. I taught reflective practice, conflict theory and applied theology in HE part-time alongside my former profession and so my experience is more of one who increased my teaching responsibilities rather than transitioning to HE to teach future practitioners in my former profession. I took care when working with my supervisors over the duration of this research to ensure that the focus was on the Career Change Academics' practitioner experience and that this was linked to their subject field within The University, and to make sure the questions I asked in interviews focused entirely on the participants' experiences and not on my experience.

As a Teaching Fellow in the subject of HE I will incorporate the results of this research within assessed programmes and CPD. I will draw the attention of those I teach to the diversity of academics and teaching staff in HE and encourage networking across participants and the wider university. As I continue to teach academics, I will highlight the role of policies within HE and signpost how changes could impact academics and therefore the students. This will be an important task for the individual academic as well as The University as the government continues to develop metrics to measure quality, and provisions within HE institutions continues to evolve. This research has shown that changes in these metrics can have an indirect impact on both traditional and Career Change Academics. I am fortunate to have worked in a centralised role where I can influence change both through structures and committees as well as the taught programmes. As such I can discuss the significance of knowledge gained both from practitioner experience as well as from research highlighting how different skills and experiences can support The University with TEF, KEF and REF applications.

Reflections on my professional development

There are two significant ways in which I have developed as a professional. The first related to how I have developed as a researcher. The second related to how the structure of my professional identity has changed throughout the past five years. These two areas will now be addressed in turn.

The first area focuses on my development as a researcher. Studying for this EdD has enabled me to develop and utilise practical research skills such as the collecting and analysing qualitative data, the use of systematic searches, referencing software and writing at level eight. In completing this EdD I have experienced what it is like to conduct research doctoral level which will enable me to support my students and colleagues who will undertake similar programmes of study. The EdD programme included assessed modules in the early stages and so I developed my writing technique as well as working with my supervisors and the Graduate School to review my development needs. Studying has enabled me to build diverse networks with colleagues from multiple fields and I feel confident that I have the skills to conduct future research and to publish the findings of this research.

The second significant area of development relates to my own professional identity formation. I would describe my professional identity at the start of my EdD as a compartmentalised identity. In my case this meant that my identity as a Priest and theologian did not naturally intersect with my identity as a teacher within HE Figure 11(c). Looking back, I can see that my professional identity developed when I spent time with Priests who were also academics. Their identity painted an image than enabled me to visualise what my future identity could be. I built support networks and collegiate friendships both within and outside of my role as a Teaching Fellow and the support from these networks enabled to arrive at what I believe is a merged identity (Figure11(d)) that encompasses my professional identities. Researching the lived experience of the participants throughout my EdD research further led to me reflecting on my own lived experience and subsequent professional identity formation. I have been struck while interviewing and analysing data that it was the training on the Education Department taught programmes, and the support from informal networks

that enabled the Career Change Academics to navigate the path into the new world of HE. In a similar way to the participants, I could name individuals who acted as official mentors as well as informal networks that have supported the development of my professional identity. To borrow a subtheme from this research, studying really has helped me to know who I am as a Career Change Academic in HE.

What next

The aim of the research was to consider plausible insight by exploring the lived experiences of individuals using a double hermeneutical approach to produce meaning. The aim was not to offer a valid deductive conclusion or develop theory (Van Manen, 2014). However, this research has combined in-depth researching utilising Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis with a rigorous review of literature, and subsequently reviewed and recommended development to a conceptual model. This Discussion Chapter has drawn out abstract observations about the influences that impact identity formation which is theoretically generalisable.

Studying the lived experience of Career Change Academic has been both an enjoyable and humbling opportunity. I would like to explore in more depth the relationship between knowledge gained from practitioner experience and knowledge gained from research, particularly in light of the impending changes in the new TEF.

Conclusion

The aim of this research was to explore the lived experience of Career Change Academics in the formation of their professional identity and to ask what Career Change Academics perceive they contribute to HE institutions. This research concludes that identity formation transcends time and that protentive provisional selves have the power to influence identity formation in addition to the interactions with others. Exploring the lived experiences of Career Change Academics has shown that not all Career Change Academics are condemned to a liminal identity. Instead, this research shows that identity formation is not, necessarily, sequential and that one's identity structure is flexible and can expand or contract depending on each new encounter or experience. This research has shown that the amount of time spent in post and the level of support networks directly affects the identity complexity of Career

Change Academics. In particular, that narrating one's career journey to working in HE can help colleagues to understand and accept multiple ingroup representations, which in turn helps the Career Change Academic to employ intrapersonal identity acceptance.

This research has shown that the industry and work-based experiences that Career Change Academics bring with them to HE has the potential to enhance The University's success, in particular with the new TEF, the up-and-coming KEF as well as the NSS. This thesis concludes by offering recommendations for research and recommendations for practice.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Literature Searches: Databases and Search Terms

Database	Type of Literature	Search Field and Search Terms	Number of results	Alert set
Web of Science	Peer reviewed journal articles	**Search Fields:** TS: title, abstract, author keywords, and Keywords Plus.	1424	Yes
		Search Terms: (TS=("Teaching Fellow" OR lecturer* OR "Teaching Fellows"))		
		AND TS=(HE OR Higher Education Institution OR "Higher Education Institutions" OR HE OR HEI OR Universit*)		
		AND (TS=(identi* NEAR/3 (form* OR chang* OR transit* OR professional* OR complex* OR social*))) OR TS=(Career* NEAR/3 (chang* OR transition* OR mov* OR shift* OR switch*))		
		AND UK Or United Kingdom OR Wales OR England OR Scotland OR Great Britain		
ERIC	Journal Articles, Reports, Books, Collected Works, Reports, Dissertations/Theses, Tests, Speeches/Meeting Papers.	**Search Fields:** title, author, source, abstract and descriptor	60	No
		Search Terms: Teaching Fellow Lecturer Higher Education Academic Career Change Identity Formation UK		
ProQuest	Peer reviewed journal articles	**Search Fields:** Article title, Abstract, Key Words.	1063	Yes
		Search Terms: teaching fellow OR Lecturer* OR "teaching fellows" OR academi*		
		AND Higher Education OR "Higher Education Institutions" OR HE OR HEI OR Universit*		

		AND Career* NEAR/3 (chang* OR transition* OR mov* OR shift* OR switch*) OR (Identi*) AND UK Or United Kingdom OR Wales OR England OR Scotland OR Great Britain		
EBCSO	All results	**Search Fields:** AB: Abstract Summary **Search Terms:** AB ("teaching fellow" OR Lecturer* OR "teaching fellows" OR academi*) AND (Higher Education Institution OR "Higher Education" OR HE OR HEI* OR Universit*) AND (Career* N3 (chang* OR transition* OR mov* OR shift* OR switch*) OR (Identi*)) AND (UK Or (United Kingdom) OR Wales OR England OR Scotland OR Great Britain)	1966	Yes
Scopus	Articles, Conference Papers, Review, Book Chapter, Book, Editorial,	**Search Fields:** Title, Abstract, Keywords **Search Terms:** (TITLE-ABS-KEY ({teaching fellow} OR lecturer* OR {teaching fellows} OR academi*) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ({Higher Education} OR he OR hei* OR universi t*) AND TITLE-ABS KEY ((career* W/3 (chang* OR transiti on* OR mov* OR shift* OR switch*)) OR identi*) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (UK OR {United Kingdom} OR Wales OR England OR Scotland OR great AND Britain))	210	Yes
Education Resource Complete	Peer reviewed journal articles	**Search Fields:** AB: Abstract Summary **Search Terms:** AB ("teaching fellow" OR Lecturer* OR "teaching fellows" OR academi*) AND (Higher Education Institution OR "Higher Education" OR HE OR HEI* OR Universit*) AND (Career* N3 (chang* OR transition* OR mov* OR shift* OR switch*) OR (Identi*)) AND (UK Or (United Kingdom) OR Wales OR England OR Scotland OR Great Britain)	786	No
	Peer reviewed	**Search Fields:** Abstract summary	371	No

Education Research Abstracts	journal articles	**Search Terms:** Identity AND lecturer (delete this note when explained why two words		
Education Administration Abstracts	Peer reviewed journal articles	**Search Fields:** AB: Abstract Summary	171	No
		Search Terms: "teaching fellow" OR Lecturer* OR "teaching fellows" OR academi*		
		AND "Higher Education" OR HE OR HEI* OR Universit*		
		AND (Career* N3 (chang* OR transition* OR mov* OR shift* OR switch*) OR (Identi*))		
		AND UK Or "United Kingdom" OR Wales OR England OR Scotland OR Great Britain		
Total number of results: 2929 (not including duplicates)				

Appendix B: Quality grid of relevant empirical research articles.

Inspired by the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme Checklist (Panchal and Damodaran, 2017)

		Was there a clear statement of aims for the research	Is qualitative methodology appropriate?	Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?	Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?	Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?
1	(Dashper and Fletcher, 2019)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
2	(Wood, Farmer and Goodall, 2016)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
3	(Duffy, 2013)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
4	**(**Smith, Boyd, 2012)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
5	(Shreeve, 2011)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
6	**(**Boyd, 2010)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Appendix C: Analytic content of qualitative research

Straddling Two Worlds = blue. The struggle to maintain **credibility**. Academic Status = *pink*. Motivation is behind my identity = green

SOURCE	Category / Context	Category / Context	Category / Context	Category / Context	Category / Context
Paper 1 = 2019 Dashper, Fletcher	Did not want to be called an academic	*Pure academics are frauds* if they cant back up material with real life examples	Academia is a world they don't understand	A blended professional: flexible when describing my identity	
Paper 2 = 2016 Wood, Farmer, Goodall	Motivation to teach was to change the sector (not a change in career to HE)	Ambition to be a lecturer	Sense of imposter syndrome	*HE was slow to change*	Not viewed as equal in worth as *traditional academics*
Paper 3 = 2013 Duffy	'Wearing two caps did not work'	*Lacked academic clout:* As a formally non degree profession	A sense of pull between substantive self (nurse) and situated self (academic)		
Paper 4 = 2012 (research conducted 2008) Smith, Boyd	Gets satisfaction from nurturing new professionals	*Learning HE language and procedures was hard work* (having to start again, learn new process)	**The work load was larger than expected** (pressure to do research, teaching – harder to maintain credibility)	**Felt the need to maintain clinical credibility.**	**Felt under pressure to conduct research**
PAPER 5 = 2011 Shreeve	Uncomfortable linking two worlds: segregation	**Teaching is a parasite that drains the practitioner**	I enjoy teaching but *don't want to be* **defined by it**	**Struggle with perceived sense of worth**	**Mismatch between ethos of teaching and legality of admin**
Paper 6 = 2010 Boyd	Struggled to learn new structures and processes	Small fish in a big pond – a threat to green	Motivated by developing new practitioners	Studying PGCHE helped orientate new staff	

NB: Themes can capture a spectrum of positions

Appendix D: Table of literature focusing on the identity formation of academics in the UK

	Name, title and author	Method	Participants	Analysis	Findings
7	Identity Work and Emotions: A Review. (Winkler, 2018)	Review of qualitative literature	Includes 129 studies published between 2000 and 2016	129 studies identified using the following search terms: 'identity tension' 'identity struggle' 'identity conflict' 'identity play' 'identity repair'	Future research should examine the role of emotions in problematizing identity: (a) mention the emotions that people feel in situations that trigger identity work, (b) illustrate identity work as an emotional endeavour, and (c) describe the emotional impact of successful and unsuccessful identity work.
8	Developing a teacher identity in the university context: a systematic search of literature (Lankveld *et al.*, 2017)	Systematic literature review	Includes studies published between 2005 and 2015, with a few chained articles outside of this time frame.	A qualitative synthesis of 59 studies. Using Web of Science the following search terms were used: professional identity, teacher identity, academic identity, higher education, university, academic, faculty, staff.	Contact with students strengthened the identity of academics, whereas the wider context of HE constrained identity formation. Five psychological processes were found to be involved in the development of a teacher identity: 1. a sense of appreciation 2. a sense of connectedness 3. a sense of competence 4. a sense of commitment 5. imagining a future career trajectory
9	Collaborative reflections on using island maps to express new lecturers' academic identity. (King *et al.*, 2014)	Collaborative Empirical Intervention	4 Academics from a post-1992 university.	The data was co-analysed by the authors and participants using the following steps: 1. Participants asked to draw a conceptual map of their identity with a short written reflection,	The research included the participants as co-reflectors. The research proposed four possible characteristics of academic identity: 1. The multifaceted whole 2. The layered self 3. The interlinked self

				which was shared with the other participants. 2. Participants were signposted to literature on academic identity. 3.The participants met as a group of participants to discuss their reflections.	4. The fragmented self The research suggests that the visual representation of emotions in academic identity is something to be explored.
10	Making sense of professional identity through critical reflection: a personal journey. (Hughes, 2013)	Autoethnographic	One academic in a West of Scotland university	Critical reflection	This paper explores an individual's professional development and professional autonomy. Hughes described their situation. "Education and my role in it is in flux." (Hughes, 2013, p. 337).
11	Identity As Narrative: Prevalence, Effectiveness, and Consequences of Narrative Identity Work in Macro Work Role Transitions. (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010)	Theoretical proposal	N/A	Reviews literature on identity work.	Offers a process theoretical model outlining the way people draw from personal narratives in order to claim their professional identity. This journal argues that narrating your identity change changes one's identity.
12	Identity work and play. (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2010)	Theoretical proposal	N/A	Reviews literature on identity work.	Offers the concept of identity play as a method of individuals actively trying different identities as part of their identity work.

Additional related literature from the search

	Title, author, year	Method	Participants	Analysis	Findings
Identity formation of academics as it related to policies					
13	Academic identities in contemporary higher education: Sustaining identities that value teaching. (McCune, 2021)	Empirical research using Semi-structured interviews	12 participants with experienced academics.	Narrative Thematic analysis of interviews.	- Identities focused on transformative teaching can be prioritised. - Teaching that transforms is core to student experience and student employability and should be taken in to consideration in HE policy.
The future of the career in HE has changed					
14	Academic identity and autonomy in a changing policy environment (Henkel, 2005)	Review of two research projects	Participant from two research projects. Numbers not listed.	Thematic analysis of data.	Article summarises: - Policy is increasingly impacting HE - Changes in funding of research has not resulted in major disturbances in departmental identity and academic autonomy remains strong.
15	Challenging career models in higher education: the influence of internal career scripts and the rise of the "concertina" career (Whitchurch, Locke and Marini, 2021)	Longitudinal study using interviews	49 mid-career academics from across eight case study UK Universities.	Thematic analysis	Career transition, academics no-longer follow traditional career routes (concertina careers).
Identity complexity					
16	Hybrids, identity and knowledge boundaries: Creative artists between academic and practitioner communities.	Empirical research using semi-structured interviews	32 artist academics from universities in the London area.	Abductive approach through three data sets.	There is an interplay between an academic's hybrid identity and knowledge boundary work. Hybrid academics can struggle with an internal identity conflict.

	(Lam, 2020)				
17	Social Identity Complexity (Roccas and Brewer, 2002)	Theoretical proposal	N/A	Reviews literature and investigates the theoretical concept of Social Identity Complexity.	This article theorises that there are four structures of intergroup identity formation a. Intersection b. Dominant c. Compartmentalisation d. Merged
Professional Identity Formation					
18	Professional identity development in higher education: influencing factors (Barbarà-i-Molinero, Cascón-Pereira and Hernández-Lara, 2017)	Literature review followed by qualitative pilot study using focus groups.	Primary and secondary data sources. 63 university students.	Thematic analysis of literature followed by qualitative interpretative analysis.	This article links student professional development with Bachelor degree choice and offers a conceptual framework of student professional identity.
Student Employability					
19	Professional identity development: A review of the higher education literature (Trede, Macklin and Bridges, 2012)	A systematic approach to a literature review.	Including 20 articles that discussed professional identity in HE journals published between 1998 – 2008.	A philosophical hermeneutic approach to textual critique of existing literature.	This article explores links between students professional identity formation in relation to their studies and recommends further research should be conducted on the professional identity formation of students.
The implications of the new REF					
20	When worlds collide: identity, culture and the lived experiences of	Mixed methods	six lecturers with eight to 20 years experience who had shown an interest in research. Using both	Axial and selective coding was used to interpret and identify emergent themes. This was	Four themes were presented as elements that supported the identity formation of researching academics: 1. Formal research training built confidence and expertise.

	research when 'teaching-led' (Sharp *et al.*, 2015)		a questionnaire followed by semi-structured interviews in a UK university	followed by a lexical analysis of interview narratives.	2. Research networks were supportive. 3. Research structure 4. Culture and community.
21	The research-teaching nexus in nurse and teacher education: contributions of an ecological approach to academic identities in professional fields (Lopes *et al.*, 2014)	Empirical data using semi-structured interviews.	Eight male and six female Nursing Practitioner Academics with between three – 37 years of HE teaching experience.	Qualitative data analysis to thematic coding.	Proposes that there is a research-teaching nexus when discussing the concept of 'practitioner identity' against the experiences of lecturers.
What industry can offer to HEIs					
22	Constructions of professional identity in a dynamic higher education sector. (Lewis, 2014)	Conceptual framework referencing a doctoral thesis using in-depth interviews across six UK universities.	29 university staff.	Thematic analysis.	This paper offers a conceptual framework that offers 'academic empathy' is a concept that can be used by practitioners in industry to support the work of HE.
The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on academics					
23	A Case Study Investigating Mental Wellbeing of University Academics during the COVID-19 Pandemic. (Dinu *et al.*, 2021)	Mixed method. First stage anonymous online survey. Second stage was followed by semi-structured interviews.	89 survey participants and 12 interviews of academics at different career stages.	Quantitative survey data used SPSS data analysis software. The qualitative data was analysed taking a realist approach.	This study found the following: - Most academics felt they had support to work from home. - There were discrepancies in digital abilities according to employment status, age, faculty. - Teaching did not increase - Social identity and team work increased.

Appendix E: Confirmation of successful ethics application REC ID: [225-11-20], [1], [14.12.20]
From: Jones, Paul <p.jones5@aston.ac.uk>
Date: Monday, 14 December 2020 at 13:01
To: Shephard, Nicola <n.shephard1@aston.ac.uk>
Subject: RE: BSS Ethics committee dates
Afternoon,

I am pleased to say your ethics application passed with flying colours. [225-11-20], [1], [14.12.20]

You can proceed with your research. Good luck, I hope it goes well.

Enjoy your time off! Speak to you in the new year.

Many thanks,

Paul

Paul Jones BSc (Hons), MSc, PG Dip, PG Cert, Assoc CIPD, FHEA
Senior Research Manager, College of Business and Social Science

Aston University
BIRMINGHAM UK

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aston.ac.uk

Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet: REC ID: [225-11-20], [1], [14.12.20]

Aston University

The professional identity formation of Career Change Academics and their contribution to Higher Education Institutions.

Participant Information Sheet

REC ID: [225-11-20], [1], [14.12.20]

Invitation

We would like to invite you to take part in a research study.

Before you decide if you would like to participate, take time to read the following information carefully and, if you wish, discuss it with others such as your family, friends or colleagues. Please ask a member of the research team, whose contact details can be found at the end of this information sheet, if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information before you make your decision.

What is the purpose of the study?

This research project has two aims:

1. To explore the lived experience of Career Change Academics with a specific focus on their professional identity.
2. To examine the contribution that Career Change Academics make to their Higher Education Institutions

Why have I been chosen?

You are being invited to take part in this study because you meet the following criteria:

- You teach as part of your role at Aston University;
- You started employment within the last five years;
- You had a former career outside HEIs;
- You have been employed for at least three months within your academic role within the University;
- Your hours of teaching are greater than any other professional practice you undertake.

What will happen to me if I take part?

You will be asked to attend an interview lasting approximately 60 – 90 minutes with the primary researcher, details are below.

How will the conversation during the interview be recorded and the information I provide managed?

With your permission we will record the audio and video of the interview and take notes. The recording will be typed into a document (transcribed) by a transcriber approved by Aston University. This process will involve removing any information which could be used to identify individuals e.g. names, locations etc. Audio recordings will be destroyed as soon as the transcripts have been checked for accuracy. We will ensure that anything you have told us that is included in the reporting of the study will be anonymous. You of course are free not to answer any questions that are asked without giving a reason.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions it is likely that this interview will be take place on Microsoft Teams and will be video recorded via Panopto. If you have any questions or would prefer to be interviewed via a different media then contact the primary researcher using the email address below.

How will the video recordings made during the study be managed?

The video and audio recordings will be destroyed as soon as the research team have analysed the information in them to answer the research question. We will ensure that anything from the analysis of the videos that is included in the reporting of the study will be anonymous.

Do I have to take part?
No. It is up to you to decide whether or not you wish to take part.
If you do decide to participate, you will be asked to sign and date a consent form. Should you wish to withdraw from the study you will be able to do so for 14 days after the interview without giving a reason.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?
Yes. A code will be attached to all the data you provide to maintain confidentiality.

Your personal data (name and contact details) will only be used if the researchers need to contact you. Analysis of your data will be undertaken using coded data. The data we collect will be stored in a secure document store (paper records) or electronically on a secure encrypted mobile device, password protected computer server or secure cloud storage device.

To ensure the quality of the research, Aston University may need to access your data to check that the data has been recorded accurately. If this is required, your personal data will be treated as confidential by the individuals accessing your data.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?
While there are no direct benefits to you of taking part in this study your participation will be much appreciated as the project seeks to understand the experience of those who have made a transition from a former career to teach within higher education. If you take part your experiences will inform future training, induction and development opportunities to benefit both students and staff.

What are the possible risks and burdens of taking part?
You will be asked to set aside 60-90 minutes for an interview with the principal researcher. It is possible that talking about your experiences may bring up emotions or reflections you wish to share with someone. Should you wish to take part you will be given a debrief sheet explaining the support the research team can offer you as well as the wider support available to staff at Aston University.

What will happen to the results of the study?
The results of this study may be published in scientific journals and/or presented at conferences. If the results of the study are published, your identity will remain confidential. A lay summary of the results of the study will be available for participants when the study has been completed and the researchers will ask if you would like to receive a copy.

Expenses and payments
If you think you will have any expenses please speak to the principal researcher. However, as the interviews will happen either on campus or online it is not imagined that there will be financial expenses.

Who is funding the research?
There is no funding for the research.

Who is organising this study and acting as data controller for the study?
Aston University is organising this study and acting as data controller for the study. You can find out more about how we use your information in Appendix A.

Who has reviewed the study?
This study was given a favorable ethical opinion by the Research Ethics Committee.

What if I have a concern about my participation in the study?
If you have any concerns about your participation in this study, please speak to the research team and they will do their best to answer your questions. Contact details can be found at the end of this information sheet.

If the research team are unable to address your concerns or you wish to make a complaint about how the study is being conducted you should contact the Aston University Research Integrity Office at research_governance@aston.ac.uk or telephone 0121 204 3000.

Research Team
Principal Researcher:
Nicola Shephard
Teaching Fellow within the Education Department at Aston University
Email: n.shephard1@aston.ac.uk
Tel: 0121 204 4276

Main Supervisor:
Dr Rowena Senior
Lecturer in Learning Enhancement and Academic Development at Aston University
Email: r.senior@aston.a.uk
Tel: 0121 204 5222

Second Supervisor:
Dr Julian Lamb
Senior Lecturer in Academic Practice at Aston University
Email: lambj1@aston.ac.uk
Tel: 0121 204 5223

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet. If you have any questions regarding the study please don't hesitate to ask one of the research team.

Appendix for the participant information sheet: Transparency statement Aston University takes its obligations under data and privacy law seriously and complies with the General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") and the Data Protection Act 2018 ("DPA").

Aston University is the sponsor for this study based in the United Kingdom. We will be using information from you in order to undertake this study. Aston University will process your personal data in order to register you as a participant and to manage your participation in the study. It will process your personal data on the grounds that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest (GDPR Article 6(1)(e). Aston University may process special categories of data about you which includes details about your health. Aston University will process this data on the grounds that it is necessary for statistical or research purposes (GDPR Article 9(2)(j)). . Aston University will keep identifiable information about you for 6 years after the study has finished.
Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible.
You can find out more about how we use your information at www.aston.ac.uk/dataprotection or by contacting our Data Protection Officer at dp_officer@aston.ac.uk.
If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter. If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are processing your personal data in a way that is not lawful you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Appendix G: Participant recruitment email

Recruitment advert for all staff emails

Are you a Career Change Academic?
Do you want to increase the understanding of the experiences of those who make the professional decision to change career? Are you willing to participate in a research study that aims to promote the understanding and appreciation of Career Change Academics and their contribution to HE as well as identifying future training and development strategies? Do you have 60-90 minutes to participate in a one off interview? To find out more contact Nicola Shephard on n.shephard1@aston.ac.uk

(82 words)

Appendix H: Interview schedule

The professional identity formation of Career Change Academics and their contribution to Higher Education Institutions.

This document outlines the draft interview schedule for the semi-structured interviews. The research questions for the study are in normal font and the interview questions are in bold.

Research questions

Research Question1: What is the lived experience of CCAs in the formation of their professional identity?

This first research question aims to address the gap in literature regarding identity formation of CCAs. This question considers the background processes, emotions, experiences, training, chance encounters, and any experience that a CCA considers to have impacted their identity formation.

1.Tell me about how you came to be an employee at This University?
(last job, why they moved, aspirations, motivations, how they decided to change career, what the process of thinking it through and if needed:

- **What did that journey transitioning between the roles feel like?**
- **How do you feel now in your new role? / What is your job title?**
- **Where do you feel like you are currently in this process?**
- **Time /dates**
- **Career history?**

2. What does the term professional identity mean to you?

3. Can you tell me about a memorable event or milestone in the formation of your current professional identity?

I would like to now look at time here at The University and look at the things that may have been helpful or challenging in that journey.

4. **Can you tell me about any people or events that have positively influenced the formation of your prof identity?**
    a. **Have they said how their colleagues view them?**
    b. **Ask something about context of colleagues**
    c.
5. **Conversely, is there a time / or incident which made you question your career change?**

6. **Can you tell me about any training / induction, formal or informal experiences which have impacted your journey**
    a. **If needed: Which of these were meaningful and why?**

7. **Did you explore or research what your career transition might involve?**

8. **Can you tell me the impact or influence of students on the development of your professional identity**

Research Question 2: What contribution do CCAs bring to HE?
The second research question is intentionally open as it seeks to explore to what CCAs believe they contribute to their HEI, examining to what extent these contributions are influenced by their former profession.

9. **Can you tell me what experiences / skills you brought with you from your former career?**
    - **Skills**
    - **Knowledge – industry facing?**
    - **Attributes – personal?**

10. **How do these skills / experiences shape your professional practice as an academic?**

    - **Are there any specific challenges you have faced incorporating your experiences in to your new role**

11. **How would you describe the wider contribution of CCA to HE?**
12. **Is there anything else you would like to tell me that you think is relevant?**

Closing interview data check list:
Questions to be gathered as appropriate throughout the interview:

1. What was their job before coming this university and how long did they work there? (Q1)
2. Have they defined their former role? (Q1)
3. When did they start working at this university and what is their job title? (Q1)
4. Have they described how they understand their current professional identity? (Q2)
5. Are they currently employed on a teaching contract or research contract? (Q1?)
6. Have they outlined how they think colleagues view their position as a CCA?
7. Do they describe themselves as an academic?

Give the participant the debrief sheet

Appendix I: Participant Consent Form

Aston University

The professional identity formation of Career Change Academics and their contribution to Higher Education Institutions.

Consent Form

Name of Chief Investigator: Nicola Shephard

Please initial boxes

1.	I confirm that I have read and understand the Participant Information Sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw up until two weeks after the date of the interview without giving any reason and without my legal rights being affected.	
3.	I agree to my personal data and data relating to me collected during the study being processed as described in the Participant Information Sheet.	
4.	I understand that if during the study I tell the research team something that causes them to have concerns in relation to my health and/or welfare they may need to breach my confidentiality.	
5.	I agree to my interview being recorded and to anonymised direct quotes from me being used in publications resulting from the study.	
6.	I agree to my anonymised data being used by research teams for future research.	
7.	I agree to my personal data being processed for the purposes of inviting me to participate in future research projects. I understand that I may opt out of receiving these invitations at any time.	
8.	I agree to take part in this study.	

Optional: Please provide an email address if you would like to be contacted regarding the outcomes of the study: _____

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	**Date**	**Signature**
__Nicola Shephard_____	_____	_____
Name of Person receiving	Date	Signature.

Appendix J: Participant Debrief Sheet

Aston University

Participant Debrief Sheet

Dear Participant,

Thank you for taking part in this research, your participation is appreciated and will inform the training opportunities for the career change academics that follow.

Your data will now be anonymised and subsequently analysed along with that of the other participants. Should you wish to withdraw your data from the study you will need to notify me within 14 days of the date of your interview.

If this interview process has raised any thoughts or feelings you wish to discuss further please contact me in the first instance, or should you wish to discuss this with someone else you can contact my supervisors or the support services below.

With many thanks,

Nicola Shephard

Principal Researcher:

Nicola Shephard, Email: n.shephard1@aston.ac.uk, Tel: 0121 204 4276

Main Supervisor:

Dr Rowena Senior, Email: r.senior@aston.a.uk, Tel: 0121 204 5222

Second Supervisor:

Dr Julian Lamb, Email: lambj1@aston.ac.uk, Tel: 0121 204 5223

Aston University Chaplaincy.

A support service for staff and Students who are experienced at listening.

Email: chaplaincy@aston.ac.uk, Tel: 0121 204 4729

https://www2.aston.ac.uk/current-students/health-wellbeing/chaplaincy

Free counselling service for staff

Contact: https://www.pam-assist.com/