

Journalism: Finding its space in a new university

An exploration of how journalism education has developed within the University of the West of Scotland

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Abstract

This context statement explores and reflects on the development of degree-based journalism education at the University of the West of Scotland from 2004 until 2016. It seeks to identify key issues that presented challenges and opportunities in the design and implementation of the programmes. These comprised discussion around achieving the correct balance in curriculum content and in creating sustainable journalism education. It uses autoethnography as its key methodology to present what is a very personal journey that has impacted significantly on my role as programme leader of each of these programmes.

It identifies the challenges I encountered around theory and practice, meeting the needs of key stakeholders and explores the role of journalism education within my own university.

It concludes that there remain many challenges for journalism education as it seeks to provide sustainable learning environments set against a background of dynamic change within the news media but that opportunity lies in partnership both within the academy and with employers.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this document are mine and are not necessarily the views of my supervisory team, examiners or Middlesex University.

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1. Introduction to the works and their professional context

In considering the contribution of my public works, a series of undergraduate journalism programmes, I was prompted by questions such as: What is journalism? What is its purpose? What does it do? And, as a journalism educator, what is my role in all of this?

These are the kind of important questions in the rapidly changing world of journalism that have underpinned the development of my professional work as a journalism educator. This context statement identifies the opportunities and challenges inherent in creating a journalism programme in which I was programme leader. This led me to think about how journalism educators might pose these sorts of questions to their students, to the news media and within the academy, in order to respond to this new world and prepare for a sustainable future. Thus, in addition to outlining the lessons learned from my own experiences, this context statement will discuss what is an underpinning principle in the design of journalism education, that is, how universities need to design degrees that teach practice-based skills but which, as Gregorian (cited in Connell) suggests, 'are [places] where students would acquire not only skills but the intellectual depth and curiosity and the commitment to honesty and high ethical standards they will need to uphold the core values of this vital profession' (2008, p.2).

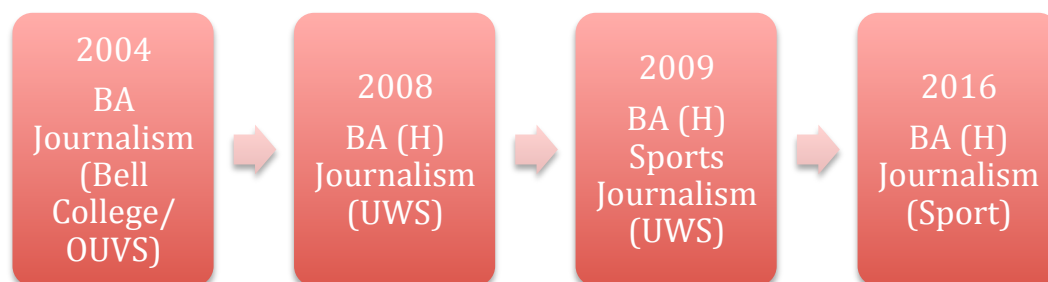
The capabilities highlighted feature strongly among the key themes explored in this context statement: degree design that balances theory with practice; the collaboration and comprise inherent in the process of designing and implementing journalism degree programmes; responsibility in ensuring sustainable and enhanced learning experiences. Underpinning all of these is my leadership role in each of them.

I worked in journalism all of my professional life and had studied it at postgraduate level, following a very traditional liberal arts undergraduate degree. It is my strongly held conviction that responsible journalism and freedom of the press, are pre-requisites in all democratic societies. I concur with

Gregorian (cited above) that it is indeed a ‘vital profession’, which requires its practitioners to possess the knowledge and skills required to hold to account the powerful in society. I moved into journalism education because I had enjoyed training young reporters in my previous roles as an editor and because I felt passionately that what I had learned through my own professional journey could be shared. Furthermore, I saw opportunity in the academy to play an active role in how journalism is studied rather than just learned. Key to my aspirations as I have developed these public works has been that students know, understand and can critique the vital role journalism and news play in society, as well as how to present news in its variety of formats.

1.1 The public works: Journalism degrees at UWS

The public works I present here comprise four Bachelor of Arts Journalism degrees developed over a period of 12 years and offered by my employers, the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) and the former Bell College of Higher Education.



- BA Journalism (Bell College/OUVS) - (See Appendix A)
- BA (H) Journalism (UWS) - (See Appendix B)
- BA (H) Journalism (UWS) - (See Appendix C)
- BA (H) Journalism (Sport) (UWS) - (See Appendix D)

The first degree (Appendix A) was created in response to an institutional desire to increase its offering of degree-level programmes and to meet student demand

and I have continued to lead the design and develop journalism degrees at the university since then.

What is most striking in any examination of journalism education and its role within the academy is how much it has grown in the last few decades. Thirty years ago there were three postgraduate programmes in journalism in the UK, a smattering of HNDs offered as part of further education colleges, many on a day-release basis, closely aligned to local newspaper groups, illustrating a culture and community which had not yet embedded itself in higher education. Today journalism degrees are offered at more than 65 institutions (UCAS, 2016) and this growth illustrates the changing shape of how journalism training and education is happening within the UK, driven by both a political culture, which has espoused higher education for all, and by a news media whose business models have changed in response to technological advances that have impacted on news creation and delivery. While this context statement will focus on the development of journalism within my own university, and, by necessity, look at my own professional development, these insights into how I have developed my own teaching and research skills, will be useful to other journalism educators or programme leaders as they design and implement programmes.

The BA Journalism degree (Appendix A) would be the first of its kind in my institution, and, as the person charged with its development, design and management, I viewed it as a fantastic opportunity to offer students the chance to gain a degree, thereby enhancing their chances in a highly competitive jobs market and providing them with an additional year of study, which would enable them to develop advanced professional, practice-based skills and critical thinking, as well as concentrate on equipping them with key graduate attributes that would also enhance their employability.

It would also offer my colleagues and me the opportunity of professional development, refining our own teaching, assessment and programme management skills.

Like everything, educational programmes need to evolve to reflect the changing requirements of a range of stakeholders. The first degree had been initiated in response to change within the institution. The next significant change came in 2007 with the merger of two institutions: Bell College (my then employer) and the University of Paisley, creating UWS. This provided the chance to create a new four-year degree, Honours-level programme BA (H) Journalism (Appendix B). This was validated in 2008.

The intervening years had not been static but had seen minor modifications that were inevitable as the teaching team and students progressed through the programme. However, while there were institutional, practical and educational imperatives to make changes, by far the greatest impetus for change came from employers.

1.2 Influencing factors on the public works

The news media has gone through, and continues to experience, a tumultuous period of change. Modes of newsgathering, presentation and delivery have been considerably impacted by technology and this in turn has changed the business models and seen the size and shape of the news media change in response. The job has changed from one which had worked along quite strict demarcation lines in terms of news production and presentation to the world of multimedia, multi platform news, which now means that journalists have to be schooled and skilled in a technical knowhow. It is no longer enough to find news. Journalists in the 21st century also need to know how to produce and present it across a plethora of outlets and media. The speed of this change has been breath-taking.

Technological change has impacted on almost every facet of modern life. Information is everywhere and is delivered to us at the speed of light on all manner of devices. Nowhere is this evidenced more than in the creation and delivery of news.

Technology has facilitated an explosion of ways in which we can all become

traditional news organisations and provided massive growth in citizen journalism and user-generated content. What technology does not do is differentiate between the 'old fashioned' laborious, hard work that creates good journalism and the opinion-laden blogs that proliferate on the internet.

This is not to say that knowledge resides only in the fraternity of professional journalists and news organisations, but what does reside there is the curating of news with the quality control mechanisms that professional journalists can provide (Ahmad, 2013).

This poses serious questions for both journalism and journalism education – it is not unreasonable to have the expectation that the world of professional journalism is populated by those schooled in newsgathering, writing and presenting skills, supplemented by tuition in law, politics, ethics and professional standards. The professional standards and practices of journalism are no less important than those society would seek in lawyers, doctors and teachers. As such, journalism education needs to ensure that technology is used to facilitate the education process, as well as journalism itself.

Technology's impact has been just as widely felt in the classroom. The hardware has become more sophisticated and more mobile – smartphones and tablets have become commonplace as learning and teaching tools. The software has enabled more creative ways to learn, teach and present assessments that are of a high professional standard. Given that the classrooms are filled with digital natives, there is much opportunity for journalism educators to learn from tech-savvy students. This has all been to the good and the enhancement of the educational experience.

What technology challenges is the differentiation by students of the quality of the information they are accessing and the resulting confusion over how this constitutes knowledge. Biggs (1999) talks of the deep learning approach that facilitates the creation of knowledge. Concerns have arisen for me as a journalism educator as I have observed a blurring of lines and understanding of what knowledge is when every answer is a click away and often resides in

information repositories that are not necessarily curated in the way that the academy requires. This is not an issue specific to journalism education but it can have damaging consequences.

If journalism students are not taught that knowledge is deeper than collecting and ordering data, then the usefulness of that knowledge is lost and it will impact on reliable and trusted journalistic outputs.

As such, the revised degree in 2008, needed to take greater cognisance of these issues by ensuring students were taught the technical skills required to meet workplace demands for these new methods of delivery and consumption of news. It also needed to reflect the move to an Honours level and the requirements for both content and pedagogical approaches to facilitate this. Increasingly we also needed to ensure that the students were being prepared for work opportunities beyond the traditional local newspapers which were shrinking fast.

The new institutional environment continued to support innovation and encouraged inter-disciplinarity. In 2009 the BA (H) Sports Journalism (Appendix C) degree was validated and has been a successful addition to the portfolio of the university. This was unique in the Scottish sector and was attractive to students.

Both degrees (BA (H) Journalism and BA (H) Sports Journalism) shared common modules and common approaches to learning, teaching and assessment and they were moderated and modified in large part to meet and reflect the changing demands of industry and employers.

This witnessed a shift in the shape of the degree with considerably greater emphasis given to practice-based content across the curriculum. This brought into sharp focus for me some of the themes that underlie the questions posed at the start of this context statement and this has crystallised into what will form much of the discussion and reflection here – what is journalism education at UWS? What does it comprise? What does it need to do?

In 2014, the university restructured and journalism was located within the School of Media, Culture & Society. Aligning social sciences and the creative industries provided a new opportunity to consider again the shape and content of the journalism degree. In 2016 I redesigned the existing degree to fit in with institutional objectives around its portfolio. In some respects the timing of this was perfect. My early work on the context statement had challenged my thinking and prompted me to reflect more meaningfully and usefully on my public works. This led me to consider more broadly, the role of journalism education and the contribution it makes in achieving the production of journalists equipped to report on a complex world in a changing work environment.

The redesign of the degree, now titled BA (H) Journalism(Sports) (**Appendix D**) therefore reflects this thinking in preparing students for a complex and shifting work environment. It also reflects the transformative impact of my own reflections in undertaking an analysis of my public works. This reflexivity has been important in designing the new programme and also in helping me to consider the impact of my public works in the evolution of journalism education at UWS.

1.3 Overview of the context statement

Reflective practice is a much-used term in professional life – most professions are conscious of the need for practitioners to reflect on their practice with the goal that performance, however it is defined, is improved. I like the concept proffered by the educational theorist Friere that to understand how we move forward we need to ‘re-cognise’ (2014, p. 38) the past, taking it apart to enable us to understand, to cognise and know better ‘why I do what I do’. Exploring and positioning myself and experience in the context of my public works is explored in Chapter 2.

A key challenge in writing the context statement was, for me, the very personal narrative that it necessitated I adopt, and which it encourages and allows. Finding a methodological approach that enabled me to meaningfully articulate the process is presented in Chapter 3. Taking an autoethnographical approach

facilitated the reflective work required. What has also been an issue is that this reflection has presented challenging issues to which I do not immediately offer answers but which provides much by the way of developing the themes of my context statement and, looking to the future, provides opportunities for continued research on the development and leadership of journalism education

The new degree (which began in September 2016) sees a shift in the balance between theory and practice. It has provided an opportunity to reflect on themes around the role of journalism in society and to tap into the wider expertise within the university, which looks at the news media through different prisms. The finer detail of this will be explored in chapters 4 and 5, where the influence of stakeholders on the process of degree design is discussed and mapped.

Key to the development of the public works is the way in which learning, teaching and assessment approaches ensure sustainable education programmes that will be of use and value to students in their future careers and this is explored in Chapter 6.

Compiling the context statement has not been without its challenges. Chapter 7 shows how it has led me to reflect on my own transition from being a journalist to being a journalism educator and how this move between communities of practice has defined my experience and my public works.

Underpinning the decision to undertake the process of the professional doctorate was the requirement I had of it that it would inform my practice. As such it is a journey of discovery into how my past practice can re-define my future and the transformative nature of the reflection is both challenging and enlightening. In essence, its reflexive nature must have a proactive outcome. It needs to impact on future practice in degree development in journalism education.

As Johns states:

‘Reflective practice is about becoming aware of our own assumptions, how these assumptions govern our practice, how these assumptions must shift to embrace change, understanding

resistance to assumption shift, and finally to change assumptions to support a better state of affairs.’ (2013, p. xv)

Reflection enabled me to see that I had begun the journey of writing the degrees based on beliefs and practices grounded in my own experience of studying journalism at university, as well as seeking advice and suggestions from others on how the programmes should be designed. Reflecting on it now, I realise how I often changed my perspective. Sometimes I went with my instinct, other times I went with what the HE sector appeared to be indicating was right and sometimes it felt that we were in a constant cycle of responding to shifting demands in the industry.

Schon (1996) puts it quite succinctly when he defines reflection as ‘an act of professional artistry’ and discusses how ‘reflection-in-action (1996, p.12)’ can have a profound impact on behaviours and practice. In the initial phase of compiling the context statement, my public works were, to all intents and purposes, historical documents that had undergone amendment. As I progressed through the doctoral project, my professional role changed and my public works now comprise a degree programme that is new and untried. The 2016 degree was framed, in part, as a result of the deep reflection I was undertaking as part of writing the context statement and is reflective of the changes I have undergone as part of this process.

This learning within the context as a programme leader in journalism education has prompted me, as Smith (2011) asserts, to use critical reflection as a useful way to become more insightful in terms of my own practice and professionalism as well as gain more knowledge about the way in which the broader field of journalism education and its study, aligns itself to meet current demands.

1.4 Core themes informing the context statement

Part of the process of compiling the context statement meant I needed to reflect and explore core themes in my public works. What emerged as the key question was ‘what is the role and purpose of journalism education and journalism?’ The answers did not come easily and have probably raised more questions.

Zelizer quite correctly identifies that tensions exist in agreeing 'what journalism is, why it is important' (2013, p.144) and who is best placed to define it, Conboy states that: 'there is not and never has been a single unifying activity to be thought of as journalism. On the contrary, journalism has always been associated with dispute – dispute about its value, its role, its direction, even its definition' (2004, p.3).

That is not to say that attempts are not regularly made to define what journalism is. Sheridan Burns states that a journalist is 'someone who earns their living from practising journalism; has mastered the technicalities of the profession and is accepted by other journalists as having done that and who believes in journalism as a social responsibility' (2002, pp. 16-17). This underpinning theme of responsibility in the context of both journalism education and journalism is apparent in my leadership in both the creation and management of my public works.

Donsbach's offers a broader and more reflective view of the changes in perceptions of journalism. It states:

'A journalist should (1) possess a keen awareness of relevant history and current affairs, as well as analytical thinking, (2) have expertise in the specific subjects about which he or she reports, (3) have scientifically based knowledge about the communication process, (4) have mastered journalistic skills, and (5) conduct himself or herself within the norms of professional ethics.' (2014, p.667)

This definition is quite prescriptive but, as a journalism educator and creator of these public works, it does provide some guidance and context around which they could be shaped.

Zelizer (2013) asserts that journalism needs to more fully develop its own understanding of what it is and that the responsibility for doing this is not solely down to the news media practitioners and journalism educators. She points to a series of key players in this, namely a troika of journalists, journalism educators and journalism scholars. She correctly advises that in the 21st century there does need to be newer, clearer definitions of journalism: 'journalists are among the

worst offenders...trotting out old (and increasingly irrelevant) definitions of what journalism is and who journalists are' (2013, p.144). But in line with my own belief, she points out that there is a need for a 'more productive intersection' between all three to provide clarity for all parties around both definition and understanding.

She also talks about the shaping of journalism in the 21st century being created, in large part, by the impact that technology has had on the delivery and presentation of news, and how the diversity of those who now produce content that consumers understand as journalism needs to be considered when journalism considers its definition.

As has been acknowledged, journalism has been significantly impacted by technology, which has been described as democratising the news, and, at the same time, as shepherding in a whole new genre of journalism in the shape of citizen and user-generated journalistic content.

This change has not only challenged journalism and journalists to react to changes in all aspects of news production and presentation, but has re-positioned what it all means. Rottwilm notes how the changes to journalism, in terms of what it is, who journalists are and how it operates, have challenged the way in which journalists perceive themselves and how they undertake 'acts of journalism' (2014, p.19).

The influence of technology in journalism and journalism education has led to substantial change in how both fields operate. Within journalism this has seen new ways to find, produce and present news. It has shaken business processes and has welcomed new entrants into the field in the guise of citizen journalists and user-generated content, and it has claimed to have democratised the news. This impact of technology on practice and outputs in both fields coalesces in discussion around theory and practice and this is more fully explored in chapter 5 and in the conclusions to this statement.

Technological advances have introduced new approaches to storytelling. This is often done by people other than journalists, and the jobs we once prepared our students for are now very different, meaning our graduates will have more varied careers where they use their journalism skills across many different organisations and work environments, which is why creating sustainable degrees is required. This evolving environment also provides an opportunity for the industry to seek guidance from the academy in a much broader sense, tapping into expertise from organisational, social, political and technological perspectives.

Zelizer's view is that journalism needs to redefine itself because the world in which it engages has changed and old ways of both doing and being a journalist have changed. She asserts that journalism is too important not to play a more proactive role in its own future:

'For journalism, these variables have introduced existential dilemmas. That is because those invested in journalism have easy access to neither certainty nor self-worth: most lack a clear sense of what journalism is, as well as a confidence about why journalism matters' (2013, p.144).

How journalism now perceives itself needs to take technology into account. The professional identity and occupational ideology, as described by Deuze (2005), are also under revision. This creates both a challenge and an opportunity for journalism education. Thus far educational programmes have been significantly influenced by the long-held understandings and perceptions of what journalism is, but as that is still evolving, it raises issues in devising three or four-year programmes that are predictive of what the industry, and wider society, will demand of its future graduates. What is clear to me is that, while I cannot predict future technological and ideological shifts, I do know that I need to design sustainable programmes that produce graduates who are adaptive and can respond to change in proactive and resilient ways.

Additionally, Zelizer (2013) makes the point that educators and scholars are well placed to be able to offer to practitioners a place where the complex world in which they have to operate can be made sense of.

Positive responses to change can be gained from wider consultation. My own experience in creating, running and leading educational programmes has relied as much on the advice, experience and wisdom of colleagues in the broader university as it has on fellow journalism educators and practitioners, and it seems that opportunity to create a more meaningful interface between the academy and the industry needs to be more actively sought.

In this vein, Greenberg (2007) agrees there needs to be greater recognition from within journalism that critique from non-journalists, who operate outside of it, can have meaning. She asks that practitioners 'listen more' to those who operate within the academy. She is sympathetic to practitioners whose working conditions are changing at a terrifying pace – she asserts this has kept practitioners in a 'reactive state' and has created 'tensions with those who should be their closest neighbours – journalism educators and scholars' (2007, p.154).

1.5 Defining journalism education

The more I examine the purpose of journalism education, the more contested it becomes and the less easy to define it. As Evans states, 'there is no commonly agreed range and scope of the subject area of journalism and ways of thinking and practicing within it' (2013, p. 67).

Although not in the same way that definitions of journalism abound, understandings of what journalism education comprises can be found across the body of literature. What is clear is that journalism education has at its core an accepted set of requirements, which focus on the teaching of professional, practice-based skills underpinned by the development of theory-based knowledge that encourages and fosters criticality of thought and reflections of actions.

In the design of academic degrees in the UK, the QAA Benchmark Statements provide a blueprint and guidance for the standard of curriculum content. Journalism as a discipline falls under the aegis of the benchmark statement in

Communication, media, film and cultural studies (Appendix E). This provides a template around which educators measure the appropriateness of the content. In terms of defining what journalism education comprises, it falls short, prescribing only what it describes as 'the basis for a range of professional practices' (paragraph 1:1).

In the early development of the degree, I investigated what other HEIs were doing, examining their content and discussing with colleagues in the developmental team the shape, nature and distinctiveness our degree needed to take. This approach, which was a comparative analysis of content, was a useful way to check that the key areas were being covered, but also to provide reassurance of the level of distinctiveness I wanted to build into our programmes.

Guidance also came in 2007 when the World Journalism Education Congress (WJEC) devised a set of guiding principles to which journalism education should adhere, and which journalism educators could consult (Appendix F).

What this set of principles made clear was that journalism is a distinctive field of study that quite rightly has a home within the academy; that it is about providing a sustainable learning environment that explores journalism from a range of perspectives – from skills development in an experiential setting to critical analysis of news content, the role of legal and ethical issues, the wider roles and responsibilities of journalism in a social, political and cultural perspective. Furthermore, it places emphasis on the importance of the role of the practitioner and industry links, that the faculty be a blend of theorists and practitioners, all with the common goal of achieving high standards of ethical and responsible journalism.

This guidance came from within the academy. In 2007 UNESCO produced a significant piece of research, aimed in large part at journalism educators in the developing world and emerging democracies, on a model curriculum for journalism education.

It provided detailed guidance:

‘A journalism education should teach students how to identify news and recognize the story in a complex field of fact and opinion, how to conduct journalistic research, and how to write for, illustrate, edit and produce material for various media formats (newspapers and magazines, radio and television, and online and multimedia operations) and for their particular audiences. It should give them the knowledge and training to reflect on journalism ethics and best practices in journalism, and on the role of journalism in society, the history of journalism, media law, and the political economy of media (including ownership, organization and competition).

It should teach them how to cover political and social issues of particular importance to their own society through courses developed in co-operation with other departments in the college or university.

It should ensure that they develop both a broad general knowledge and the foundation of specialized knowledge in a field important to journalism.

It should ensure that they develop — or that they have as a prerequisite — the linguistic ability necessary for journalistic work in their country, including, where this is required, the ability to work in local indigenous or vernacular languages.

It should prepare them to adapt to technological developments and other changes in the news media.’ (UNESCO, 2007, p6)

This statement provides parameters within which journalism educators can operate and, in some respects, it illustrates the enormity of the challenge as well as the opportunity to create diverse programmes that tap into the wider world of the academy, as has been my conviction since I led the degree development in 2004.

Indeed, when UNESCO updated its work on journalism education, it reinforced its view that:

‘newsrooms that are staffed by well-trained and critically minded journalists are likely to positively influence the processes of democracy and development in their societies ... A quality journalism education is a guarantor not only of democracy and development, but also of press freedom itself.’ (UNESCO, p9)

Not surprisingly UNESCO’s initial consultation had highlighted that journalism education ‘should nest comfortably within the intellectual and academic culture of the university and be invigorated by it’ (p10). I agree with this.

These guiding principles are difficult to challenge, and subscribing to them is easy, but, more importantly, what they have done is codify, and provide evidence, to which journalism education and educators can turn as the discipline continues to embed itself more meaningfully within the academy.

There are then blueprints, guidelines, codes, experiences, theoretical perspectives, pedagogical approaches and institutional learning, teaching and assessment strategies, and the weight of all of these bear down on the journalism educator. In the end, the most important thing is how journalism education is made real for our students. My experience is that what makes journalism degrees work well is as much about the professional expertise, enthusiasm and commitment of the teaching team, as it is about resolving many of the issues discussed here.

The practical approaches, which are discussed in chapter 5, highlight what is often missing from the literature on teaching journalism; - that the passion and determination that has driven people to become journalists and who then move into journalism education has an impact. I use the word, the concept, of passion and 'intellectual love', as discussed by Rowland (2008), within an academic context carefully and advisedly. When I talk to fellow journalism educators about their work, phrases that include 'I love teaching journalism' are often made. There has been little literature around how this concept of being so connected to your field impacts on students. However, it has indeed been a significant aspect in my career and it is my hope that this will also be made quite clear throughout this context statement.

It will show that I have led the evolution of journalism education in UWS through several critical transformations and I have done this against a background of significant transformation in the field of journalism and professional communication more widely. In doing so, I have challenged employer assumptions around what we teach but held firm to the conviction that what we do teach prepares our students for a more precarious, riskier world of work. Furthermore, I have employed sustainable and creative learning, teaching and

assessment approaches and created learning environments that empower students to face these demands and that offer fellow journalism educators guidance in navigating the process.

The next chapter will examine how my professional and personal experience has impacted on my public works.

2. Positioning self in the context

Undertaking this examination of my public works has propelled me to a place of deep reflection, from which I have learned what I consider to be defining aspects of how my life has impacted on my work and how they have each been enhanced by the other. This chapter will identify how this has been a journey of discovery, which has affirmed the importance and positive impact of my public works on both my own and others' lives.

Education brings change into peoples' lives and this transformative aspect of my public works is what makes them valuable. They have provided me with opportunities to develop programmes of learning, to participate in the strategic direction of the university and gain enormous personal fulfilment from these activities. It is the most exhausting, challenging, rewarding and enjoyable job. What is important for me, from a personal and professional perspective, is that these works make a difference to peoples' lives in the positive ways that education has for me.

My parents were intelligent people, born into large, working class families, which needed them to work and help support the family rather than study. Both left school at the earliest opportunity and undertook lifetimes of manual labour in heavy industries that were dying. Both bore these circumstances with fortitude and realism but also with the strongly held conviction and determination that it would not be the fate of their own children.

They provided us with the promise of a life made better, more rewarding, more enjoyable, with more opportunity, and less hardship through education. It was very clear, very early, that my parents had passed on their intelligence, curiosity and passion for learning to their children. I grew up unflinching in the belief and expectation that I would go to university, as did my sisters both before and after me.

Clichés abound over the role that education has in transforming peoples' lives but it is a core truth of my own life. Education changed my life. In the working

class community where I grew up few people went to university, not because they were not clever enough, but because it just did not happen very often. In my own family my sister and I, in the 1980s, were the first generation ever to go to university.

I also have to acknowledge that my early life was significantly influenced by my mother's determination that her daughters would not be denied the chance for education she had been. Within our family we may not have called it feminism then, but it surely was. My mother, and father, instilled in us the important role that women play in all walks of life and the need for women to have their seat at every table. While Sheryl Sandberg, chief operating officer of Facebook, may have coined the phrase 'lean in' some four decades later, in the early 1970s, my parents were instilling that philosophy in their own daughters.

So, I grew up in an environment that took learning very seriously. My years as an undergraduate at the University of Glasgow were a maelstrom of study and learning to become a journalist – working on the student newspaper and launching a student magazine became more important than my studies in politics and history because these activities seemed to offer a clearer, more exciting career path.

I went to Cardiff University to study postgraduate journalism. Competition was fierce. Around 600 people applied for 60 places – it was full of graduates from Oxford and Cambridge. I was excited, proud and delighted to be surrounded by others who, like me, just wanted to spend all their time finding stories, talking to people and writing – doing journalism.

What drove me then, and still drives me, is a desire to know why things happen, how we influence them, how we respond to events, how we make sense of, fit in and rationalise our own lives.

My time at Cardiff University was well spent. I worked hard, threw myself into all of my studies – applying as much energy and focus to the theory-based modules, as to the practice-based ones and took the 'deep' approach to my learning that I

would later learn was all about understanding and responding at a deeper conceptual level. My postgraduate study taught me to be a better student and gave me the skills I needed to get my first job as a journalist. I was offered a job before I had even completed the programme and was excited about my future career. I was under no illusion how having gained an excellent grounding in journalism education facilitated my early career, as it has continued to do throughout my professional life.

It would not be exaggerating to say that my professional life and public works are influenced by my personal history and upbringing and that I am a woman who works in what has been a male-dominated field. I perceive both journalism and the academy as bastions of male dominance, steeped in patriarchal hierarchies, which struggle to equitably and comfortably accommodate and promote women.

This channels in me the requirement to always be better at my job. To do that, I have had to learn how to negotiate my way through this world of power relationships and institutional politics. However, in doing so, I need to remain authentic to my own values. Thus, I have undertaken a plethora of courses on management and leadership to learn how to 'play the game'. The challenge is that the game changes almost daily. I find this bewildering, challenging and exhausting. It is also often unsettling and disruptive to constantly feel the need to ensure that I am not compromising on very firmly held convictions around equality and equity.

For better or worse, and I am driven to fulfil that unspoken promise to my parents and myself that, in whatever small way, I will speak out when I disagree with things that do not promote a better way for all of us. This outspokenness is both a curse and a blessing in all aspects of my life.

If I move away from the lens of my own life and family and broaden it out to my professional life, my ambition is for the young people I teach to have access to the same sorts of opportunities I had: a good education, which prepares them for work and life and a self-belief born of that education. I am, by nature, habit and

background, someone who thinks we deserve the best education, welfare, health, civic life and that our chances in life should not be determined by wealth or privilege. While I can relate to, and agree with, the political ideologies of the left, I am hesitant to label myself because for me politics and ideology are either too simple or too complex in which to fit my beliefs.

What underlines them is my firm belief in equity and equality and the public service aspects of education. If I relate this to my career in education, I believe all students may not start at the same place, that they will all have different journeys and will all achieve different ends. But in achieving those ends they should all have been given the same access to the knowledge and experience of those who teach them. They should all be provided with a standard of education that enables them to transform their own career opportunities and lives.

I acknowledge that not everyone will take the fullest advantage of what is offered to them – perhaps because their own background is limiting them in ways I cannot hope to imagine, nor should I interfere with, but I feel strongly that it should all be laid before them and they can choose.

While not guaranteeing success, I impress upon students that they need to want to learn and succeed and that, in doing these things, their lives will change. This will not always feel comfortable for them and others around them but, ultimately, that is what education is about – it changes all of us.

I present these public works because they represent a way in which I can bring some positive change to the world – at the same time as meeting the business needs of my employer to provide an undergraduate degree programme in journalism that is well-designed and successful. The degree programmes I have submitted – their content and the experiences they have provided for students - has changed, altered and improved their lives (as illustrated in graduate statements in Appendix G) – and that resonates strongly with who I am and my need for things to be better.

Reflecting on my role as a journalism educator and programme leader, I have found that I enjoy the role of a journalism educator more than I enjoyed being a journalist and this was quite a surprising revelation for me.

Joining the academy was a baptism of fire. Teaching was demanding. The skillset required was quite different – at a basic level journalism is about imparting information, it seemed that teaching was the same. But experience has now taught me that it is more complex. Although it requires similar skills, such as knowing your ‘audience’, knowing what they need to know and formulating ways in which to engage, enthuse and educate them, they are in essence quite similar. The devil is in the detail. I found the classroom stimulating, the administration challenging, but overall I found the excitement of being in a learning environment enjoyable and rewarding. I undertook a postgraduate qualification in teaching to better equip me for the job and I quickly decided I had found the job I could, and wanted, to do.

My ambition did not desert me, which is why I very quickly found myself in a promoted role as programme leader and as such, within a few short years of joining the academy, the responsibility to develop the new degree fell to me.

But on another deeper level, taking on the role was something that very much fed my own ambitions to shape the future provision of journalism education in my own institution.

Creating these degree programmes required meeting a range of challenging and differing objectives. I was excited at the prospect of developing modules that would enable students to achieve their goals and dreams. But there was a chasm to be crossed to develop modules that satisfied the criteria laid down by students, my own institution and the expectations of employers, to say nothing of the fellow academics who would publicly scrutinise our degree as part of the validation process.

In many respects it was, for me, about understanding the opportunity and the challenge. As I have undertaken this reflective critique, I have been struck by the

emotional response I have to my work. In the introduction I alighted on the concept of 'intellectual love' – that sense of a commitment to the discovery and sharing of knowledge. While this was present in my life as a journalist, in my role as an educator it is palpable.

Rowland (2008) talks of this sense of sharing rather than hoarding knowledge but also of the challenges of this very simple act of sharing knowledge in today's market-driven model of education. I am under no illusion that the need to provide learning and teaching that supports students through assessment and into the workplace is not driven by emotion but by demands and expectations. However, I do believe the seeds of that 'business' success need to be sown by academics who do genuinely 'love' their subject matter and want to share it.

My work is the vocation I believe it needs to be. My public works exemplify and have the potential to make real in students' lives the transformative effect of education.

Developing the public works was also a challenge and an opportunity to do something that I had never done before, that I could never have conceived I would ever have had the opportunity to do and the fact that I was not entirely sure that I could do it, made it all the more attractive. There were colleagues who needed to be convinced that moving to a degree was the correct path and that this required negotiation and discussion in developmental stages. Therefore these public works were also created against that background of a need to 'fit in' and meet other people's expectations, taking cognisance of their experiences and aspirations for their own professional development. The degree presented to each of us opportunities that would send us on a learning journey in the same way as our students. For me this was my own development as a member of the academy, which I will explore more fully later in chapter 7, but also the need to create a programme that was academically, theoretically and practically robust.

Stephens (2000, cited in Bromley, Tumber & Zelizer (2001) p.252) made a good point when he stated that journalism education and its curriculum are overwhelmingly influenced by 'externally derived conditions'. What we had to

teach in 2004 was almost pre-determined by what the industry needed at that time. It was reactive. What became quickly apparent, set against the background of the changes in the news media, was that we also needed to provide learning environments and opportunities, which prepared our students for more than just their first jobs or early years of their careers, as discussed by some of our graduates in Appendix G, but to develop the confidence to be proactive. As time passed we also became increasingly aware of the need to become more proactive in creating sustainable degrees whose content prepares its graduates for careers in media-related fields as opposed to traditional news environments.

I am proud of what I have achieved. The success of the design, validation and implementation of the journalism programmes explored here has fulfilled what good education is all about, that is, transforming lives. I am relieved that I work in the Scottish HE sector, where students do not pay fees and where education is accessible to a broad base of the population. Many of the young people I have taught have come from backgrounds where the tradition has not been to attend university. Providing access to participate in and be supported through university are incredibly important tenets of our education system and society. I benefitted from this, as should many others for as long as this is possible. Providing a programme of study, which enables students to prepare for the world of work in a sustainable and meaningful way, and equipping them with the practical, theoretical and critical skills required, are achievements that cannot be taken too lightly. That these public works help people to fulfil their educational and professional ambitions is testament to their success and to my leadership role in this.

Articulating my experience so that it is meaningful to others is a key aspect of this reflective critique and the next chapter discusses finding the methodology to do that.

3. A methodology to integrate professional and academic learning in my works

Compiling this context statement required a decision on how best to present the research using a methodology that would be viewed as valid and credible within the setting of the academy with its national regulatory criteria for assessing and awarding doctorates which are fundamentally research degrees. This chapter will examine the challenge of how to 'tell' a story of a journey and derive meaning from that for my, and others', future practice, and to research it as one would any area of knowledge. A doctorate by public works is like a reversal into the research and development articulation of a doctoral award. The works have been achieved and are already in the world. What sits behind their production is doctoral level thinking combined with senior professional practice expertise. It is an examination and articulation of the context and the how and why which provide the missing piece required for the award.

Thus I needed to identify a research methodology that could help me to make sense of how this piece of work has evolved to meet the expected demands and conventions as a piece of doctoral work. It has required me to consider research approaches within the academy and on reflection. I have persistently constructed and reconstructed my own understanding and knowledge of my public works, my work, and my approach to learning. Developing this context statement has also contributed to my reaching a point of understanding about the basis on which my knowledge is both created and claimed.

Murdock (2007) points to the work of Alfred Schutz in the early 1930s who argued that people interact with others and continually build and rebuild their own realities as they respond to the changing circumstances of their lives and the society around them. Murdock identifies a constructionist approach to which I can relate in the context of my public works in both how I created them and in how I now present them.

From an ontological perspective this work also exemplifies Cresswell's definition of a constructivist approach where 'individuals seek understanding of the world

in which they live and work (and) develop subjective meanings of their experiences' (2003, p.8). The use of autoethnography as the key methodology, illustrates how I have responded to external forces and my own understanding of them to bring meaning to the design, content and operation of the degree programmes that constitute my public works. The nature of the autoethnographical methodology I adopted has enabled me to illustrate the constructivist nature of my approach in a very meaningful way whereby the 'self' is used to show how the public works, and I, as a researcher, have responded to and negotiated with a broader social world. In this context, my public works include my background, my personal and professional experiences and the role and influence of the wider communities that represent the stakeholders in the degree programmes.

On examining my epistemological perspective I am naturally drawn to the interpretivist position that portrays the world as 'constructed and interpreted by people – rather than something which exists objectively' (Denscombe, 2010, p.121). The key concept here that I relate to is that of objectivity, as a human being, and a researcher, I believe myself to be part of a social world, or community, I am not separate from it. My understanding of that world is therefore defined by how I construct my own meaning of it, based on my interaction with it and within it, as opposed to being outside of it. Given that the public works were created by my own experiences and inquiries rather than by what quantitative data may have told me was useful to take, which, to my mind would have been a more positivist and scientific approach, my epistemological stance is an interpretivist one.

3.1 Adopting an autoethnographical approach

Furthermore, in compiling and presenting the public works, I knew the approach needed to be reflexive and it needed to stem from a qualitative perspective. I gauge the success of my public works by the impacts they have had on the students I encounter. Autoethnography provided a methodological approach around which I could frame my works.

Ellis (cited in Jones, Adams and Ellis, 2015) describes autoethnography as being a powerful influence in the work and lives of those who adopt it, she states:

‘it is not simply a way of knowing about the world; it has become a way of being in the world, one that requires living consciously, emotionally and reflexively. It asks that we not only examine our lives but also consider how and why we think, act and feel as we do’ (2015 p.10).

This resonated with me because, as stated frequently in my context statement, my work was an extension of my own personal ambitions and aspirations and, in researching my own outputs, it helps me learn more about my professional self and improve upon it. As Ellis (ibid) states ‘It asks that we re-think and revise our lives, making conscious decisions about who and how we want to be.’ (ibid, p.10)

Defining autoethnography is complex – Ellis and Berger (2002) are quite clear that it is a social science research method which consists of ‘stories written in an autobiographic genre about the relationship of self, other and culture’ (p849) and, as such, legitimises the role of the ‘self ‘ within the wider canon of academic research. But even Ellis & Bochner, two of its leading proponents, identify that ‘researchers disagree on the precise definitions of the types of autoethnography’ (2000, p.740).

What they do assert is that autoethnography is comprised

‘on the research process (graphy), on culture (ethnos) and on self (auto)’ ... and that all autoethnographies exist somewhere along the ‘continuum of these three axes’ (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p.740).

Jones (cited in Jones, Adams and Ellis, 2015), discusses the challenges around autoethnography as a methodology, she says:

‘while choosing autoethnography wasn’t a professional risk...telling personal stories in/as research always carries personal, relational and ethical risks ... I knew these risks were necessary not only for our research but also for living full lives and changing our world in important and essential ways’ (2015, p.19).

I am clear that I want this critical engagement with my public works to inform my own future practice and, hopefully, that of others. Exploring my own

experience is, therefore, a necessity because it provides a stronger foundation for transparent, reliable and relevant actions.

Jones, Adams and Ellis (2015) point out there is a marked difference between autoethnographic writing and autobiographic writing. As a former journalist my instinct, indeed what I was taught never to do as a journalist, was to write in any way that could be considered autobiographical.

Professionally I was immersed in a culture where the word 'I' was not welcomed in copy, where my experience was not relevant to the story and where the journalist should never be the story. More than that, it is about the need to retain objectivity because it is perceived as core to what journalism should be. However, adopting a constructionist approach, I acknowledge that objectivity is difficult to attain because we are the product of all of the experiences life throws at us and this shapes the language we use, and the questions we ask.

I teach students the importance of objectivity in their journalism and acknowledge and am aware of the challenges of this. Similarly in the context of the autoethnographic approach, I acknowledge the challenge it presented but it is the most useful approach to enable me to critically analyse the impact my own subjectivity and value judgements have played in my public works.

The autoethnographic approach affords me the opportunity to reflect on how I have challenged the accepted norm that we needed to adopt an industry-centred model of education, that industry professionals could almost 'dictate' what we did. From the outset of designing the very first degree, I knew it needed industry 'buy-in' but I was also determined it would have 'university degree standard' at its core. It necessitated that I consider the contribution of industry partners but, in the end, I designed a degree which put academic standards at its centre. This is not to say that they are mutually exclusive, but the two worlds have different demands and expectations. It felt vulnerable and I hope my work helps others to think how degree programmes are shaped in these contexts and against a background of a news media that has been in flux for more than a decade now.

This context statement is a mix of personal experience underpinned by academic and theoretical perspectives. Its subjective nature challenges my journalistic training, but I feel reassured this dual approach is appropriate.

Pathak (2010) discussed how she devised her own guidelines to ensure rigour in her autoethnographic work and this proved helpful and reassuring. Similarly Forber-Pratt devised a checklist to ensure her autoethnographic work met criteria around the credibility and validity expected in academic research. Adopting a similar approach in my context statement will be both useful and supportive. She stated: 'the beauty of autoethnography is creating your approach yourself and finding your own voice' (Forber-Pratt, 2015, p.832).

While autoethnography puts the researcher at the heart of the research project, as Ngunjiri, Hernandez & Chang state, this does not mean it is 'self in a vacuum' (2010, p.3) . In the context of researching my practice it is clear that I needed to consider and recognise the impact of a multiplicity of others in how I acted and reacted and how this influenced the decisions I made.

Hernandez, Sancho, Crues & Montane stated:

'it meant paying attention to moments of personal and professional transits such as learning processes, crises, migrations, beginnings and ruptures, new contexts and relations and so forth' (2010, p5)

They write about how our re-telling of our experiences are unique to us but they inevitably draw others in and have the potential to show to them a perspective on events they may/will not share.

However, for all my anxiety around the robustness of autoethnography, Anderson & Glass-Coffin (2015, cited in Jones, Adams and Ellis p64) state that a positive aspect of autoethnography is 'its methodological openness' but acknowledge that inherent in the method is the challenge around understanding the need to still collect data in a rigorous way.

Anderson & Glass-Coffin (ibid) discuss the need for those undertaking autoethnography to reflect on how they engage with their field of research and

how this engagement enables them to more fully understand and perhaps know themselves. Key here is the concept, that reflecting on my experiences has changed my public works and me. They cite Richardson who says 'writing is also a way of 'knowing' – a method of discovery and analysis. By writing in different ways, we discover new aspects of our topic and our relationship to it' (1994, p.516). This has been my experience and my perspective on my discipline has been deepened and revised as result of this process.

What is clear is that the body of autoethnographic work is extensive and spans the scientific to the creative. What is encouraging in this significant body of work, as detailed by Ngunjiri, Hernandez & Change (2010), is that life in the academy is well documented and I have found this supportive in terms of identifying the autoethnographic nature/aspect of my context statement.

They also highlight the elements of self-disclosure and exposure that autoethnographic research can involve. In the context of my own work I need to acknowledge that the greatest challenge for me is how I, and my work, are perceived in a professional rather than personal context. I am conscious of the need to have readers understand that this could be limiting in my career as much as it could be liberating. The very nature of the autoethnographic approach demands honesty and a recognition of both professional and personal vulnerability being a factor in how the work is written and presented.

Pathak discusses how undertaking autoethnographic research gave her the opportunity to tell stories that she herself wanted to read. She acknowledges the challenges, as she puts it, that telling her own story was a challenge because she wanted it to be 'research and not merely me-search' (2010, p.3). This resonates strongly with me.

Exploring, sharing and analysing my professional experience in this way is both exciting and liberating. My professional life is bound by 'rules' of systematic methodological approaches to both academic and journalistic research – autoethnography provides an opportunity to be more than autobiographic and

less than the academic discourse referred to by Ngunjiri, Hernandez & Chang (2010).

While autoethnography presents an exciting opportunity it also presents a challenging one. As Forber-Pratt states: 'how does one actually do this?' (2015, p.821). I identify strongly with her concerns over the practicalities of presenting research in this way.

Ellis (2009) talks about autoethnography as an approach that does result in the researcher becoming vulnerable in the face of others, and perhaps oneself. This has been my experience, as I realise/reflect that others will read my work and perhaps criticise both my practice and the academic integrity of the autoethnographic approach I am adopting.

Ngunjiri, Hernandez & Chang (2010) also identify that autoethnographies will often present challenges in terms of ethical dilemmas faced by participants, particularly when sensitive, personal issues are explored and could impact on others. In terms of my work this relates to any comment made about the contributions made by others in terms of the design of the degree, so care does need to be taken here. I agree with Forber-Pratt (2015) that the prospect is scary but this is necessary to enable benefit to be derived from my doctoral experience.

Autoethnography requires that I confront how 'I' met and merged with the requirement to produce academically sound work (Johnston & Strong, 2008).

Just as the discipline of journalism education needs to continue to establish itself within an HE context, so too it seems does autoethnography. The literature suggests it needs to solidify its place within the academy as a more widely adopted methodological tool which sits more comfortably within the range of ways in which we understand and contextualise our experiences and understanding of ourselves in a range of social, political, cultural, economic and educational contexts.

Pathak (2010) makes the point that autoethnography is disruptive in the context of traditional academic research and it is not without its pitfalls. For example, care needs to be taken to avoid falling into autobiographic memoir. It is useful in providing an opportunity to make more meaningful sense of lived experience. Pathak also stated: 'autoethnography gives voice to my life in a way that never seems to be articulated in academic writings in which I searched for myself' (2010, p.2).

What I relate to most strongly is her recognition that she has been schooled to accept her lack of voice was 'the most legitimate form of knowledge' (p2) – and as already discussed, my professional training had similarly taught me to silence my own voice in my work. For me, autoethnography legitimises my experience and the role of the 'self', of myself, in my work and that exploring it and finding meaning in it and direction from it can be credibly defended as academic research, which has been critically examined and can rightfully take its place in the canon of work in my field.

More than this, Pathak (ibid) passionately argues for the validity of the knowledge gained as a result of an experience is as relevant as the intellectual knowledge and is not separate from it. As she stated: 'to know is not merely an abstract, omnipotent, intellectualised process. To know is to engage an experience fully...knowledge then is a vaster, more multi-dimensional realm than we often recognise' (2010, pp.4-5).

Her position is that intellectual and experiential knowledge are equally valid, which was important to me professionally. So, as I increasingly understood that autoethnography calls for an 'active intellectual voice' (Pathak, ibid, p8) to assert this credibility, the safer I felt about using it as a means of re-telling experiences to create a space between the author and the story and remain intellectually critical.

I am attracted by autoethnography because it lays the foundations which enable personal, lived experiences to become part of the world of scholarly research and investigation. In this respect it has come to be viewed as a research method and

methodology that has relevance within the academy despite Delamont's assertion that it is 'essentially lazy', lacking in 'analytic outcomes' and 'impossible' to undertake 'ethically' (2007, p.2).

In the context of my public works and the approach I have taken, I assert that the research focuses on my experience against the background that my work was informed by the requirements of a range of stakeholders. This necessitated constant reflection and revision to meet these changing needs. As such, it does require both a critical and analytical examination of what I have done and how it impacts on the future.

In seeking to produce academically legitimate and accepted work, I was concerned about the credibility and validity of a remembered experience because this forms a large part of autoethnographic work. Without diary entries or field notes, I had to trust my own recollections and informal/formal records of how work was progressed. As Ellis & Bochner state 'there is no such thing as an orthodox reliability in autoethnographic research. However, we can do reliability checks' (2000, p.751). Therefore, throughout this process I have discussed, remembered and reminisced about my experiences with colleagues, family and friends to help build trustworthiness in the development of my public works and the impacts these have achieved. It was important also to capture some of their most helpful statements.

The purpose of this process was to find different – and better – ways of designing and delivering the journalism degree within my own university. Wright (2008) asserts observing ourselves and 'telling' the story of that experience does provide a way in which to do this.

Initially, the autoethnographic approach challenged me, as Stanley who puts it very succinctly when she writes 'the complexity and conventions of academic writing work, in part, as gatekeeper. If you don't write like us, you can't come in' (2015, p.146). What I have learned from reviewing the wide body of literature on the matter is that there are many ways of presenting my research and that my

work can make it a meaningful, useful and legitimate contribution to the discourse around journalism education.

Critics of the autoethnographical approach, such as Delamont assert that autoethnography 'abrogates our duty to go out and collect data' (2007, p.3). I would contest her definition of data as overly narrow and, in my view, it is a mistaken understanding of data. In the context of an autoethnography, the 'data' is the recollection and narrative around the experience. Part of the reflexive processes undertaken as part of this doctoral journey, and as part of everyday life, does illustrate that the data is analysed, assessment is made of the impact of the degrees I have written in a rigorous fashion and changes are made as identified and required. In that sense the approach taken as part of my professional responsibility is akin to a more 'scientific' approach to research.

Proponents of autoethnography acknowledge the body of work incorporates 'quirky, unconventional text' (Stanley, 2015, p148) that are far removed from the almost stoic nature of academic writing. If I am to view the compilation of this context statement as a journey from which I emerge transformed, for it me it means becoming more 'academic', and attaining the perceived professional status that will enable me to further develop my own career. What I now realise is that autoethnography, for all it can be disarmingly personal in its content, it does necessitate criticality at its core.

Critics of autoethnography point to the potential of a perceived lack of critical analysis (Delamont 2007) in such work. As a former journalist I can understand why it is a contested methodology and I can see where, as Pearce states 'the alleged laziness of autoethnography is levelled against the often overly evocative nature of autoethnography' (2010, p.4). However, the challenge lies in achieving a balance between the 'narrative' and analytical aspects of the work.

That requires meaningful analysis of my work and my behaviours to provide the legitimacy that will be expected within the academy as well as to enable me to develop habits of research that can be built upon. So, while I explore the experience, I measure it against the data (my public works) and derive outcomes

that can be more widely shared and tested, if required. Decision-making was based around data derived from very formal processes, such as student module evaluation forms, pass rates and progression rates. This provides hard data that identifies what performs well, and university managers like the quantitative data that illustrates success in this way. I am more interested in the qualitative. Feedback comments from students and other stakeholders are of greater use to me. This dual source of feedback informs my decisions around course and curriculum content and is the basis for action around programme development and change and offers opportunities for active and proactive decision-making.

What I have achieved has been 'me' using both an academic and a personal voice to analyse, write and reflect on what I have learned from the process (Rossing & Scott, 2016).

As Ellis & Bochner assert autoethnographers are required to look both inward and outward to gain the greatest understanding. They talk about a 'dual identity' (2000, p.74) where the academic and personal selves are working in tandem to reflect on some experience. They say 'the goal is to write meaningfully and evocatively about topics that matter and may make a difference' (2000, p.748).

It is about showing how experiences can be transformative and help us make sense of what we have experienced. I want this context statement to prompt me, and hopefully others, to reflect and learn.

Rossing & Scott (2016) talk about the role of playing an insider who also needs to stand back and reflect from a professional perspective. This is not without its challenges because it means critiquing my own work and decisions, but as Ellis & Bochner (2000) state, autoethnography is about allowing oneself to be vulnerable. As Ellis & Bochner say 'the self questioning autoethnography demands is extremely difficult' (2000, p.738).

What I am clear on is that the 'self questioning' has a purpose. Jones et al (2015) talk about the reciprocal nature of autoethnography and that work of this nature often includes calls to action – indeed my own experience has called me to action

to the extent that, in designing an updated degree in 2015/16, I have challenged myself and colleagues to consider the role of journalism education within a university environment and have sought wider discussion about this.

Ellis, (cited in Jones et al 2015) says 'Autoethnography requires that we observe ourselves observing, that we interrogate what we think and believe, and that we challenge our own assumptions' (2015, p.10). It necessitates that we 're-think and revise' our behaviours and learn from them to achieve a more meaningful outcome or future. Bochner (2015, cited in Jones et al) says 'the burden of the autoethnographer is to make meaning of all the stuff of memory and experience – how it felt then and how it feels now...The past is always open to revision and so too, are our stories of the past and what they mean now (here he is citing Ellis 2009)' (2015, p.54).

The purpose in undertaking an autoethnographical approach was to enable me, and others, to make meaning of my experience. In the next three chapters I will explore the development of the degrees and how reflection prompted action and change as the programmes evolved.

4. Collaboration and compromise to inform degree design

Designing and delivering a degree is an art and a science. It offers space for creative thinking around programme content, teaching and assessment. It encourages innovative approaches in each of these pursuits. For me, it is this creative element which I enjoy – it taps into my own personal creativity and allows me to express it through my work. A range of external factors inevitably influenced the progressive nature of developing the programmes, across the period of a decade. The autoethnographical approach discussed in the previous chapter provided a context around which experience informed progress.

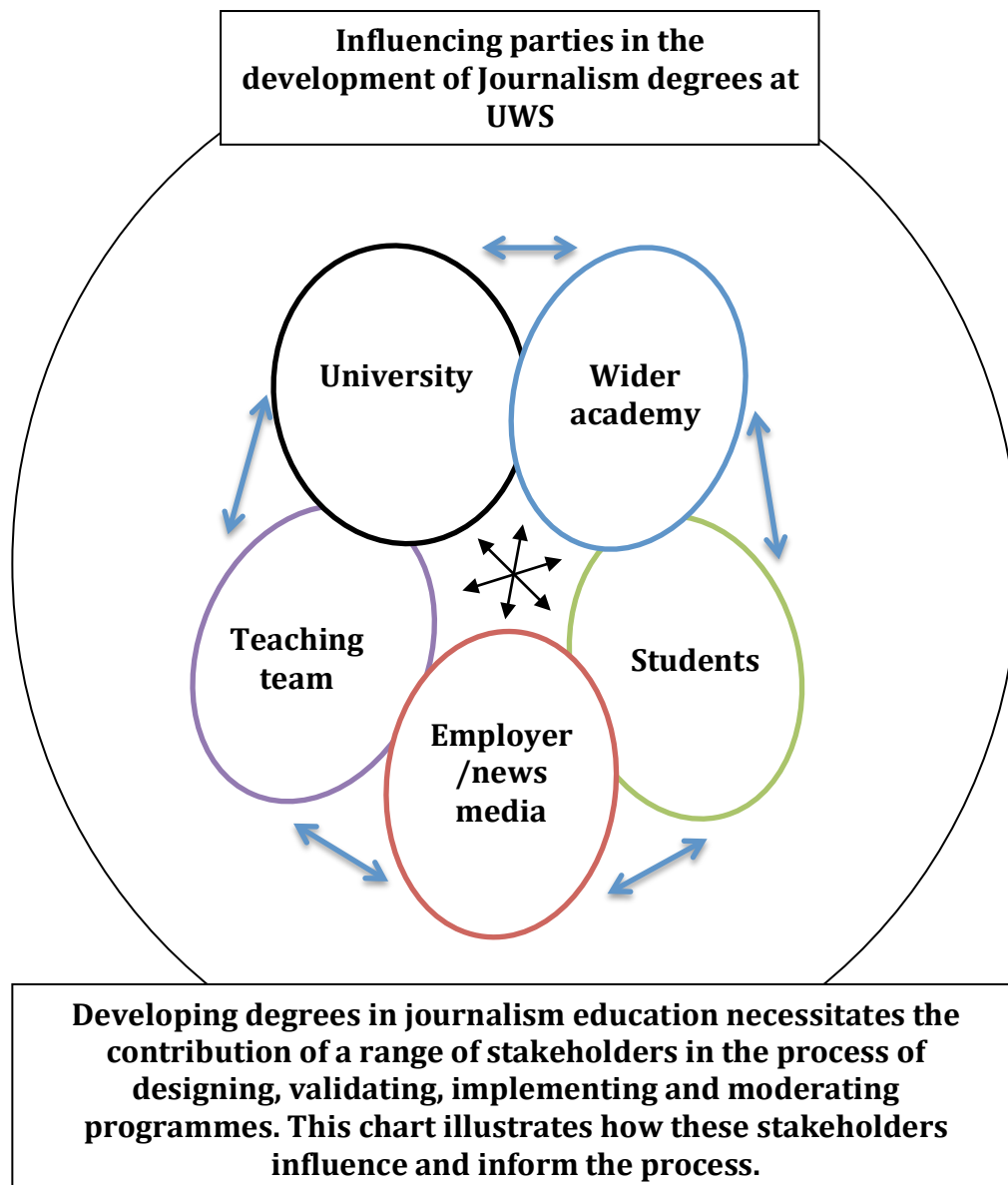
However, it is also underlined by the more practical requirement to meet the needs of powerful interest groups: the university; our students, and employers - and more broadly society and the requirement for universities to provide graduates who have a firm understanding of their contribution as good citizens replete with the range of graduate attributes that will enable them to become employable.

4.1 Key stakeholders in the Journalism degrees at UWS

Various the power and influence that stakeholders wield can be both supportive and restrictive. But what they do represent is the constituencies to whom considerable attention must be paid.

The key ones explored in this chapter (students, university and employers – with the wider societal role embedded into many decisions around course content and outcome) exert influence on my decision-making processes, but not all equally and not all at the same time.

This is a complex set of relationships wherein all play influencing roles, either into the processes involved in running degree programmes or the influence they exert at different stages of the process. I have mapped here in Illustration 1 a way in which to illustrate the complex pattern of influencing relationships.



4.1.1 University

The university, and indeed the wider academy, is the starting point. It provides the space and the opportunity to create and teach the programmes. It provides a set of institutional principles, policies and strategies around which academic programmes must be designed, but they also provide support and safety in which to do this. As a novice member of the academy in 2003, this supportive

administrative and regulatory environment was key in encouraging and inspiring me to take risks in creating new and distinctive programmes, and so it remains the case today. That there were clear parameters within which I needed to work in terms of standards and processes was enormously helpful, that these could be stretched sometimes was equally as useful.

Understanding, interpreting and responding to external demands is what drove the development of the first journalism degree and what still impinges on my work. Listening to students and employers are key elements in the process of developing and operationalizing the programmes.

When I was tasked with developing the new undergraduate programme in 2003 (Appendix A), the number of HEIs across the UK offering journalism at both undergraduate and postgraduate level was expanding significantly, so it was clear there was a market opportunity. Much had been written over the preceding decades about journalism as an academic discipline, so my overwhelming feeling was, because my employer had made a decision, I wanted to explore it, meet the challenge of it and, if possible, do something that was distinctive.

The institutional imperative was there. My employer had gained degree awarding status in 2001, although, at that stage, all of its degrees were validated by external partners, it was part of its strategic plan (2002-2006).

The BA Journalism degree (Appendix A), which was validated by the Open University Validation Services (OUVS), was intended to contribute to the college's mission to provide 'high quality education, training and advice at higher education levels...to cater for local, regional, national and international needs'.

The new degree sought to achieve a number of the college's objectives, key amongst these was:-

- Extending the availability and range of programmes at degree level in Lanarkshire;
- Increasing the opportunity for students to study journalism at degree level.

In 2004 no other institution in Lanarkshire offered journalism at degree level. As such, the programme did fulfil the objective that the college would offer programmes that were distinctive in nature.

It was true that two Glasgow-based HEIs (University of Strathclyde and Glasgow Caledonian University) had entered the market in the preceding few years and were offering journalism at undergraduate level. However, I was confident that our offering was founded on the well-established practice of the former HND and that our experience and reputation would serve us well in recruiting students. The challenge lay in 'writing' the programme, its modules and its assessments.

Resources which assisted ranged from very formal ones, such as QAA benchmark statements and guidelines, quality assurance and regulatory frameworks and what I had already learned about teaching, learning and assessment over the few years I had spent in education. There were also the rules, guidelines, blueprints and theories that I discussed in the Introduction.

While the quality assurance aspects can seem mundane, they fascinated me and I learned how to use these frameworks to achieve objectives. Furthermore, as my career has grown, I have developed a strong reputation for my skills in knowing and implementing the system, so much so that I am regularly asked to scrutinise and act as an external validator at my own and other universities in programme developments and reviews. Underpinning this is an awareness that 'knowing' the system can be the way to use the system more effectively.

Aside from the regulatory aspects of having degrees validated, the university's expectations are measured in hard data – in healthy recruitment, retention & progressions targets being met, and in module pass rates that show good student attainment and good graduate employment destinations, not to mention success in the numerous surveys that measure university performance, and their related attractiveness to applicants. This is understandable, if challenging in the face of much which lecturers have no control over, marketing budgets for recruitment being the first. In terms of the key indicators of success, each of the programmes

has recruited well over the years (in 2004 we received 15 applicants and in 2015/16 this had grown to 271). Attainment levels show encouraging growth and graduate employment continues to be a challenge in an industry that is being buffeted by strong winds of change. The vast majority of our students will still seek and find their first jobs in local news media but in the last decade local news media has been decimated.

This requires a response from us in the shape of providing learning experiences that illustrate, and enable, our students to optimise their transferable skills and knowledge, which will enable them to find work in media-related field such as public relations and press offices, but also to support them in realising their graduate-ness, as well as their journalism skills, which are highly transferable and desired by a wide range of employers.

The reality for all journalism educators now is that we need to acknowledge that many of our graduates will not work in the mainstream media, nor indeed do they all want to. I am now comfortable with that reality because it does enable us to adopt creative, sustainable approaches to learning and assessment that are more constructively aligned with future expectations of them.

4.1.2 Students

I feel great kinship with journalism students, in no small part because I once sat where they now sit. I was very fortunate to be able to attend one of the best journalism schools in the world at the University of Cardiff. It instilled in me an experience of journalism education as being one that prepared its students for future careers in the news media, albeit a news media now entirely different in so many aspects.

Gaining that qualification gave me an enormous sense of confidence. But more importantly than that, it gave me a blueprint for what I believe good journalism education should be. I quickly realised when I first joined the academy that what I would be creating and producing at undergraduate level would be much different.

It was much different because of the place from which we were starting. The postgraduate journalism course that I undertook was full of ambitious young people who had broken their journalistic teeth and proved their worth at student newspapers at leading universities. The student body consisted of a disproportionately high number of Oxbridge graduates – which is a universe away from the student body I encountered when I first joined Bell College and whom I have taught over the last few decades at UWS. From my perspective that is no bad thing. I like the fact that the majority of UWS students are the first generation of their families to come to university. Education is about inclusivity; it is our right and not a privilege born of the economic wellbeing of our parents. So, while the students are different in many perspectives, what they have in common with my peers is the same ambition to become journalists, and so I relate to their goals and dreams, and that is important.

Every student who is accepted onto our programmes is interviewed and they are always asked to explain what they expect of the degree. The most common answer is the skills to be a journalist. That is our, and their first, step on a journey where they will learn that being a good journalist is about knowledge and curiosity as much as it is about skills. So, I know what they expect. I expected it myself many decades ago. My job is to do that and more.

As well as teaching the knowledge, curiosity and skills required of graduates in a changing industry, my role as an educator is to equip students with the ability to challenge and to change their lives. As a journalism educator I understand the transformative power of education and the incredibly important role it plays in shaping and making society better – this is writ large through this context statement. Therefore, I encourage my students to challenge what is presented to them not just in the context of the classroom but more broadly in the stories they cover and the tasks they undertake. This participatory approach more readily prepares them for the future. The learning environment and contract is a challenging arena. For students to play their part in this learning partnership requires them and me to reconsider our understanding and expectations of the roles we all play.

Developing these degree programmes and teaching on them makes manifest in my life a very tangible experience of bringing the positive and meaningful experience of education to the lives of UWS students, but they need to know their role is not a passive one – I make this quite explicit to them in assessment and in adopting an active learning approach in class.

All of the degrees need to prepare our graduates for a world of work. Nowadays, for some, that means work beyond the newsrooms that they may never enter. My own career has been more diverse than my colleagues on the teaching team, who all spent all of their professional careers in newsrooms. I have worked in magazine journalism – quite a different environment to local and regional newspapers – writing for a diverse range of business and consumer titles. I spent a few years in public relations and corporate communication and my experiences have given me a very different perspective. I know that students need to enter the workforce with an open mind on what sort of jobs they can get and with a built-in resilience that will enable them to adapt to a rapidly changing work environment that calls on them to be flexible in their approach to work. That requires the sustainable learning experiences explored in Chapter 6.

The task then is always clear - to write degree programmes that take into account all of these considerations, that meet student expectations in terms of content, experience and the opportunities for them to enhance their skillsets and levels of knowledge. They also need to learn to be responsive to change and be cognisant of how incredibly important journalism is in our society and how much hard work and professionalism it requires in order to do it well.

This is not unique to journalism education, because the same can be said of a range of professional degree programmes. So, the learning gained from undertaking the doctoral process can be applied and have utility in a range of fields.

4.1.3 Employers/news media

The endpoint then would seem to be graduation, the point at which our graduates leave the relative safety of the university to join the world of work. The reality is that most of them have already been juggling work and university for four years. Some of this work has been in the news media and has netted them full-time, paid employment; for many it has not. This requires our understanding of how all of their experiences in education impact on their studies, which I discuss more fully later in this context statement. However, we arrive at the point where what they have learned interfaces most directly with the workplace. It is also the aspect of developing programmes where we acknowledge that the shadow which news industry casts across our work is significant. The use of 'shadow' to define the industry could be construed as pejorative but this is not the intention, but from my arrival in the academy I have become acutely aware that the relationship between the two is not an easy one and there is a body of work [Reese & Cohen (2000); Zelizer (2003 & 2014) and de Burgh (2003)] which supports this and is discussed in this context statement.

What has become clear over the intervening years is that the reality of who employers are have changed. In 2003 the programme was very focussed on producing graduates fit for the local newspaper industry, very quickly, and against the background of professional developments in the news media and related field, I became aware that the stakeholders I identified as employers was becoming much greater and embraced the wider field of professional communication.

When I reflect on the creation of the first degree (Appendix A), my experience brought me to a conclusion which I know will be unpalatable to many but it was simply that employers (predominantly then local newspapers) with whom I interacted in the west of Scotland did not take seriously the proposition of journalism as a university degree. To gauge industry collaboration and interest, I had undertaken some market research with 25 news organisations, initially in the form of a short questionnaire. The response rate was very low, only four

were returned. I contacted non-respondents by telephone and was mostly told they were too busy to complete the form.

This lukewarm response impacted greatly on my thinking and led me to conclude that the partnership aspect of the programme development was a contributing element and, although we needed to meet the needs of employers, I felt confident that improving the skills and knowledge of students would do that. I had the time and space to reflect and explore what journalists are there to do and to be. I understood that employers may not have articulated their needs for creative, innovative, critical thinkers but experience and research indicated that this needed to be our goal. Furthermore, at that point I was still active in journalism and had only recently left its full-time employ, as had some of the others on the team I led, and we had a very strong understanding of the requirements of industry, which provided further evidence that the degree content would meet the needs of industry.

I had confidence in my team's capacity to know from inquiry and experience what industry needed from us. I acknowledge the risk in what appears to be 'ignoring' employers but my experience has taught me that we do provide what industry needs because successive visiting editors and journalists, including our own graduates, assure me of this. Our students' experience in work placements also confirms this. When they return to university from placements, they report that their skills are more up-to-date than those they find in newsrooms. Indeed, as recently as May 2016, one such employer, the reputable online news provider CommonSpace, produced a news piece that assured its readers that the future of Scottish news was safe in the hands of students from UWS. (<https://www.commonspace.scot/articles/8464/next-generation-how-youre-creating-better-journalism-scotland-right-now>)

In 2003 my experience of talking with local newspaper editors had identified that what they required was journalists who could find and write good stories, that they had good shorthand and knew the law as it pertained to reporting. This was not a sound enough basis on which to build a degree programme and would certainly not meet the requirements of my institution or the aspirations of my

students or the needs of society more generally. So, while it was important to take these views into account and ensure we did provide the key practical skills around newsgathering, content and presentation, it was also a very tangible expression of the on-going tension that exists between the academy and the industry.

I found the lack of interest from the industry ran contrary to what I had expected from some reading that I had undertaken in preparation for devising the degree. Carey (1996) offered insightful statements about the development of journalism education programmes that are compelling. In particular he noted that in the US, university programmes often grew up around the desire of 'small town editors...seeking enhanced prestige for their humble enterprises'. It was as if studying journalism at university would afford legitimacy to its activities. In speaking with local newspaper editors in Scotland, this has not been my experience.

This was unfortunate because it was clear that in the last few decades or so, against the background of changes in delivery and perceptions of news, the news media needs to look more critically at itself and at the issues of ethics and professional standards, clearly indicating a significant measure of reflection. It may simply be as Skinner et al, states 'media owners and managers do not generally welcome critical perspectives on media practices, especially if they are contrary to commercial considerations' (2001, p.35).

Running in parallel, a growing body of academic literature devotes itself to providing a forum for critical discourse on all matters relating to the practice, as well as the theory, of journalism today. It is evident that there needs to be a greater shared discourse. It would enable more discussion between academy and industry of how degree programmes could begin to tackle these issues, how theory informs practice and vice versa. My own research had shown that much was being discussed in the academic literature that was attempting to understand the role of journalism in the 21st century, and that this learning could usefully be given back into industry to share the new knowledge being created and I discuss this more fully later in Chapter 7.

Professional accreditation of programmes is a key objective of the university, as such the Journalism programmes have achieved accreditation from the Broadcast Journalism Training (BJTC) Council and this is another stakeholder which needs to be taken into consideration in curriculum design and operational resource issues.

Achieving this accreditation illustrates the importance of having the programme scrutinised by industry professionals and the assurance this offers in terms of being able to support us in our aspiration and assertion that the course content is meeting the standards and expectations of the industry.

The university chose to seek accreditation from this particular body, rather than the National Council for the Training of Journalists (NCTJ), the oldest accreditation body, founded in the 1950s following a Royal Commission exploring the news media and historically very tied to local newspaper training, although it is now cross-platform in its approach and assessment, or the Professional Publishers Association (PPA), which largely accredits magazine-based programmes, because it believes that the multi-platform approach of the BJTC fits in with the development of the programme. The BJTC process reviews the content of the provision to ensure it meets its expectations, a visit by the accreditation team also observes students working on simulated newsdays. These accreditation visits can be advantageous as the accreditation body can call for investment in resource and this can be supportive for teaching teams.

However, accreditation preparation and meeting any conditions set do place an additional demand on staff resources because it comes in addition to internal programme review and moderation processes. However, the university sees the accreditation as an additional hallmark in the promotion of the programme and so it remains an important element of the provision.

Independent research into the value of accreditation and its impact on recruitment and employment for students has rarely been undertaken (Canter, 2015) which makes it challenging to prove or disprove its worth. There are

challenges around meeting the requirements of an external body, particularly from a resource perspective, but I do understand the institution's imperative around achieving such recognition and so ensuring that we meet the expectations and standards for this external body does play a role in how the programme develops. However, accreditation bodies, regardless of which one, do need to be able to illustrate more fully their value to institutions such as UWS perhaps by providing a stronger evidence base around how accreditation does enhance the recruitment, student experience and improved graduate employment.

4.2 Impact of stakeholder influence

Devising the degrees (in 2003 and 2008) I was actively creating programme structures where my focus was fixed on what to provide to students rather than to seek a platform for the industry to explore and examine itself. However, I do understand the crucially important role industry plays in contributing to what is taught and studied in journalism education and so the creation of a programme advisory board that will consist of my own team and employers from Scottish news media is key to advising on future developments and how we can be of mutual benefit and support.

This self-reflexive response to change is one that greatly interests and motivates me in my teaching and research and it is an area that I will continue to examine in my role as chair of the Association of Journalism Education (AJE) – the body which represents HEIs which teach journalism - for the next few years, which will be discussed more fully in the conclusion chapter.

In light of this reflexivity, I have highlighted that my key responsibilities are to UWS, my students and employer expectations. I agree with the assertion made by former president of Columbia University, Lee Bollinger, who, in presenting the vision for its world-renowned School of Journalism, stated:

'A great journalism school within a great university should always stand at a certain distance from the profession itself ... Like journalism itself with respect to the general society,

journalism schools must maintain an independent perspective on the profession and the world. Among other things, they are the profession's loyal critics. The habits of minds developed in the academic atmosphere of engaged reflection will inevitably suffuse the educational process, leading to an emphasis on some aspects of professional life, and the neglect of others." (2003, cited in Josephi 2009, p.50).

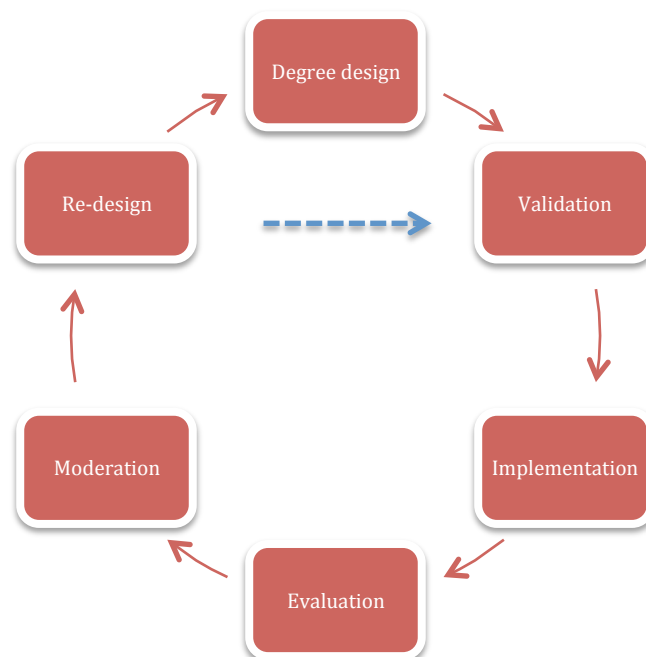
This point serves to emphasise the tensions that exist between what the industry requires and what the academy requires. This tension manifests itself most explicitly in the design of a journalism degree programme with the pull between theory-based and practice-based content. This has formed the core of the challenges, dilemmas and compromises I have faced over two decades of running and designing journalism degrees that meet the expectations of a diverse constituency. I can only conclude after all of this time, that the fact the degrees still exist, are well managed, recruit well and produce graduates who are industry ready illustrates that we are managing to meet many of their expectations. Recent UWS data shows 96% of our journalism students graduate with their Honours degree and Destination of Leavers in Higher Education (DLHE) data shows 60% of graduates from the last academic session (2015/16) are in full-time employment in professional roles.

Designing degree programmes requires mastery of processes and knowledge of the content and operation of them. Beyond this is the consideration that needs to be given to the range of interested parties whose influence on design and implementation can be far-reaching. Devising a map that illustrates to me, and other journalism educators, the complexities and connectedness of these relationships can facilitate ensuring that they are given their due consideration in order to make positive contributions to the process.

The next phase of the process is design curriculum content and this is discussed in the next chapter.

5. Designing and creating a journalism education degree

Designing, validating and implementing each of the degrees, although not a linear process, all needed to flow out of each other. The design stage is never long enough, in total the whole process from idea to operation is usually an academic session, so just around a year. The process is a cyclical one, as illustrated below:



5.1 Exploration of influential factors in degree design

What has been clear each time I have developed a new degree, or moderated an existing one, is that there are a number of conceptual as well as practical issues to consider.

Work began in 2003/4 (Appendix A) shortly after research had been published in the Journalists at Work report, (Hargreaves et al, 2002) which showed that graduates increasingly populated the news media. This research also showed

that these graduates were predominantly from established universities rather than new ones and had studied very diverse, albeit liberal arts & social sciences-type degrees.

As such, any doubt that producing the degree was the correct approach, as time elapsed I felt quite sure we had done the right thing. As Frith & Meech later asserted 'the most significant change in the occupation...is that it has become in effect, a career for graduates.' (2007, p.137) One of the key questions asked in their research, and one which informed the design of all four degrees, is how the transformation from 'on-the-job' training to graduate-level education within the academy has changed how journalists are taught and who is being taught.

Access and attainability of education is fundamentally important to me and I wanted to ensure that the students on our BA Journalism degree gained the broadest academic experience, as well as provide them with the opportunity to enjoy all that being a student studying journalism entails in terms of experience and achievement. This meant providing educational experiences that would prepare them for that 'real world' of work. De Burgh makes the point that journalism students benefit from being exposed to the broader world of what is studied within universities, albeit that the focus rarely extends beyond the social sciences. He states 'the purpose of a degree is not to make people adequate employees but thoughtful citizens and potential contributors to the intellectual and cultural life of the society' (2003, p.98).

Grappling with the question of purpose threw open issues of what the curriculum should contain and brought into focus the opportunity to go beyond the teaching of journalistic skills and knowledge to produce graduates who are equipped to respond to the changing expectations of workplaces, be that newsrooms, media-related environments or businesses that simply require them to have an understanding of the role of the news media in society today. As Deuze suggests 'Journalism, in this sense, should be considered to be the heart of what it takes to perform successfully in the information age a critical-reflective skillset, toolkit and outlook of a journalist would benefit all in the global economy.' (Deuze, 2016 in press). As such it becomes more crucial that we

design programmes that provide students with these perspectives because, in the 21st century, understanding the power of news and the myriad of media platforms will become an attribute and skill that many employers expect.

In light of this I led the creation of programmes that would certainly meet the requirements in terms of news reporting, newsgathering, interviewing and practical news production but also provide a broader, deeper education. In the context of the 2004 degree, I included modules in philosophy, sociology, criminology and psychology as well as modules that explored both the history and the business of news (See Appendix A). As Gregorian (cited in Connell) noted emphatically: ‘universities have a moral, social, and intellectual responsibility to nurture the spirit of independent inquiry that the best journalists and journalism embody’ (2008, p.4).

In leading this development, my mantra became that the degree had to produce thoughtful journalists who knew a lot and who had a broader understanding and knowledge of the world around them and the role of the journalist, and journalism, in it. Deuze asks ‘[D]oes such a program or curriculum prepare journalists for future employment, or does it serve to educate “super” citizens?’ (2006, p.24). Returning to this question of purpose, my aim is to provide programmes that do both. Providing a range of modules that would encourage and expose the students to more than the practical, professional skills of journalism would develop their critical thinking and writing skills and thereby enhance their whole experience as undergraduates – and future employability. This view was not dissimilar to that of Pulitzer (1905) almost a century earlier.

When Joseph Pulitzer convinced, and funded, Columbia University to set up a School of Journalism, he had done so because he wanted to offer to journalists a liberal arts education that had not been part of their experience, given that many journalists then were from working-class backgrounds. I agreed with Pulitzer’s sense of vision.

Pulitzer’s view of journalism was that it is ‘the most exacting profession of all...the one that requires the widest and the deepest knowledge and the firmest

foundations of character’ and he asked, ‘Is the man who is everybody’s critic and teacher the only one who does not need to be taught himself?’ (1905, p.43).

This led to a shift in emphasis in journalism education whereby it needed to explore the ‘why’ as well as the ‘how’ of journalism. I fully subscribe to this concept. Responsible journalists, and journalism, need to have a conscious understanding of how practice impacts on how we all view the world. This is an issue that must lie close to the centre of any journalism education programme.

When I reflect on the requirement to offer students this broader perspective I understand that I did it because I also wanted the students exposed to a range of views on the role of journalism and its place in the world, as Gregorian states: ‘Journalism, the quintessential knowledge profession, deserves the best-educated and trained practitioners’ (2008, p.4). Their exposure to a breadth and depth of knowledge about how the world works is crucial.

I acknowledged the level of challenge this would represent for both staff and students, but in a rapidly changing world, and a world that requires journalists to interpret ever more complex political, social, economic and cultural change, having the knowledge and ability to do more than ‘just’ tell a story is as important as ever. Friedman (1999) had suggested that to report the whole world required that journalists have a ‘six dimensional’ education in fields such as ‘politics, culture, national security, finance, technology and ecology’. The degrees may not have been able to cover all of these, but my engagement with contemporary literature at that time led me to believe we should try.

Everyone on the core journalism teaching team was a former professional journalist who brought with them a wealth of practical experience gained in a diverse range of news environments. We all held strong views on the purpose of journalism. It seemed important that the students would benefit greatly from the perspective of those who studied the impact and influence of journalism from a range of other sociological, economic and philosophical perspectives – that students were exposed to people whose experiences ranged from that of ‘what journalism does’ to those whose knowledge was more about ‘what journalism

should do'. As such, the teaching team expanded to include colleagues from law, sociology, politics, and psychology. This multi-disciplinary approach exposed students to teaching staff who had the expertise in their own fields and were able to contextualise and apply these specialist fields to the study of journalism but also relate it to how these fields impact on the role and purpose of journalists.

De Burgh's work, which underlines a core feature of what designing journalism degrees needs to consider, states:

'journalists need an education which enables them to put themselves and their society in perspective; find out anything and question everything. Motor skills yes, but also the intellectual confidence which comes from knowledge.' (2003, p.110)

This work resonated deeply with me, as did Pulitzer's which has as much currency today as it did when it was written.

I also agreed with Reese & Cohen, who make the point that the undergraduate university degree has to be about more than the reaching of 'entry-level skills' (2000, p.214) and that (additionally) the 'role of the university is to prepare student not only to be employed but also to participate effectively and critically in the democratic community' (2000, p.212).

5.2 Conceptual and practical tensions in design and content

If Pulitzer wanted to bring journalism into the academy and 'gentrify it', there has, over the intervening decades, been much made of the need to teach journalism students that undertaking journalistic work and talking about being a journalist and journalism are very different things. They need to understand that practice needs to take into account the impact it will have on audiences. This can only be achieved through discussion around the role, and impact, of journalism in society. I achieved this balance by providing the right mix of practice-based modules alongside modules that explored theoretical aspects around journalism. In this way critical thinking and intellectual pursuit underpin having the ability to undertake the practical aspects of newsgathering and production.

A recurrent theme that has emerged through the development of all of the degree programmes I have led is how educational programmes respond to a field that is variously described as both a 'profession' and a 'trade'. Reese & Cohen (2000) cite the work of Beam (1990) when talking about tensions between the practitioners and academics'.

They discuss the confusion and 'conceptual murkiness' (2000, p.127) that exists in discussions as to whether or not journalism is a profession. What they do acknowledge is that journalism does require what would be defined as professional activities but that 'what often gets called "professional" within academic programmes may often indeed be more aptly described as vocationalism' (2000, p.217).

This 'murkiness' becomes more complicated when one considers Beam (cited in Reese & Cohen, 2000), whose work around the tensions between practitioners and academics states 'the construct "professional" refers to a calling founded on a body of knowledge, a call to public service and an ethical framework for practice'. This definition would indeed suggest that journalism is a profession, given the societal roles and responsibilities that good journalism needs to fulfil. In reality, what this means for journalism educators is that curricula needs to reflect these wider societal demands in terms of content within degree programmes. Journalism education needs to, both explicitly and implicitly, provide tuition that clearly articulates the knowledge and responsibilities required of journalists, not just legal and regulatory but social and cultural responsibilities that exist for journalists if they are to fulfil these wider societal roles.

The question of whether journalism is a trade or a profession cannot be fully answered in this context statement but it was an issue that needed to be addressed. My view is that it is both. It was clear at the start of the process of creating these public works that journalism and the production of news (to say nothing of the consumption of it) was changing quickly and that the field was on a turbulent evolutionary journey that still continues today.

Witschge and Nygren (2009) discuss how this remains a very live issue, particularly as technology has impacted and perceptions of journalism have changed. While they quite rightly acknowledge the development of journalism as a feature of industrialisation, they also point to the broadly held view of sociological research that has come to define a profession as a field of work where those employed exert a degree of control and autonomy in their work. They suggest journalism is a semi-profession because of its inability to exclude non-professionals from entering it and in part due to the changing relationship journalists have with their own output. While technology allows more involvement in the process of producing news, this does not mean greater autonomy. Indeed with the economic pressures on the production of output, it could be argued that it allows less autonomy and decision-making in the face of what the market demands and expects.

The dictionary defines a trade as 'a personal occupation, especially a craft requiring skill; an occupation in commerce, as opposed to a profession' (Collins, 1993). A profession is defined as 'an occupation requiring special training in the liberal arts or sciences, especially one of the three learned professions, law, theology or medicine' (Collins, *ibid*). These definitions are narrow and perhaps only serve to illustrate the complexities that exist in how journalists are identified and how they identify themselves because the activity of journalism crosses over both.

Most journalists I know identify with each of these definitions, but what has become clearer is the need for me to shift my own understanding, and the focus of the content of all of the degrees, towards one which is about more than delivering a skillset, but was about meeting a range of institutional expectations on the academic content and pedagogy – it had to be about the development of academic knowledge and understanding as well as professional, practice-based skills. Journalism training that was taking place in both the industry and in universities and colleges was very firmly fixed on a model of training that was very skills-based.

Adam (cited in Skinner, Gasher and Compton 2001) defined the tension thus ‘the academic and professional elements of journalism curriculum are like “two nations warring within the bosom of a single state”’ (1988, p9). It is, and was, as Skinner, Gasher and Compton state a field of education that is tasked with serving ‘two masters’. They go on to illustrate perfectly the challenge that lay ahead of me and my team in designing this degree, stating:

‘On the one hand, journalism educators seek to satisfy the demands of news organisations by providing a steady stream of graduates ready for the newsroom. On the other hand, journalism schools are asked to meet the standards of university administrators who perceive post-secondary education as something more than vocational training’ (2001, p.344).

Discussion around trade and profession inevitably leads to the issue of theory versus practice and this has been a constant theme across the timeline of these public works. Much time has been spent with colleagues in the early planning stages of each programme trying to achieve a balance of ‘academic’ versus ‘practical’. To this day I cannot honestly argue whether or not either my own institution, or the many others who also teach journalism, have struck the right balance in meeting the needs of the academy and employers. I have merely drawn the conclusion that it is in a state of permanent evolution.

5.3 Designing to meet the needs of markets

Poersken (2010) refers to meeting the demands of industry as the ‘market problem’ exploring how university courses can be designed in such a way as to meet the constantly changing demands of the marketplace. What is needed argues Deuze (2006), is more reflection on the role of journalism education in today’s dynamic news media. I would posit that the changing landscape of higher education also demands that journalism educators examine its role and place in the academy, with a constant eye on meeting the exacting needs of all of its stakeholders.

Deuze (ibid) says the field has identified two approaches to journalism education – the ‘follower mode’ – very focussed on an industry-centred model, also discussed by Josephi (2009), giving the news media what it wants and needs. The

second is the 'innovator mode' – whereby the journalism programme is a 'development laboratory' (Deuze, 2006, p.25) for future needs. The idea of journalism education at the cutting edge of the developments in the field is exciting and work of this nature is being done in universities across the world. In my own programme we teach mobile journalism to the extent that students going on work placement often find themselves to be more proficient than those in some newsrooms.

Poerksen offers 'two extreme' (2010, p.182) reactions to these differing demands. The first is 'over eager adjustments to trends of media practice' and the other is 'programmatically self-isolation'. In the first scenario programmes would need to be designed – and fit in with quality assurance systems – to enable very rapid and frequent changes to structure, and content to satisfy the changing nature of the business. From a business perspective this presents many challenges. Quality assurance systems within my own university work to annual timetables of programme amendment and lack the flexibility to make quick change.

In the other scenario, programmes run the risk of becoming detached from the industry and thereby losing relevance to both students and employers alike because they do not respond to external change. My experience has taught me that module content, learning outcomes and assessments (as detailed in the module descriptors that are part of the public works) must always be written in ways that are flexible and enable teaching staff to be responsive, even proactive, in making changes that enable the student experience to meet the demands of prevailing cultures and changes.

As such, in physically designing the degrees, I have had to consider module content and assessment that is adaptive, sustainable and reflective of what the HE market is offering and industry is seeking. One of the first ways I did this was introducing assessed news days whereby students adopted a range of editorial roles and were given a deadline to produce a newspaper by the end of a working day. Although not a new concept, it was new to the department at the time and it provided an opportunity to enhance the learning experience of students and to

assess in ways that replicated the world of work. This approach was repeated across broadcast and magazine production modules with good success. More recently we have introduced assessment methods in theory-based modules that also test journalism skills. So in a politics module, instead of traditional formats such as essays and exams, students produce portfolios of political reporting that exemplify their understanding of both politics and political institutions but also how these are reported.

Support around curriculum development comes from being aware of the markets and changing stakeholder interests but the discourse at times has felt mixed. Scholarly publications and writers raise issues around the need to more fully clarify and establish the discipline of journalism education within the academy, as distinct from other fields of media studies. Discussion among employers is often around producing entrants who can do the job, who know the largely practice-based skills of constructing and presenting news. There is still the expectation from employers for journalism graduates who can do the basics of the job in terms of news, but there is also the responsibility on educators to produce graduates who have the ability to adapt to fast moving change in the world of work that enables them to develop and innovate against challenging backgrounds. This requires building in an expectation of and a resilience to working life. Our graduates should also identify as the editors and managers of the future, the very people who will lead future innovation and change. We have to instil in them the belief and behaviours they need to exhibit and practice. This has required finding a middle ground between the need to cover all of these competing interests.

As Poerksen (2010) states the practical aspects of journalism courses are what score well in student surveys and which students positively welcome. So, it is clear that these aspects will always be a prominent feature in attracting students. The theory-based aspects, therefore, need to be chosen with care and show meaningful alignment to practice, as well as the need to provide the basis of what a university education means. Success lies in knowing what will attract students, what will meet the needs of the university and employers, as well as content that none of these stakeholders will necessarily have considered as crucial to their

own requirements but which, nevertheless, provides the rounded educational experience that equips students to meet expectations not just upon graduation but for many years into the future. This means designing programmes that cover the key academic and professional skills and knowledge that students, in the main, do not always perceive they need until much later in their professional lives. This can be the leadership roles they play in simulated newsrooms or the discussions around journalism in society in seminar rooms. These represent the very essence of what education can do in enabling all of us to explore things we do not yet know will be useful in the future.

Some very practical challenges presented themselves in trying to solve this dilemma. Poerksen (ibid) points out that there is a 'problem of definition'. How do we define, and differentiate, theory and practice? It is put simply by Poerksen (ibid), who states:

'Practice indicates being anchored in tangible realities and close to down-to-earth life; theory implies a lack of vivid imagery, abstraction, and aloofness from action' (2010, p.181).

Meanwhile Poerksen (ibid) citing Fuchs (2000):

'Practice appears real, close to reality, down-to-earth, it is saturated with experience. It possesses the aura of uncontestability, self-evidence, and worldliness ... Theory is cold, operated by overpaid eggheads, who vegetate in ivory towers' (2010, pp.58-62).

Furthermore, how do we bring these together in meaningful and useful ways? Is it a perfectly asymmetrical situation whereby time is split equally between practice-based tuition and theoretical instruction, exploration and discussion? The short answer is no. My experience has taught me it is a fine balancing act that needs to respond to the changing requirements of all stakeholders.

In reality this has meant developing a curriculum that reflects what the actual experience of the newsroom environment will be and the skills required to operate successfully in it at a very practical level. This is allied with the need to achieve those 'graduate' skills that would enable the students/graduates to explore, analyse and critique the wide field of literature that explores in a

forensic way why the news/ethics/managerial decisions being made in the newsroom are being made and the impact these will have more widely in society. Alongside the opportunities and demands that the embedding of new technological advances in the capture, production and presentation of news-related content and in developing more theory-based content, challenges persisted around what many of our students have come to see as one of the 'oldest' practices of all – shorthand.

To many generations of journalists, the acquisition of the ability to record speech accurately by hand required the attainment of shorthand – in most cases to the industry expected standard of 100 words per minute. Though challenging, this is not an insurmountable task and shorthand did sit as a core module in years one and two of the journalism degrees for many years. However, as time progressed, portable dictating machines and smartphones have led to many journalists now relying more on these to record interviews. Similarly students began asking about the need for shorthand. My colleagues and I on the teaching team remain committed to the need for students to learn shorthand, if for no other reason than it is a vital skill in the times and places where recording devices cannot capture what is happening or being said.

Conscious of the need to retain the skill but cognisant of the students' issues around shorthand, a pattern began to emerge whereby students were struggling to get through the modules, thereby failing to get their degree, and we found ourselves needing to address the issue in a way that illustrated to them our understanding of their perspectives and our need to ensure we provided them with what industry still regarded as a basic key skill. It became clear that the shorthand element needed to be more strongly contextualised around the development of the students' reporting skills, so shorthand was embedded into Newsgathering Techniques (where students learn the theory and mechanics of shorthand) and in News Reporting (where they concentrate on attaining speed). This has encouraged greater engagement and performance with the shorthand elements of the programme. Students work up to 80wpm but are given the chance to undertake additional work to attain 100wpm and we provide them with a certificate from the department saying they have achieved this.

I felt that we had used a creative approach to solving a problem that was vexing for both staff and students and we continue to review the requirement to maintain the shorthand element to ensure that we are providing the fullest range of learning opportunities which we feel the students will need.

The curriculum needs to be the bridge across which we provide the graduates who met the professional requirements of the industry as well as meeting the academic standards of a university graduate.

5.4 Evolution of the degree programmes

What became quite apparent through the design stage of each of the programmes was the need for both negotiation and pragmatism, not just in dealing with the practicalities around teaching and assessment but also in these more conceptual issues.

I developed a sense, based on research, experience and instinct, of what the programmes should be in order to ensure that the needs of all stakeholders, especially the students, were met. However, all of this did need to be achieved against a background of challenging resource issues – both staff and equipment.

As explained earlier, the 2004 degree programme included a range of ‘non-journalism’ modules. This required my reaching beyond my own teaching team to tap into the necessary expertise. In 2004 this was relatively straightforward. The subject area was then situated within a school of social sciences and all of the additional teaching areas were taught by colleagues with whom I had established good working relationships and who had been part of the many early informal discussions around the development of the degree. The work environment was collegiate and supportive and the thorniest discussions were around how colleagues could fit this additional teaching into their own busy workloads. Part of the compromise became that some of the modules would be shared with cohorts of students in other programmes, most notably social sciences. It was an easy compromise to make because it also achieved my ambition that the students should be given access to lecturers from other

disciplines, as well as students whose perspectives on the news media would help journalism students understand how journalism is perceived by those outside of it. This would impact on their own perception of the responsible positions that they would hold in their future careers.

Securing the input of this broader base of staff was easy. In 2004, because the institution was so small, there were no additional complex negotiations around cross-school budgets and resources. The support from management was positive – modules being shared across programmes brought economies of scale in other respects. It worked well. Feedback from students was positive. In practice-based classes which I taught (feature writing, newsgathering and magazine journalism) students regularly taught me much about how their studies in these other modules informed their approaches to story idea generation, newsgathering & research and writing. This was the benefit of inter-disciplinary learning, teaching and assessment writ large.

From the point of view of my then very small team of three, it also enabled us to focus on the practice-based journalism modules without the additional pressure of teaching ‘theoretical’ classes. Although that is not to say we did not, I taught history and organisation of the news media and other colleagues taught ethics. What this arrangement enabled the core teaching team to do was establish the basis of key modules and to feel comfortable teaching at degree level. It also signified a shift in how the institution was teaching journalism synthesising practice and theory in way that we had not done before.

Throughout the early years of the degree programme I did need to consider that no one on the teaching team, myself included, had taught at degree level – we had all broken our teeth teaching HND journalism. This was not a barrier, merely a reality that required to be overcome. I did not doubt the team’s ability but I became acutely aware of anxieties this created and so the design and operation of the degree in its early days enabled the core teaching team to focus on developing their own skillsets within fields in which they had considerable practical and professional experience.

The initial degree ran successfully for four years – it recruited well, students gained meaningful learning experiences that enhanced their careers (see Graduate Statements A & B in Appendix G) and staff did grow in confidence in their teaching abilities. They, like me, undertook additional studies and gained postgraduate teaching certificates, Masters and PhDs as part of their own professional development.

The requirement to move to a four-year Honours degree became apparent. More than a decade later I reflect on the initial degree as a bold and distinctive approach to journalism education. It provided a rounded education and gave students a sense of journalism's role in society and it did not hinder their job prospects. There was much that was right about it. It is clear to me that I had navigated the programme and led the team through a paradigm shift in how we delivered journalism education. The programme had moved from a learning experience that had been largely practical to one which offered a synthesis of theory and practice, both embedded in the other and in doing so shifted its own perspective around what it was hoping to achieve for its students and graduates. Whereas in the past the focus was entry-level training that was almost wholly informed by the demands of the local news media, the new focus shifted to training that was grounded in the development of an understanding of journalism's wider roles and responsibilities in society, and, at the same time, to looking at how professional practice-based skills would equip students in their future careers for many years to come.

5.5 Responding to institutional change

In 2007 the college merged with the University of Paisley to create University of the West of Scotland. The merged institution – and our move to a new school of media whereby journalism sat alongside music, art, broadcast production and film-making – presented an array of opportunities around access to better equipped broadcast facilities and colleagues who worked in the wider media-related fields, to which journalism could tap into for expertise and a different sort of inter-disciplinarity. My experience in leading the development of the

initial journalism degree helped me to fit into this new environment confidently and comfortably.

Yet this also introduced a period of negotiation and compromise. For example, at an institutional level, it was decided that all degrees would be re-validated. This felt quite inclusive. It was appropriate that a new field to the university should find its place within it. Journalism had never been taught at the University of Paisley, and this made the transition for me and my team relatively painless. There was now an Honours year to be added and this met our aspirations both for our students and ourselves. However, we found ourselves in a new university, in a new school with a new management structure and it became clear very quickly that access to the knowledge, expertise and non-journalism modules from the original degree was no longer as readily available.

Developmental team meetings provided a valuable space to explore challenges around fitting into a new institutional structure at the same time as responding to changes in the news media. The outcome of this discussion was the BA (H) Journalism, which was validated in 2008 (Appendix B). It looked and felt completely different. A new credit structure – where everything had to have a value of 20 credits – meant a reduction in module choice. The team had also believed that we needed to respond to the bewildering change that was taking place in the news media. Accordingly, the new degree reflected a more multi-platform approach to journalism. More space in the curriculum was dedicated to practice-based modules and content. The ‘social science’ type options were mostly removed, partly as a response to industry changes but also to organisational change that made it more difficult to organise and negotiate input from colleagues in other schools whose workloads and priorities had also changed.

At the time the move to the new school seemed like an appropriate fit given the other media programmes it offered. On reflection the new set-up felt more ‘siloes’. There was no sharing of teaching between our subject area and the wider school, although this was in part due to being based on a different campus. Teaching on the programme was now largely undertaken by the journalism

lecturers, with few exceptions. Initially law and politics lecturers came from outside our school, although over the next few years these were also taken 'in house' and taught by the core team due to pressing resource issues.

One benefit of this shift was that it did provide the chance for the teaching team to increase their input to the more theoretical modules that now largely populate the final year of the programme. I led the issues in journalism, dissertation and news & politics modules due to my own Masters research having explored news media influence in elections. I also undertook a PG Certificate in Research Supervision to enhance my ability to guide and support students through dissertation. Colleagues also developed their own research interests around the curriculum. Meeting these new demands required that I recognise that my previous experience in designing the first degree was invaluable. We moved into a redevelopment phase whereby I felt I had less control in respect of whom I could have to teach on the degree but more confidence and control in my ability to meet the demand of designing a degree within these constraints. There are always constraints but it is how I responded to these that mattered rather than what they were.

For students the new degree meant there was a little less variety in terms of modules offered. The focus was very much on the study of journalism and how it is applied in practice, and taught solely by journalism lecturers, which was not the original vision I had had of how we should teach the subject. Much of the literature which had influenced the creation of the initial degree in 2003 espoused the involvement of non-journalism teaching staff and this involvement had been found to have been a distinctive and successful programme.

There were pros and cons in the model. The positives: from the programme leader perspective I felt there was some sense of control amidst all of the organisational change we were experiencing; from a staff development point of view there was a lot of opportunity to experience teaching subjects that felt more 'academic' in nature, which benefitted the individual's own professional aspirations to develop their own expertise in the purpose of journalism; it also had the benefit of enabling journalism staff to look more closely at what we

taught in a broader context enabling us to illustrate more explicitly the interconnection between what students were learning in practice-based modules and the impact of how stories are reported more widely in society. This enabled students to synthesise theory and practice.

Most importantly, for the students, there was more time spent 'doing' journalism and this was very popular, as both the literature and student survey widely states.

There was also greater opportunity to develop the critical thinking skills within the context of practice-based modules. The graduate attributes employers seek gained greater emphasis, and there was an institutional imperative around the need for programmes that embedded employability. For journalism this had always been easy, the programme prepares students for the world of work through modules on work placement and simulated newsroom environments, enabling the subject area to meet employability demands - the modules detailed in Appendix B illustrate this.

Beyond the 'loss' of access to a broader base of lecturers, I saw no significant negative impacts on the student experience. At that stage the cons were the compromise in terms of the loss of some modules and valuable staff input was offset by the chances it provided my team to take greater responsibility for teaching journalism modules from across the curriculum. It offered opportunities for me to keep considering how journalism education was being defined within my own university as my own experience of teaching a different range of subjects as adding to my own experience and knowledge. In this way the change process was both led by me and also led to the creation of alternative ways to deliver the subject that enhanced my leadership role and had positive impacts on my role as a journalism educator.

The new institution was supportive of new programme developments, particularly across disciplines, which seemed counter-intuitive when I consider the challenge of retaining some of the older modules in the programme, but it did support in 2009 the development of the BA (H) Sports Journalism (Appendix C). I

had mulled over the idea for many years and was convinced it would be a success. It was unique in Scotland and derived much of its content from journalism. It involved a close collaboration with colleagues who taught sports coaching and development in the school of science. Its aim was to offer a distinctive product that would be niche but which would recruit highly motivated students, and this has indeed been the experience.

At its core were key journalism subject areas – I agreed with the team and in consultation with industry that the students needed to know the basics of good journalism and that sports aspects would be layered on top of this. Again this provided opportunities to teach across cohorts in the journalism and sports modules but there were also many modules specifically designed to focus on sports journalism – this was as true in the theory-based classes as in the practice-based ones.

In 2009 the journalism teaching team had grown in size by one member of staff and now worked across two undergraduate programmes where student numbers had almost doubled. Progression and retention, for the most part, remained healthy. As time elapsed, I led regular reviews of the programmes with modules amended and dropped or introduced, to meet the demands of students, the university and the industry. Over time my own perspective, informed by my own experience, study and reflections, has led me to conclude that the design and content of the degrees offers opportunities for students and staff to achieve their professional and personal aspirations.

Designing degrees is complex and absorbing. Besides teaching I find it to be most enjoyable, rewarding and intellectually stimulating aspect of my work. In 2015 I was asked to reprise my role as programme leader (having moved on to wider school and university roles in the last few years whereby I undertook leadership roles in quality management and assurance and in learning and teaching) and to lead the re-design to fit in with a review of the portfolio of the new school in which journalism now resides. It was a task I could not pass up, as much because I love it, as because I felt my lengthy experience and reflection of journalism education could be brought to bear on addressing what I felt were the gaps and

shortcomings in the most recent versions of the programmes. There was an institutional desire to merge the BA (H) Journalism and Sports Journalism (Appendix D) programmes into a pathway model that offers a common year 1 and 2 and specialisation in years 3 and 4. Students will still study the specialist areas of sports and news production and theory. This was not a decision that I agreed with, but I understood the desire of the School management to rationalise programmes to meet other institutional objectives. I took the view that we needed to adopt the change with the proviso that we could re-assess the position as we move forward. I find that compromise and pragmatism continue to be the best way to negotiate the realities of the university.

The redesigned degree BA (H) Journalism/Sports Journalism (Appendix D), which began in September 2016, has re-positioned theory-based modules and explored how assessment in practice-based modules can be reflective of the need for the students to see journalism in a wider societal context. Students now study business and organisation of the news media. Ethics remains as core, and is supplemented by a broader study of the sociological aspects of mass media to inform more fully an understanding of ethical practices. Assessment has been redesigned to bring practice-based approaches into theory-based modules, e.g. in politics and news modules, portfolios of practical work sit alongside traditional assessment approaches, which enables the students to contextualise their learning across modules and so enhance their overall approach. This latest version of the degree has much in common with the first BA Journalism degree I led a decade ago and, as I discuss in the conclusion chapter, it is reflective of that inter-disciplinary nature that I believe is crucial in good journalism education.

The new degree has been the benefactor of the last few years of my own intensive study and reflections on the field. It has also been impacted by events outside the world of the academy in terms of how the news media is perceived following scandals such as phone-hacking and reporting on events like the Scottish independence referendum, which have brought the news media and its practices under scrutiny. As a journalism educator, I recognise and respond to such scrutiny by providing students with opportunities for theory-based learning that informs and influences their practice. I believe better journalism

lies not only in better production skills and ways of telling stories but in a stronger understanding by journalists of the perceptions and implications of their work. The new programme remains to be tested. It received endorsement as part of its validation from key stakeholders and it will be carefully observed to ensure its success and moderated to ensure it continues to remain current and relevant.

Debate and discussion around practice -v- theory has existed for as long as journalism has been taught in universities and will continue in journalism education. The conclusion I draw is that it may never be resolved but that each journalism educator needs to assess how the balance is struck in the best future interests of their students. My contention in respect of UWS is that it is less about a hard numerical balance in terms of module/credits and more about content and context.

In terms of journalism at UWS, looking at the data in terms of credit split between what we would define as practice-based and theory-based modules over the lifetime of my public works is:

	Practice (%)	Theory (%)
BA Journalism (OUVS) 2003	53%	47%
BA (H) Journalism 2008	60%	40%
BA (H) Sports Journalism 2010	60%	40%
BA (H) Journalism/Sport 2016	60%	40%

The data shows the split is still in favour of practice. What has changed is the way in which we contextualise both aspects across modules and this is evidenced both in the teaching and in the assessment. Students will often be writing reflective commentaries in journalism practice modules and will be producing journalistic content in theory modules. Practice-based modules by their very nature do require that students are prepared to undertake all aspects of newsgathering, writing, production and presentation and this requires the acquisition of knowledge. Similarly, in theory-based modules students need to understand the context of the content and how it is applied in the process of

creating good journalistic outputs. Identifying a tidy divide in terms of modules would therefore be a blunt tool that would not take cognisance of the subtleties and complexities of the challenges this presents to journalism educators and students.

In the context of the journalism programmes at UWS, I strive to encourage both staff and students to look at module content in a far more holistic way. To provide a coherent and sustainable path of study that is constructively aligned to the requirements of both the academy and industry requires that all of the modules work together.

On reflection, I believe much of the discussion around theory -v- practice needs to be looked at in the context of where journalism finds itself in these days of challenge around its role and purpose.

What remains key to the development of the programme is the discussion around how the learning and teaching approaches need to reflect changes within the academy and the news media and this will be fully explored in the next chapter.

6. Creating a sustainable & purposeful learning experience

Deuze (2000) highlights a key concern that has troubled me throughout my teaching career. Much of what we teach is about the need for journalists to know their audiences. However, this needs to be about more than simply meeting their needs as consumers. If journalism is to have a meaningful role in the civic lives of our societies, it has a responsibility to provide audiences with content that enables them to fulfil their roles in the democracies in which we live. That means we need journalists who understand journalism at this very important level, who realise that it has a responsibility to ‘speak truth to power,’ and that it exists to challenge norms, to offer alternatives, to be a public space in which discourse is allowed to take place. This demands of journalists a deep understanding of their role in society. Costera Meyer summarizes this responsibility as: ‘informing citizens in a way that enables them to act as citizens’ (2013, p.13).

Designing each of the degrees required an examination of the end point at the start of the process because such an examination informs how assessments are designed, assessments that enable the students to gain an understanding of this broader perspective on journalism, its roles and purposes. Teaching and assessment needed to be shaped according to what the news media and employers needed from those who were entering the workplace in terms of a wider understanding and perspective. This meant thinking about what role of news is in a much more conceptual way, Hermann and Chomsky (1988) describe the role of the news media as presenting citizens with a ‘tolerably realistic view of the world’, as such students need to understand its roles and responsibilities.

6.1 Identifying key themes in learning, teaching & assessment

As programme leader it was important to understand that only by providing a broader and deeper knowledge of a range of subjects that made sense of the world and people, could we produce fully rounded journalists. Such provision is apparent in the design of the public works presented here. Although the drive to produce graduates who are highly skilled in multi-media production and presentation skills is gaining ground, it is absolutely vital that university degree

programmes also produce graduates who can think critically, engage with society and understand, appreciate and challenge, where required, established social and cultural norms. This can be achieved by appropriate teaching methods and sustainable assessment approaches that encourage and facilitate long-term professional development.

Central to successfully implementing a degree programme is an understanding of the complexities in which the context is pitched. Deuze states: 'journalism is generally considered to be contributing significantly to the functioning and wellbeing of society' (2006, p.24). So it was right to ask the question 'what are these university courses preparing their students for – future employment or the education of good citizens?' As journalism educators we need to reflect on this and be able to answer the question. However, the answer is not simple – the first has quite a narrow ambition if all it is doing is preparing them for a specific field (Deuze calls this an 'internalized occupational ideology'). The response I adopted was that we must be doing the latter and that the assessment and teaching, as well as the design of the degrees, take into account this greater sense of the citizenship responsibility with the provision of a broader based education.

Designing the curriculum and content of degrees is an intellectually rewarding experience. Creating assessments is equally so but can be more difficult, bound as it often is by institutional policies and procedures that can feel restrictive. Reflecting on how this impacted on my leadership role meant that I needed to embrace a new set of academic standards and create a new regime which was sustainable for our programme.

In 2004 this meant reviewing the verbs that were used to describe the level at which the knowledge and skills of students would be assessed. Care needed to be taken that our 3rd and final year was not pitched at the Honours level but at pass degree level. This required advice and guidance from learned colleagues in the College's quality enhancement team, as well as consultation with colleagues who had, or were travelling the same journey in designing programmes in other disciplines.

As shown in the introduction to this context statement, what was required was a fresh look at every aspect of learning, teaching and assessment that we employed. I have also discussed in the introduction how external guidance, e.g., from WJEC/UNESCO/other colleagues, assisted in this task.

But, this was still a new and thought-provoking challenge. Whereas in the HND system we were prescribed a set of outcomes and objectives and assessments were designed around these, in the degree we needed to start from scratch at a time of uncertainty and transformation in the field of journalism, and this was both daunting and exciting. We needed to adhere to institutional assessment policies and strategies that undergo constant review and change in areas such as type, length and purpose of assessment. My professional journey in the academy is punctuated by a series of policy changes that, as a lecturer and programme leader, I have had to implement and these alter on an almost annual basis and are lengthy in detail and ambition. Currently, the 2016 degree (Appendix D) was designed with the UWS Enabling Plan in mind. It states that we seek to:

- offer inspirational and transformative learning within a flexible and personalised curriculum;
- ensure transitions into, within and beyond UWS that raise the horizons for all stakeholders;
- maximise staff and student engagement in a culture and environment support and development;
- ensure high quality information to support effective interventions in enhancement;
- ensure that our graduates will be highly employable and able to make a difference locally and globally.

These are worthy aspirations because they emphasise the need for sustainable approaches in learning and teaching and the need for student attainment and success to be integrated into many aspects of the students' lives and journeys through the institution and on to future careers. As such the new programme has been designed with these principles in mind and it will be measured against these.

Throughout my leadership of the programme I have encouraged colleagues to try alternative ways of learning, teaching and assessment, underpinned by a strong commitment to sustainable approaches that facilitate deep learning. This builds in capability for students to make sound professional judgements in their future careers, as much as at university. The UWS Quality Handbook defines approaches to assessment thus: 'the right bits, in the right place, doing the right job at the right time (2015, p204)'. The demand this now places on me is no less challenging than it was when I first wrote assessments, but it now does feel more attainable.

Policy statements such as this pose challenges to teaching teams. In the context of my public works my response was to undertake postgraduate study in teaching. This provided an opportunity to learn more about the design of assessment and the practice of teaching from a theoretical perspective. It forced me to reflect upon my practice thus far, as well as study the theory behind why we teach and assess in the way in which we do.

My teaching approach in the classroom was initially derived from my own experience as an undergraduate, but also as a postgraduate student on a journalism programme. I remembered lecturers whose teaching approaches had helped me to do well as a student. I adopted the practices they had used – an active style of learning that required students to play their part in the teaching and learning process. The approach that sees students as active partners and co-producers in learning and teaching has gained much traction in recent years. The parallels with being taught to be a journalist and this co-creation in the learning experience replicates professional activities in journalism – journalists do not make stories but they are co-creators in how those stories are told back to us. Therefore, adopting assessment approaches which enable this development and enhancement of this ability is an essential requirement.

Brown, McDowell & Race (1995) advise that you not imitate those who taught you but that you seek to emulate the good practice you experienced and leave out the boring bits. My teaching practice is informed by my desire to convey my enthusiasm for journalism and by capturing the students' attention with my

passion for journalism. I am not alone in this respect. Many of my colleagues are great teachers precisely because of their love of their field. What also drove my teaching was a concerted effort to convey to my students that learning by doing was required and to look at their own learning as more than just passing assessments.

Sustainability is enhanced by getting students to see how they will personally benefit from what they learn in class and in helping them to identify how they can use this beyond their academic careers. It also helps them to improve their chances of sustaining their educational experience beyond university.

This required the connectedness between practice and theory that was discussed in the previous chapter. This is not only required in teaching but in assessment also. Maki (2002) asserts that lecturers and institutions need to provide students with a variety of opportunities to learn and develop their skills. She suggests that one way is by cross-curricular assessment that enables lecturing staff from different disciplines to identify opportunities that will enable the student to learn more effectively. In encouraging this inter-disciplinary approach to teaching, and hence learning and assessment, whereby students gained knowledge and experience beyond journalism, I had taken the bold move to extend teaching beyond the core team. This was identified as good practice when it came to assessment, which meant students had an enhanced learning experience that helped to improve this chance of sustaining this kind of effective learning beyond university.

The work of Biggs (1999) became a touchstone for me in the early days of my 'transition' into the academy. In respect of the teaching approach I was taking, I agreed, and could identify, with his findings that stated that people's learning experiences are intrinsically linked to their own personal motives and intentions. Anecdotal evidence drawn from students is that they enjoy the approach and feel it benefits them beyond university. Several of those who provided me with supporting impact statements for this context statement do discuss how my approach influenced them (Appendix G).

Biggs (ibid) also writes about 'deep' and 'surface' approaches to learning. Although I had an instinct, and observed, that students took very differing approaches to their learning and assessment, it was highly reassuring to feel supported by a theoretical perspective. What I experienced, far more than I was happy with, was a surface approach that 'arises from an intention to get the task out of the way with minimum trouble while appearing to meet requirements' (Biggs, 1999). Further exploration of the field and research around teaching and learning supported this assertion. Prosser & Trigwell (2001) also talked about deep and surface approaches to learning but they added that students adopt different approaches in learning and approach to assessment in relation to the demands being placed on them as learners. They state that where assessment mostly calls for recall of facts, and I extrapolated this to include the practice-based approach in the journalism modules, they are more likely to adopt a surface level. Whereas when there is a choice in what is to be learned and a clearer idea of the standards expected and objectives to be fulfilled, students are more likely to adopt a deeper approach.

I had observed that assessments that allowed students greater autonomy in the sorts of stories they produced saw greater enthusiasm from the students and better performance in grades. By implementing assessments which are not overly prescriptive in terms of content, my experience is that students do challenge themselves to do more than the very basics when they feel they have a choice. It is an approach I have used successfully in several modules. For example, in magazine journalism and feature writing, students are asked to channel their creativity in terms of story ideas. In the dissertation module, the learning outcomes require that students explore a field of journalism from a theoretical perspective, but may choose whichever aspect they want. This has produced work as diverse as how the news media can create moral panics to how women are represented by the magazine industry. By bringing their own perspectives and enthusiasm, there is greater engagement, better performance and attainment in grades.

6.2 Applying teaching, learning and assessment approaches to journalism education at UWS

Those studying journalism are there because they want to be. They have often dreamed of doing the job. They come highly invested in their learning and are motivated by it. Biggs (1999) refers to the factors that make students want to learn something and identifies that the student has to see the value in it and must be able to expect success. This expectancy-value motivation is very apparent in many of my classes, particularly practice-based ones, which explains my rationale in offering choice in assessments, because with that choice comes responsibility for the outcome. I see it as my responsibility to encourage my students to realise their own potential and spend a considerable time both at the beginning of the course and throughout it, and telling them they can achieve their goals by learning what we are teaching them.

I illustrate this with evidence from their own work, showing them how they have improved and encouraging them to continually stretch themselves. I constantly ask them to take ownership of their own work and to become responsible for their own progress towards attaining good grades. Good feedback lies at the heart of a good educational experience and is quite rightly embedded into the culture of the university.

Students will succeed because sustainable learning, teaching and assessment provide them with the 'tools' they need to sustain their success in a changing work environment. This was as true when we were preparing them for the world of local newspapers in the early days as it is now when we spend much time preparing them to operate in multimedia newsrooms, press offices and other organisations where they will use the knowledge and skills they have gained.

Regardless of whether or not they enter journalism, journalism students will work in a fiercely competitive industry, one where peer recognition and praise is highly (and publicly) sought. This desire to be recognised is quickly apparent. Most are desperately keen to see their name in print/online/broadcast, with the inherent implication they have attained a certain standard of work. Similarly in

assessment and classroom activities, they are motivated by what their peers and the teaching staff value.

Biggs (1999) states that this achievement motivation plays an important role in encouraging students to learn. I knew this from my own time as postgraduate journalism student. I implemented the news day element of the programme. It now sits in Newsroom Practice (a module that has been a core feature of all of the degrees). This gives the students the chance to 'show off' their good news sense and journalistic skills, and, almost without exception, they are highly motivated by the desire to be seen as 'good' by their peers as well as by the industry professionals who assist in teaching the module. The news day is not a new concept but it was new to my institution and it provided the correct response to meeting teaching, learning and assessment needs because it concentrates and illustrates knowledge and skills in one place.

Assessment calls for the production of a portfolio of work created during these news events and the format has changed little over the years – it is the output which now differs – we have moved from newspapers to multi-platform online news websites that comprise hourly news bulletins consisting of print, audio and video content, and we have a model now that ensure all practice-based modules have some element of production days.

Each student is given a role to play and is assessed in that role. This exposes students to some sense of the reality of a newsroom. More than that, it illustrates to them the need to have a coherent and 'joined up' approach to their learning and to see how this impacts on their performance in assessment, and later in their careers. Therefore, students need to know and understand the implications of the law, if they produce something defamatory or submit a court story that is in contempt, then the guest news editor (usually a professional journalist) or staff member draws immediate attention to it and requires them to quickly amend their work. Students need to provide stories that examine local and national politics, sport or general lifestyle issues. All in all, this one module continues to demand from students engagement across the curriculum. It also calls for them to work collaboratively and enables us to instil in them need for

good team working skills, which stands them in great stead in the workplace. Handy (1995) talks about education preparing young people for a portfolio career – it is vitally important that we prepare our graduates for a world of work very different to what they might imagine. In some respects, this module is the entire programme's aspirations writ large.

The spin-off it has in terms of learning is that it encourages students to take an inter-disciplinary approach to their learning. They realise that they need to utilise a range of skills and knowledge in one module. It also encourages them to look more closely at what they have to do to be more successful in the assessment. I believe this leads to a deeper approach to their learning. They no longer just want to pass, they want to be better than others and they want the public and professional recognition this brings.

I would suggest that for some their motivation becomes more intrinsic. They learn because they enjoy it and are interested in it. Biggs (1999) says this leads to higher achievement and I can think of many students whose work and approach improves dramatically when they begin to see their work published and broadcast to wider audiences.

Prosser & Trigwell (2001) state that adjusting the context around learning and teaching can lead to positive changes in students' perspectives. Implementing the news day has taught me this and, as I have developed each of the degrees, I have learned it is imperative that I bear this in mind. We need to push students towards greater levels of attainment and we need creative, sustainable learning and teaching environments in which to do this.

If I can relate my experience to anything, it is to the work of Cowan (2006). He states that he felt he had to do something to enable his students to realise their potential and that the innovation for him was a joint activity with his students that involved making mistakes. I share his desire to create teaching and learning situations from which my students can learn more effectively. The experience I gained in the Newsroom Practice module I now use in the Magazine Journalism module, whereby I share with my students my plans and ideas for how we

should run the module and I get their views around the lecture schedule, the shape of lessons and how their own teams will operate. This means they are 'on board' from the start. They decide the type of magazines they will create, and lectures are planned around their choices, enabling them to create the specific types of magazines they want to produce. I explain to them that my goal is to constantly improve the module and to help them learn more effectively. This creates an environment that enables me to feel confident in taking risks, and the same is true for my students.

This environment also enables new assessment and teaching methods to be tested, allowing the students to lead the class and to comment on assessed presentations. More importantly, I aim to give the students an environment where they feel they can safely discuss their own approaches to learning and identify where I can more ably assist them.

Every year module pass rates are reviewed as part of my leadership role in annual monitoring of the programme. For the most part these have increased, driven by creative assessment regimes that encompass practice-based portfolios in theory-based modules and theory-based essays and reports that explore practice, as well as pitches and presentation across the curriculum. These are supported by learning activities that engage students but also by the realisation of students that, in order to impress future employers, as well as themselves and others, they need to gain good degree classifications.

Joseph (2009) points to the work of Splichal & Sparks (1994) which showed that 'journalism education therefore, to all intents and purposes, can be perceived as an agent of change' (cited in Wahl-Jorgensen and Hanitzsch, 2009, p.47) within the lives and perspectives of its students. This goes to the very heart of my own belief system that journalism education is a transformative and positive experience.

These are lofty ideals and I am fully aware of the need to ground my ambitions for the students in the mundane reality of designing learning, teaching and

assessment that brings positive meaning to them and that enables and empowers them to envisage future careers in the frantic world of news.

6.3 Aligning the classroom to the workplace

We know the world of journalism is changing almost daily. Whereas in the past it was a good idea to have newsdays with one deadline, we now have more of a 'rolling' approach whereby students produce to hourly deadlines across a range of platforms. We try as far as possible to provide classroom experiences that imitate the 'real world' because these are valuable learning experiences.

Biggs (2003) calls this constructive alignment and defines it as a process where learning is constructed in an environment, or social world, to give greater meaning to both the learning and the assessment. As such, this means there needs to be strong alignment between the learning and the assessments and that these have to be done in spaces where the students can meaningfully relate their learning to a present and future existence in the news media.

In the 21st century, set against the background of great change in the news media and a challenging jobs market, we also need to consider how the assessment, and content, is expanded to enable the development of other skills that will make the students more employable. We need to consider inclusion of skills that focus more on changing styles of journalism. For example, do we increase lifestyle journalism over straightforward news journalism? Or do we offer public relations or social media marketing? The challenges now in designing journalism courses are as great, if not greater, than they have ever been. The challenge before us now is how to future-proof our programmes and our students for this changing world and examining how we adapt to help them be more ready for an uncertain future.

I have responded to this challenge in different ways. In the early days of the degrees this meant that assessment was largely focused around the production of predominately local news produced in a way that reflected their learning across a range of their modules and programmes. This is no longer enough.

Today we need to prepare our graduates to 'survive' in a workplace that, for the most part, is quite alien to those who have worked in the news industry of even just a decade ago. Mensing (2000) acknowledges that much journalism education in the past (and present) was about preparing students by employing former professionals who by and large present to students the practices and behaviours expected of them now – she argues this can work well during times of little change but in the current climate we need to produce students who do not try and imitate past behaviours but are well placed to be more creative in their responses to changing working environments. In response, the journalism programmes provide simulated newsroom environments, as well as modules that teach entrepreneurship and professional development and planning. These long-term, sustainable activities prepare the students for their own working lives.

This is challenged by the reality of the great speed of change in the workplace. Reese & Cohen (2000) argue that close relationships and engagement with the industry is desirable. Industry expectations and realities in terms of what journalism education can provide in terms of meeting a range of practical and academic demands in course content has undergone significant change. No longer is it enough to provide industry-ready entrants with firm grasp of entry-level skills and knowledge.

The expectations of employers are much greater and the academy needs to respond. This means including industry professionals in teaching and bringing back former students who have forged successful careers and can share experience and wisdom, as well as networking opportunities. What becomes apparent on these occasions is the realisation from industry partners that the academy has had to respond to the changes in the industry with the same haste that the industry has. For the most part this has been about addressing technological advances in how news is presented, but this should not be to the cost of key skills needed in both journalistic and academic activity. De Burgh makes the point that we need to teach students the skills of 'investigation, analysis and communication' (2003, p.101), ensuring this development of a critical skillset should make graduates more employable in many fields. Opening

our classrooms to industry enables them to see the challenges which exist in our field, thereby providing continued opportunities for discussion around this shared experience and informing how future content can contribute and be more reflective of the changing nature of the industry.

One of the key places where this takes place – and where it is most evident that we have much to learn from each other - is in production and practice-based modules that simulate a newsroom environment. De Burgh (ibid) provides a very useful and succinct analysis of newsday and what it achieves. However, while these classroom experiences can appear, at least superficially, to be about the enhancement of practical skills, they need to be founded on a deeper knowledge set around what makes news, what is making news, what society needs to have explored and how journalists need to know how to produce news that meets these demands. As De Burgh (2003) states earlier.

Experiential learning such as this is a key feature of most journalism programmes and it ticks so many boxes in terms of providing space for innovative teaching (indeed in my own department students currently run a website and television channel for a local football club - <http://www.saintmirren.net/pages/?p=56285>) and sustainable and creative assessment approaches that mirror industry.

As the degree developed into an honours degree in 2008 and content became more theory-based, particularly in the graduating year, I expected, as Poerksen (2010) discusses, to see students becoming more thoughtful journalists, given the increasing depth of their knowledge base.

The final year of the programme consists of research projects and theory-based modules. This presents challenges to students who would in all likelihood prefer to spend their time producing news content, and it does again highlight the challenges that journalism educators face in aligning professional and academic requirements through creative and sustainable assessment approaches. It is crucial we engage students, responding to their differing motivations by illustrating to them the broader context all of their learning will have on their

lives and careers. And this does require careful management of their expectations, aided by clear communication throughout around the content, the rationale for it and proposed changes to it.

Teaching for me has never been just about what happens in the class. It is as much about the development of my subject area as it is about ensuring that the students' educational experiences are positive and transformative. As such, I have been throughout the years as pre-occupied by how they meet the demands of education and how we work to prepare them for their future careers as I have about how they manage life as a student, providing them with experiences which will sustain them in all aspects of their professional lives.

I subscribe to the concept that learning is a 'whole body' experience and that good experience will only come when students are able to be as fully engaged with their learning as possible. My university's constituency is broad and its aspirations are international in outlook, but it remains at heart a widening access institution that draws its students from some of the country's most deprived areas. This is a good thing. Students need support to engage with university life and so I concur with the work of Illeris (2007) who discusses the development of the wide field of research into learning and points to the work of Jean Piaget and his assertions that the body has a role to play in learning and that tiredness, hunger and worry manifest themselves as a tension that can have an effect on learning. The challenge then for the student who may have financial and personal issues, is to 'learn to learn' against a background of their own life's demands and for the teaching staff to be aware of this and have the knowledge and skills to respond effectively.

This aspect of my role as programme leader posed questions around my ability to deal with these almost extra-curricular issues. I have engaged with the work of Goleman (1995) on emotional intelligence and Gardner (1993) on multiple intelligences to help me understand the behaviour and support that I can provide to students beyond straightforward learning strategies. Goleman (1995) asserts that we have a rational and emotional mind, that these constantly interact and that the ability to manage these two will have a bearing on how we successfully

manage situations, not least how we learn and manage working relationships. His work has provided me with guidance in enabling and supporting students and has also facilitated my own working relationships. One of my goals as I develop the degree programme further will be to develop learning around how resilience and emotional intelligence can fit into an enhanced university experience to enable students to become capable of managing challenging future workplace demands in a positive and sustainable way.

My teaching has evolved. I now 'lecture' less in traditional classroom settings and I interact more in online discussions. Technology's impact on our teaching is felt, albeit not as acutely as in the news media, but it is set against a background of making decisions around the best way in which to instruct students in the myriad of ways they can undertake and successfully complete their degrees. I am committed to sustainable teaching and assessment that prepares them for both work and life. I do still subscribe to the concept of the 'thinking journalist' that I imagined almost two decades ago and I continue to shape programme content around this. In the next chapter I will explore how I needed to develop my own expertise as a journalism educator to facilitate and enhance my own capabilities in developing all aspects of my public works.

7. A professional and personal transition into the academy

Developing the degree programmes could not have happened successfully if I had not also been committed to developing my own career within the academy. In this chapter I will discuss how I made the transition from being a journalist to being a journalism educator, a journey that was necessary to enable me to successfully lead the development of the content of my public works.

As discussed in the Introduction chapter, journalism education has grown significantly across the HE sector in the UK in the last few decades. What is also notable is the growing body of academic research being undertaken by journalism practitioners who have moved into journalism education rather than solely by the social and cultural researchers who were examining the area in the late to mid-20th century (such as Lippmann in the 1920s, Lazarsfeld across the middle decades of the century, Habermas in the 1960s, Glasgow Media Group in the 1970s & 1980s and Hermann & Chomsky across the last three decades). This has changed the nature of how journalism is represented in the academy and impacted on my own career and on how I approach the teaching of the journalism degrees. I find that I have arrived at a point in my professional career where I have made a significant transition insofar as I now identify very strongly as a member of the academy and no longer as a journalist. This transition now feels both appropriate and comfortable but it has not been without its challenges.

7.1 A personal transition from journalism to journalism education

When I first arrived in the academy I came from a competitive and dynamic work environment. Immediately prior to it, I had spent two years in corporate public relations where being reactive occupied more time than being proactive. Joining education was a dramatic change of pace and approach. I found I did have more time to reflect, particularly on the learning I needed to do to be good at this job. I proactively sought advice and guidance on how to do and be this other profession. I learned much from the shared conversations, reflections and observations of more experienced colleagues. I quickly came to understand the

processes, practices, jargon and perspectives of fellow lecturers and learned much about other the behaviours adopted to embed myself into this new world. It was what Wenger (1998) calls social learning, writ large. By immersing myself into the academic community I learned how to become a journalism educator. But, as Wenger (2010) states, it was not just learning the practical, process driven elements of the job, it has been about so much more. It would not be an exaggeration to say that working in education has consumed my whole person. Wenger defines it:

‘learning is not just acquiring skills and information; it is becoming a certain person – a knower in a context where what it means to know is negotiated with respect to the regime of competence of a community’ (2010, p.2).

In this context, on the one hand opportunity abounded because while the ‘regime of competence’ was well established in terms of the parameters around which the degree needed to be designed, the community of practice in degree-level journalism education within my own university was nascent and therefore more flexible in terms of negotiations over what could and could not be done.

One of the ways in which the learning aspects of creating all of the degrees manifested itself most obviously was in the shape of content, as discussed elsewhere in this context statement, but what I continue to experience in my role is a permanent negotiation around my own role and my professional development.

Zelizer (2004) acknowledges the challenges of ‘fitting in’ but I felt that my particular challenge was not so much the need to fit tidily into the world of the academy but to throw myself into it and create a space that I could occupy and grow. I became and remain a student of journalism education in so many ways. For me initially this meant completing a Masters degree in journalism.

Reese & Cohen (2000) talk about the fact that most members of the journalism education community are torn between their roles as academics and as professional journalists. This tension between practice and theory makes itself manifest in the lives of journalism educators in quite an explicit way as discussed in Chapter 6.

The move into the academy has necessitated the need for former journalists to become more than proficient in scholarly research and development (Niblock (2007); Harcup (2010)). Indeed, it is now expected that everyone in journalism education should be presenting research papers, submitting journal articles for publication, writing books or book chapters, submitting to the REF and bringing in money via research grants or projects - in short, to be playing as active a role in the life of the academy as any other discipline.

I began to explore the field of journalism as a research subject because I felt very strongly it would facilitate and support the work in both developing the degrees and in teaching them. It also enabled me to feel 'at home' in a new professional environment where I am, and should be, judged in terms of how I fulfil the requirements of that professional field. My inquiries into journalism research showed that in the development of the body of knowledge, as Tuchman (2002) states, the research was very much of a qualitative nature; much of it focussed on the messages created by the news media that were reacted to by audiences – media effects research proliferated then, as it still does today. It provided a rich body of work to explain, explore and help both ourselves and our students understand the impact of the news media on our lives and societies. The value of this experience was in how it fed into my teaching and the design of my public works.

7.2 Developing my evolving career

What became clear was that as news production has at its core a set of practices that are impacted upon by a range of forces – proprietors, politicians, news sources, audiences – so too academic research has its own range of forces. In recognising this, I understood that knowledge, expertise and understanding of range of methodologies and methodological approaches was required to become an effective researcher. It felt daunting but, encouragingly, what I also discovered is that the skillsets in academic research and journalism research are much the same, with some subtle differences.

Gormally and Coburn (2013) assert that this acknowledgement of having practice-based expertise alongside a theoretical understanding of a field enables academics to have 'a position of strength from which to undertake research' (p1). Knowing about and understanding the field can lead to meaningful research within and about the world of news and journalism. This felt supportive at a stage where I wanted to concentrate more on developing this aspect of my career to enable me to build sustainable degree programmes. What I also discovered was that by drawing on discourses about journalism, researchers can begin to align practice in the field with a range of research propositions.

I strongly identified with Niblock (2007), who explored the tensions in moving seamlessly between the newsroom and the academy, but also pointed to the great willingness of those who have joined the academy to contribute to scholarly research. It acknowledges the challenges: 'there is also uncertainty about how to go about it, how practice and theory might intersect and also, if undertaken, how such research would actually be of benefit to the students we teach'. (p21) While I concur with this statement, I drew encouragement that this is shared experience and, as I make this journey, I do now seek opportunities to find, and provide support to and from, colleagues making the same journey.

If the goal of academic research is to add knowledge and improve practice, what has become increasingly clear to me is that it is crucial that the bridge between the academy and the 'real world' of the news media needs to be more effectively constructed to enable both parties to benefit. But therein lies some challenges.

Although Gormally and Coburn (2013) are exploring the area of youth and community work, the opportunities and challenges they identify are not dissimilar to my own field. Among these include the positionality and bias inherent as a former journalist who has moved in the academy. Issues I need to consider include – am I attracted towards certain research projects from a personal or organisational preference? Are we pushed towards certain research fields because of institutional agendas? And, if so, what impact will any of this have on the outcome? I want my research to feed into my teaching, these research-teaching linkages are crucial to professional practice, but what I also

need to consider is that my research needs to find an audience at conferences, in journals and, increasingly importantly, from funding bodies.

Certainly I want my research to extend beyond the walls of the academy into industry and to contribute to the discourses within the field, ultimately enhancing discussions/practices and promoting change. As Niblock (2007) stated there is an irony in that journalism and journalism educators share a commitment to improving and developing practice but finding a space for this sharing of the discourse can be challenging but it is necessary.

This requires careful management of a series of complex power relationships. I have known colleagues whose research challenges the work of powerful media interests and derision has rained down on them. Students also find this challenging – do they risk future employment by challenging current practices/behaviour? My own research at the moment is coalescing around the role of journalism education within UWS and this is posing challenging questions within my own institution around the role and purpose of journalism and journalism education, and as it develops will prompt others to ask similar questions.

Asking questions that challenge decades of behaviours from myself, and my colleagues, both within my own workplace and others is unsettling. In spite of this, there is a need to live with the disruptive nature of this exploration, begun here in the context statement around the space journalism education occupies within the academy until I arrive at a place where I may conclude we have been doing it right all along.

I now occupy a space that enables me to be a critical observer of what the HE sector is doing in terms of journalism education. It is not so much being the 'outsider' looking into the industry from a place of intimate knowledge and experience as being the critical friend that both I, and others undertaking the journey of degree development, need.

Discussion of the field of news from within the academy has had its own challenges. Josephi (2009) points to the tensions in journalism educator's exploring and critiquing the field of news. She stated 'the relevance of the inquiry into the nature and rituals of journalism has been questioned, in particular by future employers' (p49). Several commentators note the surprise of working journalists that the academy should be so interested in their practices, with there being a real awareness of a level of distrust/fear/scepticism between the academy and the media.

My experience of engaging with the industry in the design of the initial degree was thought-provoking due to the apparent disinterest in the preparation work. I was challenged by industry voices who would not contribute to the developmental work but who felt quite comfortable questioning the outcomes. This was something that resonated with me from work undertaken by Firth & Meech who go as far as to say journalism appears to be the only field 'in which practitioners believe that the study of what they do is irrelevant to the practice' (2007, p.141).

Whatever the industry believes, it becomes necessary for journalism educators to reach back into what might be termed as 'hostile territory' to advance our own field of study. This can be personally and professionally challenging, therefore to find myself in a place where I want to interrogate both how the academy 'works' and relate this to how the news media 'works' is daunting and exciting in equal measure.

My experience of leading the development of these public works has shown me that reflection is required all round. This is particularly cogent in the last decade or so. The news media has begun to look more critically at itself and at the issues of ethics and professional standards - Leveson, Harding's *BBC Future of News* paper. Running in parallel has been the growing body of literature on such matters and the establishment of a range of academic journals (Journalism Studies, Journalism Practice and Journalism Education) that devote themselves to providing a forum for critical discourse into all matters relating to journalism and journalism education.

The role of the academic community then is an important one in leading on the sustainable development and in the sharing of new knowledge and as a forum for discussion and debate. As such, both academics and practitioners becoming involved in a range of reflective and reflexive approaches that challenge perspectives and ask difficult questions will develop this knowledge. And, from my current perspective and research interests, this is as much about asking the academy to reflect on how journalism education works as it is about exploring and critiquing the news media and its practices and expectations.

I acknowledge and subscribe to the commonly held belief that good learning, teaching and research is about the creation of new knowledge – and this takes place at many stages in the process, particularly in degree design, implementation and management. As an early career researcher, the opportunity, it seems to me, comes in creating knowledge around programme design that will be of use and can be validated and tested by practitioners in the classrooms. I want the research I read to be useful in my teaching and in my broader understanding and knowledge of my field. It would seem logical that this puts me, and journalism educators, in a strong position – we should know what type of research we need to enhance our field and should seek to create this. And yet, questions remain. Is that enough to satisfy quite demanding expectations from publishers/university research directors/REF? Moving into the world of academic research has provided a new strand to my career and provided many new learning opportunities.

It is clear research has its very well established rules and conventions – but then so does journalism, as Niblock states ‘research has to be defined and executed in a manner that is commonly agreed by the academy’ (2012, p.499). News decisions and practices are not dissimilar. However, I am left with many questions around whether or not the world of research is one that can be flexible and embrace different forms in much the same the way journalism has now expanded to embrace different formats.

Many of the skills required to be a good journalist – the desire and ability to ask precise, searching questions, to present material in an appropriate format to a specific audience and the desire to find out why things are done in a certain way – are all crucial in an academic researcher. What I have also discovered is that they are also required in designing and developing degree programmes.

Across the period of time in which I have developed these public works, I have had to become willing to look beyond my previous professional skills and seek guidance and experience in fields as diverse as sociology, cultural studies, politics, semiotics, education etc. to provide new and meaningful insights into the on-going development of my work. Given my perspective on how the journalism degrees needed to develop, I am well positioned to be willing to reach into other academic disciplines to inform my own learning and thereby enhance my own professional skillset. I am currently exploring within my own university ways in which I can work more collaboratively across disciplines to create the journalism education programmes that will be attractive to both students and the news media and ultimately be to the benefit of all stakeholders.

In conclusion, what has become very clear are the parallels between the two professional worlds in which I have worked. In essence the range of approaches to teaching and researching journalism is as diverse, challenging and evolutionary as the world of producing news. The internet, technology, citizen journalism, social media – as we know journalism seems to continually sit on the cusp of an uncertain, but ultimately exciting future. My future as a journalism educator and researcher in the academy is also undergoing constant change and re-shaping. However, if my own learning is to remain at the heart of my experience and professional life, which is where I need and want it to be, I need to be prepared to consider the work that has gone before and balance it against the need to evolve and make change both in content, delivery and, quite possibly, the space journalism education occupies within the academy. In the concluding chapter I will identify ways in which my practice, public works and journalism education within UWS, and more widely, can move forward in a sustainable way.

8. Conclusions

This concluding chapter will draw together some of the key themes explored and provide discussion around future opportunities to continue to develop both my public works and research.

Undertaking this reflection on these public works has led me to a place and perspective that challenges some of the accepted norms and practices in journalism education. However, it has also led me to acknowledge that my voice and experience should be heard, as should a myriad of views and experiences, and that while my views may run counter to the prevailing voices, both in my own university and more widely in the academy on journalism education, it is nevertheless grounded in my lived experience, and research, and therefore needs to become part of the shared discourse around the development of the subject area.

Adopting the autoethnographic approach, as I have acknowledged in chapter 3, was challenging not least because I felt my work may be more critically judged by peers and because I had not adopted a more traditional research method. What autoethnography has been for me has been formative and transformative because it has enabled me to look at my public works in quite a forensic way. It has forced me to consider what drove the decisions I took and how I negotiated various challenges around meeting stakeholder expectations, designing a relevant curriculum and, most importantly, how I will respond to similar challenges in the future.

By its very nature autoethnography is disorienting, especially for a former journalist, but I have learned through the process that my views are also disorienting because they do not present the prevailing views on journalism education within my own team and more broadly in the academy.

I have talked in this context statement about the constant accusations of bias and partiality and their effect on the news media and how we as journalism educators need to play our role in addressing this. I draw very strong parallels

with my use of autoethnography – it forced me to recognise in the context of compiling these public works, and context statement, that I drew deeply on the well of my own experience and I came to understand that this is acceptable and credible research at doctoral level. As such, as we advance the discipline of journalism education in the academy we need to draw on a range of voices and understand that merit lies in hearing a multiplicity of views, approaches and experiences.

I see no value in seeking absolute answers to the challenges inherent in developing journalism education programmes that meet the needs of a changing world. We need to be more reflexive and fluid in our responses. Similarly, the ways in which we research the field needs to be able to adopt an ecology that lets it come to maturity by acknowledging different approaches.

Ultimately, I gauge the success of the autoethnographic approach in how it has changed me, my perspective, how this will impact on future provision at UWS and on the confidence it has given me to believe in this contribution to the body of work around journalism education.

As such in creating these public works and reflecting on them in this context statement, I have been prompted to think quite carefully not just about my own role as programme leader and journalism educator, but also more deeply about journalism education and what it seeks and needs to achieve both within UWS and more widely. The dynamic is fast moving which makes it challenging to predict and respond to. In this time when the news media is experiencing tumultuous change – the business model is bordering on failure and the role of the journalist is becoming ever more diverse – it becomes necessary for all of us in journalism education to reconsider how we best prepare our graduates for this challenging work environment.

In leading the development of these degrees I have been prompted to agree with Mensing who states that the changes in both the industry, and the role of the reporter, need to lead to a change in how we teach journalism in universities. She

encourages the academy to 'take up a vigorous examination of their own practices ... to consider an alternative' (2010, p.152).

One of the 'industry-centred' (2010, p.153) modes she points to – and which she cites as doing students a 'dis-service' is 'a focus on socialising students for a newsroom (that many will never enter), more than engaging in critical inquiry' (2010, p.153).

I agree with her and, for my part, I was motivated to design a curriculum, create a student experience and produce graduates who could competently and professionally carry out the tasks expected of a journalist but who could also do more and would have confidence in their ability to 'speak truth to power'. This needs to be counter-balanced with expectation from both industry and colleagues that the real focus of a journalism degree needs to be on the 'technical/craft' skills. As such, the design of the journalism degrees I have led has required consideration and implementation of modules that seek to strike a balance between practice and theory, having consulted with colleagues in the academy and in the news media and compromised where required, albeit retaining at the forefront the need to offer sustainable journalism education.

The impact of technology then has presented a challenging scenario in the last few years in particular as I have tried to re-position the degree programme and journalism education within my own university. During the period of time in which I was not directly responsible for programme management, moderations were made whereby the focus shifted to broadcast-based teaching and assessment, which concentrated largely on skills development. The response of my team was typical of many within education as the world of news became more multi-media and the demand from industry was for graduates who can do everything from story idea generation through to final editing of audio and video. The cost was the removal of non-practice modules from curriculum. The balance had shifted to one where theory-based modules were in the minority by quite a significant amount. I believed this challenged our position around the development of graduate attributes and sustainable learning. This required winning over the team of people who had put many of these changes in place.

How I achieved this was down to the research I have undertaken in the last 12 months, which explored what competitor institutions were doing in terms of on-going curriculum design. The feedback I had gained from employers, consultation with students, and more widely in discussions around the role and purpose of journalism that I initiated with the degree development team, and in the wider university, demonstrated the value of correcting that imbalance.

Recent controversies around news coverage of major events (Scottish independence referendum, the EU referendum and the US Presidential elections) and concerns amongst audiences over the reliability and impartiality of news and news organisations make it more important than ever that journalism education examines the role, purpose and responsibility of journalism. I draw the conclusion that this needs to be made explicit in journalism education programmes where students study such issues in relevant and critical ways.

So much that is written about journalism is that it is about instinct and news sense – and some of it is – but it is also about understanding that life happens in complex social, political, economic, organisational, technological and moral landscapes that are not always easily explained or navigable. As such it is about teaching journalism students that they have a responsibility to be able to contextualise what they are reporting and how they go about doing this. Greenberg's (2007) study of journalism illustrated that whatever is taught in universities needs to prepare graduates for the realities of the working world. Inherent in preparing graduates for this world of work, there needs to be an appropriate balance between practice and theory to enable students to synthesise their own practice with theory. As such, I have endeavoured to realise this in the degree programmes and in my pedagogical approaches while recognising, at the same time, that achieving a balance is always work in progress. However, experience, and reflecting on that experience, have given me insights into how ever changing circumstances, which are often unstable and uncertain, can be transformed into new opportunities within my own institution and the wider academic community.

Good journalism and journalists need to have a knowledge and understanding of the increasingly complex and connected worlds in which we live and, as such, journalism education needs to be multi-faceted so as to produce journalism that can function successfully in that world. Good journalism education needs to provide tuition in the technological aspects of journalism but it must do this alongside the development of critical and analytical thinking that enables students to use both the skills and knowledge developed in a university to fulfil the civic role of journalism that holds power to account, indeed, that holds the whole of society to account.

I find myself more and more coming to the conclusion that, while journalism education needs to have at its core the teaching of practice-based journalistic skills, which reach a professional standard, enabling our graduates to attain entry-level jobs in the news media, it also needs to foster a culture of greater enquiry, critical analysis and reflection of the role and impact of journalism on society.

This view is driven by a number of factors. In 2017 the news media is under greater scrutiny than it perhaps has ever been before. Allegations of bias and lack of impartiality have been levelled at news organisations, most notably around the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, the 2016 EU referendum and further afield in the 2016 US presidential election. One of the world's most powerful leaders regularly berates the mainstream news media and the phrases 'fake news' and 'alternative facts' have entered the lexicon. This has great potential to damage the public's perspective on the role that the news media must play in healthy democracies and socially responsible and just societies. I believe we need to prepare our students adequately to meet these challenges by instilling in them the ability to provide deep, informed analysis of the events and people they will report on as part of their careers.

Furthermore, we need to acknowledge that the news media in the UK remains an elite, dominated, at least at its top levels, by people who have attended top universities and schools. In 2016 the Sutton Trust undertook research which showed that 80% of editors of top news outlets came from these privileged

educational backgrounds, 54% of leading journalists went to Oxbridge and that only one in five of leading print journalists attended comprehensive schools (which educate around 88% of the UK population).

In 2012 research undertaken by the NCTJ showed that only 3% of entrants into the profession have parents who are defined as being in unskilled occupations. This statistic alone provides some compelling evidence that journalism, particularly at senior levels, remains stubbornly elitist. It is not difficult therefore to draw the inevitable conclusion that this can result in journalism that does not speak to the wider needs of our diverse communities and which fails to live up to its watchdog role.

It is not unreasonable for people to have the expectation that the news media will provide a check on those who would seek to corrupt, mislead and diminish what we believe to be the principles of our society. There is also the reasonable expectation that the news media will seek the truth, uncover lies and be the voice that represents society. However, this is perhaps a romantic notion because the reality is more akin to a news media that needs to survive the ravages of the market and whose content may well be driven more by analytics around clicks than by investigating and exploring the stories of the more marginalised in our society.

As the data around employment shows, the national news media is run by an elite (albeit this elite is not running local news media in the same way) and this could result in content being driven by a lack of knowledge, experience and understanding of a more diverse society. Good journalism is journalism that is representative of a society in all its guises. Yet how often do we see those on the edge of society covered by the mainstream news media? To be truly reflective of all of us, we need a news media that tell all of our stories back to all of us. Coverage around the Grenfell Tower fire in June 2017 illustrated how issues around the state and standard of social housing in the UK are rarely covered, communities ravaged by industrial decline are rarely represented, to say nothing of the representation of women, ethnic minorities and disabled citizens. The

demise of the local newspaper industry has not helped, because these were often the provenance of strong stories making their way into the national news.

It would be easy to become pessimistic about the future of the news media but I remain resolutely optimistic that change will come, that as we see the generations of journalists trained at universities, like UWS, begin to populate leading editorial roles, we will see journalism more representative of some of the challenges of our diverse society.

My firmly held belief is that by equipping my students with a critical understanding of journalism and its broader roles and responsibilities is paramount to ensuring journalists who are confident in their ability to do their job precisely because they have been taught how to probe issues more critically and creatively and in a more representative way.

Technology has been a much-needed facilitator in all aspects of journalism, and has in some respects democratised news, allowing more voices a place in which to be heard. All of that notwithstanding, the industry, and the academy, have been challenged by the impact of technology probably since it first appeared in newsrooms in the mid-1980s. For the most part, industry continues to be challenged by how it meets the constant advancements but it is finding interesting and creative ways in which to present journalistic output. By the same token, the academy has had to invest money and people in ensuring that it can equip its graduates with tuition in the use of technology, both as a teaching tool and in journalism, and again I would argue that responses have been creative and innovative. Many of our graduates enter industry more technically capable and adept than many journalists.

My very strong feeling is that while discussion around the impact of technology in journalism and journalism education will persist, for my own part the debate needs to move on. Technology needs to be seen as a way that enables different methods of journalistic storytelling – it is the means to the end and not the end in itself. The end needs to be the story. Few would argue with this, and our

responsibility as journalism educators is to keep that at forefront of learning and teaching.

Technology's use in journalism education has not only been felt in terms of how journalistic output is taught and assessed but in how students undertake research. If we are to prepare students to be the critical, analytical journalists of the future we need to tutor them in developing research strategies that are about more than acquiring information easily and quickly via the internet. We need to instil in them the concept and practice of a deeper learning approach that develops a knowledge and understanding of issues and subjects that will lead to more analytical work while at university, creating a habit and practice that prompts students to continue to behave like this in their professional lives. This is a challenge - we live in a world where information is readily available at the touch of a button. However, the reality is that this information can be unreliable, opinion-driven and lacking in the reassurance and validity that the interpretation of facts and events require when journalists are sharing it with an audience. The gulf between opinion and fact-based content needs to be understood by students. In terms of how technology has impacted upon teaching journalism, from an academic perspective I return to a similar conclusion to the one I draw around technology's impact on the new media – our lives are made infinitely better and easier by our ready access to the limitless resources online but we need to exercise caution by adopting, and teaching, good practice around checking rigorously the provenance and reliability of the sources we use. Furthermore, we need to urge students to see this resource as just one part of the toolkit they need to develop as they progress through their academic and professional careers.

Therefore, good technological and craft skills do not equate to good journalism and, as a journalism educator, it is my responsibility to ensure technology is just one part of the myriad of areas that journalism students must master.

Given the school journalism now resides in UWS (Media, Culture & Society), I once again have easy access to fellow academics who study and teach the impact and influence of the news media as part of myriad of social sciences modules. I

have begun to open up dialogue that has prompted them to begin making associations around how they would benefit from understanding more fully what journalists are taught to do. This has identified many future learning opportunities for journalism students and the wider student body, for the journalism team to access a wider teaching expertise to contribute to what we do and to provide them with opportunities to teach more broadly in the school. It also opens up collaborative research opportunities for staff across a range of disciplines within the wider school too. Furthermore, it provides opportunity for us to illustrate and increase understanding about what it is that journalism does within UWS and, more broadly, how perceptions of journalism and what journalists do can be greatly improved by having this wider discourse.

The need to create new spaces for shared discussion and discourse around journalism education is another key conclusion that I have drawn. Deuze (2006) cites Raudsepp (1989) as saying 'journalism education ... has ended up as neither fish nor fowl; it feels itself unloved by industry and tolerated, barely, by the academy' (2006 p.3). Deuze also cites Stephenson (1997), who concurs: 'the relationship between the world of the academy and the world of journalism is not a bed of roses (2006, p.23)'. Resolving this requires the wider field of journalism education to explore this more fully. Journalism educators involved in developing new programmes of study would do well to position themselves at the centre of this discussion.

Spaces need to be created in my own, and other, universities to allow these discussions to happen and provide the opportunity to showcase to industry our work, whether that be about how we teach journalism in the 21st century or what our research is uncovering and exploring. Much of my experience with industry, positive though it is, has been focussed around work placement and the practice-based activities and workshops crucial to our students' learning experiences. There is the opportunity for more.

This can be achieved in a number of ways. As previously mentioned, in the coming session I will seek to establish a programme advisory board that comprises our own academics, industry representatives and students to discuss

and provide guidance, insight and advice on how we work to develop both journalism and education. I conclude that the tension between theory and practice will persist but that it does present fertile ground on which to have meaningful discussion around how journalism educators can design programmes which embrace the issue. The result of this discourse can produce programmes that are responsive to change but can also lead change and be at the cutting edge of industry developments too.

It is clear that the role of the academic community is an important one in the development and sharing of new knowledge, as a forum for debate in the development of new approaches to how and why journalism is practised and produced in the era of new technology and new forms of journalism. This knowledge can only be developed by both academics and practitioners becoming involved in a range of reflexive approaches that challenge perspectives and ask the question 'why do we do things the way we do them and could we do this differently?'. Being able to fully answer this questions lies at the heart of the continuing evolution of the nature, originality and development of journalism research within universities as well as in partnership with the news industry and employers. Much opportunity lies in discourse with industry, and, therefore, the challenges in creating a shared understanding and finding answers could lie in partnership.

Additionally, a forum such as the Association for Journalism Education (AJE) offers further spaces for discourse and collaboration. The AJE's twice-yearly conferences tackle many of the issues that journalism educators grapple with. Invited speakers range from leading academics to leading journalists and industry representatives. This is an ideal space in which to raise issues within an environment where everyone is seeking to improve their educational offerings and the role and purpose of journalism education within the academy.

I have recently been awarded a bursary from the AJE to investigate the space that journalism education occupies in the academy and how this shapes provision. I will present research at its annual conference in 2017 and enable the

conversation to continue and to share and gather perspectives that will inform the future.

Underpinning my public works, and this context statement, is the conviction that the transformative nature of education needs to be both explicit and implicit in the lives of students. They need to gain the knowledge and skills that make them employable, thoughtful, considerate citizens, but I also want them to understand that education is a journey that lasts a lifetime and that their time at university is also a place where they can develop confidence, resilience and adaptability. I cannot always find space in a very packed curriculum to timetable classes that prompt the students to consider these softer skills but I am conscious of how necessary they are in the workplace and I will continue seeking space to build these elements into their educational experience. This also resonates strongly with theories around how learning and performance is influenced by how our bodies and minds are responding to the conditions of our lives. The university would do well to consider these elements of the students' experience. I conclude this would make UWS distinctive, responsible educators in a world where education has become highly monetised and overly influenced by the market.

Being different involves risk. For the most part I prefer to take measured risks, but what I now conclude is that, in order to provide a sustainable journalism education programme, my university needs to take more risks. As such, my team and I must consider our place within our own institution, our relationships with industry and with students. This process has begun already with the most recent re-design of the degree but this is an evolutionary process. My feedback to the development team, following the successful validation of the programmes, was not that this was the end, merely a new stage in the process.

The enhancement of relationships with stakeholders requires more meaningful dialogue around expectation and how this is reflected in content and the 'output' of that content. These conversations have taken place the whole time I have worked in education and led programme development and it will continue, informed and nuanced against the backdrop of the changing needs of all parties.

There are more difficult conversations to be continued around where journalism sits within my own university, as well as exploring this more widely in the sector. The desk-based research I undertook in preparing this context statement shows that journalism sits variously within schools of English, philosophy, media, performing arts, journalism studies, social sciences and film & television studies. Future research that can grow out of this doctoral statement is an exploration of the perception of journalism education within the wider academy and if, as evidence would suggest, there is no natural home for it. If, as Gregorian states, it is 'important to see whether the program is drawing on the talents of the entire university faculty and not just "parked in the outskirts of the university".' (2008, p.9) there are implications as to how the subject area develops in HE environments, which are also undergoing great change in response to different market demands.

Concluding this context statement leads me to assert that journalism is a social science, definitions of which vary enormously, but that it is, in essence, the study of how people behave and influence each other. As such, I see a natural home for journalism within my own university in that subject grouping. But then there are the technical aspects, the training in how to use cameras, production desks and editing software and I recognise there is a place within the creative industries subject grouping in which we are currently situated. In the same way that Raudsepp (1989) defines journalism education as 'neither fish nor fowl' – I am left with the conclusion that within my own university this is exactly what the subject area is. I have frequently voiced my views that, within my own school, journalism sits very well astride the social sciences and creative industries groupings that comprise the school. I conclude then that journalism education is inter-disciplinarity writ large and opportunities must be seized.

This provides a wealth of opportunity to explore current and future collaborations on the future shape of journalism education. As programme leader I must consider and persuade others to look more closely at the interdisciplinary nature and purpose of journalism education. To dismiss this at a time when technology has enabled easier and greater access to the creation and distribution of news products would be to be in denial of the shifting ways in

which the practice, perception and reputation of good journalism is being challenged.

As I review my public works, I realise how important it was to acknowledge and meet the demand for change. For the most part change has been in response to external forces: the industry, a new university, a new school, changing expectations of students. These all needed to be negotiated as we re-shaped our provision to meet those prevailing demands. It has meant everyone on the team 'surrendering' modules or teaching modes because they were out-dated or just did not fit in anymore. This is the simple reality of any working life but when considered carefully, however, it should be acknowledged that much that was enacted was not negotiated as meaningfully as it could have been due to a need to respond.

As such, moving forward, any future changes we wish to make to journalism education at UWS should be from a stronger position, whereby change is led by journalism education rather than being responsive to it. That is my aspiration and intention. It requires the creation of space within the team and university to let these conversations take place. It means asking difficult questions on behalf of students, colleagues, employers and the university.

Asking questions catalyses action and stimulates debate – this is the lifeblood of the academy, just as it is in journalism. So, while I now quite strongly identify as a member of the academy, I realise that my behaviours in respect of how I approach tasks within my current leadership role are not so dissimilar to my life as a journalist. Having a foot in both camps is necessary to keep abreast of change and opinion. That both camps are undergoing change at a rapid pace means that the ground beneath my feet is often shifting. It does mean being able to respond and react quickly to change when required but also having the space to consider how the change will impact on the subject area and students.

This prompts me to consider what I would have done differently in creating these public works and what I would advise others to do. In terms of the

programme design and development I would advise that taking the long view will make for more sustainable student experience and degree design.

In the new programme I have urged the team to think more carefully about the ways in which we teach and assess across modules. We will front-load more of the 'technical' skills teaching into years 1 and 2 and will assess both practice-based skills and theoretical knowledge in modules such as politics to illustrate the connectedness of the content and practice. It is intended this will result in an enhanced student experience and outcomes.

Emphasising to students from their arrival onto the programme the core part that theory and critical thinking will play in their learning will be undertaken in a more explicit way and built into induction week activities.

In the process of reflecting on my public works I began to explore the work of Paulo Friere, whose seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2014) began to influence my thinking around how his critical pedagogical approach would work well in journalism education. Friere refers to a traditional pedagogical model that envisages students being told by educators what is considered useful knowledge in their discipline. His work asserts that that a more dialogical approach, whereby students play more participatory roles, is preferable. I have referred in this context statement to the nature of co-creation and participation of journalism students in learning and teaching environment and, as a result of this brief inquiry into Friere's work around critical pedagogy, I will undertake future research to explore how it could be usefully integrated into journalism education at UWS.

Reviewing where I now find myself in terms of how I have developed my public works and how the process of reflecting on them has positioned both my thinking and my practice, I conclude that much opportunity resides in enhancing interdisciplinarity opportunities within the university, that there is still much to be debated around issues of theory and practice but that this is to the benefit of both journalism and journalism education. Good journalism graduates, in my view and experience, need to have acquired a range of professional, practical

skills alongside the development and the habit of critical thinking and enquiry. This ability to explore, critique and challenge should be as essential and instinctual as the skills required to produce a piece of professional reporting. I agree with Berger & Foote who state: 'the ultimate goal of journalism education...is to empower not only the student but journalism itself...the quality of journalism education is supposed to have an impact on the quality of citizenship and society. Journalism education educates not only practitioners but the public as well.' (2013, p.9)

Journalism education has a crucially important role in producing journalists who have the professional ability to produce good journalism, journalism that plays a critical role in healthy democratic societies.

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