The Future of the Planning Academy

Geraint Ellis, Brendan Murtagh and Lisa Copeland
Queen’s University, Belfast

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PREFACE

Sustainable development depends on society's capacity to plan for our urban and rural futures. The planning profession is a crucial part of that capacity, enabling the integration of analysis, design, negotiation and management into the process of making, and remaking, the places where we live, work and play. The planning academy in turn shapes the profession through its research and teaching activity. The relationship between practice in place-making and the academic discipline of planning will therefore underpin the future quality and functioning of our built environments.

This report was commissioned by the RTPI to create a profile of the planning academy. It assesses drivers and trends in planning education, with an emphasis on its relationship with the wider profession. Its findings and recommendations are an important contribution to the RTPI's work of supporting and developing the planning profession as a whole.

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Acronyms

APC Assessment of Professional Competence
CEBE Centre for Education in the Built Environment
CHOPS Conference of the Heads of Planning Schools
CNAA Council for National Academic Awards
dCLG Department for Communities and Local Government
ESRC Economic and Social Research Council
HEFCE Higher Education Funding Council for England
HE Higher Education
HEI Higher Education Institution
HEPI Higher Education Policy Institute
HESA Higher Education Statistics Agency
HERO Higher Education and Research opportunities in the UK
NSS National Student Survey
PIA The Planning Institute of Australia
QAA Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
RAE Research Assessment Exercise
REF Research Excellence Framework
RICS Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
RTPI Royal Town Planning Institute
TCPA Town and Country Planning Association
THE Times Higher Education Magazine
UCAS Universities and Colleges Admission Service
UGC University Grants Committee
UoA Unit of Assessment (RAE)
Acknowledgments

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

The planning academy provides a range of important functions that help support other parts of the professional community of planning. This most obviously includes the core function of initial professional education, but also activities that are crucial to a vibrant and robust profession such as knowledge production, policy development, lifelong learning and fostering independent, critical analysis of planning theory and practice. The last twenty years have however, seen major changes in both higher education and in planning practice that have fundamentally changed the relationship between the academy and other parts of the profession. This has prompted the RTPI to undertake the Future of the Planning Academy project, in order to:

- Establish a demographic profile of academic staff currently employed in RTPI-accredited planning schools in the UK;
- Identify key drivers of change in UK planning academia;
- Assess the implications of the profile and trends within the planning academy for future planning education;
- Explore the evolving links between planning academics and planning practitioners and the relationship between the number and type of planning academics and the output of planning graduates;
- Recommend to the RTPI how it could address any issues arising from the research.

The Institute appointed a team of researchers from Queen’s University Belfast, led by Geraint Ellis to undertake the project in two phases:

- Phase 1, commissioned in August 2008 consisted a literature review and identified secondary data sources, resulting in a Scoping Report published in November 2008.
- Phase 2 was commissioned in July 2009 and consists of a series of primary data gathering activities. This has included:
  - A series of interviews with 11 key individuals in the academy, practice and RTPI;
  - A census of planning schools, completed by all Heads of accredited planning schools in the UK;
  - An online survey of planning academics, completed by 211 individuals, about 42% of the planning academy;
  - A survey of planning practitioners, completed by 1525 individuals, about 16% of the RTPI membership;
  - A series of four focus groups involving 29 academics.

The final report includes a brief historical review of how the academy has evolved and highlights some of the main issues raised in the earlier Scoping Report. It then reports the insights from the research, under the headings noted below.

2. A profile of UK planning schools

There are currently 24 RTPI accredited (and 3 provisionally accredited) planning schools in the UK, providing 118 accredited courses. Provision is more extensive and more diverse than it has ever been. This should provide the RTPI with a high level of confidence that there continues to be a robust basis for university-based planning education, which will continue to provide a

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1 See more details at: [http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/2982](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/2982)
supply of planning graduates at the Institute’s required accreditation standards. Nevertheless, current strategic developments in higher education raise a number of threats and opportunities to planning schools and planning education as a whole.

A key dimension here is the staff recruitment policies of planning schools, which are now dominated by research performance, with professional experience and RTPI membership being low priorities when looking for new staff in all but a few schools. This may mean that in 10-15 years many planning schools may struggle to have any professional representation amongst their staff. While most Heads consider that their School has a healthy and productive relationship with the RTPI and the wider planning community, there are signs that there is a weakening of relationships between the RTPI and planning academics.

The average number of staff in a UK planning school is 20.4, with 50% of schools having fewer than 16 staff. They do however, vary substantially in their size, outlook and institutional context. 13 are in pre-1992 universities and 14 in post-1992 universities and only 25% are in stand-alone departments – most are merged with a range of other disciplines. Planning schools offer a greater variety of planning courses and have a higher number of planning students than ever before, at the same time as achieving greater research performance, from which students and the broader professional community can benefit.

At the time of survey, Heads of Planning Schools were positive about the future and suggested there would be relative stability in terms of changes in staff, students and educational provision. Since the surveys were undertaken there have been a number of significant changes, in particular emerging details of a period of financial austerity that will see education budgets substantially cut. This is likely to induce further change within the planning academy, with potential threats to a number of planning schools, particularly within the smaller units or those performing less well in the RAE/REF.

The main report uses the responses to a range of survey variables to characterise UK planning schools into four different “types”, termed “Practitioner-Teacher” schools, “Research-led teaching” schools, “Regional Hubs” and “Planning Leviathans”. These can be used as a framework for the RTPI to review how each type relates to its desired goals for planning education and research.

3. A profile of the planning academy

The profile of the planning academy appears to have changed significantly over the last ten years in terms of entry qualifications, experience and demography – it is now more international and more representative of the population and the overall profession. It is also notable that different planning schools tend to employ staff with different attributes, thus reaffirming the notion that planning schools have a range of distinctive characteristics.

Despite anecdotal evidence that suggests that the planning academy is becoming less professionally engaged, the three key indicators of RTPI membership, experience of professional practice and professional planning qualifications amongst academics appear to suggest a continuing strong presence of a shared professional identity. Overall, 54% of academics are members of the RTPI, 58% have a professional planning qualification and 71% have some form of practice experience.

There does not seem to be any immediate staffing crisis arising from an upcoming “retirement bulge” as there are a large number of staff in younger age groups, particularly under thirty. Different age groups of staff do, however, offer different professional profiles. While younger cohorts of staff have high proportions of planning qualifications and work experience, they do not have an encouraging profile of RTPI membership. One potential way to combat this would be to
review how the qualifying criteria relate to academic careers and whether it is possible to establish an academic route to chartered membership.

The report also explored the identities expressed by planning academics, showing that there remains a relatively strong sense of professional commitment, with 54% regarding themselves as professional planners, more than those that see themselves as higher education teachers or administrators. Members of the academy also have a clear idea of how they are able to contribute to the wider profession and are keen to do this within the constraints of contemporary academic life. Above all, academics see that their most valuable contribution can be their independent critical engagement with planning theory and practice. They also recognise their responsibilities in terms of being educators of future members of the profession and a need to provide more direct and productive inputs to policy debates. There is strong feeling that this contribution is not well appreciated by the wider professional community.

67% of academics are engaged in research, teaching and administration, with an expectation that they should perform at a high level in all three areas, with the result that extra-mural activities, covering many valuable aspects of the academic relationship with professional planning practice are given a low institutional priority. A key challenge therefore is to review how fruitful practice-academic relationships can be better aligned with the institutional interests of the universities that employ planning academics.

A specific issue is related to the way planning academics feel they are represented collectively at the national level, with only 8% believing that this was undertaken in a coherent or effective manner.

4. The practitioner-academic relationship

The survey of planning practitioners provides some useful insights into how they relate to the planning academy. This shows that a majority of practitioners have Master’s degrees, with under 1% having a PhD. 23% have links with universities; usually through attendance at seminars or conferences, rather than more interactive encounters. There is also a rather poor appreciation of the research produced by the academy; academic journals were ranked as being least important source of advice and information for their professional role.

For those in practice, the academy’s prime role is one of education, however many practitioners have a rather narrow conception of what this should be and greater exposure to ongoing lively pedagogical debate would help foster the emergence of a more mutual understanding of planning education. Indeed, there appears to be a poor understanding of what the academy can offer the world of practice and there is some evidence that many practitioners are confused about this.

Planning academics are engaged in a very wide area of research activity, much of which has direct relevance to practice. Academics do acknowledge the need to relate this research directly to policy outcomes, but overall they see the key research role as being to provide a critical and independent voice on planning issues. This role is not always appreciated by planning practitioners and far more could be done to disseminate the increased level and quality of planning research.

While there is a degree of mutual empathy and understanding of each others’ roles, the findings suggest that although academics have a keen interest and respect for the world of practice, there is less appreciation of the world of academia by those working in planning practice. This situation has been further frustrated by declining opportunities for individuals to move in either direction across the academia-practice boundary, which points to the need to rethink the opportunities open for increasing mutual understanding.
As a result of these issues, there is some evidence of an increasing distance between academia and practitioners. It is clear that the accreditation process remains a vital tool for the RTPI to engage with planning schools. While planning schools greatly value the benefits of accreditation, there is evidence that the broader links and opportunities to work with the RTPI are not being fully exploited.

5. Conclusions

The main report highlights the substantial changes that have occurred in both higher education and planning practice over the last twenty years. Most of these changes have placed increasing pressure on the academic-practitioner relationship, particularly the changing composition of the academy, the capacity of the academy to work on professionally-related issues and the perception of the academy held by the wider profession. Above everything else, the project underlines the importance of viewing the planning academy as an intrinsic part of the planning profession, rather than an eccentric fringe group or contract supplier of education services.

There is a strong feeling amongst both practice and the academy that the relationship has begun to break down and that there is a need to reconnect and increase dialogue between them. The main report draws together the findings of the research to make a number of suggestions on how this may be done around five main themes:

5.1. Development of long-term scenario and related polices for planning research and education.

It is suggested that the RTPI use the evidence in this report, along with recent predictions of future land issues produced from the Foresight programme, to generate a series of long term scenarios (i.e. 20 years+) for planning schools, upon which an action plan for securing the viability of planning research and education can be based.

5.2. Increasing dialogue, interaction and mobility between the academy and practice

There is a need to increase interactions and career mobility between the practitioner and academic parts of the planning profession and the report makes a number of suggestions of how this could be further encouraged. This includes increasing placement opportunities for academics in practice and short-term research opportunities for practitioners in the academy; reviewing how planning schools interact with local branches of the RTPI; joint events for academics and practitioners; new dissemination outlets for research findings; encouragement of doctoral study by practitioners; increasing the profile of academics in RTPI affairs; and creating a specific academic route to chartered membership.

5.3. The definition of an “effective planning school”

The report has noted that although some of the links between the academy and the RTPI have weakened, the latter still retains a powerful lever in terms of its accreditation responsibilities, which could be used to further influence how the academy engages with the wider profession. A key area is how the RTPI defines an “effective planning school”, which could be reviewed to take into account the diversity within the planning academy, increase dissemination of research outputs and specify appropriate proportions of academic staff that should have RTPI membership.

5.4. Increased knowledge transfer

The increase in the quality and quantity of planning research has not yet been effectively exploited for the benefit of the wider profession, which remains unclear about how it can best access and use the resulting findings and expertise. It is suggested that the RTPI should encourage further knowledge transfer through the development of a specific mid-range publication for research findings; engaging the research community on issues of greater
relevance to practice via direct research funding or working with existing funders; and increasing the research literacy of the practitioner community through CPD events or targeted doctoral programmes.

5.5. Communication and leadership

There appears to be a need to review the way the RTPI communicates with the planning academy, taking into account the diversity of planning schools and planning academics highlighted in the report. There also appears to be specific issues with leadership of the planning academy and how it is collectively represented at a national level. It is suggested that the RTPI review how it can encourage the emergence of leaders and collective representatives from within the academy, such as a specific electoral college within the General Assembly and greater representation on its Committees.
1. **Introduction and Background**

A vibrant and robust planning profession is based on a set of complex and dynamic institutional relationships. While the RTPI acts as the critical hub of the profession, it depends on a variety of mutual supporting partnerships with a diverse array of other bodies to deliver its vision for the profession and its services to its members. One example of this is the relationship with the higher education sector, particularly the planning academy, a critical part of the planning profession that delivers initial professional education and other important activities such as knowledge production, policy development, lifelong learning and fostering independent, critical analysis of planning theory and practice. Indeed the RTPI has had long and mutually beneficial relationships with universities across the UK and beyond, reflected in formal structures such as Partnership Boards and the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee, activities of the local branches and the contributions of academic members. This relationship is based on a long tradition of university-Institute partnerships and while these have been subject to occasional review (e.g. RTPI Education Commission) the basis of the broader academy-profession relationship has never been reflected upon. Therefore, while there has been an emphasis on the nature of planning education and the ability to recruit graduates into the discipline, little consideration has been given to what sort of relationship academia should have with other parts of the profession and how this can be further developed in the mutual interests of universities, the Institute, academics and others involved in the profession of planning. The major changes witnessed in both higher education and planning practice in the last two decades has fundamentally changed these relationships and make such a review overdue.

This has prompted the RTPI to undertake the *Future of the Planning Academy* project, in order to:

- Establish a demographic profile (including age, gender, nationality and academic/professional background) of academic staff currently employed in RTPI-accredited planning schools in the UK.
- Identify key drivers of change in UK planning academia.
- Assess the implications of the profile and trends of the planning academy for future planning education.
- Explore evolving links between planning academics and planning practitioners and the relationship between the number and type of planning academics and the output of planning graduates.
- Recommend to the RTPI how it could address any issues arising from the research.

The Institute appointed a team of researchers from Queen’s University Belfast, led by Geraint Ellis, to undertake the project in two phases.

- **Phase 1**, commissioned in August 2008 consisted of a literature review and identified secondary data sources, resulting in a Scoping Report\(^3\) published in November 2008.
- **Phase 2** was commissioned in July 2009 and consists of a series of primary data gathering activities resulting in this final report.

Further information on the project is available at: [http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/2982](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/item/2982)

This final report summarises the main issues from the Scoping Report and compiles the findings from a series of interviews, focus groups and surveys as discussed in section 4. It concludes with a number of observations on the RTPI’s relationship with the planning academy, which could provide guidance for future initiatives and policy development.

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2. Understanding the Planning Academy

Throughout this report, the term “the planning academy” is used to refer to the institutions and individuals that are associated with planning schools in the UK. This is a rather wide, eclectic collective, with blurred and porous boundaries – not just in terms of the range of people associated with planning schools on a permanent, part time and advisory basis, but also the loose disciplinary ties that define planning as a subject. For example, there are many non-planning specialists linked to planning schools, while important contributions to planning research and education are made by many academics outside of what are commonly seen as “planning schools”. For the purpose of this report, the “planning academy” is used in an attempt to encompass all those that contribute to planning education and research within an academic (i.e. higher education) context. It therefore includes not just permanent staff employed by planning schools, but also teaching assistants, Ph.D. students, external examiners etc and members of Partnership Boards. The notion that all these roles contribute to an “academy” is a deliberate one that underlines that fact that planning schools do more than just “teach” but also engage in research that produces knowledge and debate that contributes to the notion that planning should be a “learned profession” (Grant, 1999).

In terms of the scope of the report, while it is acknowledged that the RTPI has a variety of increasing international relationships with the planning academy, the project is focused on those planning schools in the UK, shaped by the specific higher education policies and funding regimes of UK universities. The surveys and focus groups undertaken for this project therefore only involved those based at UK universities with courses that are accredited (or provisionally accredited) by the RTPI. It is recognised that while the findings therefore reflect specific relationships and contexts, such as the institutional strategies that have been shaped in response to the RAE/REF process in the UK, many of the broader issues identified are likely to be reflected in the RTPI’s relationship with planning schools in other countries and with those schools seeking future accreditation in the UK.

The previous Scoping Report provided an overview of some of the literature that has sought to understand how the planning academy has evolved over time and this allows a better appreciation of the significance of recent changes faced by the UK’s planning schools. Based on Healey’s review of planning education (1983), it is possible to outline a number of distinct phases of evolution of the planning academy:

- **Pre-war.** This saw the establishment of the first planning course in 1909 when the traditions and shape of planning education were formed, lasting until the comprehensive planning system was established in 1947, when a more extensive system of planning education was required. It is noted that the Town Planning Institute, formed in 1914, immediately concerned itself with educational matters by formulating a syllabus for professional exams and, particularly from the 1930s onwards, encouraged the creation of more planning courses. During this time the planning academy largely consisted of a select band of (male) leaders of the planning movement, including Abercrombie, Unwin and Adshead (Wright 1982), providing

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4 As noted in the Scoping Report of this project, the term “planning schools” is used here to refer to those organisations that currently deliver HE courses for planners that are accredited by the RTPI. These are mostly in universities, but, as noted in the RTPI’s Policy Statement on Initial Planning Education (RTPI, 2004), this could be delivered in a range of organisational arrangements. Furthermore, planning education in universities is now rarely run by a discrete “planning school”, with accredited courses more often delivered as part of the provision of larger institutional units, often managed by academics from non-planning backgrounds. The term does not therefore always refer to a discrete, university unit staffed by those solely engaged with education of planners, as used to be the norm but indicates a recognized centre of planning education and research.
an education that Cherry (1974, p.222) describes as lacking innovation and consisted of a “topping up” for those already qualified in a related discipline. Thus there was initially a lack of a clear disciplinary identity, with the role of the academic primarily defined in terms of education and evangelism of the purpose and potential of planning.

- **1947- to the mid-1960s.** With the establishment of the statutory planning system, there was a shift in scale and emphasis, with planning education expanding and increasingly dominated by the concerns of developing a professional education. Although there was a lull in the growth of planning education in the 1950s, this was to experience a rapid development in the late 1960s, reflecting both the expansion of higher education via universities and the new polytechnics and a renewed emphasis on planning as a policy tool. During this time we see the increasing presence of planning as a distinct discipline emphasising problem-solving, quantitative techniques and social science, and a revised examination syllabus that stressed the academic status of planning courses. Although not directly commented on in the literature, this must have been based on the emergence of an increasingly credible planning academy, which appears to have been largely part-time staff and constituted by those taking up academic posts after years of working in practice (Thomas and Thomas 1981).

- **Mid-1960s to 1980s.** This period saw the emergence of the tensions between professional and more academic concerns in planning education as HE became subject to more rigorous and standardised course validation and funding criteria. This was reflected in the differences in approach between the polytechnics and the established universities, with the former exhibiting greater innovation in teaching and course provision, while the universities began emphasising research-informed teaching. Healey (1983) notes that it was during this period that control over the form and content of planning shifted away from the profession to the state. This was accompanied by a shift away from purely professional training to the teaching-research nexus, in essence marking the emergence of the distinct planning academy we have today.

- **1980s to late-1990s.** This witnessed a period of retrenchment and pessimism within planning education, with falling student numbers and reduced funding for higher education. This period also saw the transformation of the polytechnics as post-1992 universities, although the teaching-research polarisation between these and the older universities has intensified with the introduction of the RAE in 1986. The RAE has gradually become the main hegemonic force in most planning schools, further separating academia from practice and having a range of other consequences.

- **Late-1990s to present-day.** This phase witnessed a re-establishment of the confidence of planning education and practice, epitomised by the RTPI’s New Vision (2001) and Education Commission (2003). Student numbers increased through the first decade of the 21st century, sustained by strong demand for planning graduates in the context of economic growth – a factor that is now likely to decline, with potential course closures. This period has also seen a growing internationalisation of the UK planning academia and a shift to the skills required to support the new paradigm of spatial planning. Over most of this period there were increasing resources available to higher education, an improved funding regime for research and an increase in student numbers – all of which will come under severe pressure in the years ahead.

Throughout each of these phases, the RTPI and the planning academy have displayed an awareness of the changing needs, circumstances and challenges of planning education, ensuring that accredited professional learning remained relevant to the demands of society. Major reviews such as the Schuster Report (1950) and RTPI Education Commission Report (2003) focused, quite rightly, on the
outcome of the education process in terms of the quality and quantity of professionally qualified planners. However, none of these reviews have substantially examined the changing role and capacity of those who are expected to deliver this professional training: the planning academy. Therefore, while changes in the institutional context of practice and theoretical development of planning have been recognised in shaping planning education, less consideration has been given to the major shifts in the nature of higher education or the changing priorities of universities, the roles of academics and the type of individuals being employed in planning schools. Although the general direction of change seems to be appreciated by those involved in planning education, including the RTPI and its Partnership Boards, there is currently a lack of evidence that prevents the full appreciation of the key threats and opportunities facing the planning academy.

During this evolution, the relationship between the planning profession and the planning academy has been underpinned by the assumption that universities and academia will be available to provide the quality and quantity of graduates needed by planning practice and that the interests of the profession and the academy will inevitably be compatible. The changing context of both practice and higher education suggests this may not always be the case, so that this report reviews the current basis of the relationship between the academy and the profession.
3. Issues arising from the Scoping Paper

The extent of recent changes in the higher education sector and the implications of these for the academy-profession relationship were reviewed in the Scoping Report of the Future of the Planning Academy project. This drew on information provided by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). A focused literature review was also undertaken of reports, news articles and academic research, using sources such as Times Higher Education Magazine and documents produced by Higher Education Academy (HEA). Specific data on planning schools was also provided by the RTPI and a focused review was undertaken of the literature on planning education. Finally, the report benefitted from initial discussions with staff from the RTPI, CEBE and CHOPS.

The report reviewed the role of universities and academics in the planning profession, the emergence of the planning academy as a distinctive entity, the current state of UK planning education and the main drivers of change across the higher education sector. Some of the main issues identified include:

- The academic-practice relationship is a defining feature of planning as an academic discipline and while the RTPI has been an effective long term influence on the planning academy, it is increasingly competing with other factors, some of which now have a much greater impact on planning schools and academics. This has given rise to areas of tension in the relationship between the planning academy and practice, some of which are specific to planning, but others common to a broader range of professional groups.
- The RTPI has undertaken a range of initiatives in the last 5-10 years to support the idea of planning as a “learned profession” and to reform the relationship with planning schools. It is however, unclear how successful these initiatives have been to change the perception of practice of academia and vice versa.
- The tensions within the academy between research and practice on the one hand and career academics and practitioner-teachers on the other appear to be enduring themes in the evolution of the planning academy.
- There are now more students and more accredited courses than at any other time in the history of planning education in the UK. It is presumed that there are also more planning academics than ever before and more diversity in the type of higher education institutions (HEIs) employing planning academics. There is poor data on academic staff that have taught on accredited planning courses.
- There are concerns from within the academy on the nature of planning education and the way in which planning education is developing, particularly a growing lack of reflection and collegiality. It is unclear how planning academics deal with the tensions between teaching and researching and how they most identify themselves as planners, teachers and researchers.
- The broader context of higher education has perhaps the greatest influence on the planning academy and this has changed dramatically in recent decades. Although the HE sector is highly differentiated, the main contours of change have been: increasing student numbers (up 35% over the last decade); the emergence of new higher education institutions (HEIs); increasing internationalisation of staff and students; and an increasing emphasis on research performance.
- UK Universities have experienced a period of sustained investment over the last ten years, but now some institutions face a period of financial instability – the UK HE sector is funded at a much lower level (as a % of GDP) compared to other international examples from North America and Europe, raising issues of broader competition and quality.
• The number of UK academics has increased in line with the expansion of student numbers. While there is detailed demographic data on the academic sector as a whole, with concerns for its ageing profile, such information is not available for the planning academy on its own.

• In previous decades, salaries of academics have been outstripped by average earnings. In recent years academics’ salaries have attracted significant increases so that they now compare well to most other countries, except the USA. Data from 2007 suggested the average academic salary was £42,620 and the overall average salary was £29,999. Academic salaries appear to be generally higher than those available in planning practice.

• There is disputed evidence of decreasing standards in higher education, although this is strongly felt by academics. The National Student Survey suggests that planning students are generally satisfied with their learning experience in planning schools and an evaluation of new RTPI accredited planning courses suggests that students generally find these demanding and rewarding, but are calling for a more practice orientated education.

• Future projections of the higher education sector suggest a declining number of student enrolments over the next twenty years indicating an overall reduction of 2.1% from 2005/06 levels. This is differentially distributed across the UK with Scotland and Northern Ireland suffering the greatest downturns. Future scenarios for higher education are open to influence of a large number of issues of uncertainty, with the demographic projections being only one factor. Government policy, inter-sector and global competition and financial issues are some of the likely major influences on HE.

• Planning education and the planning academy must also be seen in the context of the broader institutional and societal settings for planning practice. Recent years have also seen major changes to planning practice, including a shift from land use to spatial planning (with implications for planning cultures and skills); concern over the efficiency and performance of the planning system; and until very recently, a shortage of appropriately skilled planning personnel. The role and capacity of the planning academy has largely been overlooked in relation to these debates.

The issues identified in the Scoping Report assisted the RTPI in understanding the broader context for change in the planning academy and confirmed the need for more focused research to understand the specific challenges facing the planning academy. The Scoping Report also helped identify gaps in the secondary data and shaped the scope and content of the surveys needed to generate a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges facing the planning academy. This has also helped define the key issues now facing the academy-profession relationship and as such, will be reflected upon throughout this report.
4. Phase 2: Research design and methodologies

For the second phase of the project, the following research design was adopted:

4.1. Interviews

An initial round of interviews was undertaken in 2009 with key individuals in the academy, practice and RTPI. Most of these were conducted over the telephone in July and August 2009, with notes typed up and agreed with interviewees. The interviews were undertaken on the understanding that individual comments would remain confidential, although the collective themes identified in the interviews are reported in a Working Paper produced in support of this main report. Those individuals who consented to be interviewed at this stage of the project were:

- David Adams, Ian MacTaggart Chair of Property and Urban Studies, University of Glasgow;
- Heather Campbell, Professor of Town and Country Planning, Sheffield University;
- Simon Marsh, Head of Planning, RSPB;
- Janice Morphet, Consultant and Visiting Professor at University College London;
- Sue Percy, Director of Membership, Education and Lifelong Learning, RTPI;
- John Punter, Professor of Urban Design, Cardiff University;
- Graeme Purves, Head of National Spatial Planning, Scottish Government;
- Steve Quartermain, Chief Planning Officer, Planning Directorate, DCLG;
- Rosemary Thomas, Head of Planning Division, Welsh Assembly Government;
- Robert Upton, then Secretary General, RTPI;
- Martin Willey, President, RTPI and Managing Director of YTP Regeneration Partnerships.

The interviews were used to identify the major concerns related to planning education and research, which were then used as a basis of the surveys described below. The findings of the interviews are not reported directly in this document, but where appropriate, used to support the insights generated from the surveys below.

4.2. Census of UK planning schools

This was conducted as an online survey of all Heads of accredited Planning Schools in the UK, using Survey Monkey\(^5\), between September and October 2009. A request and two subsequent reminders were sent to the Heads of Schools of accredited schools by e-mail. The survey was focused at identifying current levels of staff and students, as well as probing management issues such as staff recruitment/retention and future threats and opportunities for planning schools. Although this could be completed anonymously, 27 returns were recorded (although not all complete) and it is understood that this includes all UK planning schools currently accredited or provisionally accredited by the RTPI. The findings of this census are described below, in the section on the profile of UK Planning Schools.

4.3. Survey of planning academics

This was conducted as an online survey of staff in UK planning schools, using the Survey Monkey website, between September and October 2009. An invitation to take part in the survey was sent to a total of 518 academics, identified from the websites of the 27 accredited planning schools. In an

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\(^5\) See [http://www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)
attempt to increase the response rate, two reminders were sent at fortnightly intervals and a prize of a £40 book voucher in a draw for all those participating. The survey was aimed at collecting demographic and background information on academics, as well as their perception of their roles and the relationship between the academy and the wider planning profession. A total of 211 responses was received; 42% of the identified population. Assuming sampling conditions of a 20% estimate proportion, simple random sample and a confidence level of 95%, the error rate would be +/- 4.2%. The findings of this survey are described below, in the section on the profile of the planning academy.

4.4. Survey of planning practitioners

This was conducted as an online survey of RTPI members, using the Survey Monkey website, between September and October 2009. A request was sent by the RTPI via its e-mail list to 9,347 members and academic members who had completed the survey above requested not to participate. In an attempt to increase the response rate, two reminders were sent at fortnightly intervals and a prize of a £40 book voucher in a draw for all those participating. The survey was aimed at collecting demographic and background information on planning practitioners as well as their perception of the planning academics and the relationship between the academy and the wider planning profession. A total of 1525 responses were received: 16% of the identified population. Assuming sampling conditions of a 20% estimate proportion, simple random sample and a confidence level of 95%, the error rate would be +/- 2.18%. The findings of this survey are described below, in the section on the academy-practitioner relationship.

4.5. Focus groups

A series of four focus groups with a total of 23 planning academics were undertaken across the UK during November and December 2009 (Belfast, London, Manchester, Edinburgh) to provide a richer understanding of the aspirations and challenges facing those in the academy. Participants were asked to describe their role as planning academics and how they believe others see them; their likes and dislikes about their job; the contributions that planning academics make to the profession and to society generally; perceptions of academia within the profession; the changing role of the academy; the relationship of the academy with practice/practitioners and how best to forge stronger relationships between them; the role of the RTPI and its influence on planning schools and academics; and how the relationship between the two can be improved. A pledge was made to ensure any comments made at the focus groups would remain anonymous. Transcripts of the discussion were analysed to identify key themes and while there is not a dedicated section reporting the results from this, they are used to support the discussion of the survey findings, including the use of quotes from the focus groups where necessary.

In addition to this, some of the preliminary findings of the report have been discussed at the 2009 meeting of CHOPS and at a special session of the 2010 Planning Research Conference, with comments and observations made at these events incorporated into the report.
5. A profile of the UK’s planning schools

The first section of research findings draws primarily on the results of a Census of Planning Schools in the UK, completed by the Heads of Schools, as described in the last section. This provides an overview of current educational provision, the recruitment practices and managerial outlooks of the planning schools, from which key findings on the strategic direction of planning education and research can be drawn.

5.1. RTPI accredited planning schools and the planning academy

There are currently 24 RTPI accredited planning schools (plus the distance learning consortium and three provisionally accredited schools), proving 118 accredited courses (and 3 provisionally accredited courses) to around 4,400 students, 65% of which are at the postgraduate level. Planning schools\(^6\) are distributed across the UK (19 in England, 1 in Wales, 5 in Scotland and 2 in Northern Ireland), with the education provision provided summarised in Table 1, Figure 1 and further detailed in Appendix 2. The Scoping Report provided a more detailed analysis of the student profile and change over time, so this will not be further considered here.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>England</th>
<th>Scotland</th>
<th>Wales</th>
<th>N. Ireland</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of accredited planning schools</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of accredited UG courses</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of accredited PG courses</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: the above does not include courses offered by the Joint Distance Learning Consortium involving University of West of England, South Bank University, Leeds Metropolitan University and University of Dundee

Figure 1: Number of students on planning pathways (as reported in survey of Heads of School)

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\(^6\) In the rest of the paper, this term refers to both fully accredited and provisionally accredited schools.
It should also be noted that the RTPI also accredits planning schools outside the UK (currently in the Republic of Ireland and Hong Kong), while there are also a large number of other universities that deliver courses closely related to planning (such as property development, urban studies etc) which are not accredited by the RTPI, but perhaps accredited by other professional bodies, such as the RICS. Similarly there will be some individual academics that may be RTPI members, or actively engaged in planning research that are not employed in accredited academic units. Thus while it is possible to draw a sharp line around those universities that can be formally identified as being the main organisations units for the ‘planning academy’ (i.e. the 27 accredited/provisionally accredited schools), it is likely that the actual membership of a planning academy has a far more fuzzy boundary. For the purposes of the analysis here, only accredited (or provisionally accredited) schools will be examined.

As noted in the Scoping Report, the number of accredited courses and the number of students on accredited courses appears to be at an all time high (see Figure 2 - Figure 4). The surveys have therefore taken a snapshot of the planning academy at what is probably its high water mark – fuelled by sustained demand and identified shortage of trained planning staff through the mid-2000s onwards (e.g. Audit Commission 2006). These factors seem to have all but evaporated in the last two years. As a consequence, it would appear that the planning academy as it stands is probably at its greatest ever extent in terms of capacity and diversity, with a sharp decline in applications for planning courses in recent months. If this continues into future years and coupled with oncoming cut backs in higher education, it may result in some courses closures, staff reductions and even school closures.

Figure 2: Total number of planning students 1939-2010

Figure 3: Total number of recognised planning schools, 1909-2008

Note: This includes the Joint Distance Learning Consortium as an accredited planning school

Figure 4: Number of RTPI accredited planning courses, 1950-2008

(Sources: Schuster 1950, Cockburn 1970, Healey 1983 and RTPI data returns)
5.2. Organisational structure

Planning Schools are hosted by a very diverse range of educational institutions, each with a specific historical background linked to the emergence of the planning academy as an identifiable entity; 14 of these are post-1992 universities and 13 are pre-1992 universities. While debates over planning education have often been underpinned by the notion of “the planning school” as a discrete and largely autonomous unit, typically these are now often embedded within larger academic units as a result of the dynamic nature of university restructuring. The Census of Planning Schools asked Heads of Schools “whether planning is taught in a stand-alone school or department or merged with other disciplines in a larger department”. 25% of responses suggested planning was organised in a stand-alone unit, 75% merged with other disciplines – there do not appear to be any standalone schools in post-1992 institutions. Figure 5, shows the range and frequency of the other disciplines in these departments; this can be seen to be very varied, with the most common being the traditional sister professions of architecture and engineering.

This is not just an issue of administrative organisation, but also highlights an issue of potential autonomy, control and marginality within some universities. During the focus groups, some participants noted that given the relatively small size of the planning discipline, in terms of staff and student numbers, it is often disadvantaged when it comes to intra-departmental politics and control over resources. It was also suggested that within these larger departments, the Head of School was rarely from a planning background, so that key strategic decisions were often being made by someone who may not fully understand the nature of the discipline, or have any direct links to the planning profession, as noted by one of the academics at one of the focus groups:

“...I think that we are all controlled by people who are not familiar and often antagonistic to incorporating and linking with practitioners and the practice world. Often the people in control do not see that as important, which is very frustrating.”

Indeed, a number of participants at the focus groups commented on the way in which planning schools were being subject to more external control – not from the RTPI, but as a result of target-driven administration, league tables etc., as noted in the quote below:

“...we’ve become more bureaucratic and more local authority-like, simply because the university has got bigger, and the way that power is distributed within the university has changed. It’s moved away, to an extent from academics to professional administrators...”

This does have implications for the way in which the RTPI relates to planning schools. Traditionally planning schools have been relatively autonomous units, with the RTPI one of the strongest external influences on curriculum and delivery of learning, and were staffed by individuals who had often spent extended parts of their career in practice. Now it would appear that the RTPI has to compete with a much greater range of influences, while also having to convince some parts of the academy of the virtues of the links to the planning profession. This is not to say that the planning academy does not value its links with the RTPI as there is much evidence that it does (see for example section 6.4), but that the most valued part of this relationship is the actual status of being accredited rather than the broader links with the profession. Indeed, despite the emergence of multi-disciplinary departments, there is still a strong disciplinary identity amongst the staff who teach and research in the field of planning, as noted by one of the focus group participants:
Figure 5: Other disciplines in multi-disciplinary planning schools

Other disciplines in multi-disciplinary schools

- Urban Design
- Urban and Regional Studies
- Tourism
- Product Design
- Landscape Architecture
- Environmental Health
- Economic development
- Development Studies
- Built Environment
- Architectural Technology
- Urban and Public Policy
- Transport
- Rural Surveying/Land Management
- Environment/Environmental Management
- Construction/Construction Management
- Surveying
- Urban Regeneration
- Real Estate Management
- Geography /Earth Sciences
- Housing
- Engineering
- Architecture

Percentage of all planning schools in multidisciplinary units
“....whatever sort of structures you have in place, I think disciplines matter. You know, there are so many pressures which help retain disciplinary identity, you’ve got the RAE which leads to that, then you’ve got student perceptions, you’ve got degree programmes and all those sort of things which reinforce these disciplinary boundaries, whatever the structures you have in place ...”

This provides an interesting situation as on the one hand we have organisational structures that appear to be eroding the concept of “the planning school”, but on the other a clear message from the surveys of academics and their contributions to the focus groups that many of them recognise the great value of the disciplinary and professional identity of planning. Therefore on the one hand the use of the term “planning school” rather misrepresents the institutional context for the delivery of accredited planning courses yet on the other the continued use of the term provides a valuable asset in maintaining the professional identity of courses, students and academics.

It was also noted in the interviews and focus groups that some of the smaller organisational units were potentially vulnerable to being further marginalised or even under threat of closure in light of impending financial cutbacks. It was suggested that once staff were in single figures, it does become very difficult to run an effective planning school, not just because of issues of marginalisation within university structures as noted above, but also logistical issues such as the ability to cover for colleagues during sick leave or planned sabbaticals. The Census of Planning Schools captured the number of academic staff who were employed primarily in connection with planning research and teaching, with results for this shown in Figure 6. The mean size of planning schools is 20.4 members of staff, ranging from one school with 5 staff (3 FTE) to the largest with 85 staff (no FTE provided by the largest school). 50% of schools have less than 16 members of staff, with no major difference between stand-alone and multi-disciplinary schools, although pre-1992 universities tend to have slightly higher staff complements than those in post-1992 institutions. This suggests that the total number of directly employed staff (i.e. not including guest lecturers etc) that can be regarded as being within the planning academy, as defined here, is approximately 500.

**Figure 6: Number of staff employed in accredited planning schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of staff employed by planning schools</th>
<th>% of planning schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over 40 staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-40 staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20 staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>up to 10 staff</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
This suggests that a significant proportion of planning schools may find themselves in potentially vulnerable positions in the coming years, which may mean that the RTPI has to become more engaged in supporting schools in their case against staff losses or even closure. This may also place constraints on the ability to engage all schools in discussions on the longer term aspirations for planning education. This could also prompt reflection within the Institute on whether staff complement bears any relationship to its notion of an “effective planning school” and what it may be in a position to do to support any schools that have reduced staff numbers to ensure they are still able to meet the full complement of learning outcomes for accredited courses.

5.3. Recruitment and retention

Following from this, a critical issue in evaluating the health of the planning academy is the ability for planning schools to recruit and retain the staff they require to deliver their educational programmes and research targets. To provide insights into this, Heads of Schools were asked to rank their agreement/disagreement with a number of key statements related to this issue, shown in Figure 7.

This suggests that while a number of planning schools were facing some difficulties in recruitment, it does not appear that there are any overall problems for the staffing of planning schools. However, the reasons why some schools are facing problems is instructive, as this seems to be more prevalent in the pre-1992 institutions outside the south east of England, where the host universities appear to be demanding higher calibre candidates in terms of research performance, while the more peripheral location may act as a disincentive to a wider pool of suitably qualified candidates. This is also commented on by one of the focus group participants:

“We’ve advertised, we’ve gone through days of interviews, and we’ve met all the people and at the end it’s not been rubber stamped, even though there might be people who could contribute well to the courses and research, they haven’t been of the right standard for the university.”

Indeed, it was noted in the Scoping Report that there appeared to have been an increasing emphasis on research performance as the main recruiting criteria while work experience in planning practice was becoming less significant. Section 6.4 suggests that while a high proportion of existing staff do have a strong professional profile in terms of RTPI membership, planning experience and planning qualifications, current recruitment criteria of planning schools, as shown in Figure 8, will mean that this will change over time. Thus while membership of the RTPI is still important to recruitment in over half of planning schools, it is ranked lowest of all other criteria listed, with research performance being clearly the most important.
Figure 7: Heads of Schools’ views on staff recruitment and retention

- The level of staff turnover in our School is low
- We are able to appoint staff of a suitably high calibre in terms of both teaching and research.
- We have a large pool of candidates that apply for our posts, but few with experience in both planning practice and academia.
- There are no problems with staff recruitment in our School

Figure 8: Heads of Schools’ stated criteria for recruiting academic staff

- Membership of the RTPI
- Teaching experience in planning
- A PhD qualification
- Experience as a planning practitioner
- A strong research record
- A higher education qualification from an accredited planning school
It is interesting to speculate whether, from a professional point of view, this is a positive or negative development and whether it demands any adjustments to the way in which the RTPI relates to planning schools – for example in having a defined proportion of RTPI members as part of the definition of an effective planning school, or assurances that students will be exposed to those with planning practice through increased deployment of part-time, practice-based teaching assistants or guest lecturers.

The discussions at the focus groups clearly indicated that there has been a significant change in recruitment criteria over the last ten years – it was suggested that a decade ago most planning schools would recruit on the basis of a high standard of scholarship (but not necessarily a PhD) coupled with experience in planning practice. Indeed in one focus group it was suggested that as little as 10-12 years ago new academic members of staff were allocated mentors from both within the university and the local planning community, such was the perception of academics being professionally engaged. The changes that have occurred since prompted several focus group participants to note that they would not be appointed if they applied now and leave a specific cohort of mid-career academics in a difficult position as although they may have a wealth of experience in planning research, teaching and practice (and therefore in a professional sense, are almost the best skilled of the planning academy) their job prospects appeared rather paralysed, as noted by focus group participants:

“Because a lot of us don’t have Ph.Ds, there is no chance of moving institutions, so many of us are rather stuck”.

“If I applied for a job now, as I was then, I would have been thrown in the bin without getting thought about being called for interview. Because basically, no PhD, no publications, it’s a non-starter, isn’t it! No matter how good you are in your job, it doesn’t really matter…”

The increasing recruitment of staff without extensive practice experience of planning was raised by the majority of Heads of School when prompted for an open question of management challenges for their school. Furthermore in one of the interviews for this report, a senior academic noted that in some of the more research-driven planning schools, it is becoming increasingly difficult to cover the core elements of the planning curriculum, such as the statutory aspects of development planning or development control, as the number of staff who have expertise in this area is severely limited and a “dying species”. This tension was also highlighted by one of the focus group participants:

“... this is a profession that is all about applied research and practice, yet we are in a model dictated by people who have never actually left a university institute, who gained a Ph.D from an internal environment. It is very sad”.

This development is linked to the fact that all but one planning school engage external planning practitioners to deliver significant proportions of their curricula, on average being responsible for around 12% of the curriculum, although in one case this was as high as 40%. This also suggested that over 330 practitioners were engaged in universities, indicating the wider pool of people linked to the planning academy and that we should not become overly fixated with just the views of full time academics when appraising the health of planning education.
5.4. Research performance

Many of the changes described in the section above have been attributed to the introduction of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in 1986, which has had a major impact on the UK higher education sector. It was noted in the Scoping Report that the pending results of the 2008 RAE was likely to have a major impact on the institutional organisation of the planning academy, as its results will guide the strategic investment of UK universities. Figure 9 shows the results of the 2008 RAE, indicating that planning schools performed relatively well, collectively gaining an average rank of 2.46\(^7\) (i.e. internationally recognised), while all university institutions gained an average of rank of 2.24\(^8\). A more detailed evaluation of the state of the performance of UK planning schools in the 2008 RAE is provided by Punter and Campbell (2009), who note that about half of assessed units had 85% of their work rated at least international standard. They also noted that the planning academy could improve on this performance through more careful reflection on deploying its research effort on more agenda-setting and challenges to existing paradigms – issues that the mainstream planning community often fail to value as a function of the academy (see section 7.2).

As noted by Campbell and Punter (2009) this performance is likely to have implications for “the standing of departments... their financial viability and promotional prospects of staff” (p.31), factors that will have increased significance in the coming years as universities adopt strategies to adjust to a period of tighter resource availability.

The research performance of planning schools is also likely to have more implications for planning education: on the positive side in that students are more likely to be taught by research active staff, but on the negative side, it means staff have competing demands on their time. If one combines the data for student numbers and performance in the RAE 2008 as shown in Figure 10, it suggests that a large majority (83%) of current planning students are enrolled in planning schools with an average ranking of over 2.20 (i.e. internationally recognised) and 38% of students in schools with an average ranking of over 2.60.

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\(^7\) This relates to the 4 stage rating: 4* (world-leading), 3* (internationally excellent), 2* (recognised internationally) and 1* (recognised nationally). See [www.rae.ac.uk](http://www.rae.ac.uk) for an explanation of the system and rankings for evaluating UK research.

\(^8\) See Punter and Campbell (2009) for a more detailed explanation of the performance of planning schools.
Figure 9: Research rankings of planning schools in RAE 2008

Note: Research Power is the average ranking multiplied by the number of staff returned. * denotes RTPI accredited schools. Figures besides the bars indicate the “average rank” for each unit of assessment, which is a mean of the scores across the four RAE grades 1-4. *
5.5. Management challenges

A final issue raised in the Census of Planning schools was that of the changes that Heads of Schools considered that they would have to address in the next five years. This was done by asking them to first identify the factors that are most likely to change (Figure 11) and to rank the importance of a number of statements related to the management of the school (Figure 12).

In terms of factors of change, there was an indication of a broad pattern of stability with many Heads of School noting that many of the issues identified would not be subject to any change. However, of those that did suggest most change, the number of undergraduate students was most likely to decline (and indeed applications have reportedly substantially declined following the completion of the survey) and the number of research students perceived as most likely to increase – indeed no one suggested this would decline in their institution. The issue that was seen to remain the most stable was the number of planning programmes, whilst the view on the financial health of planning schools and the numbers of academic staff appeared to vary according to institution, with around 30% suggesting both a decline and an increase on these two issues. The result of this suggests that at the time of the survey, most Heads of Schools anticipated that the expansion of planning schools in terms of staff, programmes and students was coming to an end, but neither did they expect a dramatic decline in the near future.
To understand the nature of the challenges facing management of planning schools in a little more detail, Figure 12 highlights the issues of most concern to Heads of Planning schools. The issue of greatest importance was the research performance of the school – 76% suggested this was “very important” and the remaining 24% “important”. The next ranked in importance was increasing or maintaining student numbers, (71% ranked this very important) followed by competing for research grants (64% ranked it “very important”). While most Heads of Schools did recognise the importance of “the needs of the planning profession and practice”, this was ranked the lowest compared to other issues. This underlines the points made above that coinciding with the increase in the importance of the RAE, research performance has come to dominate the concerns of the academy, particularly those charged with the viability and standing of the individual departments. While it is difficult to make retrospective judgements, it could be suggested that with the RAE and a more managerial, competitive culture in higher education, the priority given to the relationship with the planning community has become subordinated to those factors that universities now see as the determinants of success – research performance and student numbers. This was noted by participants in the focus groups thus:

“...we’ve responded to a particular set of incentives connected to the RAE; the RAE has driven everything over the last decade and beyond and that is what explains it, that’s what explains the divorce [from practice]”.
“... if you look at the make-up of planning schools today and you look at the reasons why that make up is changing, it’s because it has less to do with the needs of the profession and more to do with the needs of the university environment...”

“I am not convinced that planning can survive in universities while the RAE/REF exists because there is so much pressure on universities to close those areas that are not performing adequately and from our point of view, for everyday you spend with practitioners trying to develop a vocational course for the students, then you are not able to do anything that will count for RAE/REF...”

While this has been apparent for many years, it may be useful for the RTPI to further reflect on the best way it can influence and work with planning schools within these constraints to enable them to maximise their contribution to the wider planning profession.

Figure 12: Importance of management issues to Heads of Planning Schools

The Heads of Schools were also asked about the critical relationships their school had with other stakeholders in planning education and research, as shown in Figure 13. This notes a surprising level of indifference or dissatisfaction with the role of CHOPS in representing planning schools, and while almost all Heads of schools think there are good relationships with the Institute, there are clearly weaknesses in how they relate to the wider professional community. Further to this, most Heads of Schools also believe that Partnership Boards are a more effective way of maintaining professional standards compared to the previous system of visiting boards (68% agreeing or strongly agreeing).
5.6. A typology of UK planning schools

It becomes very clear from this analysis that UK planning schools face a variety of challenges, with different schools operating in different contexts and with different priorities set by their wider university structures. Indeed, as suggested above, each planning school is likely to be balancing different pressures according to size, staff and student profile and institutional setting. In an attempt to bring some conceptual clarity to this diversity, the responses to the Census of Planning Schools were subject to a factor analysis to draw out the main patterns and clusters of similarities within the data. This was an attempt to produce a meaningful typology from which various “types” of planning school could be identified and the challenges facing each type better explored.

This analysis was undertaken by taking a range of independent variables from the survey and testing them, using SPSS software to achieve the greatest variance in the data. In the end, 27 variables were chosen, as shown in Appendix 3. This included variables on the school's research performance, staff profile, student profile and key management challenges of the school. Using principal component analysis, four factors were extracted which cumulatively explain 63.2% variance in the data, as shown in Table 2.
Table 2: Results of factor analysis of the Heads of Schools Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>Cumulative %</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor 1</td>
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<td>Factor 2</td>
<td>18.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Factor 3</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factor 4</td>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>63.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To summarise and to identify the factors by descriptive label, these are:

**Factor 1: “Practitioner-teacher” schools (22.5% of variance)**

These schools tend to be located in post-1992 universities with large student cohorts and with a large majority (70%) of staff having a planning qualification and practitioner experience. They employ a higher proportion of teaching only and part-time staff, with less of an international background and most staff are over 50 years of age. These schools appear to be focused on professional education rather than research performance.

**Factor 2: “Research-led teaching” schools (18.3% of variance)**

These schools are mostly located in Russell Group universities and in the top 50% of best research performers and with an emphasis on post-graduate education, particularly PhDs. The schools have a relatively young, international staff profile, encouraging appointment of those with PhDs and strong research records.

**Factor 3: “Regional Hub” schools (13.3% of variance)**

These tend to be located in regionally based universities, with many having a long tradition of acting as important hubs for planning education and research. Most have large undergraduate courses and average–high research ranking, with PhD and research record being the top recruitment criteria, although Heads of Schools are concerned about their ability to recruit adequately qualified staff.

**Factor 4: “Planning Leviathan” schools (9.1% of variance)**

These are the largest planning schools in the UK in terms of their staff, student numbers and budget, located in both pre- and post- 1992 institutions. These are characterised by a high research performance coupled with large scale educational provision at undergraduate and post-graduate levels. The staff in these schools have the lowest proportion with professional experience, planning qualifications or membership of the RTPI and a younger staff profile.

The key features of each factor are further described in Table 3 and an attempt is made in Figure 14 to relate these factors conceptually to some of the key tensions that appear to be defining the direction of change in the planning academy. One axis indicates the tension between research-orientated compared to a professional, or practice orientation to teaching while the other highlights the degree of engagement with the planning profession, for example through levels of staff activity, qualifications and links to local practitioners.
Schematically, this places Research-led schools to the bottom left of the diagram, indicating that the planning schools aligning with this “type” emphasise research performance and do not see the fostering of close links with the profession as a priority, despite hosting RTPI-accredited courses. In contrast to this are the “practitioner-teacher” schools, which are heavily focused on professionally-orientated teaching and foster good links with the professional community. Midway between these two extremes are the “Regional Hubs” that maintain good local professional links and striving for a good research performance, and the Planning Leviathans who perform well in research and host large student cohorts. Interestingly, the differences between planning schools are apparent to academics who participated in the focus groups:

“...there are the more academic departments, with the academics in these departments seeing themselves as part of the wider university, wider academy of geography and other disciplines doing their particular thing. And then there are the schools that comprise of former practitioners who take a completely different view of planning and of planning education, who are trying to produce ready to go mini-planners. They are a separate lot now ...”

This analysis is useful for a number of reasons. First it provides a useful illustration of the variety of UK planning schools, highlighting some of the key variables that explain the differences in function and outlook. Second, from this simple discussion it can be understood that there may well be significant differences in the student experience and the types of skills developed by students at these different types of institutions, prompting reflection on how the RTPI-specified learning outcomes are achieved. Finally, the type of school may influence the type of relationship it has with the RTPI and the need for the Institute to have flexibility and sensitivity in understanding the challenges faced by each school. It may also be useful for the RTPI to reflect on whether any type of planning school is better aligned to its objectives and to consider how it can further encourage planning schools to move in that direction, or whether it would like to positively encourage diversity in the recognition that each of these types offers a distinctive contribution to the planning community.

It may also be useful to speculate on whether there has been a trend for schools to move towards one type or another and to reflect on how well each may be placed to respond to the projected changes in higher education. In relation to this first issue, it is possible to speculate that key institutional drivers would make the “Planning Leviathan” or “Research-Led” schools the aspiration types, particularly for the “Regional Hubs”.
### Table 3: Factor Analysis of Heads of Schools Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 1: “Practitioner-teacher” schools (22.5% of variance)</th>
<th>Factor 2: “Research-led teaching” schools (18.3% of variance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Located in post-1992 universities, in schools shared with other built environment disciplines.</td>
<td>- Located in Russell Group universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Large student cohorts, particularly on part-time provision, but relatively few PhD students.</td>
<td>- In the top 50% of planning schools in terms of the average ranking per member of staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Relatively weak RAE performance.</td>
<td>- Average staff size (c. 15-25).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- They have a larger proportion of teaching-only and part time staff.</td>
<td>- Emphasis on postgraduate teaching (although some do have large undergraduate courses) and have a high number of PhD student per staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Majority of staff (70%+) have a planning qualification and practitioner experience, with a relatively high proportion of RTPI.</td>
<td>- Heads of School have a confident outlook and orientation towards research led-teaching, rather than giving a practice-orientation to planning education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- These schools are struggling to attract people to staff vacancies, but have low staff turnover.</td>
<td>- All staff are active in both teaching and research with a relatively high proportion of staff on full-time, permanent contracts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- When recruiting, emphasise having a professional qualification in planning and practitioner experience and do not expect staff to have a PhD.</td>
<td>- Most internationally diverse staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There is an aging staff profile, 80% of staff over 50.</td>
<td>- Emphasis on PhD qualification and research record when recruiting staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Compared to other planning schools, have a much less international staff profile.</td>
<td>- Some schools have a relatively young staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 3: “Regional Hub” schools (13.3% of variance)</strong></td>
<td>- Some heads of schools resent RTPI “control” of planning education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Located in regionally based universities, most of which are members of the Russell Group with a long tradition of acting as a regional hub for planning research and teaching.</td>
<td>- Relatively high proportion of staff with planning qualifications (over 50%), practitioner experience (over 40%) and RTPI membership (over 40%).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Often stand-alone schools, or in departments with traditional professional disciplines such as civil engineering or surveying.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Most have large undergraduate course, with minimal part-time provision.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- They are of average size (15-20 staff) and have moderate-high numbers of PhD students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Almost all staff are active in both research and teaching and they have mid to high average ranking in the RAE.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Heads of many of these schools are concerned about their ability to attract good quality candidates for staff vacancies and some have the highest staff turnover amongst all planning schools.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- When recruiting, priority is for those with a strong research record and a PhD rather than those with a planning qualification and practice experience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Relatively high proportion of staff have planning qualifications (typically over 50%), practice experience (typically over 30%) and are RTPI members (typically over 40%).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Evenly spread across the 30-59 age range.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- More male-dominated than other schools and staff from less international back grounds.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor 4: “Planning Leviathan” schools (9.1% of variance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- These are the UK’s largest planning schools in the UK in terms of staff, students and budgets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- They are located in both pre- and post 1992 universities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There are characterized by research competence coupled with large scale educational provision – they all have large undergraduate, post graduate taught course, with a high part-time provision at post graduate level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- They attract large numbers of PhD students and coupled with a strong professional orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- They are amongst the best performing in research terms, all being in the top quartile of research power and a number having the highest average research rankings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- These schools tend to have staff with the lowest levels of professional experience, planning qualifications and membership of the RTPI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- This group of planning schools seems to be facing the least difficulties in terms of staff recruitment – they report no problems, They generally seek staff with research experience, although there are also some schools represented that seek staff with more professional experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- These planning schools have a higher proportion of younger staff (&lt;30 years) than other schools, and the most even spread of staff across all age ranges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- They have the lowest proportion of female staff and have a moderately international staff, with around 25% of staff being non-UK nationals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 14: Schematic representation of the results of the factors analysis of the Heads of School Survey

Professional engagement

Factor 1: Practitioner-teacher

Factor 2: Research-led teaching

Factor 3: Regional Hubs

Factor 4: Planning Leviathans

Professional disengagement

Research led-teaching

Professionally orientated teaching
In relation to the second issue, one can consider which of these types would be best suited to meeting the challenges of the HE sector in the next two decades, which can be framed by the scenarios development by Universities UK (2008), previously discussed in the Scoping Report (Ellis et al 2008), as well as the more recent work by Blass et al (2010). This has identified key future drivers as being declining demographics forcing greater competition for student numbers, the rise of more flexible learning supported by ICT and the ability of institutions to invest in the necessary e-learning technology, a concentration on postgraduate education, restricted access to research funding and a polarisation, largely along the Factor 2-Factor 1 continuum. Although it is difficult to predict how these trends will crystallise around the existing planning schools, the initial suggestion here is that given that these scenarios are driven largely by student numbers and the need to be more flexible in the way learning is delivered, it will be the Planning Leviathans and the Practitioner-Teaching Schools that are best placed to respond to any of these scenarios, as they may be more able to invest in e-learning and continue to be focused on delivering for the students, while Regional Hubs and Research-led teaching decline as research funding becomes more and more competitive.

The future scenarios for planning schools are, at this stage, highly speculative and a more focused discussion involving a range of key stakeholders could prove useful to crystallise key threats and opportunities facing the resourcing and conceptual understanding of planning education. Indeed the scale of recently announced cuts to higher education with more generalised predictions of institutional closures or mergers provides the prospect on increased threats for some planning schools. The RTPI may therefore consider bringing together the findings of this report with the existing long-term scenarios developed for the HE sector (Universities UK 2008, Blass et al 2010) and the recent Land Use Futures Foresight Programme9 (Government Office for Science, 2010). This could effectively be done through a RTPI workshop held in conjunction with other partners (perhaps including individual planning schools, CHOPS, CEBE and those involved in the Foresight Programme) to generate more specific long term scenario-building and horizon-scanning to identify future opportunities and challenges for planning schools and their ability to meet the future challenges of planning education over the next 20-30 years.

5.7. Reflections on findings on the profile of UK planning schools

Therefore, to summarise the findings from the profile of UK planning schools, it can be noted that seen in a historical context, the planning academy has gone through a number of distinct stages in its evolution, with a different relationship with the planning community emerging from each stage. The most recent phase, from the late 1990s onwards has seen an expansion of planning schools, planning courses, planning students and the overall size of the planning academy. This has occurred in a very different context than that which previously existed, with British universities becoming far more international in their outlook, (until very recently) better resourced and with a much greater priority placed on research performance. This period has also witnessed an emergence of the concept of spatial planning and a consequent shift in the skills required of planners and, therefore, the content of planning education.

During this time, the RTPI has had a notable influence on the shape of planning education, through its Education Commission Report (2003) and the subsequent establishment of Partnership Boards. The RTPI does therefore continue to have a major and effective role in the accreditation of planning education, but appears to be losing the close links and influence that have been strong features of the planning academy from its inception – thus there appears to be a declining proportion of RTPI members employed in planning schools reflected in the recruitment criteria now being deployed by most universities. It can therefore be suggested that in a 10-15 year time frame, many planning

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9 This explored the land use challenges facing the UK in the next 50 years and as such provides a more technical basis for identifying the challenges to future planning practice, including the types of skills and demand for professional planners.

See [http://www.foresight.gov.uk/OurWork/ActiveProjects/LandUse/LandUse.asp](http://www.foresight.gov.uk/OurWork/ActiveProjects/LandUse/LandUse.asp)
schools may struggle to have any professional representation amongst their staff, unless the regulations governing membership are amended. While most Heads consider that their School has a healthy and productive relationship with the RTPI and the wider planning community, there are signs that there is a more general weakening of the relationships between the RTPI and individual members of the planning academy, which have been important, but less tangible, influences in ensuring planning education and research remains innovative and professionally focused. This could prompt the RTPI to consider how it defines an “effective planning school” for the purpose of accreditation and whether this should, for example include a specified number of RTPI members on the academic staff. It may also wish to reflect on how it engages with planning schools as a collective body, with some signs of dissatisfaction amongst heads of planning schools about the effectiveness of CHOPS in the leadership of the planning academy.

In terms of the current state of UK planning schools, this section has described the substantial diversity in their size, outlook and institutional context. On the whole, planning schools can be seen to be offering a greater variety of planning courses and educating a higher number of planning students than ever before, while also (according to the RAE) performing better at research, from which students and the broader professional community can benefit. The diversity amongst planning schools means that some are more vulnerable and less open to RTPI influence than others and this has been illustrated in this section by categorising planning schools into several types. This may be useful for the Institute to think about how its aims are progressed or inhibited by these different types and whether this should prompt any changes in the way it relates to the planning academy, or articulates its objectives for planning education and research.

At the time the surveys for this research were undertaken, most Heads of Planning Schools envisage relative stability, with many anticipating a decrease in the number of undergraduate students and an increase in research and postgraduate students. The most substantial challenges for the future were seen to be the ability to increase, or maintain, student numbers, the need to secure research grants and to produce quality research outputs. It is notable that in the list of challenges given to the Heads of Schools, “meeting the needs of the planning profession and practice” was rated the least important.

However since the surveys were undertaken there have been a number of significant changes, in particular emerging details of a number of years of financial austerity that will see education budgets substantially cut, a new model of student financing and a new government, with a very different policy agenda for planning. This is likely to induce further change within the planning academy, with potential threats to a number of planning schools, particularly within the smaller units or those performing less well in the RAE/REF. The future prospects for the planning academy and its ability to continue to work with the RTPI are likely to continue to change and it is suggested that it would be useful for the RTPI to work with a range of partners to reflect on the findings of this report, the Land Use Futures Foresight report and the long-term trends for higher education to generate long term scenarios to guide its future policy for the planning academy.

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10 The survey took place in October –November 2009.
The key observations for the RTPI arising from this section are:

- The current relationships between the RTPI, planning schools and individual members of the planning academy should be seen in a historical context. The last 10-15 years have seen a number of trends that are particularly significant, in shaping the RTPI’s relationship with the planning academy.
- While the arrangements for accreditation appear to continue to be effective and important to planning schools, other aspects of the relationship between the RTPI, planning schools and individual members of the planning academy have weakened and are under further threat. A range of initiatives could be considered to address this, as noted below.
- There is some dissatisfaction amongst planning schools about how they are represented at the national level and the RTPI may wish to review the arrangements for its collective engagement with planning schools.
- There is a need to appreciate the diversity of planning schools in the UK and the different pressures that they now face. The RTPI should reflect on how this diversity relates to its aims for planning education and research and whether any of the “types” of planning school identified offer any particular threats or challenges to these aims.
- An understanding of the diversity of planning schools could also prompt a review of how the Institute can maintain a continuing influence over the planning academy. In this context, it may wish to revisit how it defines an effective planning school, for the purpose of accreditation.
- There is a need to reflect on whether it is important that planning schools have a large proportion of RTPI members amongst its staff and if so, the measures the RTPI may have to take to ensure this is maintained, given the trends in recruitment of academic staff and the influence the RTPI can have.
- The planning academy is now entering a period of uncertainty that will ensure that future prospects for the planning academy and its ability to continue to work with the RTPI are likely to continue to change. It is suggested that it would be useful for the RTPI to work with a range of partners to generate long term scenarios to guide its future relationships and policy in relation to the planning academy.
6. **A profile of the planning academy**

6.1. *Understanding the planning academy*

It was noted in the introduction that the concept of the “planning academy” is a rather loose one with porous boundaries, which included full-time and part-time academics, teaching assistants, external examiners, guest lectures and others. However, for the purpose of this empirical exercise, this group has had to be more closely defined, so the academic survey (described in section 4) was focused on those academics formally employed (in whatever capacity) by RTPI accredited planning schools in the UK. On this basis, using the staff listings on planning school websites, it was estimated that the planning academy consists of around 500 academics, confirming the figures generated by the Census of Planning schools described in the last section. This group was used as the sampling population to establish a profile of the current planning academy.

Despite being crucial for the delivery of planning education and research, there has never been an attempt to comprehensively capture the characteristics of the planning academy. While the RTPI does collect basic statistical data on staff in accredited planning schools, and some historical research undertaken on certain characteristics of the academy, such as disciplinary background (e.g. Thomas 1979, Thomas and Thomas 1981, Healey 1983; see Scoping Report), and other research into the academy’s perspective on planning education (e.g. Poxon 2001), very little is understood about the overall profile of this group, their views on the relationship with the rest of the profession, or their aspirations for the future.

In an attempt to capture some of this data, an online survey was undertaken of this group, as described in section 4.3. The survey achieved a 42% response rate (i.e. responses from 211 academics), which was noted in section 4 as having an error rate of +/- 4.2%, assuming sampling conditions of a 20% estimate proportion, simple random sample and a confidence level of 95%. The results of the survey form the basis of this section. First it gives a detailed demographic and professional profile of the academy and goes on to evaluate how the group views broader educational change and the relationship with practitioners.

6.2. *The planning academy: demographic profile*

It was noted in the interviews, census of planning schools and focus groups that the planning academy has changed significantly over the last ten years, with a number of interviewees noting the increase in female staff being a key feature of change. This is confirmed by the survey, which shows that the current planning academy appears to be more diverse than ever. For example, 52% are male and 48% female, which not only compares well to the population as a whole, the wider higher education sector (which is only 42% female, Universities UK, 2007) but also to the student body, which is noted in the Scoping Report (Ellis et al, 2008), as being 45% female and 55% male. It is also noticeable that both the academy and the student population are substantially closer to society’s gender mix than the RTPI membership, which is 67% male. The survey also suggests that the post-1992 universities employ a higher proportion of women than pre-1992 universities, with 47% in the former and 42% in the latter. It should also be noted that more senior positions are still dominated by male academics, with three times as many male professors and readers than female, twice as many senior lecturers, yet slightly more female lecturers.

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The potential inaccuracies stemming from such a definition are acknowledged, such as missing relevant staff listed as part of their wider institutional unit (and this staff listed together with those of architecture or engineering) and those staff based on other units that contribute to planning programmes. There are also those staff that may not be listed on web pages due to a looser allegiance as a part-time tutor or guest lecturer. However, there is confidence in the sample, given the high return rate.
A similar pattern emerges in terms of ethnic background and nationality. According to the survey of planning academics, 90.5% describe themselves as “white” and 8.5% as “non-white”, which is a direct reflection of the higher education sector (Universities UK, 2007). As noted in the Scoping Report (Ellis et al 2008) while the percentage of BME in the overall population was 7.9% in the 2001 census, 10% of planning students are from ethnic minority communities – the RTPI membership is 95% “white”.

In terms of nationality, 78% of the planning academy are UK nationals and the rest drawn from a wide range of geographic origins shown in Figure 15. This compares to the 13% of foreign nationals in the higher education as a whole (Universities UK, 2007) and the 10% of planning students from overseas.

**Figure 15: Nationality composition of the UK planning academy**

![Nationality composition of the UK planning academy](image)

The final demographic explored was that of age, which is set against concerns that the sector is facing a problem of succession as a consequence of a “retirement bulge” as the academics recruited in the expansion of the 1960s end their careers (e.g. Metcalf et al 2005). The age profile discovered by the survey is shown in Figure 16. This is compared in Figure 17 to the age profile in 1975 according to Thomas and Thomas (1981). This shows that the planning academy does have an ageing profile compared to the rest of the higher education sector, with a significant contrast to the young academy in 1975. It is noticeable that there is another young cohort “bulge”, perhaps reflecting the most recent expansion of planning academia in the last decade. Thus while it is likely that planning schools will lose a well experienced and large cohort of academics in the next 5 years, this does not amount to a staffing crisis, with good representation of younger staff available to take on more senior positions.
Figure 16: Age profile of the planning academy

Figure 17: Age structure of the planning academy in 1975 and 2009

(Note: source of 1975 data: Thomas and Thomas 1981)
Planning schools are, of course, quite varied in terms of their age profile, with a slight bias to younger staff in post-1992 institutions. The varying age profiles should however be understood, not just in terms of succession planning, but also the availability of adequate staff to deliver planning programmes in the future. In this sense it is important to note that older and younger staff tend to have very different profiles in relation to planning practice (see section 6.3), with older staff more likely to have extensive experience of working in planning practice. Younger staff are more likely to have PhD qualifications, often in a related discipline such as geography, indeed the planning academy is increasingly becoming a multi-disciplinary body, with consequences for how it relates to the rest of the profession. These trends mean that over time this will change the RTPI's relationship with some planning schools and potentially the way in which planning students come to understand about planning practice. This could prompt a reflection on behalf of the RTPI on how, in the long term, it should engage with the planning academy.

6.3. The planning academy: academic profile

In addition to the demographic profile, the survey also explored the academic profile of those working in planning schools, in terms of their position in the university, the activities they engage in and any specific research interests. The first issue is related to the academic grades of survey respondents, as shown in Figure 18, showing that 59.8% were Senior Lecturers or more senior (i.e. Reader or Professor). This tends to reflect the high level of experience within the planning academy, with 60% having more than 10 years experience of higher education as an academic.

Figure 18: Academic roles in the planning academy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic roles in the planning academy</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching fellow/associate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research assistant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research fellow/associate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic salaries are directly related to academic grade (with some range within each grade), which in turn is broadly linked to time in post. The salaries of the respondents are shown in Figure 19, indicating that 48.3% are paid between £30,000-£50,000. 7.6% are paid over £70,000 and 14.5% less than £20,000. As noted in the Scoping Report, throughout the 1980s and 1990s average earnings had considerably outstripped academic salaries, until a series of pay settlements over the last five years, so that academic salaries now compare favourably with many comparable jobs in the UK and is similar to academic pay in a range of other countries (e.g. France, Denmark, Canada) and
compares well to others (e.g. Sweden, Japan, Australia and New Zealand), but not as favourable as the USA. HEFCE (2008) notes that the median academic salary in 2006/07 was £41,130 (£43,710 for males and £39,030 for females) and 22% earn over £50,000 – suggesting planning academics are relatively well paid compared to sector averages. The 2009 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings from the Office of National Statistics (ONS 2009), shows that gross annual salaries of higher education teaching professionals have a mean gross annual pay of £38,422, compared to the overall mean of £25,800 and the mean professional pay of £37,534. The same survey notes that the mean annual gross pay for Town Planners is £34,567, indicating that on average, academics are better paid than practitioners, underlining that in financial terms there is no major general threat to academia from a brain drain to practice, as has been witnessed in some related disciplines, such as surveying (see Ellis and Wood 2006).

Figure 19: Salaries of planning academics, 2009

In contrast to the relatively healthy average academic salaries, there is concern about the growing casualisation of junior academic posts: the 10% of staff that are earning less than £20,000 are mostly research contract staff on temporary contracts. As noted in the Scoping Report, the resulting lack of job security amongst this group is a key source of job dissatisfaction across the higher education sector, with 30% of all academic staff in England in 2006/07 being on fixed term contracts rising to 88% amongst researchers (HECFE 2008). The difficulties of securing a first, permanent academic post were raised a number of times in the focus groups. The survey highlighted that within the planning academy, 81.6% were on permanent contracts (18.6% non-permanent) and 80.1% were full-time (10.9% part-time). It appears that pre-1992 universities have a higher proportion of staff on non-permanent contract compared to post-1992 universities, made up of contract research staff and time-limited contracts for full academic posts.

Figure 20 also shows the relatively high level of part-time work, particularly in post-1992 institutions. This can reflect a wide range of factors, including job flexibility and, increasingly, reliance on teaching assistants, often teacher-practitioners to delivering core aspects of the curriculum.

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12 This is recognised by most academics, as one participant noted in a focus group “I don't know any poor planners, or poor planning academics, but no one goes into it for the money...”
The survey also examined the various activities that academics are engaged with. The census of planning schools asked Heads of Schools to indicate the proportion of academic staff that were employed on a research/teaching only basis (see Figure 21), indicating that 66.8% were engaged for both research and teaching, 21.6% for teaching only and 11.6% research only. Staff are far more likely to be teaching-only in post-1992 universities and, to a lesser degree, more likely to be research only in pre-1992 universities.

This underlines the fact that universities still offer the unique locus for planning education, where it can be delivered in a context where teaching remains linked to research, with the major benefits of allowing students to be exposed to the most current thinking on planning-related issues, and acting as a vital pillar to support the status of the planning profession as a “learned society”, as discussed by Grant (1999). In the survey of academics, a large majority also endorsed the value of the research-teaching nexus, with 84.5% agreeing that research positively complements the learning
experience for students. The fact that pre- and post-1992 institutions are more likely to have different proportions of staff engaged on teaching and research begins to highlight the diversity in UK planning schools, which was discussed in section 0.

The expectation that most academics are required to teach and research on top of an increasing administrative burden has led to a growing sense of pressure across the higher education sector and there is a heightened sense of stress as noted below in section 6.6. This was a key theme in the focus groups, reflected in some of the quotes below:

“I would probably say I’ve got at least seven jobs rolled into one. I’m an academic, I’m a teacher, I’m a researcher, I’m an author, I’m an editor, I’m a consultant, I’m an advisor and an administrator and probably others I’ve forgotten. And you have to do all of them. And it’s the nature of most academic institutions now, where you have to juggle so many balls simultaneously all the time.”

“The challenge is trying to fit everything in and I’m trying to imagine whether it is actually possible to do so...”

“It seems everything seems to be additive. You know the pressures are all being ratcheted up; pressures to do your research, administration, teaching, and the number of students in the class. A number of the management aspects are working against many of the aspects of the job that are the more rewarding – such as collaboration with colleagues and engaging with practitioners ... yet from a management perspective this does not make sense in terms of use of resources and there are negative results as a consequence....”.

Academics also expressed their frustration that these pressures were very poorly understood by the rest of the professional community, or indeed the public at large. A particular point made strongly and often was the dismay at the widely held idea that academics get summers off. The issue of perception of the academy by practitioners is examined in detail in section 7, but this does highlight the need for greater mutual understanding of the various roles undertaken by the planning academy.

The academics survey also explored the percentage of academics’ time that was committed to consultancy, scholarly research and the proportion of scholarly research that is funded, shown in Figure 22. This indicates a higher level of each of these activities in pre-1992 universities, reflecting that these generally have lower teaching loads per member of staff than in post-1992 institutions. This figure also indicates the relatively low level of ongoing engagement with practice work amongst academics, with only 5% of average time spent on consultancy (presumably planning related), with 53% of staff doing no consultancy at all. Similarly the average time spent on “scholarly research” was 35%, with only 16.7% doing no research, but 31% doing no funded research.

The survey also explored the main research interests of academics and they were allowed to tick as many as was relevant, with the ranked frequency of the main areas shown in Figure 23. This provides an indication of the extent to which academics are engaged with the issues of concern to policy-makers, practitioners and the public and shows the great range of expertise available within the planning academy. It should be noted that only three of these areas, planning theory, planning pedagogy and planning history are areas that don’t necessarily directly relate to planning practice and raise questions on why the practitioner community perceive the academy as being rather “ivory tower”.
6.4. The planning academy: professional profile

A key objective of this research has been to assess the links between the academy and practice. An important dimension to this is to understand the proportion of the planning academy with formal qualifications or practice experience in planning\textsuperscript{13}. The survey suggests that 59.4% of academics have a higher education qualification from an RTPI accredited planning school, although this appears to vary in terms of age and type of institution: for example 44% of academics in pre-1992 universities and 60.5% in post-1992 institutions, as noted in the discussion of different “types” of planning schools in section 0.

In terms of professional membership, overall 54% of respondents are RTPI members (57.7% in post-1992 institutions and 44.8% in pre-1992 institutions) and 27% having no professional affiliation. Academic staff are also members of a large range of other professional organisations, with a total of 28 professional groups mentioned. Some of these are planning institutes in other countries, but also include a range of other professional affiliations, with the most common being the HEA (7.1%), RICS (5.2%), CIH (1.4%) and RIBA (1.4%). Others mentioned included institutions in the fields of engineering, management and economic development.

\textsuperscript{13} The Heads of Schools survey asked for indications of how many staff in each planning school had professional practice, a planning qualification and membership of the RTPI – the figures given from that survey broadly verify the findings from the survey of academics. The latter is taken for further analysis here as it allows for cross-tabulation against other variables, such as age, gender etc.
Figure 23: Academic Research interests

Academic research interests

- Retail
- Gender and planning
- Governance
- Water and marine planning
- European and comparative planning
- Transport planning
- Planning law
- GIS/modelling
- Equality and diversity
- Planning pedagogy
- Rural planning
- Development control/management and...
- Planning history
- Conservation and built heritage
- Planning theory
- Urban design
- Regional planning
- Public participation
- Community planning
- Development planning and land markets
- Environmental issues, climate change and...
- Economic development and regeneration

% of total responses
This also relates to experience that academics have had of planning practice – it was noted in the Scoping Report and in sections 2 and 5.3 above that a traditional model of planning academia has been that a large proportion of staff were recruited after a period of time in practice. While this is still a feature of a small minority of planning schools, many planning academics do not conform to this model, as shown in Figure 24.

**Figure 24: Practitioner experience of planning academics**

It appears that 71% of respondents had at least some experience of working in planning practice, the majority of whom worked exclusively in the public sector (42% of all staff). There was a big difference in the percentage of academics that had any practical experience, with 53.3% of staff in pre-1992 institutions and 73.7% in post-1992 institutions (which partly relates to the types of planning schools identified in section 23). This would suggest that academia is still largely staffed with practitioner-academics, yet if one looks at the length of the experience, as shown in Figure 25, it shows that two thirds of those with experience worked in practice for 5 years of less, but with a clear inverse pattern in pre- and post-1992 institutions, with the former dominated by staff who have worked for less than 10 years in practice and the latter by those with more than 10 years experience. This coincides with the findings discussed in section 5.3, with pre-1992 institutions far more likely to now recruit on the basis of research performance, whilst post-1992 institutions have, at least until more recently, still also looked for practitioner experience.

Unsurprisingly, those academics with longer periods of practice experience were drawn from older age groups, but it is interesting to note that the younger age group (i.e. under 30) has a higher percentage of respondents having some practice experience than later age groups, as shown in Figure 26. While this does appear to be a positive issue in terms of having a new generation of practice-academics, the younger age group’s experience is virtually all under 2 years and through discussion at focus groups does appear to be largely made up of work experience while at university.
or temporary summer jobs, which has become more common in recent years with high demand for planning skills coupled with increased financial pressures on students. The quality of this experience is therefore questionable in terms of how it may relate to their teaching and research. However, when one views other aspects of the academics’ professional profile, one sees that there are healthy indicators across all age groups – it is the 30-49 group that have the lowest percentage of planning qualifications and least experience. Indeed, the academy’s link to the wider planning profession is clearly a defining feature of the discipline and is highly valued, as noted in one of the focus groups:

“I like having the link with practice – it’s really important to me!”

Figure 25: Length of academics’ practical experience
This suggests that while many of the academics and practitioners consider that planning academia is becoming more de-professionalised, in terms of these key indicators, it remains strongly linked into the RTPI and planning practice. One notable feature is the relatively small proportion of the under 30 years group with RTPI membership, and again this was an issue that came up regularly in the focus groups, with younger participants highlighting the difficulty they perceived in gaining membership:

"Many of my colleagues now are not able to join the RTPI, ... because they have the wrong kind of degree, they have a planning degree from the wrong country. All sorts of things."

"I hate to break the bad news to you – but you aren’t going to be able to join the RTPI: you’ve worked in civic design for about twenty years and they are still going to say no to you because you’ve got a politics and economics degree and a PhD in planning is completely worthless. You teach on an RTPI course, but, that doesn’t matter!"

"... I’m a student member still – being academic only counts for half the time as if I had a job processing development control decisions...”

Therefore while the younger academics do appear to be well qualified and most have some experience of planning practice, one obstacle to greater RTPI representation in planning schools appears to be the membership criteria for academic staff. It may therefore be worthwhile for the RTPI to review the ways in which academics can qualify for full RTPI membership.

Further aspects of the professional profile of the planning academy are discussed in section 7.
6.5. Views on current higher education

The survey of academics also asked them to reflect on the current state of planning education, with a view of capturing insights into the constraints, opportunities and frustrations the academy is facing in delivering its planning programmes, rather than a comprehensive evaluation of curriculum content etc. Academics were asked to rank a number of statements, as shown in Figure 27. This shows that many academics have a rather pessimistic view of the key trends in education with higher student numbers, declining student engagement and monetary rather than educational motivations of universities. These are all factors that seem to be making the job of teaching more difficult, with potential consequences for the quality of delivery as a result of increasing student numbers per member of staff, declining student engagement and the balancing of educational aims with other institutional strategies, such as increasing numbers of overseas students (which has its own challenges) and, for some staff, research performance. The figure does show a diversity of opinion on many of these issues, but with most disagreeing with the fact that the quality of students had increased, the insinuation here is that many believe it has declined along with the standards staff are expected to maintain, resulting in the frustrations noted at the focus groups:

“What I really get irritated about is these pressures, or the insinuation that we are almost solely responsible for the success of our students, so we have to monitor their attendance. So if they fail it’s actually our fault, rather than the student not engaging or doing enough work…”

“There are a growing minority of students that are much more enthused about using the systems that exist within the university structure to blame others. If they devoted that effort they expend on blaming others to actually working out what they needed to do, they would probably be very successful students at some level...”.

It is not clear whether these issues are fully appreciated by the wider professional community as during the interviews for this project a number of the practitioners were critical of planning schools (or rather, the wider system of RTPI-accredited planning education) in the way it prepared graduates for the world of work. While this issue will be returned to in section 7.3, academics do appear to be sensitive to such issues noted in the focus groups:

“Are we here to produce planners or are we here to produce people trained and knowledgeable in the art and science of planning? And probably our take, and my personal take, is that we are the latter, not the former”.

“… it’s our job to teach people the wider contexts for why we plan and how that fits into the management of the built and natural environment, I think it’s about giving people the wider context, which is what we should be doing in the academy and that’s best done drawing across a broad social science context...”.

In addition to this, there does seem to be a proportion of the planning academy that struggle with the way some universities seem to prioritise research above teaching and the consequences this has for professional education. Indeed, as noted by one participant in the focus group, academic careers are now generally made on the basis of research performance, so that quality and innovation in teaching are not always recognised:

“By and large you can do what you like with your teaching and nobody gives a hoot. I find you have to achieve a basic level of competence but there’s very little reward system for going beyond that.”
The key message to be taken from this brief section is that there is the (unsurprising) fact that the planning academy holds a variety of opinions on the state of higher education, with a strong critical voice in relation to declining student quality and the standards of attainment, which is a view found right across the HE sector, but officially refuted. This provides an important context in which academics engage in the wider discussions on planning education and offers a different discourse on planning education than that offered by the practitioner community (see section 7.3).

6.6. Academic job satisfaction

It was noted above that a common theme arising in all the focus groups was the increased sense of pressure in academic life and the need to juggle a number of different roles. This was highlighted by the quotes in section 6.3, which complement the following:

“We are expected to perform those extra additional roles that the university, the academy, the policy community and the professional community expect of us, simultaneously"
“I would say that it’s a balancing act and you also develop a unique range of skills associated with it, I suppose, in that most people – they might complain about the amount of activities that they have in terms of being an academic today, but they still do it, and they cope and they muddle through, sometimes more successfully than others...”

Despite this, the focus groups did highlight the fact that most academics were passionate about their job and committed to both the education of their students, the idea of planning as an activity for improving society and the issues on which they undertake research. Indeed, set against the increasing sense of a pressurised workplace, most still managed to keep focused on the positive aspects of their job:

“I think it’s an incredible privilege to be in a position like the one I am in and to be able to be paid to research and write. And that’s the thing that pulled me into this, not the teaching, it’s actually the writing and researching – new ideas and communicating those new ideas; that’s the exciting bit – when you’ve got time to do it.”

“I always spend some time doing administrative tasks, sometimes teaching, sometimes research – as a person, that keeps me fairly stimulated.”

“Regardless of the constraints that we all moan about, we’ve still got a lot of autonomy relative to most other professions. So if I decide I want to go and do some research on health or something like that, I can do that and no one is going to stop me.”

In order to provide further structure to these views, the academic survey included a number of questions on aspects of job satisfaction, as shown in Figure 28, which tend to reflect these comments well. This suggests that most are generally content with their working conditions, as 66.2% agree or strongly agree with the idea of flexibility being a key attraction to the job, and most are satisfied (51.1% agreeing or strongly agreeing) with the financial reward for their role. However, on the downside, 59.8% agree or strongly agree with the fact that they are struggling to find an appropriate work-life balance and only 26.4% consider they have good career opportunities, (see discussion in section 5.3). There does seem to be a particular issue with one cohort of academics who are valuable members of staff, fully contributing to their planning schools, yet in the context of the substantial changes of higher education, either do not have a PhD or time to develop the research profile now required for promotion by their employing institution. As far as planning education is concerned this offers a potential threat to a very valuable and well experienced cohort of teachers. This group of staff may therefore be amongst the 14.7% who are “seriously considering an alternative career”.

This situation is not helped by the fact that most planning academics feel that they are poorly represented at the national level (for example through their trade union, CHOPS or the RTPI), with only 7.9% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that “planning academics have a coherent and effective leadership at the national level”. It may therefore be useful for the RTPI to consider how it engages directly with the planning academy (and not just the planning schools) and whether there are any mechanisms it could put into place to further encourage leadership from them as a collective body.

While many of these issues are symptomatic of the changing context across the higher education sector, the role of planning academics (and others in professionally–orientated disciplines) is different as they often have to balance activities in relation to their universities, their discipline and the rest of the professional community. While it appears that a compatible skills set may have once helped deliver for all three, some academics are increasingly seeing a divergence in interests, adding to pressures of academic life and stoking discontentment. However, the RTPI and the profession have little influence over many of these issues and should consider the ways in which it can exert any
influence it does have, with the accreditation responsibility given to Partnership Boards being a key area in which this could be done, particularly through how it defines an "effective planning school".

**Figure 28: Issues in academic job satisfaction**

please consider the following statements in relation to aspects of job satisfaction/dissatisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree or Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am seriously considering an alternative career outside of university education into public or private sector planning practice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A key attraction of my job is that I have freedom to pursue my own planning consultancy work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I struggle with trying to find an appropriate work/life balance due to the expectations over my job.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am happy with the financial reward I receive for my work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have good career prospects and there are numerous opportunities for internal promotion.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An academic career is flexible and allows me to pursue my own professional interests.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.7. The planning academy: identity, outlook and challenges

In addition to demographic and professional data, the survey and focus groups explored planning academics' broader views on the profession, their role and identity, with the view of providing a richer understanding of the state of the academy and the threats and opportunities this may have for the relationship with the profession and future state of planning education. This was explored through a number of focused questions in the survey of planning academics, but also assessed on a qualitative basis in the focus groups. The insights from the focus groups have been used throughout this report to highlight specific issues, but in an attempt to provide a flavour of the entirety of the focus group discussions, the transcripts have been distilled into a word cloud\(^\text{14}\) as shown in Figure 29. This

\[^{14}\text{This illustration has been generated by Wordle software, using the entire text of the transcript of the four focus groups held with planning academics. This produces a word cloud with the word size relative to the number of times that it appears in the text. The application omits frequently-used, but unimportant word, such as “the”, “and”, or “but” and the illustration has then been edited to remove other words that are not directly relevant such as the, therefore etc. A conscious decision was to also remove the words such as “thing”, “whatever”, “still”, “also”, “think”, “even”, “maybe”}\]
highlights the main preoccupations of the academics involved – first the dominance of “people”, followed by a preoccupation with research (as noted above), followed by professionally related words – “RTPI”, “Practitioners” etc., which appear to be on a par with learning-focused terms, such as “teaching”, “education” and “students”. The diagram also hints at the undercurrents of contemporary academic life with words such as “interesting”, “pressures”, “difficult” and “work” having a presence. A number of the concerns that were highlighted in the discussion above also appear – “PhD”, “accreditation” and “society”.

These conjure up the broad patterns of how planning academics make sense of their identity and a number of insightful comments were made on this in the focus groups, including this in relation to the poor public image of both:

“Is it even more embarrassing to be an academic than a planner?”

Planning academics were also asked to quantitatively indicate issues of identity, by asking them to rate how they see themselves in relation to their work given the options shown in Figure 30. This shows how the most popular are higher education teacher (69.9% strongly agree or agree) and professional planner (56.8% strongly agree or agree). Academics see themselves least as university administrators (with 25.4% strongly agree or agree). This indicates a strong disciplinary and professional identity within the academy, despite some fears that the increased recruitment of non-planning specialists may be undermining this.
Figure 29: Word cloud of content of academic focus group transcripts
There are some other interesting differences across the types of institutions with more academics in post-1992 universities seeing themselves as professional planners (54.1%, agreeing or strongly agreeing) compared to in pre-1992 universities (40.5%), with the latter more likely to see themselves as more general scholarly researchers or experts from other fields. Those in post-1992 universities were also more likely to see themselves as higher education teachers than those in pre-1992 institutions, and the latter appeared to object more to being labelled administrators. Notably 35.4% of academics see themselves as an expert of other disciplines, such as geography, law, sociology etc - this is higher in pre-1992 universities (39%) than post-1992 universities (33%), underlying the recruitment strategies discussed in section 5.3, and indicating a possible trend away from the planning discipline as research performance is increasingly stressed.

In terms of their role as educators, section 7.3 includes some comparative insights from both practitioners and academics, but given the increasing emphasis on research in the contemporary role of academics, they were also asked about what they saw as the ultimate purpose of this, as shown in Figure 31. While this shows broad agreement across all three statements, it is the first, indicating a subject-specific critical engagement that attracts the highest level of agreement and which is an issue that is often less appreciated by some practitioners. There is also clearly strong support also for policy-orientated research. These issues were also reflected in the focus group discussions, where this function of academics was strongly emphasised:

“Well, we should be at liberty to criticise the planning system ... to have a critical view and reflect on it publicly, in order to improve society.”
“It is important that we critique and advise and recommend and justify and challenge and that makes us potentially unpopular and vulnerable to politicians.”

The value of such activity appears to be less appreciated by those in practice. However, it should be noted that the academics are not just interested in negative critique, but keen to make links to improving policy and reflect on this for teaching purposes, 73% agreeing that there are educational benefits of having strong links with practice.

Figure 31: Academics’ views of the purpose of planning research

6.8. Reflections on the findings of the profile of planning academics.

The profile of the planning academy revealed in this section suggests that while this is a very diverse group, it is broadly representative (in terms of gender and ethnicity) of the population as a whole and the body of students that are in planning schools. Indeed, planning academics appear to be more diverse than the higher education sector as a whole. It is also notable that different planning schools (for example post and pre-1992 institutions) tend to be composed of staff with different profiles, thus reaffirming the notion that each planning school will have a distinct characteristic that will be reflected in the diversity of teaching and research areas.

It is also clear that the planning academy has changed substantially in recent years in terms of entry qualifications, experience and demography, becoming more international and with a greater presence of women. While this is likely to have led to a more vibrant and representative staff within planning schools, there are still issues in terms of equality at higher grades and casualisation of
research posts that may act as a deterrent to some entering the academy. While these issues need to be acknowledged, it would appear that the RTPI has little control or influence over such matters, although could comment on such issues through Partnership Boards.

Despite anecdotal evidence that suggests that the planning academy is becoming less professionally engaged, the three key indicators of RTPI membership, professional experience and professional planning qualifications amongst academics appear to suggest a continuing strong presence of a professional ethic. Thus, 54% of academics appear to be members of the RTPI, 58% have a professional planning qualification and 71% have some form of practice experience. It is assumed here that from an RTPI point of view this would be seen as being a positive indicator of its links with the academy. However, this does hide subtle trends that see different age groups and staff in different planning schools having very different professional profiles, suggesting the RTPI should continue to monitor this as the composition of the academy changes over time.

Indeed, while the findings have confirmed that there is a large cohort of staff that are fast approaching retirement, there does not appear to be any prospect of a resulting staffing crisis in planning schools, with a large number of staff at younger age groups, particularly under thirty, reflecting the expansion of the sector over the last ten years. There are, however, subtle differences in outlooks and degree of professional engagement at different age cohorts. This suggests that while the professional indicators of RTPI membership, practice experience and professional qualifications decrease amongst the 40-49 age group (i.e. the leaders of the academy in the next ten years), the young cadre of staff have a high proportion of professional qualifications and practice experience (although this tends to have been rather short-term). However, this group performs rather poorly in terms of RTPI membership, a critical factor for the institute to maintain greater links with the academy. This is partly explained by the fact that many universities do not include RTPI membership as recruitment criteria, but also because of a perception amongst academia that their career profile does not meet that expected for chartered membership. Clearly if this is not addressed, the levels of academic membership of the RTPI will continue to decline, so it is suggested the RTPI review how the qualifying criteria relate to academic careers and whether it is possible to establish an academic route, as is the case with other professional bodies such as the RICS.

This section has also explored the professional identities held by the planning academy and again, there remains a relatively strong sense of commitment to planning, with 54.1% regarding themselves as professional planners, more than those that see themselves as higher education teachers or administrators. There are however, a significant number of staff that see themselves as experts in other disciplines.

In terms of activity, 67% of academics are engaged in both research and teaching, and recognise the professional value of relating research to teaching. This supports the idea that to maintain the standing of the planning profession, its main education programmes should remain within universities. Yet if it is to further aspire to the idea of planning being a “learned profession” (Grant, 1999), far more needs to be done to exploit the increasing quality and quantity of research activity for the needs of planning practice. Indeed, planning academics are engaged in a very wide area of research specialisms, most of which have direct relevance to practice. Most academics acknowledge the need to relate this research directly to policy outcomes, yet overall they see the key research role as providing a critical and independent voice on planning issues. This role is not always appreciated by planning practitioners and there is certainly a need to increase mutual understanding between each of these groups, particularly in relation to the need and purpose of planning research.

In terms of the job satisfaction, most academics are content with their conditions of work and the remuneration they receive. There are however significant concerns over increasing pressures on academics in all areas – having to teach more students at a time when they appear to be less
engaged, mounting expectations of research performance and increasing levels of administration. While a common misapprehension survives of academic life being a rather languid condition, nearly 60% of academics express concerns over maintaining an appropriate work-life balance. Such pressures are not conducive to encouraging academics to be more outward looking and the response practitioners sometimes receive for requests for joint working from practitioners sometimes surprises them. One issue in fostering close academic-practitioner links is therefore a better understanding of the roles and pressures experienced in different elements of the profession.

A specific issue is related to the way planning academics feel they are represented at the national level, with only 8% believing that this was undertaken in a coherent manner. This suggests that the RTPI should review how it can relate to planning academics and whether this should be done on a separate basis from engaging with planning schools.
The key observations for the RTPI arising from this section are:

- The planning academy is composed of a diverse and demographically representative staff, with a wide variety of interests, outlooks and backgrounds. This suggests that any strategy aimed at promoting further engagement with the academy will have to reflect this diversity.
- The variety of roles undertaken by academics within universities and through their engagement with the wider society is often under-appreciated and misunderstood by the wider professional community. There is a sense that in recent years, academic roles have become far more pressurised, with the majority of academics now struggling to maintain an appropriate work-life balance. While the RTPI has little influence over this, it is an important factor in understanding the capacity of the academy to further engage with the RTPI and the wider practice community.
- In recent years the academy has increased both the quality and quantity of its research output, and increased the wide variety of specialists that are hosted by UK planning schools. Most of these are engaged in research areas of direct relevance to planning practice, yet this has not been fully exploited for the benefit of the profession – the inclusion of “impact” as a factor in the proposed REF could be used as an important stimulus to forging new academic-practice relationships.
- While most academics remain committed to increasing standards of planning education, universities themselves tend to prioritise research performance. In their role as researchers, most academics recognise the importance of supporting policy development, but the majority view the overall purpose of planning research as being to provide an independent and critical commentary of planning in its widest sense. This outlook does not complement well the research needs of practice and tends not to be appreciated by the profession as adding a valuable contribution to the future development of the discipline. There is clearly a need for further mutual understanding of the research needs of practice on the one hand and the appreciation of the intellectual contribution of academics on the other.
- The vast majority of planning academics believe they lack coherent leadership, a fact that may have contributed to some of the issues listed above. The RTPI should therefore be encouraged to consider what it can do to provide opportunities for such leadership to emerge from the planning academy.
- Most academics do identify closely with the planning profession, a fact that is reflected in the proportion that have RTPI membership, planning qualifications and experience of planning practice. While these vary across institutions and according to demographic characteristics, it is likely that over time the RTPI will have to adopt different strategies to engage with different generations of planning academics. One potential threat emerging from these findings is a declining number of the younger cohort of academics that are becoming members of the RTPI and many are put off by current membership criteria. The RTPI may therefore wish to consider adopting a specific academic route to membership.
7. The practitioner-academy relationship

7.1. A profile of participating practitioners

Given that one of the key aims of the report is to evaluate the relationship between the academy and the wider professional community, this section reports the results of the survey undertaken of planning practitioners and, where appropriate, these are compared to responses of academics to the same questions. As noted in section 4, practitioners were invited to take part in this online survey by the RTPI via its e-mail list to 9,347 members. A total of 1525 responses were received: 16% of the identified population. Assuming sampling conditions of a 20% estimate proportion, simple random sample and a confidence level of 95%, the error rate would be +/- 2.18%. Most of the questions duplicated those asked to academics, thus providing an insight to the contrasting views of these two groups and these are reviewed below. In order to contextualise the perspectives offered by the practitioner respondents, the respondents are compared for their representativeness to the overall RTPI membership in Table 5 in Appendix 3 and a number of other key attributes, which may condition responses to other questions, are discussed below.

To begin, the open responses provided by the practitioners were assessed in a similar way to the transcripts of the academic focus groups, as shown in Figure 32. This consisted of taking the 794 comments made in the last open section of the survey and similarly analysing them using Wordle software. The results provide an interesting contrast to that produced for the academics with “practice” and “practitioners” being very dominant (rather than “people” in the case of academics). Other topics of key relevance (e.g. “students”, “graduates”, “academia”) as well as some words shared with the academic analysis of academic discourse. However it is in the second tier words that is of most interest as discussed at the end of section, where we see words reflective of the reality of planning practice – “government”, “public”, “skills”, “training”, “experience”, “policy” etc that were not as prominent in the academic’s word cloud and which dominate the practitioners world and have less immediate resonance amongst those who work in universities. Therein perhaps lies the source of tension in reconciling these two parts of the profession.

It is also important to explore other issues that can be seen to contextualise how practitioners relate to the academy – and this can be understood in terms of their engagement they had with universities as students (i.e. in terms of the qualifications gained) and ongoing contact through their activity as practitioners.

In terms of their links with universities, only 23.2% of the RTPI membership state that they have any links with universities and of these, the type of links are shown in Figure 33. The most common is attendance at occasional seminars, but with a high proportion also more actively engaged as guest lecturers. The large “other” responses included links such as hosting student placements, involvement in research or student projects, commissioning research, as part-time students or as an APC mentor or assessor. This does highlight the extent of academic-practitioner links, involving nearly a quarter of the membership and identifying potential mechanisms for fostering closer links between these parts of the profession in the future.

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15 To generate the word cloud, the entire text of the open comments given by practitioners in their online survey. This produces a word cloud with the word size relative to the number of times that it appears in the text. The application omits frequently-used, but unimportant word, such as “the”, “and”, or “but” and the illustration has then been edited to remove other words that are not directly relevant such as the, therefore etc. A conscious decision was to also remove the words such as “planning” and “academics” as they dominated the diagram and words such as “one”, “may”, “seem”, “rather “were commonly narrative terms, largely incidental to the real meaning of what was being said.
Figure 32: Word cloud of Practitioners’ open comments from online survey
In terms of the practitioners' experience as students, this can be gleaned from the qualifications held by the membership, as indicated in Figure 34, showing that the majority of members (55.5%) hold a Masters qualification and only 0.7% a doctorate. It is suggested that there may be a range of benefits to the profession by encouraging a greater take up of doctoral training including a higher level of expertise and specialism, more sophisticated use and evaluation of evidence and an enhanced ability to transfer between academic and practice. The RTPI may therefore consider whether more can be done to encourage those with PhDs in planning to consider a career in practice and more significantly whether more practitioners could be encouraged to undertake doctoral research on a full or part time basis. This may require the establishment of taught-doctorate (i.e. a D. Plan), scholarships for fees and/or subsistence and consideration whether such paths could be a valid route to professional accreditation.
The level of qualification may also be considered a factor in conditioning how practitioners access and use and value academic research, as shown in Figure 35. This particular issue has been further explored by a discrete research project for the RTPI undertaken by Durning et al. (2007), which investigated the types of learning and knowledge used in practice. That report effectively identified the varied ways in which different forms of information were accessed and underlines the myriad sources of knowledge external to the formal research settings of universities. Indeed, when one looks at Figure 35, one can see how academic sources, particularly journals, rate in relation to other forms of information. Some of the reasons for this were articulated at the focus groups with academics:

“Are we producing knowledge for the planning body or are we producing knowledge for society? I think that distinction needs to be made. We used to do the former a lot, that’s why planning schools really were set up ... but now it’s much more about the contribution to society.”

“I think the kind of research the profession would like to see will always be in contrast to the research needed for the RAE/REF, so we will always be torn between which one we choose... so do we choose to support the profession or do we choose the research that our employers want?”

However, it also seems to be understood that practitioners do face significant work pressures and do need the information they require in a very rapidly accessible form, for which the more reflective academic articles are rather inappropriate. The graph clearly highlights the dominance of government policy as a source of information, followed by the weekly magazine Planning and then training or discussion events such as conferences, or those run by employers and the RTPI. Indeed, in responses to other questions (see below) it is also noted that nearly 40% of practitioners regarded academic work being disseminated in a form that is “virtually unusable” in their work.

These issues were raised often in the focus groups with academics, who expressed some frustration in the availability of suitable outlets for their work that would be accessible to practitioners and the wider policy community, as noted in these quotes:

“But in terms of access to, say, the professional body, I think we are probably at the lowest ebb. We no longer have a professional academic weighted journal where we debate ideas, or the membership debates ideas.”

“If I wanted to communicate with members of the planning profession – some of my ideas- what would I choose? I couldn’t choose anything, really, within the RTPI that would have that total dissemination across the membership. And we are one of the few professional institutes that don’t have that opportunity…”

“Planning magazine never has anything really, or very rarely... occasionally there is something that is more research-led or more conceptual and I think they could do a bit more, because some of the stuff in there is awful. Probably not many academics read it, do they?”

This does indicate a level of frustration amongst the planning academy, most of whom highly value the links with practice, yet feel unable to fully disseminate the research to this wider audience. This does raise the question of how best this can be done and while academics appear to widely acknowledge the attempts by the RTPI to instigate academic-practitioner dialogue through the launch of the Planning Education and Research Network and the Journal of Planning Theory and Research, the latter seems to be regarded as essentially functioning as academic journal with consequent issues of cost and accessibility in terms of language and length or articles. During the focus groups the academics highlighted how they thought Town and Country Planning magazine
had been able to strike the right balance between accessibility and quality research writing and many held a nostalgic view of *The Planner* in the way it disseminated “big ideas” to the wider professional community. The academics made a variety of suggestions regarding the need for opportunities to disseminate their work, such as a new mid-range publication, or a requirement placed on planning schools to produce briefing notes to the Partnership Board as a way of channelling research output to the RTPI membership. The prospect of having “Impact” as a strong element of the REF could further encourage academic interest in such initiatives. These are however very academic-sided views of how university research could be disseminated and further investigation is needed on how useful such suggestions would be for the wider RTPI membership.

**Figure 35: Practitioners’ source of advice and information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Advice and Information</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Neither Important nor Unimportant</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Least Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online resources such as Knowledge Builder to help with CPD</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RTPI Website</td>
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<td>Planners in the Workplace</td>
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<td>Employer’s in-house training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other conferences/seminars</td>
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<tr>
<td>RTPI Events</td>
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<td>RTPI Networks and Associations</td>
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<tr>
<td>RTPI Regional Newsletters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other public agencies advice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning Magazine</td>
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<td>Academic Journals</td>
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<td>Government Policy</td>
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7.2. Perspectives on the practitioner-academic relationship

Having established some of the characteristics of practitioners that may impact on how they view the planning academy, this section examines directly how the perception of these two groups relate to each other and the implications this has for further developing the links between them.

The first insight is related to how both academics and practitioners view the work of those working in practice, as shown in Figure 36. This indicates they do have similar views, with a few percent of academics viewing the work of practitioners in a less positive light than the practitioners themselves. This again underlines the strong professional identity within the planning academy, although there is a core of 20% who believe academia has few insights to be gained from practice – more surprising perhaps is the 15% of practitioners who believe practice is usually undertaken in an unreflective way.

Figure 36: Perception of practitioner work

The graph above is in contrast to the results shown in Figure 37, where both practitioners and academics were asked about the value of the work undertaken by the academy. This shows less consensus – two of these questions show there is a 15-25% difference in opinion, with practitioners valuing the work of academics less than the academics themselves. However in the third question, practitioners suggest that the contribution of academics is valued highly by the practitioner community and rate this higher than that of the academics themselves – suggesting perhaps that either the practitioners think that other practitioners value the work of academics, or that academics underestimate how valued their work is. In either case, this only amounts to 15-20% of the sampled populations agreeing with such a statement. This suggests that while the work of academics has the potential to make a valid contribution to practice, at the moment this value is not being effectively appreciated amongst the practitioner community.

There is clearly some awareness amongst the academy of the way they are perceived by practitioners, as highlighted at the focus groups:
“I think there is a lot of misunderstanding or myths about what happens behind university doors, which doesn’t help that relationship”

“There is still a perception I think, … from practicing planners, that there probably is something that academics can do for them, but they are not quite sure what....”

Figure 37: Perception of the value of the academy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic/Practitioner views on the value of the academy</th>
<th>% agreeing or strongly agreeing with statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research undertaken in planning schools can have a positive influence on planning practice and policy.</td>
<td>![Bar Chart]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics engage in interesting work from which practitioners can learn.</td>
<td>![Bar Chart]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The contribution of planning academics is highly valued by the broader professional community.</td>
<td>![Bar Chart]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 38 shows how practitioners and academics rate the importance of the different possible roles that the academy could perform. Although this does indicate a broad consensus between academics and practitioners across each of the possible functions, practitioners appear to value the education function above anything else and have less appreciation for the research-based roles. For academics, they appear to value the role of a critical and independent voice above everything else, followed by the education function.

Further insights into how practitioners perceive academia are gleaned from the responses to the question asking whether they had ever considered an academic career in planning education (28.9% saying yes) and planning research (24.6% saying yes) – indicating that there is a significant proportion for whom academia could appear as a viable professional career, and interestingly the education element appears more attractive than the research. Indeed, 55.8% believe that a career in planning education is an attractive option for a graduate. However, 45.1% of practitioners believe that there are barriers for them in taking up a career in academia – the main reasons given for this are the fact that they believe it would involve a drop in their salary, a lack of skills or experience, inappropriate qualifications or the proximity of planning schools to where they live. Some suggested that once they had moved into academia they would then be unable to move back into practice, due to “deskilling”.

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Although many practitioners do reflect on the fact that there are many in academia with a background in practice and therefore understand the potential of developing a career in this direction, the reasons given for why there may be barriers are instructive about how many practitioners view the world of academia:

“I think that planning academics are stereotypically abstract thinkers as opposed to having real work experience as practitioners”

“It [academia] seems very much a closed shop”

“Ageism and the short-term contracts are a disincentive to working in academia”

“Salary levels are generally lower than local government”

“Lack of recognition of the importance of planning practice. Planning schools need to more fully open up teaching of planning practice”.

“Once you’ve left academia (even for a short time), it is almost impossible to be successful in appointment”

“Suspicion between practice and academia”

“There is a sense that academia is so far removed from the real world that real world experience would be of little relevance”

“Insular community - difficult to move into from practice”
“Becoming "institutionalised" and stuck within an ivory tower. Old boys networks. Fear a lack of connection with reality by other academics - have they ever worked in both private and local government?”

“In my experience academia usually favours its own”.

“Academics think differently from professionals.”

The last comment is particularly telling, setting the academy clearly aside from the planning profession. This issue was also discussed in the focus groups with academics also identifying barriers for mobility between the academy and practice, but tending to identify these as structural (rather than attitudinal) issues linked to recruitment practice of universities. Indeed, most academics saw this lack of mobility as a negative development:

“That's your old Abercrombie thing, where the academic went out and did a plan for somewhere or other. It is still happening in other parts of the world but it doesn’t happen here.”

“I just think it is so important to keep some idea of porosity between the academic and the practice background. In 1991, that seemed possible. It was possible, what I never realised, as I didn’t at the time, it was just a blip, it was a point where, for various economic and administrative reasons, universities needed practitioners which they could use for their own purposes ... and we came in. But they don’t need them anymore ... and it’s a pity.”

This hints at the increasing barriers to the transfer of staff between practice and academia, often to the detriment of the overall profession. While the recruitment criteria of universities is a key issue here, the perception of academia is also significant and the RTPI should consider how it can promote greater academic contributions to the overall profession, the benefits of an academic career and the opportunities of transferring from one to another. There are a number of potential initiatives that could contribute to this, including opportunities of short term placements across the practice/academia boundary, such as a focused scheme akin to the ESRC’s Placement Fellowships, more opportunities for exchanging ideas or experiences at RTPI events or conferences and a higher profile of academics within the profession – for example as spokespersons for the RTPI on some issues or even an higher number profiled in Planning magazine.

Both practitioners and academics were also asked how they viewed the relationship between the academy and other parts of the profession, as shown in Figure 39. This again shows a difference in opinion between academics and practitioners, with the academics being far more optimistic. In terms of the practitioners, this may be based on a lack of understanding of how the academy is engaged with the profession, but nevertheless again highlights the need for a closer and more coherent relationship between these two arms of the profession. The results shown in this figure can be further understood in terms of the number who disagreed or strongly disagreed with these statements – for the health of the relationship with the RTPI the percentages were relatively low (7.8% for academics and 6.3% for practitioners,) but for the wider community this was of much greater significance, (36% for practitioners and 31% of academics), underlining the scale of recognition that the academy is not contributing to the profession as much as it could.
The focus groups also discussed the academy’s relationship with the RTPI and this almost always came down to the value of having accreditation for planning programmes, with other consequences and benefits being marginalised. Therefore, for some academics, they view the RTPI purely as a regulating body, with little sense of partnership:

“If we don’t have accreditation then we can shut doors and sign our P45s. So obviously that’s pretty important”.

“We obviously need accreditation because otherwise people wouldn’t necessarily come and do a planning degree and we may as well shut down. You might still survive doing some other kind of environmental urban studies type thing... I think without the accreditation we’d be in trouble, in terms of the numbers of students”

“I don’t sense a lot of love out there for the RTPI, to be honest”

This does highlight some critical issues. First it suggests that planning schools and planning academics need to be further convinced of the wider benefits of links with the RTPI and second it underlines the very real power that the RTPI has in its ability to accredit courses, with the potential that this could be further used to secure additional benefits for planning education and research from the academy.

Finally in this section, practitioners and academics were asked if they thought the relationship between academics and practitioners was becoming more distant, and as shown in Figure 40, opinion is generally divided within the academy (with around 30% both agreeing and disagreeing), but the majority of practitioners believe that this is becoming weakened.
This section has highlighted some problematic issues in the relationship between the academy, the RTPI and the wider professional community which may need to be addressed, both by the RTPI and planning schools themselves. Again these were discussed at length in the focus groups, with the following two quotes effectively summing up the general attitude of many in the academy:

“It’s a two handed beast: on the one hand, there’s a discourse of anti intellectualism in this country and .... on the other hand, we are not very good at relating what we can do for them, in taking time to put our research into formats that are readily accessible. There should be a closer relationship [between the academy and practice] and I think it’s desirable that there is, but I think there’s all kinds of barriers against it”

“I think there is a future for the academy and I think there’s a future for the RTPI in the academy. To some extent maybe there’s been, I wouldn’t say ‘gulf’, but maybe there has been a problematic relationship for a long, long time. I think it’s partly down to both elements changing radically in a short space of time... that flux has caused a great deal of uncertainty on both parts about what each other’s role is ... and what they expect the other body’s role to be....”

7.3. Practitioner-academic perspectives on planning education

In addition to exploring the more general relationships between the academy and the wider profession, the surveys also explored perceptions of what is seen as one of the main roles of the academy, the delivery of planning education. The key aspects of this are shown in Figure 41. This indicates a relatively small proportion of both groups thinking that the quality of graduates has increased (which of course is set against debates of declining standards etc – see section 6.5). There is also broad consensus on the effectiveness of planning programmes in promoting critical thinking about space and places (i.e. the broad academic content of the programmes), yet it is on

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16 A more detailed discussion of academic views on education is given in section 6.5.
how the planning curriculum is related to the skills for practice that there is most disagreement. Here far more planning academics believe that planning programmes are not effective, compared to practitioners. This is interpreted, not so much as academics being critical of planning programmes, but that they believe it is not strictly the role of planning schools to train planners for the world of work, but provide them with a wider capabilities. This appears to be a key tension between practitioners and academics, an issue commonly raised in the focus groups:

“[students] only become planning practitioners in the workplace after several years of training. But we give them ideas and knowledge and opinions and how to refute opinions in order for them develop as intellectuals. This makes planning a profession. You’ve got to have debate, you’ve got to have an art and science about what you are doing and that marks out it from being different to administration.”

On the whole academics are focused on developing student capacity across a range of capabilities, guided by the RTPI’s defined learning outcomes for accredited courses, while increasingly those in practice would like more emphasis on the very specific skills required in the workplace. This has long been a tension between the two parts of the profession and may continue to be so – for example in another question to practitioners, 46% of agreed that “practitioners have too much to do to ensure graduates are up to speed in the workplace”. This does point to the fact that while the academy continues to debate the relative merits of planning education, such debates are not well exposed to the wider RTPI membership. This is partly related to the lack of outlets for such debates, as noted in section 6, with, for example, Planning magazine rarely carrying content on planning education and university activities, let alone engaging in more pedagogical debate.

Figure 41: Perception of planning education
7.4. Reflections on the findings on the practitioner-academic relationship

This last section on the relationships between the academy and practitioners has provided further evidence that it would be beneficial if the RTPI took some steps to bring the academic and practitioner wings of the profession closer. This would not only help forge more fruitful partnerships that could lead to a more coherent view on planning education, but also facilitate a more robust evidence base for practice through more effective transfer of findings from the substantial planning research activity undertaken by universities. Indeed, while there is a degree of mutual empathy and understanding of each others’ roles, the findings shown here do suggest that although academics have a keen interest and respect for the world of practice, there is less understanding of the world of academia by those working in planning practice. This situation has been further frustrated by declining opportunities for individuals to move in either direction across the academia-practice boundary, which points to the need to rethink the opportunities for increasing mutual understanding – a number of initiatives such as placements, exchanges and professional doctorates have been mentioned as potential ways in beginning to redress this.

There a number of ways that this issue can be approached. Perhaps the most important is the need for greater interaction and understanding between academics and practitioners. The survey noted that only 23% of practitioners consider themselves to have any links to universities. Where this does happen, it is primarily through attendance at seminars of conferences, rather than more interactive encounters. This seems to have led to a poor understanding of what the academy can offer the world of practice and there is some evidence that many practitioners are confused about this and certainly have a different view than that offered by academics. Thus, practitioners appear to understand the role of the academy as educators of future planners (although they do express some concerns about this, see below) and seem to appreciate that there may be some generic value in research, but do not fully understand how they could engage with this. Indeed, the findings show that of all the sources of information and guidance, academic journals are the least important to practitioners. This clearly highlights issues in the motivations for academics to disseminate their research and the outlets available for doing so.

Although less clear, there also appears to be continuing evidence that academics and practitioners have very different views on the role and purpose of planning education. While there are established mechanisms for debating such issues (such as Partnership Boards and the RTPI’s Education and Lifelong Learning Committee), the lack of opportunity for the wider RTPI membership to be exposed or engage in these debates does appear to be a contributing factor.

As a result of these issues, there is evidence of an increasing distance between academia and practitioners, with the latter group particularly seeing this as being in further decline in recent years. A number of suggestions for how this could begin to be addressed are listed below, but it is also clear that the accreditation process remains a vital tool for the RTPI to lever in initiatives to engage with planning schools, with how it defines an “effective planning school” being a critical element in this. However, while planning schools greatly value the benefits of accreditation, there is evidence that the broader links and opportunities to work with the RTPI are not being fully exploited and as a result of changes in higher education, are becoming increasingly marginalised.
The key observations for the RTPI arising from this section are:

- While there is a wide range of ways in which practitioners can engage with the activities of the academy, only a small percentage of the RTPI membership do so, leading to a misconception of some areas of academic life. A strategy for overcoming this is a wider exposure of the current role undertaken by academics, such as through Planning magazine and greater opportunities for integration between the academy and practice.

- There may be opportunities to focus existing programmes of placement fellowships and exchanges (e.g. those run by the Research Councils) to encourage interaction.

- It is also noted that practice and academia tend to have very discrete conference events and there may be value in reviewing how the Planning Research Conference and the Planning Convention could be better integrated or run a separate event for the promotion of practice-academia interaction.

- It would also be useful to further engage the membership on pedagogical debate in planning education and promotion of more education related material in Planning magazine would be welcomed.

- There are now reduced opportunities for individuals to move careers from practice to academia and vice versa, further inhibiting cross learning and mutual understanding. While this issue is strongly constrained by the recruiting policies of practice and universities, the RTPI could explore how practitioners could be further encouraged to engage in doctoral level studies, through for example accredited doctorates and/or taught doctorates. This would not only increase the opportunities for transfer from practice to the academy, but also help develop a better understanding of research and evidence within practice.

- A key factor of change in planning schools over the last twenty years has been a real improvement in the quality and quantity of research activity as measured by the RAE/REF, much of which is in areas of direct interest in planning practice. However, there appear to be a range of barriers preventing the further exploitation of this, including the motivating factors for academics to disseminate to practice and the capability of practitioners to engage with more reflective or theoretical knowledge. While the welcome establishment of PERN is recognised, the emergence of the concept of “impact” being promoted through the REF could provide a useful stimulus to further examine this issue. Potential areas of activity could include more formal dissemination of research findings through Partnership Boards and publishing outlets for accessible research articles.

- Although there is evidence of an increasing gap between practice and the academy, planning schools still very much value links with the RTPI. While this could provide the basis for a wide range of partnerships, the most valued aspect of this relationship remains the value of hosting an accredited course, with declining appreciation of the broader aspects and benefits of partnership with the RTPI. The RTPI could therefore review how other elements of partnership could be enhanced and review how it could more effectively use its accreditation responsibilities to enhance the academics contribution to the wider profession, particularly through how it defines an “effective planning school”.

8. Conclusions

The Future of the Planning Academy project has reviewed a wide range of evidence on the changing context in which the UK’s planning schools and individual academics working in the planning field contribute to the wider planning profession. This has included a major evaluation of secondary data and literature review reported in the previous Scoping Report (Ellis et al 2008) and an extensive primary data gathering exercise, which has been reported here. As a result, we now have a more detailed picture of the state of the planning academy than we have had before. This has highlighted the substantial changes that have occurred in both higher education and planning practice over the last twenty years and which point to a need to take stock of the relationship between the planning academy, the RTPI and the practitioner community to ensure an ongoing flow of the mutual benefits that strengthen the overall health of the planning profession. It is recognised that some areas of this debate speak to historically problematic issues (i.e. the tensions between theory and practice, academia and the profession), but this project has provided robust empirical evidence that points to a need for action in a number of key areas, highlighted below. These call on the RTPI, the planning academy and individual members of the profession to recognise how they relate to the wider professional ideas of planning and how it can further develop its standards of education, effectiveness of practice and its overall intellectual basis. In particular, it is essential to understand the planning academy as fulfilling functions that are vital to its professional standing, yet which are poorly appreciated by many in practice. Above all else, this project points to the need to view the planning academy as an intrinsic part of the planning profession, rather than an eccentric fringe group or contract supplier of education services. Failure to take appropriate action will further accentuate what appears to be a growing distance between the academic and practitioner arms of the profession.

Throughout the report, an attempt has been made to draw together some of the headline findings arising from each section. In essence, the project has highlighted a number of important points:

- In terms of the numbers of planning schools, staff and students, the planning academy is in a relatively healthy position; indeed it is more extensive and more diverse than it has ever been. This should provide the RTPI with a high level of confidence that there continues to be a robust basis for university-based planning education that will continue to provide a supply of planning graduates at its required accreditation standards. Nevertheless, there is a number of strategic developments in higher education that provide threats and opportunities for planning schools and planning education as a whole. In order to fully anticipate the long term context for planning education, it is suggested that the RTPI, along with education partners, develop a series of long term scenarios for UK planning schools, alongside projections for planning skills, to guide its future relationships and policy in relation to the planning academy.

- Although at the time of survey (October 2009), Heads of Planning Schools were positive about the future, since these were undertaken the implications of cuts in public spending have begun to emerge and it can be expected that this may result in closure of some planning schools and a reduction in the overall number of planning programmes. The RTPI may want to reflect on the consequences of this and consider how it could support the planning academy if individual planning schools are threatened with retrenchment.

- The survey has effectively highlighted that both planning schools and planning academics are highly differentiated in terms of their interests, abilities to contribute to the planning community and the varied pressures that they face. The RTPI is encouraged to reflect on how the various “types” of planning school relate to its aspirations for planning education and research and what it can do to further encourage the activities and outlooks that align with its goals. Indeed, it is clear that very few planning schools or planning academics live up to the standard
stereotypes of each and a more realistic perception of what these terms entail in contemporary life would be valuable.

- A strong feature of this project has been to show how the changing nature of academic life has affected the academy's relationship with the profession. Key factors here include increasing student numbers, emphasis on research performance, internationalisation and growing administrative burdens in the academy. Most of the changes in higher education have placed increasing tensions on the academy-profession relationship, including the changing composition of the academy, the capacity of the academy to work on professionally-related issues and the perception of the academy held by the wider profession.

- There is now an expectation in most planning schools that most staff perform at a high level in terms of teaching, administration and research, while extra-mural activities, covering many valuable aspects of the academy-professional relationship are given a low institutional priority. This has resulted in a pressurised atmosphere in many areas of the academy, with most academics having concerns over how they can achieve an appropriate work-life balance. A key challenge therefore is to review how fruitful professional-academic relationships can be better aligned with the institutional interests of the universities that employ planning academics.

- One major consequence of the changing nature of academic life is the emphasis on academics to engage in a variety of research activity. Indeed in many universities this tends to dominate the recruitment, promotion and institutional strategies of planning schools. Research outputs are primarily geared to the measures used in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and its proposed successor the Research Excellence Framework (REF), including research income and peer-reviewed publications, which have not tended to facilitate increased interaction with practice. However, this has led to a major increase in the quality and quantity of planning-related research being undertaken in the UK and means that the majority of planning students are being taught in planning schools where staff are highly research active and producing internationally recognised research. There has been some neglect in attempts to ensure that the profession is able to exploit this increasing expertise and evidence base. The establishment of the RTPI's Planning Education and Research Network is recognised as being a very positive initiative in this area, and the RTPI may wish to review how this can be further active in this area, using the changes in the way research is evaluated, particularly using the concept of ‘research impact’ as a key stimulus.

- Despite these substantial changes, most academics in UK planning schools have a strong professional identity and highly value their links with practice. Indeed, this is still a central attribute of their professional identity. The majority of academics retain membership of the RTPI, have a professional qualification and a high proportion have had some experience of planning practice. There are, however, a number of trends that may indicate that this could change in the future and the RTPI should keep under review how it can maintain a close connection with individuals employed in planning schools. A key issue here could be to review how academics gain full chartered membership of the institution, even if they are drawn from other disciplines and do not have formal planning qualifications.

- Members of the academy also have a clear idea of how they are able to contribute to the wider profession and are keen to do this within the constraints of contemporary academic life. Above all, academics see that their most valuable contribution can be through the independence they have to engage critically with planning theory and practice. They also recognise their responsibilities in terms of being educators of future members of the profession and a need to provide more direct and productive inputs to policy debates. There is strong feeling that this contribution is not well appreciated by the wider professional community.
Indeed the findings confirm that practitioners do not value, or fully understand, the nature of contributions that can be made by the academy nor appreciate the context for contemporary academic life. For those in practice, the academy’s prime role is one of education, however many practitioners have a rather narrow conception of what this should be and greater exposure to ongoing lively pedagogical debate would help foster the emergence of a better mutual understanding of planning education. While other roles of the academy are recognised by practice there is some confusion or misapprehension of how this can be engaged with in terms of specific professional roles.

There is a strong feeling within both practice and the academy that the relationship between them is becoming more distant and that there is a need to reconnect and increase integration between them. Most believe that this will be of mutual benefit and a number of initiatives that the RTPI may wish to consider in this respect are noted below.

Accreditation remains a very strong foundation for maintaining an ongoing relationship with planning schools – indeed without it, most planning schools would not survive. For many academics, the relationship with the profession has been reduced to maintaining accreditation status, with little appreciation of a broader basis for links with practitioners. The introduction of Partnership Boards has been welcomed by most academics and the responsibility they have for maintaining accreditation status is now the key (perhaps only) lever the RTPI has for engaging with planning schools. It is suggested that, while recognising the broader constraints acting on the academy, the RTPI reviews how it uses this duty to increase professional engagement of the academy, particularly in how it defines an “effective planning school”. An example of this may be that they more closely specify the proportion of staff that are members of the RTPI, coupled with a further facilitation of academic membership.

Many of the findings listed above point to a review in the way in which the Institute, planning schools, members of the RTPI and individual planning academics communicate with each other. There is a need for the RTPI to review whether it can effectively intervene in this area. In particular, the surveys indicated a high level of dissatisfaction within the academy about its leadership at the national level – a review of how the collective voice of the planning academy can be articulated would help address many of the issues identified above.
The findings of this report point to the need for the RTPI to consider action in five main areas:

1. **Development of long-term scenario and related policies for planning research and education.**

   This report has provided a detailed empirical picture of the current state of the planning academy and the various trends and drivers of change in the higher education sector. In order to ensure that this is effectively integrated into the way the RTPI relates to the academy, it is suggested that it works with planning schools and other education partners to develop a series of long term scenarios (i.e. 20 years+) for planning education, alongside the recent predictions of future land issues produced from the Foresight programme. The output of such an exercise will provide an opportunity to reflect collectively on the key actions needed to ensure the ongoing viability of planning research, education and supply of planning graduates.

2. **Increasing dialogue, interaction and mobility between the academy and practice**

   The declining opportunities and motivations for interaction between the academy and practice have tended to accentuate the structural trends that have led to an increasing distance between these two vital parts of the planning profession. It has also been noted that there have been declining opportunities for career mobility between practice and academy and vice versa, with detrimental impacts on each. While the RTPI can only have limited influence on aspects such as the recruitment policies of universities, it could consider further promoting academic-practitioner interaction through initiatives such as:

   - Placement opportunities for academics in practice and short-term research opportunities for practitioners in the academy. There are a number of existing schemes, such as those run by research councils, that could be used as a basis for this.
   - A review of how planning schools are linked to and interact with local branches of the RTPI, such as the re-establishment of practitioner panels.
   - An annual joint conference and/or other events to bring together academics and practitioners to debate issues of current planning practice, research and education.
   - The creation of a new publication or other form of outlet for academic-practitioner debate on policy issues.
   - Further encouragement of doctoral study by existing practitioners, for example through specific bursaries, the establishment of accredited doctorates and/or taught doctorates in planning.
   - An increased presence of academics and discussion of education and research issues within the RTPI and its publications, including profiles of academics and their work in Planning magazine, and use of academics as a spokespersons on various issues for the Institute.
   - Establishment of a specific academic route to chartered membership.
3. **The definition of an “effective planning school”**

The report has noted that the RTPI has declining opportunities to influence the form and activities of the planning academy, but does retain a powerful lever in terms of its accreditation responsibilities. It is suggested that while the RTPI should be cognisant of the overall context of higher education, there may be opportunities to use its powers of accreditation to further influence the way in which the academy engages with the wider profession, using the activities of its Partnership Boards and particularly how it defines an “effective planning school”, which could be explored in conjunction with (1) above. For example, this could be used to:

- Reflect the increasing diversity in planning schools and planning academics and the different ways these contribute to the profession;
- Increase dissemination of academic research to the wider membership through specific reporting to Partnership Boards;
- Specify levels of practitioner input to teaching programmes;
- Specify proportions of staff that are RTPI members.

4. **Increased knowledge transfer**

It has been noted that planning research has increased significantly in the last 20 years in terms of its quality, quantity and significance to the planning academy, yet this has not been fully exploited for the benefit of the wider profession, which remains unclear about how it can best access and use the resulting findings and expertise. While recognising the ongoing activities of PERN, the increasing focus on research impact could be used as a stimulus to consider what further actions it can take to increase the dissemination of academic research to the wider membership, which could include:

- The development of a specific mid-range publication for short accessible articles on planning research and pedagogy, or leaflets/briefings having the same function;
- Encouraging academic research on issues of greater relevance to practice, through the establishment of a research fund or working more closely with existing funders such as the research councils, Leverhulme Trust or the Joseph Rowntree Foundation;
- Increasing the research literacy of the RTPI membership through CPD events or doctoral programmes noted in (2) above.

5. **Communication and leadership**

The diversity of the planning academy described in this report has shown the problems of having a single approach to engaging with planning schools and planning academics and the RTPI should consider whether it can more effectively target its interaction with the higher education sector through more nuanced communication, particularly those academics that are not members or have not signed up to PERN. There also appear to be specific issues with leadership of the planning academy and how it is collectively represented at a national level. The RTPI is encouraged to review how it works with CHOPS and whether there are other mechanisms in which is can encourage the emergence of leaders and collective representatives from within the academy, such as a specific electoral college with the General Assembly and greater representation on its Committees.
9. References

Alderman, G (2008) ‘A grotesque bidding game is undermining university standards’ The Times Online, June 18 2008: http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/guest_contributors/article4158426.ece last accessed 20/3/10


Durning, B., Carpenter, J., Glasson, J., and Butina Watson, G. (2007) Professional Knowledge Development for Sustainable Communities, Royal Town Planning Institute/ Academy for Sustainable Communities


10. Appendices

10.1. Appendix 1: Focus Group Participants

Brendan Murtagh, Queen’s University
Stephen McKay, Queen’s University
Jenny Muir, Queen’s University
Karen Keaveney, Queen’s University
Malachy McEldowney, Queen’s University
Deborah Peel, University of Ulster
Heather Ritchie, University of Ulster

John McCarthy, Heriot-Watt University
Andy Inch, Heriot-Watt University
Gill Wall, University of Aberdeen
Marilyn Higgins, Heriot-Watt University
David Kirk, University of Dundee
Sarah McIntosh, Heriot-Watt University

Mark Tewdwr-Jones, University College London
Nick Gallent, University College London
Andrea Frank, University of Cardiff
Guy Clifford, University College London

Iain Deas University of Manchester
Mark Baker, University of Manchester
Alex Lord, University of Liverpool
Yasminah Beebeejaun, University of Manchester
Olivier Sykes, University of Liverpool
Michael, Hebbert, University of Manchester
## Appendix 2: RTPI Accredited Planning Schools in the UK, 2009-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Undergraduate Programmes</th>
<th>Postgraduate Programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglia Ruskin University</td>
<td>BSc (Hons) in Environmental Planning with Diploma in Environmental Planning</td>
<td>MSc in Town Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham City University</td>
<td>BSc (Hons) in Planning and Development</td>
<td>MA Spatial Planning Diploma in Spatial Planning MA in Urban Design MSc in Property Development MA in Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff University</td>
<td>BSc City and Regional Planning</td>
<td>MSc in Planning Practice and Research MSc in International Planning and Development MA in Urban Design MSc in Sustainability, Planning and Environmental Policy MSc in Transport and Planning MSc in Regeneration Studies MSc in Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heriot Watt University</td>
<td>BSc (Hons) in Urban &amp; Regional Planning</td>
<td>MSc in Urban and Regional Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Distance Learning Consortium</td>
<td>BSc (Hons) in Planning &amp; Property Development</td>
<td>MA in Town and Country Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingston University</td>
<td></td>
<td>MA in Planning &amp; Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leeds Metropolitan University</td>
<td>BA (Hons) in Urban and Environmental Planning with Diploma in Town Planning</td>
<td>MA in Town and Regional Planning MA in Local and Regional Regeneration MA Heritage Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool John Moores University</td>
<td></td>
<td>MSc in Environmental Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London South Bank University</td>
<td>BA (Hons) in Urban and Environmental Planning with Diploma in Town Planning</td>
<td>MA in Planning Policy and Practice MA in Urban Planning Design MSc in Cities and Local Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle University</td>
<td>BA in Town Planning with Certificate in Planning and Diploma in Planning and Regeneration or Diploma in Environmental Planning or Diploma in European Spatial Planning or Diploma in Planning and Urban Design</td>
<td>MSc in Town Planning Diploma in Spatial Planning MA Planning and Environment Research MSc Planning for Sustainability and Climate Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxford Brookes University</td>
<td>BA (Hons) in City and Regional Planning with Diploma in Planning or MPlan</td>
<td>MSc in Spatial Planning Diploma in Spatial Planning MSc in Environmental Assessment and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Course Offerings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens University Belfast</td>
<td>Management MSc in Historic Conservation MSc in Tourism, Environment and Development MSc in Urban Planning: Developing &amp; Transitional Regions MA in Urban Design MSc in Transport Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheffield Hallam University</td>
<td>BSc (Hons) in Environmental Planning MSc in Environmental Planning MSc in Urban and Rural Design MSc in Spatial Regeneration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Cambridge (Provisional)</td>
<td>Master in Planning Master in Planning and Transport BA(Hons) Planning Studies BA(Hons) Planning and Transport</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University College London</td>
<td>BSc (Hons) in Urban Planning, Design and Management with Diploma/MSc Town and Country Planning or MSc Urban Regeneration or MSc European Property Development and Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Aberdeen</td>
<td>MA in Spatial Planning MA in Property and Spatial Planning MA in Rural Surveying and Spatial Planning MA in Geography and Spatial Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Birmingham</td>
<td>MSc Rural Planning and Environmental Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Brighton– (Provisional)</td>
<td>MSc in Urban and Regional Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Dundee</td>
<td>MA (Hons) in Town and Regional Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Glasgow</td>
<td>MSc in City &amp; Regional Planning MSc in City Planning &amp; Real Estate Development MSc in City Planning &amp; Regeneration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Aberdeen</td>
<td>MSc in Urban and Regional Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Brighton– (Provisional)</td>
<td>MSc Town Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Dundee</td>
<td>MA (Hons) in Town and Regional Planning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Glasgow</td>
<td>MSc in City &amp; Regional Planning MSc in City Planning &amp; Real Estate Development MSc in City Planning &amp; Regeneration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Liverpool</td>
<td>Master in Planning (MPlan)</td>
<td>Master of Civic Design (MCD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Manchester</td>
<td>Master of Town and Country Planning (MTCP) BA (Hons) Town and Country Planning (BATCP)</td>
<td>Master of Planning (MPlan) MA Urban Regeneration and Development (MAURD) MA Environmental Impact Assessment and Management (MAEIAM) MSc Global Urban Development Planning (GUDP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Reading</td>
<td>BSc in Real Estate with MSc/Diploma in Urban Planning and Development</td>
<td>MSc in Development Planning Full-time and part-time 1 year (full-time) Combined MSc in Development Planning and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Sheffield</td>
<td>MPlan in Urban Studies and Planning</td>
<td>MA in Town and Regional Planning MArch in Architecture and Town and Regional Planning, preceded by BA in Architecture MA International Development and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Strathclyde</td>
<td></td>
<td>MSc in Urban Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Ulster (Provisional)</td>
<td>Master in Planning (MPlan) in Urban Planning and Property Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Westminster</td>
<td></td>
<td>MA in Urban and Regional Planning MA International Planning and Sustainable Development (with Spatial Development Planning) MA International Planning and Sustainable Development MA Urban Regeneration MA Urban Design</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.3. Appendix 3: Factor Analysis

Table 4: Variables used in the factor analysis of Heads of Schools survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component Matrix$^a$ for Heads of Schools Survey</th>
<th>Component 1</th>
<th>Component 2</th>
<th>Component 3</th>
<th>Component 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>0.391</td>
<td>-0.314</td>
<td>-0.486</td>
<td>-0.364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3  UGFT</td>
<td>-0.520</td>
<td>-0.454</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
<td>0.483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3  PGTFT</td>
<td>-0.533</td>
<td>-0.292</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3  PGRFT</td>
<td>-0.661</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>0.384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4  Nos</td>
<td>-0.327</td>
<td>-0.463</td>
<td>-0.242</td>
<td>0.458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5</td>
<td>0.515</td>
<td>-0.447</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6</td>
<td>-0.181</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>0.537</td>
<td>0.214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7b  There are no problems with staff recruitment in our School</td>
<td>0.376</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.504</td>
<td>-0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7d  The level of staff turnover in our School is low</td>
<td>0.173</td>
<td>0.167</td>
<td>0.612</td>
<td>-0.543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8b  A strong research record</td>
<td>0.790</td>
<td>-0.281</td>
<td>-0.232</td>
<td>0.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8d  Teaching experience in planning</td>
<td>0.523</td>
<td>0.629</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.315</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q8f  Membership of the RTPI</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>-0.061</td>
<td>0.453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10</td>
<td>0.343</td>
<td>0.060</td>
<td>0.461</td>
<td>-0.476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12  FT</td>
<td>-0.789</td>
<td>0.458</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>-0.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13  non_perm</td>
<td>-0.110</td>
<td>-0.400</td>
<td>0.510</td>
<td>-0.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14  30 years FTE</td>
<td>-0.709</td>
<td>-0.204</td>
<td>-0.124</td>
<td>0.141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q14  Over 60 years FTE</td>
<td>0.477</td>
<td>-0.396</td>
<td>0.589</td>
<td>0.364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15  Female FTE</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>0.327</td>
<td>-0.712</td>
<td>-0.232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17  UK FTE</td>
<td>0.386</td>
<td>-0.866</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.132</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q21a  The needs of the planning profession and practice</td>
<td>0.298</td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.109</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q21c  Internal competing prioritiesfinancial constraints</td>
<td>0.276</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>0.708</td>
<td>0.365</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q21b  Increasing or maintaining student numbers at UG and PG le</td>
<td>0.305</td>
<td>0.684</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>0.353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q21g  Attracting quality PhD students</td>
<td>0.629</td>
<td>0.425</td>
<td>-0.405</td>
<td>0.257</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q21d  Recruitment and retention of staff</td>
<td>0.624</td>
<td>0.047</td>
<td>-0.113</td>
<td>0.212</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q21b  My Planning School has a healthy and productive relationship</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>0.454</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>-0.290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q26</td>
<td>0.709</td>
<td>-0.511</td>
<td>-0.276</td>
<td>0.282</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research ranking</td>
<td>-0.477</td>
<td>0.618</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>0.170</td>
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</table>
### 10.4. Appendix 4: Profile of respondents to the practitioner survey

Table 5: Profile of Practitioner sample compared to RTPI membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RTPI membership</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>58.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members categories</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Chartered Member</td>
<td>68.9</td>
<td>67.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Chartered fellow</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Members</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Associates</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Members</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licentiate</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students - fee paying</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired Members</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honorary Members</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 60 years old</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-60 years old</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49 years old</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39 years old</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;30 years old</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional distribution</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East of England</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East England</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West England</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East England</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West England</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>96.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-white</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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17 This is based on details of the membership provided by the RTPI in June 2010