

Sir Humphrey and the professors: What does Whitehall want from academics?

A survey of senior civil servants' views on the accessibility
and utility of academic research and expertise

CONTENTS

What do policymakers want from academics?

A survey of senior civil servants' views on the accessibility and utility of academic research and expertise.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What do policymakers want from academics?

A survey of senior civil servants' views on the accessibility and utility of academic research and expertise

What do (civil service) policymakers want from academics? A seemingly simple question, and one to which you would already think we had a pretty good answer.

Academia represents a very rich source of ideas, facts and theories about how public policies of all sorts might work (or not). Somewhere around 25,000 to 50,000 UK academics work on specifically policy-relevant areas – this represents a massive pool of knowledge that could help policymakers.

Despite this obvious situation, actually very little is known precisely about how academia and policymakers interact. There are some research projects that have explored the issue, but these have mostly been case studies from which it is hard to generalise.

We decided to ask the whole of the British Senior Civil Service (SCS) how they relate to academic research and expertise. We invited all 4,000+ members of the SCS to fill in our online survey.

About 8% responded, with a representative gender balance and spread across nearly all policy areas, which is a reasonably good sample. Moreover the variations in responses suggest there was no obvious self-selection bias – it certainly wasn't only those positive about academic outputs that responded.

We asked a series of questions about how they access and use academic research and expertise and what impact this has on policymaking. Some of their answers were expected, and some were surprises that challenged standard assumptions.

Overall, the impression from our survey is that the majority of senior civil servants actively engage positively with academic outputs. However, it is also clear that a significant minority does not engage at all with academics and that many do so in fairly limited ways.

Unsurprisingly perhaps, senior civil servants had a predilection for “pre-digested” results of research and academic expertise. Their preference for “first contact” was briefings or reports (79%), or media reports of academic outputs in newspapers and weeklies (61%) or professional journals (55%).

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Rather more surprisingly, a majority (55%) also claimed to be accessing the more 'classic' academic outputs – the 'gold standard' of peer-reviewed academic journal articles – far more than was expected (especially given restricted access of costly academic journals).

Another key finding for academics and universities is that senior civil servants value general expertise as much, or more, than they do specific research. Given that the Research Excellence Framework and research councils' guidance has tended to focus on the direct impact of specific pieces of research, this response from Whitehall might provide a welcome corrective.

When asked about which academic disciplines are most useful to them, public policy (63%), economics (60%), public administration (54%) and business and management (49%) top the responses. This is again surprising, and interesting to academia, because two of those four 'disciplines' – public policy and public administration – do not really have the usual paraphernalia of academic disciplines in the UK. There are few undergraduate and masters courses, no prominent academic associations or conferences, and only a few UK based journals.

Recent moves to establish MPA (Masters in Public Administration) and MPP (Masters in Public Policy) (notably for the latter at both Oxford and Cambridge) suggest some movement, but the UK is a long way from having well developed academic communities in these areas compared to most other large developed economies.

Senior civil servants were also surprisingly positive about academics playing a role in the policy process: as information and knowledge providers (86%); informal advisers (67%); formal advisers or participants (62%); and as providers of training and education for policymakers (63%).

The latter finding about education provision, coupled with the findings about the public policy and public administration disciplines, suggest that there is a gap for higher education to provide more advanced training for policymakers in the civil service?

Finally, our survey provides some unsurprising confirmation of the dominance of London, Oxford and Cambridge as sources of academic expertise for Whitehall. It also suggests that personal contact in some form is an important ingredient to academic-civil servant interchange.

However, our results do explode one small myth – that Oxbridge educated Civil Servants tend to go back to their old tutors for advice – only 11% claimed to access academic expertise through this route.

The survey is clearly only a partial view of the interchange between academia and Whitehall, and there are many other issues to explore. It does however provide some useful 'baseline' data about how senior civil servants currently access and use academia.

INTRODUCTION

How do governments – more specifically British governments – utilise academic research and expertise?

In an age when the challenges facing governments seemingly become ever more complex, our knowledge is substantial about how policy problems can be at least managed, if not always solved.

Maximizing access to, and use of, academic expertise might also have particular importance during the current period of austerity in government, when civil servants have fewer resources themselves but rising demands to deal with.

The **200,000 academics** working in UK universities¹ represent a substantial potential resource for Government policymaking. Compare that to the numbers working in Think Tanks (probably a few hundred at most), or the size of the Senior Civil Service and other civil servants working on policy issues (a few thousand) to get some idea of the scale of resource available.

Of course, not all UK academics work in immediately policy-relevant areas. At our own university, we estimate that of 4,000 academics working here, approximately 500 to 1,000 are directly engaged with issues that are 'policy relevant' – or between 1 in 8 and 1 in 4. If replicated nationally that would mean between 25,000 and 50,000 academics with expertise and research relevant for policymakers.

Most UK academics are of course also part of international communities of scholars and researchers with access to even greater pools of knowledge. With modern ICT, access to our international colleagues' expertise is often only a mouse click and a matter of minutes or hours away.

There is already some research on how well government accesses and utilises academic research and expertise – and an awful lot of supposition and conjecture. In this context we considered an up-to-date survey of UK senior civil servants' use of, and views about, academic expertise and research output would be a useful addition to our knowledge.

The survey was stimulated in part by a study from Avey and Desch² who focused on what policymakers in the **United States defence and security field** wanted from international relations scholars. Avey and Desch focused on the opinions on and impact of a range of particular theoretical works produced within this discipline.

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Our survey is much more general in nature, **looking at UK Senior Civil Servants' views about the accessibility, utility and impact of research across all policy-areas**. It also differs in some other respects, but some of our questions do mirror aspects of the Avey and Desch survey to get some comparative data.

We have chosen to focus initially on civil servants – non-elected public officials – because in British government they play a very important role as 'gatekeepers' of what 'gets into' the policymaking process. Elected politicians of course have other routes to expertise (and opinion) other than civil servants, but the Civil Service does play an almost uniquely powerful role in Britain.

Having said that, this is only the first of what we hope will be a series of studies – quantitative and qualitative – about the relationship between policymaking and academic expertise. Subsequent projects will look at other groups of actors.

METHOD

The survey was conducted online during March 2014 using Qualtrics software. The sampling frame used was a list of Senior Civil Servants (SCS) produced by DODs (the Government and Parliamentary communications experts). As this represented a total population of around 4,000, we considered a whole population sample likely to produce a sufficient sample on which to base conclusions.

We are of course aware that policymaking in the Civil Service takes place outside of the SCS, and sometimes involves “a cast of thousands”³ – however there is no easy way of sampling those outside the SCS who ‘do policy’. Some of this group – only a small number – responded to the survey anyway. We are also aware that some in the SCS are engaged in work that is not mainly policy-oriented, but again there is no easy way of separating these individuals from the whole SCS.

We are satisfied that using the whole SCS as our ‘sample’ was a good, if not perfect, strategy to obtain data that gives us some valid and reliable insight into how Civil Service policymakers view, access and use academic expertise.

SCS members (4,312) were sent three invitations to complete the survey online, on a weekly basis, and we received 340 completed ‘usable’ responses (8%) by the time the survey closed.

As well as collecting structured data we also asked for additional qualitative comments on most of the questions in the survey. We received a good many of these and some of the key themes are mentioned here. As yet though we have not completed a detailed analysis of comments across the whole survey.

We also asked if respondents would be willing to be involved in follow-up interviews and around 60 agreed to this and supplied us with contact details. We intend to follow up these offers.

Respondents came from across the UK – both Whitehall and the devolved governments:

- 84% came from the UK Central Government
- 5% from the Scottish Government
- 3% from Welsh Assembly Government
- 3% from Northern Ireland Assembly

They also came from wide range of policy areas within Government.

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The largest category chosen by respondents was 'other' (representing 10%) and included a wide range of specific policy areas such as Animal Welfare, Social Security, Counter Fraud, Forestry, Children's Rights, Productivity Transformation, to name but a few.

The response rates from Government departments/policy areas – see Figure 1 – is not an exact match to the spread of policymaking SCS members across these departments and areas, but it is sufficiently broadly spread for our purposes (although it doesn't allow for some more fine-grain analyses).

Figure 1 Percentage of response by policy area/department

| Departments/Policy Area | % of total responses from each area |
|---|--|
| BIS; MOJ | 9% |
| Transport; Education | 7% |
| Revenue and Customs; Defence; Health | 6% |
| Cabinet Office; DCLG | 5% |
| Environment; Foreign and Commonwealth | 4% |
| Science and Technology; Regulatory bodies; Culture, Media and Sport; Employment | 3% |

FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY

Accessing academic research and expertise

We were interested in finding out how civil service policymakers **access** academic research – what are the principal channels through which they find out what academics are doing and saying?

A wide range of options (18, including an ‘other’ category) was given to them and they could select any that were relevant to them.

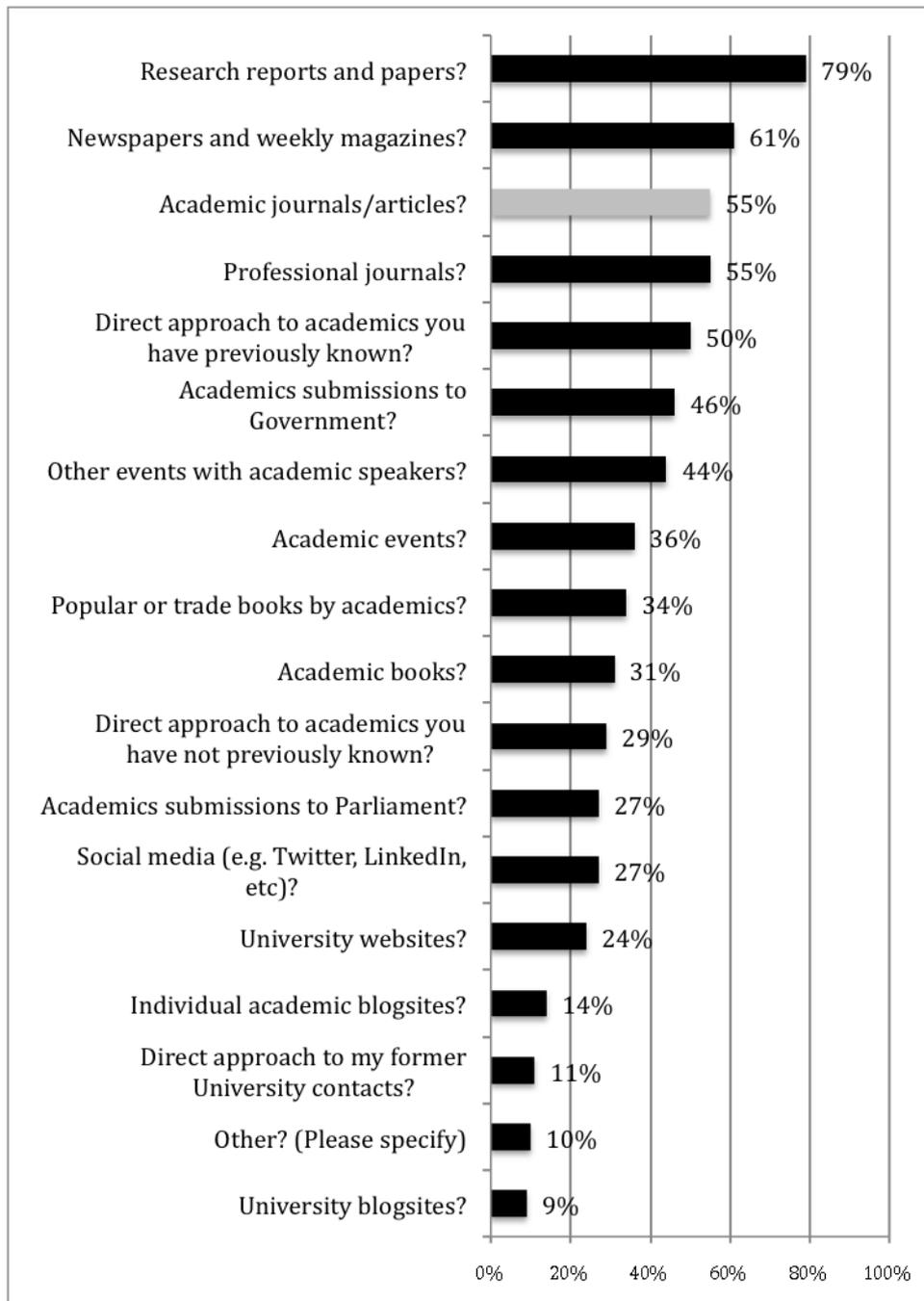
By far the highest number of responses was for **research reports**, with 79% of respondents saying they accessed research this way (see Figure 2).

The second highest was **newspapers and weekly magazines** at 61% closely followed by **professional journals** at 55%. This finding is interesting in so far as it suggests a preference for ‘pre-digested’ sources – ones that are quick and cheap (in both money and time) to access. It also suggests to academics that working with the general and specialist media is a good route to accessing civil service policymakers.

We have highlighted **academic journals** (55%) in Figure 2 because this was a highly unexpected result. Anecdotally we had been told by many civil servants (and others) that accessing academic journal publications was almost impossible in Government, because few (if any) departments could afford to subscribe to the necessary paper or online journals. To find that more than half of our respondents claimed they did access academic journals, therefore came as something of a surprise. This is one of the issues we intend to follow up with further enquiries.

Academic submissions directly to Government were also accessed by 46%.

Figure 2 Routes for accessing research by policymakers



Although we do not (as yet) have direct evidence to support this, taken together these results tend to suggest that 'first contact' with research or expertise may often come through various indirect routes (newspapers, professional journals, academic journals, direct submissions) but that Senior Civil Servants **tend to follow this up by accessing the direct reports of the actual research (hence the 79%). This is clearly something that needs further investigation.**

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There are clearly several other routes to accessing academic expertise and research. Submissions by academics to Parliament (27%), popular books (34%) and academic books (31%) all seem significant, if minority, channels.

All of the above represent various fairly conventional ways of publishing and distributing research and expertise. We also asked about other less conventional or less formal ways of accessing material of interest.

Firstly, approaching academics directly. In this category we asked if policymakers accessed research via existing relationships (50%), or via a direct approach to academics they did not know (30%). This suggests that personal contact and interaction is an important dimension in the relationship between academics and policymakers, alongside the more traditional 'broadcast' medium of publishing.

Although very interestingly one particular myth seems to be exploded by our survey – it is often asserted that Senior Civil Servants will tend to 'fall back' on contacts with their teachers and tutors from their own undergraduate university education. Only 11% of our respondents claimed this as a route to accessing academics, suggesting that this is one of those popular myths with little substance behind it.

Secondly, we asked about access through events at which academics speak or academic conferences – the former was slightly better used at 44% compared to 36% for the latter. Again, this suggests that a more direct, personal, involvement and preference for the 'spoken word' and oral exchange forms a significant component of how civil servants access academics.

Finally in this section, we asked about the use of websites and other forms of social media. Social media was most accessed (27%) - equal to the access through Parliamentary submissions.

University websites came next in terms of use at 24% followed by individual blogsites at 14% and university blogsites at 9%. Although these figures are low at the moment, this may be a 'supply side' problem. Few university websites are (as yet) very good at making their expertise readily available to the outside world, and even fewer seem to have developed successful social media strategies for sharing research and expertise.

It is clear from some of the comments we received that social media and 'web presence' is increasing in importance, and may provide opportunities to support engagement between the two communities to a greater extent in the future.

Ease of access and use

We wanted to establish whether policymakers thought accessing and using academic material was getting easier or harder.

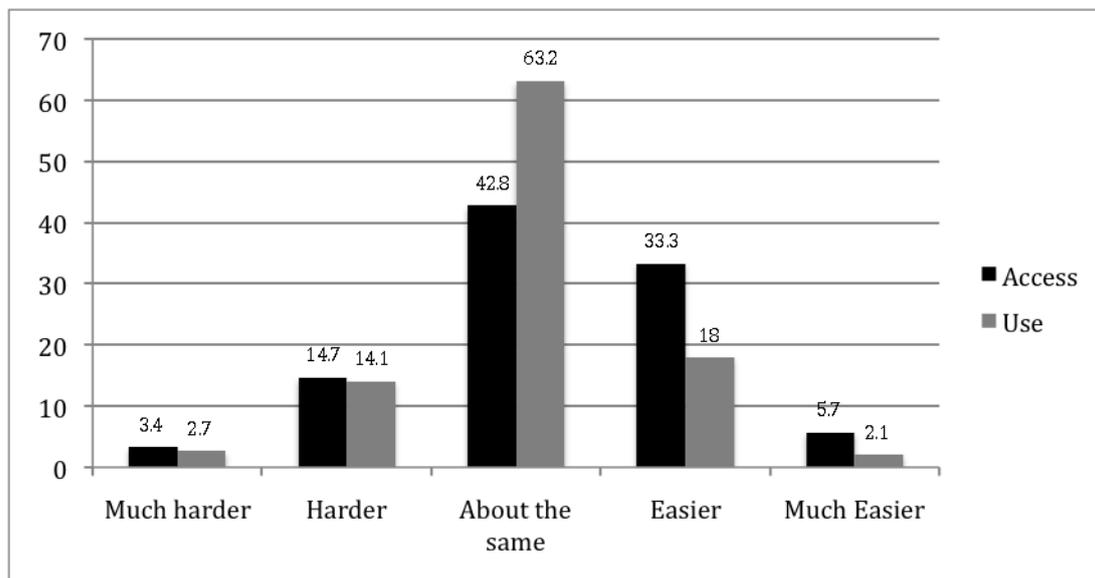
The largest proportion of answers suggested there had been no change on access (63%) and no change in use (43%) (see Figure 3).

Other than this, where we do see change, it is marginally on the side of it getting easier to access and use academic research. On access in particular the findings show clearly that more civil service policymakers think it is getting easier, although slightly less so for using academic outputs.

A clearly identified theme in the qualitative comments was also that increased accessibility has not meant that academic outputs are any easier to use for policymakers.

There are particular comments around the sheer amount of material that is available and issues regarding the quality of freely available material. Civil Servants are requesting more open access, free, material but they also seem to want some validation of the quality of research.

Figure 3 Changes in ease of access and use of academic research



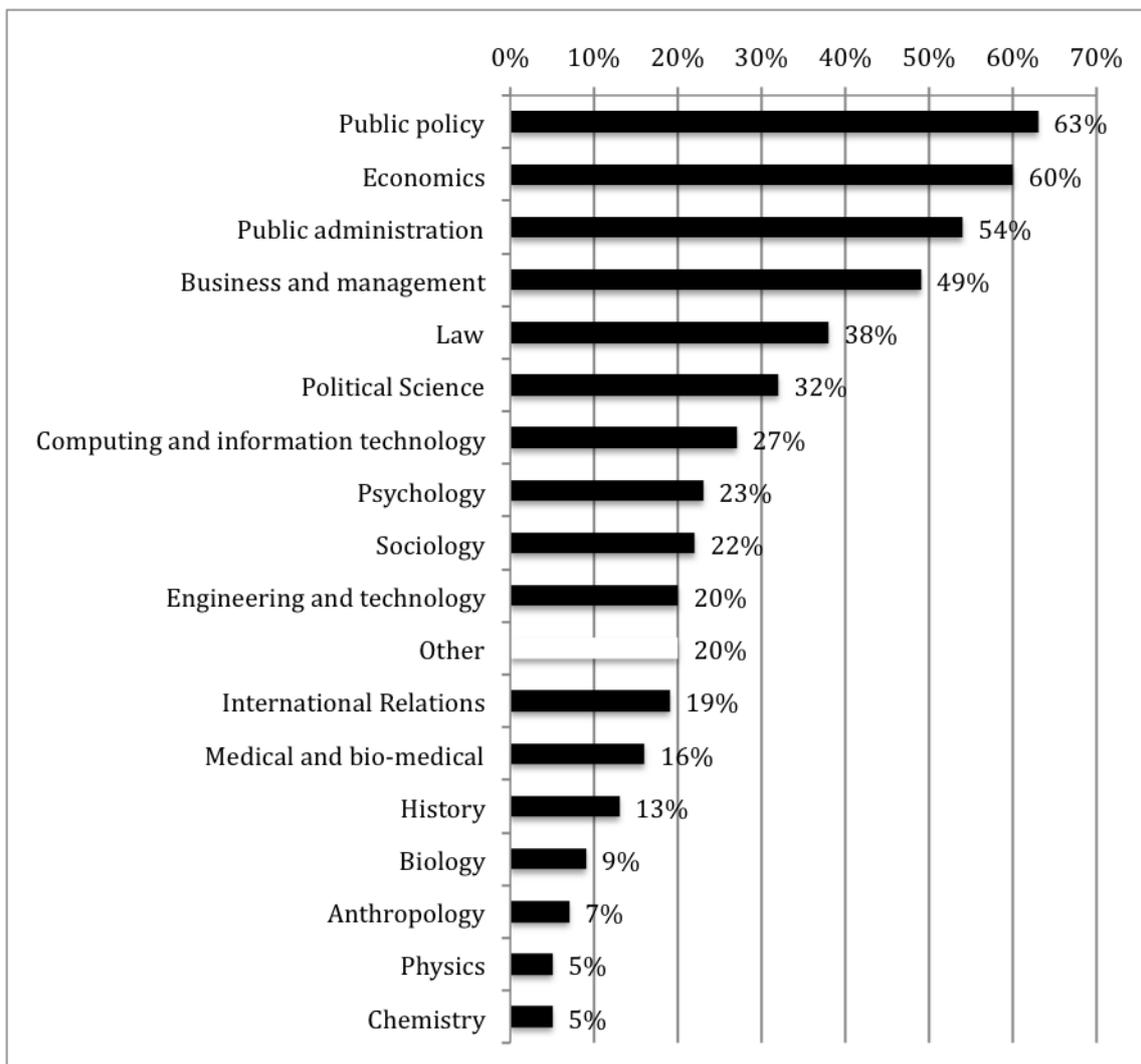
What is not clear is to what extent Civil Service policymakers attach value to known academic sources – either journals, particular research groups, universities, etc. – in the same way in which academics themselves attach value to research findings.

Another issue, which is more basic, is that civil servants are not always sure if particular research really addresses their problem and will propose some potential solutions. This suggests that there is some work to do in highlighting the potential value of research, as a form of quality (re)assurance and/or an improved mechanism for them to be able to find material that does answer their questions.

Disciplines found most useful to policymakers

We wanted to establish which academic disciplines seemed to be most accessed and used by SCS members. What is interesting (and perhaps surprising) about these results is the degree to which social sciences dominate the responses (see Figure 4)

Figure 4 Disciplines most useful to your work?



Especially notable are the results for 'Public Policy' (top) and 'Public Administration' (3rd) – neither of which really exist within British academia as organised disciplines.

'Public Policy' in the UK has no significant national association and is split between 'Social Policy' and various specific policy areas (eg health and education) and has no single national academic forum (unlike in the USA, where APPAM⁴ exists, for example).

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'Public Administration' is even more striking – whilst 'Public Management' groups exist (until recently mainly in business schools) the name 'Public Administration' has largely been abandoned in the UK (unlike in most of the rest of the world, including the USA, which has both APSA⁵ and NASPAA⁶). There has been a recent growth in 'Masters in Public Administration' courses in the UK but this has been fairly modest (about 20 programmes, compared to more than 500 globally and 250 in the USA alone) and is not linked to a growth in academic groups.

In both of these cases it is therefore somewhat surprising they should be so strongly selected by civil servants as 'useful' disciplines – especially as they out-score many disciplines that are well established in the UK (business; law; political science; sociology; etc).

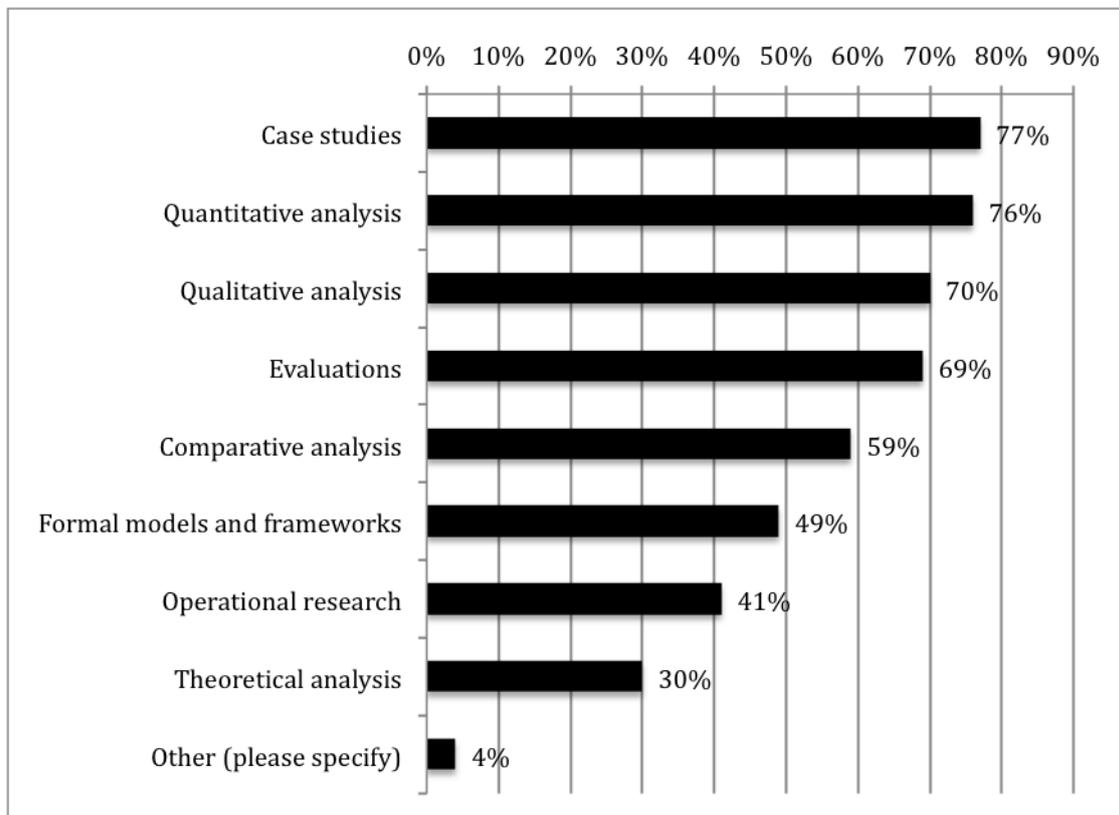
There is clearly a major disjunction here between what senior civil servants perceive as being important disciplines and what academic institutions have seen as important.

'Other' was also selected by 20% of respondents – these included: Education, broadly Environmental Sciences, Statistics and Criminology. All of these were added by several respondents with Education getting the highest score of 12.

Types of research methodology useful for policy work

In the responses to the question ‘which types of research do you find useful?’ case studies came out on top with 77% followed by quantitative studies at 76%. (see Figure 5). Qualitative studies were selected by 70% of respondents, quickly followed by Evaluations at 69% and Comparative analysis at 59%. Whilst formal modeling, operations research and theoretical analysis were viewed as less useful overall albeit useful in some areas, they still represent ¼ of the responses in total. This seems to suggest that all kinds of research are valued by Civil Servants, but particular policy areas have specific needs.

Figure 5 Extent of usefulness of types of research



Although there is some bias towards quantitative studies within certain policy areas (notably the Treasury, Transport, Revenue, Education and Regulation) in others case studies are highly represented (e.g. Business, Devolved Government, Energy, Employment, Environment, Foreign Office and International Development).

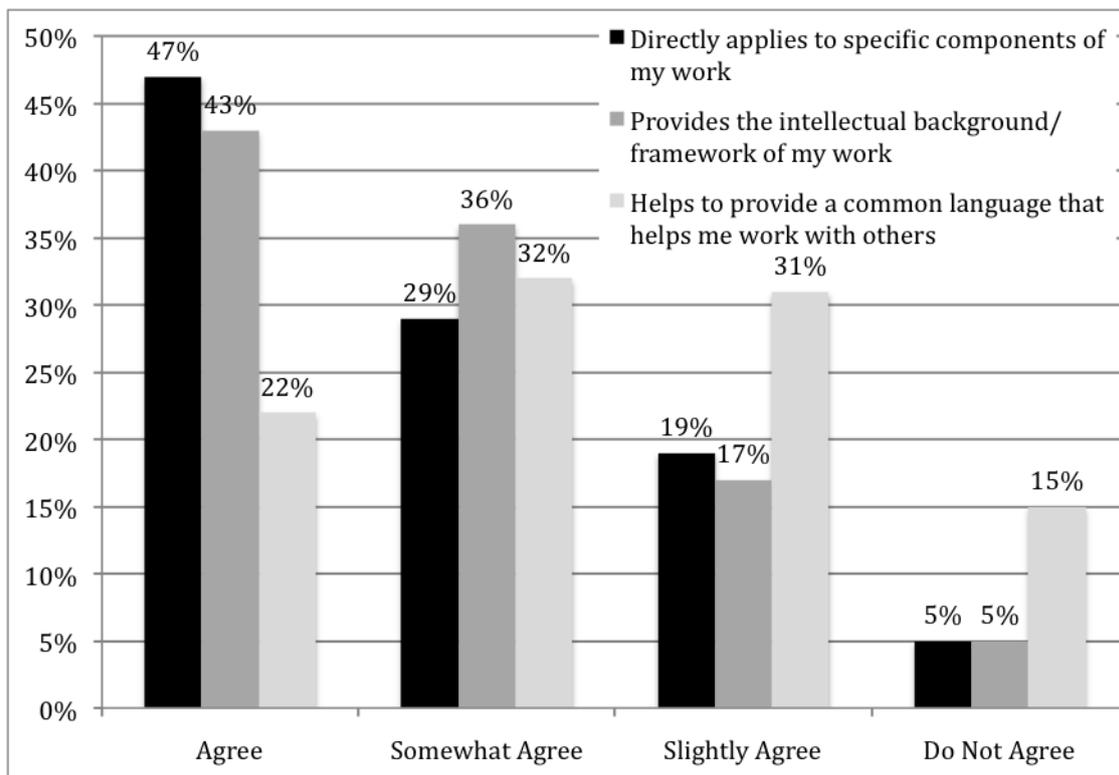
In most, a range of methods or research are welcomed. Cross tabulating with policy area, grade and gender did not throw up significant variations across policy areas.

In line with other research in this area it seems that there is a disjuncture between what policymakers feel provides useful knowledge for them and what academics are encouraged to do to gain publications and promotion.

Relevance of academic work to your role

We also asked about the degree to which respondents would agree that research and expertise directly applies to specific components of their work; and/or it provides the intellectual background of their work and/or it helps to provide a common language.

Figure 6 How academic research and expertise applies to policy work



The responses showed a significant drop-off in agreement with the three statements – with direct application to policy work being the most relevant, whilst providing a common language was seen as far less relevant (Figure 6).

The use of an academic ‘language’ seems to be the main issue here – in the comments there were many complaints about ‘jargon heavy’ academic research and comments such as:

“[There’s] a disjuncture between the practical realities...and the world of academic discourse”

“I have to portray it more straightforwardly to colleagues”

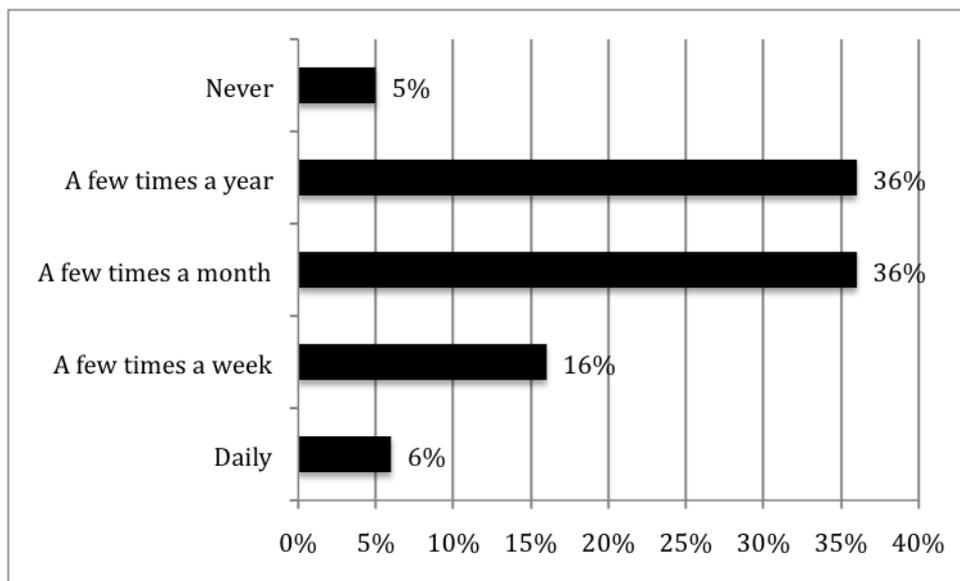
“Academic speak is a barrier not a bridge”

This suggests that academic outputs need to be targeted at a policy audience and backed up with the published references.

Frequency of use of academic research

We also asked if respondents could estimate the frequency with which they used academic outputs in their work, which showed overall it wasn't that often (a few times a year or month being the favorite responses) (see Figure 7).

Figure 7 Frequency of the use of academic work



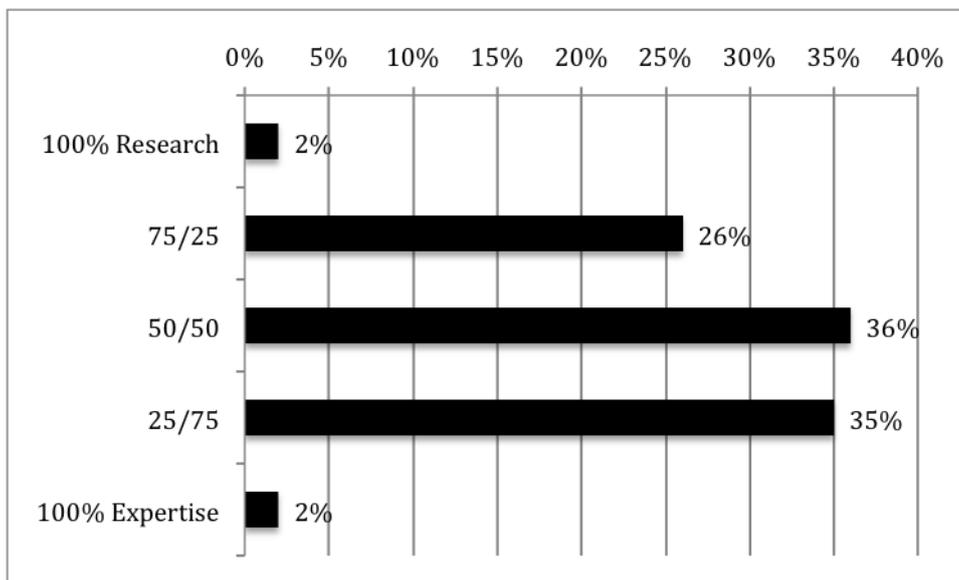
However, without more fine-grained analysis of what this means it is difficult to judge as “use” may mean different things.

Research or expertise as the most valued resource?

A further question asked whether Senior Civil Servants feel that it is the **research outputs** that are more important or **general expertise** of academics (see Figure 8).

This is important since the academic ‘drivers’ such as the Research Excellence Framework and current publishing agendas within universities do not recognise the latter.

Figure 8 Specific research or general Expertise?



“Impacts” it is assumed, come directly from one piece of research rather than other forms of knowledge. In reality, knowledge may come from direct experience, long term engagement with a particular discipline area, or cumulative knowledge of research in the field or policy, and a direct impact may only come from the accumulation of research findings over a period of time.

The data gathered from the survey demonstrates that policymakers think both specific research and general expertise are important for their work. If anything, general expertise is more highly valued than just specific research. This could provide a useful corrective to current academic thinking which values only specific research in relation to “impact”.

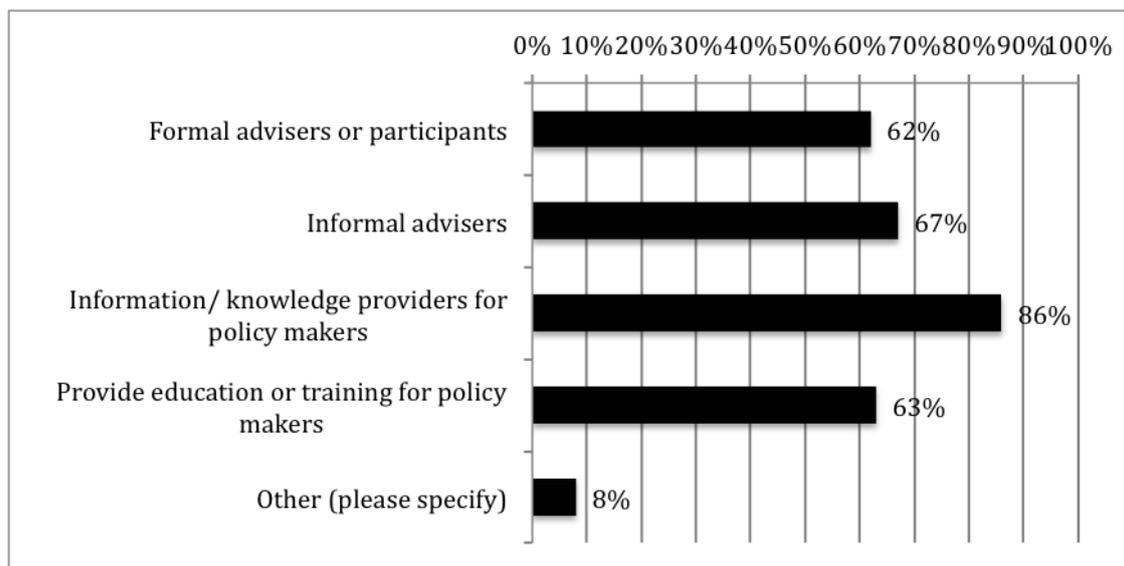
Some policy areas seemed to have a stronger bias towards expertise: Business; Justice and Legal; Defence; Cabinet Office; Health and Revenue and Customs.

How should academics be involved in policy making processes?

We asked how academics could be best involved in the policy process either as knowledge providers, educators, formal or informal advisers.

What is most notable here is the strongly positive response across all of these potential roles for academics (see Figure 9). Around two-thirds of our respondents clearly saw a positive role for academics in policymaking. Conversely, this also means that around a third of Senior Civil Servants saw either a restricted role or no role at all for academics.

Figure 9 Roles academics should play



Of the specific roles, information or knowledge providers was the most popular (86%). The next was as informal advisers (66%) closely followed by educators (63%) and formal advisers (62%).

In the qualitative comments further ideas on the role that academic should play were put forward including that academics have a role in providing independent views or challenge; as stakeholders or advocates and to provide commissioned research.

The finding on education and training is very significant. One characteristic of the British Senior Civil Service is that its members are far less likely to have a higher degree or qualification than many of their counterparts in Germany, France, the USA or Japan (for example). The fact that a majority of our respondents see a role for academics in education and training for public policy is also highly significant.

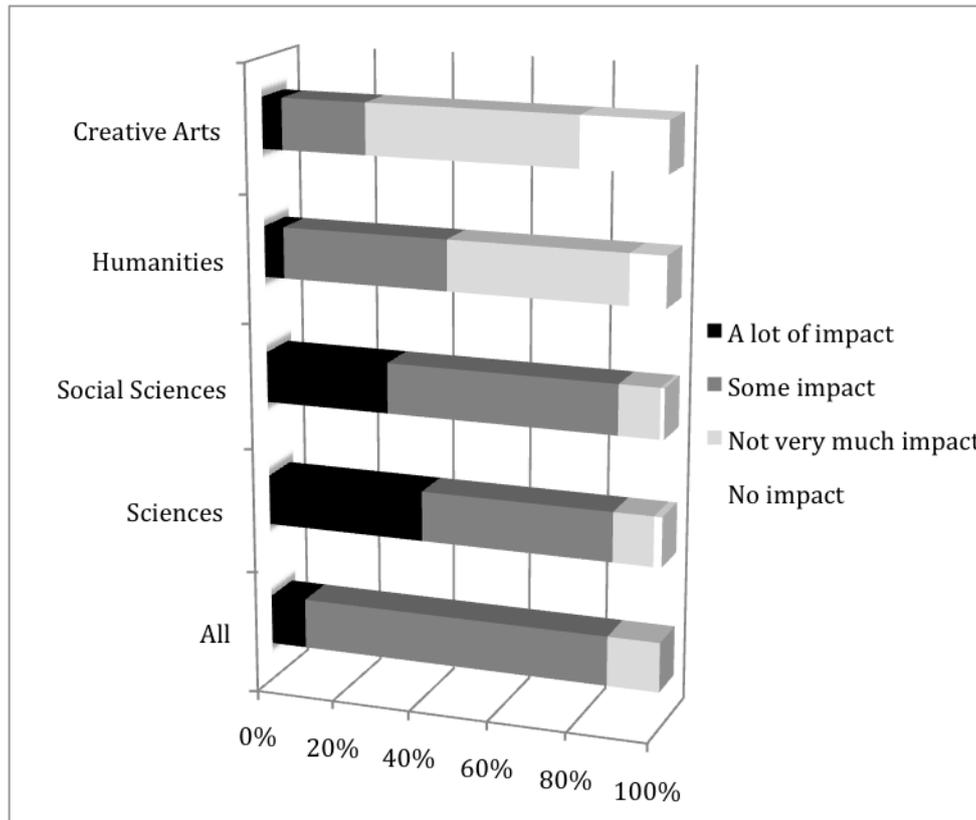
Taken together this suggests that academics can play an important 'knowledge broker' role for Civil Servant policymakers. Taken together with the earlier findings about the importance of the 'public policy' and 'public administration' disciplines, it also suggests that higher education could be offering more in the way of education and training in these disciplines.

It is significant that the past two years both Oxford and Cambridge universities, amongst others, have launched new Masters in Public Policy (MPP) programmes, alongside the new MPA courses mentioned earlier.

Impact of different 'academic discipline groups' on policy

We asked how much impact a range of 'academic discipline groups' (Social Science; Science, Humanities or Creative Arts⁷) had (see Figure 10 and table).

Figure 10 Impact of different 'academic discipline groups'



| | A lot of impact | Some impact | Not very much impact | No impact |
|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| All | 9% | 78% | 13% | 0% |
| Sciences | 40% | 48% | 10% | 2% |
| Social Sciences | 31% | 57% | 10% | 1% |
| Humanities | 5% | 42% | 45% | 9% |
| Creative Arts | 5% | 21% | 52% | 21% |

Interestingly, when compared to the earlier question about the more specific academic disciplines and their use in policymaking, here the relationship between the sciences and social sciences is very different. Both sciences and social sciences were rated by 88% as having "a lot" or "some" impact, but sciences scored more highly on "a lot" of impact (40% to 31%).

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The comments added to the responses to this question suggested among other things that it was difficult to comment outside one's own area. This data may then just represent an artefact effect or people's assumptions regarding what they think is having the most impact.

The questions were also different – the first spoke about “usefulness” whereas the second talked about “impact”. There is clearly a lot of scope for trying to tease out what this means, which we will try to do in future research.

Best UK universities for research and expertise

We asked respondents to name five universities they regarded as important sources of academic research and expertise. Here we have concentrated on the first one cited. As you can see in Figure 11 the responses are dominated by the London universities, Oxford, and Cambridge (which is no great surprise).

Figure 11 Top entries for best UK universities

| Number of entries | University |
|-------------------|---|
| 26 | University of London, LSE, UCL, Imperial (combined) |
| 16 | Oxford |
| 12 | Cambridge |
| 3 | Cranfield, Glasgow, Manchester, Reading, (each) |

We also asked for individual academics to be named. On analysis we could not find a particularly strong pattern in terms of fitting in with the dominant institutions. In the qualitative comments respondents noted that the research was more important than the institution and international institutions may well have something important to offer.

When asked to provide the top international universities Harvard was selected first with 38 entries out of a total of 79. MIT came second with 16 entries (see Figure 12).

Figure 12 Top entries for best international universities

| Number of entries (out of 79) | University |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 38 | Harvard |
| 16 | Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) |

Top academics whose work has been used

Respondents were clear they did not like naming people, and shifts in work meant a shift in academics over time. Many names were put forward, and some were repeated, but not that many. We have not carried out any extensive analysis of this question beyond noting that respondents were clear about the quality of the research rather than particular individuals and institutions.

Top non-academic institutions

Figure 13 shows the dispersion of policy expertise: out of 81 entries as the “top non-governmental body”, 45 were only cited once, a further 11 were cited twice and only five organisations were cited three or more times.

Figure 13 Top non-academic institutions

| Organisations | Number of times cited |
|--|-----------------------|
| Institute for Fiscal Studies | 7 |
| Policy Exchange | 6 |
| Institute for Public Policy Research | 5 |
| Institute for Government | 4 |
| King’s Fund | 3 |
| RUSI, JRF, NCUB, OECD, NIESR, DEMOS, CHATHAM HOUSE, ODI, WORK FOUNDATION, CIPFA, RICS | 2 each |

CONCLUSIONS

We have already presented a summary of what we see as the most important findings in the Executive Summary at the start of this report, so there is no point in repeating that here. Instead, we want to focus on what the survey tells us about ‘what next’?

The issue of “knowledge exchange” between academia and Whitehall is slowly developing into a major locus of activity and research in its own right. It is gradually being accepted on all sides that the powerhouse of knowledge creation and systemisation which our 120 or so universities represent, is a vital national asset for Government, civil society, industry and the economy.

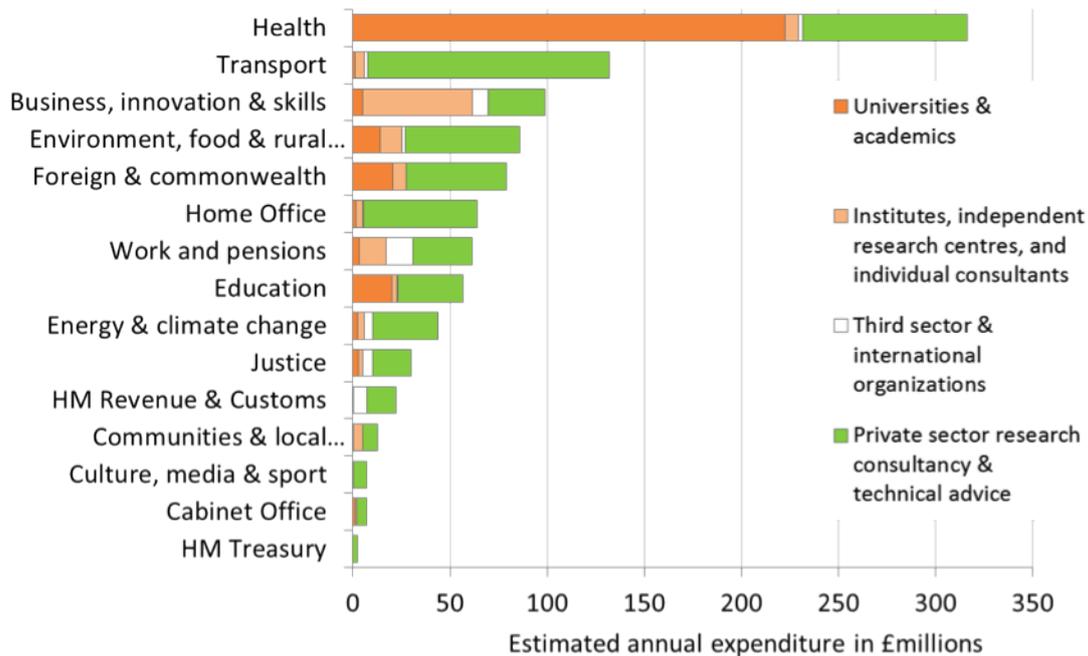
For us the next step is to follow up directly on this research in two ways. Firstly, we want to take the opportunity to interview some or all of the 60 or so Senior Civil Servants who kindly offered to engage with us further.

Secondly, we will be doing more to integrate our findings with those of the (as yet small) band of researchers who are now starting to address these issues seriously (see for example the Bastow, Dunleavy and Tinkler book referenced above).

For Whitehall we think this survey poses some important questions: centrally, is Government using the UK academic community as well as it should be? Whilst there is a new commitment to ‘open policymaking’ in Government⁸, and specifically an attempt to (re)engage with academia, our survey suggests a significant minority of Senior Civil Servants do not regularly and systematically engage with academics and academic research and expertise as well as they might.

Academic expertise and research is not free. So one useful gauge of how much Whitehall uses academia is the amount spent by Government departments on commissioned research and expertise – in other words ‘follow the money’. Recent research by LSE shows that, apart from the Department for Health, the majority of such funding goes to independent institutes, the private sector and others, and only a small proportion to universities (see Figure 14).

Figure 14 Estimated UK Central Government (only) spending on research and technical consultancy, by type of recipient organisation (£ millions)



Source: <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2014/03/20/open-data-government-commissioned-research>

One important area for further exploration is why this apparent bias against using universities exists. This is something for both Whitehall and academia to think about.

For Academia our survey poses some serious issues. It is clear the narrow focus of things like the Research Excellence framework ‘impact’ agenda is not what Whitehall wants. They are less concerned with the impact of a specific piece of research and much more interested in cumulated knowledge and expertise – which current approaches to impact tend not to measure.

Our findings also suggest that the current internal disciplinary structures of academia do not reflect what policymakers want. This is not to suggest that academic disciplinary formations should be driven by Government, but rather to ask why the UK academic community appears so out of step with most other countries that have substantial, and vibrant, generic public policy and public administration academic communities?

It would not be the first time a large scale disciplinary change had occurred because of factors external to universities. In the early 1990s such a change occurred with the massive expansion of business schools, MBAs, and associated academic institutions⁹. We went from having only a handful of business schools to virtually every university having them in the space of a few years, and the main academic research association, the British Academy of Management, suddenly grew exponentially.

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The MBA and business school explosion occurred to meet a widely perceived need for more expertise in British management, and British universities showed themselves capable of moving swiftly to create the provision of education and vastly increase research in the field. Public policy and public administration does not (yet) have the same impetus behind it, but our research shows there is considerable interest in both in Whitehall.

As we said at the start, this research is a small contribution to understanding the dynamics of knowledge exchange between Whitehall and academia. More will follow, from ourselves and others, as this issue is likely to continue to grow in importance.

NOTES

- ¹ HESA www.hesa.ac.uk accessed 7/04/2014.
- ² Paul Avey and Michael Desch (2014) What Do Policymakers Want From Us? Results of a Survey of Current and Former Senior National Security Decision-makers. *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol 58 No 4 (Dec 2014) (forthcoming).
- ³ Edward Page and Bill Jenkins (2005) *Policy Bureaucracy – government with a cast of thousands*, Oxford UP.
- ⁴ Association for Public Policy and Management.
- ⁵ American Society for Public Administration.
- ⁶ National Association of Schools of Public Administration and Affairs.
- ⁷ These groupings are taken from Simon Bastow, Patrick Dunleavy and Jane Tinkler (2014) *The Impact of the Social Sciences*, Sage.
- ⁸ See <http://my.civilservice.gov.uk/policy>.
- ⁹ The expansion was triggered by the two semi-official reports: Charles Handy (1987) *The Making of Managers*, MSC/NEDO/BIM and I. Mangham and M. Silver (1986) *Management Training, Context and Practice*, ESRC and DTI. For details see Colin Talbot (1993) *Twin Peaks? MBAs and the Competence Movement – A tale of Two Courses*, *Management Learning*, Vol 24: 330, Sage.