

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

**What Kind of Space Does Sheffield International College Provide for Its Students  
and Principal Stakeholders?**

Being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Education  
in the University of Hull

by

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## Abstract

This thesis is concerned with one example of the recent phenomenon of International Pathway Colleges, Sheffield International College. It is a case study designed to answer initial questions and identify areas for future research, which uses the lens of *The Third Space* (Bhabha, 1994) to investigate the educational, organizational and cultural aspects of the College. Chapter one presents a series of research questions to support the investigation. Chapter two's literature review uses a framework suggested by Ridley (2008) to establish background, context, theories and concepts, terminology and previous research and its limitations. An ever-evolving HE sector and a for-profit educational and media sector are described. The circumstances which have brought them together in creating more than forty partnerships since 2005 are examined. Globalisation is identified as the driving force and key characteristics are identified. Two different narrative themes are described, one pessimistic and the other optimistic.

*The Third Space* is then explored as a lens through which to consider the College: its educational, organizational and cultural facets are considered.

Methodological and ethical issues are then reviewed. The research and its findings are discussed. It is suggested that the evidence depicts a sometimes random and contradictory picture as a consequence of a move from an international to an internationalizing strategy at the University – a move which has not been reflected in the mission or vision for the College.

The thesis concludes with recommendations at the local and sector level. At the local level, it is recommended that *Third Space* analysis is used to determine where the College sits within the University's internationalization strategy. At the sector level it is recommended that commercial rivals act collaboratively in the interests of the occupants

of the sector – students and staff. Finally the prospects of this happening, and those for the College, are considered.

## Frontispiece

‘By exploring the Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves.’ (Bhabha, 1994:39)

## Chapter 1 – Introduction

This thesis centres on Sheffield International College as one example of the International Pathway Colleges (IPCs) which have emerged in the UK since 2005, with a focus on undergraduate students studying for the Foundation Certificate in order to progress to undergraduate degree studies at the host university. In 2005 there were three such colleges. Today there are more than forty. The colleges are a new and evolving phenomenon and represent *terra incognita* as far as scholarly research is concerned. By considering a number of questions and measures, this thesis hopes to make an initial contribution to research in the area.

The thesis is a case study and its purpose is twofold. First, it seeks to apply a variety of measures and concepts to answer some initial questions about one of the largest IPCs in the UK. Second it seeks to identify areas for potential future research into IPCs.

Sheffield International College was established as a consequence of a partnership agreement between The University of Sheffield and Kaplan International Colleges in 2006 (Kaplan, 2006). It contains both undergraduate and postgraduate students, but as their needs are significantly different and as undergraduates constitute roughly three quarters of the students in the College (at December 2013), the undergraduates have been the subject of this inquiry.

The use of ‘space’ as a focus of inquiry is a consequence of the emergence of the idea of a *Third Space* where;

“insider” and “outsider” voices may coalesce into a new perspective, one which is not just counter-hegemonic or simply oppositional (thereby remaining within the discursive frameworks and structures of the dominant), but which opens a new arena of negotiation, meaning, representation.  
(Routledge, 1996:414)

It is used by a variety of authors in a variety of contexts, for instance; Bhabha, 1994 referring to culture; Whitchurch, 2013 in discussing institutional developments in

Higher Education and Solomon et al., 2006 in discussing learning. In this thesis it is used to facilitate an investigation of all three aspects of the College. These are considered as themes throughout the thesis

- The first theme is a consideration of the College as an *educational* space. How successfully does the college meet the educational needs of its international students as they prepare for life in an alien institution in a foreign land?
- The second theme is an examination of the College as an *organizational* space for collaboration between two very different partners. This is the space that Whitchurch (2013) describes as a ‘Third Space’ which involves ‘interactions between people who would not normally have worked together.’ (McAlpine and Hopwood, 2009:159). How successfully does the college enable two different organisations to work together?
- The third theme is a consideration of the College as a *cultural* space, a ‘Third Space which enables other positions to emerge’ (Rutherford, 1990:121) in a transformative process which allows those involved to ‘elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of [them]selves’ (Bhabha, 1994:39). This transformative process is applicable to students, staff and institutions and this cultural inquiry seeks to establish the wider impact of the College.

The notion of space, and in particular, *Third Space*, will therefore provide a lens through which to consider the College and to answer the educational, organizational and cultural questions listed above. In order to be able to address these questions, other subsidiary questions need to be answered. These are listed below by theme.

## 1.1 Research Questions

### **Research Question A.1: What is the genesis of Sheffield International College and others of its type?**

As their numbers have grown, the presence of international students at universities in the United Kingdom has become a matter of increasing importance to the United Kingdom, to UK universities, to those who prepare students for entry to universities, and to the students, their parents and sponsors (Koutsantoni, 2006a:22). The growth in student fee income and numbers is shown in *figure 1.1*, and now accounts for roughly 8% of all income for UK universities (HESA, 2009). For some UK universities, non EU and international students now represent more than 24% of their full-time student population (University of Sheffield, 2013a). International students represent a source of revenue for universities, the UK economy and the government; a source of livelihood for the educational sector that serves their needs in the UK and overseas; a stimulus to UK universities seeking to align their curricula, learning models and teaching practices to ‘a multi-dimensional international strategy ... to internationalise the educational, cultural and social experience of all faculty, students and staff...’ so that students are prepared for the world beyond graduation (University of Surrey, 2010:1); and a challenge to which the United Kingdom Border Agency struggles to rise (UKCISA, 2010). Benefits are future as well as present, as it is to be anticipated that students who successfully graduate from UK universities will return to their countries of origin to assume positions of authority, taking with them a predisposition to their *alma mater*, its country and culture, a notion upon which The British Council is, in part, predicated (Kinnock, 2009:1).

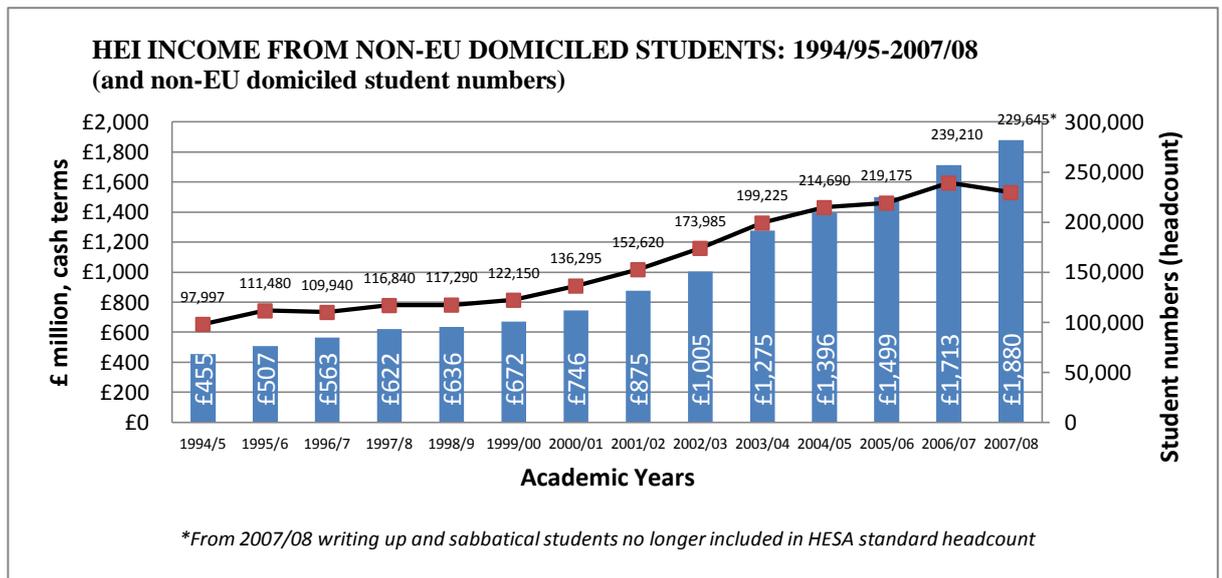


Fig 1.1 HEI income from non-EU domiciled students: 1994/95 to 2007/08 (HESA, 2009a)

International students, therefore, have an impact which extends far beyond their lecture theatres or halls of residence. They are also a stimulus, and one response to this stimulus has been the growth of international pathway colleges (IPCs).

In 2005, there were three international pathway colleges in the UK. There are now more than forty (see Appendix A). These colleges, based on the campuses of their partner institutions all cater for overseas students who wish to enter higher education institutions (HEIs) in the UK. Because of the national education system in which they have been schooled, these students lack the necessary academic credentials for direct entry to UK HEIs. Typically, they have come from a twelve year schooling system, one year short of the thirteen that is the standard in the UK.

Each college is based on the campus of a partner university ... All students are guaranteed admission to the partner university upon successful completion of their study programme at the required level. (Kaplan, no date:1)

The international pathway colleges owe their existence to two forces. The first is the “push” provided by demand from students from developing countries, particularly China. China accounts for roughly a half of the student population at Sheffield International College, one of the largest of the international pathway colleges. The inequality of wealth in China is more marked than in the USA (Hutton, 2007:30) and with the country spending only 2% of GDP on education (Hutton, 2007:173) there is a very limited supply of higher education to meet demand. The consequence is a burgeoning wealthy middle class who can afford to send their children overseas for undergraduate and postgraduate studies.

The second factor is the “pull” provided by HEIs in the UK. Whilst their remit to deliver education and research expands, their public funding dwindles (Callinicos, 2006:5). HEIs are therefore looking to international students to support their finances (Callinicos, 2006:20). International pathway colleges allow them to tap a hitherto inaccessible supply of international students and their fees. However, international pathway colleges are a partnership between UKHEIs and private educational providers and the growth of this educational sector over the last six years has been controversial in some quarters. The University and College Union has amongst its campaigns ‘Fighting Privatisation in Tertiary Education’ (UCU, 2010a, 2012), and mentions pathway colleges by name. It perceives them as a threat to the education system as a whole.

**Chapter 2, Literature Review**, considers this contested space in more detail.

**Research Question A.2: What are the educational goals of the College and to what extent and how well are they achieved?**

Each college has a number of stakeholders whom it serves. These are students, parents and educational agents; the company and its shareholders; the university partner (which may, in itself, be a multifaceted entity from staff suspicious of an agreement with a for-profit organisation to the International Office which has an established relationship with

the company and its staff). The primary goal of the College is to ensure that students achieve the grades they require to secure a place at the partner HEI. Entry alone, however, is not enough to guarantee the award of a degree and for the students and the university alike, there is considerable interest in how well the progressing students perform on progression to degree-level studies. A second goal is added to that of progression to host. A key metric by which the College is judged is the performance of its graduates in their first year of studies at The University of Sheffield compared with other international students who have had direct entry to The University of Sheffield. Taking the experiences of the two different groups one stage further, this inquiry also sought to establish how well international students believed they had been prepared for a UK HEI. In contrasting the perspective of the two groups, as well as their academic performance, it is hoped to be able to establish a richer understanding of the attributes and experiences of the two different groups and the role the College plays.

**Research Question B.1: What kind of relationship does the College have with its principal stakeholders?** The College is the product of a partnership between two very different institutions – a British red-brick civic university established by and for the citizens of the city, and a Washington Post Company<sup>1</sup> which is for-profit with a global educational business. The ability of these two dissimilar institutions to forge an effective partnership will be a significant factor in the success of the College. RQ B.1 makes use of schema developed by Whitchurch (2013) to describe the partnership by looking at the structures and systems that have been established (or have developed over time).

**Research Question B.2: How effective have these relationships been in delivering the goals of the partnership?** Use of Whitchurch's schema (2013) is made in an

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<sup>1</sup> In November 2013 the company changed its names to Graham Holdings Company following the sale of the Washington Post newspaper (Washington Post, 2013).

attempt to determine fitness for purpose. Where does the relationship with the College sit in this schema and how effective is it? This issue is considered within **Chapter 5 Analysis of data.**

**Research Question C.1: To what extent does the college provide a ‘Third Space’ for its stakeholders?** Bhabha (Rutherford, 1990) describes two problems with cultural diversity.

A transparent norm is constituted, a norm given by the host society or dominant culture. Which says that ‘these other cultures are fine, but we must be able to locate them within our own grid’,... The second problem is...that in societies where multiculturalism is encouraged racism is still rampant in various forms. This is because the universalism that paradoxically permits diversity masks ethnocentric norms, values and interests. (Bhabha quoted in Rutherford, 1990:208)

Is the College located and contained ‘within our own grid’? If so whose grid is it, Kaplan’s or the University’s? If not, does it represent a hybrid Third Space?

The importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the ‘third space’ which enables other positions to emerge. (op. cit.: 211)

**Research Question C.2: What is the likely future direction of the College?**

Drawing on the findings from the preceding research questions this question seeks to look to the future and suggest possible directions the college may take. These questions are considered in **Chapter 7, Conclusion.**

## **1.2 Personal interest**

My interest in the topic stems from 30 years’ experience in international education in a variety of contexts and capacities (see *table 1.1*).

The last twenty years have been spent largely in the Middle East working with Arab learners, with an increasing focus on the needs of students making the transition from secondary to tertiary studies. There is a gap which remains unfilled. Speaking at a

conference in 2010 Dr. Farid Ohan a College Director with the Higher Colleges of Technology in the United Arab Emirates and a former colleague stated:

I've been here 12 years. The evidence that we've not made the progress we should be making in education reform is that we talk about it in the same way we did 12 years ago... Up to 90 per cent of students arrive at Sharjah Women's College and Sharjah Men's College with too little education... students must undergo costly foundation programmes before beginning their [tertiary] studies... the students coming out of high school are still deficient in basic disciplines, especially language, mathematics and sciences.  
(Bardsley, 2010:6)

Period	1979 to 2010
Countries	Greece, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom
Job Titles	EFL Teacher, Assistant Director of Studies, Head of Testing, Teaching Centre Manager, College Dean, Head of English Programmes, College Director
Organizations	Greek frontistirion, International House affiliated language school, Eurocentres, University of Manchester, Saudi Arabian Airlines, The British Council, Higher Colleges of Technology, Abu Dhabi Education Council, Kaplan International Colleges.

*Table 1.1. Professional Experience of Researcher*

My thesis presents an opportunity to research questions which have arisen in this connection. In particular, it seeks to determine how successful foundation studies are in bridging the secondary-tertiary gap. In so doing it also deals directly with the central concern for Kaplan and The University of Sheffield, the stakeholders, with the College's ability to successfully prepare for UKHE study students who come from an educational background that has not been designed with that end in mind.

The opportunity also presented a particular challenge. The related to the identity of the researcher, being both a student of the University of Hull and also the director of the college being investigated. In face-to-face interviews, in particular, this could be

considered as a significant problem. There is a fuller discussion of this issue in **Chapter 4, Methodological Considerations.**

The next chapter contains a review of literature around the setting for IPCs with a particular focus on educational, organizational and cultural contexts.

# Chapter 2 – The University Context: Global and Local Challenges for UK Higher Education

## 2.1 Introduction

Over the last ten to fifteen years there has been a growing sense of unease in some scholarly circles about “a dirty secret” known by those who sit on dissertation committees ... that most literature reviews are poorly conceptualized and written’ (Boote and Beile, 2005:4) and that much of this failing was due to a lack of ‘formal training in how to analyze and synthesize the research literature in their field’ (Boote and Beile, 2005:5). There is now a growing literature available to the doctoral student on the subject of the literature review (see, for example, Hart, 1998; Ridley, 2008; Randolph, 2009). Before commencing the literature review it is worth pausing for a moment to consider its purpose and structure in light of the scholarly advice that is now available.

Given the failings that have been noted with literature reviews it is important to start with a definition of both what it should and what it should not be. ‘The literature review is not ... a laundry list of previous studies ... a compilation of facts and feelings, but a coherent argument that leads to a description of the proposed study.’ (Rudestam and Newton, 2001:55-57). A number of authors (Ridley, 2008; Hart, 1998; Gall, Borg and Gall 1996, for example) provide advice on the structure of the argument presented through the literature review. Ridley suggests six elements for consideration;

- Historical background
- Contemporary context
- Theories and concepts
- Relevant terminology
- Previous research and its limitations
- The significance of the issue being researched

(Ridley, 2008:28)

Following from Ridley, based on a review of background and context, this study of the literature will seek to establish relevant theories, concepts and terminology, and then

move to considering previous research and its limitations and conclude by establishing the relevance of the issue being researched. Borrowing from Rudestam and Newton, focus and depth will be appropriate to need. *'Long shots, medium shots and close ups'* will be used.

As a metaphor, a long shot suggest that the material is background [and] ...needs to be acknowledged, but not treated with the same detail as foreground material ... the close up requires a careful examination of the research ... on a relatively narrow topic that is clearly central to the proposal.  
(Rudestam and Newton, 2001:62)

As the focus moves from 'long shot' to 'close up' so the literature for review will move from widely published general sources to 'grey literature' – 'publications available in both print and electronic formats, but not controlled by commercial publishing interests and where publishing is not the principal driver' (Caruana and Spurling, 2007:5).

A final observation concerns voice. There is a potential for conflict between the two partners in Sheffield International College. However, my employment status notwithstanding, I seek to adopt a neutral position so that I do not overlook evidence as a result of bias (see Cooper, 1988:109). Indeed, part of the thesis is that the College is neither one nor the other but is in itself a third, distinct, entity.

Because the background research covers a substantial area, it is dealt with over two chapters rather than one. The first (this current chapter) considers the historical context of UKHE and the impact of globalisation. The second (the following chapter) considers the relevance and applicability of the theories and concepts which have been chosen as tools of analysis. The conclusion at the end of this subsequent chapter considers the limitations of previous research and seeks to establish the relevance of the issues being studied.

## 2.2 Historical Background

This study is concerned with two institutions, The University of Sheffield and Kaplan Inc., who established a partnership agreement in 2006 to create a joint venture, Sheffield International College (Kaplan, 2006). The review of the historical background concerns itself with the development of universities in the UK, Sheffield in particular, and the growth of for-profit pathway colleges, where Kaplan is the primary focus.

There is a notion that the institution of the university has a long and ancient pedigree. It has been the constant guardian of ‘the public good’ with its professors engaged in a ‘republic of scholars’ (Bleiklie and Kogan, 2007:477) and the perpetual search for truth, wisdom and knowledge with which to light the way for the rest of humankind (King et al., 2004:1). It is the contention of this thesis that the evidence of the literature suggests that universities are predominantly modern, not ancient, have served a number of masters with whom they have established pragmatic *modi vivendi*, and have achieved such longevity as they have by an ability to reinvent and reposition themselves. Globalisation poses the next challenge / opportunity to which universities must rise, and in doing so, reinvent themselves for the twenty-first century. What may hold them back is their own fondness for the more mythological aspects of their heritage.

### 2.2.1 The University

The modern university traces its origins to Bologna and Paris (King et al., 2004:3; Wildavsky, 2010:17). For these original institutions, the primary concern was with...

passing on accepted knowledge to others rather than being engaged with its creation...Theology, not science was king and it was the task of the scholar to receive and understand accepted wisdom.  
(King et al., 2004:46)

They were patronised and endowed by monarchs, princes and the church and in their turn they provided the trained staff for the administrations to support the institutions of government (Torstendahl, 1993: 110). As the nation state developed, so universities

oriented themselves increasingly to its needs (King et al., 2004:4). There thus developed a more rational and secular approach to knowledge, most clearly manifested in the Enlightenment: ‘The template of truth was forged in this world rather than the next.’ (King et al., 2004:46). The nineteenth century witnessed two major attempts ‘to identify the essence of a university’ (Edwards, 2004:30). The first, based on von Humboldt’s commitment to ‘the proposition that a university should be a place that encouraged scholars to conduct research without government interference’ (Wildavsky, 2010:19) was the model for the research university, and its influence persists to this day (Edwards, 2004:30). The second was the ‘idea of a university’ articulated by John Henry Newman in 1852 (Newman, 1996). ‘This notion of a university was one that provided a liberal education; it had no place for vocational training or, indeed for research.’ (Edwards, op. cit.). Across the Atlantic, an institutional model had developed which was different from that in Europe. Harvard, established in 1636 by John Harvard, was based on a private benefaction. A tradition was established which was to see a substantial cadre of private universities with large endowments (Edwards, 2004: 40). Higher education in the United States was therefore founded by a private (though not for-profit) institution. Just as universities had realigned and adjusted to the political and epistemological changes delivered through the period of the Enlightenment, the latter half of the nineteenth century saw them responding to the stimulus of the Industrial Revolution (Freidson, 2001:91) and at the beginning of the twentieth century, the English ‘civic’ movement reached its zenith with the granting of the royal charter to a number of new (redbrick) universities which had grown from colleges and schools established earlier by wealthy patrons.

The establishment of these universities signalled a dramatic change in the nature of higher education in England. First, they focused on the ‘new’ professions associated with industry and anatomy (Freidson, 2001:104). Second, they were explicitly designed

to serve the needs of their local civic communities, rather than the institutions of state (King et al., 2004:14). Further expansion occurred with the ‘plate-glass’ universities of the 1960s (Beloff, 1968) and the ‘new’ universities of the 1990s (King et al., 2004:16).

The picture that emerges is of a higher education community that is characterized more by change and diversity rather than continuity and similarity, and it is this ability to change and adapt which will be central as UK HEIs seek to respond to the latest challenges they face (Edwards, 2004:31).

<b>University</b>	<b>Royal Charter granted</b>	<b>Antecedent institutions</b>	<b>Founded</b>
Manchester	1880	Owens College	1851
Birmingham	1900	Birmingham Medical School	1825
Liverpool	1903	University College	1882
Leeds	1904	Leeds School of Medicine	1831
Sheffield	1905	Sheffield School of Medicine Firth College	1828 1879
Bristol	1909	Bristol Medical School	1833

*Table 2.1 Origins of Civic Universities (adapted from Truscot, 1943:15)*

That diversity is reflected in the four-fold classification of HEI used in the report on borderless education produced for the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals in 2000 (CVCP, 2000).

1. Public. Publicly funded. However, the matter of change arises in this context, too, as even those institutions which rely on the state for their funding in the UK are seeing the funding per student decline (King, 2004:xiv) and are developing alternate income streams.

2. Private, not for-profit. A small sector.
3. Private, for profit. An area of growth and development, primarily US in origin.
4. Corporate. Primarily skills-based and focussing more on training rather than education.

It is worth noting that despite this attempt at classification, almost all of these categories are 'porous'. The report observes that 'private providers often work in partnership with existing universities' and that 'existing universities (are) establishing private ventures to enable them to operate more flexibly.' (CVCP, 2000:12).

The CVCP report mentions media companies as potential beneficiaries of the 'explosion of activity' (ibid.) and the strategic direction taken by the parent of Kaplan International Colleges, The Washington Post (the Post) over the last ten years is an interesting case study. Until 2007 the Post described itself as 'a media and education company'. In 2007, it rebranded itself as an 'education and media company' (Ahrens, 2007). In 2010 it sold 'Newsweek' and in 2013 it sold the Washington Post newspaper. Having divested itself of its core media interests, it has repositioned itself (under the title 'Graham Holdings Company') and in the press release announcing the change in title, the company began its description of its activities as follows:

The Company owns Kaplan, a leading global provider of educational services to individuals, schools and businesses, with programs that include higher education, test preparation, language instruction and professional training.  
(Washington Post, 2013:1)

In their most recent report on the area (UUK, 2010), the successor organisation to CVCP, Universities UK, spends several pages describing Kaplan and its activities in UK HE. It would appear, then, that Kaplan has matured within its own organisation, and 'arrived' on the UK HE scene.

### 2.2.2 Kaplan and the for-profit international pathway college

Stanley Kaplan challenged society with the notion of meritocracy by helping students who would ordinarily have been shut out of prestigious colleges win admission by virtue of high test scores.  
(Rosen, 2011:xxii)

In 1937 Stanley Kaplan, set up a tutoring business in the basement of his parents' home in New Jersey. Following the end of the war in 1945, Kaplan focussed his efforts on preparing students for the Scholastic Aptitude Test or SAT. There then commenced the first of several battles with examination boards to establish the credibility of his test preparation techniques. In the 1960s, he expanded into law, medical and business school test preparation and in the 1970s Kaplan colleges were in operation in 23 cities across the US. His running battles with test makers came to a head in 1978 when, following a three year investigation, the Federal Trade Commission determined that;

... contrary to the test makers' claims, preparation could in fact improve SAT scores. The test makers were required to withdraw their statements that test preparation did not work. Kaplan and other test preparation companies gained new respect in the education world.  
(Kaplan, 2010c:1)

In 1984, the Kaplan organisation was purchased by the Washington Post. However, by its own admission, this was not an immediately successful acquisition:

In the early 1990s, Kaplan was losing money and facing tough competition from a new wave of test prep providers. The company started to falter in the industry it had founded and once dominated. The Washington Post Company knew they needed strong, energetic leadership to ensure Kaplan would have a bright future.  
(Kaplan 2010d:1)

There then ensued a programme of acquisition of education related businesses, which diversified the former test preparation business into K12, professional training and Higher Education, and broadened its reach to include Europe, Asia and Australasia. By 2008, turnover, which stood at \$80million in 1994, had grown to \$2 billion (Kaplan 2010d:1) and Kaplan had four divisions: Kaplan Higher Education, Kaplan Test Prep, Kaplan Ventures, Kaplan International (UCU, 2010b:1).

Part of this process of expansion into other geographic regions and other educational fields saw the establishment of Kaplan International Colleges in 2005, with the opening of a pathway college on the campus of Nottingham Trent University. In 2006, the University of Sheffield followed suit, and by 2010, pathway partnerships had also been established with the University of Glasgow, the University of Liverpool, City University, Westminster University, Bournemouth University and the University of Southampton. Kaplan is not alone in the development and there are a number of other for-profit educational companies who have established partnerships with UK HEI. From a position in 2005 where there were three International Pathway Colleges in existence (Hertfordshire, Brunel and Nottingham Trent), there are now more than 40. Appendix A lists the IPCs that are currently operating (December 2013). The characteristics of these colleges are generally as follows:

- First, each college has a triple aspect: as a college in its own right; as part of a for-profit educational organisation; as the result of a partnership between a private provider and a UK university.
- Second, that partnership confers upon successful graduates of the college guaranteed access to programmes of study at the partner universities.
- Third, the colleges are located on the campuses of partner institutions thereby providing access to partner university facilities for college staff and students (although KIC London is not located on the campus of City University, students enjoy the benefits of associate status).
- Finally, the colleges are designed for fee-paying international (non-EU) students with a ‘gap’ in their educational credentials. This gap prevents them from securing direct entry to a UK university. The size of this gap is measured in terms of both the quality and quantity of secondary education. The University of Portsmouth describes the countries of origin as “countries whose educational

systems don't easily equip students to move directly into British degree programmes" (University of Portsmouth, 2009, p.1). English language competence may be a further factor to consider, but as most partner universities operate their own pre-sessional language courses, international colleges will normally only address the language issue in conjunction with the academic gap, not alone.

Heretofore universities had focused on direct recruitment of qualified candidates to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Students without the prerequisites for entry had to rely on an offshoot of the English language pre-sessional department (for example, University of Southampton) or ad hoc local arrangements with FE colleges (for example, City University and City and Islington College) to provide the remedy, the pathway programme, to bridge the academic gap they faced. However, the growth of potential markets for pathway programmes, primarily the Chinese market, persuaded UK universities that they needed to find solutions if they were to "open access to a range of international applicants who would otherwise lie beyond the University's recruitment reach." (University of Portsmouth, 2009, p. 1).

Until 2005 the two universities offering a pathway programme for international students were Brunel and Hertfordshire. As remarked earlier, there are a number of phases of development of HEIs in the UK, frequently with an architectural soubriquet. The ancient universities were joined by the civic or "redbrick" at the end of Queen Victoria's reign. At the time of the Robbins report in the early 1960s the "plate glass" universities swelled the ranks. Following the legislation of 1992 the "new" universities took the number of UK HEIs to over a hundred. (Beloff 1968; Callinicos 2006; Truscot 1943). The most useful distinction that can be made for the purpose of this thesis is between the Russell group universities of which Sheffield is a member, primarily the ancient and civic universities (or 20 "major research-intensive universities" Piatt, 2009)

and the rest of the UK universities. The Russell Group website highlights the significance of the distinction (and the slightly smug cachet associated with membership of this club) and the power the group wields. 'In 2006/07 Russell Group Universities accounted for 66% (over £2.2 billion) of UK Universities' research grant and contract income' (Piatt, 2009:5). Neither Brunel (conferred university status in 1966) nor Hertfordshire (conferred university status in 1992) are members of the Russell Group. Thus when Sheffield, a key member of the Russell Group, decided in 2006 to collaborate with a private education provider in the establishment of an international pathway college, it signalled a change in the status of International Pathway Colleges. Prospective, rankings-conscious (Wildavsky, 2010) international students now had a Russell Group institution made available to them. Other UK universities had to consider their position in relation to this market segment and this mode of recruitment. The fact that within six years of Sheffield's move there are now more than forty such colleges suggests that the segment and the model have achieved a degree of recognition. That almost a third of the Russell Group has established such partnership alliances suggests that this recognition is not merely from "new" or "plate glass" institutions.

Side-by-side with the development of these partnerships has been the growth of 'internationalisation' strategies at UK universities. The University of Sheffield appointed a Pro Vice Chancellor, International in 2011 and published an Internationalisation Strategy 2012-2017 the following year (University of Sheffield, 2012a). This might appear to be back-to-front as it might be expected that the internationalisation strategy would come first and then, as part of that strategy, the international pathway college would follow. It suggests that strategy in this area is 'emergent' (Mintzberg, 1994:24).

This brief overview of the development of UK universities, a for-profit education provider and the international pathway college which is the fruit of their union tells us

*how* International Pathway Colleges came about. However, it tells us little about *why*. If it were part of a carefully conceived strategy, that might assist with an explanation. However, as Sheffield's case suggests, the college preceded the strategy. A consideration of the contemporary context provides insight into the 'why' of IPCs.

## **2.3 Contemporary Context – Global Trends**

### **2.3.1 The Growth of Internationalisation in Higher Education**

There used to be three near-certainties about higher education. It was supplied on a national basis, mostly to local students. It was government-regulated. And competition and profit were almost unknown concepts... few educators thought much about customers, fewer about profit. How that has changed. Higher education is now international in a way it has not been since the heyday of Europe's great medieval universities – and on a vastly greater scale.  
(Economist, 2005: 77)

The context of these changes, as the Economist suggests, is to do with internationalisation, a phenomenon which Knight (2003) defines thus:

Internationalisation at the national, sector, and institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education.  
(Knight, 2003:2)

As the Economist also points out, the scale and impact of the internationalisation phenomenon is of an unprecedented order. Knight (2008) suggests why. 'Internationalisation is changing the world of higher education, and globalization is changing the world of internationalisation' (Knight, 2008:1).

Internationalisation, then, is a response to the stimulus of globalisation. To understand the reason for the presence of International Pathway Colleges within the internationalisation agenda of universities, it is necessary to understand some of the characteristics of the phenomenon of globalisation that is driving it.

### **2.3.2 Globalisation and Higher Education**

The concept of globalisation is one that has existed in many guises for many years (Wallerstein, 1974). However, in its current and arguably most pervasive incarnation

(Robertson, 1992) it manifests a number of key characteristic. Waters (2001) identifies six.

1. *Starting in the sixteenth century, it is now in its most rapid phase of development.*

In support of the historical perspective Waters cites Wallerstein whose world-system theory can be seen as a precursor to globalisation. According to this theory, ‘over four hundred years, successive expansions have transformed the capitalist world economy from a system located primarily in Europe to one that covers the entire globe.’ (Wallerstein, 1990:36). Although his focus on the economic sphere of activity limits his analysis (Giddens, 1990:69), it nonetheless suggests two important features of globalisation. First, that ‘globalisation is the direct consequence of the expansion of European culture across the planet’ (Waters, 2001:6), and that, secondly, as Britain and the United States have, between them, provided the capital markets to fuel the growth of the capitalist world economy (Gilpin, 1987:308), their common language, English, has been ‘learned as a foreign language, in recognition of the hegemonic power of native English speakers’ (Graddol, 2006:19).

The recent acceleration of globalisation is due to the sphere in which it operates. The initial development of the European capitalist model was primarily economic involving material exchanges. This was then followed by a political phase as nation states became established, which in turn has now been succeeded by a cultural phase as symbolic exchanges predominate. ‘The more that people are engaged in exchanging information, values and artistic expression with each other, the more likely it is that these exchanges will occur over long distances.’ (Waters, 2001:21). The nature of culture has itself been transformed in this process as the distance between elite and popular culture narrows, and its commodification continues apace

(Waters, 2001:172). Abu Dhabi, for example, is in the process of creating a 'cultural hub' in the Middle East which will contain a Louvre Museum and a Guggenheim Museum in close proximity to a branch campus of New York University an INSEAD research foundation and a Sorbonne University campus.

2. *It implies the phenomenological elimination of space and the generalization of time.*

The change to time and space occasioned by globalisation has been commented upon by a number of authors. For Giddens (1990:19), the relationship between the two has been severed; for Harvey (1989:241) time has annihilated space. The consequence is that the organisation of human activity irrespective of 'local time' or locus becomes possible. See, for example, the activity of call centres in the Indian sub-continent serving customers on the other side of the planet (Friedman, 2005:21-29).

3. *It subsumes the dualism of universal and particular as a result of the annihilation of time and space.*

As a consequence of the change in the relationship between time and space, the dualism of universal and particular is no longer tenable and instead there is 'a twofold process involving the interpenetration of the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism.' (Robertson, 1992:100). Thus the experience of particularization - of distinctness where one lives - is increasingly the situation everywhere; it is universal. At the same time, when there are universal ideas – human rights, for example – they are developed and adapted (particularized) by and for each location.

4. *It is reflexive, as we all orient ourselves to global phenomena.*

The two separate worlds of the universal and the particular have now been replaced by a dialogue between the global and the local which Giddens describes in terms of relativization and reflexivity (Giddens, 1990:36-45). The local becomes a ‘reflexive construction of community’ (Waters, 2001:5) in response to the stimulus of globalisation.

5. *It increases the inclusiveness of human society.*

A consequence is that all human society is related. There are no boundaries that can be set, or limitations applied to experiences which are now global. This ‘unification’ is one of experience of a common stimulus. It does not in any way imply a common response. Global consciousness does not mean global consensus.

6. *It involves a fiduciary commitment by each individual to the incomprehensible whole.* This incomprehensibility stems from the inability of any individual to fully understand the forces at work in the systems (e.g. global financial markets). In order for globalizing mechanisms to work, individuals are required to extend trust to unknown and impersonal agencies and forces. This represents a profound shift from what Giddens calls ‘facework’ commitments to ‘faceless’ commitments (Giddens, 1990:80).

These six characteristics would appear to have both relevance to and significance for HEIs. First, HEIs based in the English-speaking world have two immediate advantages. They are associated with the economic, political and philosophical models which have ushered in the modern age, and they communicate in its lingua franca. This gives them pre-eminent status. Over the last hundred years British and US scholars have received more than half the Nobel prizes in physics, chemistry and medicine, for example

(Feldman, 2001:388-400). Second, the compression of space and time gives rise to a number of possibilities in terms of modes of educational delivery. Distance learning (both synchronous and asynchronous) becomes possible as does the establishment of a physical presence on another continent which is still perceived as a branch campus of the founding institution able to deliver all or part of the educational experience (see New York University, Abu Dhabi; Nottingham Trent, Ningbo, China, University of Sheffield, Malaysia.). It also becomes possible for students to relocate themselves in distant locales to pursue education yet remain in immediate, direct and frequent contact with multiple points of reference at their origin. As the world engages in the process of relativization and reflexivity (Giddens, 1990:36-45) in relation to global phenomena, it is HEIs in the English-speaking world who are able to establish themselves as “gateways to expert relativization and reflexivity” by dint of their pre-eminent status. Additionally, the acceptance of faceless commitments facilitates payment for a service (education) provided at great distance from the sponsor. In sum, the developmental model which posits that ‘material exchanges localize; political exchanges internationalize; and symbolic exchanges globalize’ (Waters, 2001: 20) might also indicate that a HEI which organizes the symbolic exchange which occurs when a student pursues further studies has the opportunity to be a material beneficiary of globalisation. At a time when HEIs are seeing shrinking budgets (in per capita terms), yet increasing demands from national governments to serve a wider clientele and to deliver a different academic ‘product’ (Edwards, 2004; Callinicos, 2006), it would appear they have not only the opportunity but also the motive to engage successfully in globalisation.

This is an optimistic prognosis of the opportunities (as opposed to challenges) presented by globalisation. Other observers are not so sanguine.

Some commentators focus on the economic aspect of globalisation, the aspect which ‘not only sets the context for other forms of globalisation. Its language is also increasingly used to describe their activities – it “captures their discourses.”’ (Bottery 2006:102).

Other authors also comment on ‘the discourse of marketization that circulates in contemporary Higher Education’ (Montgomery, 2010:6). The prevalence of the economic aspect is closely linked to a world view which gained pre-eminence at the end of the twentieth century. With the collapse of Sino-Soviet communism, ‘neo-liberalism’ (Giddens, 1998:5) or ‘the Washington consensus’ (Stiglitz, 2002:67) achieved hegemonic status. This stood for liberalization in capital markets, trade and in all areas of economic activity. It may be thought that Higher Education could draw itself up and stand aloof from being considered to be directly involved in ‘economic activity’ and therefore immune to the changes sought by this new economic agenda and those, particularly in government, who pursue it. However, two other forces have brought HE very much into the economic arena. The first is the connection made by governments between ‘the knowledge society’ and higher education as the locus of production of that knowledge (Callinicos, 2006:5). The second is a change in the recognition accorded academic mobility:

While academic mobility has been an aspect of higher education for centuries, it is only now in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that an international trade law treats higher education as a tradable commodity subject to a multilateral set of trade rules.  
(Knight, 2008:x)

Knight is referring here to the General Agreement on Trade in Services which makes an explicit connection between education and international trade. Like it or not, Higher Education cannot avoid the impact of the economic agenda that has been at the heart of globalisation or the neoliberalism which has grown from it, so must decide how to deal with it. There are three trends in particular that have particularly circumscribed their

latitude in doing so. In addition to the neoliberal Washington consensus, there is also the decline of the West and the emergence of the knowledge economy.

### **2.3.3 Emerging trends**

#### **From Welfare Consensus to Washington Consensus**

After 1945, the liberal democratic economies that emerged from the years of conflict enjoyed ‘the golden age of history’ (Hobsbawm, 1995) and societies benefitted from ‘expanding populations, prosperous economies and benign states.’ (Hargreaves, 2003:3). In the UK this allowed the development of the ‘welfare consensus’ (Giddens, 1998:vii). The golden age was to be followed by ‘the landslide (1975 to 1991)’ (Hobsbawm, op.cit). The descent to which he refers was associated with a ‘new-right ideology and a widespread recognition of the failure of the welfare state model’s emphasis on public ownership’ (King et al., 2004:68). The consensus which replaced the welfare version was entitled ‘the Washington Consensus’. It was based on three pillars – ‘fiscal austerity, privatization and market liberalization.’ (Stiglitz, 2002: 53). This set of values, shared by many western democratic nation-states and as importantly by the IMF and World Bank (Stiglitz, 2002:73-74), sought to liberate the nation-state from the restraints that were perceived as being placed upon it by the earlier orthodoxy and which were now impeding its growth and health. Unfortunately, this view flew in the face of considerable economic research (Stiglitz, loc.cit.) and attributed the decline in western economic prowess to a system of internal organisation over which the nation state could exert control, rather than a consequence of globalizing forces beyond its control (King, 2010). As this economic doctrine gained currency amongst leaders of nation-states, it became a political ideology, termed ‘neoliberalism’ (Stiglitz, 2002:13). It is ‘a particularly pure form of the logic of capital’ which:

seeks to subject every aspect of social life to the logic of the market, and to make everything into a commodity that can be privately owned and bought and sold for a profit.  
(Callinicos, 2006:7)

The pursuit of neoliberalism as an antidote to economic decline has been contested (Gray, 1998; Luttwak, 1999; Stiglitz, 2002; Hargreaves, 2003; Klein 2005; Callinicos, 2006; Ritzer, 2008). It is criticized for both failing to deliver any significant gains for the nation-states involved in its pursuit, and for allowing capital markets freedoms which have resulted in the crisis of the first decade of the twenty-first century and the debt burden under which these nation-states now labour: ‘capital market liberalization... did more to serve the interests of the financial community than of global stability’ (Stiglitz, 2002: 230)

As well as the financial cost, there has also been the social cost. Central to neoliberalism is the primacy of the market. Nothing should be allowed to impede it. Institutions designed to moderate its more pernicious effects (Stiglitz, 2002:12) are seduced by it. Thus, the IMF ‘destroyed the social contract to preserve the credit contract’ (Stiglitz, 2002:209) in its dealings with the former USSR. Societies retreat before it and have ‘surrendered responsibility for providing safe environments to commercial interests leading to a life of consumption’ (Ritzer, 2008:114). As a consequence, citizens are transformed into consumers. The significance of this is in the transformation that this wreaks upon the individual and society. ‘Consumers speak the elementary rhetoric of me; citizens invent the common language of we.’ (Barber, 2003:243). This is but the first step on a downward spiral. There is ‘a pervasive corrosion of character of the long term sentiments and moral virtues that hold people together in families, communities and corporate life.’ (Hargreaves, 2003: 39) and the result is ‘a brutal, uncaring social order.’ (Ignatieff, 2000: 91). In the world of work, neoliberalism has emerged in the form of ‘McDonaldization’ which seeks to subject every aspect of work to the four principles of efficiency, calculability, predictability and control (Ritzer, 2008:11). In consequence, work is deskilled, workers are proletarianized and employment becomes more precarious (Callinicos, 2006:24).

The effect is ultimately self-destructive, so the biological metaphor of cancer is more apt than the chemical metaphor of corrosion. ‘McWorld cannot survive the world it inevitably tends to create if not countered by civic and democratic forces it inevitably tends to undermine’ (Barber, 2003:245). Rifkin (2000:247) speaks of ‘poisoning the well from which we draw important values and feelings.’

Neither the argument nor the evidence is entirely conclusive. Gallo (2012: 215) describes the Apple corporate model which values innovation and challenge (‘it’s better to be a pirate than to join the navy’ attributed to Steve Jobs). Hargreaves (2003:160ff.) describes ‘professional learning communities’ in counterpoint to the ‘performance training sects’ which he perceives as products of neoliberal orthodoxy. Yet, it is the pervasive nature of neoliberalism which makes it so potent - its ability to ‘capture the discourses’ of other ideologies (Bottery 2006:102).

The impact of this doctrine on higher education has been considerable. From a position of insulation under the welfare consensus where education was considered a societal good to be bankrolled by the state which thus mediated the relationship between the institution and its students, universities must now increasingly engage in customer relations management with the customer who is making a payment – albeit often deferred - for the service provided. Universities must justify their existence, and increasingly earn the funds to support it.

It could be argued, then, that international pathways colleges are the harbingers of a commodification of education, developing a ‘McDonaldized’ curriculum and impoverished learning experience for students (Ritzer, op. cit., Bottery, 2004:30), whilst subjecting staff to the proletarianisation and precarity described by Callinicos (op.cit).

The first potential answer to **Research Question A.1, What is the genesis of Sheffield International college and others of its type?** is that they came into being as a result of

an extension of neoliberal doctrine into the realm of higher education. These appear to be similar to the ‘banking schools’ of which Strike (2000) wrote and for which ‘knowledge ... is a commodity and education is instrumentalised.’ (Bottery, 2004:167). This is the view of the University and College Union, and is the reason why it has, as one of its campaigns, ‘Fighting privatisation in tertiary education.’

UCU opposes any attempt to transfer course provision and other key university functions into the control of any ‘partnerships’, ‘joint ventures’ or other enterprises involving private sector providers such as INTO, Study Group International or Kaplan.. (UCU, 2012)

Two further connected, yet contending, trends are also influential.

### **The decline of the West**

Just as natural resources are becoming ever scarcer, so is the financial resource on which western economies were able to build their welfare consensus in the second half of the twentieth century.

America has faced pressures like this before, particularly after World War II, when our nation decided to send millions of returning GIs to college. During that period, the US government addressed the problem in a simple way: by throwing money at it. This won’t work in these times, given the dismal fiscal condition of the federal and state governments. (Rosen, 2011:xxviii)

This phenomenon is not confined only to the United States. Hargreaves (2003:6) refers to the period after the Second World War as ‘the age of the autonomous professional’ when education in developed, democratic countries ‘benefitted from expanding populations, prosperous economies and benign states.’ (Hargreaves, loc.cit.). This largesse depended on ‘enabling resources’ (King, 2010:xvii) over which western economies had hegemonic control and access. That ease of access to cheap enabling resources now having gone, the foundation of largesse for education has been eroded. As a consequence, UK universities are ‘being transformed from scholarly institutions into profit centres earning foreign exchange for the economy of the UK.’ (Callinicos, 2006:5). From this perspective, it could be argued that another answer to **Research**

**Question A.1** is that IPCs exist to supply the depleted coffers of UK universities who lack the resources, the expertise or the inclination to engage in for-profit activities themselves, though happy to reap the rewards when others do so on their behalf.

### **The Knowledge Economy and Higher Education**

That education should prepare students for the twenty-first century world of work is not denied by politicians or educators. The UK government white paper, *‘Our Competitive Future: Building the Knowledge-Driven Economy’* (1998) set out the challenge and placed the government at the heart of this initiative, with a specific educational remit of ‘improving the skills and capabilities of the workforce including by raising educational standards’ (DTI, 1998:2.2). Educators recognize their role:

We live in a knowledge economy, a knowledge society. Knowledge economies are stimulated and driven by creativity and ingenuity. Knowledge society schools have to create these qualities, otherwise their nations will be left behind.  
(Hargreaves, 2003:xvi)

Following a decade of investment and initiative, signs are not encouraging. ‘The latest findings of the PISA survey - the Programme for International Student Assessment - show the UK tumbling down the rankings,’ (Coughlan, 2010:1). However, whilst it may be argued that this is journalistic hyperbole given that the population of the survey has doubled over the last ten years, there is a growing sense of unease about the fitness of schools to deliver the specific skills for the information economy, schools which ‘are preparing young people neither to work well in the knowledge economy nor to live well in a strong civil society.’ (Hargreaves, 2003: xvii). This was as a consequence of ‘a new orthodoxy of educational reform worldwide – providing standardized solutions at low cost’ (Hargreaves, 2003:57). The results are a ‘trained incapacity to think openly’ (Lauder et al, 1998:51) and the opening of an ‘ingenuity gap’ (Homer-Dixon, 2000). In sum:

‘standardization, micromanagement and tightened inspection systems may therefore have been adopted in large part because of global pressures, it is likely that they are exactly the opposite of what is required to meet this global future’  
(Bottery, 2004:86)

Universities are, therefore, expected to deliver graduates skilled and ready for the knowledge economy, a transformation they must achieve with limited resources, the second of the key challenges they face.

International Pathway Colleges could, then, be seen as one way of attempting to respond to the demand for ‘knowledge workers’ from economies whose appetite outstrips their own capacity to satisfy it, by offering them a route in to the ‘knowledge factories’ of the West. However, IPCs must themselves determine where they stand insofar as preparing students for the demands of the knowledge economy is concerned. One of Kaplan’s key considerations is to provide ‘stripped down classes [for students who] don’t want anything they’re not using’ (Rosen, 2011:118). The result is a very consumer-oriented, possibly backwards-looking, educational proposition which may not consider liberal and civic goods as part of its remit, and does not necessarily prepare students to live and socialize in the world in which they work.

#### **2.3.4 The alternate view**

The potential answers to **Research Question A.1** that have been derived from a consideration of three facets of globalisation indicate, according to some commentators, that IPCs represent a flawed logic that is ultimately injurious to the institutions with which they are partnered and, in exchange for substantial fees, offers an impoverished view of education. By extending neoliberal principles and marketization into education, they bring precarity and proletarianisation (Callinicos, 2006:12) to staff and students alike; by acting as a means of generating revenue for universities, they commodify education and eviscerate the internationalisation agenda of any deeper significance (UCU, 2010a); by providing an entirely instrumental approach to education, they

provide only a skin-deep preparation for the demands of the knowledge economy or university. (Hargreaves, 2003).

There is, however, an alternate explanation. In his book *'Change.edu: rebooting for the new talent economy'* Kaplan CEO Andrew Rosen looks at the 'evolution of challenger institutions across the history of American higher education, including, most recently, private-sector colleges.' (Rosen, 2011: xxv). He provides a historical context, in which for-profit education is seen as the latest in a line of 'disruptive innovators' (Rosen, 2011:xvii).

The colleges that resulted from these bursts of innovation were each greeted with condescension, criticism and charges of illegitimacy (yet achieving) ... over time the same level of acceptance (as the elite).  
(Rosen, *ibid.*).

Like their predecessors (land-grant colleges in the nineteenth century, and the community colleges of the twentieth century), they 'create new opportunities for people who have been shut out by the prestigious institutions' (*ibid.*), a theme he enlarges in relation to Kaplan in particular.

Kaplan is a for-profit institution, but my colleagues and I see our work as 'mission-driven', by making highly effective higher education accessible to people who have been shut out by traditional institutions.  
(Rosen, 2011:xxiii)

The reduction in public funding at the time when there is an increased need for educated individuals as a consequence of the knowledge economy exposes serious shortcomings in the current model of education, where income is spent 'on activities that aren't included in any real definition of education or learning' (Rosen, 2011:44). By contrast with traditional elite institutions, he describes for-profit colleges as being 'able to tailor their education to specific, identifiable learning outcomes and measure performance against these outcomes' (Rosen, 2011:111). He believes that whilst non-profit institutions focus on inputs including many inessentials, for-profits focus on outputs and measurable student learning. He also suggests that the soubriquet 'for-profit' might

more appropriately be replaced by ‘tax-paying’ to distinguish such colleges from the ‘tax-receiving’ ones of the state.

Although International Pathway Colleges are not serving students whose financial means are limited in the way that Community Colleges in the United States are (Rosen, 2011:78), they are serving a group whose access to higher education and the opportunities it confers is limited because the opportunities they seek are not available at home, and access to opportunity overseas is denied by a combination of language and academic entry barriers. It could therefore be argued that Kaplan’s International Pathway Colleges sit foursquare within the Kaplan tradition of ‘opening doors’ (Rosen, 2011: xxii) intending to make ‘highly effective higher education accessible to people who’ve been shut out’ by geography, language and academic requirements (Rosen, 2011: xxiii). Rosen’s book is not a piece of scholarly research. Instead it is a contribution to a debate in the United States about the value and future of higher education (Kirschner, 2012:1) and the only substantial review of his book (Gates, 2012) is to be found in *The Washington Post* (Rosen’s employer) by Bill Gates whose wife, Melinda, served on the board of *The Washington Post* from 2004 to 2010. These caveats aside, Rosen is CEO of Kaplan and speaks for the organization. Though more polemic than scholarship, his book represents the counter-argument to the positions presented in sections 2.3.3, 2.3.4 and 2.3.5.

### **2.3.5 Summary**

In order to frame a response to **Research Question A.1, What is the Genesis of Sheffield International College and others of its type?**, this chapter has considered the historical background. Three particular themes emerged: the spread of the neoliberal doctrine into all areas of contemporary life; the need to generate additional sources of income for higher education in response to straitened circumstances; the global demand

for workers prepared for the needs of the ‘knowledge economy’. Each one of these could provide an answer to the question.

In addition, there were two very different lenses through which these answers could be seen. The first is a critical and pessimistic one, which perceives International Pathway Colleges as agencies of forces that are injurious to the staff and students of the institutions.

In sum, HEI internationalisation is the offspring of economic globalisation, the neglect of HEIs in the developing world and the cultural and economic hegemony of the West. The vehicle it has created, ‘Higher Education Inc’, seeks financial gains from international students. From this emerges a ‘Global University’ disbursing a culturally loaded, standardised education through the internet and a casualised local labour force, to train employees for a globalised corporate economy.  
(Haigh, 2008:430)

The second is one that perceives HE provision (particularly in the US) as failing to respond to the three principal themes outlined above, and sees for profit institutions as the ‘test tubes’ wherein answers are being developed.

The multinational, for-profit firm could turn out to be the vehicle best-suited for providing broad-scale access to practical higher education, benefitting students who might otherwise have far fewer opportunities  
(Wildavsky, 2010:166)

Private and for-profit institutions bring particular strengths to bear: ‘Their key resource is control of increasingly sophisticated delivery platforms and managed learning environments plus efficient administrative staff and systems’ (King, 2004:61).

Perhaps this is not a matter of either / or choices between paradigms and traditions: ‘Multi-sourced approaches now predominate in many advanced countries ... because innovation requires solutions to complex problems that cannot be adequately addressed from within a single paradigm’ (Gibbons, 2004:113).

It may be possible, therefore to establish a working hypothesis suggesting that International Pathway Colleges are a response to a number of stimuli, and that how they develop will very much depend on the conscious direction in which they are then taken

by the leadership of the institutions they serve. It may be that one institution will see them as exclusively a response to financial issues, whilst another will seek to take advantage of the opportunities they present for deeper internationalisation of the curriculum in preparing all its students for the global knowledge economy. The future direction of Sheffield International College is addressed in **Research Question C2**

**What is the likely future direction of the College?**

Having surveyed the context in which The University of Sheffield and Sheffield International College operate in seeking to answer **Research Question A1 ‘What is the genesis of Sheffield International Colleges and others of its type?’**, our attention now turns to the theories and concepts that will be used to answer the other research questions set out at the beginning, **Research Questions A2, B1, B2 and C1** (see table 2.2)

Theme	Subsidiary Research Questions
A. Educational space	A.1 What is the genesis of Sheffield International College and others of its type?
	A.2 What are the educational goals of the College and to what extent and how well are they achieved?
B. Organizational space	B.1 What kind of relationship does the college have with its principal stakeholders?
	B.2 How effective have these relationships been in delivering the goals of the partnership?
C. Cultural space	C.1 To what extent does the College provide a ‘Third Space’ for its stakeholders, students and staff?
	C.2 What is the likely future direction of the College?

*Table 2.2 Subsidiary Research Questions*

## **Chapter 3 - Theories, Concepts and Terminology: their relevance to the subject of research**

Concepts are organized around theory (Weiskopf, 2011). Thus, Bhabha (1994) has a theory of cultural development for which he creates the concept of *The Third Space*. ‘Space’ (and ‘place’ - see Masfield, 1946:10 and Rosen 2011:xi) is used as a core concept in this thesis, not as a static or empty physical or geographical location, but as an evolving (Harvey, 1989:241; Giddens, 1990:19), contested (Whitchurch, 2013) and consequently transformative (Bhabha, 1994) concept. ‘Space’ is considered under three themes in this thesis – educational, organizational and cultural – each dealing with an aspect of Sheffield International College. Before looking at the specific theories, concepts and associated terminology under each of these three headings, it is worth examining the notion of *The Third Space* in more detail to understand its relevance and potential.

### **3.1 The Third Space**

One of the consequences of Globalisation is the challenge to ‘Orientalism’. The 1970s saw the introduction of the notion of *post colonialism* (Kalscheuer, 2009:36). One of its foremost proponents was Edward Said whose *Orientalism* (Said, 1977) suggested the development of an “imaginative geography” (Said, 1977:162) comprising a world divided between imperial superiors and their (culturally inferior) subjects, with an implied distance and inequality, justifying and supporting the continuation of imperial power. With the dismantling of Anglo-French imperial structures in the second half of the twentieth century, the supporting conceptual infrastructure was challenged, most eloquently in Said’s (op. cit.) seminal work. As Globalisation manifested itself towards the end of the twentieth century, the “imaginative geography” of which Said had written

was challenged. The physical distance on which imaginative geography partially relied for its existence was substantially eroded or compressed as a consequence of travel and technology (Giddens, op.cit; Harvey, op.cit.). The compression of time and space meant the replacement of a space which kept cultures apart (Said's "imaginative geography") by a space where they came together. This space was conceptualized by Homi Bhabha (1994) as '*the Third Space*.' This has not been an uncontested development. Authors (most notably Huntington, 1996) have sought to adapt imaginative geography for the twenty-first century by suggesting a series of antagonistic cultural blocs. The notion of *The Third Space* is, however, a novel contribution to, and perspective on, intercultural studies (Ikas and Wagner, 2009:2). Fundamentally, rather than cultures existing at distance, they meet in the *Third Space* to which the compression of time and space – one of the features of globalisation that was noted in the preceding chapter – gives rise. As a consequence, hybrid cultures emerge.

The importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the 'third space' which enables other positions to emerge.  
(Bhabha in Rutherford, 1990: 211)

However, the *Third Space* is not an automatic or unchallenged consequence of globalization. Bhabha sees a challenge whence one might anticipate support – from cultural diversity.

A transparent norm is constituted, a norm given by the host society or dominant culture. Which says that 'these other cultures are fine, but we must be able to locate them within our own grid',... The second problem is...that in societies where multiculturalism is encouraged racism is still rampant in various forms. This is because the universalism that paradoxically permits diversity masks ethnocentric norms, values and interests.  
(Bhabha in Rutherford, 1990:208)

This echoes one of the features of globalization that was described earlier, namely 'a twofold process involving the interpenetration of the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism.' (Robertson, 1992:100). The 'containment within a grid' is at the heart of the debate about the kind of experience that international students have in UK HE (Montgomery, 2010:5) and so the fundamental question that

arises in connection with the College is whether it forms part of a grid or a *Third Space*. If a 'grid', whose - Kaplan's or the University's? If not, does it represent a hybrid Third Space?

### **3.2 Spaces: educational, organizational and cultural**

Earlier, in chapter one, reference was made to the value of the concept of space and its applicability at three levels within this research. By drawing on the work of a number of authors, not simply Bhabha, this thesis uses the concept of space in an educational, an organizational and a cultural setting in order to provide a layered and detailed analysis of developments of which Sheffield International College is a part. However, by using a single motif throughout the research, the aim has been to keep a single focus in order to provide a coherent analysis of connected issues.

First it facilitates a consideration of the College as an *educational* space and seeks to establish how well the College meets the needs of its students. Second, it facilitates an examination of the College as an *organizational* space for collaboration between two very different partners. How successful is the collaboration? Third, it allows a consideration of the College as a *cultural* space, a '*Third Space* which enables other positions to emerge' (Bhabha in Rutherford, 1990:211) in a transformative process. This transformative process is applicable to students, staff and institutions and this cultural inquiry seeks to establish the wider impact of the College.

#### **3.2.1 Educational Space**

The forces that have been described in the description of the contemporary context (2.3, above) have had no less an impact on schools than they have on universities. Authors (Strike, 1999; Hargreaves, 2005; Bottery, 2004) have suggested a continuum along which schools need to consciously position themselves. For Strike, (1999:49) it is a

difference between a bank and a congregation which Bottery (2004) adapts to contrast metaphorical 'banking' schools with community schools (Bottery, 2004: 168-169). Hargreaves sees the continuum as being one between 'Performance Training Sects' and 'Professional Learning Communities' (Hargreaves, 2005: 133ff.). These are the concepts associated with the vision of a future of education painted by the CEO of Kaplan Inc., the parent of Kaplan International Colleges, Andrew S. Rosen (2011) on the one hand, and the vision of a university painted by Masfield (1946) at the inauguration of the Chancellor of The University of Sheffield on the other. Haigh (2002), applies this notion of a continuum to the provision of preparatory education for international students at HEIs in the UK, with 'Bringing the foreigners up to speed' at one end of the continuum and 'Multicultural education' at the other. Because of its explicit connection to international students, it is worth looking in some detail at Haigh's concepts.

Haigh (2002) posits a number of ways of 'containing' the international dimension within a western HE grid. He labels these as follows:

#### 'Bringing the Foreigners up to Speed'

Individuals are given remedial work, often including language training, to bring them up to speed with the dominant tradition. For example ... in Oxford, the many private English language schools serve a similar function in equipping students for British universities. Some universities try to incorporate such training within the normal degree structure but this isolates such students for long hours in remedial classes. It ...signals that the local tradition is considered unquestionably normal in the context of the education provided and restricts the intrusion of multicultural skills into the system at large.

#### 'Education about Cultural Pluralism'

The university provides courses that grant all students the opportunity to learn about different cultures and study their ideas and values. Large universities espousing this model create centres for Asian, African, or Celtic Culture... Inevitably, the approach implies that the dominant tradition is 'normal' and above such analysis.

#### 'Benevolent Multicultural Segregation'

Intending to preserve diversity and pluralism, different traditions, often associated with minority groups, are taught as separate but equal alternatives to the dominant...the result emerges as minority programmes, most famously 'Black Studies' ... rivalry between the

two systems results in conflict as the minority group strives to assert its own values and identity.

### ‘Bicultural Education’

All students build competence in at least two traditions: the locally dominant and another that is strongly represented amongst the student body... The approach may, in some way, support the status quo... Naturally, the approach is most suited to circumstances where two clearly defined communities coexist.

He also posits a last category which is project-based and which he ‘commends.’

### ‘Multicultural Education’

The approach is echoed by Delors’ (1998a) advice that the answer is to have members of different groups working together on shared projects of collective concern. However, personal experience shows that, in this case, unless cross-cultural understanding is an explicit part of the equation... participants do no more than build a neutral working relationship that lies inoffensively between different not-understood norms. The risk of trying to teach multicultural skills directly is that of stereotyping.

(Adapted from Haigh 2002 and Haigh, 2008).

In the first four of these categories, there are clear references to ‘the grid’ that contains and confines the international. However, it does not necessarily follow that international students are constrained by a deficit model (Montgomery, 2010:112) and enveloped within a ‘grid’. There is a growing body of evidence (Caruana and Spurling, 2007; Beck, 2009; Leask, 2009; Montgomery, 2010) emerging that as well as a home-international axis along which the ‘home’ adopts the dominant position, there is also the intra-international axis on which international students explore a *Third Space* with other international students wherein a hybrid culture develops, a culture of ‘intercultural’ speakers, who leave the UK equipped for the world around them (Montgomery, 2010:113).

In determining what type of ‘educational space’ the College provides for its students, this thesis will use the concepts and the continua described above to frame its answer. Measuring achievement along the continua presents a challenge. The success of a focus on achievement in test scores in numeracy and literacy associated with ‘Performance Training Sects’ or ‘banking’ schools can be evaluated through an analysis of these scores. But the preparedness of a student to enter, and their performance within, a

‘Professional Learning Community’ requires a different approach, an approach more consistent with a focus on the attributes required to make a contribution to a (learning) community. The concept of Graduate Attributes or Outcomes is a common feature of many educational institutions (Moore and Hough, 2005). The University of Sheffield is no exception. It lists twelve attributes and comments thus: ‘One of the University’s most important objectives is to encourage in our students a commitment to personal growth, self-improvement, enterprise and life skills development’ (University of Sheffield, 2011).

<b>The Sheffield Graduate</b>	<b>The Kaplan Graduate Outcomes (Kaplan (2009))</b>
1. knowledgeable in their subject area	<b>Academic Knowledge</b> – the academic knowledge and skills required to undertake their degree programmes (see <b>Critical Appreciation</b> , below)
2. a critical, analytical and creative thinker	
3. an independent learner and researcher	<b>Academic Appreciation</b> – a theoretical and practical understanding of the protocols and practices associated with UK HE study
4. a problem solver	<b>Critical Appreciation</b> – the ability to discriminate between sources of information and a willingness to consider and explore different ideas and viewpoints with an open and critical mind
5. information literate and IT literate	
6. a flexible team worker	
7. an accomplished communicator	<b>Communicative Ability</b> – the linguistic ability and communication skills to succeed on their degree programmes and operate effectively in academic and social situations encountered while living and studying in their host environment.
8. an efficient planner and time manager	<b>Self Management</b> – the skills to be able plan and organize one’s time and to be an independent learner with the ability to work in a team and cope with change
9. competent in applying their knowledge and skills	<b>Studentship</b> - the confidence to engage in their host environment such that they are able to benefit fully from the range of social, cultural and educational opportunities available to them in their university life.
10. an active citizen who respects diversity	
11. professional and adaptable	
12. reflective, self aware and self-motivated	

*Table 3.1. The Sheffield Graduate and KIC Graduate Outcomes compared: adapted from Kaplan (2009) and University of Sheffield (2011).*

Kaplan also lists the goals it sets for its students in its own Graduate Outcomes (see table 3.1). The research for this thesis sought to gain the students’ own perceptions of their development of these attributes through a questionnaire and interviews structured around the Kaplan Graduate Outcomes.

This thesis, therefore, seeks to establish an answer to the question “**What kind of educational space does the college provide?**” by considering its work from both ends of theoretical continua provided by some of the experts in the field.

### 3.2.2 Organizational Space

The conceptual framework of *Third Space* between professional and academic spheres of activity is offered... as a way of exploring roles and identities in a diversifying higher education community, and also of considering the implications for individuals and for their institutions  
(Whitchurch, 2013: xii)

For Whitchurch, *Third Space* is an emerging concept which transcends the ‘academic/non-academic binary’ (op.cit.:3) notions of activity in higher education institutions. She refers to ‘a recognition of an expansion and re-combination of activity in higher education’ (op. cit.:14) since 1990 and makes reference to;

*Third Space* professionals [who] work not only between professional and academic spheres of activity, but also between functions and projects, between internal constituencies, and between institutions and their external partners.  
(op. cit.: 138)

Although there is no direct reference to the genre of International Pathway Colleges as a form of *Third Space*, there are clear linkages with reference to work between institutions and their external partners. If such Colleges can be considered as a form of *Third Space* it opens up a body of research and ideas that may be useful in explaining where such entities have come from as well as where they are going.

Whitchurch uses this concept in consideration of professional staff and their engagement with academic colleagues in a number of activities, described by McAlpine and Hopwood as ‘interactions between people who would not normally have worked together, where those interactions are focused on a shared (often novel) object (concept)’ (2009:159). Whitchurch suggests that:

Staff who are not in what are seen as mainstream professional or academic roles continue to be poorly documented. Nor are they well understood by institutional colleagues and there is sometimes equivocation among the staff themselves about their roles and identities.  
(Whitchurch, 2013:xiii)

This may have applicability to an International Pathway College implanted within a university campus and enjoined to work with university professionals and academics to develop a curriculum and student experience for international students intent on pursuing degree-level studies at the university. The comments about documentation and understanding are particularly apposite as evidence is cited later on (taken from an interview with Pro Vice Chancellor Paul White of The University of Sheffield) that there are ‘some preconceptions and some misunderstanding and some prejudices’ even on the University Executive Board about the international dimension within the University.

Of particular interest are the stages of development and types of *Third Space* that Whitchurch postulates:

<i>Stages of development</i>	<i>Description</i>
Contestation	a sense of resistance and struggle thereby becomes an integral part of working practices
Reconciliation	Understandings are developed that offer a more permissive place for new activities and relationships
Reconstruction	Involves the active contribution of individuals to the formation of the new space

*Table 3.2 Organisational Third Space: Stages of Development  
Adapted from Whitchurch, 2013:26-27.*

It is important to recognize that ‘the three processes are not mutually exclusive, and are likely to occur in parallel’ (ibid) so do not necessarily imply a linear progression. Depending on who is involved and in what area of the project, all three could be taking place at once. For example, work with the International Office at the University might be considered to be in one phase while engagement with an academic department that has had little or no exposure to the College might be at another, both at the same time.

Three types of *Third Space* emerged from Whitchurch’s studies and are shown in table 3.3. Although International Pathway Colleges in general and Sheffield International College in particular do not fit within this typology being, at least initially, entirely external to the University, nonetheless it is possible to use some of the logic of the

typology to examine the relationship with the parent company (Kaplan) as well as that with the University.

<i>Types of Third Space</i>	<i>Description</i>
Integrated	explicitly recognised by the institution and embedded within organisational structures
Semi-autonomous	recognition has been accorded by the institution to a specific project that has a measure of independence and autonomy from the institution by being fully or partly self-funded
Independent	arises, at least initially, out of individual collaborations and networks on a temporary or one-off basis for a specific purpose, often remaining under the organisational radar.

*Table 3.3 Organisational Third Space: Typologies  
Adapted from Whitchurch, 2013:33 ff.*

This thesis will use these concepts and frameworks to try and establish what kind of organizational space the College provides.

### **3.2.3 Cultural Space**

There are at least three ways in which Sheffield International College could provide a cultural *Third Space*.

First is for its students whose ‘imaginative geography’ is now challenged as they live and study together (85% of SIC students live in College accommodation) in an environment which is to a large extent equally alien to them all. Does the College foster a *Third Space* wherein a new ‘cosmopolitan<sup>2</sup>’ culture can emerge? More widely, does the College offer a space where international and home students can meet and create a hybrid ‘cosmopolitical’ culture (Beck, 2009:12)?

Second is for its staff and curriculum, and for the staff and curriculum of the University. How effectively does the College provide a *Third Space* where notions of educational deficiency are challenged (Montgomery, 2010:74), and false dichotomies (Ryan and Louie, 2007) are re-examined?

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<sup>2</sup> By ‘cosmopolitan’ the meaning intended here is that described by Ulrich Beck in a world where ‘nationalism is becoming unreal and idealistic (and) cosmopolitanism stands for realism in a world which has become cosmopolitical to its core’ (Beck, 2009:12)

Third, does the College provide a *Third Space* where two very different systems (government HE on the one hand and private enterprise on the other) can meet and establish an ‘assimilation of contraries’ (Wilson Harris quoted by Bhabha – Bhabha 1994:38).

These three lines of inquiry will be pursued later in this thesis to see if, in Bhabha’s words, ‘by exploring the Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves.’ (Bhabha, 1994:39)

### **3.3 Limitations of previous research**

In looking at the contemporary context and theories and concepts, it would appear that the limits of current research into international students studying within UKHE in general and international pathway colleges in particular have been reached. This is for three principal reasons.

First, too often the commercial agenda has driven research. ‘Confusion between research about international student issues and market research driven by recruitment agendas has at times muddied the issues in this area.’ (Montgomery, 2010:6). Second, and related to the first, the international pathway college environment is a highly competitive one, and a study across a range of (competing) colleges is improbable as too much of the relevant data would be considered as “Commercial – in confidence”. Third, IPCs in general and Sheffield International College in particular are so new that there has been little time for them to be a focus of any meaningful research, let alone literature.

However, the application of the concepts and theories considered above coming from the notion of *Third Space* could be useful in the same way that work undertaken by Whitchurch and others in relation to their particular fields of research has been in

helping to investigate ‘developments [which] appear to be occurring “under the radar”’ (Whitchurch, 2013:xii). Perhaps the metaphor of *Third Space* could provide a framework for consideration of IPCs.

In this chapter, a number of theories have been considered which will be used in conjunction with the research data to suggest answers to the research questions. The next chapter begins with a summary of these theories and questions, and then looks at the methodological considerations around the collection of the research data.

## Chapter 4 - Methodological Considerations

### 4.1 Introduction

The thesis title is: **“What kind of Space does Sheffield International College Provide for its Students and Principal Stakeholders?”** Making use of the notion of *Third Space* developed by Bhabha (1994), Whitchurch (2013) and others as the lens through which to consider the College, the ‘Space’ that is under consideration is educational, organizational and cultural. There are six subsidiary research questions which seek to break the inquiry down into a series of steps. Chapters 2 and 3 elaborated on concepts to be used to investigate the theoretical framework of *Third Space*.

Theme	Subsidiary Research Questions	Key concepts
A. Educational space	A.1 What is the genesis of Sheffield International College and others of its type?	Globalization ‘Performance Training Sects’ and ‘Professional Learning Communities’ (Hargreaves, 2003) ‘Banking schools’ and ‘Community schools’ (Bottery, 2004) ‘Bringing the foreigners up to speed’ and ‘Multicultural Education’ (Haigh, 2002) Graduate Attributes
	A.2 What are the educational goals of the College and to what extent and how well are they achieved?	
B. Organizational space	B.1 What kind of relationship does the college have with its principal stakeholders?	Third Space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typologies</li> <li>• Stages of development</li> </ul> (Whitchurch, 2013)
	B.2 How effective have these relationships been in delivering the goals of the partnership?	
C. Cultural space	C.1 To what extent does the College provide a ‘Third Space’ for its stakeholders, students and staff?	The Third Space (Bhabha, 1994) ‘Deficit model’ (Montgomery, 2010) ‘False dichotomies’ (Ryan and Louie, 2007) ‘Cosmopolitan culture’ (Beck, 2009) ‘Intercultural speakers’ (Byram and Fleming, 1998) ‘Assimilation of contraries’ (Harris quoted by Bhabha, 1994)
	C.2 What is the likely future direction of the College?	

*Table 4.1 Themes, Research Questions and Concepts*

Given that the subject for investigation is relatively new and previous research is limited, this case study will seek to apply theories and concepts to illuminate the case and to suggest avenues for further research.

Exploratory research is undertaken when few or no previous studies exist. The aim is to look for patterns, hypotheses or ideas that can be tested and will form the basis for further research.  
(Neville, 2007:3)

## **4.2 Methodology, reliability and validity**

This is a chapter entitled ‘Methodological considerations’.

The significance of the term ‘methodology’ is that it requires an argument to connect the choice and practice of particular methods to the way that the problem is conceived and the limitations and utility of the outcome. It is in this sense of the term, as requiring a critical justification for the adoption and practice of particular research methods that we claim that our concern is with ‘methodology’ rather than with methods alone.  
(Schratz and Walker, 1995:12)

In this section the argument is made for the selection and use of particular methods. The argument begins with ontological assumptions about what it is to be human, and associated epistemological assumptions about what constitutes knowledge. (Bryman, 2008:4).

Ontology is concerned with the nature of existence and the two positions most commonly arising from its consideration are those of *objectivism* and *constructivism*. In the realm of social phenomena, the former ‘asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors’ while the latter ‘asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors’ (Bryman, 2008:19).

This research takes a *constructivist* ontological position believing that ‘social phenomena and categories are not only produced through social interaction but...are in a constant state of revision’ (Bryman, 2008:19). The notion of *Third Space* which the thesis employs is not a physical space but a socially constructed one. The associated

epistemological position is *interpretivism* which seeks to ‘grasp the subjective meaning of social action’ (Bryman, 2008:694) or to see the world through the eyes of those who are the subject of the study, a view of knowledge that is particularly prevalent in cultural or ethnographic studies (Bryman, 1989:142). Methods associated with interpretivism are generally, though not exclusively, qualitative. The alternative would be a ‘positivist’ approach that only considers objectively verifiable facts as the basis for knowledge. There has been considerable debate over the link between methods and methodology, which, in its extremes, has suggested that methods are pre-determined by methodological assumptions.

The rather partisan either/or tenor of the debate about quantitative and qualitative research may appear somewhat bizarre to an outsider, for whom the obvious way forward is likely to be a fusion of the two approaches so that their respective strengths might be reaped. (Bryman, 1988:127)

This approach favouring a fusion is the position taken in this thesis. Although the methods most frequently employed throughout this research are qualitative, this has not excluded the use of quantitative methods where appropriate. For example, assessment data is used to compare the performance of the two groups that are the subject of inquiry. However, although this (objective) data can tell us what is happening, it is only with the collection of feedback from the students themselves that we can start to understand why it is happening.

The emphasis of qualitative methods is ‘on the perspective of the individual being studied’ (Bryman, 1989: 24). Methods most commonly used in qualitative research include participant observation, unstructured and semi-structured interviewing, and the examination of documents (Bryman, 1989:142). Because of the researcher’s role within the case being studied (see the ‘Ethics’ section, below), participant observation was not used as there would be too much danger of bias in the interpretation of observations. However, this is a case study designed to ‘look for patterns, hypotheses or ideas that can be tested and will form the basis for further research’ (Neville, 2007:2) and it may be

that future studies could involve an ‘outside’ researcher who could employ participant observation from a more detached and objective position.

Prior to the interviews an on-line questionnaire (using Survey Monkey) was administered. Phellas et al. (2012:191) contrast the advantages of survey and interview. Survey provides cheap, quick access to a large number of potential respondents and can also generate a large amount of data for investigation. However, interpretation can be problematic, and this is where interview can assist by providing context and detail. This is an example of a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, and Bryman (2008:610) lists sixteen categories of ‘mixed methods research’ in practice. This would be an example of ‘Completeness’ where ‘a more complete answer to a research question or set of research questions can be achieved by including both quantitative and qualitative methods’ (op. cit.:612).

The methodology and methods being established, a check is needed of methods to ensure that they are robust and fit for purpose. For quantitative methods, this is considered to be a concern with ‘reliability’ and ‘validity’ (Neuman, 2003:208; Bryman, 2008:149) and for qualitative methods a concern with ‘trustworthiness’ and ‘authenticity’ (Bryman, 2008:377).

Bryman constructs a list matching the criteria across methods:

<b>Quantitative</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>
Reliability	Dependability
Internal validity	Credibility
External validity	Transferability
Objectivity	Confirmability

*Table 4.2 Criteria for Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research (Based on Bryman, 2008:377)*

Both survey and interview questions were reviewed by an expert panel consisting of thesis supervisor, international student graduate of the College, and a member of staff in the international office at the University. Their expert judgment was sought to advise on:

- the apparent reliability/dependability of the tools
- the relatedness of the tools to the concepts of Graduate Attributes (the concept being operationalized)
- whether or not the researcher’s professional role had resulted in inherent bias in the questions

The issue of external validity / transferability was also a matter for concern. This was a case study investigating a novel phenomenon – the international pathway college. Absent an existing body of literature on the subject or established practice in the area, transferability of findings might be questionable. Two features of the research improved the opportunity for transferability. First, by choosing one of a group of more than forty similar institutions there is an opportunity for transferability. Second, the use of the lens of *The Third Space* sought to establish a connection with a developing field of research which would offer potential for comparison and transfer within *Third Space* studies.

### 4.3 Research Design

#### 4.3.1 Case Study

Bryman (1989:174) lists five ‘chief research designs’ for the investigation of organizations.

Designs		Methods	
D1	Experiment (major distinctions: laboratory and field experiments; experiments and quasi – experiments)	M1	Self-administered questionnaire
D2	Survey (including longitudinal survey design)	M2	Structured interview
D3	Qualitative research	M3	Participant observation
D4	Case study	M4	Unstructured interviewing
D5	Action research	M5	Structured observation
		M6	Simulation
		M7	Archival sources of data

Table 4.3 Chief research designs and methods in organizational research (Bryman, 1989:29)

The value of a case study is that it ‘can be employed in a somewhat exploratory manner in order to achieve insights into a previously uncharted area’ (Bryman, 1989:174).

However, there is at least one methodological consideration to address before this assertion can be accepted. Interpretivism, the epistemology on which this thesis is based, ‘requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action’ (Bryman, 2008:694). As a consequence, it is claimed, ‘generalizations are impossible since phenomena are neither time- nor content-free’ (Guba and Lincoln, 1982:238). If this is true, the ‘insights’ to which Bryman refers are therefore of very limited value as they can only relate to the particular case in question. Others, however, (Williams, 2000; Bassey, 1999) contend that generalization is possible from case study in interpretivist research. Williams proposes three types of generalizations:

- Total generalizations – instances of the application of scientific laws
- Statistical generalizations – being based on the level of confidence derived from a sample and its population
- Moderatum generalizations – ‘where aspects of [the case] can be seen to be instances of a broader recognizable set of features’ (Williams, 2000:215)

Bassey (1999) also perceives three types of generalizations, and his first two are the same as those cited by Williams. His third is similar, but is titled ‘a fuzzy generalization’ which:

... arises from studies of singularities and typically claims that *it is possible, or likely, or unlikely that*, what was found in the singularity will be found in similar situations elsewhere: it is a qualitative measure.  
(Bassey, 1999:12)

The focus of the research is an organization, Sheffield International College, in its relationship with two further organizations, Kaplan International Colleges and The University of Sheffield. The College is a ‘singularity’ as it is not a statistical sample of a population. However, it is one of a group of similar colleges, International Pathway Colleges, described earlier (2.2.2 above). The research in this thesis will therefore seek

to suggest ‘fuzzy’ or ‘moderatum’ generalizations relating to these colleges taken as a group for further consideration.

Sheffield International College therefore represents a ‘single-case design’ (Yin, 2009:47). Yin lists five rationales for the use of single-case design:

- The critical case – to test a ‘well-formulated theory.’
- The unique case – to document and analyze a unique instance
- The representative or typical case – ‘to capture the circumstances and condition of an everyday or commonplace situation’
- The revelatory case – ‘an opportunity to observe and analyze a phenomenon previously inaccessible to social science inquiry.’
- The longitudinal case – ‘studying the same single case at two or more different points in time.’ (Yin, 2009:47-49)

The selection of Sheffield International College (rather than any other IPC) is for the following reasons:

- it was the first college to be established by a Russell Group university following which there was a significant expansion of the phenomenon of International Pathway Colleges. It is therefore a *representative* (Yin, loc. cit.) or *exemplifying* case (Bryman 2008:56) of the eight IPCs established with Russell Group universities, as well as having relevance for colleges established with post 1992 institutions.
- it seems to be one of the largest UPCs and is therefore a significant case.

‘*Seems to be*’ as obtaining information on student numbers across the sector is difficult.

It is only since the Quality Assurance Agency was tasked with the inspection of such

colleges (QAA, 2011) that data on student numbers has become available, though even then only occasionally. Prior to then, such information was not in the public domain.

The case in question is Sheffield International College. The research:

- looks at the establishment of the College and considers reflections by key stakeholders on the years leading up to 2011-12 when data was collected
- considers the subsequent performance of students progressing from the College to the University. This is because of the importance attached to it by both Kaplan and the University.
- compares the perceptions of SIC graduates and Direct international students at the University on their preparedness for their first year of studies.

#### 4.3.2 Sample

	<b>SIC graduates</b>	<b>Direct international students</b>
Survey Sample	211	c. 459 <sup>3</sup>
Survey Response	22 (2 incomplete) or 12.6% of the sample	41 (8 incomplete) or 8.9% of the sample
Interviews (students)	5	5
Interviews (senior staff)	Managing Director, Kaplan International Colleges Pro Vice Chancellor, Learning and Teaching, The University of Sheffield	

*Table 4.4 International First Year Undergraduates at The University of Sheffield 201/11*

The survey sample was international students in their first year of undergraduate study at The University of Sheffield. It comprised two groups. The first comprised the graduates of Sheffield International College who had progressed to The University of Sheffield. The second comprised international students whose educational background and English language competence had made it possible for them to enter the University

<sup>3</sup> There were 2,077 international students at on UG courses in 2010. Divide by 3.1 (to take account of students on 4 year degrees) and then subtract the SIC graduates. Source: <https://www.shef.ac.uk/departmentProfiles/instprofile/student-population/2010>

directly without needing the preparatory course at Sheffield International College. In the tables that follow they are referred to as ‘SIC’ and ‘Direct’ respectively. The sample was selected in order ‘to sample cases/participants in a strategic way, so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed’ (Bryman, 2008:415).

In attempting to investigate **the first theme of research** – ‘What kind of educational space does the College provide?’ – a subsidiary question was ‘What are the educational goals of the College and to what extent and how well are they achieved?’. The survey worked on the basis that;

the initial goals were ... related to the progression into the university and the success of students in moving into the university and completing programmes, ... and by that we don’t just mean moving from college to university but moving all the way through.  
(Paul White, Pro Vice Chancellor for Learning and Teaching)

On this basis the agreement between the University and Kaplan became a hypothesis to be tested, namely, all other things being equal (i.e. the student experience at the University for first year undergraduate students) the performance and experience of SIC students at the University should at least equal that of Direct international students. It sought to verify this hypothesis in two ways.

- First, did SIC students perform at least as well as Direct international students in their exams at the end of the first year?
- Second, following almost a year at university working alongside Direct international students who had not been at Sheffield International College before commencing their undergraduate studies, did SIC graduates perceive themselves as having been better prepared for life at the University than those Direct students?

**The second theme of research** related to organizational space with two subsidiary research questions asking about the kind of relationship between the college and its

principal stakeholders as well as the effectiveness of these relationships in delivering the goals of the partnership. Key sources of data were two senior stakeholders, one from the University (Paul White, Pro Vice Chancellor for Learning and Teaching and the chair of the Joint Academic Advisory Board the chief reporting body for the College) and Linda Cowan, Managing Director of Kaplan International Colleges. Both had been instrumental in establishing and then managing the relationship between Kaplan and the University. Interviews were conducted with each of them.

**The third theme of research** related to the cultural space that the College provided. It sought to draw together the findings from the preceding themes on educational and organizational space and to seek to establish the extent to which the College might be considered to provide a *Third Space* for its stakeholders, students and staff.

#### 4.3.3 Methods of data collection

In many instances, case study uses multiple methods of data collection (Bryman, 2008:53), and this study also takes this approach.

Subject	Method
International student perception of their experience at SIC and the University	Archival sources of data, self-administered survey and semi-structured interview
Student performance at The University of Sheffield	Archival sources of data
Stakeholder perceptions of the College	Structured interview

*Table 4.5 Methods of data collection*

Such a combination of methods has the advantages associated with ‘Mixed Methods’ research. (Bryman, 2008:610ff.), providing confirmation or corroboration; elaboration and richer detail; the chance of fresh insight through the examination of apparent paradoxes or surprises (Rossman & Wilson, 1985:632-633; Bryman, 1988:131).

The framework of reference that was used to measure perceptions in the survey was loosely based on the Graduate Attributes listed by both Kaplan (Kaplan, 2009) and (University of Sheffield, 2011).

Our students are at the centre of everything we do. Every member of staff makes a major contribution to the delivery of our mission and the development and success of our students. The Graduate Outcomes provide a focus for that work. They are designed to achieve a number of goals.

- To flesh out a profile of what we seek to achieve that helps staff and students understand where we are going and some of the challenges that we will face.
- As an extension of the first, to provide a qualitative as well as a quantitative account of our work.
- To emphasize learning as well as teaching, and consequently demand of us that we accommodate reflective learning in our systems and processes rather than focussing solely on measurement of taught curricula.
- To pull together the complete student experience as a coherent whole and in so doing make this whole greater than the sum of its parts.
- To integrate the activity of teaching, student support activity and learning support tutorial and invest them all with a common focus.

(Kaplan, 2009)

Our students gain an impressive range of knowledge and skills whilst at University. We want these to be clear to our students and to employers so we have identified 'The Sheffield Graduate' attributes as part of our commitment to supporting your development.

(The University of Sheffield, 2011)

Effectively, how well prepared were students to take full advantage of their University opportunity? A series of questions was then constructed to test student perceptions of their preparedness to work towards these goals (see tables 3.5; 3.6 and 3.7). Whilst the attributes listed here are useful, neither of these lists provide a blueprint for survey design. First, although attributes indicate what students should be leaving their educational experience with, they do not list the kind of curriculum or activities that will deliver the opportunities to facilitate the development of these attributes. Second, the attributes listed for the *Sheffield Graduate* relate to all graduates from The University of Sheffield and are not designed with any particular groups of students in mind. International students are therefore not addressed explicitly. The survey structure and statements are therefore said to be loosely based on the graduate attributes. The attributes and survey statements are listed below.

<b>The Kaplan Graduate Outcomes (Kaplan (2009))</b>	<b>KGO</b>
1. <b>Academic Knowledge</b> – the academic knowledge and skills required to undertake their degree programmes	
2. <b>Academic Appreciation</b> – a theoretical and practical understanding of the protocols and practices associated with UK HE study	
3. <b>Critical Appreciation</b> – the ability to discriminate between sources of information and a willingness to consider and explore different ideas and viewpoints with an open and critical mind	
4. <b>Communicative Ability</b> – the linguistic ability and communication skills to succeed on their degree programmes and operate effectively in academic and social situations encountered while living and studying in their host environment.	
5. <b>Self Management</b> – the skills to be able plan and organize one’s time and to be an independent learner with the ability to work in a team and cope with change	
6. <b>Studentship</b> - the confidence to engage in their host environment such that they are able to benefit fully from the range of social, cultural and educational opportunities available to them in their university life.	

*Table 4.6: The Kaplan Graduate Outcomes (Kaplan, 2009)*

<b>The Sheffield Graduate (The University of Sheffield, 2011)</b>	<b>SG</b>
1. knowledgeable in their subject area	
2. a critical, analytical and creative thinker	
3. an independent learner and researcher	
4. a problem solver	
5. information literate and IT literate	
6. a flexible team worker	
7. an accomplished communicator	
8. an efficient planner and time manager	
9. competent in applying their knowledge and skills	
10. an active citizen who respects diversity	
11. professional and adaptable	
12. reflective, self aware and self-motivated	

*Table 4.7: The Sheffield Graduate (The University of Sheffield, 2011)*

Survey Statements	Type	Linked to
<b>When I started my degree:</b>		
I had a clear idea of the course and what it contained	Yes/ No	KGO5; SG3
I already had friends and acquaintances in Sheffield		KGO6; SG10
I had personally visited the department where I am now studying		KGO5; SG3
<b>When I started at the University of Sheffield in September 2011:</b>		
I learned a lot during orientation and induction	Likert	KGO3; SG3
I had all the documents I needed for registration		KGO5; SG8
I went to the Fresher's Fair		KGO6; SG10
It was easy for me to find my way to lectures, seminars and tutorials		KGO5; SG8
I was able to submit all of my assignments on time		KGO6; SG 10,11,12
I experienced a strong culture shock when I started at the University		
I felt homesick for the first few weeks of the academic year		
<b>Communication at The University of Sheffield</b>		
In lectures and seminars I have found it difficult to understand some of the lecturers	Likert	KGO4; SG7
It has been difficult for me to communicate with fellow students and staff in English		KGO4,5; SG6,7
I use English all of the time		KGO4; SG12
<b>Studying at The University of Sheffield</b>		
I found I had a gap in my knowledge between where my previous (SIC) studies finished and where my university studies began	Likert	KGO1,2; SG1,2
I found the grading system at the University to be different from what I was used to (at SIC)		KGO2; SG12
The way of teaching and learning at the University was new to me		KGO2,4; SG 11
The rules on plagiarism, citation and referencing at the University were new to me		KGO2; SG12
<b>Using technology at The University of Sheffield</b>		
It has been easy finding the sources I need to complete my assignments	Yes/	KGO2,3; SG2,3,5
I had used a VLE before I came to / this year at the University		
I had used 'Turnitin' before I came to / this year at the University	No	KGO2; SG5
I had searched an academic database (such as 'Web of Knowledge') before		
<b>General Issues at The University of Sheffield</b>		
I have found it difficult when asked to work with other students	Likert	KGO5; SG6

I have found it difficult to solve problems that I have faced since starting my degree studies		KGO5; SG4
I know who to go to if I need help		KGO4,5; SG4,11,12
I have friends of many nationalities		KGO3,6; SG10,12
It has been difficult making friends with English students		KGO3, 6; SG10,12
<b>When I started at the University</b>		
I already had accommodation arranged	Yes/ No	KGO5; SG8
I already had a bank account set up		
I already had a UK mobile telephone number		
<b>The Students' Union</b>		
I have joined some of the clubs and societies at the Students' Union	Yes/ No	KGO6; SG10
I never use the Students' Union		
<b>Sheffield and the surrounding region</b>		
I know my way around the city centre	Likert	KGO4,6; SG10,12
I have visited a number of places outside the city		
At the weekends I get bored because there is not a lot to do		
Sheffield feels like home		

*Table 4.8 Survey Statements and their related Graduate Attributes*

A Likert scale response system was used predominantly throughout in order to facilitate comparison between the responses of SIC graduates and Direct international students.

Respondents were invited to select one of five possible indicator responses:

- 5: Agree with the statement
- 4: Partially agree with the statement
- 3: Neither agree nor disagree with the statement
- 2: Partially disagree with the statement
- 1: Disagree with the statement

This comparison works in two ways. First, to compare the intensity of feeling in response to each statement and second to compare the overall nature of the response. An example is given in table 4.9.

- **The rules on plagiarism, citation and referencing at the University were new to me. (Likert scale)**

<b>Likert scale</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
SIC respondents	20	10.0%	5.0%	5.0%	10.0%	70.0%
Direct respondents	33	39.4%	6.1%	9.1%	15.2%	30.3%
<i>Variation A</i>		-29.4%	-1.1%	-4.1%	-5.2%	39.7%
<i>Variation B</i>		-30.5%		-4.1%	34.5%	

*Table 4.9: Responses on plagiarism, citation & referencing*

Fifty-three international students responded to the statement about plagiarism, citation and referencing, twenty SIC graduates and thirty-three Direct entrants. Of the SIC respondents, 70% disagreed with the statement and 10% partially disagreed whereas 30.3% of Direct entrants disagreed and 15.2% of Direct entrants partially disagreed. Variation A indicates the difference in the strength of feeling along the scale – being most noticeable in this case at either end of the scale (a difference of 29.4% for response 5 and 39.7% for response 1). The overall percentage within each group of respondents in general agreement (responses 5 and 4 taken together) or disagreement (responses 1 and 2 taken together) is shown as Variation B (a difference of 30.5% in agreement and 34.5% in disagreement).

In order to vary the questions (Bryman, 2008:147) some items adopted a positive and others a negative view of the area of interest, and some questions were posed as yes/no rather than Likert.

In addition to the survey statements for students, a list of interview questions was prepared for both students and key stakeholders designed to elicit further detail. A full list of survey statements and interview questions is included in Appendix C with two sample transcripts in Appendix E.

In order to quality assure the survey statements and interview questions, the opinions of an expert panel consisting of University of Hull supervisor, University of Sheffield

International Office supervisor and University of Sheffield international student were sought. Feedback focussed on two key issues. The first was the language that was used for the survey statements and its accessibility to international students in their first year of undergraduate studies. For example, in response to the statement ‘I would be most grateful for your help with this questionnaire,’ feedback was received as follows: ‘What IELTS level will participants have? Your language is extremely polite and doesn’t make it clear that you’d like them to **complete** the questionnaire.’ The statement changed to: ‘Can you help me by completing this questionnaire?’ There were several other instances where changes were made in order to render the text more comprehensible to international students. When the survey was piloted by an international student, they reported that they had been able to complete it without any issues around language comprehension. The second issue concerned the connection between interview questions and the sub questions of the thesis, or as the reviewer put it: ‘Are you able to identify which of these questions address specific initial sub questions at the start of the thesis?’. In making this connection the thesis was given direction by a further panel of reviewers, the two examiners. On first submission they made the following observations:

The thesis centres on questions as to what the relationship might be between two differing educational partners...[and] whether there is any benefit to students of their college experience...There is no consistently developed theoretical framework in the thesis...the candidate raised some appropriate theoretical frameworks that might provide a useful lens through which to view the central focus of the thesis. One of these was the concept of cultural ‘third spaces’ as articulated by Homi Bhabha...

It had not been the intention of the thesis to examine ‘the relationship between two differing educational partners’ in any depth, but given the observation made by the examiners, this had evidently become an emergent central theme. The reference to *Third Space* also gave cause for reflection and as a consequence the focus and lens of the thesis changed, with broader consideration given to the College as an educational, an organizational and a cultural space with the *Third Space* as a critical concept. This then

gave greater saliency to the statements made in survey and the questions asked in interview as they were all concerned with the educational, organizational or cultural aspects of the College.

## **4.4 Ethics**

### **4.4.1 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical principles in social research focus tend to revolve around the following four areas:

1. Whether there is harm to participants
  2. Whether there is a lack of informed consent
  3. Whether there is an invasion of privacy
  4. Whether deception is involved
- (Bryman, 2008:118)

Participant research was conducted through self-administered surveys and structured interviews. Two survey questionnaires were used. The first was designed to obtain student reflection on their college experience at the end of their period of study in the College. The second was designed to obtain international student reflection on their preparedness for their first year at the University at the end of that year. The first questionnaire was administered to all students at the end of their studies in the College as part of College quality assurance measures. In the preamble it states:

Your feedback on your experience at Sheffield International College is extremely important to us. We need this information to monitor and improve the service we provide. We would therefore be grateful if you could complete this form by the end of the term.

Students were not required to provide their names. There was, therefore, both informed consent and anonymity in the completion of this survey. This thesis makes use of the data in order, *inter alia*, to present the student view of life in the College, consistent with the stated aim of the survey ‘to monitor and improve the service [provided].’

The second survey was developed for the specific purpose of seeking international student reflection at the end of their first year of undergraduate studies on their

preparedness for these studies. When the first draft of questions was prepared, it was submitted to an expert panel consisting of University of Hull supervisor, University of Sheffield International Office supervisor and University of Sheffield international student for review and comments. Changes were made in light of the comments and the final draft was submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval with the following introduction:

*I am an Ed. D. student at The University of Hull researching the international student experience at The University of Sheffield. I am particularly interested in the experience of first-year international students on undergraduate degrees. If you are 18 years of age or more, an international student in your first year of undergraduate studies, can you help me by completing this questionnaire? There are between 20 and 30 questions and it should take between 20 and 25 minutes of your time to complete. Should you have any concerns about the conduct of this research project, please contact the Secretary, Faculty of Education Ethics Committee, University of Hull, Cottingham Rd, Hull, HU6 7RX; Tel No (+44) (0)1482 465988; fax (+44) (0)1482 466137.*

Approval was then obtained from The University of Sheffield for the questionnaire to be circulated to all international first-year undergraduate students by email in the same way that all other research questionnaires were sent.

The final question in the survey invited respondents to reply 'yes' or 'no' to the statement '*I would be happy to be interviewed to discuss some of these questions in more detail if I have time,*' with the instruction to those who responded 'Yes' that '*If you answered 'Yes' please send a message to K.R.Smith@2006.hull.ac.uk with 'Interview' in the subject line OR put your email address in the space below and I will contact you.*'

Where respondents indicated a willingness to be interviewed, they were contacted and an interview arranged. Interview questions were developed in the same way as questionnaire items, with the draft being reviewed by the same expert panel. Each interview was preceded by the following statement. The interview would only proceed where the interviewee responded in the affirmative.

*Our conversation will be recorded and transcribed. If I use any of the things you say, it will be anonymous and you will see a version of my findings before it is submitted for assessment. This interview should last between 20 and 30 minutes. Is that OK?*

To take Bryman's areas in turn:

*Harm to participants.* Bryman (2008:118) identifies anonymity for respondents as a key safeguard against this. In survey questionnaires anonymity was guaranteed. In student interviews pseudonyms were used, and in stakeholder interviews, respondent validation of the transcripts was employed.

*Lack of informed consent.* Bryman (2008:121) describes this as 'the area within social research ethics that is most hotly debated [which] can involve covert participant observation ... in which the researcher's true identity is unknown'. (Bryman, 2008:121). The notion of 'true' identity implies there is also a 'false' or 'assumed' one. In this research, the researcher was identified as an Ed. D. student at The University of Hull. This is true – and has been since 2006. The researcher has been an expatriate, teaching in Greece, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the UAE for twenty-five years. The researcher has also been College Director of Sheffield International College since 2009. The essential point is that the researcher has not 'assumed' the identity of one or other role in order to undertake the research. All three roles are equally 'true'. At the outset

only one role (that of student) was disclosed and when interviews were conducted, the researcher's identities were clear.

*Invasion of privacy.* Bryman (2008:124) notes that 'the issue of privacy is invariably linked to issues of anonymity and confidentiality in the research process.' The British Sociological Association states that 'the anonymity and privacy of those who participate in the research process should be respected' (BSA, 2002:5). In this research, survey questionnaire anonymity was guaranteed. In student interviews pseudonyms were used, and in stakeholder interviews, respondent validation of the transcripts was employed.

*Deception.* 'Deception occurs when researchers represent their work as something other than what it is' (Bryman, loc.cit.). In the statements made to potential participants the research was always presented as the doctoral thesis that it is.

#### **4.4.2 Role of the Researcher**

As well as being a matter of concern for ethical reasons as described above (4.4.1) the researcher's role was also a matter of concern for 'political' reasons:

The social researcher is never conducting an investigation in a moral vacuum – who he or she is will influence ... the conduct of social research. This view is widely accepted among social researchers, and one hears increasingly less frequently claims that social research can be conducted in a wholly objective, value-neutral way.  
(Bryman, 2008:130)

If the researcher's identity is not therefore a matter of controversy in itself, one must nonetheless consider how it might affect the responses given by respondents and interviewees (Bryman, 2008:122) as well as the interpretations of the researcher him or herself (Bryman, 2008:131).

Or rather, how the identities might have an effect. Mention was made above of the researcher's identities, and it is worth considering them here.

- a. A student at the University of Hull.
- b. An associate member of staff at the University of Sheffield, a UK university

- c. A member of staff for Kaplan International Colleges, a for-profit education provider.
- d. The college director for Sheffield International College
- e. A native of Sheffield whose two grandfathers, grandmother, father, uncle and son have all studied at The University of Sheffield.
- f. An expatriate professional who has spent 25 years living and working in an educational or cultural capacity in Greece, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.

We return here to the complexity described by Whitchurch in connection with *Third Space* professionals.

*Third Space* professionals work not only between professional and academic spheres of activity, but also between functions and projects, between internal constituencies, and between institutions and their external partners.  
(Whitchurch, 2013: 138)

Different respondents would have had different amounts of knowledge about the researcher. Most SIC graduates would have been aware of all the factors. Direct international student may have been aware of only one or two. While SIC graduates were aware of the role of the College, Direct students may have been ignorant of it. The point though is that an accusation of bias based on one of these items (example: ‘you worked for a for-profit private provider’) demonstrates just as much unconscious partiality (or containment within ‘a grid’) as would a researcher who fails to reflect on these issues at all. Similarly, the suggestion that respondents would feel the need to offer the ‘right’ answer because of the researcher’s position begs the question of just what the ‘right’ answer would be given the number of positions that the researcher simultaneously occupies. This last point is perhaps more relevant in consideration of the responses offered by SIC graduates for whom the most salient position the researcher adopted was as college director.

Turning to SIC graduates in first-year studies at the University, it is to be noted, first, that none of the respondents or interviewees were current students at the College. They had studied there in the past. The relation between former SIC students and the researcher was a historic rather than a current one. Second, the extent of that relationship had been limited by the fact that the researcher had started working at the College in January 2009 when many of the SIC students were starting their final term of studies there. The direct acquaintance was therefore of twelve weeks' duration. Third, an assumption that power relations were one-way (with the researcher holding the power by virtue of his role) is overly simplistic. International Pathway Colleges are highly competitive (UUK, 2010) and in a rankings-conscious international educational market-place (Wildavsky, 2010:5) word-of-mouth reputation – particularly using social media ('the marketing of a university is now in the hands of overseas students, whose fingers are on their mouses (sic.) (Shepherd, 2008:1)) – provides the student with a considerable degree of power. Equally comfortable with 'rate-my-teacher' as with deference, and in a system where they (or parents) are paying directly for the education, relationships are substantially different from those that obtain in a national 'free' education system. The very marketization of education (Callinicos, 2006) that is a feature of the sector consequently creates a customer-service provider relationship. To that extent, the power relationship between student and researcher *qua* college director was two-way and the interaction taking place was not between master and pupil but service provider and consumer in an increasingly consumer-oriented domain where student opinion and feedback is a quintessential part of marketing and quality assurance. Furthermore, if students are to 'have the opportunity to contribute to the shaping of their learning experience' (QAA, 2012:5), then it is to be expected that the director of such an establishment should be undertaking such research.

The second issue concerned the researcher’s own perceptual lens as a matter of research concern. As a participant in the case being studied, issues arise not only over the reactivity of respondents but also the critical reflections of the researcher himself. Gold’s four categories of participant observation (1958) suggest a continuum from involvement to detachment, but this starts from the position that the researcher is researching from without (and therefore needs to assume an identity), rather than researching from within. Costley et al. (2010) are part of a growing body of writers on ‘insider’ research. They observe that:

A most important aspect of work based research is the researcher’s situatedness and context. Within this, the unique perspective of the researcher inevitably makes a difference to the research.  
(Costley et al.:2010:1)

The ‘difference’ provides both opportunities and challenges.

Opportunities	Challenges
<p>Access to people and information</p> <p>Ability to unravel intricacies and complexities</p> <p>Potential to generate theory</p> <p>Potential to improve practice</p>	<p>Constraints of resources (time and money)</p> <p>Transferability</p> <p>Potential conflicts of interest (with colleagues and organizations)</p> <p>Lack of impartiality or fresh perspective</p> <p>Respondent bias in research</p>

*Table 4.10 Opportunities and Challenges of Work-based Research  
(based on Costley et al., 2010:3-7)*

The opportunities are amongst the characteristics which led this researcher to this study. The challenges are also familiar. Constraints have been most evident in terms of time – it has not been possible to take an extended period of time to undertake research. It is hoped that this case study will provide ‘fuzzy generalizations’ (Bassey, 1999:12) with other IPCs. The framing of the research (*‘What kind of space does Sheffield International College provide for its students and principal stakeholders?’*) is deliberately general to allow the generation of theory and leave open opportunity for

transferability. Conflicts of interest are a particular concern as the two stakeholders – the organizational parents of the college – come from two different traditions (see Chapter 2, above) with different organizational values and ways of doing things. Researchers are consequently enjoined to demonstrate ‘respect for the values of the organization, its purposes and ways of doing things’ (Costley et al., 2010:5), a respect which this researcher acknowledges. It is also hoped that ‘by exploring the Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity’ (Bhabha, 1994:39). Whilst potential lack of impartiality is a concern, ‘researchers who reflect about their stance offer more trustworthy and honest accounts’ (Pelias, 2011:663) and in the act of writing, this researcher is undertaking such reflection. Potential respondent bias in interview research is noted, but the effect of using a combination of measures is designed to offset such bias.

## **4.5 Summary**

This thesis is a case study of one organization, Sheffield International College – and its relationship with two others, Kaplan International Colleges a private education provider, and The University of Sheffield, a Russell Group university. Three principal aspects of the case – educational, organizational and cultural, are considered through the conceptual lens of *Third Space* (Bhabha, 1994; Ika and Wagner, 2009; Whitchurch, 2013).

The notion of *The Third Space* arises from the field of cultural studies (Rutherford, 1990). The ontological and epistemological positions most commonly associated with ethnography or cultural studies (Bryman, 2008: 20; Neuman, 2003:423) are constructionist and interpretivist which take culture ‘to be an emergent reality in a continuous state of construction and reconstruction’ (Bryman, loc.cit.). The thesis also

takes this position and seeks to investigate the educational, organizational and cultural aspects of the College.

Methods used are self-administered questionnaire, semi-structured interview and archival sources of data (Bryman, 1989:29). Feedback from two expert panels was critical to the final shape of the thesis. The first panel consisted of thesis supervisor, professional colleague and an SIC graduate whose comments and observations contributed to changes in certain data collection tools. The second expert panel consisted of the examiners of the thesis whose comments on first submission gave rise to a revision of the research questions and the selection of a particular lens (*Third Space*) through which to view the research.

Ethical considerations had a particular focus on the role of the researcher and acknowledged the position he occupied. Measures were in place to ensure respondent anonymity and the use of respondent validation of transcripts post-interview was also used. The positions or identities of the researcher meant it was difficult to discern any single predominant identity to which Direct students would respond, and for SIC graduates the relationship was depicted as being between service-provider and customer as much as master and pupil. The advantages of access to sources and insider knowledge provided additional benefits. By acknowledging the issues around his position the researcher hoped to demonstrate reflection on these matters.

The following chapter will now present and analyze the data produced by the research.

# Chapter 5 - Results drawn from Archival Sources, Questionnaires & Interviews.

## 5.1 Introduction

The thesis title is: “**What kind of Space does Sheffield International College Provide for its Students and Principal Stakeholders?**” Making use of the notion of *Third Space* developed by Bhabha (1994), Whitchurch (2013) and others as the lens through which to consider the College, the ‘Space’ that is under consideration is educational,

Theme	Subsidiary Research Questions	Principal Sources of Data
A. Educational space	A.1 What is the genesis of Sheffield International College and others of its type?	Literature review Archival sources – founding agreement Stakeholder Interviews
	A.2 What are the educational goals of the College and to what extent and how well are they achieved?	Archival sources – institutional student feedback, student performance in their studies Student Survey responses Student Interviews
B. Organizational space	B.1 What kind of relationship does the college have with its principal stakeholders?	Archival sources of data – founding agreement, minutes of meetings Stakeholder Interviews
	B.2 How effective have these relationships been in delivering the goals of the partnership?	
C. Cultural space	C.1 To what extent does the College provide a ‘ <i>Third Space</i> ’ for its stakeholders, students and staff?	Draws on all the above
	C.2 What is the likely future direction of the college?	

*Table 5.1 Themes, Research Questions and Sources of Data*

organizational and cultural. There are six subsidiary research questions which seek to break the inquiry down into a series of steps. The sources of data and methods to be used were described in chapter 4. The data produced by an application of these methods

to these sources of data is considered in this chapter which is structured by theme, and follows the order of the subsidiary research questions (see table 5.1).

## **5.2 Educational Space**

### **5.2.1 What is the genesis of Sheffield International College and others of its type?**

#### *Literature review*

The literature review undertaken in chapter 2 used a number of published sources to investigate this question. The findings of the literature review will be discussed in **chapter 6, Discussion of Results and Findings.**

#### *Archival sources*

The primary source is the Co-operation Agreement (Kaplan 2005). This is a confidential document, but permission has been sought and received from Kaplan and the University to cite as below.

The University of Sheffield made a decision to expand its recruitment of international students: ‘The University plans to grow its population of international students over the next five years.’ (op. cit.:4). The strategic decision to form a partnership and the choice of partner is explained thus:

The University recognizes that infrastructure will be required to achieve this goal, including the development and implementation of specific recruitment and marketing processes and the development of specific courses of study. The University has contemplated implementing the necessary infrastructure itself, but has decided to collaborate with a third party with strategic marketing, and teaching expertise and capacity in the international market, with experience in English language provision, and with a strong commitment to quality assurance of equivalent standards to the University itself... the Kaplan group of companies have strategic marketing expertise and capacity in the international market, experience in English language provision, and a strong commitment to academic quality.  
(op.cit.:4)

The purpose of the college was described thus:

The purpose and function of the College is to run programmes of study on the Campus for international Students who wish to obtain a university postgraduate or undergraduate degree by studying at the University but are unable to satisfy the University’s academic and other entrance requirements applied generally by the

University without first completing additional studies or who would prefer to take additional Programmes prior to gaining direct access to Undergraduate or Postgraduate study at the University.  
(op. cit.:5)

In addition to teaching and assessment, the College was also required to provide other support to its students – ‘counselling, language and customs orientation, career development and assistance in obtaining accommodation...visa or other immigration requirements’ (op. cit.:14).

The University was responsible for the provision of teaching facilities and providing access for college students to the library, sport facilities, accommodation services, health care and Student Union ‘as provided to students of the University on the same terms ... as are applicable to such students’ (op.cit.:17).

A Joint Academic Advisory Board would be established ‘responsible for all academic issues relating to the establishment and operation of the Programmes’ (op. cit.:9). Principal duties were to ‘monitor and review’ learning, teaching and assessment with the same rigour as applied to learning, teaching and assessment on degree courses (ibid.). In addition, there would be a university co-ordinator who would act as the principal point of contact for day-to-day matters.

On successful application to the College, students would receive a conditional offer letter ‘confirming that, on successful completion of that ... Programme, the applicant will be entitled to a place on the relevant [degree] Course’ (op. cit.:17).

### *Stakeholder interviews*

**Professor Paul White, Pro Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching at The University of Sheffield** was one of the members of the University Executive Board who worked on the establishment of the College in 2005/6. He recalls two colleagues being at the forefront of the initiative:

The original idea for this was very much that of the Registrar of the University... David Fletcher at the time... and what I think David was looking at was the metrics for universities around the country and particularly Russell Group and Russell Group and York which are our natural comparators at the time and noticing that the University was not performing as well as many others in the recruitment of international students.  
(Paul White)

The other champion was the Vice Chancellor, 'Bob Boucher, who was very interested in the internationalisation agenda.' (Ibid.)

There were two drivers. One, financial, the other, reputational:

the financial consideration [...] was... erm... and I think in many ways that was one of the prime foci for the whole discussion. The VC at the time Bob Boucher though was really concerned that the University should be seen as an international player. I don't think he saw that vision though as one that affected home students. He wanted to be able to show that the University was a high quality institution and one of the ways in which it could be demonstrated that it was a high quality institution was that it was recruiting students from around the world.  
(Paul White)

Such a step – to partner with a private pathway provider – was not taken without considerable debate and inquiry:

There were one or two universities who were doing it themselves and still do, (??) with internally run international student preparation programmes. Warwick is still one that does that of course. The arguments around that were that if we could do it ourselves we could quality control it ourselves without recourse to an outside partner to implement anything that came out of quality control...The clinching arguments against it within the discussions that took place within the senior management group at the time were relating to recruitment and reach...Were we likely to be able to increase the reach of the institution to recruitment to a foundation programme of some sort? Probably not ... and ultimately it was recognized that it would be much easier to do that via an organization such as Kaplan which had all of the Washington Post backing for it and with its global reach being so much greater than we could ever achieve.  
(Paul White)

A strategic decision was therefore made to work with a partner, although there was also an element of chance about this decision, too.

the serendipity of ...Charles Hall<sup>4</sup> ... meeting at I think a conference Bob Boucher and then finding that we were interested in doing something; he was interested in providing something. A series of meetings then involving Charles took place...so there is an element of personal ... personal networks being set up which sometimes of course as we all know can sometimes transcend the economic or the intellectual reality of what we are trying to do but in this case worked in a parallel sort of direction.  
(Paul White)

As far as the reasons for the subsequent substantial growth in numbers of other IPCs at other universities, Professor White sees a change in the motivation:

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<sup>4</sup> Former President of Kaplan International Colleges

... a whole number of other institutions who've done the sort of analysis that David Fletcher had done here in 2004/2005, and saying to themselves we want a piece of this action... But I think the agenda has changed from the way it was thought of in 2004/5 and I think ... that a lot of the rationale now is not financial wanting more students here in order that the good name of universities is spread, I think a lot more of the motivation now is around producing international experience on campus for home students as well as international ... institutions like ours, but not just institutions like ours, other universities around the country, are now wanting to prepare their own home students for a global labour market in a way which is facilitated by having more international students and more international experiences on campus.  
(Paul White)

In this overview, Paul White highlights three distinct and important phases of UK university strategy in relation to international students. First, there was the pre-pathway college phase, when few if any universities identified international students without an education that articulated directly into UK HE as a group of interest or value. Then came the articulation of a strategy when, as either leaders or followers, universities sought engagement with these students through the agency of an external company, most usually for financial or reputational purposes. Phase three saw the development of an institutional internationalisation agenda wherein international students became a source of an 'international at home' experience for UK students, in order to prepare these UK students for the global workplace. There is also an element of chance and serendipity about the development of the Sheffield strategy with the predispositions of key players (VC Boucher) and chance meetings (VC Boucher and KIC President Charles Hall) playing an important role. Paul White suggests that the 'International at home' experience will be 'facilitated' by the presence of international students. This choice of language indicates that it does not necessarily follow that the presence of an international minority will guarantee their engagement with the 'home' majority. Such an experience requires the development of a strategy beyond mere recruitment of international students for its fulfillment.

**Kaplan International Colleges Managing Director, Linda Cowan**, describes a conscious strategic decision in 2004 for Kaplan Inc., a US based company to expand into the international arena:

It was looking at how it could expand its activities outside of the US and KIC was part of that strategy so it was an idea proposed ... put together based on the model of Navitas that had been operating successfully in Australia and Kaplan supported the proposal so on the basis that it was a way in which it could expand its international operations and also get involved in activities supporting international students and working in partnership with universities as it fitted with the strategic direction that it had in mind at that point in time.

Kaplan International Colleges was consequently founded in 2004 and pursued a three-pronged strategy: recruitment of staff with international student recruitment experience and connections with educational agents (in 2004); the establishment of overseas offices (Beijing, Delhi and Lagos starting with Beijing in 2005) from which they could further develop links with educational agents, and the wholesale acquisition of a network of agents through the purchase of Aspect language schools in 2006. They also sought to acquire university partners of rank:

We felt very much it was the type of institution that many students often aspire to study at and therefore by partnering with Sheffield it was an important position partnership for Kaplan and also a good opportunity for us to develop the concept or establish the concept of pathway programmes because it was with a leading Russell Group university.

However, this was still a very uncertain venture and it was by no means clear how big the potential sector might be or necessarily what the forces were at work on the market.

because at the stage that we set up KIC there was very little competition for pathways colleges in the UK so it was a tiny bit unknown how quickly the competition would develop and also the external factors which can have an impact on the international student recruitment market.

In this overview, Linda Cowan highlights the key features that contributed to the development of the international pathway college business at Kaplan. First, a corporate perspective that was global and open to speculative initiatives. Second, the capability to make a series of global connections that would bring together students and universities and third an understanding of both the student market (predominantly Chinese initially) and the UK HE sector which made partnership with a Russell Group university a key strategic objective.

## **5.2.2 What are the educational goals of the College and to what extent and how well are they achieved?**

### ***Archival sources - Goals***

The stated target was to see 1,000 students enrolled at the College by year five (Kaplan, 2005:8). As well as supporting the strategic goal of increasing the numbers of international students, there was also a focus on their diversity, both in terms of national origin and the degrees they chose to study:

Kaplan and the University agree and acknowledge the importance of there being diversity of the Affiliated Students both in terms of the Affiliated Students' countries of origin and the Programmes on which they enrol.  
(op. cit.:9)

The quality of students as demonstrated by their performance in their exams at the end of their first year of studies was of particular interest for the Joint Academic Advisory Board (JAAB). In its minutes of June 2008 it noted 'the UoS is slightly disappointed with the first set of results, as in more than half of all modules SIC students scored less well than other international students.' (JAAB, 2008:4). The performance of SIC graduates at the end of their first year of studies would henceforth be compared with Direct international students as well as home students. The goal was that SIC graduates should perform at least as well as direct international students.

These sources provide four goals based on performance indicators: quantity (1,000 students at the College by 2010) and a diverse body of students (metrics unspecified); a strong conversion rate (rate unspecified) of students who achieve the academic requirements for progression to Sheffield; a performance in academic assessments at the end of their first year of studies at least as good as that achieved by Direct international students.

Lying beneath these performance indicators were other goals, designed to support and facilitate academic success. These were twofold: first, the cooperation agreement required the College to provide 'counselling, language and customs orientation, career

development and assistance in obtaining accommodation...visa or other immigration requirements' (Kaplan, 2005:14). The second of these additional goals was an emergent one arising from JAAB reviews of College activity and student performance. The JAAB noted (2008:2) that there were a number of students who, although in receipt of unconditional offers of places at the University, had chosen to study elsewhere. The College was further tasked with seeking to make Sheffield an unequivocal choice for students who had met the academic requirements. Conversion of unconditional offers thus became an additional task for the College.

### *Stakeholder interviews – Goals*

**Professor Paul White, Pro Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching at The University of Sheffield** identified international student recruitment as a driver of the initiative which led to the establishment of the College, and the Co-operation agreement itself began with the statement 'The University plans to grow its population of international students over the next five years.' In addition progression and performance were also goals of the College:

Well the initial goals were effectively statistical analysis of KPIs related to the progression into the university and the success of students in moving into the university and completing programmes... by that we don't just mean moving from college to university but moving all the way through.

**Linda Cowan, Managing Director, Kaplan International Colleges**, identified numbers of recruits, diversity, progression, performance plus enhancement of the University brand.

growth plans for the College in terms of student numbers; diversity in the intake in terms of the range of departments the students were progressing into in the University; and diversity in terms of the nationality mix of students and then erm goals in terms of proportion of students progressing into the University and how they performed once into the University. That's probably what the key goals were reflected around. And then a secondary goal as to how we could we work with the University to continue to enhance the brand of the University to benefit direct recruitment to the University and that was probably a secondary goal for our activities

## Summary

In sum, the goals of the College were perceived as a series of key performance indicators, shown in *Table 5.2*:

<b>KPIs</b>	<b>Metrics</b>
Contribute to an increase in international student numbers at the University	No metric given
Diversity of nationality and degree choices	No metric given
Student enrolment at SIC	1,000 annually by 2010
Progression to the University	‘Satisfactory’ (Commercial – in confidence)
Performance at the University	At least as good as Direct international students
<b>Subsidiary goals</b>	<b>Metrics</b>
Effective pastoral care	No metric given
Conversion of unconditional offers to enrolment at the University	No metric given

*Table 5.2: College Goals*

## Goal achievement

**International Student Enrolments at the University:** The student population at the University in 2005 and 2010 are compared in *Table 4.3*. Approximately 20% of international students studying at the University in 2010 had come through Sheffield International College. Over the five-year period which The Co-operation Agreement (Kaplan, 2005) identified as the period for growth in numbers of international students, the number increased by almost 60% and the proportion of international students at the University increased from 14% to 25%.

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change</b>
Number of undergraduate overseas students	1321	2152	62.9%
Number of postgraduate overseas students	1753	2730	55.7%
Total number of overseas students	3074	4882	58.8%
Overseas students as percentage of total student population	14%	25%	11%
Top 5 largest national groups	China: 580 Malaysia: 423 Germany: 173 India: 154 France: 137	China: 1662 India: 451 Malaysia: 387 Japan: 262 Nigeria: 226	

*Table 5.3: Overseas & International Students at The University of Sheffield: 2005 & 2010 compared (Source: University of Sheffield website – ‘Facts & Figures: Overseas & International students’)*

**Diversity of students at Sheffield International College:** In 2009/10, the top five largest national groups at Sheffield International College were: China, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Kenya and Jordan (*source: Sheffield International College*). Three of these nationalities did not appear in the University of Sheffield ‘top 5 largest national groups’ suggesting that through its focus on students from outside the EU, the College was, of necessity, making a contribution to the University’s strategic goal of diversity.

**International Student Enrolments at the College:** In the year 2009/10 when the expectation was for the College to register 1,000 enrolments, just over 1,000 students enrolled at Sheffield International College (*source: Sheffield International College*).

**Progression to the University:** This figure is protected by commercial confidentiality. This is a matter of frustration for research in this area as it is one of the key metrics. College web sites contain a variety of claims about the success of their students - ‘Our ISC programmes achieve 87% progression rates’ (Study Group, 2014) - but there is little evidence of consensus on how this is reported. Whether this is as a percentage of students who started or of those who completed their studies is unclear. Montgomery comments on ‘confusion between research about international student issues and market research driven by recruitment agendas [which] has at times muddied the issues in the area’ (Montgomery, 2010:6). However, Paul White comments as follows:

Well the initial goals were effectively statistical analysis of KPIs related to the progression into the university and the success of students in moving into the university and completing programmes...and by that we don’t just mean moving from college to university but moving all the way through...in the very earliest years I don’t think we did get it right and I think that is partly the responsibility of the college and partly the responsibility of the university but as you’ve said we were working in a very very new environment and some of those initial goals were not being met in the first year or two because the progression rates into the university that were modelled in the business plan ... were not achieved and so that if you like was the crucial indicator in the very early days. And you know that’s something that we’ve learned how to deal with and change the thinking around and seen some broader benefits since.  
(Paul White)

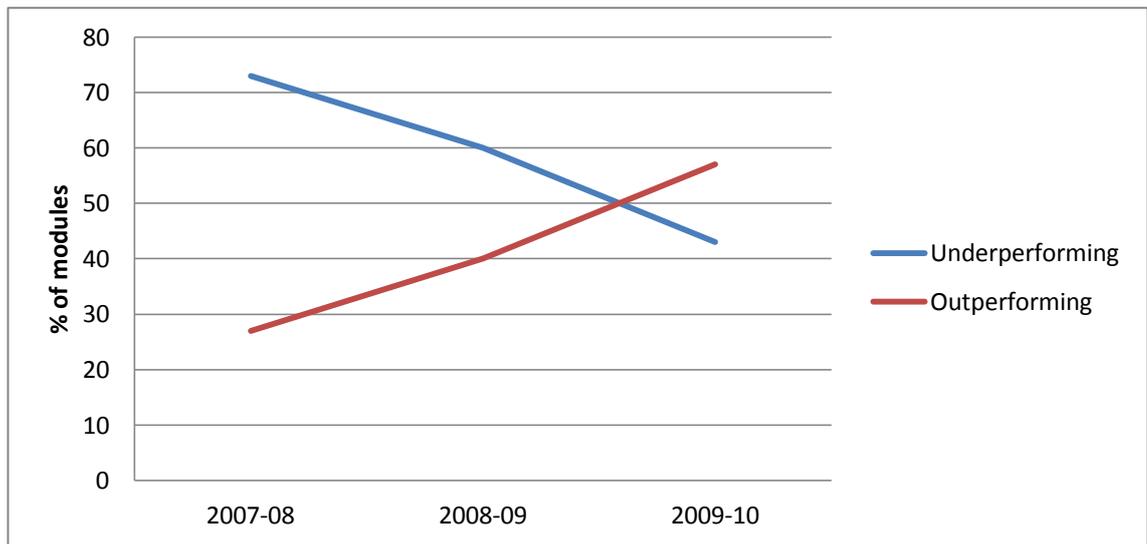
Reacting to the initial disappointments the College took short, medium and long term responses. First, it raised the language requirements for admission, from IELTS 4.5

overall to 5.0 overall for three-term programmes and from 5.0 to 5.5 overall for two-term programmes. Second, it worked with its sister-college in Liverpool to develop an entry test in maths and science and to develop a pre-sessional term in maths and science \*(see Appendix D). Third, Kaplan set about diversifying its student recruitment. By 2013, progression rates to the University stated as a proportion of students who had started their studies at the College had improved by 50% on where they had stood in the early years. Clearly, a move from 20% to 30% might not engender great confidence whilst a move from 50% to 75% might be interpreted as more encouraging. Unfortunately, it is not possible to comment further.

**Performance at the University:** JAAB minutes (2008:4) state ‘The University of Sheffield is slightly disappointed with the first set of results, as in more than half of all modules SIC students scored less well than direct international students.’ This was the performance of the first cohort of students to progress from the College to the University. By 2010 the JAAB reported that:

... the undergraduate Semester 1 performance appears to have improved overall with SIC students underperforming in comparison with overseas students in 43% of Level 1 modules compared with 60% for Semester 1 2008-2009 and 73% for Semester 1, 2007-08.  
(JAAB, 2010:3)

Thus if 43% of SIC students were underperforming in comparison with overseas students, it may be inferred that 57% were performing at or above the level of overseas students. The development is shown graphically in figure 5.1.



*Figure 5.1: The Performance of SIC Graduates at The University of Sheffield in Level 1 modules relative to Direct International Students. (JAAB, 2010)*

**Subsidiary goals – pastoral care:** Measurement of the provision of this care is problematical as no measures were set and no reports submitted to JAAB on this topic. Given the importance of this element to the success of the College, its reputational standing and the basic welfare of its students, this would appear to be a surprising omission. Paul White comments that ‘the initial goals were effectively statistical analysis of KPIs related to the progression into the university and the success of students in moving into the university.’ Whether it was assumed that pastoral care would be monitored through the agency charged with oversight (until 2012 the British Accreditation Council and since then the Quality Assurance Agency) is unclear. However, alongside the Joint Academic Advisory Board two other forums have been established for engagement between the University and Kaplan. The first is the Joint Strategic Management Board and the second is the Operations Group both established in 2012 which, in Paul White’s words, ‘gives us the way of dealing separately with what I would call the business planning and the operational alongside the academic.’ This suggests a process of learning by experience and recognizing the need for additional forums alongside the Joint Academic Advisory Board. However, neither forum has yet

set any metrics for pastoral care. It would seem that although there is recognition of the importance of the pastoral element, its measurement presents a problem. This thesis seeks to evaluate this element through a combination of questionnaire and interviews. Recommendations made in the final chapter of this thesis include an adoption of such methods as part of periodic monitoring of the College and its performance.

***How well prepared were students for life at the University?***

This was the major research area of the thesis in seeking to contrast SIC graduate perceptions with those of Direct international students. The research was structured around the Graduate Attributes that Kaplan and the University aim to deliver, and each question from the survey is cross-referenced to these attributes (see *Table 4.8*). The methodological approach and issues associated with this approach were considered in the previous chapter. In the following account of the findings, **SIC percentages** refer to responses from graduates of the College and **Direct International percentages** refer to responses from international students who entered the University directly, without first studying at the College.

***Graduate attribute: The academic knowledge and skills required to undertake their degree programmes.***

- **I found I had a gap in my knowledge between where my SIC / my previous studies finished and where my University studies began (Likert scale)**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	10.0%	30.0%	10.0%	30.0%	20.0%
Direct respondents	31	19.4%	6.5%	25.8%	19.4%	29.0%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-9.4%</b>	<b>23.5%</b>	<b>-15.8%</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>-9.0%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>14.2%</b>		<b>-15.8%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	

*Table 5.4: Questionnaire responses – question 17a ‘Knowledge gap’*

A greater percentage of SIC graduates than Direct international students believed there was a knowledge gap between end of previous studies and start of university studies (14.2%). In survey comments, one of the SIC respondents commented:

During semester 1 [out of 2] we had 2 modules of academic skills which were similar to the one taught in semester 2 and were not incredibly demanding, whilst the content of the 3 subject modules taught during semester 2 was large, which made it hard to cope with the material. As a result we missed on some bits as it was challenging to manage to learn everything when we had such a large amount of material given to us. Hence some of biological and biochemistry topics that were taught in SIC during 2nd semester were poorly acquired by me and when I needed them in the university I did not have the required knowledge in those subjects. I suggest re-adjusting the structure of the science foundation course to make it evenly difficult as semester 2 is harder than semester 1. Perhaps shift 1 subject module from semester 2 into semester 1 as a replacement for 1 of academic skills  
(S, SIC, Ukraine)

In interview, another had a different view on matters stating of the SIC curriculum ‘...it actually covers the first semester or even some of the second semester of my first year’  
(J, SIC, China).

***Graduate Attribute. A theoretical and practical understanding of the protocols and practices associated with UK HE study***

The questionnaire contained three statements that focussed on the pedagogic aspect of this area.

- **I found the grading system at the University to be different from what I was used to (at SIC). (Likert scale)**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	50.0%	15.0%	10.0%	15.0%	10.0%
Direct respondents	32	34.4%	21.9%	18.8%	12.5%	12.5%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>15.6%</b>	<b>-6.9%</b>	<b>-8.8%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>-2.5%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>8.8%</b>		<b>-8.8%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	

Table 5.5: Questionnaire responses – question 17b ‘Grading System’

Where grading is concerned responses to the questionnaire are broadly similar. Of the SIC students, 65% agreed that the grading system at the University was different from what they had been used to, and 56% of ‘Direct’ students agreed or partially agreed with the statement. A. (Direct) from Estonia comments

the grading system for example that in the first year you know almost no one gets more than 80 points and this was really strange because all my friends get like 90 points in their university in Estonia so when they ask how did I do and I say that I got like 75 points they say (*with irony*) ‘right, OK, good for you,’ and then it’s just this was really perfect for me so it’s like I didn’t know that it was normal to get like 65 points and be

happy for your essays but maybe it's as I have heard it's going to change in the second year or third year but right now I was quite kind of surprised.  
(A, Direct, Estonia)

However, it is worthy of note that after a period of preparation at the College half of the SIC respondents found the grading system at the University to be different from what they were used to at SIC.

In academic skills A during semester 1 our teacher told us that we will not receive a grade that is above 70. In university it is possible to achieve a grade that is higher than 70 provided the requirements for the work are met. Also a small contribution to the overall result in academic skills came from attendance - it happened to me that my arrival to the college was delayed due to visa issues and I missed on first two weeks - it was not my fault but for some reasons my mark for attendance was reduced because of this. In university attendance does not affect the overall result.  
(S, SIC, Ukraine)

- **The way of teaching and learning at the University was new to me. (Likert scale)**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	30.0%	25.0%	20.0%	15.0%	10.0%
Direct respondents	33	30.3%	27.3%	18.2%	12.1%	12.1%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-0.3%</b>	<b>-2.3%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>-2.1%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>-2.6%</b>		<b>1.8%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	

Table 5.6: Questionnaire responses – question 17c ‘Teaching & Learning’

Both the intensity and distribution of views are similar with SIC graduates and Direct entrants registering very similar views. Given that the purpose of the College is to prepare students for study at Sheffield, it might be anticipated that more than 10% of SIC graduates would have disagreed with this statement. J, SIC, China saw the College as a half-way house in preparing for the style of study expected at the University.

Researcher: What about the style for the course because you've described this very specific self-study approach in the university. Did you find you were prepared for that in the college or not so much?

J, SIC, China: I think it was half-half because as I said the college is still more like high school the teachers actually persuade you to study, but they do give you some freedom of study like we're doing some group project and the question is very open-ended you can explore as much as you want. And also I don't know for other modules but in my Chemistry module we also get a scientific essay to write on and that has to be based on your own research and these are also self study and for the lab reports the analysis section is also very open and you can go as far as you like. So based on the results, the results actually inspire you on something that you will look up on internet or in literature then I think is also about self study. So basically it is half half.

Another SIC graduate of Science and Engineering, however, had a different perspective:

As I have studied at Sheffield International College some of our lectures were similar I mean the style of the lectures so I was expecting this style of the lectures, the manner that it will be given so I wasn't surprised. At the college I understood the idea that the lectures would just be outlines for what should be learnt and then all this idea that's what guides me now so during the lecture I'm just listening to key points I do not say I understand everything but I get the idea of what should I be concentrating on so that's how I can say college helped me it gave me the idea the lecture just gives you the outline what you should study by yourself it doesn't give you the full information.  
(S, SIC, Ukraine)

In Social Sciences J. (SIC) from Taiwan responded to the question "How well did your time at this College prepare you for this style of studying?" as follows:

Very well ... I learned something really valuable and really different ... I think it has a good effect on the way I read books and makes notes and in general I get to know better how uni works in England, I get to see how English students study and do their work. I also want to mention I think the social science and political theory modules really help, definitely, it's really important I think to get a basic knowledge of the democracy, culture of the country to see how the society works is definitely very important.  
(J, SIC, Taiwan)

N. from Malaysia (Direct) at the end of the first year of UG study recognized a fundamental misconception she had held about teaching and learning at Sheffield.

N.: ... because my first year, during the first semester, I didn't do quite well in my studies. I passed all the modules but then the marks are not, I'm not satisfied with the marks. Maybe because I'm playing too much? Yeah, that's why during now, second year I'm thinking of like arranging a timetable that I can, that I need to uh to go on with.

RESEARCHER: Did you have a timetable and a plan throughout your first year or..?

N.: Not really. I do have a timetable but I didn't, didn't uh, I didn't follow the timetable.

RESEARCHER: And do you think that's the reason why you didn't get the marks you wanted?

N.: I guess so, yeah **because the lecturer helps me and the tutor helps me very much but I didn't do the effort to study more in depth for the modules.** (my emphasis)  
(N, Direct, Malaysia)

- **The rules on plagiarism, citation and referencing at the University were new to me. (Likert scale)**

On the issue of plagiarism, citation and referencing, it is apparent that most SIC students who responded to the questionnaire felt themselves to be well versed in these academic regulations and practices (80% disagreeing with the statement). In interview

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	10.0%	5.0%	5.0%	10.0%	70.0%
Direct respondents	33	39.4%	6.1%	9.1%	15.2%	30.3%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-29.4%</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>	<b>-4.1%</b>	<b>-5.2%</b>	<b>39.7%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>-30.5%</b>		<b>-4.1%</b>	<b>34.5%</b>	

Table 5.7: Questionnaire responses – question 17d ‘Plagiarism, citation, referencing’

one of the SIC students elaborated on this:

The college couldn’t have provided, that’s not the job, the *content* for the university, but I think what the college did was provide the *context* for the university. It was a lot of the little things. PowerPoint, posters, academic skills ... we looked at referencing... plagiarism. So SIC really introduced the context of university life.

(R, SIC, Africa)

Of ‘Direct’ students, 45.5% agreed or partially agreed with the statement. This is significantly different from the response from the SIC students. This difference is reflected in comments by J, SIC, China.

There was also some international students from other countries in my first year and we were the person they usually asked the question of because we knew the rules so one day they finished their lab report or their scientific essays we usually checked their content and the structure to see if it is complied with the rules. The University also runs some introductory course about how to write lab reports and scientific essays but these are optional. Not all the students attend them and sometimes they are not even aware because they just came here, they’ve got loads of things to settle down so sometimes they miss these sessions but we knew the rules the standards already so it was more convenient for us.

(J, SIC, China)

The questionnaire also contained 4 questions which related to the use of resources and technology in the support of studies. Students were asked to respond ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to the statements.

- **It has been easy finding the sources I need to complete my assignments**
- **I had used a VLE (Virtual Learning Environment – any system like MOLE<sup>5</sup>) before this year at the University**
- **I had used ‘Turnitin’ before this year at the University**
- **I had searched an academic database before (such as ‘Web of Knowledge’)**

<sup>5</sup> MOLE – **M**y **O**n-**L**ine **E**nvironment. University of Sheffield VLE

	SIC	<i>SIC percentages</i>		Direct	<i>Direct percentages</i>		<i>Variation</i>
		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>		<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	
Sources	21	95.2%	4.8%	33	87.9%	12.1%	<b>7.4%</b>
VLE	21	57.1%	42.9%	33	30.3%	69.7%	<b>26.8%</b>
Turnitin	21	90.5%	9.5%	38	15.8%	84.2%	<b>74.7%</b>
Database	21	85.7%	14.3%	33	39.4%	60.6%	<b>46.3%</b>

Table 5.8: Questionnaire responses – questions 18, a-d Electronic resources

In all questions, the responses indicate that SIC students had a perceived advantage compared to ‘Direct’ students with that advantage being most profound in the use of ‘Turnitin’ and slightly less so in the use of an academic database or VLE. The advantage was only marginal in the issue of finding sources. In interview, in response to the question “To what extent did your experience at SIC help you prepare for life at the University?” F, (SIC) from Africa observed:

I think it helped me a lot maybe 90%? It’s quite a lot because I was already familiar with most of the things to do like the places where to go, the libraries, what to do with the books, the computer system, everything I was familiar with unlike the other students that just came up because they just had the open day I think so they had to ask a lot of questions but I was already familiar with almost everything I just had to go meet my new lecturers and classes that's all but apart from that I was very familiar with the whole system.

(F, Africa, SIC)

***Graduate Attribute: Communicative Ability. The linguistic ability and communication skills to succeed in their degree programmes and operate effectively in academic and social situations encountered while living and studying in their host environment.***

The questionnaire contained three statements that focussed on this aspect of university life for which respondents were asked to use a Likert scale for their responses.

- **In lectures and seminars I have found it difficult to understand some of the lecturers**

<b>Likert scale</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
SIC respondents	20	20.0%	25.0%	10.0%	30.0%	15.0%
Direct respondents	33	15.2%	27.3%	0.0%	12.1%	45.5%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>4.8%</b>	<b>-2.3%</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>17.9%</b>	<b>-30.5%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>2.6%</b>		<b>10.0%</b>	<b>-12.6%</b>	

Table 5.9: Questionnaire responses – question 22a ‘Understand lecturers’

In spite of the time they have spent in the UK studying at a College associated with the University, 45% of SIC respondents agreed or partially agreed that they had had difficulty understanding some of the lectures, almost exactly the same as ‘Direct’ students (42.5%).

Where lectures are concerned, interview comments focused on issues of accent and varieties of English.

All lecturers have different styles. Some of them I find very hard. We had one, he’s Scottish so at first I found his accent very hard to understand but as time went on I understood what he was saying.  
(F, SIC, Africa).

One of the ‘Direct’ students also comments on accents, and the ability to come to terms with them:

The accents at first were really difficult, but it was only one week difficult and then you started to notice that you don’t have problems with accents any more. That was I was actually worried that I am used to listen American movies and songs and am just come here and this was like the thing I didn’t know anything about and I was also quite scared about it yeah I was quite scared about it but this goes away; this isn’t that difficult. Everybody can handle it. People don’t have to be worried about it. Yeah.  
(A, Direct, Estonia)

As well as accent, there is the issue of variety of English. One of the ‘Direct’ students observed that ‘Some lecturer's first language is not English ... making it very hard to understand.’ (Questionnaire: comment).

A further factor is student motivation, a point made by J, China, SIC, continuing his description, quoted earlier, of students who came to SIC due to failure in China:

They had no university to study in China so they have to come here to study ... and these students are the ones that most reluctant to speak English because they... they actually don’t want to study you know...  
(J, China, SIC)

- **It has been difficult for me to communicate with fellow students and staff in English**

<b>Likert scale</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
SIC respondents	20	10.0%	10.0%	0.0%	50.0%	30.0%
Direct respondents	32	12.5%	18.8%	9.4%	18.8%	40.6%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-2.5%</b>	<b>-8.8%</b>	<b>-9.4%</b>	<b>31.3%</b>	<b>-10.6%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>-11.3%</b>		<b>-9.4%</b>	<b>20.6%</b>	

Table 5.10: Questionnaire responses – question 22b 'Communication with others'

When it came to communicating with fellow students and staff, there was a marked difference between SIC and 'Direct' students with 80% of SIC students disagreeing or partially disagreeing with this compared to just over half (59.4%) of 'Direct' students. However, this difference is qualified somewhat by the fact that a greater proportion of 'Direct' students disagreed (response 1) than SIC (30%).

All students interviewed remarked on the ease they found in communicating with their assigned tutor. N. (Direct, Malaysia) commented:

N.: I got personal tutor for my degree study, so everything every problem that I have, I had, I ask him and ask him when I see him for advice and, besides I got like tutorial groups for different modules, so every time I got a problem I ask the tutor for my studies.

RESEARCHER: And how often did you see your tutor?

N.: For personal tutor, mm, every time I have a problem! About um once a month?

RESEARCHER: And how did you first meet your personal tutor? Did they tell you about your personal tutor and arrange a meeting or were you sent an e-mail or..?  
At first I didn't know I got a personal tutor, during the intro week they introduce a personal tutor for each of us and arrange a meeting, the first meeting and then the next meeting is on our own.

INTERVIEWER: Was it easy to make that connection and then to keep the meetings planned?

N.: Yeah, it's really easy and he's very supporting.  
(N, Direct, Malaysia)

In response to the question in interview "In the University is there support for you as well?" S. (SIC, Ukraine) answered:

Yes and um, the support there is very helpful, we have in my department we have personal tutors it's something that every department has this system we have a tutor we have every week, meet once a week and we can talk about our problems and results and questions related to our modules and generally our lecturers are very helpful and there was a few times I had approached the lecturer after the lecture and he appointed me a meeting and he would explain me the point I didn't understand, it wasn't the case for all the lecturers some were very busy and it was hard to contact them but overall I can say that I received good support in the first year.  
(S, SIC, Ukraine)

- **I use English all of the time**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	55.0%	5.0%	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Direct respondents	33	48.5%	24.2%	3.0%	12.1%	12.1%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>6.5%</b>	<b>-19.2%</b>	<b>17.0%</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>-12.1%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>-12.7%</b>		<b>17.0%</b>	<b>-4.2%</b>	

Table 5.11: Questionnaire responses – question 22c 'Use English'

In terms of using English, a greater percentage (72.7%) of 'Direct' respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement than SIC graduates (60%), yet there were also proportionately more 'Direct' students (24.2%) who disagreed or partially disagreed with this statement than SIC graduates (20%). With 19% of SIC graduate respondents neither agreeing nor disagreeing, the response pattern to this question was inconclusive.

**Graduate Attribute: Self Management. The skills to be an independent learner with the ability to work in a team and cope with change.**

The questionnaire contained three statements that focussed on this aspect of university life for which respondents were asked to use a Likert scale for their responses. Their responses are shown below and the questions are listed beneath the responses.

- **I have found it difficult when asked to work with other students**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	5.0%	25.0%	15.0%	20.0%	35.0%
Direct respondents	33	9.1%	33.3%	12.1%	18.2%	27.3%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-4.1%</b>	<b>-8.3%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>-12.4%</b>		<b>2.9%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	

Table 5.12: Questionnaire responses – question 19a 'Work with other students'

Proportionately more 'Direct' students (42.4%) agreed or partially agreed with this statement than did their SIC graduate counterparts (30%).

- **I have found it difficult to solve problems that I have faced since starting my degree studies**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	0.0%	35.0%	10.0%	35.0%	20.0%
Direct respondents	33	9.1%	15.2%	18.2%	30.3%	27.3%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-9.1%</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	<b>-8.2%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>-7.3%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>10.8%</b>		<b>-8.2%</b>	<b>-2.6%</b>	

Table 5.13: Questionnaire responses – question 19b 'Solving problems'

On solving problems, 55% of SIC students disagreed or partially disagreed with the statement, with a similar proportion of 'Direct' students (57.3%) responding in the same manner.

- **I know who to go to if I need help**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	19	68.4%	21.1%	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%
Direct respondents	33	30.3%	54.5%	0.0%	6.1%	9.1%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>38.1%</b>	<b>-33.5%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>	<b>-9.1%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>4.6%</b>		<b>5.3%</b>	<b>-9.9%</b>	

Table 5.14: Questionnaire responses – question 19c 'Help'

On knowing who to go to for help, there were broadly similar response from both groups (89.5% of SIC respondents and 84.8% of 'Direct' respondents agreeing or partially agreeing with this statement).

Planning and time management are covered by two questions in the questionnaire.

- **It was easy for me to find my way to lectures, seminars and tutorials**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	19	68.4%	21.1%	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%
Direct respondents	33	30.3%	54.5%	0.0%	6.1%	9.1%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>38.1%</b>	<b>-33.5%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>	<b>-9.1%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>4.6%</b>		<b>5.3%</b>	<b>-9.9%</b>	

Table 5.15: Questionnaire responses – question 15d 'Find lectures, seminars, tutorials'

Almost twice the proportion of SIC graduates (68.4%) agreed with this statement than their 'Direct' counterparts (30.3%)

- **I have been able to submit all of my assignments on time**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	90.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Direct respondents	33	87.9%	3.0%	3.0%	6.1%	0.0%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>2.1%</b>	<b>7.0%</b>	<b>-3.0%</b>	<b>-6.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>9.1%</b>		<b>-3.0%</b>	<b>-6.1%</b>	

Table 5.16: Questionnaire responses – question 15e ‘Submit on time’

There was a small difference between the two groups in response to this question with 100% of SIC respondents in agreement and 90.9% of ‘Direct’ respondents expressing the same view.

***Graduate Attribute: Studentship. The confidence to engage in their host environment such that they are able to benefit fully from the range of social, cultural and educational opportunities available to them in their university life.***

The questionnaire contained questions about preparation for life in Sheffield, questions specifically on making friends, questions on the Student Union and questions about life in Sheffield.

- **I already had accommodation arranged (Yes/No)**
- **I already had a bank account set up (Yes/No)**
- **I already had a UK mobile telephone number. (Yes/No)**
- **I already had friends or acquaintances in Sheffield (Yes/No)**

	SIC	SIC percentages		Direct	Direct percentages		Variation
		Yes	No		Yes	No	
	n.			n.			
Accommodation	20	100.0%	0.0%	33	90.9%	9.1%	<b>9.1%</b>
Bank account	20	90.0%	10.0%	33	45.5%	54.5%	<b>44.5%</b>
Mobile phone	20	95.0%	5.0%	33	51.5%	48.5%	<b>43.5%</b>
Friends	20	80.0%	20.0%	29	31.0%	69.0%	<b>49.0%</b>

Table 5.17: Questionnaire responses – questions 26 a-c & 14b ‘Already had mobile etc.’

Whilst a few ‘Direct’ respondents arrived in Sheffield without accommodation (9.1%), roughly half of them did not have a bank account, mobile phone or friends locally when

they arrived. All SIC respondents had accommodation before they started their undergraduate studies and more than 90% had a bank or mobile phone with 80% having friends. SIC graduates had the advantage of the time already spent in Sheffield to establish these basic necessities and personal connections.

I was already familiar with most of the things to do like the places, where to go the libraries, what to do with the books, the computers system, everything I was familiar with unlike the other students that just came up because they just had the open day I think so they had to ask a lot of questions but I was already familiar with almost everything I just had to go meet my new lecturers and classes that's all but apart from that I was very familiar with the whole system.  
(F, Africa, SIC)

For 'Direct' students, it was a matter of the pre-arrival material they had received from the University. A, (Estonia, Direct) refers to the materials sent by the University:

I think I had most of the things I wanted to know in this booklet that the University gave out and I actually took it and underlined the important bits. It was like strange to do but I felt that I needed it.  
(A, Estonia, Direct)

- **I learned a lot during orientation and induction**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	40.0%	30.0%	10.0%	0.0%	20.0%
Direct respondents	32	21.9%	40.6%	28.1%	0.0%	9.4%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>18.1%</b>	<b>-10.6%</b>	<b>-18.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>10.6%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>7.5%</b>		<b>-18.1%</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	

Table 5.18: Questionnaire responses – question 15a 'Orientation & Induction'

Proportionately more SIC graduates either agreed or disagreed with this statement than 'Direct' students for whom most either partially agreed or neither agreed nor disagreed.

- **I experienced a strong culture shock when I started at the University**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	5.0%	30.0%	30.0%	25.0%	10.0%
Direct respondents	33	15.2%	6.1%	21.2%	27.3%	30.3%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-10.2%</b>	<b>23.9%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>-2.3%</b>	<b>-20.3%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>13.8%</b>		<b>8.8%</b>	<b>-22.6%</b>	

Table 5.19: Questionnaire responses – question 15f 'Culture Shock'

Responses here produced two different response profiles. SIC respondents had a tendency to cluster to the middle of the response range with 85% of respondents within

2,3 or 4 response categories. ‘Direct’ respondents had a more dispersed profile with 45.5% of respondents in either categories 1 or 5. Given that SIC students had already spent six to nine months studying in the city of Sheffield at The University of Sheffield International College one might expect them to cluster more towards disagreement. However, a graduate from SIC observed that ‘[at SIC] we were mummied a bit more by the teachers. The university lecturers are a bit more impersonal.’ (R, SIC, Africa). There was also an issue around the gap between studies for SIC graduates who completed their studies in April and then left England until returning five months later in September, which is discussed below, under ‘homesickness’.

- **I felt homesick for the first few weeks of this academic year**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	5.0%	20.0%	35.0%	15.0%	25.0%
Direct respondents	33	12.1%	21.2%	15.2%	12.1%	39.4%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-7.1%</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>-14.4%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>-8.3%</b>		<b>19.8%</b>	<b>-11.5%</b>	

Table 5.20: Questionnaire responses – question 15g ‘Homesickness’

Homesickness still affected 25% of SIC respondents, only slightly fewer, proportionately, than their ‘Direct’ counterparts (33.3%). Given SIC graduates’ previous experience in Sheffield, this might appear counter-intuitive. However, one of the SIC students who suffered from homesickness commented:

I did two terms in SIC so I finished in April and its quite a long holiday we started in September so because I've finished and I went to New York for holidays and all fun fun fun having fun I didn't do any back reading, any background reading nothing and I just came in September and I went straight to class I think the gap is so long that before, it took me time to adjust back to my academic side so that was a little bit problems.  
(F, SIC, Africa).

Students were asked to reflect on the friends they had established by the end of their first year at the University. Two questions were asked.

- **I have friends of many nationalities (Likert scale)**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	50.0%	10.0%	30.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Direct respondents	33	51.5%	24.2%	6.1%	12.1%	6.1%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-1.5%</b>	<b>-14.2%</b>	<b>23.9%</b>	<b>-7.1%</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>-15.8%</b>		<b>23.9%</b>	<b>-8.2%</b>	

Table 5.21: Questionnaire responses – question 19d ‘Friends of many nationalities’

Proportionately fewer SIC students either agreed or disagreed with the notion that they had friends of many nationalities than their ‘Direct’ counterparts. Almost a third (30%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. One of the SIC respondents remarked in interview that...

I think it was because of my stay here in Sheffield International College and we all had a lot in common ‘cos I think we were all international students and for most of them it was their first time away from home so even though we were from different countries we all had this in common that is was the place was new, different cultures, so I think that’s why we bonded so I have some friends from China, some Arabic friends, I did know someone from Mexico. If I didn’t come here I don’t think I would have had that opportunity to meet so many different people and in the university too I’ve got to make a few friends.

(F, Africa, SIC)

The same interviewee also reflected on why some students did not establish an international circle of friends.

The majority of students are all Chinese so I got to meet them, uh with my flatmates because for me I think the way I see I think they are a little more different from the other cultures because they usually stay in a group and they usually speak their own language. It’s very hard to get to know them.

(F, Africa, SIC)

A demographic analysis of SIC respondents shows that, of the 8 Chinese students who answered this question, 6 chose option three, ‘Neither agree nor disagree’.

- **It has been difficult making friends with UK students (Likert scale)**

Likert scale		5	4	3	2	1
SIC respondents	20	25.0%	30.0%	25.0%	5.0%	15.0%
Direct respondents	33	27.3%	27.3%	6.1%	15.2%	24.2%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-2.3%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>-10.2%</b>	<b>-9.2%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>0.5%</b>		<b>18.9%</b>	<b>-19.4%</b>	

Table 5.22: Questionnaire responses – question 19e ‘Friends with UK students’

Approximately half the respondents from each group (SIC: 50%; 'Direct': 54.6%) agreed with this statement. For one of the 'Direct' students, this was explained as follows:

A.: The thing is there was one girl from Romania that she... like I know there are cultural differences and am aware of those things but for English people they are like so, they can't ... I don't know... it's hard for them to accept that you can do things differently and she started to go out with only other international students. So she didn't need to go out with English people any more. That's like how it went.

RESEARCHER: Why do you think the English people can't quite understand how other people might see things differently?

A.: Maybe because they don't feel that they're a part from Europe and I feel that because... I look at things from a small country point of view that Estonia's one of the countries that are really proud to be part of the European Union we so want to be part of the EU because it means we are not connected with Russia any more so we want to know about the other cultures and countries and yeah that's since the yeah for me it's easier because I really wanted to be part of that.

(A, Estonia, Direct)

A graduate from SIC made a similar observation:

J.: I like dealing with um, more mature English people actually I mean, uh, age, er, say like uh, I like dealing with uh people who are already working or are very local, you know, because I think British students they can be a bit ignorant sometimes, sometimes but not all of them of course it always depends but I actually prefer to talk to elderly peoples I think because they obviously know more.

(J, Taiwan, SIC)

The same student elaborated further:

J.: Well um, at first I've been to a few, at the beginning of the study I've been to a few uni parties but um there wasn't really my thing I didn't really like it I didn't like, I preferred the party scenes back home in Taiwan than here.

RESEARCHER.: How are they different?

J.: The music I think and um, I think sometimes English students can just be a little bit too drunk, too often. Yea. Well I mean drinking is fine and I understand we're young and need to have fun but sometimes it just appears to be a bit of a problem, sometimes yea.

(J, Taiwan, SIC)

- **I went to the Fresher's Fair (Y/N)**
- **I have joined some of the clubs and societies at the Student Union (Y/N)**
- **I never use the Students Union (Y/N)**

Although a greater proportion of SIC graduates attended the Freshers' Fair (71.4% compared to 'Directs' 68.8%), not as many had turned this interest into club or society

	<i>SIC percentages</i>			<i>Direct percentages</i>			<i>Variation</i>
	SIC	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	Direct	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	
	n.			n.			
Freshers' Fair	21	71.4%	28.6%	32	68.8%	31.3%	2.7%
Clubs & societies	20	55.0%	45.0%	33	69.7%	30.3%	-14.7%
Never use SU	19	21.1%	78.9%	31	16.1%	83.9%	4.9%

Table 5.23: Questionnaire responses – questions 15c & 27a & 27b

membership. For some 'Direct' students, the Student Union provided some of the benefits which SIC graduates had received from the College in their year there:

RESEARCHER: Did you take advantage of an arrivals service when you came to the UK?

N.: Yeah, my seniors here took me from the Manchester airport until Sheffield ... I mean the senior from the society from the Student Union society

RESEARCHER: This is from the Malaysian society?

N.: Yes from the Student Union.

INTERVIEWER: How did you find your accommodation?

N.: First I asked the seniors to arrange a house for my friend and I, um, and then actually at first it was 5 of us staying in one house.  
(N, Malaysia, Direct)

The final set of questions concerned life outside the University, in the city of Sheffield and beyond.

- **I know my way around the city centre**
- **I have visited a number of places outside the city**
- **At the weekends I get bored because there is not a lot to do**
- **Sheffield feels like home**

<b>Likert scale</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
SIC respondents	20	95.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Direct respondents	33	75.8%	21.2%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>19.2%</b>	<b>-16.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>-3.0%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>3.0%</b>		<b>0.0%</b>	<b>-3.0%</b>	

Table 5.24: Questionnaire responses – questions 28a 'City centre'

<b>Likert scale</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
SIC respondents	20	95.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Direct respondents	33	48.5%	18.2%	12.1%	15.2%	6.1%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>46.5%</b>	<b>-13.2%</b>	<b>-12.1%</b>	<b>-15.2%</b>	<b>-6.1%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>33.3%</b>		<b>-12.1%</b>	<b>-21.2%</b>	

Table 5.24: Questionnaire responses – questions 28b ‘Visited outside Sheffield’

<b>Likert scale</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
SIC respondents	20	0.0%	35.0%	20.0%	20.0%	25.0%
Direct respondents	33	6.1%	18.2%	18.2%	21.2%	36.4%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>-6.1%</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>	<b>-11.4%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>10.8%</b>		<b>1.8%</b>	<b>-12.6%</b>	

Table 5.24: Questionnaire responses – questions 28c ‘Bored at weekends’

<b>Likert scale</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
SIC respondents	20	25.0%	50.0%	20.0%	0.0%	5.0%
Direct respondents	33	21.2%	24.2%	27.3%	18.2%	9.1%
<b>Variation A</b>		<b>3.8%</b>	<b>25.8%</b>	<b>-7.3%</b>	<b>-18.2%</b>	<b>-4.1%</b>
<b>Variation B</b>		<b>29.5%</b>		<b>-7.3%</b>	<b>-22.3%</b>	

Table 5.24: Questionnaire responses – questions 28d ‘Sheffield feels like home’

After almost two years in the city almost all SIC respondents (95%) agreed that they knew their way around the city centre and the same proportion agreed that they had visited a number of places outside the city. Only one ‘Direct’ respondent felt they still did not know their way around the city, but 21.2% appear not to have visited a number of places outside the city. After almost two years in the city, proportionately more (10.8%) of SIC graduates agreed or partially agreed that they found themselves bored at the weekends, but 75% of them agreed or partially agreed that Sheffield felt like home, more than the 45.6% of ‘Direct’ students.

### 5.2.3 Summary: What is the genesis of the College, its goals and to what extent and how well are they achieved?

<b>KPIs</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	<b>Change 2005-2010</b>
Contribute to an increase in international student numbers at the University	No metric given	Growth of 62.9% in international student numbers. International students as percent of total student population increased from 14% to 25%
Diversity of nationality and degree choices	No metric given	
Student enrolment at SIC	1,000 annually by 2010	More than 1,000 in 2010
Progression to the University	'Satisfactory' (Commercial – in confidence)	Commercial – In confidence
Performance at the University	At least as good as direct international students	57% of SIC graduates did as well as or better than 'Direct' students in assessments at end of their first UG year in 2010.
<b>Subsidiary goals</b>	<b>Metrics</b>	
Effective pastoral care	No metric given	
Conversion of unconditional offers to enrolment at the University	No metric given	

Table 5.25: Sheffield International College KPIs, Metrics and Results, 2005-10

The Literature review in chapter 2 provided a context suggesting a number of global drivers creating the conditions for the genesis of International Pathway Colleges. At the institutional level a combination of strategic planning, personal ambition and serendipity saw The University of Sheffield develop a plan for a partnership. At the same time, an American 'media and education company' was pursuing a business development strategy which positioned it as a potential partner for Sheffield.

The goals for the College that were established were listed as a set of key performance indicators with the five year point (2010) as the point at which this thesis took measures.

Research for this thesis sought to establish, too, *how well* the College prepared its students for studies at The University of Sheffield. The research, based on attributes listed for *the Sheffield Graduate*, established that SIC graduates appeared to be at an advantage in ancillary pastoral issues – accommodation, banking, mobile phone - as well as ancillary academic matters – VLE, 'Turnitin', academic database, citation and

referencing. In other areas the answer was less clear-cut and sometimes suggested some disadvantages for SIC graduates ('culture shock' and a continuing lack of engagement with the Students' Union on progression to the University).

As well as a consideration of the College as an educational space, this thesis also sought to establish what kind of organizational and cultural space it provided for its stakeholders. The next section in this chapter looks at the evidence gathered in connection with the following research questions:

- What kind of relationship does the College have with its principal stakeholders?
- How effective is the relationship in delivering the goals of the partnership?

The evidence is drawn primarily from documentary sources and interviews with the representatives of the two key stakeholders, Pro Vice Chancellor Professor Paul White of the University and Managing Director Linda Cowan of Kaplan.

## **5.3 Organizational Space**

### **5.3.1 What kind of relationship does the College have with its principal stakeholders?**

In interview **Pro Vice Chancellor Professor Paul White** identified three phases of development of the relationship between Kaplan and Sheffield.

Phase 1: 2006 - 2009

I think in the first phase the [Joint Academic Advisor] Board was ... the sort of supreme governing body but it was supported by a whole raft of other activities which linked the University with the College on day to day operational matters, quite a lot of them, but actually which were quite important in making the whole relationship work well. You had, if you like, David Webster, you had Wendy Hobson, you had Jackie Gresham - a whole series of people there who were working in ways that fostered the development of the business relationship. Perhaps not at a big strategic level but certainly in making the thing run - oiling the wheels, and that parallels the quality management - the 'is this programme suitable; is that programme suitable; how do we make the English work?' discussions within the JAAB. I think in retrospect when the voluntary severance scheme came forward in this university we lost too many people who were crucial to that relationship and didn't replace them.

(Paul White)

In this phase staff who had been involved in initial contract negotiations had central roles in the implementation of the agreement and the running of the College. They all left the University in the course of the voluntary severance scheme that ran during 2009. Jackie Gresham had been the inaugural Coordinator appointed by the University as ‘the principal day to day point of contact’ (Kaplan, 2005:17) for the College. She chaired an ‘Operations Group’ designed to take responsibility from some of these individuals, but it met once only in 2009 and then ceased to exist following her departure.

#### Phase 2: 2009 – 2012

I think the... the... the environment in which the JAAB has been operating is one where that Board doesn't have the powers that it needs to do some of the things it has to do because some of those people are no longer there to do them... Those levers disappeared after 2009.

As a consequence of the departure of the key staff, the Joint Academic Advisory Board had been operating at a sub-optimal level without the support it needed in a number of other areas.

#### Phase 3: 2012 to present

Why I say this is a three-phase thing is because I think the establishment now under Rebecca<sup>6</sup> of a group that will look at the bigger strategic issues, I think gives us the way of dealing separately with what I would call the business planning and the operational alongside the academic and yes they need to have an interface but I think it will make it much clearer... the responsibility of the different organs within this so ... erm... that's why I'm giving that three-phase model.

In 2011 the University appointed Professor Rebecca Hughes to a new position on the University Executive Board - Pro Vice Chancellor, International. In January 2012 she chaired the first (and so far only) meeting of the Joint Strategic Management Board. In 2013 she left the University. The position of Pro Vice Chancellor, International, no longer features on the University Executive Board.

From the perspective of **Linda Cowan, Managing Director of Kaplan International Colleges**, there had been two phases to the relationship.

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<sup>6</sup> Rebecca Hughes, Pro Vice Chancellor, International, March 2011 to March 2013

RESEARCHER: Is Kaplan International Colleges a system of colleges or a unified college system?

LC: ... one of the key things that we learnt in the development of the network of the colleges was actually how important it was for us to enable colleges to reflect the needs of the partner university and to develop their programmes so that they were very aligned to preparing the students for the delivery of erm programmes in the partner university so I would say at the very outset we probably had a belief that we could have more uniformity across all of the colleges but we've certainly moved quite a long way on that from our outset and certainly now I wouldn't say we were a system of individual colleges but I would say we're somewhere between the two and trying to ensure the colleges do reflect erm do properly prepare the students working in partnership with the partner university but also get the benefits of being part of the KIC network.

In the initial phase there had been a uniform approach to Colleges and curriculum. However, during 2009 there was an attempt to implement major curriculum changes across all colleges. These were not accepted by all partners, and it became apparent that the uniform approach would need to become more flexible and adaptable. **Paul White** referred to this episode in interview:

the relationship between SIC and Kaplan ... would be for there to be almost a sense that yeah we can really talk with colleagues at SIC, know what's going on, and not have something potentially thrown at us left field by Kaplan who will come and say we would like to do this or we're thinking of that in ways which slightly muddy the relationship because who knows the people at Kaplan? Only about 4 or 5 of us who have met Linda and met others and know, you know *know* them and can ring them up or email them. And yet you know things that might be thrown at the institution from that source er... can destabilize what people otherwise think of a relationship they have already set up with local individuals that they know down the road.

He also referred to the emergence of a third entity or identity within the relationship – that of the College itself:

I think there's been the perception within the university that SIC and Kaplan don't necessarily speak with the same voice erm... and there's a need to try and recognize the particular viewpoints that individuals within that set come from. So, yes, it is a three way relationship and with those three sets of relationships there and I think there's been occasions when from the University's point of view we've got sorted out with the College or we've dealt with an issue or we've got some plans to do something and then there seems to be a delay or Kaplan takes a slightly different reaction. Now, that's a perception, Kevin, and you might want to say that's not the case but that is the way it seems to us in various cases and it's not as helpful to developing things in the future as it might be.

Linda Cowan describes a continuum between a unified college system with centralized command and control and a system of devolved responsibility. She also suggests that the colleges in Kaplan's network have moved to a position that is 'somewhere between the two'. It would appear that this has not been articulated clearly or communicated to

the University or understood by the University (or any combination of these three). The consequence has been a degree of uncertainty and confusion that has hindered the development of cohesive partner relations.

### **5.3.2 How effective have these relationships been in delivering the goals of the partnership?**

It would appear that although the initial goals of the partnership in terms of student recruitment and SIC student undergraduate performance has been met, the relationship has not been as effective as it could have been in supporting this delivery. On the University's side, changes in key personnel before the establishment of an institutional framework hampered the delivery of support to the College. On Kaplan's side, there has been the development of a devolutionary strategy which sees Colleges taking a position on a continuum between central control and devolved responsibility. Yet the precise nature of this change and its implications in terms of responsibility and authority still seems to be unclear to colleagues at the University consequently hindering the development of the relationship.

### **5.3.3 Summary**

The relationship has been problematic due to changes of key personnel, the lack of a fully developed relationship management structure, and the sense that there could still be some surprises even after three years of working together. Although the College was the nexus of the relationship, it did not have an articulated position in its own right.

## **5.4. Cultural Space**

### **5.4.1 To what extent does the college provide a 'Third Space' for its stakeholders?**

Bhabha (Rutherford, 1990:211) suggests that the *Third Space* is the conceptual place where cultures meet and together create a hybrid form which allows development rather than stalemate. This is the difference, he believes, between the engagement of different

cultures in the development of new culture on the one hand and on the other the containment of one culture by another ‘in a kind of *musee imaginaire*’ in the guise of cultural diversity (Rutherford, 1990:208). Within Higher Education there is a body of research that contends that...

even the cultural hybridity permitted within an internationalised HEI is scripted by the neoliberal presumption that Western norms should prevail (Sidhu, 2004). Jonas Stier’s (2004) critique of internationalisation ideologies begins with ‘cultural idealism’ –interpreted as ‘they should learn from us’ and share the vision of a future shaped by technology, the market, and the exclusion of ‘Others’ – ‘women, non-Western cultures and Nature’ (Milojevic 2005, 12). (Haigh, 2008: 430)

The suggestion is that for all the movement from an international strategy to a strategy of internationalisation, the binary power relationship of superior to inferior is still the same.

A transparent norm is constituted, a norm given by the host society or dominant culture. Which says that ‘these other cultures are fine, but we must be able to locate them within our own grid’,... (Bhabha in Rutherford, 1990:208)

Is there any evidence at Sheffield that the internationalisation strategy has started to remove the ‘grid’ and allow the development of *Third Space* and is the College involved?

The first challenge the University faces is with its own roots and background. The international strategy (University of Sheffield, 2009) that was supplanted in 2012 was built firmly on the university’s civic heritage. This was still the vision that the Vice Chancellor had articulated in 2005 when the original agreement was signed with Kaplan. The Internationalisation strategy established in 2012 only mentions the word ‘civic’ twice in sub-paragraphs of the paper (University of Sheffield, 2012:3 and 5) and combined the notions of global and civic in its vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> century

#### **A 21st-century civic university**

The University of Sheffield was founded over a hundred years ago, founded on the aspirations and financial support of the people of Sheffield. They wanted to establish a university which would benefit their economy, health and children.

These far-sighted men and women could only have wondered at what would follow. Today we are a global community and our citizenship stretches around the world into over 150 countries. Like our city, our staff and students have roots and connections all over our planet.

What we continue to do is based on our values and rooted in our founding principles. Our approach inspires innovative collaboration across subject areas and with individuals, businesses and organisations to solve the more pressing problems we face, both close to home and around the world.

Being a Civic University means that we are a place for open debate, for working together to solve problems and making partnerships which challenge and inspire new thinking. We are open to people, to change and to possibility.

(University of Sheffield, 2013)

The statement about *openness to people, change and possibility* suggests the potential to remove ‘the grid’ and allow for the *Third Space* where this possibility can be realized.

Does the College have a role in creating this possibility?

An evaluation of the formal and the informal curricula (Montgomery, 2010:126) suggests two very different approaches. The curriculum that was established in 2005 at the outset contained – and still contains – three elements (see Appendix D): language modules, subject modules and academic skills modules. This is entirely consistent with the ‘Bringing the Foreigners up to Speed’ model posited by Haigh (2002) as there is no explicit cross-cultural study element.

There is no reference to any other cultural traditions or models of research. This is an introduction to the European school of social science that emerged from the Enlightenment (King, 2004:7) because this is the milieu that is applied at the University. Absent a change in the curriculum at the University itself, the College will continue to deliver this curriculum. If there was a compulsory element within the University curriculum that involved cross cultural activity, the College would be constrained to consider the same. Within the University there are signs of change to the curriculum. Within the Engineering faculty, all first year undergraduates take part in the ‘Global Engineering Challenge’ (University of Sheffield, 2014). In place of standard assessments, The Faculty of Engineering has established a group project based on ‘Engineers without Borders Challenge’ projects. The rationale is stated thus:

In order to tackle the Engineering challenges of the 21st century, it is important to possess teamwork, design, problem-solving, communication skills and global awareness, as well as technical knowledge. The aim of the Sheffield University Global Engineering Challenge Week is to introduce and develop these transferable skills highly valued by employers through a cross-faculty group project. (University of Sheffield:2014)

This emphasis on skills as well as knowledge is of note. The global element is also emphasized:

The project briefs concern the sustainable development of disadvantaged communities whilst raising questions about key 21st century issues: globalisation, climate change, sustainability and equality - the "Global Dimension". (ibid.)

This would appear to be at the 'Multicultural education' end of Haigh's continuum where 'members of different groups [work] together on shared projects of collective concern.' It also offers the opportunity to provide a *Third Space* which lies beyond an established cultural grid and actively encourages the development of solutions to unfamiliar problems (e.g. 'Infrastructure to minimize mosquito breeding.'). It would seem appropriate for SIC to seek to mirror this activity in some way.

The informal curriculum provides some evidence of the College's attempts to create a *Third Space* for its students. The LOTC programme (Learning Outside the Classroom) is a programme of activities beyond the College seeking to engage SIC students with university undergraduates through Student Union activities or public lectures. It also seeks to engage them in the wider environment through a series of accompanied tours and trips. There is also a project in January at SIC which has echoes of the 'Global Engineering Challenge':

The Sheffield story – through an international lens.  
We know what international students give to the city in terms of [benefits they bring to us](#). But what's it like from their perspective?  
Since 6<sup>th</sup> January over 300 international students at Sheffield International College have been working on InLAW – Independent Learning Activities Weeks. Some of them have been researching The Great Sheffield Flood of 1864 while others have been investigating the here and now with six tasks to complete. The students, who have been working in more than sixty independent groups, will all be presenting their findings, either through a short dramatic interpretation or a media presentation. (Sheffield International College, 2014)

With the University, then, there are signs of *Third Space* internationalisation appearing within the curriculum. At the College, it is not yet apparent as a strategic development within the formal curriculum, although the informal curriculum suggests some moves in this direction.

#### **5.4.2 Summary**

It would appear that the College plays no instrumental part in the University's internationalisation strategy. It still seems to serve the ends of the international strategy that was in force when it was established in 2005/6, or to be 'Bringing the Foreigners up to Speed' (Haigh, 2004). Yet, in their own interactions and reflections, its students seem to be creating, in spite of rather than because of the College, their own *Third Space* where they meet students of different nationalities and cultures and learn about and from them.

#### **5.4.3 What is the likely future direction of the College?**

This question will be considered in **Chapter 7, Conclusion**

## Chapter 6 – Discussion

### 6.1 Introduction

The purpose of the Discussion chapter is to ‘critically examine your findings in the light of the previous state of the subject...and make judgments as to what has been learnt in your work.’ (Evans et al., 2003:167). In seeking to achieve this goal, this chapter will use the structure provided by the theme and research questions established in the introduction, and use the data and analysis from chapter five to support the findings and judgments that are advanced.

Theme	Subsidiary Research Questions	Principal Sources of Data
A. Educational space	A.1 What is the genesis of Sheffield International College and others of its type?	Literature review Archival sources – founding agreement Stakeholder Interviews
	A.2 What are the educational goals of the College and to what extent and how well are they achieved?	Archival sources – institutional student feedback, student performance in their studies Student Survey responses Student Interviews
B. Organizational space	B.1 What kind of relationship does the college have with its principal stakeholders?	Archival sources of data – founding agreement, minutes of meetings Stakeholder Interviews
	B.2 How effective have these relationships been in delivering the goals of the partnership?	
C. Cultural space	C.1 To what extent does the College provide a ‘ <i>Third Space</i> ’ for its stakeholders, students and staff?	Draws on all the above
	C.2 What is the likely future direction of the college?	

*Table 6.1: Key Themes and Research Questions*

## 6.2 Educational Space

### 6.2.1 What is the genesis of Sheffield International College and others of its type?

In section 2.3 Contemporary Context – Global Trends (above), a working hypothesis was suggested...

that International Pathway Colleges are a response to a number of stimuli, and that how they develop will very much depend on the conscious direction in which they are then taken by the leadership of the institutions they serve. It may be that one institution will see them as exclusively a response to financial issues, whilst another will seek to take advantage of the opportunities they present for deeper internationalisation of the curriculum in preparing all its students for the global knowledge economy.

The insight provided by a key member of the team at The University of Sheffield (Pro Vice Chancellor Paul White) suggested that not only might a number of different institutions seek to respond to particular stimuli through such agreements, but a single institution might start by seeking to respond to one of these stimuli, and then change its focus and emphasis to seek to address others.

[the] Vice Chancellor at the time – Bob Boucher – ... was very interested in the internationalisation agenda, but I would say in one particular dimension of it and that was very much in bringing international students to the UK to have an international student experience or to have a UK student experience that was er the way in which the university's internationalisation strategy was written at the time. It wasn't concerned with some of the other broader issues that we now are concerned with.  
(Paul White)

In all of these developments, the personal dimension should also be considered:

There is an element of personal erm personal networks being set up which sometimes of course as we all know can sometimes transcend the economic or the intellectual reality of what we are trying to do but in this case worked in a parallel sort of direction.  
(Paul White)

Thus, whilst the genesis might have an identifiable rationale, that rationale can and does change over time. Paul White's description is of a substantial, rather than a marginal, change in emphasis away from the vision of the Vice Chancellor in 2005 - the provision of a Sheffield experience for international students - to the provision of an international experience for home students. This represents a major cultural shift for the University away from what Paul White called 'a rather traditional slightly backward-looking view of the place of the UK in the world and respect for the UK and respect for UK

education’ to a more realistic appraisal of the relative positions of international students and the University. Such a shift has implications at all levels and in all aspects of the University from the curriculum to the cafeteria, from the Registrar to the receptionist.

It is a matter of internationalizing the outlook of staff and students, both international and at home, and also of internationalizing the attitudes of people in the wider community of the university.  
(Montgomery, 2010:5)

Montgomery identifies particular areas that might be less amenable to such adaptation. ‘Some institutions...may not be extending the intercultural dimensions ... into the teaching, support and research cultures of the University’ (ibid.). Given that the College was established in 2006 before the University’s internationalisation agenda became what it now is, the question arises as to what extent this change to the agenda has affected the College.

The issue of personal champions is also a significant one in the establishment of the College, as recognized by Paul White. By 2010, however, the key players in the establishment of the college (Vice Chancellor Boucher; Registrar Fletcher; Commercial Director Webster; Coordinator Gresham) had all left and only Professor White himself was left of the senior staff who had been involved in the establishment of the College. The consequence was an ‘information gap.’

I’ve had a conversation with Rebecca Hughes about a piece of work that, probably at a University Executive Board away day, she and I need to lead on really an awareness raising exercise for colleagues across the University Executive Board - not just about Sheffield International College I hasten to add - but about Northern Consortium UK<sup>7</sup>... about the International Faculty<sup>8</sup> because within the University Executive Board there is partial knowledge of each of these areas that are also there for a good deal of, I won’t use the word ‘ignorance’ but ‘innocence’, and therefore some preconceptions and some misunderstanding and some prejudices which I think Rebecca and I need to try and overcome.  
(Paul White)

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<sup>7</sup> The Northern Consortium of UK Universities (NCUK) is owned by 11 UK universities, and has offered university pathway programmes to international students for more than 20 years. See [www.ncuk.ac.uk](http://www.ncuk.ac.uk)

<sup>8</sup> The University of Sheffield International Faculty, CITY College, is one of the six faculties within the University and the only one operating overseas, with its main campus in Thessaloniki, Greece

Paul White's comments are illuminating. As well as 'misunderstanding' he also uses the words 'preconception' and 'prejudice.' The position the College occupies is not only educational, it is also a political one. However, this issue will be addressed in greater detail in the later section on the organizational setting of the College.

A final observation concerns the pace of change in this area. In the period 2005 to 2010, the number of IPCs has grown tenfold. A process of 'leapfrog' has seen institutions assimilate developments and then innovate yet further.

I think what David saw was a need for us to catch up but in catching up you don't try and do the same thing as the others. You try to catch up if not overtake by using different means to put yourself in that position.  
(Paul White)

For Sheffield, what started in 2005 as a plan to increase student numbers and raise the international profile of the University has changed into an internationalisation strategy that sees 'Internationalisation at home' as an issue of strategic importance. An internationalisation (as opposed to international) strategy has been developed and the position of Pro Vice Chancellor, International, established and then deleted.

The General Agreement on Trade in Services (King, 2004:88) is useful in establishing a categorization that suggests a continuum along which universities can choose to position themselves in response to the stimulus of globalization.

Mode	Title	Commentary
1	Cross-border supply	Only the service itself crosses borders. Distance learning. Set to grow through use of new technologies
2	Consumption abroad	Consumers move to point of consumption. International students travel abroad to study
3	Commercial presence	Establishment abroad of point of delivery. Partnership with local provider (3a) or branch campus (3b)
4	Presence of natural persons	Persons delivering the service travel abroad. Professor travels overseas to deliver education

*Table 6.2: GATS Modes of Services Trade (adapted from King et al., 2004:88)*

Whilst some universities have embraced the more far-reaching models implied by categories 3b and 4 (see, for example New York University's vision of 'a circulatory system on six continents. You choose a continent for your next semester as easily as you choose a course' John Sexton, President of New York University quoted in Hechinger, 2010), British universities have also explored categories 2 and 3a extensively. International Pathway Colleges fit within category 2, as they manage the whole student journey, both literal and metaphorical, from point of contact to entry to a degree programme at a UK university. However, the pace of growth and development is notable across all modes of supply.

### *Summary*

In establishing the genesis of pathway colleges in general and SIC in particular, the evidence of both the literature review and interviews with key personnel indicate that these colleges came about as a result of global forces which have prompted growing numbers of international students to seek educational opportunities overseas, and UKHEIs to initially increase revenue and then subsequently provide an 'internationalisation at home' (Knight, 2008: 22ff) experience for their students.

This research has provided firsthand accounts from key participants that suggest that, whilst pathway colleges can be instrumental in achieving revenue or recruitment targets, engaging them successfully in the more qualitative pursuit of provision of an internationalisation experience for home students is an together different task which requires active engagement and partnership rather than the setting of targets and measurement of their achievement. In addition, these accounts indicate the dynamic nature of developments and the challenge that they presented for senior university decision makers whose 'preconceptions, prejudices and misunderstandings' act as an impediment to comprehension.

## 6.2.2 What are the educational goals of the College and to what extent and how well are they achieved?

The educational goals of the College were set in 2005 within the cooperation agreement at a time when the international strategy for the university focussed on finance and ‘a rather traditional slightly backward-looking’ (Paul White) view of international students. The University’s primary goal was ‘to increase the number of international students’ and the Colleges educational goals were framed to support this objective.

Goal	Metric in 2006	Comment
International student enrolment at SIC	Enrol 1,000 students by 2010	Over 1,000 students enrolled at SIC in 2010
Diversity of nationality and degree choices	None given	In 2012 the University set a diversity target for the College framed in terms of the maximum number of students enrolled in a year from any one nationality. The target changed from year to year over a five-year period.
Progression to the University	Framed in terms of a minimum proportion of students enrolled at SIC	The 2005 minimum requirement was achieved in year one of operation and in every year subsequently. In 2012 the University set a progression target for each year for the following five.
Performance at the University	At least as good as other international students	Not achieved until 2010
Effective pastoral care	No metric given	
Conversion of unconditional offers to enrolment	No metric given	Subsumed within the ‘progression’ target

*Table 6.3 College Goals & Metrics*

All the initial goals set in 2005 had been achieved by 2010. Although the university did not state a target for the growth of international students, there was an increase as a percentage of the total student population from 14% to 25% over the period 2005 to 2010. These statistics would appear to suggest that by 2010 the College was achieving the educational goals set for it by the University. However, this does not take into account the perspective of the students themselves which is the focus of the second part of the question – how well were these goals achieved?

By using a blend of the attributes listed for *the Sheffield Graduate* and *Kaplan Graduate Outcomes*, a framework was developed within which survey and interview questions were placed and chapter five examined this data in detail. By grouping responses based on degree of difference between SIC students and Direct students, it is possible to suggest some answers to the question of preparedness for SIC graduates.

- **Ancillary academic areas – substantial difference between SIC graduates and Direct entrants.**

In responses to questions on Turnitin, the use of a VLE, the use of an academic database and familiarity with rules on plagiarism, citation and referencing, SIC graduates consistently indicated that they perceived themselves to be more familiar with these aspects of study at the University as a result of their preparation for entry to HE than did Direct entrants. These are all taught explicitly on the curriculum within ‘Academic Skills’ a credit-bearing component of the SIC curriculum (see Appendix D)

- **Ancillary pastoral areas – substantial difference between SIC graduates and Direct entrants.**

In responses to questions on bank accounts, mobile phones, familiarity with the campus, familiarity with Sheffield and the surrounding region and having a network of friends, SIC graduates consistently indicated that they perceived themselves to be more familiar with these aspects of student life on arrival at the University than did Direct entrants. These are items addressed through the student support office within the College through the provision of an orientation programme, a social programme and visits to university departments.

- **Academic studies**

One of the categories that appears to be counter-intuitive is in preparedness for core academic studies. Proportionately more SIC graduates felt they had a gap between where their previous studies finished and where their university studies started than did 'Directs'. Given that the College delivers a bespoke curriculum designed to prepare students for studies at the University, this appears puzzling. However, what the College provides is two programmes, one Science and Engineering and the other, Business, Law and Social Science, from which to proceed to any one of over eighty degrees. Given the breadth of degree pathways to which students can proceed from two disciplinary areas, there will inevitably be an element of compromise in what students study. There cannot be a bespoke offering for each one of the degree options available to students. The fact, too, that SIC students attend a college that is designed to prepare them for entry to the University of Sheffield may also raise expectations about subject content as well as academic skills preparation.

- **Engagement with the Students' Union**

Also seemingly counter-intuitive was the fact that SIC respondents experienced a greater level of boredom at the weekend in Sheffield compared to their 'Direct' counterparts and also experienced more culture shock on progression to the University. Perhaps, however, this offers an insight into the difference between the experiences of the two groups of students. For SIC students, their introduction to life in Sheffield was through the College itself. The College was the primary nexus for contact with other students and social activity from accommodation to circles of friends to social activities.

When I came I was, when I came the college arranged a place for me to stay which is just less than 5 minutes from the college so that was very convenient

and I was very happy because I stayed at Rockingham Michelle was very welcoming I liked the place and I had very good flat-mates and I'm still in touch  
(F, Africa, SIC)

It is worth pausing for a moment to consider how SIC student accommodation is managed. In the first three years of the agreement the College worked with the University to accommodate students primarily in university lodgings. However the size and scale of the operation suggested a commercial opportunity to Kaplan and as a consequence Kaplan now has leases for premises which it then offers to its students. This means hundreds of international students in purpose-built student accommodation that is retained for the exclusive use of Sheffield International College students. This provides a very international experience, but does not result in any direct contact with home students and is restricted to students from SIC. There is the possibility of creating an inward-looking mentality which sees the student experience as going no further than the College and its population.

For 'Direct' students, there is a considerable reliance on the Students' Union to act as this nexus:

Well, um, I joined table tennis club, so I met a few people from that, and I also go to church. I met half of my friends there. I, if I saw some activities online I would attend it so I meet new friends, um the others are friends' friends. Some from student unions and some from uh, other websites I think. ... and, this ... university also held some fair, such as volunteer fair and also some other activities like that.  
(W, China, Direct)

The Students' Union at the University of Sheffield provides a broad range of activities and entertainment for students, and has its own International Officer.

Interviewer: So why did you choose Sheffield in particular. Maybe you had a shortlist did you?

A: Um, yeah like the biggest the most positive thing about the University was the Student Union.  
(A, Baltic States, Direct)

Sheffield International College provides a social programme for its students – but it cannot claim to have 300 clubs and societies as the Students’ Union does. Where students have relied on the College to provide their web of contacts and social activities, they may fail to take advantage of the Student Union when they progress to the University. To that extent, the College could be failing to prepare students for life at the University.

The notion that the College may fail to prepare its students to engage fully with the Student Union is added some strength by the fact that proportionately fewer SIC respondents had joined clubs or societies at the Students’ Union.

### *Summary*

In answer to the questions to what extent and how well does the College achieve its educational goals, it would appear that the College is meeting the progression and performance goals as defined by the University. However, although there appears to be advantage for SIC students in ancillary academic areas – educational technology in particular – and ancillary pastoral areas, there is also a suggestion that horizons are narrowed as a consequence of the limits of College experience in the foundation year. Indeed, after a year on the campus of a university in the heart of England, there was still a sense that College students had yet to have meaningful encounters with home students.

... because in our department, for our first year was 124 students and, uh let me see 90% are all home students so there wasn't a large amount of international students very different from when I was in SIC here because the whole class, everybody, is from different countries but when I went in 90% were British students so that was different because I was not used to that.  
(F, Africa, SIC)

This touches on the issue of engagement between international and home students. According to Professor White, the University’s posture on international students has changed substantially since the College was established:

Universities around the country are now wanting to prepare their own home students for a global labour market in a way which is facilitated by having more international students and more international experiences on campus.  
(Paul White)

However, without any change to the goals laid out in the 2005 agreement to redefine the College's mission in light of these changes, with 'fewer shared interests between international and home students' (Montgomery, 2010:95) and absent any 'naturally-occurring context of encounter' (Luzio-Locketti, 1998:221) outside the lecture theatre, the question arises as to how these experiences are to occur. Further, how should the educational goals of the College – the single biggest source of international students at the University of Sheffield - be adapted to support the shift from an international to an internationalisation strategy? The internationalisation agenda described by The University of Sheffield as 'open to people, to change and to possibility' suggests the preconditions for a *Third Space* where 'we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves' – but there is no indication that the College has any strategic role to play in this. The mission and goals remain rooted in the preceding international strategy. It may be, perversely, the inarticulate occupation of an organizational *Third Space* which prevents the College from making a contribution to an educational or cultural *Third Space* at the University.

### **6.3 Organizational Space**

The conceptual framework of *Third Space* between professional and academic spheres of activity is offered... as a way of exploring roles and identities in a diversifying higher education community.  
(Whitchurch, 2013: xii)

For Whitchurch, *Third Space* is an emerging concept which transcends the 'academic/non-academic binary' (op.cit.:3) notions of activity in higher education institutions. She refers to 'a recognition of an expansion and re-combination of activity in higher education' (op. cit.:14) since 1990 and makes reference to

*Third Space* professionals [who] work not only between professional and academic spheres of activity, but also between functions and projects, between internal constituencies, and between institutions and their external partners.  
(op. cit.: 138)

Although there is no direct reference to the genre of International Pathway Colleges as a form of *Third Space*, there are clear linkages here with reference to work between institutions and their external partners. If such colleges can be considered as a form of *Third Space* it opens up a body of research and ideas that may be useful in explaining where such entities have come from as well as where they are going. The purpose of this section of chapter six is to bring together the research by Whitchurch and others together with the initial findings of this study to see what might be learnt from such a combination.

Whitchurch identifies the following characteristics of *Third Space* activity:

- **‘under the radar’** – ‘such developments appear to be occurring “under the radar” without being clearly articulated or acknowledged giving rise to perceptions of invisible workforces.’ (op. cit.: xii)

SIC is the result of a contract between the University and Kaplan. As a consequence, it is the single biggest provider of international students to the University. However, even at the highest levels of the University there is still a lack of clarity ...

... not just about SIC I hasten to add - but about NCUK; about the international faculty because within the University Executive Board there is partial knowledge of each of these areas that are also there for a good deal of, I won't use the word 'ignorance' but 'innocence', and therefore some preconceptions and some misunderstanding and some prejudices which I think Rebecca and I need to try and overcome.  
(Paul White)

In the University's Internationalisation Strategy (University of Sheffield, 2012a), reference is made to the contribution that can be made by the International Relations Office, the International Affairs Steering Committee, the Students' Union and Sheffield Volunteering. There is no mention of Sheffield International College.

The Oxford Economics report (2013) on ‘The Economic Costs and Benefits of International Students’ referred to students at The University of Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam University and Sheffield College – but not Sheffield International College.

It would seem that the College does operate ‘under the radar’ for some of the time.

- **‘safe and risky’** – ‘on the one hand a haven for experimentation and creativity, and on the other, a space in which there is likely to be contestation and uncertainty’ (op.cit.:xiii).

The College operates on the basis of a ten-year contract. To that extent it is a safe environment where experimentation and creativity can occur. Following the poor performance of students in maths modules in particular, the College – working with colleagues at Liverpool International College – developed the baseline test and bridging programme to address the problems perceived in the sector (MacLeod and McEwan, 2010:12; Manning and Maier 2010:14). However, the college also operates in an environment which is risky for three reasons. First is the external environment where legal and commercial factors threaten the existence of colleges such as SIC. Changes in UK government legislation have given rise to challenges which have caused serious problems for some - the withdrawal of London Metropolitan University’s international sponsor license in August 2012 by the UKBA being a case in point. Second is the commercial environment where the College could see a shift away from GATS mode 2 operations (“Consumption Abroad – Consumers move to point of consumption” - see table 6.2 above) to other modes of delivery. Finally, like most projects, the College operates within a time-limited arrangement. Its current contract expires in 2015 and the terms and conditions of its renewal – if it is to be renewed – will depend on the decision the University will want to make about the number and type of international students it wants to see studying in Sheffield:

It's a debate which is only really just being opened up now as a result of changes to the HEFCE student numbers control and so on and you might think "well all that's home stuff" but there is now that big crossover effect between the changes, the deregulation of the home student market which will sit alongside what is already a deregulated overseas student market and we need to think about how we do the two together.  
(Paul White)

- **'Sense of exclusion'** – 'a tendency for both academic and professional staff to see the other as more powerful, and themselves as marginalized.' (op. cit.:4)

The actors within the College itself do not have a voice in this research, primarily due to the researcher's own position. However, inferences can be drawn from comments made by both Paul White and Linda Cowan. The binary perception which Whitchurch (2013) finds inadequate to describe current HE developments is also inadequate here. The notion that there are two actors in this relationship – the University and Kaplan – is to overlook the College as an entity. However, for many observers, the College's identity is confused:

RESEARCHER: In considering the College does the University think of it as being part of The University of Sheffield or Kaplan or both or neither?

Paul White: Any of those at different times for different people in different circumstances I think. Erm... I think a lot depends who you would ask that question of erm... if you asked that question of me, what do I think of it, I suppose I'm quite likely to think of it as part of Kaplan because I'm in relatively frequent conversations with people in the same position as me who have got similar relationships with KIC institutions in their own back yard... If on the other hand you were to talk to let's say Faculty Directors of Learning and Teaching or [name] for instance... from [School] I don't think they would see SIC as anything other than SIC a close partner of the university but they would not see the Kaplan bit in the background. So, I think you would get different answers from different people in other words.  
(Paul White)

For Linda Cowan, Managing Director of Kaplan...

...we would view SIC as being erm very much part of Kaplan. A college that erm we operate in strong partnership with the university and that can fundamentally only exist because of the partnership with the university and we view our students as being very much on a pathway to TUoS. So it is a as I say very much a college that's part of the KIC network but we never underestimate that it could exist in isolation because the core purpose of the college is to prepare students for TUoS and that's something we believe in and are very proud of.  
(Linda Cowan)

Although there is a mix of perspectives, none envisages anything other than a dyadic relationship. Whether this inability to perceive the relationship as one with three rather

than two partners also results in the marginalization of any of the three partners could only be answered by an investigation of its own. However, it appears possible.

- **‘Constructed rather than positional authority’** – constructing their own authority on a personal and ongoing basis with minimal recourse to positional authority.’ (op. cit.:71).

Members of the College have no positional authority within the University, so any authority they achieve has to be constructed. However, this issue was not addressed in the interviews so there is little evidence to work on.

Whitchurch posits a typology of *Third Spaces*:

<i>Structural Type</i>	<i>Integrated</i>	<i>Semi autonomous</i>	<i>Independent</i>
<i>Characteristics</i>	Integrated within organizational structures	Loosely associated with institutional identity	Tenuous links with institutional identity
<i>Response of Individuals</i>	Make a career in project area	Develop rules and resources specific to locale	Work around structures. Seek legitimacy for project
<i>Examples of activity</i>	Institutional research	Enterprise Employability	Equity initiatives

*Table 6.6 Characteristics of integrated, semi-autonomous and independent Third Space (Adapted from Whitchurch, 2013:34)*

The three spaces identified here have all arisen internally. They are either a conscious decision to create an office or function staffed by university employees (op. cit.:33); to focus on ‘a specific project that has a measure of independence and autonomy... by being fully or partly self-funded.’ (op. cit.:37); or to be individual collaborations (op. cit.:40). None of these typologies accommodates an International Pathway College. The staff are not university employees; a conscious decision was made at the outset to outsource the project rather than undertake it in-house; this is not a collaboration of individuals. Yet, it manifests many of the features of a *Third Space*. It is safe and risky, operates under the radar some of the time, and (possibly) has a sense of exclusion.

Whitchurch also posits three stages of development of *Third Space* activities, ‘Contestation, Reconciliation and Reconstruction.’ (p.26). However, as this research demonstrated earlier, the progress of the College is perceived very differently by both Kaplan and The University of Sheffield, and there is evidence that it has yet to move from the ‘Contestation’ phase as far as relations between the founding principles are concerned.

... to be almost a sense that yeah we can really talk with colleagues at SIC, know what’s going on, and not have something potentially thrown at us left field by Kaplan who will come and say we would like to do this or we’re thinking of that in ways which slightly muddy the relationship.  
(Paul White)

This, however, may be bound up with the failure to conceptualize successfully the space the College occupies where, as well as two principal partners, there is also a third separate entity which has its own distinct position.

It may be possible, therefore, to propose a further type of *Third Space* to add to the typology proposed by Whitchurch. Its principal distinguishing feature would be that it arises externally:

Certain people in the institution felt that we could probably do something effective ourselves without making use of a Pathway college or creating a relationship with an outside organisation but ultimately the Registrar’s view prevailed and we started to take seriously the possibility of working with an outside provider to supply that series of paths into the institution for international students ...there were one or two universities who were doing it themselves and still do, with internally run international student preparation programmes ... The clinching argument against it within the discussions that took place within the senior management group at the time were relating to recruitment and reach.  
(Paul White)

The relationship with the external entity being mediated through a co-operation agreement with an external agency, this would seem an appropriate ‘structural type’ to suggest (see *table 6.7*). Unless the College can be recognised in its own right, activity reifies the status quo ‘in which the requirement to adjust lies solely with [international students]’ (Caruana and Spurling, 2007:114). This fails to make use of the students as a resource or the College as a place of experimentation and discovery. If however,

recognition of *Third Space* analysis removes the cloak of invisibility or misunderstanding from the College, it becomes possible to develop a strand of an internationalisation strategy which permits an experimental role for the College and opens the way to make a significant contribution.

Structural type	Co-operation agreement with external agency
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognised as a contractual entity, but not as one in its own right.</li> <li>• Initial integration through personal contacts. Secondary stage sees the creation of organizational structures to support integration.</li> <li>• Entirely funded through fee income</li> <li>• Association depends on audience. Perceived as aligned with partner A, partner B, or as a separate entity</li> </ul>
Response of individuals	To be researched
Examples of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student recruitment</li> <li>• Management of Highly Trusted Sponsor<sup>9</sup> and ECREO<sup>10</sup> status</li> <li>• Teaching and Assessment</li> <li>• Pastoral support for international students</li> <li>• Preparation for degree studies at UKHEI</li> </ul>

*Table 6.7: Additional type of 'Third Space'*

### **Summary**

In answer to the questions ‘what kind of relationship does the college have with its principal stakeholders?’ and ‘how effective have these relationships been in delivering the goals of the partnership?’ it is apparent that, insofar as goals set at the outset have been met, then the partnership has been instrumental in achieving these goals. If, however, an attempt is made to characterize the kind of relationship, it seems that the two partners, Kaplan and Sheffield, retain a ‘binary view’ (Whitchurch, 2013:4) of their relationship and have ‘not fully explored, articulated or conceptualised’ (Whitchurch, 2013:3) the notion of the International Pathway College as a *Third Space* which can be used to support the internationalisation strategy which is now a feature of many UK universities:

I think the agenda has changed from the way it was thought of in 2004/5 and I think that would be not just in this university but elsewhere because I think that a lot of the rationale now is not financial wanting more students here in order that the good name of

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<sup>9</sup> Conferred by United Kingdom Visas and Immigration

<sup>10</sup> Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight - QAA

universities is spread. I think a lot more of the motivation now is around producing international experience on campus for home students.  
(Paul White)

Such colleges can do this in a number of ways:

- They might act as ‘a laboratory or an innovation zone’ (Whitchurch, 2013:138) where experimentation can occur with strategies for the delivery of internationalization.
- They can act as institutional ‘yeast’ helping staff who would not normally work together to combine and produce ideas and solutions (ibid.).
- They can act as a contemplative retreat where staff can withdraw to reflect, consider and experiment (ibid.).

Whilst currently fulfilling the historic goals, the relationship does not enable the College to deliver on current and future goals. It appears to exemplify many of the negative features of an organizational *Third Space* that Whitchurch identifies, yet enjoys few of the benefits of *Third Space*. It is suggested that an application of *Third Space* analysis could help identify obstacles and present possibilities clearly.

## **6.4 Cultural Space**

In answer to the question ‘To what extent does the College provide a Third Space for its stakeholders?’ the answer would appear to be that it does not consciously provide such a space. Although it brings over a thousand international students a year to a university campus in the heart of England, there is little evidence that these students engage with home students in a space where ‘the grid’ of cultural power relations is dissolved allowing them to ‘elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of [them]selves’ (Bhabha, 1994:39).

The goals originally established in 2005 are still the focus for the College although the University's strategy has changed from international to internationalisation and the provision of an 'International at Home' (Knight, 2008:22ff.) experience for home students is now a strategic university goal. However, an approach which is both collaborative and competitive (Hughes, 2011:3) contains tensions which do not 'elude the politics of polarity.' Whilst 'Multicultural Education' is the most progressive (in terms of internationalisation) of Haigh's (2002) types of engagement with international students, it can still have its drawbacks:

However, personal experience shows that, in this case, unless cross-cultural understanding is an explicit part of the equation... participants do no more than build a neutral working relationship that lies inoffensively between different not-understood norms.  
(Haigh, 2002:57)

This is still a binary approach which does not create a hybrid culture as a result.

Yet, strategy apart, there are interesting developments within the formal curriculum of the University such as the Global Engineering Challenge. This builds on the work of 'Engineers without Borders' and states that:

The project briefs concern the sustainable development of disadvantaged communities whilst raising questions about key 21st century issues: globalisation, climate change, sustainability and equality - the "Global Dimension".  
(Global Engineering Challenge, 2013/4)

This project for first year undergraduate engineers thus creates a *Third Space* where they can work together to explore projects taken from around the world.

Although the formal curriculum of the College shows little change in response to internationalisation, the informal curriculum (or 'Learning Outside the Classroom') does seek to engage the students with their environment ('The Sheffield Story'). However, the internationalisation that takes place is amongst international students rather than between international and home and much of the exposure is within 'the grid' rather than without it.

Absent any formal reflection of the University's internationalisation strategy in the goals for the College, there is little likelihood of the formal curriculum altering. It therefore remains rooted at stage one of Haigh's (2002) continuum, 'Bringing the Foreigners Up to Speed.' The informal curriculum seeks to offer opportunities for exploration and discovery, though often within the established cultural milieu.

Yet, there is evidence of students themselves using the College as a *Third Space* as they meet and engage with each other.

We were all international students and for most of them it was their first time away from home so even though we were from different countries we all had this in common ...that is the place was new, different cultures, so I think that's why we bonded so I have some friends from China, some Arabic friends, I did know someone from Mexico, if I didn't come here I don't think I would have had that opportunity to meet so many different people and in the university too I've got to make a few friends... home students not a lot because I think it's easier for me to make friends with the international students than the home students because usually they tend to stay in groups so it's harder...  
(F, SIC, Africa)

It seems then that the College does provide one set of stakeholders with a *Third Space*, even if by accident rather than by design.

## Chapter 7 – Concluding observations and recommendations

Universities are recognizing that much subject content is too domestically oriented in an era when graduates – domestic as well as international – are facing the prospect of more globally mobile careers, or, even if working locally, doing so for organizations operating in cross-national contexts  
(Ryan, 2004:166)

As the research for this thesis proceeded, it became apparent that answers to research questions were not straightforward. International Pathway Colleges were the product of a variety of factors. They offered both opportunities and threats, and how the balance between the two stood depended on the observer's perspective. The particular college that was studied appeared to still be tied to an international rather than an internationalization strategy. As a consequence, the educational space that it provided appeared to have more in common with the more backward-looking (to use Paul White's description) of the positions that Haigh outlines of 'Bringing the foreigners up to speed' (Haigh, 2002:57), thus reifying 'the grid' (Bhabha in Rutherford, 1990:208) which sets one culture as superior to another. And yet, in the partner institution there were signs of *Third Space* activity (The Faculty of Engineering's Global Engineering Challenge; The Students' Union's 'We are all international' campaign) which sought to dismantle the grid and embrace a hybrid globalised culture. Why did there seem to be no connection between these initiatives and a College which, by its very name and purpose, ought to be involved in such developments?

When the focus turned to the College's relationship with its principal stakeholders, it was challenging to establish just what the position of the College was. When asked whether the College was viewed as part of the University, part of Kaplan or an independent entity, Paul White answered: 'Any of those at different times for different people in different circumstances I think.' When it came to establishing how successful the relationships had been in delivering the goals of the partnership, it was evident that where there were metrics, this could be determined but that the metrics all related to an

historic set of goals for the College, based on the international strategy of 2006 rather than the internationalization strategy of 2012 which had superseded it. Asking students about their perceptions also produced a combination of answers, some of which appeared intuitive (SIC student perceiving themselves to be better-prepared in ancillary academic and pastoral matters), and some more counter-intuitive (engaging less with the Student Union than Direct students and experiencing a similar culture shock on transition to the University as Direct students). Finally, when it came to considering to what extent the College provided a *Third Space* for its stakeholders it became evident that, although the College did not provide such a place by design, it seemed that, from the testimony of their interviews, students had been able to create one for themselves in spite of these strategic shortcomings. Finally, to return to the issue of internationalisation and the goal of enabling students to take advantage of the opportunities at the University to become more globally adept or 'intercultural speakers' (Montgomery, 2010:113), it became apparent that international students at the University were doing this – but it was often in concert with other international students rather than UK students.

The reason for this apparently haphazard and accidental set of outcomes seems to be because of a lack of a clearly articulated vision and mission for the College within the internationalization strategy of the University. This goes to the very heart of *Third Space* thinking. The international strategy that existed in 2006 when the partnership between Kaplan and the University was established was based on a deficit model of learning (Montgomery, 2010:112) which had

a rather traditional slightly backward-looking view of the place of the UK in the world and respect for the UK and respect for UK education through people who had experienced it and the more people he could see coming to experience it the better that was .

(Paul White)

This is the cultural ‘grid’ that Bhabha describes (Rutherford, 1990:208) and which the *Third Space* transcends. If the College is to make the transition from international to internationalization, then the mission and vision spelled out in the original Cooperation agreement needs to be revisited and redrafted to reflect this shift. For that to happen, however, there is another transformation which needs to take place first, and this is in the perception of the College and its place at the University. It is not possible to conceive of a mission for the College inspired by *Third Space* which seeks to provide an opportunity for international and home students to meet in a space unconstrained by a grid of preconception if the College is to be itself constrained within such a grid. It was earlier observed that

‘It may be, perversely, the inarticulate occupation of an organizational *Third Space* which prevents the College from making a contribution to an educational or cultural *Third Space* at the University.

Whitchurch’s (2013) use of *Third Space* in the context of ‘interactions between people who would not normally have worked together’ (McAlpine and Hopwood, 2009:159) provides a framework of reference and analysis with which to examine such relationships. This thesis has suggested a further typology which might be added to Whitchurch’s existing list to acknowledge the differences that arise when the relationship is with an external entity (see table 7.1).

Whether this addition is accepted or not is moot however. What is important, as **the first recommendation** of this thesis, is that the position of the College is examined using Whitchurch’s *Third Space* analysis to dispel the ‘innocence and therefore some preconceptions and some misunderstanding and some prejudices’ (Paul White) about the College which exist at the highest levels of the University – and possibly elsewhere, too. It is illogical to seek to establish an internationalizing – and therefore ‘grid-free’ – strategy, whilst one of the potentially most useful agents in its implementation languishes in a ‘grid’ of ‘misunderstanding and prejudice.’ In so doing it may be

Structural type	Co-operation agreement with external agency
Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognised as a contractual entity, but not as one in its own right.</li> <li>• Initial integration through personal contacts. Secondary stage sees the creation of organizational structures to support integration.</li> <li>• Entirely funded through fee income</li> <li>• Association depends on audience. Perceived as aligned with partner A, partner B, or as a separate entity</li> </ul>
Response of individuals	To be researched
Examples of activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student recruitment</li> <li>• Management of Highly Trusted Sponsor<sup>11</sup> and ECREO<sup>12</sup> status</li> <li>• Teaching and Assessment</li> <li>• Pastoral support for international students</li> <li>• Preparation for degree studies at UKHEI</li> </ul>

Table 7.1: Additional type of Organizational Third Space

possible to disentangle the politics of the partnership (the for-profit private provider and the debate which this attracts) from the delivery (the College as a *Third Space* supporting an internationalization strategy). Such an analysis should lead to three questions asked earlier being answered:

1. Does the College offer a space where international and home students can meet and create a hybrid ‘cosmopolitical’ culture (Beck, 2009:12)? This concerns the engagement of students.
2. Can the College provide a research space where staff from University and College can engage together to investigate ways in which an internationalization strategy can be developed within both the formal and the informal curricula of College and University? This concerns the engagement of staff.
3. How effectively does the College provide a *Third Space* where notions of educational deficiency are challenged (Montgomery, 2010:74), and false dichotomies (Ryan and Louie, 2007) are re-examined? This concerns the cultural norms prevalent in the College and more widely in the University.

<sup>11</sup> Conferred by United Kingdom Visas and Immigration

<sup>12</sup> Embedded College Review for Educational Oversight - QAA

Once this analysis is undertaken and these questions answered, it should be clear exactly what kind of educational and cultural space the College will be asked to provide in the context of the internationalization strategy.

The **second recommendation** concerns another aspect of institutional research. It is that an investigation into the experiences of international students at the end of their first year at the University should routinely take place in order to compare and contrast the perceptions of Direct entrants and College graduates.

The **third recommendation** is at sector level. It concerns the norms that operate in what is currently a keenly competitive environment. If the sector is to have professional credibility, the providers need to rise above their commercial rivalry to establish agreed measures which they commit to providing on a regular basis so that students, practitioners and researchers alike can gain a clearer understanding of trends and developments. This amounts to an invitation to the providers to take a step forward and work collaboratively rather than competitively. Furthermore, if they are to prove their worth as ‘disruptive innovators’ (Rosen, 2013) the providers need to be engaging with their partners’ internationalization strategies and suggesting ways in which they can support them.

There are a number of potential **areas for future research**. First, this particular piece of research would have benefitted from taking evidence from staff at the University who work with the international students in their first year of undergraduate studies. Their views would have been valuable in creating a richer and fuller picture of the first year experience of these students and their preparedness for it. It would also be useful to contrast the findings from this Russell Group university from a similar study undertaken at a post-1992 university. Whitchurch (2013) distinguishes in her findings between institutions using these labels because of the perceived differences in culture and

outlook. Finally, the mantle for research needs to be taken by an ‘outsider’ who can use this ‘insider’ research as a map, as it were, so that they can follow and explore further, bringing with them a perspective that is fresh but informed.

### **What is the likely future direction of the College?**

In an announcement in the PIE<sup>13</sup> news of 13<sup>th</sup> March 2014, David Leigh, CEO of Study Group, another private provider and one of Kaplan’s competitors, announced:

Study Group’s takeover of the Sheffield International College pathway programme, one of the largest in Europe, [which] will make it the first example of a university pathway programme being taken over by another provider. “We’re very, very proud to be the first beneficiary of a change in pathway provider... we’re very excited to be taking it on,” said Leigh. Study Group will welcome its first Sheffield intake in September 2015.

The following week (20<sup>th</sup> March 2014) the ‘EducationInvestor’<sup>14</sup> carried the following article:

Study Group ousts Kaplan for Sheffield pathway contract

Study Group has announced that it is to replace Kaplan as the provider of pathway courses for the University of Sheffield.

Shemina Davis, head of media relations at the University of Sheffield, said the 10 year contract with Kaplan had come to a natural end. The university will announce more details on why the changes were made on April 2.

Study Group’s chief executive David Leigh told Education Investor that he believed it was the first time a pathway contractor has ousted another in the UK.

He added: “We are very excited about the Sheffield brand, and expect it to be very significant for us financially. We believe we were chosen ahead of Kaplan because of how successful we are at progressing students into university, which was a key factor in assessing Study Group.”

One of the characteristics that Whitchurch (2013) identifies in connection with *Third Space* organizations is that they are: ‘**safe and risky**’ – ‘on the one hand a haven for experimentation and creativity, and on the other, a space in which there is likely to be contestation and uncertainty’ (Whitchurch, 2013:xiii). As the transition to a different provider is announced, all that can be said at present is that the future of the College will be marked by uncertainty.

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<sup>13</sup> ‘News and business analysis for Professionals in International Education.’

<sup>14</sup> ‘News and views on the business of learning.’

## Appendix A: International Pathways Colleges in the UK (August 2013)

Organization  No of colleges	Host University	Organization  website
Kaplan  8	Nottingham Trent, Sheffield, Liverpool, Glasgow, Brighton, University of the West of England, Bournemouth  Kaplan International College, London* <i>City, Westminster, Cranfield</i>	<a href="http://www.kic.org.uk">www.kic.org.uk</a>
ISC  15	University College Dublin, Herriot Watt, Keele, Kingston, Huddersfield, Lancaster, Leicester, Lincoln, Leeds Met., Liverpool John Moores, Royal Holloway, Strathclyde, Surrey, Sussex, Trinity College Dublin	<a href="http://www.studygroup.com">www.studygroup.com</a>
Navitas  8	Brunel, Hertfordshire, Anglia Ruskin, Swansea, Robert Gordon Aberdeen, Edinburgh Napier, Portsmouth, Plymouth	<a href="http://www.navitasworld.com">www.navitasworld.com</a>
INTO  9	Exeter, East Anglia ( <i>UEA; UEA London</i> ), Newcastle, Glasgow Caledonian, City, Manchester, Queen's Belfast, Manchester Metropolitan, University of London ( <i>St. George's</i> )	<a href="http://www.intohigher.com">www.intohigher.com</a>
Cambridge Education Group  5	Central Lancashire, South Bank, Coventry, Sunderland  University of London* <i>Royal Veterinary College, Birkbeck, Goldsmith's, Queen Mary, Institute of Education, Royal Holloway</i>	<a href="http://www.ceg-uk.com">http://www.ceg-uk.com</a>
Shorelight  1	Bath Spa	<a href="http://shorelight.com/">http://shorelight.com/</a>
*Stand-alone college serving a number of institutions		

(Source – websites)

## **Appendix B: The Kaplan International College Graduate Outcomes**

The student mission of Kaplan International Colleges is ‘to offer a high quality learning environment that enables students to acquire the knowledge and skills to fulfill their academic potential and to grow as individuals’. (KIC Mission Statement, 2009).

Our students are at the centre of everything we do. Every member of staff makes a major contribution to the delivery of our mission and the development and success of our students. The Graduate Outcomes provide a focus for that work. They are designed to achieve a number of goals.

1. To flesh out a profile of what we seek to achieve that helps staff and students understand where we are going and some of the challenges that we will face.
2. As an extension of the first, to provide a qualitative as well as a quantitative account of our work.
3. To emphasize learning as well as teaching, and consequently demand of us that we accommodate reflective learning in our systems and processes rather than focussing solely on measurement of taught curricula.
4. To pull together the complete student experience as a coherent whole and in so doing make this whole greater than the sum of its parts.
5. To integrate the activity of teaching, student support activity and learning support tutorial and invest them all with a common focus.

If we achieve these goals we create real organizational advantage as, in creating the six dimensions of the Graduate Outcomes, we establish a unique identity for the Kaplan graduate.

All activities which our students undertake from the moment they arrive until completion should support the Graduate Outcomes. All activities should be capable of being mapped against the Graduate Outcomes.

The Kaplan graduate will have the following skills and qualities.

- **Academic Knowledge.** The academic knowledge and skills required to undertake their degree programmes.
- **Academic Appreciation.** A theoretical and practical understanding of the protocols and practices associated with UK HE study .
- **Communicative Ability.** The linguistic ability and communication skills to succeed on their degree programmes and operate effectively in academic and social situations encountered while living and studying in their host environment.
- **Critical Appreciation.** A willingness to consider and explore different ideas and viewpoints with an open and critical mind.
- **Self management.** The skills to be an independent learner with the ability to work in a team and cope with change.
- **Studentship.** The confidence to engage in their host environment such that they are able to benefit fully from the range of social, cultural and educational opportunities available to them in their university life.

## Appendix C: Survey Statements and Interview Questions

### Theme A: Educational space. Survey statements

<p><b>When I started my degree:</b></p> <p>I had a clear idea of the course and what it contained I already had friends and acquaintances in Sheffield I had personally visited the department where I am now studying</p>
<p><b>When I started at the University of Sheffield in September 2011:</b></p> <p>I learned a lot during orientation and induction I had all the documents I needed for registration I went to the Fresher's Fair It was easy for me to find my way to lectures, seminars and tutorials I was able to submit all of my assignments on time I experienced a strong culture shock when I started at the University I felt homesick for the first few weeks of the academic year</p>
<p><b>Communication at The University of Sheffield</b></p> <p>In lectures and seminars I have found it difficult to understand some of the lecturers It has been difficult for me to communicate with fellow students and staff in English I use English all of the time</p>
<p><b>Studying at The University of Sheffield</b></p> <p>I found I had a gap in my knowledge between where my previous (SIC) studies finished and where my university studies began I found the grading system at the University to be different from what I was used to (at SIC) The way of teaching and learning at the University was new to me The rules on plagiarism, citation and referencing at the University were new to me</p>
<p><b>Using technology at The University of Sheffield</b></p> <p>It has been easy finding the sources I need to complete my assignments I had used a VLE before I came to / this year at the University I had used 'Turnitin' before I came to / this year at the University I had searched an academic database (such as 'Web of Knowledge') before</p>
<p><b>General Issues at The University of Sheffield</b></p> <p>I have found it difficult when asked to work with other students I have found it difficult to solve problems that I have faced since starting my degree studies I know who to go to if I need help I have friends of many nationalities It has been difficult making friends with English students</p>
<p><b>When I started at the University</b></p> <p>I already had accommodation arranged I already had a bank account set up I already had a UK mobile telephone number</p>

### **The Students' Union**

I have joined some of the clubs and societies at the Students' Union  
I never use the Students' Union

### **Sheffield and the surrounding region**

I know my way around the city centre  
I have visited a number of places outside the city  
At the weekends I get bored because there is not a lot to do  
Sheffield feels like home

## **Theme A: Educational Space. Interview Questions – students**

1. Preface. Thank you for taking the time to speak to me today. Our conversation will be recorded and transcribed. If I use any of the things you say they will be anonymous and you will see a version of my findings before it is submitted for assessment. The interview should last between 20 and 30 minutes.
2. Background. Can you tell me where you are from and your school history? //What are you studying at TUoS?
3. Choosing. How did you come to choose the University of Sheffield as your place of study?// What steps did you take to find out about the department and the degree? //Was it as you expected? Or were there some surprises? // (*SIC supplementary if not surfaced by previous questions: how useful did you find the Open Days organised by SIC while you were studying at the college?*)
4. Studying. Tell me about your course. How would you describe the way of teaching and learning at Sheffield? //How new was this for you? (*SIC supplementary: How well did your time at SIC prepare you for this?*)// What kind of support and guidance was there for you in learning about learning?// How did you discover this support?
5. Living. Did you take advantage of an arrivals service when you came to the UK?// How did you find your accommodation?// Tell me about it... do you share? With whom? How do you get on? Will you live there next year?//Where do you do your shopping?// Do you cook at home or eat out more?//(*SIC supplementary: how much help did you get from SIC when you were studying there with these things?* )
6. Social life at TUoS. Tell me about life outside of studying. How do you occupy your time?// What places and activities do you frequent and do? //Who are the friends you made?// What drew you together? (*SIC supplementary: how much of this familiarity and friendship is as a result of your time at SIC?*)
7. People. What did you think of English people before you started this year? //How has that perception changed? // What did you think of other nationalities? // How has that perception changed?
8. What have you learned about yourself since starting at the University?
9. What do you wish you had known before you started at TUoS that you know now?

10. What advice would you give to the Vice Chancellor of TUoS to help him take TUoS forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century?
11. *(SIC Supplementary: To what extent did your experience at SIC help you prepare for life at the university?// What knowledge or skills did it give you that you didn't already have? // )*
12. Thank you very much. Please accept this book token as an expression of my appreciation for the time and trouble you have taken to help me with my research.

## **Theme B: Organizational Space. Interview Questions – Principal Stakeholders**

### **PVC Professor Paul White (Teaching & Learning, and Sheffield)**

#### **General questions about the establishment of the College.**

1. Can you tell me a little about your role in the establishment of The University of Sheffield International College?
2. What were the reasons behind the university's decision to establish a pathway college?
3. Of these, which one was primary, would you say?
4. What models were considered? For example, with a foundation course already in operation for some prospective international engineering students, did the university consider expanding its own provision?
5. Why did it choose a partnership arrangement with a private provider?
6. Until 2006, there were just three pathway colleges in the UK. There are now more than 40. What, do you think, has led to this surge in numbers?
7. The university published its internationalisation strategy in 2012. What approach did the university have back in 2006? Where did the college fit within that approach?

#### **Questions about the development of the relationship and vision for the college**

8. What were the initial goals for the college. How were these measured? Were they achieved?
9. In your talk to college staff in February 2009, you spoke of 'pricking the bubble'. Can you tell me what you meant by that? How would you measure its achievement and how successful has the college been in achieving this goal?
10. You chair the Joint Academic Advisory Board, the primary oversight body. How well do you think Kaplan and the college have responded to the steer given by the Board over the five years of the college's existence?
11. How has the relationship between the university, the college and Kaplan developed, would you say?

12. In considering the College, does the university think of it as being part of The University of Sheffield, or Kaplan, or both? What difficulties does this dual aspect of the college create?

**Questions about the future direction and vision for the college.**

13. The university appointed a PVC International in 2011 and has now developed an 'internationalisation' strategy (approved April 11 2012). However, there is no mention of the college or the relationship as a distinct element of this, although there is mention of Faculties and of the Student Union. Does the college have a particular contribution to make? Which of the goals in particular would you expect the college to support?
14. How has the vision and the goals for the college changed since the establishment of the partnership in 2006?
15. Regardless of the partner who will be involved with the University from 2016, how would you see the vision and direction for the College developing?

**Linda Cowan. Managing Director of Kaplan International Colleges.**

**General questions about the establishment of the College.**

1. You are the Managing Director of Kaplan International Colleges. Can you describe how KIC came into existence as a part of the parent company, Kaplan Inc?
2. What was the vision for and expectation of KIC at the outset? There were only two other pathways colleges in the UK at that time. What suggested that IPCs could become successful?
3. In 2005 when KIC was established there were just two IPCs (Brunel and Hertfordshire). There are now more than 40. What do you think has led to this growth?
4. Can you tell me a little about your role in the establishment of The University of Sheffield International College?
5. Why was the University of Sheffield chosen as Kaplan's second partner?

**Questions about the development of the relationship and vision for the college**

6. Is KIC a system of individual colleges or a unified college system? Is the answer you have given now the answer you would have given at the outset? In what ways does this response impact the vision and direction for colleges as a whole and for Sheffield in particular?
7. When the college was established, what were its initial goals? How were these measured? Were they achieved?
8. In considering the College, does Kaplan think of it as being part of The University of Sheffield, or Kaplan, or both? What difficulties does this dual aspect of the college create?

9. How has the vision and direction for the college developed in the five years of its existence? To what extent has the University been consulted in the development of the plan for the College?
10. To what extent was Kaplan consulted in the development of the internationalization strategy of the University?
11. How has the change in leadership of Kaplan Inc. and KIC affected the vision and direction of the colleges in general?

**Questions about the future direction and vision for the college.**

12. How do you anticipate the vision and direction for KIC in general and Sheffield in particular developing in future?
13. To what extent will the University of Sheffield be consulted in the development of the vision and direction of the college?
14. Is there the potential for a forum/ fora in which KIC partners and the colleges themselves can meet to discuss vision and direction?

## Appendix D: Academic Programmes at SIC

Foundation Certificate, Business, Law and Social Science – Business Pathway		
<b>Business Pathway</b>		
Two term programme		
<i>Term 1</i>	<i>Term 2</i>	
FC005 - Introduction to Social Sciences	FC008 - Mathematics and Statistics for the Social Sciences	
FC006 - Economics in an International Context	FC009 - Business and the Business Environment	
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC019 - Business Enterprise & Accounting	
AS1b - Introduction to Academic Reading and Writing	AS2 - Academic Writing Skills	
2T FE - Foundation English	(2T FE - REPEATERS ONLY)	
Three term programme (Language)		
<i>Term 1 - September</i>	<i>Term 2 - January</i>	<i>Term 3 - April</i>
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC005 - Introduction to Social Sciences	FC008 - Mathematics and Statistics for the Social Sciences
AS1b - Introduction to Academic Reading and Writing	FC006 - Economics in an International Context	FC009 - Business and the Business Environment
LCAS2a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2a	AS2 - Academic Writing Skills	FC019 - Business Enterprise & Accounting
LCAS2b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2b	LCAS3a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3a	LCAS3b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3b
<b>Business and Mathematics Pathway</b>		
Two term programme		
<i>Term 1</i>	<i>Term 2</i>	
FC006 - Economics in an International Context	FC008 - Mathematics and Statistics for the Social Sciences	
FC017 - Foundation Mathematics	FC009 - Business and the Business Environment <b>OR</b> FC019 - Business Enterprise & Accounting	
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	AS2 - Academic Writing Skills	
AS1b - Introduction to Academic Reading and Writing	(2T FE - REPEATERS ONLY)	
2T FE - Foundation English	FC020 - Applied Mathematics	
Three term programme (Language)		
<i>Term 1 - September</i>	<i>Term 2 - January</i>	<i>Term 3 - April</i>
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC017 - Foundation Mathematics	FC020 - Applied Mathematics
AS1b - Intro to Academic Reading & Writing	FC006 - Economics in an International Context	FC009 - Business Environment <b>OR</b> FC019 - Business Enterprise & Accounting
LCAS2a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2a	AS2 - Academic Writing Skills	FC008 - Mathematics and Statistics for the Social Sciences
LCAS2b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2b	LCAS3a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3a	LCAS3b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3b

<b>Law and Social Science Pathway</b>		
Two term programme		
<i>Term 1</i>	<i>Term 2</i>	
FC005 - Introduction to Social Sciences	FC008 - Mathematics and Statistics for the Social Sciences	
FC006 - Economics in an International Context	FC011 - The Individual, State and Society	
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC012 - Introduction to Legal Principles and Systems	
AS1b - Introduction to Academic Reading and Writing	AS2 - Academic Writing Skills	
2T FE - Foundation English	(2T FE - REPEATERS ONLY)	
Three term programme (Language)		
<i>Term 1 - September</i>	<i>Term 2 - January</i>	<i>Term 3 - April</i>
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC005 - Introduction to Social Sciences	FC008 - Mathematics and Statistics for the Social Sciences
AS1b - Introduction to Academic Reading and Writing	FC006 - Economics in an International Context	FC011 - The Individual, State and Society
LCAS2a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2a	AS2 - Academic Writing Skills	FC012 - Introduction to Legal Principles and Systems
LCAS2b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2b	LCAS3a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3a	LCAS3b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3b
<b>Psychology Pathway</b>		
Two term programme		
<i>Term 1</i>	<i>Term 2</i>	
FC006 - Economics in an International Context	FC008 - Mathematics and Statistics for the Social Sciences	
FC017 - Foundation Mathematics	FC011 - The Individual, State and Society	
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC026 - Biological Science	
AS1b - Introduction to Academic Reading and Writing	AS2_FC_BLSS - Academic Writing Skills	
2T FE - Foundation English	(2T FE - REPEATERS ONLY)	
Three term programme (Language)		
<i>Term 1 - September</i>	<i>Term 2 - January</i>	<i>Term 3 - April</i>
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC005 - Introduction to Social Sciences	FC008 - Mathematics and Statistics for the Social Sciences
AS1b - Intro to Academic Reading & Writing	FC006 - Economics in an International Context	FC011 - The Individual, State and Society
LCAS2a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2a	AS2 - Academic Writing Skills	FC026 - Biological Science
LCAS2b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2b	LCAS3a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3a	LCAS3b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3b

Foundation Certificate, Science and Engineering		
Physics & Engineering Pathway		
Two term programme		
<i>Term 1</i>	<i>Term 2</i>	
FC017 - Foundation Mathematics	FC020 - Applied Mathematics	
FC018 - Fundamentals of Science	FC021 - Physical Sciences	
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC025 - Engineering Physics	
AS1b - Introduction to Academic Reading and Writing	AS2 - Scientific Essay Writing and Poster Presentation	
2T FE - Foundation English	(2T FE - REPEATERS ONLY)	
Three term programme (Language)		
<i>Term 1 - September</i>	<i>Term 2 - January</i>	<i>Term 3 - April</i>
FC017 - Foundation Mathematics	FC018 - Fundamentals of Science	FC021 - Physical Sciences
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC020 - Applied Mathematics	FC025 - Engineering Physics
LCAS2a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2a	AS1b - Intro to Academic Reading & Writing	AS2 - Scientific Essay Writing and Poster Presentation
LCAS2b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2b	LCAS3a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3a	LCAS3b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3b
Chemistry & Chemical Engineering Pathway		
Two term programme		
<i>Term 1</i>	<i>Term 2</i>	
FC017 - Foundation Mathematics	FC020 - Applied Mathematics	
FC018 - Fundamentals of Science	FC022 - Practical Chemistry	
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC025 - Engineering Physics	
AS1b - Introduction to Academic Reading and Writing	AS2 - Scientific Essay Writing and Poster Presentation	
2T FE - Foundation English	(2T FE - REPEATERS ONLY)	
Three term programme (Language)		
<i>Term 1 - September</i>	<i>Term 2 - January</i>	<i>Term 3 - April</i>
FC017 - Foundation Mathematics	FC018 - Fundamentals of Science	FC022 - Practical Chemistry
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC020 - Applied Mathematics	FC025 - Engineering Physics
LCAS2a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2a	AS1b - Intro to Academic Reading & Writing	AS2 - Scientific Essay Writing and Poster Presentation
LCAS2b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2b	LCAS3a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3a	LCAS3b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3b
Life Sciences Pathway		
Two term programme		
<i>Term 1</i>	<i>Term 2</i>	
FC017 - Foundation Mathematics	FC022 - Practical Chemistry	
FC018 - Fundamentals of Science	FC026V3 - Biological Science	
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC041 - Biochemistry	
AS1b - Introduction to Academic Reading and Writing	AS2 - Scientific Essay Writing and Poster Presentation	
2T FE - Foundation English	(2T FE - REPEATERS ONLY)	

<b>Life Sciences Pathway (continued)</b>		
Three term programme (Language)		
<i>Term 1 - September</i>	<i>Term 2 - January</i>	<i>Term 3 - April</i>
FC018 - Fundamentals of Science	FC017 - Foundation Mathematics	FC022 - Practical Chemistry
AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	FC041 - Biochemistry	FC026V3 - Biological Science
LCAS2a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2a	AS1b_FC_S&E - Intro to Academic Reading & Writing	AS2_FC_S&E - Scientific Essay Writing and Poster Presentation
LCAS2b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 2b	LCAS3a - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3a	LCAS3b - Language and Communication for Academic Study 3b
Three term programme (Maths and Science*)		
<i>Term 1 - September</i>	<i>Term 2 - January</i>	*This option is available to students who have the English required for entry to a 2 term programme but would like additional preparation in maths and science. In their final term they progress to the final term of their pathway.
FC018 (a) - Fundamentals of Science	FC018 (b) - Fundamentals of Science	
BP002 (a) - Biology	BP002 (b) - Physics	
BP001 – Bridging Mathematics	FC017 - Foundation Mathematics	
BP 501 – Bridging Academic Skills	AS1a - Strategies for Listening and Speaking	
BPIT – Bridging IT	AS1b - Intro to Academic Reading & Writing	

## Appendix E: Sample interview transcripts

### Sample 1: Interview with SIC graduate

INTERVIEWER: Our conversation will be recorded and transcribed. If I use any of the things you say, it will be anonymous and you will see a version of my findings before it is submitted for assessment. This interview should last between 20 and 30 minutes. Is that OK?

SIC GRADUATE: Yes, that's fine.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you very much. Now these interview questions are built around the key stages of the student journey. So they're designed to get an insight from you into the different parts of your journey if you like through the college and on to the university. But not just in the college from before as well. So we're going to start out before, then through the college, then into the University. And you now have a view of all of that journey. So first can you tell me where you are from and your school history before you came to the college

SIC GRADUATE: I'm from China. Before I went to the SIC I completed high school study in China in Shanghai. My mother school was one of the important or key schools if you like in Shanghai erm the competition there was quite high. I was in I chose Chemistry as my additional subject. Apart from that I also had to study Chinese English and Maths so I had to study 4 compulsory subjects in total. My class was the highest level in class amongst all chemical classes and I graduated from the school and I got admitted in one of the universities in Shanghai which is for Science and Engineering but that university was not my ideal university so after I studies there one year I withdrew from the university and began tom start my overseas studies.

INTERVIEWER: I see. And when you were at school and for that matter at university how much of your studies were in the English language and how much were in your mother tongue?

SIC GRADUATE: I think every subject apart from the English was in my mother tongue and even for the only subject which was English that we had to use English but the teaching of that was still in Chinese so basically we were using Chinese to learn that and we didn't have to speak English we didn't have to write much English so it was like very much passive learning. We were just able to read and listen. Not able to process and produce any English materials from ourselves.

INTERVIEWER: Interesting. How many students did you usually have in your class at school? Not only for English but for other subjects too? How big was the class group?

SIC GRADUATE: Around 50.

RESEARCHER: Did this give much time for question and answer to the lecturer at all to the teacher at all?

SIC GRADUATE: The education system in China is quite different. Students are not quite allowed to ask questions during lectures. We are just sitting there and listen to what the teachers are saying then take notes then do questions. So it was like very very exam oriented.

RESEARCHER: Interesting. You said that after your first year of university in Shanghai. You said that you decided to look overseas. What was it about the university in Shanghai that made you think you wanted to study somewhere else?

SIC GRADUATE: Actually before I started my overseas study I didn't know the difference between Chinese university study and English university study. It was actually when I was here when I started I actually found the difference and I much like

here rather than China. I think the biggest difference is the way of learning. Here you learn by yourself. The teacher does not teach you the materials but he teaches you the method of learning. But in Shanghai in China it is different. They teach you the materials. They basically just want you to remember these materials and use them for the exams. So after you have graduated maybe in a certain months' time then you will forget what you have learnt and it's not useful for your life.

INTERVIEWER: Interesting. You say you discovered that only after you had come here. So why did you decide before that, before you knew that, what was it that led you to decide, no I'm going to leave this and I'm going to go to a completely different country where I don't really speak the language and I'm going to study there. That was a big decision to make...

SIC GRADUATE: I think it was because I didn't achieve my...get into my ideal university. So my parents said would you like a second chance? You can go abroad study and go to where you want to. And also my parents were persuaded by my cousin who was already studying in Australia. He told my parents about his overseas experience and I was listening to that. I thought that is quite a good opportunity and it is also a challenge for me. Because it was my own fault – I mean about the failure of not getting to my ideal university – it was my fault so I think I'm going to pay for that fault and going to study again.

INTERVIEWER: I see OK. So you decided to choose somewhere to study overseas. You had a cousin in Australia. It seems to me that possibly Australia would have been the natural place for you to look and maybe choose. But you didn't. You chose England and you chose Sheffield. Why, why did you choose...

SIC GRADUATE: Originally I choose the New South Wales University in Australia and I was preparing for my IELTS test. After I got the results of my IELTS test, because

it was good so that made me to choose a better place to study so I choose England and I chose SIC because I wanted to have a foundation programme in order to have a transition period between my home country study and overseas study. I have met the requirements to go to the university directly but I chose to have this transition period in order to be more in order for my overseas period to be more smooth. I leave the one year education in my home country so I had one year extra to do that transition.

INTERVIEWER: Interesting. Um. Sheffield, then. You decided on this university. What kind of steps did you take to choose Sheffield because I guess you could have chosen from many other universities? What made you choose Sheffield? What research were you able to do?

SIC GRADUATE: Most of the research I've done is from the internet. I checked the rankings. I checked the forum to see what people say about this university and this college and I think the most important one was my meeting with the Sheffield University representative at one of the agents that I used. And he because he was directly from the university so he introduced them to me much of his experience and because that was face to face so it was very much interactive and I got to ask him the questions that I wanted to ask and because I wanted to study engineering and he told me Sheffield was one of the leading institutes in the UK for engineering and that did match with my research findings so that made me decide on Sheffield.

INTERVIEWER: And when you came here to the college, I think we also provided some Open Days for you. Were you able to take advantage of those?

SIC GRADUATE: Yes, I think the open day allowed us to see what department actually looked like and ask the university students about their experience in the university and to better choose a particular university course because originally I chose the general one and the Open Day took place before we finalized admission on the university

progression route so that Open day allowed you to compare the difference between different programmes and made a sensible choice.

INTERVIEWER: Were you thinking of doing something a different degree or did you change your mind what happened.

SIC GRADUATE: I was quite strong on my decision. I didn't even thought to change it because I liked the chemistry. I choose that as my additional compulsory subject in my high school so I had already made my mind up. I will build my career in chemistry so I didn't have any problems with that.

INTERVIEWER: Very good. But like you said the Open Day was useful it helped you to actually get a clearer idea...

SIC GRADUATE: Yes because we not only get the brochures we also got tutors from different because they got director of different courses and each director can introduce a few more information about his courses to you and there was a small group of us there were not many students in that particular subject so the session was very interactive and there were some previous students from SIC I couldn't remember if they were from SIC but they were in the University so we not only get the view from the teacher we get the view from the students. Because sometimes the teachers may think this course is not difficult and the method of teaching is OK but the students may find it a bit different.

INTERVIEWER: You've mentioned the course and the way of teaching and earlier you contrasted the style in China with the style here. Tell me a bit more about it. How would you describe the style of teaching and learning at Sheffield in the University in particular?

SIC GRADUATE: For the university level for each subject we only get a two hour lecture each week and that lecture does cover a lot of materials so I don't think most of

the students can actually catch up with the lectures during the session so they have to do a lot of independent study afterwards and this is the key that I think the British education has. It makes you to learn – it forces you to learn and actually it separates out those that want to learn from those that don't want to learn because if you don't do your self-study then you won't be able to catch up with the ongoing materials.

INTERVIEWER: And how well did your time at this college prepare you for that?

SIC GRADUATE: I think the college prepares me in terms of because actually when I first really started at the university education I didn't realise this because the college is still more like high school rather than the university so... um the college teaches you a lot of things that the first-year course will cover so that actually gives you some time which you can regret that I didn't do the self study but it is OK I have done this before but now I have seen the difference so I must start from now I must act from now so the College actually provides you I would say with buffer time or something.

INTERVIEWER: Interesting. So the college actually gave you some buffer time?

SIC GRADUATE: Yes

INTERVIEWER: So the college actually teaches into the first year?

SIC GRADUATE: Yes. It does. It actually covers the first semester or even some of the second semester of my first year and I knew already about how to write a lab report and how to I mean those things that I have not touched in my Chinese study.

INTERVIEWER: OK. And how did you find that your experience in terms compared to the experience of other international student who were studying alongside you... who hadn't come through the college?

SIC GRADUATE: There was also some international students from other countries in my first year and we were the person they usually asked the question of because we knew the rules so one day they finished their lab report or their scientific essays we usually checked their content and the structure to see if it is complied with the rules. The university also runs some introductory course about how to write lab reports and scientific essays but these are optional. Not all the students attend them and sometimes they are not even aware because they just came here, they've got loads of things to settle down so sometimes they miss these sessions but we knew the rules the standards already so it was more convenient for us.

INTERVIEWER: What about the style for the course because you've described this very specific self-study approach in the university. Did you find you were prepared for that in the college or not so much?

SIC GRADUATE: I think it was half-half because as I said the college is still more like high school the teachers actually persuade you to study, But they do give you some freedom of study like we're doing some group project and the question is very open-ended you can explore as much as you want. And also I don't know for other modules but in my Chemistry module we also get a scientific essay to write on and that has to be based on your own research and these are also self study and for the lab reports the analysis section is also very open and you can go as far as you like. So based on the results, the results actually inspire you on something that you will look up on interne or in literature then I think is also about self study. So basically it is half half. The teachers actually persuade you to study but you also have to do your bit.

INTERVIEWER: Very good thank you. Right. I'm going to take you out of the classroom now and look more widely at your experience. When you came did you take advantage of an arrivals service at all?

SIC GRADUATE: Yes. I was picked up in London airport. Although it was not very great because we had to wait in the airport for about six hours. I think that was because that was the first time the college ran a pick up in the Heathrow airport. They didn't anticipate very precisely about the size of luggage that students would bring so there were not enough seats. But later on I think the registration period went quite smoothly because I think the college told students about what documents they had to bring and these actually facilitated the whole process.

INTERVIEWER: And what about accommodation? Did you find your own accommodation or did you use the college to find accommodation?

SIC GRADUATE: I lived in Opal 2 so I applied through the college

INTERVIEWER: How did you find opal 2 was it ok?

SIC GRADUATE: Yes it was ok

INTERVIEWER: And what about now just now in the university where have you been living in the university?

SIC GRADUATE: Because I already lived in Sheffield before I started the university so I knew the city around so I looked for my own accommodation rather than applying through the university which was quite expensive and quite far because so I lived in IQ Brocco For my first year THEN moved all my flatmates to a private house. And lived there for 2 years.

INTERVIEWER: And your flatmates are they all Chinese as well?

SIC GRADUATE: They are all Chinese and they all came to they all came into Sheffield international college together and actually we all knew each other before we came because we met at the agency the agents organised a like a pre departure meeting

to introduce to us something you have to prepare to be aware of before you go. So we met at that party and exchanged our contacts and ?----

INTERVIEWER: Alright now that's quite interesting because as a group you knew you stick together and you must have close friendship bonds. Has that helped you or has that perhaps prevented you from mixing with a wider group of people in the university?

SIC GRADUATE: Actually we will only meet after we finish our classes so we have our evening lives together. Sometimes actually every day we cook together most of the times we cook together so we don't miss home because we have Chinese food every day but during the day we do meet with other students because we are not in the same course also the university?--- we live together we only have the evening life together and we all join some other societies sometimes I don't come back home to eat I eat outside with my friends from the society from the clubs so

INTERVIEWER: And now you mention societies and clubs tell me a little bit about them?

SIC GRADUATE: I joined the international students committee for two years it was it was started from my second year and now I was acting as the East Asia representative so we basically help organise some bit events for international students and for home students as well the biggest event we organise is the international cultural evening there were around 20 societies participating or performing there international dancing or singing to the committee of ?---

INTERVIEWER: how did you find out about the student union were you conscious of it when you were a student here at the college? Did you know of its existence.

SIC GRADUATE: Actually while I was at the college I didn't know about it but when I moved into the university I knew about it and I started to look I started to the first

year I went to a few badminton sessions and at the end of the first year I joined a recruitment for the university orientation programme so I worked as an assistant for for the September intake 1<sup>st</sup> year which was the start of my second year and during that orientation programme I met many students from the orientation committee so that's how I joined it because I made friends with them then I knew their organisation then after the orientation programme I joined them and worked as the east Asian representative.

INTERVIEWER: Ok but you didn't find college had had er highlighted the student union in any way

SIC GRADUATE: I think when I was here it was not highlighted but I think now and the year before it was very much highlighted and the college reminded the student union to um to come to the fair and give out promotional materials to students .

INTERVIEWER: Yes and from your side now in the university do you find that you get students from the college coming along and trying to find out about it while still in the college? do you find that

SIC GRADUATE: Er because I worked here after registration I think so the students still ask me a lot of questions also about how the university is like but when I met when I meet them in St Georges library or in other common places they do ask me how my university study is going and do you have many classes much coursework to do or these things

INTERVIEWER: Hmm and as far as the student union is concerned because you were on the international committee do they ask you about that, do they have any interest in that at all

SIC GRADUATE: I think they are like you have to push them because one of my (?) friends we do sell tickets in the SIC And at that moment they are very interested but rather than that they are not er very interested in going to the student but some students are maybe many Chinese students they are not but many other international students are

INTERVIEWER: So why do you think some students or particularly Chinese students are not interested in the student union at that time

SIC GRADUATE: I think this is quite hard to say I think some Chinese students are interested but the majority of them are not I think it is because our culture where from and not very and not very open society eer and we are more like to stick to our own nationality and I think it is because there is so many Chinese here and there is so may Chinese places so they don't even have to mix with other people and they could still have a well enjoyable life

INTERVIEWER: Ok ok um tell me about your life outside of studying you've told me that you're a member of clubs and societies badminton and the international committee anything else that you do outside of studies what sort of places what kind of things where do you go things that you do in your free time

SIC GRADUATE: Er I go for travelling sometimes and I work as a volunteer and I also joined Sheffield students Sheffield mentor scheme as a senior student I have a mentor from junior year I give them some advice sometimes about my course sometimes our social life then uk is a good place to travel around ? most of the tourist attractions are they have very good information of these about them but I do not travel quite often because I have loads of course work to do

INTERVIEWER: we talked about international students Chinese students but what about English people what did you think of English people before you started your time here in Sheffield?

SIC GRADUATE: I think they are very reserved themselves er this is what how I was told and most of them are very gentlemen and when I actually started my first year I didn't know about many English students before I studied at group chat? In my group there was an English student and now I worked with him and as my like our group is also dividing into two to talk on different topics and I was with him on a particular topic so we had a lot of contacts between us and later on after I moved to my third year project the first part of my third year project was also a group one and this time I had more English group mates I had three and during the group working I was I found about their working style how generally English people work um some of them are quite free some of them are very academically er concentrated even more than me I think sometimes so I think they are quite diverse they are quite different and when you actually initiate the conversation with them then they will talk to you but if you don't start they are just quite reserved themselves I think this may be their way to be polite or I don't know

INTERVIEWER: No no ok yes that's that's very generous I think um what about other nationalities at the university because we have French and Chinese you mention English other nationalities in the university how have you found it how easy has it been to work with them perhaps on the international committee

SIC GRADUATE: I think working with other students I mean both English and international it is quite easy but at the initial stage of your university experience it was easier to talk to other international students rather than English students because we were all foreign students we all had the same problems I mean because we all come from different places so we have similar experience as being overseas student so we had many common topics to share to discuss about at the initial stage but later after you have known many of your classmates then it is the class is quite like a mix when

you go into the classroom you can talk to anyone and ask about their progress coursework what they did last night and things it was just like normal

INTERVIEWER: Ok very good what have you learned about yourself since starting at the university

SIC GRADUATE: I think I discovered my potential I think mmm and I believe as long as you pay your efforts you will always succeed

INTERVIEWER: That's fine that's fine now let me suggest to you one thing the vice chancellor of the university of Sheffield wants to improve the experience for international students and he has put together a little committee a little group of international students to advise him he's asked you to work on that group what advice would you give him if he wants to improve the experience for international students at the university of Sheffield

SIC GRADUATE: As I mentioned in the interview I give to (?) I think that language is the most important for experience of the international student here because if they don't know the language very well then they are not able to mingle around very well with other students and find themselves (?) and make most of their time in the university so I think this is a prior advice they must be at least confident with their language they must have at least a basic level from which they can improve and they are able to improve while they actually arrive here and on the side of the university I think maybe we can give students not that is not about language maybe we can give students much more health information because I think they don't know about the university health system very well that is also from my own experience because I didn't know it very well although I have registered but I have never used it or heard from it about anything not until I actually got any illness and I know nothing about the health system in the UK so I have to find out about myself and it actually took quite a while for me to find out like

how to actually go to see a doctor here then later I found ok if you want to go to a particular department the hospital then you have to go to the GP first so I think maybe a little bit more information about the health system in the UK because this whole system is quite different from my to the one in my country and I believe it is also quite different to the one that in the country of many international students

INTERVIEWER: Let me take you back one step further and maybe the answer is the same I don't know but what advice would you give to me the college director of this college in order to improve the experience for international students

SIC GRADUATE: I think what you have done on your side is almost at its maximum it's what the students have to do they have to respect that policy they have to take their own initiative because they have to do their bit which actually is more than what the college has to do in order to improve their English what the college can do is only to help them what they have to do is accept a (??) and actually absorb this helps into themselves and (??) variety so it is what they have to do that's what I believe I find there are some students who are quite keen at learning English but there are some ones who are actually reluctant and I think um some of the students they they are not quite they don't have a very clear er purpose of why they have to why they are here and the work they are actually going to do some of them the reason for some of them who came here is because they've failed their er Chinese high school education so they had no choice they had no university to study in china so they have to come here to study to go to a like a not very good university and these students are the ones that most reluctant to speak English because they they actually don't want to study you know they they are finding other people to write essays coursework for them so they are the ones that are ruining the policy and some of the students here because they are not mature enough but they are easily influenced by these how they say maybe bad students so I think this is the work that the agents have to do they have to try and find the source of

the (?) and make sure that only those students that who want to study who are know what difficulties they will find and willing to take the challenge only send those kind of students

INTERVIEWER: Ok but the entry levels are very high as I understand it I don't understand a lot about Chinese qualifications but I understand that the entry requirements are high so for a student to come to this college they have to score high marks in their secondary school examinations

SIC GRADUATE: I think I think what the college has to do is to check the... check the qualification check the authenticity of the qualification maybe some of the qualifications are not genuine. I think you have to call the school that they studied in and to to actually compare the transcript that you have with the transcript in their system but all you can if you don't check if you don't trust the authenticity of these transcripts then you can set up a test it eliminates those ones that don't pass it

INTERVIEWER: Jiankai thank you very much indeed for your time today

SIC GRADUATE: No problem

**Sample 2: Interview with Professor Paul White, Pro Vice Chancellor, Learning & Teaching at The University of Sheffield.**

INTERVIEWER: I wanted to focus on the issue of the vision and future direction for The University of Sheffield International College to give it its full title and given that you have been central to the establishment and development of the College as well as being the chair of the JAAB I thought you would be and ideal person to ask on those topics. So what I wanted to do was to look at ... I wanted to take it through three stages if I could: the set up stage and what was expected of it; where we stand now and where you think it might go in future

PW: Fine

INTERVIEWER: So if I could take you back to the beginning can you tell me a little bit about your role in the establishment of SIC

PW: Well it wasn't my idea. The original idea for this was very much that of the Registrar of the University... David Fletcher at the time... and what I think David was looking at was the metrics for universities around the country and particularly Russell Group and Russell Group and York which are our natural comparators at the time and noticing that the University was not performing as well as many others in the recruitment of international students. Now that was allied to a Vice Chancellor at the time – Bob Boucher – who was very interested in the internationalisation agenda, but I would say in one particular dimension of it and that was very much in bringing international students to the UK to have an international student experience or to have a UK student experience that was er the way in which the university's internationalisation strategy was written at the time. It wasn't concerned with some of the other broader issues that we now are concerned with... So David Fletcher sought to persuade colleagues that there were ways in which we could increase the input of international student to the University erm by looking at pathway colleges etc. There was a bit of a debate because certain people in the institution felt that we could probably do something effective ourselves without making use of a Pathway college er and creating a relationship with an outside organisation but ultimately the Registrar's view prevailed and we started to take seriously the possibility of working with an outside provider to supply that series of paths into the institution for international students

INTERVIEWER: Interesting that you should talk about this UK experience for international students. What direct benefits did the Vice Chancellor of the time perceive

that there would be in this UK experience for international students for the university itself.

PW: Well, I think it would be disingenuous of me to say that the financial consideration was not there. It was... and I think in many ways that was one of the prime foci for the whole discussion. The VC at the time Bob Boucher though was really concerned that the University should be seen as an international player. I don't think he saw that vision though as one that affected home students. He wanted to be able to show that the University was a high quality institution and one of the ways in which it could be demonstrated it was a high quality institution was that it was recruiting students from around the world. His perspective was also very much that of going to other countries where there was a great affection for the University and for the UK as a result of people he met there having been associated with the university as students and I think his perspective was therefore in a sense a rather traditional slightly backward-looking view of the place of the UK in the world and respect for the UK and respect for UK education through people who had experienced it and the more people he could see coming to experience it the better that was.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that those countries in particular that the VC of the time had in mind map closely to the countries that have indeed provided the students that have come through the pathway college?

PW: Yes. Quite closely because Bob himself had of course erm had experience in universities in the Far East and he was not ... erm... unlike the present Vice Chancellor as knowledgeable and as well-travelled in China but he had had experience in East Asia, Hong Kong particularly and he was thinking I think of Hong Kong graduates from here, people like William Mong and others, Arthur Lee erm I think the other area that he was thinking of as well was erm parts of Latin America and particularly Mexico

remembering that Bob could speak Spanish and was interested therefore in developing the university's connections there... er... outside the traditional UK colonial realm if you like but erm so in some ways yes similar to the pattern of those that have emerged in other ways, no.

INTERVIEWER: OK I think we have effectively covered question 1 to 4 in that overview so thank you. I suppose we spoke about the models that were considered and that the Registrar's vision prevailed. Interesting that now we talk as if pathways were an established fact but at that time there were only two other...

PW: That's right

INTERVIEWER: ... colleges extant and Kaplan was in the process of opening its own first one

PW: Yes, yes at Nottingham Trent. Well that was why the internal debate about whether we could do it ourselves was quite an interesting one because there were one or two universities who were doing it themselves and still do, ... with internally run international student preparation programmes. Warwick is still one that does that of course. The arguments around that were that if we could do it ourselves we could quality control it ourselves without recourse to an outside partner to implement anything that came out of quality control. We could have more direct involvement with what the programmes were etc. etc. The clinching argument against it within the discussions that took place within the senior management group at the time were relating to recruitment and reach. Because we were already recruiting international students into the university, perhaps in numbers but not those that matched the university's ambition, but we were doing that through our own networks of agents in various places our own sets of connectivities. Were we likely to be able to increase the reach of the institution to recruitment to a foundation programme of some sort? Probably not unless we in some

way radically changed the pattern of agent recruitment that we were able to provide for ourselves and ultimately it was recognized that it would be much easier to do that via and organisation such as Kaplan which had all of the Washington Post backing for it and with its global reach being so much greater than we could ever achieve.

INTERVIEWER: Interesting because the initial comparison that the Registrar at the time had undertaken was with other peer universities who appeared to be more successful in international student recruitment yet nonetheless were not using a pathway college or anything like that themselves. Why do you think that was?

PW: No. I'm not going to I'm going to answer a slightly different one. But I think what David saw was a need for us to catch up but in catching up you don't try and do the same thing as the others. You try to catch up if not overtake by using different means to put yourself in that position. I think it was quite probably quite important the serendipity of erm and you can remember the guy and I can't remember his name but erm senior figure from Kaplan...

INTERVIEWER: Charles Hall

PW: ... Charles Hall of course, erm meeting at I think a conference Bob Boucher and then finding that we were interested in doing something; he was interested in providing something. A series of meetings then involved Charles taking place in London at The Croft and elsewhere so there is an element of personal erm personal networks being set up which sometimes of course as we all know can sometimes transcend the economic or the intellectual reality of what we are trying to do but in this case worked in a parallel sort of direction.

INTERVIEWER: OK. The agreement was with a private for-profit provider. Was this the first time the university had entered into such an educational partnership?

PW: Not really, no, because, erm, there were a number of relationships we already had with institutions in other parts of the world articulation arrangements with colleges of one sort or another particularly in Malaysia. Some of them being yes state-organized and the rest of it but the Malaysian ethnic situation is quite a complex one and therefore you have state funding going into institutions for the Malay population but much more private finding going into institutions that are for the Indian or Chinese populations and we have had relationships with a number of institutions over a period of time. The other which is probably worth just drawing attention to is the relationship with City College in Thessaloniki which was a validation relationship from 1993 through until 2009 or thereabouts and has now been incorporated in governance terms, in academic governance terms as a faculty of the university but City College Thessaloniki is owned by a family, the Strategakis family who are private providers of language education throughout Greece and then of higher education and they expect to take a return on their investment. It's not a significant return and it's probably less of a return as you would expect in a purely for-profit organisation it's a sort of slightly pro bono slightly for-profit organisation but we have been working with them happily for an extended period so those are just a couple of examples. There would be others as well.

INTERVIEWER: OK. Until 2006 as I mentioned earlier there were only 2 or 3 when Kaplan opened Nottingham Trent, pathway colleges in the UK. However there are now more than 40. What do you think has led to this surge in numbers?

PW: Well we talked about the University of Sheffield wanting to play catch-up in a way. I think you've seen that quite significantly with a whole number of other institutions who've done the sort of analysis that David Fletcher had done here in 2004 2005, and saying to themselves we want a piece of this action and I think if I may make mention of Glasgow and Liverpool tow of the colleges in the Kaplan network, and particularly Glasgow. I think they saw you know we would like to see more

international students coming here. But I think the agenda has changed for the way it was thought of in 2004/5 and I think that would be not just in this university but elsewhere because I think that a lot of the rationale now is not financial wanting more students here in order that the good name of universities is spread away, I think a lot more of the motivation now is around producing international experience on campus for home students as well as international and I think that's a change that's taken place over the last eight years or so a recognition that institutions like ours but not just institutions like ours, other universities around the country are now wanting to prepare their own home students for a global labour market in a way which is facilitated by having more international students and more international experiences on campus.

INTERVIEWER: Now that's interesting because I remember in 2009 when you kindly came along and gave a keynote talk to College staff in February of that year as I recall...

PW: I am honoured that you remember..

INTERVIEWER: Well, well several things have stayed in my memory from that talk, in particular that phrase about 'pricking the bubble' that you spoke about ...

PW: Yes, mmm, yes

INTERVIEWER: ... and that seems to me to be very much connected with what you have just been describing. Why do you think that is particularly pertinent at a university such as Sheffield?

PW: I think that's partly because of the quality of the students that that we're producing and the quality of the graduates. Erm... if we haven't given them an understanding that the market for their skills is a global one I think that we're selling them short and they're likely to sell themselves short. Erm many of our brightest students in areas like Engineering in Architecture in Political analysis and so on have got skills which ought

to be being sold – ‘sold’ in inverted commas – on an international market. They ought to be looking to employment in multinational organisations both in the private sector and in you know United Nations agencies and other things of that sort. Errm so I think it’s very important that we try to convert - convert? - socially engineer... we try to encourage them to think of their futures as perhaps more broadly based geographically than they have ever previously thought. And I think that’s that in a way is possibly accompanied by you know the move into recession and the move into global economic crisis when the assured entry into secure jobs in the UK labour market has been harder and you know it’s not just me but other people around this institution that are saying to students you know yes you might find it hard to get an engineering job in Rotherham but you know there’s plenty going in India and there’s plenty going in Brazil and there’s plenty going in China and to think more broadly.

INTERVIEWER: OK, and just to wrap up this sort of tour of the past if you like going back to the outset when the college was established what were the initial goals for the college and how were they measured?

PW: Well the initial goals were effectively statistical analysis of KPIs related to the progression into the university and the success of students in moving into the university and completing programmes and in a way it was as simple as that because the college was not going to be doing itself any favours and we weren’t going to be doing any favours to student unless there was success in progression and by that we don’t just mean moving from college to university but moving all the way through. Eerm had we and of course I think this is something you well know Kevin in the very earliest years I don’t think we did get it right and I think that is partly the responsibility of the college and partly the responsibility of the university but as you’ve said we were working in a very very new environment and some of those initial goals were not being met in the first year or two because the progression rates into the university that were modelled in

the business plan which affected both Kaplan's thinking and the university's thinking were not achieved and so that if you like was the crucial indicator in the very early days. And you know that's something that we've learned how to deal with and change the thinking around and seen some broader benefits since.

INTERVIEWER: OK. You chair the Joint Academic Advisory Board which is the primary oversight body. How well do you think the partner, Kaplan, and the college, have responded to the steer given by the Board over the years...

PW: I think the position of the Board has been a bit complicated and it has changed from period to period and I'm hoping that things will be better in the future. Now what I mean by that is I think there have been three phases – one of these leading into the future. I think in the first phase the Board was as you say the sort of supreme governing body but it was supported by a whole raft of other activities which linked the University with the College on day to day operational matters quite a lot of them but actually which were quite important in making the whole relationship work well. You had, if you like, David Webster, you had Wendy Hobson, you had Jackie Gresham a whole series of people there who were working in ways that fostered the development of the business relationship. Perhaps not at a big strategic level but certainly in making the thing run – oiling the wheels, and that parallels the quality management the 'is this programme suitable; is that programme suitable; how do we make the English work?' discussions within the JAAB. I think in retrospect when the voluntary severance scheme came forward in this university we lost too many people who were crucial to that relationship and didn't replace them. And for the period since that which is three years now 2009 to now I think the... the... the environment in which the JAAB has been operating is one where that Board doesn't have the powers that it needs to do some of the things it has to do because some of those people are no longer there to do them. You know if as happened when we did the earliest interim review once the college was up

and running and was doing things if there were recommendations that come back Rod Nicholson as you remember chaired a little review. There were things that came out of that about accommodation and about the building work and various other things there were levers that could be pulled to get things done. Those levers disappeared after 2009. Why I say this is a 3 phase thing is because I think the establishment now under Rebecca of a group that will look at the bigger strategic issues, I think gives us the way of dealing separately with what I would call the business planning and the operational alongside the academic and yes they need to have an interface but I think it will make it much clearer... the responsibility of the different organs within this so ... erm... that's why I'm giving that 3 phase model. Which is a rather longer answer to your question than you possibly imagined but you did ask me to reflect and I'm reflecting.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you and I think that's very helpful. But I'll return to that last part of my question if I may and say how well do you think the partner and the college have responded to the steer... however effectively you might feel the steer might have been applied, but where it was applied and where ... erm... direction was given , how well do you think...?

PW: I think the response has been erm... improving through time. I think one thing that there is still perhaps a little bit of frustration on the part of some individuals who sit round the JAAB table or who read some of the papers from it is a frustration that we often have internally within the university and that is that people often can produce material which is factual and find it much harder to be reflective and that is the case within the university when we ask departments to reflect on where they're going, what they're doing. We often get something which is much more 'we're doing this, this, this and this, rather than is it being successful. I think we're encouraging through the JAAB and perhaps through the way we handle some of our discussions now a more reflective approach on the part of key individuals within the relationship and I think that is

something that we're now trying to do through JAAB both with the faculty support colleagues from the university and I think we've now got a better set than we have had – being candid here – erm and I think that's also true within the individuals that lead the streams and the pathways within the college and with your colleagues therefore. I think it's taken time to get there though and it's still not necessarily perfect but it's moving in the right direction.

INTERVIEWER: And how... I suppose a related question. The relationship between the University the College and Kaplan, which is not necessarily one relationship but several. How do you think those relationships then should I say have developed in support of strategic objectives

PW: I think that's quite a complicated one actually because you know going back to your predecessors as well as head of the college I think from time to time the university has not been very sure who to talk to at strategic level about particular things and I think there's been the perception within the university that SIC and Kaplan don't necessarily speak with the same voice erm... and there's a need to try and recognize the particular view points that individuals within that set come from. So, yes, it is a three way relationship and with those three sets of relationships there and I think there's been occasions when from the university's point of view we've got sorted out with the college or we've dealt with an issue or we've got some plans top do something and then there seems to be a delay or the or Kaplan takes a slightly different reaction. Now, that's a perception Kevin and you might want to say that's not the case but that is the way it seems to us in various cases and it's not as helpful to developing things in the future as it might be.

INTERVIEWER: Which brings me to my next question because in considering the college does the university think of it as being part of the university of Sheffield or Kaplan or both or neither.

PW: Any of those at different times for different people in different circumstances I think. Erm... I think a lot depends who you would ask that question of erm... if you asked that question of me, what do I think of it, I suppose I'm quite likely to think of it as part of Kaplan because I'm in relatively frequent conversations with people in the same position as me who have got similar relationships with KIC institutions in their own back yard and indeed they have on occasion come to ask me about we have done jointly and we use each other in one way or another and at one time there was what we called the Kaplan user group which erm... met only once actually but we did meet in Birmingham and erm... you know...talked over issues that we had in common what we had separately. We recognized we weren't necessarily really in competition with each other as it happened and therefore there wasn't any problem about that. We didn't talk about finances or commerce you know commercial confidentiality in those terms. If on the other hand you were to talk to let's say Faculty Directors of Learning and Teaching or Linda Lewis for instance who has come on as I think a very effective new colleague from management. I don't think they would see SIC as anything other than SIC a close partner of the university but they would not see the Kaplan bit in the background. So, I think you would get different answers from different people in other words. And you asked me to give a view for the university which is what you would expect somebody in my position to be able to give, and I think it would be confused.

INTERVIEWER: Hmm

PW: Now I'll add to that actually because this very morning I've had a conversation with Rebecca Hughes about a piece of work that probably at a UEB awayday she and I

need to lead on really an awareness raising exercise for colleagues across UEB - not just about SIC I hasten to add - but about NCUK; about the international faculty because within the UEB there is partial knowledge of each of these areas that are also there for a good deal of I won't use the word ignorance but innocence and therefore some preconceptions and some misunderstanding and some prejudices which I think Rebecca and I need to try and overcome erm... and the VC has encouraged indeed it was his idea that we probably do an hour session at an awayday I thought we might do it as a multiple choice question and answer session... be too humiliating though for various people to show what they didn't really know... That's not as direct an answer as you probably wanted but I think it represents the reality of a different series of understandings.

INTERVIEWER: No I think it does justice to the complexity of the relationship. Is there a way in which moving forward now I suppose is there a way in which those that tangle if you like (pejorative word but probably advisedly so) that tangle could be untangled in a way that would be beneficial to the university do you think?

PW: I think two things there. One thing I think we need to do is actually to be much more encouraging to colleagues to take an active role in the development of activity within SIC and I know we do you know that's one thing we've pushed and we do get more now than we did but it's still not as big as it should be. You know you've had Tony Ryan come along and give a lecture. You've had Mike Gibbs do things you know you've had Alistair Warren facilitating things and so on but it's by no means as strong a relationship in my view as would help you and help the students there to feel that they were part of the wider portfolio of activities that the university would represent for them. I think the second actually would go back to the issue we raised a minute or two ago about the relationship between SIC and Kaplan and that would be for there to be almost a sense that yeah we can really talk with colleagues at SIC know what's going

on and not have something potentially thrown at us left field by Kaplan who will come and say we would like to do this or we're thinking of that in ways which slightly muddy the relationship because who knows the people at Kaplan? Only about 4 or 5 of us who have met Linda and met others and know you know know them and can ring them up or email them And yet you know things that might be thrown at the institution from that source er... can destabilize what people otherwise think of a relationship they have already set up with local individuals that they know down the road.

INTERVIEWER: The university appointed we've spoken about Rebecca Hughes appointed a PVC International in 2011 and has now developed an internationalisation strategy approved in April this year. However there'D no mention of the College or the relationship as a distinct element of this although there is mention of the Faculties and of the Student Union. Does the College have a particular contribution to make.,

PW: I think it does but I think there are a rather a lot of other things that aren't mentioned in there as well, so I wouldn't take it as a personal slight on the college. I think that document is deliberately a strategy. It's a high level document. At the moment there isn't an operational plan behind it. I don't know. I haven't talked to Rebecca about this, whether her team is about to develop an operational plan perhaps, but I'm responsible for the Learning and Teaching strategy and we've got our ten big priority statements in there. But behind that then there's a whole series of we need to do this and this in order to deliver. I don't think the internal strategy yet because it's new has got that element to it. I would see the International College as a very important aspect of delivery because of what I said earlier and that is the ways in which the international strategy for the university has shifted from being solely about recruitment to being about the creation of the international experience in which recruitment is one strand but alongside exchange arrangements; international partnerships; articulations of students backwards and forwards developing learning and teaching methods on campus which

actually encourage students to interact with others of international backgrounds and all that range of things erm... to me SIC within that just as the NCUK just as the International faculty just as the Students' Union have all got a role to play.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you. Regardless of the partner who will be involved with the University from 2015 how would you see the vision and direction for the International College developing?

PW: A lot will depend on the way in which the University ultimately thinks about what it wants to be in the light of the changes in government policy because we're moving into a very different world for a university like us than we've ever been in before where effectively we can say to ourselves if we wish to and I think we ought to 'We want to be this size... we want to have this blend of disciplines and we want to have this blend of students'. Until now we have been in an environment where we are handed down a number of students from home environments – home and EU students – which we have not been able to expand other than by successful biddings into various rounds er ... other than ... you know... specific extra student numbers competitions and we've not been able therefore to change the pattern of home recruitment or the balance between different faculties and departments significantly and alongside that you've had the international student recruitment which has not despite what the Daily Telegraph thinks, meant the replacement of a home student by an overseas student. In the world we're now moving into where there is effectively going to be no erm... bar on the recruitment of high performing home students we've got a decision to make about 'Do we want this university to continue to be 18,500 undergraduate students or do we want to see it go smaller? Do we want to see it go bigger?' If we do, either of those, what do we want the balance between home and overseas students to be? That's a discussion that we haven't yet started, but in my view we need to because actually that is going to be an incredibly sensitive political argument within this country if this university said to itself we want

to pursue that mix of international and home students to the extent that would balance it say 50/50, of course it's nowhere like that at the minute, but if that's what we set as our goal, we would by implication be saying, and that will actually reduce the number of home students in the university, and where are we going to get that increase in overseas students from and then we'd be looking to direct recruitment from agents, but also through our existing connections, through things like NCUK, SIC to provide us with that. So I can't give you a definite answer Kevin because your question is predicated on us knowing what we want to be like in 2015 and 2016 and it's a debate which is only really just being opened up now as a result of changes to the HEFCE student numbers control and so on and you might think well all that's home stuff but there is now that big crossover effect between the changes the deregulation of the home student market which will sit alongside what is already a deregulated overseas student market and we need to think about how we do the two together.

INTERVIEWER: You've described a sort of visionary journey or a strategic journey that the university has travelled since 2005 in the perception of the role that international students can play in the university. How much of an influence was the college and the students that have come from it in making that change or in helping that growth or development?

PW: That's quite a tricky one. I suspect the answer is it's been differential in different parts of the institution because the college has fed more international students into some departments that already had them and hasn't made a big difference but in some other departments it has generated a student population which wasn't previously there. I think that's more particularly in some of the social sciences. I would say Economics is a case in point. I was head of Economics between 2003 and 2006 and during that period PGT numbers were low and yeah were half and half international and home but they were small. UG numbers were small from overseas. That's changed now and

Economics is now recruiting large numbers of international students both into its UG and into its PG programmes and I think that has changed the nature of thinking within that discipline. That wouldn't be the case if you look at something like Chemical and Biological Engineering or Electronic Engineering where there has been a historic pattern of much more overseas student interest so it's a bit differential around the university but certainly in some cases that has been a factor.

INTERVIEWER: OK. Paul White PVC Teaching and Learning from the University of Sheffield thank you very much indeed.

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