



Logic Checksheet for a Successful ESRC Standard Grant Proposal

('Developing Organisation Leaders as Change Agents in the Public Services', principal applicant Mike Wallace, co-applicants Jonathan Morris, Mike Reed and Rosemary Deem. ESRC award number RES-000-23-1136)

Focus	Element of logic	Content in this proposal
WARRANTING THE CONCLUSION OF YOUR ARGUMENT		
What topic you're going to investigate	Project Title <ul style="list-style-type: none"> keywords summarising the topic 	Developing organisation leaders as change agents in the public services
	Broad aim <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contribution to finding out about the topic in general terms 	To determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the forms of externally provided leadership development support that present and aspiring leaders of (English) service organisations in education and health seek and how these are perceived and experienced, how far such support is designed to build their capacity as public service change agents, and how activities provided by national leadership development bodies (NLDBs) and their impact on participants' perceptions are affected by the association of each national body with or its independence from central government-driven public service modernisation
	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> collection of data 	A - to track the evolution in England since 1997 of discourses of public service reform and change with special reference to leadership development, as reflected in public documentation and the personal accounts of different stakeholders B - to determine the variety of externally provided leadership development support activities which current and aspiring leaders seek and experience, and why, with particular attention to the significance that is accorded to NLDBs C - to examine the acculturation and capacity-building processes, networks and mechanisms employed by these national bodies to orchestrate the implementation of modernisation and other change agendas D - to determine the extent to which those being trained or seeking leadership development support perceive that activities offered by the appropriate NLDB are crucial to their careers and have potential to inform their own capacity-building as change agents, and how far they perceive that their leadership development needs are capable of being met in other ways
	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contribution to knowledge, policy, practice for specified beneficiaries 	(not expressed as an objective, but indicated in the account of anticipated outcomes and impacts)
	Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of theory, methodology or methods 	(not expressed as an objective, but indicated in the introduction of the case for support)

<p>Why the topic is important and timely</p>	<p>Major central question or issue about the topic to be addressed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence for its importance and timeliness 	<p>Central question - How is government public service reform mobilised and mediated through the innovation of NLDBs, whether introduced by government or by organisation leaders' professional bodies?</p> <p>Importance - because New Labour has invested heavily in the innovation of NLDBs for most public services in England.</p> <p>Timeliness - because there is no UK precedent for this innovation. Also there has been no major research on the perceptions of the target organisation leaders about external leadership development support, nor on the contribution of this innovation to the implementation or mediation of reform</p>
<p>How you'll investigate the topic</p>	<p>Theoretical framework for addressing the central question or issue</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> government-driven public service modernisation is conceived as a political project, a discursive strategy, and a loose configuration of control technologies (eg NLDBs) reform is orchestrated across administrative levels, creating potential for mediation a cultural and political perspective on interaction focuses on uses of power to achieve or resist acculturation
	<p>Research questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> related directly to objectives within the broad aim, contributing to addressing the wider central question or issue of concern to the specified beneficiaries 	<p>Objective A: RQ1 - What discourses of leadership and its development, modernisation, programmatic and piecemeal change are reflected in government education and health policy documentation since 1997 relating to secondary schools, HE, PCTs and hospitals, that of relevant NLDBs and other leadership development bodies, and accounts from other stakeholder groups?</p> <p>Objective B: RQ2 - What external leadership development support activities do present/aspiring organisation leaders in English secondary schools, HE, PCTs and hospital trusts seek to undertake (if any), and why? RQ3 - What are the characteristics of NLDBs and their partnerships offering activities, and what discourses of leadership and its development, modernisation and/or independent change underpin their brief?</p> <p>Objective C: RQ4 - To what extent do present/aspiring leaders perceive that development activities provided by NLDBs and their partnerships target them as modernisers and/or independent change agents, and how do these perceptions affect their readiness to seek NLDB activities? RQ5 - To what extent are these leaders' perceptions consistent with the discourses underpinning the brief of the NLDBs, and how far are these providers attempting to acculturate and build leaders' capacity as modernisers and/or independent change agents? RQ6 - To what extent are the NLDBs informed by similar principles across services and sectors, and how are they shaped by service-specific contextual characteristics?</p> <p>Objective D: RQ7 - To what extent do present/aspiring leaders seeking and experiencing externally provided leadership development support perceive themselves as change agents for government-driven modernisation and/or more autonomous reforms, and what discourses of leadership, modernisation and change underpin their views? RQ 8 - What is the impact of external development activities on such leaders' cultural beliefs and values about leadership, modernisation, their capacity as modernisers and/or independent change agents, and the career importance of these activities?</p>

	<p>Research Methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific means of data collection to answer each of the research questions 	<p>Critical discourse analysis of policy documents and interviews (RQ 1-6) Initial semi-structured interviews with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <100 organisation leaders (RQ 1-8) • <15 policymakers (RQ 1-6) • <15 professional association representatives (RQ 1-3) • <15 leaders of NLDBs (RQ 1-6) • <15 trainers working for NLDBs (RQ 1, 4-6) <p>Follow-up interviews with <50 organisation leaders (RQ 1, 7-8)</p>
	<p>Methods of analysis: specific means of analysing data to determine the answer to each of the research questions</p>	<p>Critical discourse analysis - identifying themes and genres related to leadership, its development, reform and independent change across services and administrative levels Interviews - create codes linked to research questions addressed by interview questions, use Hyperresearch software to code transcripts, create tables for inductive categorisation of results for each code and illustrative quotations, create sector and cross-sector summary tables</p>

THE CONCLUSION OF YOUR ARGUMENT		
<p>What your investigation promises to find out about the topic</p>	<p>Anticipated outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projected body of data that will answer research questions and achieve the objectives • how the data will be reported 	<p>Objective A, RQ 1 - how government and other discourses of public service leadership and capacity-building through leadership development have emerged, interacted, evolved in relation to modernisation since 1997</p> <p>Objective B, RQ 2-3 - how external leadership development provision sought and experienced by leaders of selected service organisations in education and health links with national bodies' connection to central government public service modernisation and/or independent agendas, and with their discourses of leadership, modernisation and change</p> <p>Objective C, RQ 4-6 - how acculturation and capacity-building processes, networks and mechanisms constituted in leadership development activities are employed by NLDBs to orchestrate implementation of reform or other agendas by developing leaders' capacity as modernisers and/or independent change agents, and the extent to which interchange between these providers affects their operation</p> <p>Objective D, RQ 7-8 - the impact of leadership development activities, including those of NLDBs, on leaders' acculturation and capacity as modernisers and/or independent change agents distanced from modernisation, and the salience attached to these activities for career development</p> <p>emerging themes to be discussed with advisory group, presentation and feedback at interim seminar and final dissemination conference papers to be presented at UK, European, overseas academic conferences 6+ articles for diverse academic journals book, contract to be negotiated article for public service practitioner journal</p>
<p>How you will ensure that what you find out about the topic is useful</p>	<p>Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what value the outputs will have for the specified academic and non-academic beneficiaries in helping them address the central question or issue of concern • how engagement and dissemination activities will maximise impact on these beneficiaries 	<p>New data to inform future practice, policy and research on the contribution of leadership development to developing public service organisation leaders as change agents:</p> <p>Objective A, RQ 1 - evolution of discourses relating to leadership development for modernisation and/or other agendas</p> <p>Objective B, RQ 2-3 - external leadership development support that organisation leaders seek and experience, perceived significance of NLDBs</p> <p>Objective C, RQ 4-6 - range of acculturation processes offered by NLDBs promoting modernisation and/or other agendas, extent to which principles underlying activities overlap or vary between NLDBs</p> <p>Objective D, RQ 7-8 - perceived impact of activities of NLDBs and other providers alongside other influences on acculturation and capacity as change agents for modernisation and/or other agendas</p> <p>Data could inform strategic planning, especially in NLDBs Data will contribute to international research and theoretical knowledge about leadership development as a means of improving public services, and the role of NLDBs in reform including their use of new technologies to extend their reach</p> <p>Engagement will be ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeking advice from representatives of key users as members of a steering group • generalised feedback to informants <p>Dissemination will be ongoing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to users through the project website, professional publications, interim and final dissemination conferences • to the international academic community through conference papers and publications in academic journals