

Academic motivations for supervision of work based learning to enhance transition and employability

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Context

- Employer Perceptions and Facts
- Benefits of work based learning
- Making the Most of Masters www.mastersprojects.ac.uk



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- Learning to learn through the workplace

Aspirations of Making the Most of Masters (MMM)

- Embed work-based learning in the curriculum through the masters dissertation.
- Concept of Masterness (QAA)



- Stakeholders: Academic supervisors

Methodology

- Two phases
- Semi-structured interviews
- Qualitative design
- Nvivo



Findings

- Reflections of academics with experience of both:
 - work related masters dissertation projects and
 - University-based dissertations
- Motivations

Student Demand

- Programme Level
 - especially in Computing Science
 - to recruit overseas students

“It’s something that’s helped us advertise and promote the course”

- Student Level
 - some students ask for work-related/ based projects

Enhancing the Student Experience

“We provide opportunities for them to grow and to fill their opportunity or their capability. ... That’s what keeps me going anyway..to give students that opportunity to reach their potential. Sounds very altruistic but true!”

- **Benefits of Learning in the Work Context**
 - Develop knowledge, understanding and competencies
 - Develop networks
 - Exploit opportunities

Staff Development

- To enhance employer engagement
 - To inform teaching, programme development and research
 - To deepen knowledge and understanding
 - To keep informed about the industry

“Some advantage in improving your relationship with the company”

“You learn about something that you otherwise wouldn’t have done and that, at some point, leads to something useful”

To Influence Research

“The motivation is two fold, multifold. One is that it’s interesting to be engaged outside of academe with people who want to use our research and then secondly it’s very interesting to see what other people want from research”

- To expand and explore another area of interest in an existing study
- To explore a new idea
- Low level of motivation
 - may have risks for existing research

MMM Dissertation Projects

- Proposals are actively sought from employers

“We are looking at employers needs rather than my needs and that’s the way these projects are focused”

ACADEMIC SUPERVISOR

Risk Management

- Reputational

“I’ve occasionally steered a very poor student away from a company project for the sake of reputation”

- Student Support:

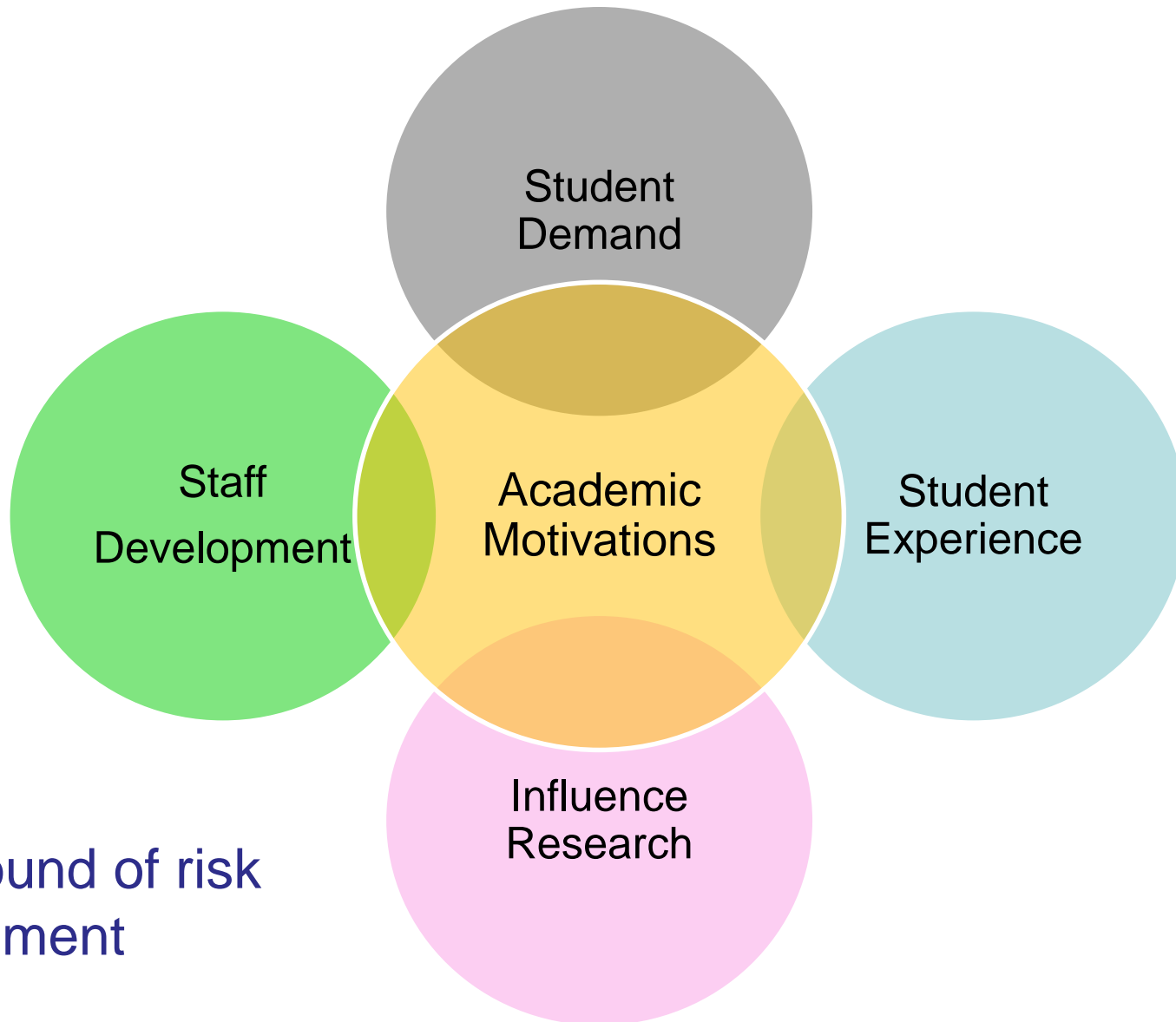
- Transition and During

- Supervisory Support

- Employer and Academic

- ~~Time~~

Academic Motivations to Engage in WBL



Background of risk management

Impact

- Raised awareness of employability, MMM and academic drivers
- Changing Practice
- Influence of Policy
 - SFC Support of MMM Legacy Project

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