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Devolution and public policy in Scotland and Wales: A joined-up governance approach and the cases of special educational needs and adult community learning.

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Devolution and public policy in Scotland and Wales: a joined-up governance approach and the cases of special educational needs and adult community learning

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This study examines policy processes and outputs in Scotland and Wales in order to test the thesis that a distinctively 'inclusive' and 'holistic' policy style will emerge in the new, meso-level institutional setting. To this end, the study develops a 'joined-up governance (JUG) approach' to examining policy processes and outputs and applies this to the policy areas of special educational needs (SEN) and adult community learning (ACL) in the two nations.

This approach reveals a marked variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action between policy areas (though less between jurisdictions) and uses an examination of seven 'moderating variables' to uncover the conditions in each case study that may influence the degree of horizontal and vertical coordination. It is shown how one of these variables – scale – has great explanatory utility, and this contributes to the main finding that some distinctively inclusive and holistic features can be detected in the emerging policy styles in Scotland and Wales.

The study also reflects on the theoretical implications of a JUG approach. It is argued that interests-based accounts of the policy process, such as those put forward in the policy network literature, can be complemented by an approach which acknowledges trust-, as well as resource-based relationships, specifically in a 'joined-up' policy context.

DECLARATION

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Contents

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List of abbreviations

ACD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
ACL	Adult Community Learning
ASN	Additional Support Needs
ASN	Additional Support Needs
BAVO	Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations
BPMF	British Poultry Meat Federation
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
CCET	Community Consortia for Education and Training
CPRS	Central Policy Review Staff
CSP	Coordinated Support Plan
ECSC	Education, Culture and Sport Committee
ELLC	Education and Lifelong Learning Committee
ELWa	Education and Learning Wales
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
ETAG	Education and Training Action Group
ETAP	Education and Training Action Plan
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council
FEI	Family Employment Initiative
FSG	Flexibilities Special Grant
FSG	Flexibilities Special Grant
GLA	Greater London Authority
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
HJTA	Hierarchy of Joined-up Thinking and Action
ICT	information and communication technology
IEP	Individual Education Plan
ILA	Individual Learner Account
IWA	Institute of Welsh Affairs
JUG	Joined-up Government(ance)
LCO	Legislative Competency Order
LEA	Local Education Authority
LHB	Local Health Board
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
MAFF	Ministry for Agriculture Fisheries and Food
MGF	Modernising Government Fund
NAAG	National Assembly Advisory Group

NCETW	National Council for Education and Training for Wales
NFU	National Farmers' Union
NIACE	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
PIU	Performance and Innovation Unit
SALP	Scottish Adult Learners' Partnership
SALTAG	Speech and Language Therapy Action Group
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENDIST	Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal
SENRG	Special Educational Needs Reference Group
SENTW	Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales
SEU	Social Exclusion Unit
SLCD	speech, language and cognition difficulties
SLT	Speech and Language Therapy
SU	Strategy Unit
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
TUC	Trades Union Congress
WAGSEN	Welsh Advisory Group on Special Educational Needs
WICE	Welsh Initiative for Conductive Education
WJEC	Welsh Joint Education Committee
WLGA	Welsh Local Government Association

1

Introduction

In the decade since the first devolved elections were held, in May 1999, the face of territorial politics in the UK has changed considerably: debates on such sensitive and seemingly intractable issues as Scottish independence have been revitalised; conceptions and expressions of national identity have been revisited; and a wider and deeper regional politics has emerged in each of the devolved jurisdictions. Not content with having reordered the politics of the Union, devolution has also redesigned the administrative architecture of the state. Although the Scottish Parliament and National Assemblies for Wales and Northern Ireland are at variance in terms of institutional design, legislative power and executive competence (reflecting the asymmetry of the devolution settlements in the three nations), they each operate at an intermediate level of government that lies somewhere between the central and local tiers of national administration (Rawlings 1998). Constitutional change has not only created a fresh political context, then, but an entirely new layer of government: elected institutions now operate, for the first time in the UK, at a regional, or 'meso' level.[1]

The introduction of this meso layer may have far-reaching constitutional consequences for the UK, particularly when devolution is viewed as forming part of a wider European trend towards regionalisation. Over recent decades, meso-level institutions have proliferated in Europe's historic regions and elected forms of 'meso-

government' have become part of the constitutional furniture of most Western European states (Sharpe 1993). Devolution for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland has merely added to an already long list of *Régions* (France), *Länder* (Germany), *Fylker* (Norway), *Regioni* (Italy) and *Comunidades Autónomas* (Spain) in what for some is now a 'Europe of the Regions' (Petschen 1993; Bullman 1994; Jones & Keating 1995; Keating 1998). In the context of a European Union where the criteria for allocating prized structural and other funds have favoured regional rather than national units, governments from Brittany to Bavaria have become increasingly assertive on the national and supranational stage (Harvie 1994). Indeed, the growing power and influence of 'the meso' is challenging traditional notions of nation state governance to such a degree that critical questions are being posed about the very nature of the unitary state (Bennett 1989; Leonardi & Nanetti 1990). The strengthening position of the Scottish National Party in the UK, with its open agenda for independence being advanced from a position of previously unattainable political power, is only the most recent example of the pressure now being applied to national sovereignty from below.

Aside from these well-documented risks to the constitutional integrity of the UK, however, the introduction of meso-government may have equally important implications for the devolved nations themselves. This is because meso-government has for some time been associated with a quite distinctive approach to policy-making. Such governments have generally demonstrated an ambition to engage with a broader range of interests than central states, and particularly with those in the so-called 'third' sector (see e.g. Raffe 2005; Hirst 1997; NIEC 1996; for Spain, see Gibbons 1999: 135; for France, see Cole 2001). Rather than seek to impose an agenda on the regional policy space, the archetypal meso instead acts as 'strategy-maker', 'arbitrator' and 'consensus-builder' within that space, promoting and facilitating cooperation between actors positioned differently within broad networks of stakeholding groups (Amin & Thomas 1998: 199). In this way, the meso aims to cultivate a 'public philosophy of dialogue, power-sharing and negotiation' so that it may construct and guide a 'social coalition in favour of change' (Marquand 1997: 27-28). Such claims have a solid empirical basis. Alistair Cole (2001: 716) has shown that the emergence of a strengthened layer of meso-government in France, for example, has caused the

education policy process in Brittany to become accessible to a wider range of interests. 'There is much evidence of meso-level change', Cole observes, and this is embodied in 'a more networked policy style'. Political and administrative decentralisation in France has produced 'genuine negotiations within a regional policy space' between the elected regions and 'the social partners.'

The meso is also associated with a strong commitment to achieving a high degree of horizontal and vertical policy coordination, what in the UK has become known as 'joined-up' or 'holistic' government, and elsewhere as 'connected government' (Australia), 'networked government' or 'policy coherence' (Canada) (see e.g. Eberts 2008; Peach 2004; Bogdanor 2005b; Stoker 2005). There are certain social problems – among them drug addiction, social exclusion and youth offending - that cut-across traditional departmental boundaries and straddle the different layers of government. To borrow the terminology of Perri 6 and his colleagues, such problems are 'wicked', both in their impact and apparent intractability.[2] Although policy coordination has certainly been a prominent goal of many central governments in the last decade or so - not least the successive New Labour administrations led by Tony Blair in the UK – there is little evidence to suggest that joined-up government (JUG) has yet been achieved in that setting. Many central governments, including in the UK, have inherited a nineteenth century model of organisation that is rigidly departmental and structured around 'functions and services' rather than 'solving problems' (Wilson 2000: 3). As Eugene Bardach (1998: 232) has noted, almost nothing about the traditional 'bureaucratic ethos' of central government makes it 'hospitable to interagency collaboration.' Those operating at the meso-level have recognised that many features of meso-government, not least its freedom from the prohibitive scale of national bureaucracy, presents a unique opportunity for achieving levels of coordination that are virtually impossible at the centre. Vernon Bogdanor (2005a: 16) has explained this with reference to the Greater London Authority (GLA), within which the Mayor of London (who has far fewer executive powers than any national government) has recognised an opportunity to act as 'facilitator ... bringing together government agencies and the voluntary and private sectors so as to avoid fragmentation'.

In as much as a general policy style can be attributed to any group of institutions or

layer of government, meso-government can therefore be said to have developed a style that is distinctively 'inclusive' and 'holistic': it actively seeks the involvement of a full array of actors in the policy- and decision-making process; it bases policy decisions on negotiation with and between actors positioned differently within networks of interested groups; and it aims to develop coordinated forms of policy formulation and delivery that together guard against the debilitating consequences of departmentalism.[3] By introducing an elected form of meso-government to the UK, the architects of devolution raised the prospect that a new, more inclusive and holistic approach to policy-making would emerge in the new jurisdictions.

1.1 Devolution and a distinctive policy style: rhetoric and reality

Given the experiences of their meso-level European cousins, it came as little surprise that some supporters of devolution shared a vision of a more collaborative policy-making ethos in the brave new world of devolved government. The language of inclusiveness and holism certainly pervaded the rhetoric surrounding and emanating from the new institutions in their early years of existence. In Scotland, those with an interest in the political and administrative architecture of the new Parliament spoke of the opportunity for 'far-reaching reorganisation to improve capacity for tackling complex policy issues, including ... involvement of outsiders, and structuring the machinery of government around a small number of broad policy goals' (Leicester and Mackay 1998: 3). Before the election of the first Scottish Parliament, in May 1999, it was widely predicted that the new Executive would act with 'the freedom to innovate [and] improve policy-making' because it would 'rethink relationships with local government, business, the voluntary sector, and the citizen' (Leicester & Mackay 1998: 2). Subsequent studies suggested such predictions had a foundation in something more than mere optimism (e.g. Keating 2003, 2005; Keating et al 2003). Although in terms of substantive policy output there remain consistencies between the administrations in Edinburgh and London, some early 'differences of style and emphasis' have been noted, with a more 'consensual' and 'negotiated' style emerging during the period of the first Scottish Parliament under the leadership of Donald Dewar's Scottish Labour Party (Keating et al 2003: 129-130). David Raffe (2005) puts

forward what became known as the 'National Debate' on education in Scotland as a practical example of early attempts by the Scottish Executive to 'introduce a new, more open and participative style of politics' (see also, Paterson 2000).

Dewar's administration also took some important initial steps to bring a new coordination to policy formulation and delivery. Jack McConnell, then Minister for Finance, announced the creation of a Modernising Government Fund (MGF) to the Scottish Parliament on 23rd February 2003. The fund provided £25m, later increased to £26m, for innovative public sector projects aimed at improving the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of public services in Scotland (Scottish Parliament 2002). Furthermore, preliminary research showed that white papers and legislation drawing links between 'the immediate focus' and 'other policy sectors' were prominent, and there was some evidence that certain cross-cutting issues, like social exclusion, had been successfully 'mainstreamed' (Keating 2003: 8). As Richard Parry and Audrey McDougal (2005) describe, the Scottish Executive also embarked on what it called a 'cultural change' programme in the first Parliament, which was designed to ensure that the Executive could deliver the targets contained in the Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition's policy programme *A partnership for a better Scotland: partnership agreement* (SE 2003). The change agenda was based around four core concepts: leadership; outward focus, including working with stakeholders; delivering outcomes; and developing corporate processes and procedures.

A similar picture is emerging in Wales. The National Assembly was designed to be a 'modern, progressive and *inclusive* democratic institution' (NAW 1997, emphasis added) and the first Assembly government certainly placed that aim at the centre of its vision:

> We cannot achieve anything working alone ... We value the links we have forged with local government, business, trade unions and the voluntary sector and will continue to work with and through them in developing and implementing our policies.
>
> NAW (2003a: 11)

Long-standing members of the government, like Andrew Davies, formerly the Minister for Economic Development and now with the Finance and Public Service Delivery portfolio, were particularly keen to stress their personal commitment to 'engaging with civil society and the voluntary sector' when developing policy in their

particular spheres of interest throughout the Assembly's first two terms (Davies, evidence the Richard Commission, November 7th 2002). Indeed, the language of inclusion was *de rigueur* as the makers of devolution became the first to practice politics in the new context.

JUG was also given a position of some prominence in the policy agenda of the first Assembly government, which promised 'co-ordinated responses to [the public's] needs, which often cut across the boundaries between public agencies and spheres of government' (NAW 2001a: 3). The *Community Strategies* initiative, for example, had the aim of 'coordinating the provision of services and initiatives to tackle the problems areas face in a coherent and integrated way' (NAW 2005a); similarly, the *Health, Social Care and Well-Being Strategies* envisaged a 'shared role' for Local Authorities and Local Health Boards (LHBs) and 'a joined-up approach to addressing the factors influencing health' (NAW 2003b: 6); and in its flagship education and lifelong learning policy paving document, *The Learning Country* (NAW 2001a: 21), the Assembly Government committed itself to developing 'education strategic plans [that] properly provide for multi-agency working ... to link the contributions of health, education and social services'. This commitment to JUG in policy-making was matched by a clear message that multi-agency partnership working should be at the heart of policy implementation and service delivery. The *Making the Connections* (WAG 2004) agenda had three very clearly articulated aims. The first was to place 'citizens at the centre', so that services would be more responsive to users' needs and people and communities would be involved in designing the way services are delivered. The second was to deliver 'better public engagement', so that every person would have the opportunity to contribute to and connect with the hardest to reach. The third, and most pertinent, aim was to allow 'the Welsh public service to work together', so that more and better coordination between providers could deliver more efficient and effective services.

However, while the rhetoric of inclusive and holistic policy-making was and is abundant in post-devolution Scotland and Wales, research comparing that rhetoric with reality is not. In Scotland devolution was met with an avalanche of academic interest. As a reflection of an understandable initial interest in devolution as an historic *constitutional* change, there was an early research focus on nation-building,

changing conceptions and expressions of national identity (e.g. Hearn 2002; Keating 2002b) and on political parties and the party system (Holmes 2007; Laffin 2007; McEwen 2005, 2002; Hassan 2002; Bennie 2000; Bradbury et al 2000). Michael Keating and a catalogue of collaborators that includes Paul Cairney, Linda Stevenson and Katherine Taylor (e.g. Keating et al 2003), also produced a substantial body of empirically-based research which examined policy-making in the devolved Scotland. Cairney conducted comparative analysis in a number of policy areas, with a focus most notably on health (2007a; 2007b; 2009), and also examined the role of the Committees of the Scottish Parliament (2006a). Cairney's work on tobacco policy, for example, examined evidence of 'policy transfer' (see Dolowitz and Marsh 2000) between the devolved and central government settings, and arrived at some interesting findings, including that there is some evidence of policy transfer *from* Scotland *to* Westminster in tobacco policy, as a opposed to the reverse of that processes in many of the other policy areas he has chosen as case studies, including housing stock transfer and higher education student tuition fees (2006b; for tobacco policy transfer see 2007a). Indeed, health policy was a popular focus for early empirical work in Scotland (see also e.g. Simeon 2003). Margaret Arnott led a separate group of scholars whose focus was on the development of some quite specific aspects of education policy, including questions around the governance of Scottish schools in the devolved era (2008; with Menter 2007; 2005; with McKeown & Ransom 2003). However, this relatively extensive Scottish literature has not interrogated those claims reprised above that the devolved context is a better site for coordinated, inclusive policy-making. Furthermore, there has been no systematic or rigorous research into JUG in the devolved Scotland to date. Claims of a distinctively Scottish policy style have consequently not been adequately examined.[4]

The devolution literature in Wales is arguably less well-developed. There was the same initial interest in devolution as a *constitutional* change and a similar early research focus on nation-building, changing conceptions and expressions of national identity (e.g. Jones & Osmond 2003; Osmond 2004) and public support for the National Assembly (Jones and Scully 2003; Pattie et al 1999; Trystan et al 2003). As the devolution project gathered momentum, there was considerable interest in how

political parties are dealing with the challenge of a new political and policy context in Wales, particular with regard to questions around so-called 'multi-level governance' (Davies & Williams 2009; Morgan et al 2008; Osmond 2008, 2007; Betts 2007; Laffin & Shaw 2007; Laffin et al 2007; Laffin, Shaw & Taylor 2005; Laffin, Taylor and Thomas 2004; Lynch 2004; Taylor 2003; Thomas 2003; McAllister 2001, 2000). There has also been a small number of rigorously-researched, empirically-based studies of the new Welsh policy space (e.g. Cole et al 2003; Cole 2004; with Baudewyns 2004; with Jones & Storer 2003; Huggins et al 2000; Chaney & Fevre 2001; Chaney 2003; Stafford 2008; Bradbury & Stafford 2008).[5] As with the Scottish literature, however, there is no through-going attempt within this literature to conduct a rigorous analysis of the emerging policy style in Wales and certainly no interrogation of the claim that such a style may become distinctively inclusive and holistic. However, some studies did wander into this territory while pursuing other central research questions. Alistair Cole (2004; with Baudewyns 2004; Cole et al 2003) led some detailed comparative work on devolution and decentralisation in Wales and Brittany which conducted nearly one hundred interviews with actors located differently in the Welsh policy-making community. One of the findings of the research – and a pertinent one for the types of policy relationships identified and discussed later in this study (see chapter 5: 114-124) - is Cole's (2004: 359) relatively positive evaluation of the state of the emerging Welsh civil society:

> There is some evidence that the first term of devolution ... provided the mobilizing project necessary to embed the Welsh polity and to build Welsh civil society, in the long run potentially overcoming an important social capital deficit. There is a more cohesive party system, the equilibrium of which is favourable to making the devolved institutions work. There is the 'team Wales' approach, signifying the building of new institutions as part of the devolved family and the diffusion of emerging referential frames. There are much closer contacts between Welsh Assembly government officials and Assembly sponsored public bodies than in the pre-devolution era (Cole et al 2003). There is the appearance, finally, of all-Wales organizations within civil society and the gradual recognition by professional organizations ... [of] the need to take devolution into account in their own organization

Cole (with Jones & Storer 2003) also conducted research into the nature of the emerging National Assembly civil service, drawing some useful conclusions about the lack of policy-making capacity within the fledgling service. Although contributors to

the research commented on a generally difficult relationship with Whitehall departments, there was an interesting take on the nature of relationships between policy actors in Wales. As one interviewee put it, 'we've got better structures in Wales than in England. We've got Team Wales, we're small and we work closely together' (Cole, Jones & Storer 2003: 227). Given this study's central thesis, a general comment Cole added to the findings of this research may be significant. The interview data, he explained, showed that:

> All the key players know one another personally and there are close linkages not only between civil servants and ministers, but also among politicians, officials and representatives of Welsh Civil Society.
>
> (Cole et al 2003: 227)

This apparent *social dimension* to policy relationships is returned to frequently in the analysis of policy processes and outputs in both Wales and Scotland in the following chapters. There was also some highly relevant early work on the inclusive nature of governance in the devolved Wales undertaken by Paul Chaney (2003; with Fevre 2001). This identified the potential for a new 'partnership' to emerge between the government and third sectors and investigated the extent to which that had happened in Wales over the first months of a new pattern of governance. The findings, while preliminary, indicated that there was already some evidence of 'active engagement' of some third sector representative groups (Chaney & Fevre 2001: 131).[6] Despite these tantalising glimpses into the workings of an emerging Welsh policy style, however, there was no rigorous examination of JUG in the devolved context.

Alongside this empirical work, a number of frameworks for conducting descriptive evaluation of policy development in the devolved context were developed. This literature focused in large part on the extent to which devolution has enabled policy-makers in Scotland and Wales to develop distinct responses to policy problems. Much of this work was undertaken in the context of Keating's (e.g. 2002a; with Hepburn & Cairney 2009) 'policy convergence-divergence' analytical framework and was largely the preserve of scholars with a base in or principal focus on Scottish devolution (2002a; Greer 2001; Simeon 2003; for a study that has employed the framework in a comparative empirical study of policy-making in Scotland and Wales, see Stafford 2008).[7] However, while Ian Stafford (2008: 76) is certainly correct that this framework

provides 'a useful starting point for comparative policy analysis in post-devolution UK', it does not have any great utility for exploring this study's key research questions. For this reason, the analysis which follows chapter 5 and 6 is framed by a new approach to evaluating public policy in the devolved context. The detail of what is termed a 'joined-up governance approach' is provided in chapter 3 (61-65).

In summary, there was clearly a shared vision that a new and distinctive approach to policy-making would develop in both Scotland and Wales in the early years of devolution. However, the extent to which this new policy style has emerged in both nations has not been subjected to rigorous or detailed comparative analysis, particularly with regard to JUG. Although the newness of the devolved institutions creates a clear imperative to be cautious when drawing conclusions of any kind, the empirical work undertaken by Keating, Cairney, Cole and others demonstrates that legitimate and valuable research into the policy-making in the devolved institutions is possible now. On this basis, and at the ten year anniversary of devolution, the time is now right for a detailed, comparative study of the emerging policy styles in post-devolution Scotland and Wales.

1.2 JUG in the devolved context: the case of education and lifelong learning

This study examines the impact of devolution on policy processes and outputs in Scotland and Wales and, more specifically, tests the thesis that a distinctively inclusive and holistic policy style will emerge (or has emerged) in the new jurisdictions. In particular, the study focuses on attempts to 'join-up' government in Scotland and Wales since devolution and the extent to which these have been distinctive, either in their scope, nature, quality or success. It is important to note, however, that the study is one of *British politics* rather than a *comparative regionalist* study: Wales and Scotland are not necessarily comparable in terms of the size of the two countries, or the configuration, executive competence and legislative power of their new political institutions. The study therefore considers and investigates the impact of devolution specifically on the British policy terrain, even if the central thesis of a more inclusive and holistic policy style has its foundation in meso-level Europe.

It is hoped the study will be valuable and timely in four main ways. First, there has been no rigorous comparative study of JUG in the devolved context in the UK. In this respect a recent (and authoritative) volume edited by Vernon Bogdanor, *Joined-up Government* (2005b), is instructive. Although the volume includes some discussion and analysis of attempts at JUG at the decentralised level in England, an analysis (or even an acknowledgement) of the devolved level in Scotland and Wales is almost entirely absent. The study will therefore make a contribution to the empirical literature on JUG by presenting the findings of original research conducted at the devolved level, but it is also intended that the study will make a contribution to the study of JUG more generally by developing a clear definition of the concept and a framework for descriptive evaluation that can facilitate systematic comparative analysis of JUG for the first time. Second, the study will make a contribution to the fledgling empirical literature on devolution and comparative public policy in the UK. There have been some excellent and exciting studies in this area in recent years, but there remains real scope for fresh empirical work. Third, while there is a growing literature on aspects of education policy in both jurisdictions, most notably with respect to schools and student tuition (e.g. Egan & James 2001; Jephcote & Salisbury 2007; Rees 2005; Phelps et al 2006; Morgan et al 2004), the two case studies chosen for detailed analysis, special educational needs (SEN) and adult community learning (ACL) – important policy areas in their own right – have thus far been somewhat neglected. The research may therefore be of use to education and lifelong learning policy-makers and practitioners because it places policy processes and outputs into vital comparative context and allows lessons to be drawn from experiences in other jurisdictions. Fourth, the study will make a contribution to the theoretical public policy literature through critical reflection on a range of key theories and the development of a conceptually innovative approach to policy-making in a new institutional context. In particular, the study conceptualises JUG in a way that may challenge the paradigmatic network theory of the policy process.

The remainder of this introductory chapter is structured in the following way: the next section details the key research questions, organised around the four main ways in which the research will contribute to the various empirical and theoretical

literatures identified above. There then follows a concluding section which presents a summary of the remaining chapters.

1.3 Key research questions

The research is framed by a series of focused, comparative questions. These are organised around the four main ways in which the research seeks to contribute to the various empirical and theoretical literatures mentioned above.

A. The emerging empirical and theoretical literatures on JUG:

    i. What is JUG?
    ii. Is JUG new, or distinctive in any way?
    iii. How can 'joined-up-ness' be defined, measured and assessed?
    iv. What are the specific features of policy-making at the devolved level that influence JUG? Is scale an explanatory factor?
    v. How successfully have education and lifelong learning policy processes and outputs been joined-up in Scotland and Wales since devolution?
    vi. How can any variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action between policy contexts be explained or accounted for?
    vii. What are the continued obstacles to JUG in the devolved context?

B. The empirical literature on devolution and public policy in the UK:

    i. How is SEN and ACL policy formulated and implemented in Scotland and Wales, post-devolution?
    ii. How can any distinctive features of the respective policy styles be explained?
    iii. What, more specifically, is the role of scale?
    iv. Who are the key actors in the policy-making processes?
    v. What strategies do these actors employ when seeking to influence policy- and decision-makers? How successful are they?
    vi. How do these actors relate to one another and what is their respective influence on policy outputs?
    vii. More specifically, what role do third sector organisations play in the policy process?
    viii. How does the policy-making process compare across jurisdictions, including in Northern Ireland and the regional governance structures in England?
    ix. What is the specific role played by the devolved legislatures in the policy process? Is this distinctive?

C. The empirical literature on devolved education and lifelong learning policy:

    i. How has education and lifelong learning policy developed in Scotland and Wales since devolution?

ii. What are the continuities with education and lifelong learning policy in the pre-devolution era?

iii. To what extent has devolution created distinct policy agendas in Scotland and Wales and to what extent have these been translated into distinct policy processes and outputs?

iv. What are the similarities and differences between SEN and ACL policy across jurisdictions and to what extent does knowing the degree of specificity of the case studies allow the research findings to be generalised?

D. The theoretical public policy literature:

i. How can a 'joined-up policy universe' be conceptualised?

ii. If JUG relies on policy actors pooling policy- and decision-making sovereignty, what is the mechanism – the institutional glue – that binds actors together in these relationships? More specifically, how far does inter-personal and inter-organisational trust explain the presence or absence of effective JUG?

iii. Does an interests-based account of the policy process adequately explain the nature of policy- and decision-making in the chosen case studies?

iv. What are the wider theoretical implications of JUG? Would a joined-up policy universe, should it be detected in any case study, represent an empirical challenge to the established network paradigm?

1.4 A summary of the chapters

The chapters that follow begin, in chapter 2, with the study's organising perspective. The development of the policy network concept is discussed and the British literature is surveyed. Particular attention is paid to the typology of networks posited by Rod Rhodes (1988; with Marsh 1992), ranging from the closed, highly integrated characteristics of his 'policy communities', to the more open and loosely integrated nature of his 'issue networks'. This is followed by a discussion of the literature on pressure groups in British politics and, in particular, the 'insider-outsider' distinction used by some writers (e.g. Grant 1999). It is argued that this literature puts forward what is essentially an interests-based explanation of the policy process, in which power and influence are derived from the resources actors can access or mobilise, and the realtionships which bind those actors together in networks take the form of 'resource dependencies'.

The chapter then turns to the concept and doctrine of JUG and proposes a definition of the term based on a reading of the practitioner and academic literatures. It is argued that achieving JUG depends on policy actors agreeing to pool what is termed their 'policy- and decision-making sovereignty' and that, for such a pooling to take place,

high levels of inter-personal and inter-organisational trust must be established and sustained. This provides the basis for a Hierarchy of Joined-up Thinking and Action (HJTA) which is put forward as a set of indicators for measuring and assessing JUG. The chapter then puts JUG into historical perspective and argues that, though frustration with Whitehall departmentalism and a related interest in policy coordination are recurring themes in the history of UK public administration, there are some features of JUG that may mark it out as distinct from previous attempts to coordinate policy formulation and delivery.

An attempt is then made to reconclie JUG with the interests-based explanations contained in the network literature. It is argued that, while actors operating within networks are motivated by narrow institutional interests and held together in networks by various forms of resource dependency, those operating in a 'joined-up policy universe' are motivated by the broader interests of partnerships and held together by various forms of instituional and individual trust, a quite different gravity. The chapter concludes by asking whether successfully identifying this 'culture of collaboration' in Scotland and Wales might represent an empirical challenge to the network paradigm.

Chapter 3 outlines the applied research methods used to generate primary data and assimilate secondary material in order to test the study's central thesis. It also elaborates on the HJTA as a framework for organising and facilitating its analysis and the basis, therefore, of a 'JUG approach'. The chapter also introduces and provides some basic background to the case studies in each of the devolved institutions and explains why they were chosen as suitable tests of JUG.

The first section of the chapter introduces education and lifelong learning policy as the study's principal area of focus in Scotland in Wales and SEN and ACL policy as the areas chosen for detailed examination. This is followed by a more detailed discussion of the case study method, including the extent to which it might be possible to generalise research findings. The research design is then outlined, which combines document collection and analysis with a series of semi-structured interviews with key policy actors. The value of interview data in uncovering the nature of policy-making is examined and the method used to identify potential interviewees is explained.

The second section elaborates on the HJTA as a framework for effective descriptive evaluation of policy-making in each of the cases. It then considers a set of seven key variables which may influence the number and quality of trust relationships (and, concomitantly, the degree of joined-up-ness) and further facilitate systematic, comparative analysis from a JUG perspective of policy-making between policy areas, across jurisdictions and over time.

Chapter 4, the first of three substantive chapters, presents an analysis of the development of SEN and ACL policy in Scotland and Wales from the first devolved elections, in May 1999, to the most recent, in June 2007. It is argued that these policy areas are of particular interest for two main reasons: first, there has been considerable policy-making activity in SEN and ACL in both jurisdictions since 1999, meaning that there is a relatively well-developed evidential base to inform detailed comparative analysis; and, second, policy-making in the two areas has taken place in quite different contexts, meaning that the study's broader research questions around policy processes and outputs can be tested in different ways. To this end, particular attention is paid to policy developments which have salience for questions around JUG. In the area of SEN, the chapter focuses on the Coordinated Support Plan (CSP) in Scotland, a statutory measure designed to coordinate the contributions of an array of agencies with an interest in educational provision for children with additional support needs and, in Wales, *Working Together*, a multi-agency strategy developed to deliver better speech and language therapy (SLT) services for children and young people. In the area of ACL, the chapter focuses on the development of Individual Learner Accounts (ILAs) in Scotland, a mechanism designed to broker ACL to those with a need to develop their skills and, in Wales, the Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs), an institutional framework designed to encourage and facilitate partnership working among the statutory, private and third sectors at a sub-regional level. In the final section, the chapter locates these developments within the wider policy contexts in Scotland and Wales between 1999 and 2007 and explores some of the complex linkages that developed during that period between education and lifelong learning and a number of other broad policy goals.

Chapter 5 measures the 'joined-up-ness' of the education and lifelong learning policy processes and outputs detailed in chapter 4, using the HJTA developed in chapters 2 and 3 as the framework for a descriptive evaluation. The analysis is organised according to the different levels of trust that make up the HJTA – starting with the 'informational' level and progressing through 'prudential', 'contract' and 'goodwill' trust – and is further divided by policy area and jurisdiction. The key finding is that trust relationships were successfully cultivated between policy actors of all types in both policy areas and in both jurisdictions during the period of study. Issues were routinely framed as cutting across portfolios and traditionally-defined spheres of interest and there were concerted efforts to ensure that all stakeholders were made to feel part of the process of finding joined-up solutions. This picture was particularly stark in Wales, where devolution delivered a step change in the frequency and quality of consultation experienced by less well-resourced policy actors. While the level of trust demonstrated in the majority of policy processes and outputs was generally restricted to the lower 'informational' or 'minimal' levels, there is also strong evidence of 'contractual' trust relationships, most commonly associated with funding mechanisms designed to ensure joint working at the policy implementation and delivery stage. As might be expected, there are fewer examples of processes or outputs which required or demonstrated the existence of the highest level of 'goodwill' trust, but those that can be identified are located almost exclusively within the SEN policy area in both jurisdictions. There is therefore significant variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action between the policy areas chosen as case studies and SEN policy is described as being 'more joined-up' than ACL policy.

Chapter 6 seeks to explain this variation by exploring the idea that conditions can be more or less favourable for JUG depending on a number of key variables. The first section of the chapter examines SEN and ACL policy processes and outputs in the light of the set of variables identified in chapter 3 as having the potential to influence the number and quality of trust relationships. It is then shown how two of these variables played out quite differently in the SEN and ACL cases in Scotland and Wales during the period of study, with the relatively low political sensitivity of SEN, combined with the relatively high level of existing consensus in the policy area

allowing actors to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty and demonstrate their commitment to the principles of JUG in conditions that did not seriously jeopardise their narrow institutional interests. Participation in a joined-up SEN policy process in Scotland and Wales is therefore described as having been 'institutionally safe'.

The second section of the chapter examines in some detail the significance of two further variables that are particularly relevant for a study of JUG in the devolved context; namely, the scale of the policy-making context and the age of the competent political institution. It is shown that the relatively small scale of policy-making in Scotland and Wales had a major influence on the formation of trust relationships in all of the case studies and a number of clear examples are identified where scale helped cultivate what Jasper Eshuis and Cees Van Woerkum (2003) call 'individual' trust (see chapter 2: 40-43). However, it is then shown how the positive impact of scale was counter-balanced to some extent by the relatively young age of both devolved institutions. This meant there was a lack of *institutionalised* relationships and forms of trust associated more established policy contexts had not emerged as a result.

The final section asks whether an understanding of how these key variables influence the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action can help move the study of JUG towards a predictive model in which the degree of joined-up-ness – at least in policy processes and outputs – may be confidently forecast. It is concluded that, while identifying the degree of specificity in a given case study may add to the legitimacy and validity of generalisations drawn from its findings, further analysis must be conducted in a range of additional cases before a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between the conditions in a given policy context and the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action can be claimed.

Chapter 7 reflects on the contribution a JUG approach can make to the way the policy process is described, explained and conceptualised. The first section of the chapter re-examines SEN policy processes and outputs in Wales through the conceptual lens of the network and finds that SEN policy actors participated in a network which shares some features of Rod Rhodes' (1988; with Marsh 1992) 'producer' type. However, in the second section it is argued that the mechanism of

'resource dependency', which is central to the network theory, only partially explains a number of these relationships, particularly those between traditionally-powerful government actors and small, relatively poorly-resourced actors in civil society.

The concluding section asks whether the network approach can provide a satisfactory explanation for the existence of close policy relationships that do not have a clear basis in 'exchange'. It is acknowledged that the tendency observed in the case studies for powerful actors to enter into these kinds of relationships only when they perceive there to be *limited institutional risk* suggests that, even where there is strong evidence of joined-up thinking and action, institutional interests remain the main dynamic of interaction between policy actors and, for this reason, viewing policy processes and outputs from a JUG perspective complements, rather than fundamentally challenges, the network literature.

The concluding chapter brings together a number of strands of analysis in search of some definitive answers to the key research questions outlined above. The chapter begins by describing the framework which was developed to effectively measure the relative 'joined-up-ness' of policy processes and outputs in Scotland and Wales. This section returns to the working definition of JUG posited in chapter 2 and reviews the innovative framework for the descriptive evaluation of policy processes and outputs from a JUG perspective outlined in chapter 3. It is shown that, by arranging policy processes and outputs according to the type of inter-personal or inter-organisational trust that must exist for policy actors to agree to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty, it was possible - arguably for the first time - to conduct systematic, comparative analysis of JUG across policy areas, between jurisdictions and over time.

The chapter then explains how this 'JUG approach' was used to examine policy processes and outputs in the policy areas of SEN and ACL in Scotland and Wales between 1999 and 2007. It is shown how a marked variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action in the two policy areas was the starting point for an analysis of seven key variables which may influence JUG. This section pays particular attention to the variable of scale, both in terms of the numbers of actors involved in the policy- and decision-making process and their physical proximity to one another. It is claimed that the relatively small scale of the devolved context has created conditions

that, on balance, are favourable for JUG. The main research finding is that the emerging policy styles in the devolved jurisdictions demonstrate some distinctively inclusive and holistic features which are to some extent a function of 'smallness'.

The chapter then turns to an important research question which focuses on JUG as an administrative doctrine more generally. This section asks whether the case studies offer any evidence that JUG represents a real departure from previous attempts to coordinate the business of policy- and decision-making. It is argued that, while a call for *cultural* change marks out the rhetoric of JUG from that associated with previous attempts at coordination, there is scant evidence that a set of behavioural rules which make pooling policy- and decision-making sovereignty a normalised and therefore expected mode of behaviour has become embedded. As such, the existence of a 'culture of collaboration' is not supported by any robust empirical data from the case studies. However, it is argued that JUG has found a place in the collective consciousness of the policy-making community in Scotland and Wales and that 'collaboration' is now an established synonym for 'good governance': policy actors in both nations see JUG as an ideal state to which to aspire, even if that aspiration is only translated into action under certain conditions.

The final section considers the ways in which the empirical and theoretical study of JUG and public policy in the devolved context might be taken forward. Care is taken not to endow the findings of what must be seen as isolated case studies with significance beyond their quite specific situation and a call is made for additional in-depth case study research to be conducted in a range of policy contexts so that the ways in which key variables influence the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action can be better understood (particularly where they exist in combinations different to those identified in the SEN and ACL cases). It is also argued that potential linkages between a JUG approach and the paradigmatic network literature should be explored in order to deepen understanding of policy relationships in contexts where there is evidence of joined-up thinking and action.

Notes to chapter 1

[1] From the Greek *mesos*, meaning 'middle'. Other scholars have referred to a 'third' layer of government (e.g. Hepburn 2008), though this usage is avoided here to prevent confusion with the 'third sector'.

[2] Although the specific term JUG is increasingly maligned as a voguish New Labourism - a sinister Mandelsonian creation devoid of any real meaning - the need to coordinate government activity to tackle cross-cutting issues remains a key strand of the public policy practitioner literature and may even have become embedded as a set of legitimised rules for good governance (see Chapter 2: 43).

[3] The problems of developing hard typologies of national policy styles are discussed by Percy Allum (1995: 402-406)

[4] The development of devolved government in Northern Ireland is, for many reasons, a quite different case to Scotland and Wales. For much of its short life, the National Assembly at Stormont has been suspended and policy development, for that reason alone, is markedly less well developed. Indeed, many of the reasons put forward for a lack of empirical work during the first National Assembly for Wales still apply in large part to Stormont, which has produced comparatively little in the way of substantive policy output.

[5] This literature is inferior to the Scottish devolution in terms of both scope and depth. Some of the most detailed work in Scotland was funded as part of the Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC) Devolution and Constitutional Change programme, and it is unfortunate that a parallel Welsh study, funded as part of the same programme, published little significant data and only the most general of research findings (Loughlin & Sykes 2004).

[6] It has been argued that the relatively limited empirical literature on Wales is reflective of the time it takes for genuine and observable patterns of policy-making to emerge in new institutional settings. The National Assembly, after all, has had 'very little time to develop new policies in any field' and, as a consequence, 'the evidential base for drawing any conclusions about the policy effects of a new pattern of devolution is pretty limited' (Rees 2002: 104). While this is certainly the case (devolution, as Ron Davies (1999) famously put it, is a process, not an event), the relative newness of the Assembly is an excuse that is itself running out of time. However, even the larger body of empirical work focussing on Scotland has been restricted to some extent by the age of the Parliament. This has thus far precluded much of the outputs-based research that is necessary to cut through the thicket of public policy rhetoric. This is acknowledged in the literature, which is careful to draw attention to the 'tender age' of the Scottish Parliament and is aware of the danger of arriving at 'premature judgements' (Arter 2002: 95).

[7] The framework that Keating (e.g. 2002a; with Hepburn & Cairney 2009) introduced for studying policy differentiation highlighted the importance of a range of structural factors that influence policy-making. These can be summarised as: the asymmetrical nature of the devolution settlements; the nature of intergovernmental relations; the political make-up of the central and territorial governments; the character of the (broadly conceived) policy communities in the new jurisdictions; the extent to which policy divergence is possible between jurisdictions with a common security area, common market and common welfare state; and the extent to which devolved functions are subject to EU law and political influence.

Keating then put forward a typology of policies that may be identified in the post-devolution policy-making setting. The first type of policy that may be identified, he argued, were 'non-comparable policies' where an issue is specific or otherwise restricted to one particular region of the UK. He then identified 'policy autonomy' where different institutions may formulate policy in response to particular needs in, for example, education, social services or organisational matters. The third broad type was 'concurrent policy' where policy-makers in the different jurisdiction may be under the same pressures, either from UK-wide pressure groups or universally applied European regulation. The fourth type was 'policy uniformity', where 'practical considerations or external pressures' cause different jurisdictions to pursue a single line'. The final policy type was policy competition', which drew on the literature on policy transfer and policy learning. In this type, jurisdictions seek to innovate in policy formulation and delivery in order to demonstrate their credentials as independent-thinking, autonomous entities.

2

Organising perspective

When Tony Blair and New Labour swept to power in the UK, in May 1997, they brought with them the next 'big idea' in public administration (Bogdanor 2005b). The call to 'join-up' government was a reaction to the rigid departmental mindset associated with Whitehall and its apparently debilitating consequences for the effective coordination of central government policy. In emphasising the need to join-up, Labour argued that better inter-agency coordination within government and greater collaboration between government, the legislature and institutions in civil society, were key to solving those 'wicked' problems that cut-across traditional, departmental boundaries: problems such as youth offending, drug addiction and social exclusion (Cabinet Office 2000a, 2000b, 2001; SEU 2002).

Joined-up government (JUG) proved a captivating, if controversial, slogan. While many embraced it as a pragmatic, common sense approach to reforming the business of government (see Hilpern 2002; Baroness Masham 2000), for others it typified a New Labour fetish for empty, media-friendly catchphrases: the concept was voguish, one critic argued, but vague (Hoggart 1998). By the early years of the new century, however, JUG was established as an administrative doctrine of some currency (Page 2005). Politicians of all colours made rhetorical commitments to its core principles and some highly visible early initiatives were a public relations success (SEU 2002). Following what Christopher Pollitt (2003: 34) calls a 'small flood' of practitioner accounts and think tank publications (Cabinet Office 2000a, 2000b, 2001; CMPS 2000,

2001; Mulgan et al 1997; 6 1997) a steady flow of academic work brought the study of JUG into the mainstream of contemporary political science (Kavanagh & Richards 2001; Flinders 2002; 6 et al 2002; Pollitt 2003; 6 2004; Bogdanor 2005b).

Despite this growing political, administrative and academic interest, however, JUG remains something of an enigma. There continues to be confusion over the nature and scope of its aims and the specification of its methods; there is no satisfactory framework for detecting its presence or for measuring variations in its degree; a debate continues over whether JUG describes a genuine departure in public administration, or merely the successful rebranding of a long established administrative doctrine; and it remains unclear how the idea of joined-up policy-making can be reconciled with established, interest-based conceptions of the policy process, such as those put forward in the policy network literature (e.g. Rhodes 1988; with Marsh 1992).

This chapter begins by discusssing the literature on goverance, networks and pressure groups as together forming the paradigmatic organising perpsective in the contemporary public policy literature. It is argued that this literature puts forward what is essentially an interests-based explanation of the policy process in which power and influence are derived from the resources actors can access or mobilise, and the realtionships which bind actors together in networks take the form of 'resource dependencies'.

The second section proposes a working definition of JUG based on a reading of the practitioner and academic literatures. It is argued that achieving JUG depends on policy actors agreeing to pool what is termed their 'policy- and decision-making sovereignty' and that, for such a pooling to take place, high levels of inter-personal and inter-organisational trust must be established and sustained. This provides the basis for a 'Hierarchy of Joined-up Thinking and Action' which is put forward as a set of indicators for measuring and assessing JUG. The chapter then puts JUG into historical perspective and argues that some features of the doctrine may mark it out as distinct from previous attempts to coordinate policy formulation and delivery.

In the final section an attempt is made to reconclie JUG with the interests-based explanations of the policy process put forward in the network literature. It is argued that, while actors operating within networks are motivated by narrow institutional

interests and held together in networks by the mechanism of resource dependency, those operating in a 'joined-up policy universe' are motivated by the broader interests of partnerships and held together by mutual trust, a quite different gravity. The chapter concludes by asking whether successfully identifying examples of JUG in action might therefore represent an empirical challenge to the network paradigm.

2.1 Policy-making through the conceptual lens of the network

> The concept, image and metaphor of the 'network' has become the new paradigm for the architecture of complexity across the whole of intellectual enquiry.
>
> Kenis & Schneider (1991: 25)

The group of public policy scholars referred to loosely as the 'British school' framed their analysis with a series of familiar questions: has prime ministerial government replaced cabinet government? How does the cabinet counter-balance prime ministerial power? Do officials dominate ministers, or *vice versa*? The focus was thus on a hierarchy of clearly-defined institutions and processes at the very heart of government; the various relationships between prime minister, cabinet, ministers, civil servants and, to a lesser extent, political parties, were seen as the pre-eminent and definitive dynamics of the policy- and decision-making process. Writers in the British school saw these policy relationships as having a liberal, constitutional footing, and used the Westminster model of British politics – with its intricate rules for the conduct of policy- and decision-making - as an organising perspective. A number of versions of the model were put forward, but Andrew Gamble (1990: 407) identified its broad features as: Parliamentary sovereignty; strong cabinet government; accountability through elections; majority party control of the executive; 'elaborate rules' for the conduct of parliamentary business; institutionalised opposition; and 'the rules of debate'. The point is that subscribers to the Westminster model conceptualised the policy process as a series of zero-sum games in which all actors facilitate, but also delimit, each other's ability to act (see Gamble 1990; Bevir & Rhodes 1999).

In more recent work, this approach has been criticised for placing too great an emphasis on the role of prime minister and cabinet: on the 'core of the core'. For Martin Smith (2000: 1), the very fundamentals of the traditional approach are defective: 'it is important', he argues, 'to get away from ... the view that one person, or a select

few, can run government' and to instead *focus* attention on a plurality of policy actors, including the representatives of private and non-governmental groups.

2.1.1 Policy networks: an interests-based account of the policy process

There is now something of a consensus that the corridors of power in Westminster and Whitehall form what is merely part of a wider and more fragmented policy process that is heavily reliant on a range of complex 'policy networks': that is to say, 'clusters of state and non-state actors, each with an interest, or 'stake' in a given policy sector and, crucially, with the capacity to help determine policy success or failure' (Petersen 2003).[1] Writers in the British school have also been criticised for basing their analyses on the Westminster model of British politics, and the notion that policy actors at once facilitate and delimit each other's ability to act is now widely dismissed as idealistic, 'simplistic and flawed' (Thain 2002: 128; see also Marinetto 2003). Rod Rhodes (1988; with Marsh 1992), in particular, has taken strong issue with the idea of zero-sum games, arguing that policy relationships within network structures are better conceptualised as a series of 'positive-sum games', in which policy is formulated and implemented through the exchange of *resources*.

These resources may take a variety of forms. Representatives of an organisation may be able to guarantee the compliance (or acquiescence) of that organisation's membership, particularly if it is configured around a hierarchical model; others may be able to provide unique expertise, or deliver important services, that are vital for the effective implementation of a given policy. In Rhodes' view, the capacity to mobilise resources of this kind determines an actor's bargaining position within a policy network because other actors within that network may *depend* on those resources, not only for the effective implementation of policy generally, but also for the realisation of their own particular policy goals. Negotiation is therefore in the interests of all those who hold resources within networks because it can lead to policy outcomes that benefit all concerned. Within the structure of the network, then, it is the resources an actor can call upon that provide the dynamic of the policy-making process, and which ultimately form the basis of *power*. For Smith (1993: 7), power is 'a relationship based

on dependence and not a zero-sum', and a policy network is frequently a mechanism for 'enhancing mutual power' rather than 'taking [it] from one or the other'.

The concept of the policy network and the explanatory mechanism of resource dependency together form what is now the paradigmatic organising perspective in the British public policy literature. The seeds of this dominance were sown in the 1970s, when Hugh Heclo and Aaron Wildavsky's (1974) study of networks in the UK Treasury and Jeremy Richardson and Grant Jordan's *Governing Under Pressure* (1979: 74), both drew attention towards negotiations between state actors and a range of non-state pressure groups, taking place within 'compartments' or 'segments'. Interest in this work had an influence on some major Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) research programmes in the 1980s. Most of the work carried out as part of the *Intergovernmental Relations Initiative* and the *Local Governance Programme*, for example, viewed the policy process through the conceptual lens of the network (Marsh & Rhodes 1992: 10-18).

It was Rhodes' (1986, 1988) account of British inter-governmental relations that sparked the real interest, and Marsh and Rhodes' (1992) edited book collection on policy networks in Britain that marked the new paradigm. Other studies focused on particular policy sectors, such as agriculture (Smith 1990, 1991, 1992; Jordan et al 1994), education (Raab 1992), subnational government (Gray 1994), water (Richardson et al 1992), community care (Hunter & Wistow 1987) and government-industry relations (Wilks & Wright 1987). There were also a range of theoretical contributions (e.g. Rhodes 1990; Jordan 1990; Marsh & Rhodes 1992; van Waarden 1992).

2.1.2 Distinguishing networks: classification and typology

A key strand of the policy network literature is the work on classifying networks for descriptive purposes. In broad terms, distinctions are drawn between networks based on two key characteristics. The first of these is what might be termed 'network membership'. This includes the 'stability' of membership, which refers to the extent to which members of a given policy network remain part of that network over time, and the 'accessibility' of membership, which refers to the extent to which the boundaries of the network are porous to the inward and outward movement of members. The

second characteristic is what Rhodes calls 'resource distribution' (1988: 212; see also 1995, 1997, 2000). This refers to the nature and basis of interaction between network members in terms of the exchange of policy resources. Rhodes makes his clearest distinction between *interdependent relationships*, in which each of the actors involved has the capacity to mobilise resources on which another or others depend, and relationships based merely on *consultation*, which involve little or no exchange of resources. Rhodes posits a typology of policy networks based on different variations of these characteristics, and his 'policy communities', 'issue networks', 'producer', 'territorial' and 'professional' networks have become the most widely used classifications in the literature.

The term 'policy community' was used by both Heclo and Wildavsky (1974) and Richardson and Jordan (1979) to refer to highly integrated and exclusive networks, and Rhodes deviates little from their classic definitions.[2] According to David Marsh (1998: 14), Rhodes' policy community is characterised by:

> a limited number of participants with some groups consciously excluded; frequent and high quality interaction between all members of the community on all matters related to the policy issues; all members have resources so the relationships between them are exchange relationships; the basic interaction is one involving bargaining between members with resources.

In terms of the characteristics noted above, then, Rhodes' policy community is a network with a highly stable membership, highly restricted access to membership, and interdependent relationships between members based on the resources they each 'bring to the table' (Fig. 2.,1)

Fig. 2.1 *Rhodes' policy community*

The boundary of the network is non-porous. There are a small number of members and most relationships are interdependent. As such, interaction takes the form of bargaining or negotiation.
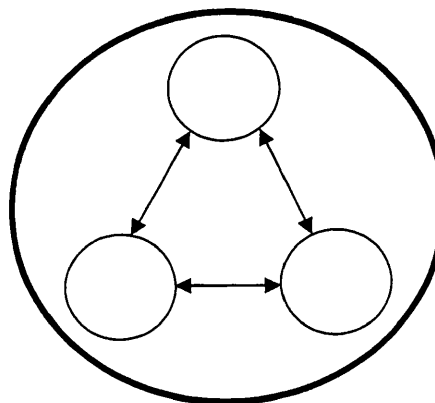
The policy community is usually conceptualised as a three-way network (perhaps involving a government department, industrial organisation and trade union), but the historical example most frequently cited in the British literature involved only two actors. Smith has shown that agricultural policy-making in Britain from the end of the Second World War to roughly the end of the Thatcher era was dominated by the National Farmers' Union (NFU) and the Ministry for Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF). These excluded other groups from the policy agenda and moved policy in the direction that best fitted their 'shared view of the goals of agricultural policy' (1992: 47).

The most pertinent part of Smith's analysis is his explanation of how the NFU and MAFF were able to achieve this level of dominance. Put simply, Smith (1992: 48) argues that they together dominated the policy process because they also dominated the key policy resources. For most of the post-war period, the NFU 'performed the role of aggregating and limiting demands and then helped to sell the agreed policy to its members. In return, MAFF had to offer the farmers guaranteed prices.'

In contrast to his policy community, Rhodes' 'issue network'[3] involves 'only policy consultation', and very little negotiation or bargaining. It is further characterised by:

> the involvement of a large number of participants; fluctuating access for the various members; the absence of consensus and the presence of conflict; [and] an unequal power relationship in which many participants may have few resources, little access and no alternative.
>
> Marsh (1998: 14)

The issue network is thus the polar opposite of the policy community.[4] Its membership is highly volatile and fluid, and so there are very few institutionalised relationships; access is totally unrestricted and so the boundary of the network is both porous and difficult to discern; the relationships between members are generally not exchange relationships and are instead based almost entirely on consultation (Fig. 2.2).[5]

Fig. 2.2 *Rhodes' issue network*

The boundary of the network is porous. There are a large number of members and, although some may have resources, these are invariably limited. The basic relationship is consultative.
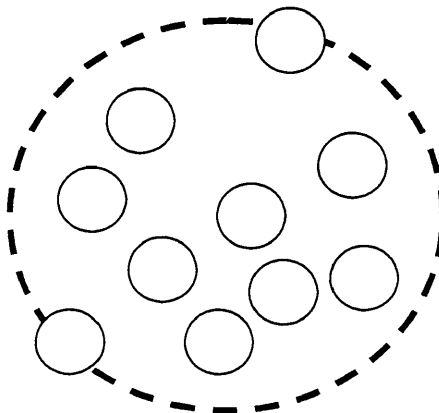
Between his policy community and issue network poles, Rhodes identifies at least three further types of network. Marsh and Rhodes (1992: 14) distinguish 'producer' networks by:

> the prominent role of economic interest (both the public and private sector) in policy making; their fluctuating membership; the dependence of the centre on industrial organisations for delivering the desired goods and for expertise; and the limited interdependence among the economic interests.

Such networks thus have a somewhat unstable membership, and a boundary that is porous to some inward and outward movement. There are certainly interdependent relationships between members, but these are restricted to relationships between the centre and the producers: there is no interdependence among the producers themselves (Fig. 2.3). This contrasts clearly with Rhodes' policy community, in which all members of the network – or at least the great majority - develop mutually dependent relationships.[6]

Fig. 2.3 *Rhodes' producer network*

The boundary of the network is porous to an extent, with some fluctuation of membership. While there are interdependent relationships, these exist only between the centre and the producers.
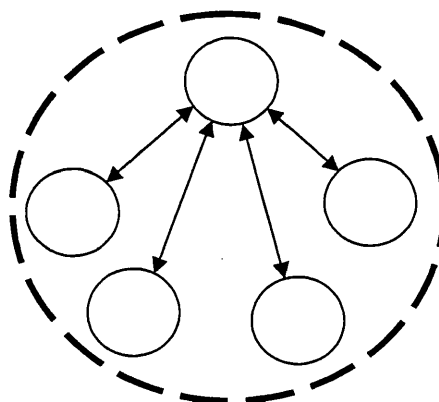
2.1.3 Predictive theory or descriptive device? The explanatory utility of the network

Although there is now general agreement that policy networks exist and that it is possible to identify broad types of network, the explanatory utility of the concept – its legitimacy and value as the basis of predictive theory - remains a matter of some contention (Marsh 1998: 3). At the heart of the debate is a simple question: does the 'type' of policy network, classified according to typologies such as that posited by Rhodes above, have any *causal effect* on policy outcomes? Rhodes, of course, maintains that it does. The existence of a policy community, he argues, 'constrains the policy agenda' and 'shapes policy outcomes' in specific and predictable ways (with Marsh

1992: 197). It is Rhodes' view that policy developed within this kind of network will be more coherent, consistent and effectively implemented than policy developed in more loosely integrated settings.

Smith seeks to explain the development of agricultural policy in Britain using precisely this logic (1992: 49). The existence of a closed, stable, interdependent policy community, he argues, produced a certain consistency of policy outcomes in the post war period. Interestingly, Smith also imagines how agricultural policy would have differed had it been made in the context of other network types. If it had instead taken place within an issue network, he argues, it would have 'lacked a single policy centre' and, as a consequence, would have produced far more pluralistic and 'less coherent' policy outcomes.[7]

However, despite an enthusiastic take up of Rhodes' invitation to develop the network concept as the basis for predicting the nature and direction of policy-making, a number of critics have emerged. Chief among these is Keith Dowding (1994; 1995; 2001), though others, like Mark Thatcher (1998), have also voiced their concerns. Dowding (1994) has urged Rhodes and others not to 'stretch a good idea too far.' Attempts to explain policy outcomes based on the network concept fail, he argues, because:

> ... the driving force of explanation, the independent variables, are not network characteristics per se but rather characteristics of components within networks ... these components both explain the nature of the network *and* the nature of the policy process.
> (1994: 9, original emphasis)

In Dowding's view, then, it was the complicit relationship between the NFU and MAFF, and not the fact that this existed in something called a 'policy community', which caused agricultural policy in Britain to develop in the post war period in the way it did.[8]

Given the controversy surrounding the explanatory utility of the network concept, it has often been used simply as an *analytical tool*: as a metaphor, rather than a model. As Tanja Borzel (1998) points out, although in their theoretical contributions to the British policy network literature many writers make a great play of the explanatory utility of the network concept, in their empirical contributions to that literature most (including Rhodes) limit themselves to using the network as a means of organising

empirical material and communicating it to others (see e.g. Hardy, Wistow & Rhodes 1990; Bennett and Krebbs 1993). Even Dowding (1995: 139, quoted in Marsh & Smith 2000), the arch sceptic, has accepted that the network concept is 'heuristically useful'.

However, as the key conceptual tool of an interests-based explanation (or, more sceptically, description) of the policy process, networks are problematic for the study of JUG. This is because actors in genuinely joined-up policy processes (even if such things exist only in the realm of theory) are necessarily motivated by something other than their narrow interests and bound together by something other than resource dependency. JUG requires that poorly-resourced actors are active members of policy networks and, for this to happen in reality, it is necessary for richly-resourced actors to act in ways that are inconsistent with (or even contrary to) their immediate institutional interests. The potential conceptual friction between a network approach and the proposed JUG approach forms an important part of the discussion and analysis in chapter 7.

2.1.4 Strategies within networks: pressure groups and the rules of the game

From the discussion so far it is clear that private and non-governmental groups are recognised as playing increasingly important roles in the policy- and decision-making process, both in the rhetoric surrounding JUG and in the network literature. Although such actors are almost infinite in their variety, most can be characterised, in broad terms at least, as 'interest', or 'pressure' groups (see e.g. Richardson 2000). This section discusses the strategies such groups employ when seeking to influence public policy.

Wyn Grant (1999: 14) defines a pressure group as:

> an organisation which seeks as one of its functions to influence the formulation and implementation of public policy, public policy representing a set of authoritative decisions taken by the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary, and by local government and the European Union.

There are many hundreds of such groups currently active in the UK, and they range from mass membership organisations such as the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and the Trades Union Congress (TUC), to much smaller groups such as the paternal rights campaigners, Fathers4Justice. However, it is not merely membership numbers that distinguish such groups. They also vary in the way in which they are

configured; in the kinds of resources, if any, they can draw upon; in the issues they are interested in representing; and in the strategies they employ to influence public policy. There is therefore a clear need to classify these groups for descriptive purposes, and this is reflected in the pressure group literature, where a number of different typologies are put forward, both as a means of bringing analytical order to the study of pressure groups, and in the hope that they might 'lead to useful generalisations about [their] behaviour' (Grant 1999: 18). One of the most commonly used is a distinction between 'sectional' and 'cause' groups. Sectional groups represent a section of a given community and their function is to 'look after the common interests of that section' (Grant 1999: 18). Cause groups, on the other hand:

> represent some belief or principle ... they seek to act in the interests of that cause. Theoretically their membership is not restricted at all ... anyone can join and by doing so signify his acceptance of that belief or principle.
>
> Stewart (1958: 25)

A more useful distinction for this study, however, is that which is drawn between 'insider' and 'outsider' groups. This distinction is concerned not with the aims of groups, or with how they are configured, but with the strategies they employ in order to influence public policy. Some groups have what Smith (1993: 9) calls a 'consultative relationship' with the centre. That is to say, their views are sought on policy issues as a matter of routine. Groups must earn this status by abiding by the 'rules of the game'; by 'not upsetting the closed nature of policy-making' and by observing the 'demands for secrecy'. By demonstrating this over time, such groups can achieve access to elite policy-making circles. However, in exchange for a privileged position 'inside' the policy process, pressure groups inevitably sacrifice some of their independence. By agreeing to take part in a game where the rules are set by someone else – and by being threatened with disqualification should any of those rules be broken – it has been argued that some insider groups are left with merely an 'outward shell' of autonomy (Nettl 1965, quoted in Grant 1999: 20).

So-called 'outsider' groups do not have the same kind of relationship with decision-makers, but neither do they suffer from being at least partially emasculated by the process of incorporation into the policy process. Such groups seek to influence public policy through such activities as media manipulation, the organisation of boycotts,

protests or demonstrations, and more controversial 'shock tactics', which at the most extreme level have included trespass on or the destruction of private property.[9] Fathers4Justice (2006) is a clear example of an outsider group, having adopted a strategy this is:

> based around [the] press ... raising awareness through publicity ... 'making the injustice visible' and mobilising a 'dads army' ... applying pressure to the system and MP's to bring around meaningful change [sic].

Such outsider status may be desirable if groups do not wish to be confined or, indeed, emasculated by the rules of the game, but could equally be undesirable if a group wishes to gain insider status but is excluded (see Garner 1996: 83).

The insider-outsider distinction, however, has been criticised for a number of reasons and is, as Grant puts it, a 'typology under attack' (1999: 21). The most commonly made criticism and, indeed, the most valid, is that it is relatively easy to achieve insider status and that a great majority of pressure groups can be classified in this way. Most recently, this criticism has been provided with a solid empirical basis. Edward Page's (1999) study of over three hundred UK pressure groups found that an overwhelming majority exhibited the key characteristics of the insider and that only a very small number could be classed as genuine outsiders. Page (1999: 205) argues that the implications of his findings are that the insider-outsider distinction is 'at best an oversimplification and at worst misleading.'

Page and others may be right in observing that most groups enjoy some kind of insider status and that an outsider is a rare breed, but this does not mean that the insider-outsider distinction is redundant: it simply means it must evolve. Indeed, the evolutionary process has already begun. Grant Jordan and his colleagues at Aberdeen University have argued that insider status is easily achieved because its definition conflates the dimensions of 'strategy' and 'status' (Jordan et al 1992; see Grant 1999: 22). In order to separate these dimensions, Jordan et al put forward a number of sub-types within the insider classification (Table 2.1). By acknowledging that some 'insiders' have more influence on the policy process than others, and by linking this to the possession (or dispossession) of policy resources, Jordan et al successfully restore to

the insider classification the exclusive quality that was originally intended for it and provide an adequate answer to the important concerns raised by Page.

Table 2.1   *Sub-types of 'insider' groups**

'Core' insider groups	Characterised by bargaining/exchange relationships with policy-makers over a broad range of issues. Examples would be CBI and the NFU
'Specialist' insider groups	These are seen as reliable and authoritative, and also have bargaining/exchange relationships with policy-makers, but in much narrower policy niches. An example would be the British Poultry Meat Federation (BPMF)
'Peripheral' insider groups	Participation that has the insider form but carries with it little influence

The criticism, then, that insider status is too easily achieved for the classification to have any real analytical utility is acknowledged and effectively addressed by recognising different kinds of insider status. 'Core' and 'specialist' insiders are rewarded with a much greater say in the direction of policy than their 'peripheral' counterparts because they have the capacity to mobilise resources on which the centre depends for the effective implementation of policy. In the chapters that follow, this sub-division of the insider classification is shown to have great analytical value.

2.2 Joined-up government: definition and assessment

Although JUG has now entered the lexicon of UK public administration and even become a stock phrase of the popular media, it is a concept that continues to defy easy definition. As a Blairite mantra, JUG achieved a certain disposable quality; it was a throwaway line often used with apparently little understanding of its precise meaning or implications for the way in which government works. However, there are certain features of the concept that suggest a degree of coherence and this begins with the problems JUG promises to solve.

2.2.1 A cure for the 'departmental disease': overcoming functional fragmentation

It has been understood for some time that central government in the UK is organised principally along functional lines (Albrow 1970: 88; Hood 1976: 17-20; 6 1997; Peters 1998: 295-6; 6 et al 2002). Government departments and agencies generally have the capacity and authority to administer one or more clearly-defined processes – delivering medical care, say - and their remit is to manage those processes as efficiently as possible. As David Kavanagh and Dennis Richards (2001: 2) explain, the 1918 Haldane Committee (Cmd 9230, 1918) firmly endorsed the existing convention that individual Ministers are accountable and responsible for their departments before Parliament. Under these conditions, it was perhaps inevitable that the institutional cultures, incentives and structures of departments became focused on efficiently carrying out one or more prescribed functions and not necessarily on finding solutions to specific (and shifting) social problems (6 et al 2002). Government departments and their immediate political leaders have developed what Page (2005: 141) calls 'silo mentalities', meaning that problems are 'defined, processed and handled ... on the basis of the intellectual and physical resources of the particular organisation that is handling [them].'

This functional division of labour represents a major systemic obstacle to effective policy coordination (Peters 1998; 6 et al 2002; Pollitt 2003). Where the performance of an agency is measured by how efficiently it carries out a prescribed function, it may bring certain institutional benefits to that agency to transfer or 'dump' problems and costs (intentionally or unintentionally) onto another agency or agencies. Perri 6 et al (2002: 37) give the example of the sharp increase in school exclusions in England over recent years. Here, they argue, policy decisions taken by one agency with the aim of improving school discipline have had the corollary effect of adding to levels of youth offending – a new cost and one that must be born by other agencies. Functional fragmentation also generates a degree of policy duplication and contradiction which can in turn lead to the wasting of scarce resources, gaps in service provision or problems in the sequencing of services (6 et al 2002: 37). The pursuit of efficiency within one functionally-defined and -oriented unit of government can therefore lead to blinkered policy-making and wider *inefficiencies* in the system as a whole.

Functional fragmentation is most debilitating, however, where problems 'resist ... solutions that are readily available through the action of one agency' (6 et al 2002: 34). Successfully tackling rising levels of childhood obesity, for example, requires the input of a multiplicity of agencies. These include health care, of course, but also social services, education and lifelong learning and even those agencies with responsibility for regulating media advertising and contracting out school catering. Single agencies are not only ill-equipped to tackle such a 'wicked' problem alone, but may also be disinclined to act collaboratively where doing so poses a real or imagined risk to their capacity to carry out a prescribed function. Many studies have identified a tendency within bureaucracies generally for agencies to protect their resources and guard their policy-making 'turf': those seeking collaborative solutions to cross-cutting problems are often reminded to 'keep off the grass' (see Downs 1967; Heclo & Wildavsky 1974).

It was a deepening frustration with this entrenched departmental attitude that led to the first calls to join-up government in the UK in the late 1990s. However, it took some time for those calls to develop into a cogent case for reform and still longer for the JUG doctrine to achieve any standing among policy-making elites. The problems associated with functional fragmentation were widely acknowledged and the basic goal of bringing greater coordination to the business of government certainly struck a chord, but JUG was nonetheless a concept that for many seemed nebulous, intellectually-lightweight and transient.

2.2.2 'Horizontally and vertically co-ordinated thinking and action'

JUG continues to defy easy definition. In the early practitioner literature, it was used to capture an emerging attitude to public service reform and was 'a term of art' rather than 'a precise technical or scientific concept' (Pollitt 2003: 34). Even in the more sophisticated academic literature that followed, writers struggled to pin down a straightforward meaning (Huxham and Vangen 2000; James 2001; Kavanagh and Richards 2001; Newman 2001; Newman and Nutley 2001). The definition put forward by Pollitt (2003: 35), which is careful to acknowledge its own limitations and deficiencies, is perhaps the most useful available in the literature and worth

perfectly possible for this to be pursued independently of inter-departmental coordination), the phrase JUG is used here as short hand for what the doctrine's most zealous promoters and strictest devotees might see as an ideal state: a joined-up policy universe (Fig. 2.4).[10]

Perhaps the most effective way to build on Pollitt's preliminary definition of JUG is to detail some of the specific institutional arrangements and practices the doctrine prescribes and to discuss these in the light of some New Labour reforms. Pollitt (2003: 44) suggests a number of ways in which policy-makers might effectively join-up their activities, based on his review of the practitioner and academic literatures. These examples of 'best practice' include:

- Shifting to an outcome-and-effectiveness-focused mode of policy-making, where different organisations can be united in the pursuit of commonly-defined, shared outcome targets (Cabinet Office 2000a; DETR 2000, executive summary).
- The organisation of ministries around client groups
- Firmly lodging the strategic leadership of the 'joined-up' initiative with one or more senior politicians (Cabinet Office 2000a).
- Creating a co-ordination device/steering group (Cabinet Office 2000a).
- Creating 'joint teams' at operational level.
- Organising 'one-stop' or 'one-window' delivery at street level.
- Developing funding mechanisms in which 'pots' of money can only be 'unlocked' when all the key stake-holders agree (Cabinet Office 2000a).
- Pooling parts of budgets and their administration.
- Ensuring that the 'rules of the game' for collaboration are clearly-defined (Van Bueren et al 2001).
- Organising effective systems for the consultation of stake-holders, rather than the 'too little, too late, too few' mode of consultation which the civil service [in the UK context] is sometimes accused of (Van Bueren et al 2001; Cabinet office 2000a, annex 6).
- Exchanging key staff between the different organisations involved (DETR 2000: para. 3.113).
- Involving outside experts at the earliest possible opportunity (Cabinet office 2000a: paras 7.7-7.11).[11]

A number of the reforms carried out by New Labour in the name of JUG have involved one or more of these examples of best practice. Geoff Mulgan (2005: 182-4) has carried out a review of these reforms (admittedly from the perspective of a former Director of both Tony Blair's Strategy Unit and the pro-JUG think tank, Demos), and it worth rehearsing two of the main examples in order to better illustrate the kinds of activity practitioners have designed as attempts at JUG.

Firstly, the Blair government created a small number of well-resourced and high profile policy units that operated independently of any particular department. The Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) and the Performance and Innovation Unit (PIU), later known as the Strategy Unit (SU), were able to 'analyse problems and propose solutions free from departmental interests' (Mulgan 2005: 182). These in turn set up a number of dedicated delivery units, among them the Rough Sleepers Unit and the Children and Young People's Unit, which were charged with directly tackling the issues affecting their eponymous client groups through the strategic mobilisation of resources and expertise held by various government agencies. The SEU, PIU and proliferation of subordinate units, each with their own cross-cutting problem to tackle, were a kind of institutional scaffold erected around the existing departmental structure.

Secondly, the Sure Start programme was set up by the government in 1999 as a means of tackling a specific cross-cutting issue by pooling budgets and encouraging cross-departmental leadership. Sure Start brought together the contributions of agencies with responsibility for early education, childcare, health and family support in order to deliver 'the best start in life for every child', with a particular emphasis on those in disadvantaged areas. Although the programme was based in the Department for Education and Employment, responsibility for overseeing the programme and delivering on its objectives rested with Yvette Cooper, who at the time was a Minister in the Department of Health (Mulgan 2005: 182). Moreover, Sure Start was funded out of a pooled budget which was managed by a designated team.

The key point to make is that the examples of best practice identified by Pollitt and the New Labour innovations detailed above all require, to a greater or lesser degree, that two or more policy actors agree to pool what might be termed their 'policy- and decision-making sovereignty'. If, for example, important personnel are exchanged between agencies, or parts of budgets are combined or transferred, the agencies involved must come to terms with the prospect of some control over those resources being held in common with another agency or agencies: they must be prepared, then, to dismantle some of the barriers demarking their turf and expose their institutional interests to some degree of risk. Crucially, the challenge facing those hoping to join-up

government is how to sustain the kinds of inter-personal and inter-organisational relations necessary for this pooling of policy- and decision-making sovereignty to take place.

2.2.3 Building and sustaining inter-organisational relations: a question of trust

> To 'believe in someone', without adding or even conceiving what it is that one believes about him, is to employ a very subtle and profound idiom. It expresses the feeling that there exists between our idea of a being and the being itself a definite connection and unity, a certain consistency in our conception of it, an assurance and lack of resistance in the surrender of the Ego to this conception...
>
> Simmel (1990: 179)

Trust has been the subject of increasing sociological interest in the last two decades, with writers turning their attention to such questions as: what is trust; how and why do we trust; and how can trust be sustained (Zucker 1986; Sako 1992; Misztal 1996; Seligman 1997; Sztompka 1999; Lane & Bachmann 2000). There is broad agreement in this literature that trust is a key explanatory variable in social interaction, but one that has not been clearly conceptualised or effectively utilised by scholars. Trust has been described as one of social science's greatest enigmas: it is the oil in the machine of society, but is intangible and even immeasurable. As Martin Hollis (1998: 1) observes, trust is something that seems to work better in practice than in theory. It may be useful, therefore, to posit a basic definition of trust before discussing its particular relevance and analytical utility for a study of policy-making generally and JUG in particular.

Put simply, the existence of trust gives the 'trustor' – who may be an individual, group or organisation – a degree of confidence that the 'trustee' will behave in line with their expectations. Changes in levels of trust will be reflected in changes in the degree of confidence the trustor has in the trustee and, indeed, in the kinds of expectations he or she holds. 6 et al (2002: 119-120) distil four main 'reasons' to trust from the sociological literature:

1. We might trust on the basis of past *experience* of dealing with the person or organisations during which they have proven to be capable and reliable.
2. We might trust on the basis that the person or organisation has a *reputation*. We might ourselves rely on that reputation as a guide to the person or organisation's likely behaviour, or we may rely on that person or organisation acting in such a way as to protect its reputation.

3. We might trust on the basis of *shared characteristics* or *shared identity*. We might decide, for example, that a person is trustworthy because we share the same nationality or local roots, or simply the same sex.
4. We might trust on the basis of *generic institutional factors* like the availability of legal redress in the event of default.

Some scholars have applied the sociological concept of trust to governance and the policy process (Eshuis & Van Woerkum 2003; Van Vliet & Stein 2004; Marks & Zadoroznyj 2005). Within this emerging literature, Jasper Eshuis and Cees Van Woerkum's (2003) distinction between 'individual', 'organisational' and 'institutional' trust is of particular interest. Individual trust, they argue, is founded on a continuity of face-to-face contacts and the 'orality' – the body language, eye-contact and verbal exchanges - they contain (Bāhre & Smets, 1999). Such contacts enable policy actors to develop close relationships based on mutual intellectual respect, or a shared understanding of policy issues. They help cultivate empathy. Stereotyped ideas of certain categories of actors – the 'voluntary sector', say - can also be overcome in a face-to-face context (although one must not ignore the possibility that prejudices can also be reinforced). The point is that relationships based on high frequency, high quality contact often become 'overlaid with social content that carries strong expectations of ... abstention from opportunism' (Granovetter 1985: 490, quoted in Eshuis & Van Woerkum 2003: 381). High levels of individual trust within a given policy space can create a series of relationships within which actors 'will expose themselves [to risk] more easily, are more receptive to other's [sic] ideas, accept more interdependence, and have less need to impose control on others' (Klein Woolthuis et al 2002: 5, quoted in Eshuis and Van Woerkum 2003: 382). Trust, then, can oil the wheels of cooperation within a policy process and the more trust there is, the greater the chance that actors will agree to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty. The prime conditions for JUG are therefore those where mutually trusting relationships can be formed between key policy actors.

'Organisational trust' shares many features with individual trust and can in some ways be conceptualised as trust between groups of individuals. As Eshuis and Van Woerkum (2003: 383) put it:

> Trust in organizations has to do with agency too. Organizations produce trust because of their agency or ability to perform. The ability to perform sprouts from the fact that organizations as a collectivity bundle and direct the agency of the individuals in the organization. The trust in the ability to perform is similar to the trust in competencies of individuals.

But this type of trust is also a function of the way in which the processes organisations develop are seen as effective, or reliable. In this sense, organisations can also be the subject of *institutional trust*. This third variant is of particular interest because it flows from, in large part, many of the characteristics that actors operating in the new context of devolved government are unlikely to be able to demonstrate: longevity, continuity, proven track record. Institutional trust, one may expect, will be a feature of more established policy contexts where there has been a sufficient passage of time for shared experience to reinforce inter-organisational relationships.

Having established the importance of trust for successful JUG, it is necessary to be able to distinguish between different levels of trust in order to be able to identify more and less onerous forms of joining-up. 6 et al (2002: 20) again offer a useful classification:

1. The *minimal* or merely *prudential* level of trust is where we trust that a person's statement of intent – a promise, threat or other indication of intention - can be believed.
2. We may trust a person to carry out a *contract* we have with them.
3. We may trust the person or organisation to exercise *goodwill*. That is, we trust that person or organisation to protect our interests.

It is also important to recognise trust in both its predictive and normative senses. As Hollis (1998: 10-14) explains, if one trusts that someone will, for example, arrive for an appointment on time, one may do so for two separate but linked reasons. First, one may expect that person to be on time because they have shown themselves through their previous conduct to be punctual. Their trustworthiness is therefore based on past experience and is predictive. Second, one may expect the person to be on time because punctuality is what courtesy demands. Their trustworthiness is therefore based on a commonly held set of behavioural expectations and is normative.

These senses of trust are, of course, mutually reinforcing. A normative commitment to punctuality can only exist if it has been reinforced over time by a majority being reliably punctual. Proponents of JUG make a similar argument. In one of the first codifications of JUG, the PIU put it in the following terms:

> The answer is not to try to remove the boundaries, but to make sure they remain flexible and permeable. That may require a fundamental change ... switching from a culture of tribal competitiveness to one of partnership. That change of mind-set is difficult to achieve in an organisation that is not used to looking beyond its own narrow interests. It means looking for shared agendas, and may sometimes mean doing things that do not seem to be in the immediate interests of the organisation, but which adds value indirectly by adding to the value of the partnership. That change of mindset is vital to successful cross-cutting working.
>
> Cabinet Office (2000a)

For what might be described a 'pure' form of JUG to be achieved, then, policy actors must act in ways that reflect the existence of a 'culture of collaboration'. That is to say, there must be a normative commitment to JUG among all stakeholders if the most beneficial effects of it are to be felt.

2.2.4 A new name for an old idea? Joined-up government in historical perspective

> The idea must be rejected that there was once a simpler age, when policies could be enacted that would require a single agency to carry them out, acting alone ...
>
> 6 (2004: 104)

The discussion so far has proceeded on the basis that JUG is a distinctive and path-breaking concept with the potential to redefine government, or at least reconfigure the ways in which it operates. However, much of the academic debate on JUG has been concerned with whether it is in fact a new idea at all (Kavanagh and Richards 2001; Clark 2002; Flinders 2002; Hood 2005). There is no doubt that the phrase itself is novel (even if claims to its authorship are disputed), but whether JUG describes a genuine departure in public administration remains something of a moot point.

What is beyond doubt is that governments have always been preoccupied to some extent with the need to coordinate their business. As Christopher Hood (2005: 19) notes, the language of public administration has traditionally made reference to a doctrine of 'coordination' which, at the most general level, holds that 'all or many parts of executive government should interconnect, complement one another, and pool related information'. Specific attempts at coordinating government activities are detectable since at least the beginning of the twentieth century, beginning with military operations and disaster management (Hood 2005: 20). During the Second World War, for example, reference was made to the need to undertake military

operations 'in which two or more of the fighting services cooperate in order to strike the enemy with the maximum of effect at a chosen place and at a chosen time' (Sanders 1943: 7, quoted in Hood 2005: 20). In the post-war era, the need for greater administrative coordination moved steadily up the political and public administration agendas and there were increasingly sophisticated examples of UK governments putting forward policy coordination as a potential solution to the problems associated with departmentalism. These are covered in some detail in the literature, but it is worth discussing one particular example which clearly demonstrates that 'overcoming the pathology of departmentalism' has not been the exclusive concern of the New Labour decade.

The Conservative government formed by Edward Heath in June 1970 carried out a substantial programme of institutional redesign aimed at tackling creeping departmentalism. The 1970 White Paper, *The Reorganisation of Central Government* (Cmd 4506, 1970), contained a series of restructuring measures that merged a number of smaller departments into larger ones. This meant that there were fewer Cabinet ministers and, in theory at least, fewer competing tribal voices around the Cabinet table. For Kavanagh and Richards (2001: 4), these measures were taken in the hope that they would 'assist the Cabinet to develop a broader, strategic, overview of the government's programme and militate against the outbreak of 'departmentalism''. Heath's structural reorganisation of departments, then, was undertaken very much in the spirit, if not the name, of JUG.

Heath's most innovative commitment to policy co-ordination came in the form of his Central Policy Review Staff (CPRS) (see also Flinders 2002; Plowden et al 1988). The CPRS was a clear articulation both of Heath's appreciation of the problems associated with departmentalism and his understanding that coordinating mechanisms and processes offered potential solutions. The CPRS sought to challenge the entrenched departmental mindset of Whitehall in a number of ways. In particular, it produced a series of influential reports on carefully chosen policy issues – among them the motor industry, race relations and energy conservation - that cut-across departmental boundaries (Kavanagh & Richards 2001: 5). These, then, were among the first acknowledged 'wicked' problems. Crucially, it was the CPRS's 'freedom from

day-to-day pressures and vested departmental interests [that] enabled it to engage in more wide-ranging analyses than might otherwise have been possible' (Greenwood & Wilson 1984: 50, quoted in Kavanagh & Richards 2001: 5). In its 1975 report, *A Joint Approach to Social Policy*, the CPRS framed its analysis in ways that would be familiar to any of the New Labour 'joiner-uppers'.

Given the clear parallels between the Heath government's interest in policy coordination and New Labour's aspiration to achieve JUG, it is understandable that scholars such as Pollitt (2003: 36) have concluded that JUG 'only seems new' and is in fact only 'the latest manifestation of one of the oldest preoccupations in the field of politics and public administration.' However, to dismiss JUG as merely a high profile rebranding (sexing-up?) of an old administrative doctrine may be hasty.

2.2.5 What is distinctive about joined-up government?

Although it is quite reasonable to locate JUG within a cyclical pattern of interest in policy coordination, it has three broad features that may add up to a certain degree of distinctiveness. Firstly, most scholars have characterised departmentalism as an escalating problem. Kavanagh and Richards (2001: 3) make the point:

> The problem has been exacerbated, post-Haldane, by governments year on year taking on more responsibilities and becoming locked into more dependency relationships. The creation of new departments, as well as the growth of legislation, regulation, programmes and networks, prompt reactions elsewhere in the system that may be unforeseen or run counter to a policy's original intended outcomes.

Against this background, attempts at policy coordination by the Heath government and others appear as marginal efforts to shake Whitehall from the grip of departmentalism. In contrast, JUG arguably represents a more ambitious and thorough-going attempt at policy coordination. Even if it is not a qualitatively new solution to the problem of departmentalism it might be accurate to describe JUG as a significant ratcheting-up of that solution. The examples of best practice and examples of New Labour reforms listed above represent a more diverse range of institutional arrangements and practices than any previous attempts at coordination have proposed, and the requirement that collaborative relationships with institutions in civil society should form part of a joined-up policy process is arguably an extra dimension. This is

certainly the view of Andrew Podger (2007; see also Lindquist 2000) for whom the different structural conditions in a more complex world have created an inescapable imperative to coordinate the business of policy- and decision-making better:

> The greater interest in connectivity and horizontal government in recent years should not be seen as just a fad – it has many recognised long-term drivers, across many policy areas, on a worldwide basis. These include the increasing demands of citizens; the complexity of modern social problems; the pressure on public budgets; the impact of new information and communications technologies, giving both the increased technical capacity to connect and a related increase in expectations that we will use that capacity; and active experimentation by governments in new ways to meet these challenges and deliver services.

Secondly, JUG has achieved unprecedented longevity as a prominent political and administrative goal. It is certainly true that the phrase itself has now fallen from fashion. Andrew Davies, the Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery, now consciously avoids what he calls 'an ugly phrase' and instead talks about 'policy integration' as a key aim of his government (Interview 10). Similarly, usage of the term in the popular media has fallen off considerably since reaching a peak in 2000 (Fig. 2.5).

Fig.2.2 Incidence of the phrase 'joined-up government' in The Times, 1997-2007
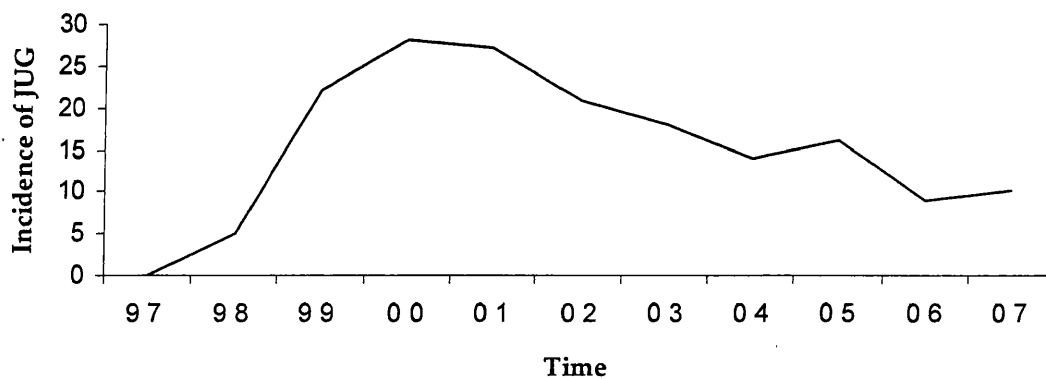
However, Page (2005) and others observe that JUG has now passed into the general canon of Civil Service administrative doctrines. It may no longer be a 'Big Thing', he argues, but it is certainly still thought of as a 'Good Thing'. Aiming for partnership and developing collaboration have become default settings for policy-makers

operating at all levels of UK government and JUG has become synonymous with 'good government'. In this sense, policy coordination has never before enjoyed such a prolonged period of interest and action.

Thirdly - and potentially most significantly - proponents of JUG emphasise a normative dimension to the doctrine. That is to say, the achievement of JUG involves more than restructuring departments and developing overarching institutions to bring a strategic overview to the business of government. The ultimate aim of JUG expressed clearly in the practitioner literature is the achievement of both structural and *cultural* change. Ministers and senior civil servants, for example, were encouraged in the early practitioner literature to provide strong leadership in tackling cross-cutting issues and to act as 'champions' of JUG, whose example would help 'create a culture conducive to cross-cutting working' (Cabinet Office 2000a: 7). Perhaps the defining feature of JUG, then, is that its proponents emphasise the need to cultivate new attitudes and ways of working as a way of catalysing and reinforcing institutional and process change so that reforms carried out in the name of JUG are sustainable in the longer term.

If policy actors could be found to be entering into trust relationships with others based on trust in its normative sense, then, the distinctiveness of JUG as an administrative doctrine could be reinforced by empirical data. This is because the existence of such relationships would indicate *cultural change*. This key research question is taken up in chapter 8.

2.2.6 Assessing 'joined-up-ness'

Detecting, measuring and assessing JUG has proven as much of a challenge for scholars and practitioners as defining it. Pollitt (2003: 43-46), however, identifies two broad methods of assessment that might be employed. The first examines *policy outcomes* and asks whether a given JUG initiative has produced more co-ordinated public policy, or whether outcomes 'reflect continued contradictions, duplications and fragmentations' in policy formulation and delivery. Such a method is attractive because it assesses the impact of JUG initiatives on the social problems they are designed to address. However, significant resources are required to assess outcomes effectively and it is not yet clear whether there are sufficiently mature outcomes to

assess in Scotland and Wales. Particularly when the focus of initiatives is on the most intractable social problems, the success or failure of JUG must be measured in decades rather than years. The second method of assessment Pollitt outlines, however, is more manageable because of its focus on *policy processes* and *outputs.* This method involves comparing the policy processes and outputs of a given policy initiative with prescribed examples of 'best practice'. By considering how many of these joined-up institutional arrangements and practices have been followed, it becomes possible to at least estimate the degree of 'joined-up-ness' within a given policy space. Such an approach incorporates a great deal of 'practitioner wisdom and experience' and, most importantly, requires neither tangible policy outcomes nor the availability of significant resources to be applied to a JUG initiative (Pollitt 2003: 45). As Pollitt (2003: 45) emphasises, it is a method that can be used 'long before results or outcomes-based evaluations are even possible'.

A clear weakness of the best practice approach, however, is that the literature gives little indication of the relative importance of the various institutional arrangements and practices. Being able to measure the degree of joined-up-ness – rather than merely *estimate* it - requires that the examples of best practice are arranged into a hierarchy of some sort. The best available variable for creating such a hierarchy and allowing important distinctions to be made between examples of best practice is the level of trust required. Table 2.2 shows how such a hierarchy might be arranged, with some of the examples of best practice suggested by Pollitt (2003: 44) matched to the corresponding level of predictive trust required as put forward by 6 et al (2002: 20). At the bottom of the hierarchy, where no trust is required, are measures that seek to join-up government merely through the more effective dissemination of information. A minimal level of trust is required for consulting stakeholders or involving outside experts where there is no question of handing over the policy agenda to those actors. A funding mechanism that requires evidence of and commitment to collaboration in order to 'unlock' some dedicated resource requires policy actors to demonstrate 'contractual trust, while pooling budgets, or handing control of the policy agenda to one or more stakeholder, requires that there is the highest level of trust between actors, the 'goodwill' level in 6 et al's classification.

This Hierarchy of joined-up thinking and action (HJTA) (Table 2.3) combines two sets of good ideas to form an innovative framework for effective descriptive evaluation of policy processes and outputs. The framework makes it possible for policy-making across policy areas, jurisdiction and levels of government to be compared. The HJTA is developed further in chapter 3 as part of a 'JUG approach'.

Table 2.2 *Hierarchy of joined-up thinking and action*

Level of trust required	Type of institutional arrangement or practice
Goodwill	• Pooling budgets • Exchanging key people • Creating 'joint teams' at operational level · • Handing over the policy agenda to institutions in civil society • Making the legislature a driver of policy
Contract	• Developing funding mechanisms in which 'pots' of money can only be 'unlocked' when all the key stake-holders agree
Minimal	• Organising effective systems for the consultation of stake-holders • Consulting outside experts • Focusing the business of participation in policy delivery and implementation – application, monitoring, evaluation – on collaboration and partnership
Informational	• Ensuring the 'rules of the game' for collaboration are clearly-defined • Framing problems as 'cross-cutting problems'

2.2.7 Obstacles to JUG at the centre: tracing accountability and tracking resources

The departmental system that has dominated policy-making in the UK for over a century draws a great deal of its legitimacy and longevity from its ability to deliver at least a veneer of democratic and managerial accountability and provide acceptable mechanisms for effective resource management. As is mentioned above, Haldane endorsed the convention that Ministers are responsible for their departments and the administration of their prescribed functions before Parliament, and the departmental

system makes it clear where political and managerial responsibility lies. It is also relatively straightforward to track and manage the throughput of resources in a departmental system as staff, money and assets are hermetically sealed within vertical 'tubes' (Mulgan 2005: 183).

The purpose of JUG, of course, is to overcome some of the inherent weaknesses of the departmental system. In terms of accountability and resource management, however, many of these weaknesses can be interpreted as strengths. Breaking down the barriers between departments and allowing resources to permeate departmental demarcations may very well allow government to respond more effectively to cross-cutting issues, but it can also result in a blurring of the lines of accountability and an obscuring of the throughput of resources. Involving non-governmental actors in the formulation and delivery of joined-up solutions would almost certainly exacerbate these problems.

Within a large scale policy-making context such as Whitehall, the importance of a departmental modus operandi for tracing accountability and tracking resource management is magnified. Put simply, the greater the number of agencies that require joining-up, the greater the risk that doing so will adversely affect accountability and resource management. This has been one of the key obstacles to achieving JUG at the UK centre. 6 and others (6 et al 2002; Parston & Timmins 1998; United States General Accounting Office 1992) have identified a range of additional obstacles to JUG, including: intra-departmental incentive structures and career paths that are not conducive to collaborative working; issues of employment law; and the fact that the geographic boundaries for agencies expected to collaborate or coordinate their activities are very often not co-terminous.

2.3 JUG and interest-based theory: an empirical challenge to the network paradigm?

The call to join-up government is not a call to reinvent government. Rather, as Vernon Bogdanor (2005a: 17) explains, it is 'a means of modifying a form of government which remains organised predominantly in the departmental mode'. The institutional arrangements and practices detailed above are grafted on to a functionally fragmented

system in order to offset some of its worst features: a subtle redesign of the architecture of government rather than a complete rebuild.

However, if JUG prescribes a subtle modification to the architecture of government, it demands a fundamental change in the mode and pattern of behaviour among those acting within that system. As has been noted, the network literature explains the policy process in terms of interests and resources; actors have confidence that they can predict the behaviour of other actors within networks and rely on them to protect their interests based on the mechanism of resource dependency. However, a genuinely joined-up policy universe, should such a thing exist in empirical fact, is held together by a different gravity: by high levels of inter-personal and inter-organisational trust. The existence of such a universe, in which a full array of stake-holding actors pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty and develop co-ordinated and collaborative policies and forms of implementation, would therefore represent an empirical challenge to the network paradigm.

If Rhodes' policy community is seen as the expression and logical end point of a free market in power and influence, then genuinely joined-up policy processes – themselves taking the form of networks of course – are best compared to a planned economy, in which power and influence is distributed according to a set of guiding principles; that is, the principles contained in the doctrine of JUG. This requires actors to act in ways that they would not in a free market context; it asks them to desist from exploiting their own resources and to instead act in ways that benefit broader partnerships. The network literature therefore provides a valuable tool kit for identifying an absence or failure of JUG. Where actors within a network exclude other actors or seek to restrict membership on the grounds of the resources actors bring to the table, they are participating in the very antithesis of JUG. In each of the ideal types of policy network put forward by Rhodes and discussed above, for example, distinctions are drawn as much by who is not involved in the policy-making process as by who is. The inclusiveness of policy-making is based squarely on a 'need to know' basis, not on a normative commitment to inclusion as a principle of good governance. Moreover, the way actors behave is determined by their own interests and not by what is necessary to develop and implement the best possible policy outputs or outcomes.

Policy networks are therefore a conceptual tool that can be used to describe or explain a policy process in which actors collaborate and coordinate their activities, but only where doing so serves their narrow institutional interests.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter began by explaining that, while JUG is a prominent goal of government and a key strand of the public policy literature, it remains a concept and mode of policy- and decision-making that is difficult to define, describe and evaluate. Moreover, it is unclear whether JUG is in fact a new idea at all. In an attempt to bring some clarity to the concept and harness its potential as a perspective on the policy- and decision-making process, a clear definition was posited, along with the basis of a framework for conducting descriptive evaluation of policy processes and outputs from a JUG perspective. The HJTA brought together two good ideas from the JUG literature: first, the examples of best practice identified by Pollitt (2005) in the practitioner literature as the basis of a best practice approach to the evaluation of joined-up thinking and action; and, second, the nature and extent of the trust required to operate or operationalise them effectively. The HJTA is further developed as a framework for descriptive analysis in chapter 3.

The chapter then considered the implications of JUG for the way policy- and decision-making is currently described, explained and conceptualised. After identifying the policy network and interest group literatures as together forming the paradigmatic organising perspective in the British public policy literature, it was argued that the network approach was founded on the core explanatory mechanism of resource dependency and could therefore be described as an essentially interests-based account of the policy process. It was suggested that, should a genuinely 'joined-up policy universe' be detected in empirical fact, it may represent an empirical challenge to the network paradigm.

Notes to Chapter 2

[1] The terminology of the policy network literature is at best inconsistent and at worst confused. It is necessary, therefore, to make clear how the term 'policy network' is used in this study. Patrick Kenis and Volker Schneider (1991: 29) use the term generically – to refer to any cluster of policy actors, no matter what peculiar or distinctive features that network exhibits - and it is this usage that is adopted here. A policy network, then, is described simply by 'its actors, their linkages and its boundary. It includes a ... set of mainly public and private corporate actors [and] the linkages between actors serve as channels for communication and for the exchange of information and expertise.'

[2] Jordan, however, does see a degree of 'flexibility in the system' and the possibility of different 'sets of participants' moving in and out of the policy community over time. In this respect, his policy community is more loosely integrated than that of Heclo and Wildavsky and, indeed, Rhodes (Jordan 1981: 117, quoted in Smith 1992: 28). The early American literature on government-group relations identified structures with the same broad characteristics as policy communities, known as 'Iron Triangles'. It is clear that this kind of policy-making structure was recognised before the late 1970s, even if it was labelled differently (see e.g. Griffith 1939; Freeman 1955).

[3] The term was first introduced by Heclo (1978).

[4] Indeed, the typologies writers like Rhodes have posited contain only ideal-types. No network exists with exactly the characteristics of, say, an 'issue network'. Marsh acknowledges that what Rhodes puts forward is more a *continuum*, on which a given network can be positioned closer to one pole or the other.

[5] Examples of issue networks are more difficult to identify in the empirical literature. The most often cited is the consumer affairs policy network, though an in-depth case study is missing.

[6] Although in this classification producers are restricted to 'economic interests' and, more specifically, to 'industrial organisations', there is no obvious reason why not-for-profit, voluntary organisations that deliver services or provide expertise on which the centre depends for the effective implementation of policy can not be included. Rhodes is silent on this point.

[7] A further example of the network concept being used to explain policy outcomes is Toke and Marsh (2003).

[8] David Marsh suggests that what this debate boils down to is in fact a fundamental epistemological disagreement between the two sides: a disagreement, that is, over the primacy one should attach to structure and agency (1998: 10-14; see also Marsh & Furlong 2002; Marsh et al 2001)

3

Applied research methods

This chapter outlines the applied research methods used to generate primary data and assimilate secondary material in order to test the study's central thesis. It also elaborates on the HJTA as a framework for organising and facilitating its analysis and the basis, therefore, of a 'JUG approach'. The chapter also introduces and provides some basic background to the case studies in each of the devolved institutions and explains why they were chosen as suitable tests of joined-up governance (JUG).

The first section of the chapter introduces education and lifelong learning policy as the study's principal area of focus in Scotland in Wales and special education needs (SEN) and adult and community learning (ACL) policy as the areas chosen for close examination. This is followed by a more detailed discussion of the case study method, including the extent to which it might be possible to generalise research findings. The research design is then outlined, which combines document collection and analysis with a series of semi-structured interviews with key policy actors. The value of interview data in uncovering the nature of policy-making is examined and the method of identifying potential interviewees is explained.

The second section elaborates on the HJTA as a framework for effective descriptive evaluation of policy-making in each of the cases before considering a set of seven key variables which may influence the number and quality of trust

largely technocratic teachings of JUG may take second place to the realities of electoral or party politics.

1.1.1 Generalising in case study research: beyond 'the science of the singular'?

The case study is not a specific technique but rather a method of organising data for the purpose of analysing the life of a social unit (Franklin and Osborne 1971: 184). The unit could be a person, a family, an organisation, an institution, a network. A number of research methods may be marshalled by the case study researcher to produce an in-depth study of the case or cases of interest. Case study research can have many purposes and be designed and executed in many ways. Catherine Hakim (2000: 61) has described the 'extended range' of case study designs:

> [there are] case studies combining exploratory work, description and the testing out of hunches, hypotheses and ideas in varying combinations.

For this reason, there is 'very little consensus as to the exact methodological status of the case study as a type of [social] research' (Verschuren 2003: 122). For many case studies, an intensive investigation of a single case is the only concern of the researcher. Many are descriptive or evaluative studies. It is where 'the science of the singular' (Simons 1980) moves beyond the confines of its particular case and enters the domain of generalisation that problems often arise.

Case studies that generalise from results have been fiercely criticised. How, it is quite reasonably asked, can a study of a single school (e.g. Woods 1979; Ball 1981; Burgess 1983), no matter how in-depth or rigorous, be representative of the schooling system at large? Generalisation from the results of such studies, like levels of bullying or the effect of free school breakfasts, will always be open to the charge that those results have the potential to be 'idiosyncratic' (Bryman 1992: 89). This is because isolated cases always have an 'unknown degree of specificity' (Gillham 2000: 6). Precisely because the 'the real business of case study is particularisation', the findings such studies produce are a 'poor basis for generalisation' (Stake 1995: 8). This is a not only a concern for critics but also for case study researchers themselves. As Alan Bryman (1992: 88) notes, many exponents of the method 'display unease

about the extent to which their findings are capable of generalisation beyond their particular case'.

Although these criticisms are mostly valid, there are certain conditions in which some generalisation might be considered appropriate. In order to explain this, it will be necessary to make a distinction between different kinds of case study research and, just as importantly, between different forms of generalisation. The problem of potentially idiosyncratic results can be addressed by extending case study research to a number of different cases. Cynthia Cockburn (1991), for example, investigated resistance to sex equality in organisations through a series of case studies of different kinds of organisation: a trade union, a civil service department, a retail company and a local government organisation. By producing a comparative suite of case studies, Cockburn's findings were given important comparative context. Similarly, Jerome Skolnick (1966) carried out a case study of police officers in 'Westville, USA', and also spent a period embedded in a police force in another US city. The second case enabled him to put his findings from Westville in comparative context and allowed many of that force's idiosyncrasies to be identified and explained. The 'degree of specificity' of each case was made clearer through comparison.

This is what Robert Yin (1994: 30) has called 'comparative case method' and though it has been utilised in many fields of social enquiry, it has been most enthusiastically embraced by political scientists (see Lijphart 1975). The three case studies of individual schools mentioned above, like all studies of single cases where generalisations outside of that case are made, would benefit from being extended to another case or cases. However, while it is true that a multiple-case method protects research from some of the criticisms that narrower studies are open to, it is not enough, on its own, to validate generalisation. The *form of generalisation* that is made is equally important.

Yin (1994: 30-34) makes the distinction between 'statistical' and 'analytic' generalisation. The former is an attempt to apply to data collected in case studies the same generalisations one would apply to data about a sample (Bassey 1999: 30-32). This is exactly what is advocated by Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion and Kevin Morrison (2003: 185) in their source book on research methods:

1.1 Research design

Finding answers to the research questions outlined in chapter 1 requires a research design that offers insight into the unseen workings of the policy process; the off-the-record conversations which take place in informal settings. Although there is a raft of relevant and illuminating documents in the pubic domain that offer some way of providing this insight, the most satisfactory method is to combine document collection and analysis with in-depth, face-to-face interviews with key members of the policy process. At the centre of the research design, therefore, was a series of interviews with individuals identified as key actors within the education and lifelong learning policy networks in Scotland and Wales.

Potential interviewees were initially identified following a period of desk research during which the education and lifelong learning policy networks in Scotland and Wales were mapped. This was done with reference to all available documentary evidence, including: minutes of plenary debates; minutes and reports from the relevant committees and departments; party manifestos and other policy proposals; reports on the activities of the relevant QUANGOs; documents prepared by interested groups; and broad policy strategies. The interviewees identified at this stage were divided into the following groups: ministers, deputy ministers and their spokespeople; other elected representatives with a particular interest or expertise in the field of education and lifelong learning; senior officials within the Scottish Executive and Welsh Assembly Governments, with a focus on those in the variously configured education and lifelong learning departments; the directors or other senior representatives of relevant pressure groups, representative and third sector organisations; and senior officials working in Scottish or Welsh Assembly Government--sponsored programmes in local government settings.

Mapping the policy networks in Scotland and Wales provided a useful starting point, but further informants were identified using chain referral sampling, or 'snowballing'. This type of respondent-driven sampling carries with it certain, well-known dangers of informant agenda-setting and bias, and it was important to remain mindful of these issues in the field. However, care was taken to ensure that initial informants occupied a range of distinct positions in the policy networks in Scotland

and Wales, and by using these multiple entry points it was possible to limit as far as possible the problems of bias experienced in some sociological studies that have used the same sampling technique (see Biernacki and Wald 1981). The potential for this kind of bias was further off-set by the fact that, on a number of occasions, the same individual was referred by more than one informant.

The interviews themselves were all semi-structured and, where possible, only nominally time-limited. As Charlotte Davies (1999: 98) has noted, the emphasis in this kind of qualitative interviewing is on obtaining 'a variety of interpretations' rather than seeking consistencies in responses in order to generate statistical generalisations. Put differently, face-to-face interviews allow a certain degree of insight into official documents, rehearsed plenary performances and carefully prepared media briefings, and the assurance of confidentiality led, in some cases, to quite candid conversations. This is not to say all interviews were entirely frank, but much was divulged 'off the record' that put a great deal of data generated through document collection and analysis into some kind of context.[1] Precisely because the interviews were a search for unique or inaccessible viewpoints, no attempt was made to obtain any *representative sample* of policy-makers and practitioners.

Aside from these specific data collection techniques, a key aspect of the research design – and arguably its most innovative feature - was the framework developed for the effective evaluation of policy processes and outputs from a JUG perspective. The following section elaborates on the HJTA introduced in chapter 2 and outlines a set of seven 'moderating variables' that may be used alongside the HJTA to explain – or, at least, account for – any variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action it may help detect.

1.2 A framework for descriptive evaluation and assessment of 'joined-up-ness'

The discussion in chapter 2 put forward the HJTA as a basic framework for the effective descriptive evaluation of policy processes and outputs from a JUG perspective. The HJTA brings together two of the most useful ideas in the JUG literature – Christopher Pollitt's best practice examples assembled from the practitioner literature and Perri 6 et al's typology of trust relationships – to form the

basis of what might be described as a 'JUG approach'. The HJTA makes it possible –
arguably for the first time – to conduct systematic, comparative analysis of JUG
between policy areas, across jurisdictions and over time (Table 3.1). This is clearly a
useful approach for exploring the research questions set out in chapter 1.

Table 3.1 *Hierarchy of joined-up thinking and action*

Level of trust	Type of institutional arrangement or practice
Goodwill	• Pooling budgets • Exchanging key people • Creating 'joint teams' at operational level • Handing over the policy agenda to institutions in civil society • Making the legislature a driver of policy
Contract	• Developing funding mechanisms in which 'pots' of money can only be 'unlocked' when all the key stake-holders agree
Prudential	• Organising effective systems for the consultation of stake-holders • Consulting outside experts • Focusing the business of participation in policy delivery and implementation – application, monitoring, evaluation – on collaboration and partnership
Informational	• Ensuring the 'rules of the game' for collaboration are clearly-defined • Framing problems as 'cross-cutting problems'

However, the HJTA is only a part of an effective JUG approach. Its utility is restricted
to some extent by the fact that it only measures trust in its predictive sense. As such,
it is a framework which can only b used to measure JUG where it has already been
ascertained that a 'culture of collaboration' has *not* emerged. The HJTA is also
restricted t a degree by the fact that, while it may uncover variation in the nature and
extent of joined-up thinking and action between policy contexts, it is not equipped in
the form in which it appears in Table 3. to explain that variation. These two
limitations are addressed in the following section which outlines two further
components of a JUG approach.

1.2.1 Normative trust and detecting the 'normalisation' of collaboration

The HJTA is effectively a framework for the descriptive evaluation of trust in its *predictive* sense; that is to say, the framework is concerned with trust relationships where policy actors' confidence in the behaviour of one another is based on their knowledge of some known, actor-specific characteristic: a reputation, a past experience of dealing with an individual or organisation, the personalities of those involved in face-to-face negotiation. This knowledge helps actors predict behaviour. However, an analysis of policy processes and outputs should also examine the evidence of trust in its *normative* sense (see chapter 2: 42-43). Actors may trust another actor or actors when they are less familiar with any actor-specific characteristics. In these circumstances, such an actor may feel confident that the behaviour of the other actor or actors will be conditioned by a normative commitment to JUG: the 'rules of the game' that govern behaviour within a given policy-making context are sufficiently legitimised, embedded and normalised as the expected mode of behaviour and interaction that collaboration is a 'default setting'. [2]

This is a qualitatively different kind of trust and an important one for the descriptive evaluation of JUG. Normative trust must exist if JUG is to become a universal mode of policy- and decision-making; if a *cultural change* is to take place. However, it is closely bound up with predictive trust too as the normalisation of behaviour flows from that kind of behaviour being demonstrated consistently within a given context. Therefore, if policy actors routinely act in a way that 'abstains from opportunism' within a given policy milieu, that behavioural heritage may form the basis of normative trust in the future and act as the starting point for a 'culture of collaboration'.

1.2.2 Measuring variation in the nature of joined-up thinking and action

It is unlikely that the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action will be consistent across policy areas, jurisdictions, levels of government and over time. An effective JUG approach to examining policy processes and outputs must therefore incorporate a framework for understanding and accounting for variation where it is detected. This section indentifies a set of seven 'moderating variables' that can be

used alongside the HJTA. This has two principal potential benefits: first, recognising the variables and incorporating them into a JUG approach give it additional complexity and sophistication and help make it into a more responsive and flexible tool; and, second, explaining variation can help identify the degree of specificity within each case, the absence of which can make generalisation of the research findings problematic. Ultimately, this could take the study of JUG towards a predictive model where the nature and extent of JUG can be forecast according to specific conditions within the policy context.[3]

These variables can be summarised as follows:

1. The existing **level of policy-making capacity** within the specific policy area in question. Where governments are disinclined to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty, they may still be forced into trust relationships: what might be termed 'forced marriages'. This may be a particular feature of new jurisdictions where it is not likely that there will be a robust tradition and settled pattern of policy-making in that particular context. This is, of course, a variable that might be expected to become less of a factor over time, but it is not necessary time-dependant.
2. The **political sensitivity** of the specific policy area in question. Government departments and other traditionally-powerful actors are more likely to retreat to departmental control of policy processes and outcomes when a policy issue is exposed to unusual public scrutiny and/or has direct electoral or party political implications. This variable will fluctuate over time as the political sensitivity of an policy area is as fickle and unpredictable as politics itself.
3. The degree of **existing consensus** within the specific policy area in question. This will condition the behaviour of all policy-actors, not merely that of the well-resourced. Even a well-intentioned government liberated from preoccupation with its own institutional interests may struggle to cultivate effective trust relationships under such conditions. This variable is undoubtedly subject to change over time, but in general consensus takes longer to build then erode.
4. The **level of legislative competence** of the political institution. This is of particular relevance for a comparative study of jurisdictions with political institutions with different levels of legislative competence as is the case in Scotland and Wales. The opportunity to develop statutory safeguards can reinforce trust relationships. Although the degree of legislative competence of the competent political institution may be increased, and Wales is already emerging as a case in point[4], this is likely to be over an extended period.
5. The **overall level of resources available** to government. As JUG is closely linked to efficiency and, therefore, to 'efficiency savings', it is to be expected that a less generous settlement for the Scottish Parliament or National Assembly for Wales would potentially lead to a more enthusiastic approach to JUG.
6. The **scale of the policy-making context**. This is particularly relevant for the

individual-type trust relationships identified by Jasper Eshuis and Cees Van Woerkum (2003) and discussed in some detail in chapter 2 (40-43). Smaller scale can provide opportunities for higher quality and higher frequency face-to-face contact between key policy actors than is possible in larger bureaucratic settings like Westminster-Whitehall.[5] Unlike most of the variables discussed here, scale is almost never subject to change over time. Indeed, in the devolved context, scale is more accurately described as a 'feature' than a 'variable'.

7. The **age of the competent political institution**. This variable is particularly important for Eshuis and Van Woerkum's (2003) institutional-type trust relationships because these develop between actors over time. They are relationships that require a period of incubation.[6] The passage of time has obvious implications for this time-defined variable.

The utility of this set of variables is shown in the analysis in chapter 6, where variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action between the SEN and ACL policy areas in Scotland and Wales is explained.

Notes to chapter 3

[1] The interviews also proved useful as a source of unpublished documentary material. Although this was usually shared on the understanding that it would remain confidential, it did inform the analysis in chapters 5 and 6 by adding further context to documents in the public domain.

[2] It may seem logical to include 'normative' trust in the HJTA as an additional, higher tier. After all, policy actors entering into such relationships are, by definition, doing so *in spite of* their own, narrow institutional interests. However, normative trust does not attach itself so usefully to particular examples of best practice in JUG as the predictive variant. An actor may, for example, agree to pool budgets with another out of *either* predictive or normative trust. The variable is the degree of actor-specific knowledge a participants in the relationship bases its decision on, not the nature of the activity itself. For those reasons, analysis which examines evidence for an emerging 'culture of collaboration' must take place alongside – but separated from – that undertaken using the HJTA.

[3] The possibility of developing such a model is discussed further in chapter 6 (152-153).

[4] The National Assembly has recently been given permission to apply to the Westminster parliament for Legislative Competency Orders (LCOs) and SEN policy was one of the first areas that were identified for application.

[5] However, there is no guarantee that smaller scale will necessarily build greater trust. High quality, high frequency contact with an individual may equally lead to an erosion of respect and cause actors to become more disinclined to collaborate than had they known each other less well.

[6] As with scale, however, it does not follow that this variable will have an even influence. Indeed, it seems at least equally possible that time may serve to *institutionalise* negative relationships.

4

Evidential base: special educational needs and adult community learning policy in Scotland and Wales, 1999-2007

As a central responsibility of the devolved institutions, education and lifelong learning achieved considerable prominence in the policy agendas advanced in Scotland and Wales between 1999 and 2007. As a route out of poverty and disadvantage, as an engine of social mobility and community cohesion, and as a hard currency in the emerging 'knowledge economy', learning was put forward by Scottish and Welsh policy-makers during that period as the solution to some of the two nations' most intractable social and economic problems.

The Welsh Assembly Government confirmed its commitment to education and lifelong learning in 2001, by recasting Wales as a 'Learning Country' (NAW 2001). In the first flagship strategy document published following devolution, Jane Davidson, then Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, declared that a new focus on education and training in Wales would 'liberate talent', 'extend opportunity', 'empower communities' and 'help create wealth' (NAW 2001). A Learning Country, Davidson continued, would embrace and harness technological change in order to meet the increasing challenges posed by competition from Europe and beyond, whilst simultaneously empowering the disadvantaged to improve their own life chances (NAW 2001). The Scottish Executive[1] developed a similar equation for

success. Instead of issuing one foundational document in the image of Wales' *Learning Country*, the Executive demonstrated its commitment to learning through a series of strategies in a range of areas within the broad field of education and lifelong learning. In the area of adult basic skills, for example, Alan Wilson, then Deputy Minister for Enterprise and Lifelong Learning, was explicit that adult literacy and numeracy was a key area for promoting social justice, for delivering economic development - even for improving health. As such, learning was given considerable prominence – almost primacy - in the Executive's wider policy agenda in Scotland (Scottish Executive 2006: 1-5).

In short, devolution in both nations was accompanied by a highly ambitious focus on education and lifelong learning which had a clear dual purpose: learning, in rhetoric at least, promised to deliver both economic development and social justice for the devolved nations.

This chapter charts the development of education and lifelong learning policy in Scotland and Wales from the first devolved elections, in May 1999, to the most recent, in May 2007. Within the broad field of education and lifelong learning, the chapter focuses on two more narrowly-defined areas: special educational needs (SEN) and adult community learning (ACL). These areas are of particular interest for two main reasons: first, there has been considerable policy-making activity in SEN and ACL in both jurisdictions since 1999, meaning that there is a relatively well-developed evidential base to inform detailed comparative analysis; and, second, policy-making in the two areas has taken place in the context of different levels of consensus and competition among key policy actors, meaning that the study's broader research questions around policy processes and outputs can be tested in different ways (see Chapter 1: 12-13). To this end, particular attention is paid to policy developments which have salience for questions around joined-up governance (JUG). In the area of SEN, the chapter focuses on *Working Together*, a multi-agency strategy developed to deliver better speech and language therapy (SLT) services for children and young people in Wales, and the Coordinated Support Plan (CSP), a statutory measure designed to coordinate the contributions of an array of agencies with an interest in educational provision for children with additional support needs in Scotland. In the

area of ACL, the chapter focuses on Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs), an institutional framework designed to encourage and facilitate partnership working among the statutory, private and third sectors at a sub-regional level in Wales, and Individual Learner Accounts (ILAs), a funding mechanism designed to broker ACL to those with the greatest need to develop their basic skills in Scotland.

In the final section, the chapter locates these developments within the wider policy contexts in Scotland and Wales between 1999 and 2007 and explores some of the complex linkages that developed during that period between education and lifelong learning and a number of other broad policy goals.

4.1 Special educational needs

The statutory framework for SEN in England and Wales is outlined in the Education Acts 1993 and 1996, and in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. Under the terms of this scheme, a child has SEN if he or she has a 'learning difficulty' which calls for 'special educational provision' (Education Act 1996: s312.1). A child has a 'learning difficulty' if he or she has:

> a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his or her age, or a disability which either prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his or her age in schools within the area of the Local Education Authority (LEA).
>
> Education Act (1996: s312.2)

The term therefore covers a broad spectrum of cognitive, physical and social obstacles to learning and may include: formally diagnosed neurological or developmental conditions, such as dyslexia, speech and language difficulties, ADHD and autism; physical disabilities, such as visual and aural impairment and a range of motor disorders; and less specific, unnamed difficulties, which may be linked to family circumstances or to a lack of appropriate learning opportunities. 'Special educational provision' refers to:

> provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of [the same] age in schools maintained by the same LEA.
>
> Education Act (1996: s312.4)

Such provision may range from simple curriculum differentiation, through to intensive, one-to-one support by specially-trained Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) or, for children with the most acute needs, regular consultations with specialist therapists. It has been estimated that one in four children in mainstream schooling in England and Wales will require special educational provision of some description during the time they spend in compulsory education (ELLC Jun 16 2004). In 2002, 3.4% of the mainstream school population in Wales had statutory recognition of their SEN, and in 2003-04 the budget for SEN in Wales was £224m (NAW 2003c).

The Education Act 1993 placed a duty on the Secretary of State for Education to issue a Code of Practice for SEN provision in England and Wales and established the power to revise it from time to time (Education Act 1993: s156.1). The first Code of Practice came into effect in 1994 (DfE 1994) and the most recent was issued in 2002 (DfES 2002). Central to the Code of Practice was the Individual Education Plan (IEP), a document unique to each child with SEN and aimed at reviewing the efficacy of any special educational provision he or she receives. The IEP was also the primary instrument for monitoring the progress of children with SEN in English and Welsh mainstream schools. The Code of Practice also set down guidance and procedures for the early identification of SEN. There is clear evidence that early (and appropriate) intervention is an effective means of addressing many learning difficulties, and the Code of Practice placed particular emphasis on the role of external specialists (e.g. speech and language therapists or educational psychologists) in picking up the early signs of difficulty and advising schools on preventing the development of more significant needs (DfES 2002). The increasing use of such specialists, however, created a number of related problems. Particular specialisms complained they were under-resourced and unable to meet demand. There were also severe problems coordinating services: for example, NHS Trusts were the primary providers of SLT services in England and Wales, but it was LEAs that had responsibility for ensuring provision of such services to children with SEN. This led to tension across agencies and confusion for parents seeking appropriate levels of support for their children (SALTAG 2003). The issue of early identification of SEN

and, in particular, the role of specialist external services in that identification, continues to be one of the key policy issues in the contemporary SEN debate.

The Education Act 1996 also made provision for the statutory assessment of children who fall (or probably fall) within the Act's definition of 'learning difficulty'.[2] If, following assessment, a child is considered to have sufficiently acute needs, the responsible LEA is obliged under the Act to make and maintain a Statement of those needs, resulting in a statutory entitlement to special educational provision (Education Act 1996: s323-330). This statutory assessment or 'Statementing' process has become a hugely controversial policy issue in England and Wales. Children who have acknowledged or suspected SEN, but who are not assessed as requiring a Statement under the terms of the 1996 Act, have no statutory entitlement to special educational provision of any kind. There has also been a great deal of variation in the number of Statemented children in comparable LEAs across England and Wales since the statutory assessment process was first introduced (Estyn 2004: 5; ELLC May 26 2005), and a general decline in the overall number of new Statements granted across England and Wales in the decade to 2000 (BCCED 2000). This led to suggestions that resource management, rather than educational need, was taking priority within some LEAs and even Baroness Warnock, author of the report that first recommended a standardised form of national statutory assessment, *Special Educational Needs* (CEHC 1978), has acknowledged some of the inequities the process can create (Warnock 2005). Statementing has also become a time-consuming process, with a minimum six month wait between initial assessment and the issue of a Statement, and consequently a proportion of children with SEN inevitably fail to gain the provision they need at a sufficiently early stage in their development. As such, the two issues at the centre of the SEN policy debate in England and Wales – early identification and statutory assessment – are closely interwoven.

The 1996 Act also created a Special Educational Needs Tribunal to deal with disputes arising from the statutory assessment process in England and Wales (Education Act 1996: s325-326). The SEN and Disability Act 2001 renamed it the

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST) and extended its jurisdiction markedly (SEN and Disability Act 2001: s.17).

SEN provision in Scotland, like the majority of its education system, is subject to a different legislative scheme to that which operates in England and Wales, and has developed some distinctive definitions of and approaches to SEN and associated provision. Provision for children with SEN was until recently made through a framework based around the Education Act (Scotland) 1980. In a clear echo of the England and Wales legislation, Section 1 (5) (d) of the Act defines children's SEN as, 'needs caused by a learning difficulty which he has which calls for provision for special educational needs to be made for him'. 'Learning difficulty' is defined in the same Section as:

> (i) he has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children or, as the case may be, young persons of his age; or
> (ii) he suffers from a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children or, as the case may be, young persons of his age in schools under the management of the education authority for the area to which he belongs ...; or
> iii) he is under the age of five years and is, or would be if provision for special educational needs were not made for him, likely to fall within subparagraph (i) or (ii) above when over that age

Children enter the statutory process where they have 'pronounced, specific or complex special educational needs, which are such as require continuing review'. In order to formalise the review process, each child identified as having SEN is given a Record of Needs to encourage agencies to come together to plan and review a child's needs. The Record of Needs is broadly comparable with the Statementing process in England and Wales, although it focuses on an assessment of the child's strengths and weaknesses, rather than the provision that should be put in place to allow the child to progress.

The format of a Record of Needs is specified in the Education (Record of Needs) (Scotland) Regulations 1982. Under the terms of these regulations, a Record must contain: a summary of the child's impairments; a statement of the special educational needs arising from these impairments; measures proposed by the relevant education authority to meet those needs; and, where appropriate, the nomination of the school

to be attended. The Record may also include the views of the child and/or parents and a summary of reviews of the Record. Education authorities are required to keep the Record under review and guidance recommends that this be on an annual basis. About 2% of children in compulsory education had such a Record in 2005, but many more received additional provision.

The suitability of the Record of Needs, like that of the Statementing process in England and Wales, has been an important policy issue in Scotland for some years and was one of the most debated policy issues between 1999 and 2007. Unlike in Wales, however, the Scottish Parliament had the powers to introduce legislation to radically change the system.

4.1.1 The development of SEN policy in Wales, 1999-2007

Responsibility for education and training in Wales, including SEN provision, has rested with the National Assembly since devolution. A separate SEN Code of Practice for Wales was issued in 2002 and this ensured the IEP remains at the heart of the guidance and procedures set down for SEN provision in Welsh mainstream schools (NAW 2002a). The Assembly government also established a Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales (SENTW) in 2003, which operated with effectively the same jurisdiction as SENDIST, which became its English equivalent.[3] It is clear that publication of a Code of Practice, the inclusion in the Code of the IEP as its central focus, and the creation of a separate SEN Tribunal for Wales all represent clear continuities with pre-devolution SEN policy in Wales.

There were, however, been some important policy departures. The Assembly government set out its priorities for SEN in *The Learning Country*. Briefly, it made commitments to:

- adopt a strategic approach to reduce the fragmentation of [external] services;
- establish the precise extent to which the demand for speech and other therapies is exceeding supply; and
- require LEAs and LHBs to work together on matters of provision much more consistently than they do at present.

NAW (2001, original emphasis)

In order to add some detail to what were somewhat vague commitments to improve and coordinate speech and language therapy (SLT) services, Jane Davidson and Jane

Hutt, then the Assembly Ministers for Education and Lifelong Learning and Health and Social Services respectively, together established a Speech and Language Therapy Action Group (SALTAG) in 2002. The group's membership was drawn from representatives of all the key stakeholder groups, including LEAs and LHBs, NHS Trusts, and specialist SEN and SLT organisations (SALTAG 2003, Appendix I). The group undertook a review of SLT services in Wales based on a wide-ranging but informal consultation process, and published its report, *Working Together*, in late 2003 (SALTAG 2003). The report identified a number of failings in the provision of SLT services in Wales, among them: 'unmanageable caseload sizes and poor professional morale'; a 'lack of co-ordinated working arrangements between health and education'; and 'insufficient resources generally' (SALTAG 2003: 31-33). The group made two key recommendations. The first of these was that the Assembly government should establish schemes in which SLT services are made available on a regional basis, so that the contributions of different providers can be coordinated and a seamless rather than fragmented service can be offered to parents and their children (SALTAG 2003: 26). The Assembly government responded by setting up a number of regional schemes in which:

> all parties bring resources to the table and agree priorities in relation to how these resources can be used most effectively within a given region ... bringing together in an integrated way teams of speech and language therapists, specialist teachers, SLT assistants and LSAs to share their skills, knowledge and training ... conduct joint assessments and provide intervention to meet individual needs including in-situ support in schools.
>
> Jane Davidson, Afasic Cymru Conference Oct 15 2004 (Afasic 2004)

These schemes did not become operational until April 2005 and so the extent to which they were successful in their aim of coordinating SLT services in the initial trial regions is as yet unknown.[4] Nonetheless, such schemes represent a novel approach to tackling the problem of integrating services. SALTAG's second key recommendation was that:

> a funding mechanism should be developed that supports and facilitates a co-ordinated approach to the commissioning of services to children and young people with [speech, language and cognition difficulties (SLCD)].
>
> SALTAG (2003: vii)

The response of the Assembly government was to encourage LEAs and LHBs to apply for its Flexibilities Special Grant (FSG). Totalling £4.85m in 2002-03, the FSG had the 'policy intention' of achieving 'greater joint working between the NHS and local government' by providing an option for joint-budgeting for collaborative projects (NAW 2002b).

In June 2003, the Assembly's Education and Lifelong Learning Committee[5] (the ELL Committee) decided to carry out a comprehensive review of SEN policy in Wales (ELLC Jun 18 2003). The review focused on the two key policy issues identified above: in phase 1, the ELL Committee examined early identification and intervention, including the provision of specialist external services such as SLT; and, in phase 2, it focused on the statutory assessment procedure.[6] Phase 1 was completed in November 2004 at which time the ELL Committee made a number of recommendations to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning (ELLC 2004a: paras. 4.1-2.28). Briefly, it recommended that the Assembly government should:

- issue guidance to LHBs and LEAs encouraging ... joint commissioning of services and pooled budget arrangements [and the extended use of] the FSG, to fund collaborative SEN projects;
- give particular attention to the need for all newly qualified teachers to have a better understanding of SEN; particularly in techniques for early identification;
- commission an audit of provision of SEN services for children and young people with SEN, whose first language is neither English nor Welsh;
- provide funding for an advocacy service, independent of LEAs, to reinforce its independent nature and ability to offer totally impartial advice; and
- increase funding for the training and recruitment of specialist staff [e.g. speech and language therapists].

All of these recommendations were accepted by the Minister, who then outlined detailed plans (including some funding details) to put them into practice (WAG 2005a; see also NAW 2005c). In some cases, these plans represented extensions or adaptations of existing policies, most notably with respect to the extended use of the FSG. But in many respects the recommendations of the ELL Committee led to a degree of policy innovation. For example, a number of 'coordinators' were appointed to work with health and education service providers in overseeing joint commissioning arrangements for the provision of specialist external services at the local level (WAG 2005a).

4.1.2 The development of SEN policy in Scotland, 1999-2007

Like its counterpart in Wales, the Education, Culture and Sport Committee (ECS Committee) of the Scottish Parliament (along with its various other incarnations) made SEN provision a key priority in the years immediately following devolution. The ECS Committee began a review of SEN policy in Scotland with a formal written evidence session in early 2000 and published a report, based in large part on that consultation, as well as on extra oral evidence taken in Committee, in 2001 (ECSC 2001). The recommendations of the ECS Committee were strikingly similar to those of the ELL Committee in Wales, noted above. Perhaps of most analytical relevance for this study was the clear commitment on the part of the ECS Committee to putting in place joint funding and delivery arrangements between agencies working in the spheres of education, health and social services in Scotland. For example, the ECS Committee recommended that:

> The Scottish Executive should consider establishing an inclusive education resource centre which would co-ordinate resources, information and training for staff, parents and young people with special needs, and undertake research.
>
> (ECSC 2001)

In 2002, Cathy Jamieson, then Minister for Education and Young People, announced proposals for radical changes to assessing and providing for children with SEN in Scotland, including important statutory arrangements to improve the coordination of services. The main features of the proposals can be summarised as follows:

- Plans to replace the Record of Needs with a strengthened and more streamlined staged intervention process, where a new, flexible Coordinated Support Plan will be put in place for children with the most complex needs
- Improved staged intervention processes using school-based support to provide for all children with additional support needs, including those with behavioural difficulties, children for whom English is an additional language, refugees and asylum seekers and Gypsy/Traveller children. External agencies, such as education authorities, social workers and health professionals will continue to support children, parents and schools whenever necessary
- Local authorities to provide more information for parents of children with additional support needs, and to have mediation services in place which will aim to resolve any disputes at an early stage
- Extended rights of appeal for parents and children to allow them to challenge the level of provision proposed. And a less bureaucratic appeals system, with an

independent, expert Tribunal being set up to make the appeals process less daunting and quicker for parents and young people

Although officially a response to the Executive's own consultation paper, *Assessing our Children's Educational Needs - the Way Forward?* (Scottish Executive 2001a), the proposals echoed many of the recommendations made by the ECS Committee.

The Scottish Executive subsequently announced outline proposals for change in February 2002 and the process culminated in the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004. This major piece of legislation replaced SEN with a much wider recognition of all Additional Support Needs (ASN)[7] and replaced the Record of Needs with a new statutory instrument of assessment and recording, the highly innovative Coordinated Support Plan (CSP). The definition of ASN was always intended to be much wider than that of SEN (Scottish Executive 2002). The Act removed the requirement that a child should be experiencing a 'learning difficulty' and instead referred to the 'additional support' that should be available where the child requires such support to benefit from the education to be provided *'for whatever reason'* (s1 (1), emphasis added). Additional support must now be provided if a child requires such support as a result of a range of new variables, including if he or she is 'gifted or talented'. As the new instrument of statutory assessment and recording, the CSP details the ASN of a child and the full range of services required to adequately provide the additional support necessary where the provision of that support requires action on the part of two or more agencies. Crucially, the CSP places a statutory duty on the agencies named in the Plan to implement the plan effectively and provide a record of implementation. The CSP is subject to periodic review within certain time parameters.

4.1.3 The SEN policy context in Scotland and Wales: a climate of consensus

For many years, the most debated SEN policy issue in the UK was whether to *include* children with SEN in mainstream schooling, or else to *segregate* those children in special schools or other segregated settings. This debate seemed to have been settled on the side of inclusion by the early 1980s, but is slowly remerging in the English context. Since the UK general election of May 2005, the Conservative Party has

sought to make an issue of the closure of a number of special schools in England and its Leader, David Cameron (2005), has been unequivocal in his opposition to the policy of inclusion across the board. 'Labour's idea of compassion', Cameron argues, 'is to put every child, no matter what ability or disability in the same class and the same school and say, somehow, that is equal rights, that is inclusion. Well I say it is heartless, it is gutless, it is wrong and we've got to get rid of it'. There has also been a steady increase in the proportion of children being schooled in segregated settings in England since 2002 (CSIE 2005).

In Scotland and Wales, however, the hegemonic position of inclusion remains unchallenged and inclusion-versus-segregation is yet to re-emerge as a major issue within the Scottish and Welsh SEN policy debates. Indeed, in Scotland, the right for a child with SEN of any kind to be admitted to a mainstream school remains enshrined in statute in the form of the Education (Scotland) Act 1981. This has some important implications for a study of policy-making that takes particular interest in JUG. It was posited in Chapter 2 that the ideal conditions for effective JUG are those where high levels of inter-personal and inter-organisational trust can be established and maintained and this may be more likely to happen in a policy area where the debates that polarised opinion in the past have now been settled and a climate of something close to consensus has been created. In the following section, it will be clear how this kind of policy-making context does not exist in many other policy areas, not least in this study's other chosen key case study.

4.2 Adult community learning

> In the 21st Century, our natural resource is our people – and their potential is both untapped and vast. Skills will unlock that potential. The prize for our country will be enormous – higher productivity, the creation of wealth and social justice. The alternative? Without increased skills, we would condemn ourselves to a lingering decline in competitiveness, diminishing economic growth and a bleaker future for all.
>
> Lord Leitch (2006: 1)

> Every additional year of learning by adults brings measurable social gain in terms of the way people live their lives and function within society. People with more education tend to be more law abiding and to enjoy better standards of health. These are all benefits for society as a whole … leisure education is a good investment for those with a lower level of education in terms of social gain and is worthwhile even if they do not progress to further learning.

Sir Adrian Webb (2007: 55)

In communities across the UK, coal-mining, steel-working and ship-building, along with many other kinds of heavy industry, have all but disappeared. Although a significant manufacturing rump remains, the service sector has grown beyond all recognition in the last two decades or so, with the UK now specialising in such areas as financial services, biotechnology and telecommunications. This reweighting of the UK economy has placed new demands on its workforce and a good standard of literacy and numeracy - and at least a basic competence in information and communication technology (ICT) - have become minimum requirements for employability (Future Skills Wales 2003). Even comparatively low order occupations, such as front line jobs in customer service call centres, demand far more sophisticated communication skills than were required to work the factory production lines of the 1960s and 1970s.

As the needs of the economy have changed, so the definition of what constitutes 'basic' skills has been revisited. As the Scottish Executive (2001b: 7) put it: '[literacy] and numeracy are skills whose sufficiency may only be judged within a specific social, cultural, economic or political context' and it is fair to say that that context has changed markedly. In this respect, the results of a survey commissioned by the Scottish Executive in 2000 (MORI 2000, quoted in Scottish Executive 2001b: 8) are instructive. The results of the survey make clear employers' changing attitudes to the sufficiency of the basic skills of their employees: nearly a third of employers responding to the survey reported that increasing demands had been made on employees' literacy and numeracy skills over the previous five years; nearly a third expected increasing demands to be made on employees' literacy and numeracy skills over the following five years; and a fifth believed poor or moderate literacy and numeracy skills had been and would continue to be a barrier to productivity in their business.

It is in this light that employers' organisations across the UK have been warning for some time that a significant minority of adults, ranging from school leavers to experienced individuals currently in work, lack the literacy, numeracy and ICT skills necessary to meet what has become a *new minimum standard*, and with potentially

debilitating consequences for the competitiveness of UK business (e.g. CBI 2006). Phrases such as 'skills deficit' and 'literacy gap' have entered the lexicon of business leaders and their representatives and a certain amount of pressure has been put on governments to 'up skill' the general working population as a consequence.

Policy-makers at the UK level have certainly heeded these warnings. The UK government commissioned a large scale, independent review of the UK's long term skills needs in 2004. The Leitch Review of Skills was tasked with identifying the 'optimal skills ... to maximise economic growth, productivity and social justice, set out the balance of responsibility for achieving that skills profile and consider the policy framework required to support it.' The final report of the Review, *Prosperity for all in the global economy - world class skills*, published in December 2006, explained the urgent need for the UK to raise achievements at all levels of skills and recommended that it commit to becoming a world leader in skills by 2020, benchmarked against the upper quartile of the OECD. This means 'doubling attainment at most levels of skill' and involves the responsibility for achieving these ambitions being 'shared between Government, employers and individuals.' (Leitch 2006: 3).

However, Leitch is only the most recent example of the major influence the 'skills agenda' has had on the nature and trajectory of education and lifelong learning policy at the UK level in recent years: the creation of literacy and numeracy 'hours' was an attempt to improve basic skills in schools; the development of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) was an effort to endow vocational qualifications with the same prestige as more traditional, academic qualifications; and there was significant investment in subsidising training opportunities for those in employment, with a focus on formal accreditation for work-learned skills. Crucially, there was also recognition among policy-makers that those individuals with the lowest skills are often those least likely to engage with formal or traditional educational opportunities or be in employment and able to access work-based learning. In this light, ACL, traditionally the preserve of the casual or 'leisure' learner, opened up as an additional front in the battle to improve the nation's skills.

ACL, as Sir Adrian Webb (2007: 55-58) has remarked, is notoriously difficult to define or categorise. It can take the form of informal, non-accredited courses for those with little experience of traditional education, but can also closely mirror formal educational settings with linear routes towards recognised qualifications. It can be a means of engaging with adults who 'have to be informally coaxed into rebuilding a relationship with the world of learning' (Webb 2007: 58), but can also be an opportunity for already well-qualified individuals to pursue their interests and continue learning throughout their lifetimes. Courses might range from accountancy to fork lift truck driving, nail care to conversational Spanish (ILA Scotland 2009). There are therefore many ideas of what ACL is, what it can achieve, what form it should take and what kind of journey adult learners should be taken on. Building up the skills of the hardest to reach and lowest skilled to fuel a changing economy is merely one of many competing policy aims.

It should come as no surprise, then, that some providers and advocates of adult learning are generally unimpressed by suggestions that the focus of ACL should be narrowed onto basic skills. There is strong support among well-resourced organisations, such as the FE colleges, the Scottish Adult Learners' Partnership and the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), for the principle often described as 'learning for learning's sake' or, alternatively, 'leisure learning', to be maintained and, indeed, extended. There is also some concern that some of the 'softer' benefits associated with adult learning – creating more responsible, engaged and fulfilled citizens, for example - would be stripped away in any rush to develop courses focussed exclusively on those 'harder' skills which appear to have a more immediate or tangible economic pay off.

How best to develop ACL policy in ways that balance these competing (though not necessarily incompatible) aims was the key policy issue in the ACL field in Scotland and Wales between 1999 and 2007 and there were a number of innovative responses.

demands of business. Arthur Morgan et al (2004: 228) have described the problem:

> The very different orientation of [education providers] and employers meant that it was difficult to bring the various stakeholders together to produce a reform that would have a direct impact ...

Even prior to devolution, then, it was clear to all with an interest in ACL that many of the grave social and economic problems afflicting Wales could not be solved by policy actors usually defined by either an education or economic development orientation acting in isolation.

Concerted work to overcome this problem began in 1998, when the Welsh Office set up an Education and Training Action Group (ETAG) to review the provision of education and training in Wales in anticipation of the inaugural Assembly elections. The Group began a major process of consultation and published its recommendations the following year (ETAG 1999). The subsequent Education and Training Action Plan (ETAP) recommended a significant restructuring of post-16 education and training in Wales designed to rationalise a complex structure in which various roles were played by Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), the Further Education Funding Councils (FEFCs) and Local Education Authorities (LEAs). The fledgling Assembly accepted ETAG's proposals and several stages of reform led to a new national body, Education and Learning Wales (ELWa), assuming responsibility for post-16 provision from April 2001.[9] At the national level, ELWa comprised the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (NCETW), and the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW). Beneath this were four regional ELWa committees, covering North, Mid, South-East and South-West Wales, and at a sub-regional level a series of Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs) were established (Phelps et al 2006).

The architects of this new structure in Wales were acutely aware of the cross-cutting issues at the heart of the policy debate and their reforms took great care to bring together the disparate interests from government, educational institutions and the voluntary and private sectors in ways that they hoped would encourage greater collaboration and partnership. ELWa's Operational Plan, for example, drew attention to the role business interests would play in the new regime: '[we] place the

utmost importance on our relationships with businesses' ELWa insisted, 'from one to one contact through to engagement with local, regional and national business organisations' (ELWa 2001: 35). In short, the new education and training structure was charged with an onerous task: it was hoped it could help bring effective coordination to a notoriously fragmented and contested policy milieu.

This commitment to achieving greater joined-up-ness, particularly in the case of ACL, can be seen most clearly in the structure and remit of the highly innovative CCETs, as well as in the rhetoric surrounding them.

4.2.1.1 Community Consortia for Education and Training: a 'strategic compact'

CCETs formed an important part of the new post-16 structure in Wales recommended by ETAG and, while not statutory bodies, the Consortia enjoyed some considerable autonomy in developing sub-regional strategies for developing and delivering education and training. ETAG (1999) clearly had the broad aims of JUG in mind when it advised that the CCETs would 'develop the kind of partnership and collaborative approach to the provision of learning that really can and will create benefits for learners', and many individual CCETs took this up as a kind of mission statement (e.g. BCBC 2006). In launching the CCETs, Jane Davidson, then Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, heralded the principle of the consortium as providing an opportunity to develop a truly 'integrated education and training system' through a full range of interests 'who have agreed to collaborate at the local level to deliver education and training in their areas ... working together in committed partnership'.

The Assembly government set down a number of functions for the CCETs which were wide-ranging but focussed in large part on the need to build partnerships and collaborative relationships. These included:

- identifying opportunities for improved provision, including new patterns of collaboration;
- ensuring the work of education and training meets the needs of employers and others at every stage;
- securing delivery to agreed conditions of accountability, propriety and regularity;
- ensuring that Welsh medium post-16 provision meets defined needs;
- ensuring that collaboration with Higher Education institutions is sustained and enhanced;

- working in close collaboration with the National Council to develop teaching and learning through Information and Communication Technology;
- working with Careers Wales;
- capitalising on Wales' developing profile in Europe; and
- producing an annual Partnership Plan.

In all, twenty-one CCETs were formed with boundaries roughly coterminous with the Welsh unitary authorities.

CCETs are not only an example of attempts to join-up ACL policy *processes*. There are also some examples where CCETs themselves developed innovative, joined-up ACL policy *outputs*. One such example is the Learning Brokers project, which was in operation in one local authority area of South Wales between 2002 and 2006. Learning Brokers was developed by the Bridgend CCET, working in partnership with the Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO). The CCET commissioned the People and Work Unit to conduct research and make recommendations on a suitable way of linking individuals to skills and training opportunities in the Bridgend local authority area, with a particular focus on disadvantaged areas. As Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC 2008: 1) acknowledged in its submission to Excellence Wales (the Welsh Local Government Association's (WLGA) body which recognises and shares good practice), Learning Brokers successfully explored 'ways to avoid unnecessary duplication of provision' and demonstrated 'the clear benefits of having a centralised ... team who can assess local need and be a bridge between learners and providers to meet that same need.'

The Assembly government reaffirmed its commitment to tackling low levels of basic literacy and numeracy - and to the CCETs as a key mechanism for achieving this at a sub-regional level - in its basic skills strategy document *Words Talk, Numbers Count* (WAG 2005c). The strategy was developed in order to raise awareness, develop new ideas and strengthen capacity to tackle basic skills deficits in Wales. Among four core aims contained within the strategy was a commitment to diminish significantly the number of adults with poor basic skills (WAG 2005c: 4). More specifically, the Assembly Government made a commitment to:

- Help people with low basic skills to identify their needs and to tackle them
- Make sure that effective learning provision is in place and that learners receive sufficient support over both participation and completion.

Although the CCETs were assessed at this stage as having achieved some notable successes, the Assembly government was not entirely satisfied with the way that adult basic skills had been incorporated into their Action Plans and promised to 'encourage' CCETs to 'develop a more coordinated approach to planning and delivery' (WAG 2005c:17).

This hinted at what was to become the ultimate failure of the CCETs. Hopes that CCETs would provide the conditions under which a collaborative ethos could be established and sustained at a sub-regional level were largely dashed. One ELWa representative told Nick Phelps and his colleagues (2006: 569) during an interview undertaken as part of a research project into business representation in Wales, that far from contributing to a collaborative ethos among the full range of stakeholders, the CCETs had merely succeeding in exposing stakeholders' divergent positions:

> I think generally speaking if you look at the fact that ... there is competition between training suppliers and schools and colleges for post-16 people. The squabbles that go on if [CCET members] are in a meeting together is not really conducive to a bloke giving up his time from running his business to be constructive about the various needs in the area. And I think until we sort this out we are not actually going to get business people involved. I would honestly say that at CCET level ... the business influence in what CCETs are doing is now next to nothing

This view is further reinforced by the interview data. All of the CCET members interviewed commented on a certain degree of disharmony between business and educational interests within individual Consortia (Interviews 7 & 5). The former Director of a leading adult learners' representative organisation, for example, was in no doubt about the absence of a collaborative ethos in evidence in CCETs generally. 'The biggest players in CCETs' he argued, 'were FE colleges and they'd come and say, 'well, we're doing this anyway, I don't care about you ... thank you, goodnight, we're off' ...' (Interview 7). This appears in stark contrast to ELWa's own assessment of the progress made by CCETs in meeting their objectives in terms of collaboration. 'The key added value provided by CCETs thus far' ELWa stated in 2003, 'is ... the change in culture that they are helping to stimulate amongst learning stakeholders; there are increasing signs that learning providers and related organisations are developing a greater willingness to collaborate (ELWa 2003)

Although there certainly were examples of CCETs largely fulfilling expectations in terms of partnership and collaboration, in general the CCETs failed to engage and involve the appropriate range of interests, or at least the range of interests their architects originally intended. Employers and representatives from business organisations such as the Chambers of Commerce, CBI, IoD, and FSB were very much in the minority on CCETs. Individual employers (admittedly with a number of clear exceptions, particularly with regard to the highly pro-active Chairman of the Bridgend CCET) found it difficult to justify the time commitment. Business representation on the CCETs amounted to 12% of all members in 2003, with only 5 individual members being drawn from business representative organisations (ELWA 2003). Moreover, members of CCETs from all of the sectors from which interviews were conducted reported that the Consortia quickly became process-rather than outcomes-oriented, leading to frustration and no little sense of disillusionment (Interview 5).

The Assembly government ended formal requirements for CCETs in 2007. The Minister reported that new partnership organisations were needed to find a better balance between the supply and demand side of education and training and indicated that new structures would reflect recommendations made by Leitch and seek to 'strengthen the employer voice in the delivery of skills [through] a rationalisation of existing bodies to better represent employer views' (ELLC 21 Mar 2007). The problems surrounding education and training in Wales therefore remain cross-cutting and the Assembly government continues to pursue joined-up solutions.

The most recent policy development in ACL in Wales suggests what form these future solutions may take. Skills, of course, is a devolved issue, and Lord Leitch in his review of skills in England could only express his hope that the Celtic nations would follow the Anglo Saxon lead (2006: 18). Partly in response to Leitch, but also because of Wales' stubbornly low skills levels, the Assembly government commissioned Sir Adrian Webb to undertake a review of the mission and purpose of the FE sector in Wales in December 2006 (Webb 2006). Jane Davidson, then Minister for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, agreed that the review would need to be 'holistic in its approach', incorporating an appraisal not just of FE institutions, but an

analysis of the wider roles of the sector too. This included: analysis of developments in 14-19 education; responsiveness to the skills needs of employers and the economy; adult learning; social justice and community engagement; interface with higher education provision; and the needs of, and responsiveness to, post 14 learners in Wales. The final report of the Webb Review was published in December 2007, meaning that any policy outputs following on from the recommendations of the Review are outside the time frame of this study. However, the process through which the review was commissioned, its terms of reference set out and its recommendations arrived at does form part of the analysis in the chapters that follow.

4.2.2 The development of ACL policy in Scotland, 1999-2007

> We are fully committed to supporting a coordinated community learning policy as a means of engaging with young people, of promoting social inclusion, of developing individuals and communities ....
>
> > Cathy Jamieson
> > Minister for Education and Young People (2001)

> Improving levels of literacy and numeracy is [a] vital step in helping people to participate in and contribute to our economy ...
>
> > Wendy Alexander
> > Minister for Transport, Enterprise and Lifelong Learning (2001)

The picture of a comparatively low-skilled adult population that was so clear to those with an interest in ACL in Wales was similarly stark to their counterparts in Scotland. In considering the scale and nature of the problem, the Scottish Executive's strategy paper, *Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland* (2001b), noted that, though the majority of the population was satisfied with their skills for the uses they encountered: up to 800,000 adults appeared to have very low skills; 500,000 assessed their own skills as poor or moderate; and many unemployed people did not know if they had the literacy and numeracy skills for their choice of job. The strategy also drew attention to that fact that a high proportion of those with low levels of literacy and numeracy were to be found among people who live in Scotland's most disadvantaged areas, among workers in low skilled jobs, among people on low incomes, and among people with health problems and disabilities. As such, policy-makers were quick to make the same links as their counterparts in Wales between

poverty and disadvantage and low skills – and to identify strengthened and refocused community-based adult learning as a potential solution.

A potentially hugely significant development in the first Parliament was the way in which the Scottish Executive chose to configure its various departments. In particular, there was a decision to unite in one ministerial portfolio responsibility not only for enterprise (encompassing business and economic development), but also lifelong learning. This may be indicative of awareness within the nascent Executive of the need to coordinate skills and economic development policy as a direct response to the emerging skills agenda. If correct, this observation would be a direct example of the Executive taking steps to '[structure] the machinery of government around a small number of broad policy goals' (Leicester and Mackay 1998: 3; see chapter 1: 4) in the way many supporters of devolution in Scotland had imagined they would and hoped they might. However, it was suggested by some informants during the course of the research that the decision to combine these functions in one department was at least partially the result of political expediency. It was suggested that, following her (unsuccessful) bid for the Labour leadership in Scotland, Wendy Alexander was given a choice of policy areas to come under her Deputy Minister portfolio. This alternative interpretation would explain the way the departments were configured using the dynamics of intra-party politics rather than an emerging bureaucratic attitude to JUG. Indeed, there was a third string to Alexander's Ministerial bow at that time, Transport, and this may hint at a not altogether coherent plan to join-up interrelated policy areas using the departmental structure.[10]

Aside from these developments in the departmental structure of government, there were a number of innovative policy responses to the problem of poor basic skills in Scotland, particularly among those outside of the orthodox arenas of formal educational settings and the workplace. One of the most significant was the development, demise and subsequent renaissance of the Individual Learner Account scheme.

4.2.2.1 ILA Scotland: brokering learning for adults outside the workplace

A key problem identified by policy-makers in Scotland, as in Wales, was the difficulty practitioners experienced in linking learners and their specific, individual needs to the complex web of available learning opportunities delivered in different settings and in different ways. There were a number of perceived barriers to learner engagement: some individuals had been disenfranchised by mainstream education and found it difficult to engage in formal learning activity; others were not aware of opportunities or unclear about how to access learning; others did not have the necessary resources to attend courses (Slowey 2004). The Individual Learner Account (ILA) scheme, in all of its incarnations, offered Scottish learners significant cash contributions to the cost of learning as a way of incentivising and facilitating adult learning.

Scotland's original Learner Account scheme was closed following the demise of a similar scheme in England in November 2001. Both schemes had suffered under (largely unfounded) allegations of fraud and from a failure to reach the under-skilled individuals the programmes were designed to assist. Three years later, in January 2004, Scottish officials announced the creation of a new scheme, known as ILA Scotland, which offered adult learners over the age of eighteen and earning £15,000 or less the opportunity to get up to £200 towards the cost of courses at community learning venues and FE colleges. To protect against past problems of fraud, the scheme used the Student Awards Agency of Scotland and the Scottish University for Industry as safeguards.[11]

ILA Scotland had a small number of very clear aims that can be summarised as follows:

- Widen participation in adult learning
- Introduce new, non-traditional learners to learning
- Prioritise needs of certain learner groups
- Target funding more effectively, focussing on low income earners

There were therefore two mechanisms at work which may be of some significance in terms of JUG. ILA Scotland identified on the ground 'brokerage' between the public and a public service as a key to joining up the two. It also used a funding mechanism:

there was a significant commitment of resources to the scheme. Crucially, any learning provider that wants to offer a course as part of the scheme (and the funding made available to support learners is clearly an incentive for providers to want to engage with it) must meet quality standards and cover areas of learning that are approved by ILA Scotland. This gives the architects of the scheme and its administrators some control over the kinds of learning individuals from deprived, low-skilled backgrounds receive.

Leitch was very enthusiastic about ILAs and saw the Scottish example as one for the rest of the UK to follow. In particular, Leitch enthused about the way ILA Scotland engaged successfully with lower level, lower income learners and this, he said, is a key lesson to learn in England, where he wanted Learner Accounts to carry the entire adult learning traffic outside a work context by 2010. It is also important to note that, despite not representing a policy innovation initially (ILAs were introduced simultaneously across jurisdictions) their renaissance in Scotland and subsequent focus on lower level skills has shown some considerable innovation. As Leitch explains:

> 6.34 The recent Education and Skills Select Committee report on further education endorsed the reintroduction of Learner Accounts and noted that problems marring the previous Individual Learning Account scheme were administrative rather than fundamental. The Review supports this conclusion, recognising that learning accounts present real benefits for people, increasing ownership and choice, as well as providing a powerful incentive to the supply-side to drive up quality.

> 6.35 The [scheme] in Scotland [has] successfully shown that accounts can be expanded to learners at lower learning levels and the Review wants to ensure that all learners, particularly those most likely to be disengaged from learning, can access the benefits that accounts deliver.

4.2.3 The ACL policy context in Scotland and Wales: a climate of non-consensus

Unlike in the case of SEN, ACL policy-making takes place in a context where the major policy debates have yet to be settled and the actors in the process have competing claims not only over the nature of provision, but also over its purpose. In the case of SEN, potential fault lines still exist in the divisions between actors with a principal focus on education, social services or health, whereas in ACL, the fault lines between education and business are clear. It is wrong to characterise the

situation as one in which those who see ACL as having a social justice function and those who see it as having an economic development function are in different camps – that is a false dichotomy - but these two aims do place competing pressures on policy-makers and resources.

For this reason, ACL is a quite different test of JUG than SEN. In a climate of non-consensus, building and maintaining the necessary inter-personal and inter-organisational trust to promote a collaborative ethos and effective joined-up thinking and action must be more difficult to achieve. In some respects, ACL is a 'harder' test of JUG than SEN and an area which may require participants in the policy process to demonstrate a deeper commitment to coordination.

4.3 The wider policy context

All of the policy developments described in this chapter can not be discussed in isolation from other important developments that have shaped and continue to shape the nature and trajectory of policy-making across policy sectors in Scotland and Wales. As was noted in chapter 1, the *Making the Connections* (WAG 2004) agenda had three very clearly articulated and complementary aims in Wales. The first was to place 'citizens at the centre', so that services would be more responsive to users' needs and people and communities would be involved in designing the way services are delivered. The second was to deliver 'better public engagement', so that every person would have the opportunity to contribute to and connect with the hardest to reach. The third aim was to allow 'the Welsh public service to work together', so that more and better coordination between providers could deliver more efficient and effective services.

It was in this context that education and lifelong learning policy in Wales developed following the Learning Country. Interviewees used the term 'proofing' to describe how policy proposals were held up to the light of *Making the Connections* before being put in place (Interview 1 & 2). The Assembly government published an action plan to operationalise *Making the Connection* in 2005. *Delivering the Connections: from Vision to Action* (WAG 2005b) gave the agenda a second injection of publicity

and ensured that the need for greater coordination in public services remained in the consciousness of actors involved in policy formulation and delivery in Wales.

A second key policy development that impacted greatly on the development of some aspects of education and lifelong learning policy in Wales – particularly skills-related, for-work training - has been Communities First, the Assembly government's flagship programme for improving the living conditions and life chances of people living in the most deprived communities in Wales. Communities First is a long term programme that acknowledges the central role community involvement must play in delivering real and sustainable change and aims to:

- get local people involved in improving their areas and their own prospects;
- bring in funding and support from a range of sources to make things happen;
- make sure improvements last;
- encourage flexibility, risk-taking and new ways of dealing with problems;
- involve everyone working together to identify and do something about their community's problems.

Crucially, work undertaken as part of the programme is informed by the (recently revised) Communities First Vision Framework (WAG 2007). The Framework is organised around six key themes:

- Child Poverty;
- Community Safety;
- Health and Well Being;
- Education, Skills and Training;
- Environment; and
- Jobs, Business and Income Generation.

Communities First therefore has a focus on bringing education and training opportunities to the hardest to reach in the most deprived communities and, uniquely, is tasked with 'programme bending' existing mainstream services into those communities. So, for example, Communities First had a great deal of input into the CCETs and even hosted the Learning Brokers programme in Bridgend. Although the successor to Learning Brokers, Bridges into Work, is outside the time frame of this study, it is noteworthy that Communities First in six local authority areas in Wales has taken the step of match-funding the new project, providing further evidence of how education and lifelong learning is moving toward something like a symbiotic relationship with other WAG-sponsored bodies. Communities First is

expressly tasked with facilitating or brokering access to education and lifelong learning opportunities and is a part of a number of the main learning strategy documents (e.g. WAG 2005c).

It is instructive that education and lifelong practitioners working with learners on the ground view their own work within this wider policy context. The Learning Brokers project was, in its own words, a reaction to the fact that partnership and collaborative working were 'high on the policy agenda' and was conscious that it was being designed in the context of the expectations laid down in the *Making the Connections* agenda. This may be evidence of a culture or ethos emerging in which policy-makers and practitioners locate their own work within an overall agenda.

In Scotland, a similar agenda to *Making the Connections* was put in place some years earlier. As Richard Parry and Audrey McDougal (2005) describe, the Scottish Executive embarked on what it called a 'cultural change' programme in late 2002, which was designed to ensure that the Executive could deliver the targets contained in the Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition's policy programme *A partnership for a better Scotland: partnership agreement* (Scottish executive 2003). The change agenda was based around four core concepts: leadership; outward focus including working with stakeholders; delivering outcomes; and developing corporate processes and procedures. The successes of *Changing to Deliver* have been evaluated on two occasions: by the Scottish Permanent Secretary, John Elvidge, in a review conducted for the Finance Committee of the Scottish Parliament, and later by the Office of the Chief Researcher in autumn 2004 (OCR 2004). The findings of Elvidge's review are summarised by Parry and McDougal (2005: 3) and reproduced in Box 4.1.

The overall conclusion of the evaluation study undertaken by the Office of the Chief Researcher was that significant improvement could be demonstrated in the areas of policy-making and outward focus. It was acknowledged that communicating the corporate vision and gaining staff support for change has been successful, although this had yet to be demonstrated through concrete actions and work was required to fully engage ministers. Finally, the evaluation noted that changes in corporate processes had achieved little improvement, and a greater

alignment is needed between corporate processes and the business needs of the Executive.

Box 4.1 Achievements of *Changing to Deliver*

- Leadership – based on responses to a recent staff survey, the Executive scored highly compared to other UK departments and public bodies.
- Outcomes – outcome measures are primarily based on meeting the partnership agreement targets; however another measure of success of this programme is the degree of professionalisation of the executive's staff. The number of staff holding appropriate professional qualifications is increasing both in support services and mainstream policy roles.
- Outward focus – a 2004 survey of stakeholder opinion about the Executive, involving 824 respondents indicated that over 70% of stakeholders were satisfied with their dealings with the Executive and two thirds of stakeholders considered that the Executive's approach to joint working has improved since devolution.
- Corporate processes – improvements in the finance, IT and HR systems have also been achieved.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that both SEN and ACL policy in Scotland and Wales have experienced some important developments since 1999. SEN has been the subject of at least two major reviews and a range of policy innovations have been proposed and put into practice. ACL has been high on the policy agenda of both governments and the need to up skill members of deprived communities has been a particular focus in both jurisdictions. This has resulted in eye-catching policy innovations, like ILA Scotland and the Communities First aim of 'programme bending', which have attracted international attention.

It is clear from the discussion above that policy-makers were not reticent about making claims for joined-up thinking and action in their areas of interest or responsibility. The degree of rhetorical engagement with the doctrine of JUG was considerable. But to what extent is this rhetoric matched by the reality of policy-making? Among the claims to new ways of working, just how joined-up was policy-making in these areas during the period of study? The following chapter addresses this question through a descriptive evaluation of policy processes and outputs from a JUG perceptive.

Notes to chapter 4

[1] Following the election of Alex Salmond's Scottish National Party, in May 2007, the Scottish Executive has been known as the Scottish Government. In order to prevent confusion, this study only uses the term Scottish Executive as it was used consistently throughout the period of the first two Parliaments.

[2] This provision also forms part of some previous legislation, but it is the 1996 Act that is currently in force in England and Wales.

[3] A detailed account of the role and progress of this body is included in its annual report (SENTW 2005).

[4] Indeed, any assessment of the efficacy of a JUG initiative in terms of its *outcomes* is beyond the scope of this study (see Chapter 2: 47-49).

[5] The ELL Committee's broad remit was based on the portfolio of the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning and included schools, further education, higher education, skills development, the youth service and the careers service.

[6] The areas of focus identified by the ELL Committee were more wide-ranging and clearly-defined than the priorities set out by the Assembly government in *The Learning Country*.

[7] This means that, post-2004, it is inaccurate to talk of the development of *special educational needs* policy in Scotland. However, it is confusing to change the terminology to *additional support needs* and a consistent terminology has been maintained for that reason.

[8] The national standards framework for literacy and numeracy defines skills at Entry level (divided into three sub-levels), Level 1 and Level 2 or above. Levels 1 and 2 are broadly comparable to GCSE English and Mathematics. General descriptions of each level within the National Standards are given below.

Table 4.2 National standards framework for literacy and numeracy

Level	Level Literacy (reading)	Numeracy
Entry level 1	Understands short texts with repeated language patterns on familiar topics Can obtain information from common signs and symbols	Understands information given by numbers and symbols in simple graphical, numerical and written material
Entry level 2	Understands short straightforward texts on familiar topics Can obtain information from short documents, familiar sources and signs and symbols	Understands information given by numbers, symbols, simple diagrams and charts graphical, numerical and written material
Entry level 3	Understands short straightforward texts on familiar topics accurately and independently Can obtain information from everyday sources	Understands information given by numbers, symbols, diagrams and charts used for different purposes and in different ways in graphical, numerical and written material
Level 1	Understands short straightforward texts of varying length on a variety of topics accurately and independently Can obtain information from different sources	Understands straightforward mathematical information used for different purposes and can independently select relevant information from given graphical, numerical and written material
Level 2 or above	Understands a range of texts of varying complexity accurately and independently Can obtain information of varying length and detail from different sources	Understands mathematical information used for different purposes and can independently select and compare relevant information from a variety of graphical, numerical and written material

[9] These reforms are discussed in some detail by Phelps et al (2006).

[10] There is a potentially key difference here with Wales. The Assembly government chose to combine lifelong learning with education, rather than enterprise. Later on, this was reinforced by the addition of skills. In Wales, any link between enterprise, lifelong learning and skills was made in the way different departments and ministers interrelated, rather than in the way they were structured.

[11] A version of the ILA Scotland was established in Wales in July 2003. ILA Wales is a smaller scheme with narrower criteria for qualification (learners must be in receipt of certain benefits or have qualifications below NQF Level 2) and a smaller amount available to support learners, up to a maximum of £200.

5

Analysis: measuring 'joined-up-ness' in policy processes and outputs

Between 1999 and 2007, the rhetoric surrounding education and lifelong learning policy in Scotland and Wales was pervaded by the language of joined-up government (JUG). No problem, it seemed, was so intractable that it could not be overcome by a more 'collaborative ethos' or by better 'partnership working'. Stakeholders with apparently divergent views on how policy should be developed came together in 'strategic compacts' (NAW 2001: 49), while government departments and agencies whose first instinct was to defend their narrow institutional interests developed new, 'whole-of-government' mindsets. But to what extent did these claims to joined-up thinking and action reflect a real commitment to a new mode of policy- and decision-making in the two nations? Were government and other traditionally-powerful policy actors really prepared to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty purely in the name of greater coordination?

This chapter measures the 'joined-up-ness' of special educational needs (SEN) and adult community learning (ACL) policy processes and outputs in Scotland and Wales between 1999 and 2007. To this end, it employs the Hierarchy of joined-up thinking and action (HJTA), developed in chapter 3, as a framework for the descriptive evaluation of the key policy processes and outputs detailed in chapter 4. The analysis is organised according to the different tiers of the HJTA and further divided by policy area and jurisdiction.

The key finding is that trust relationships were successfully cultivated between policy actors in both policy areas in both jurisdictions during the period of study. Issues were routinely framed in terms of the spheres of interest they cut across and there were concerted and consistent efforts to involve the full array of stakeholding groups in finding joined-up solutions. This was particularly true in Wales, where devolution delivered a step change in the frequency and quality of consultation experienced by less well-resourced policy actors, some of whom were able to shape the nature and trajectory of policy-making in their particular area of interest. While the level of trust demonstrated in the majority of policy processes and outputs was restricted to the lower 'informational' or 'prudential' tiers of the HJTA, there was some evidence of 'contractual' trust relationships, most commonly associated with funding mechanisms designed to encourage joint working at the policy implementation and delivery level. As might be expected, there were fewer examples of policy processes or outputs which demonstrated the existence of the more onerous 'goodwill' trust. However, it is highly significant that those examples that were identified were found almost exclusively within the SEN policy area. As such, SEN is cautiously described as being 'more joined-up' than ACL in both Scotland and Wales during the period in question.[1] Despite this, however, it is shown that there was virtually no evidence of 'normative' trust operating to moderate behaviour in any of the case studies and it is concluded that a genuinely joined-up 'culture of collaboration' had not emerged.

5.1 The HJTA as a framework for descriptive evaluation

The HJTA was introduced in chapter 2 and further developed in chapter 3 as a framework for effective descriptive evaluation of policy processes and outputs from a JUG perspective. The HJTA arranges the processes and outputs that the academic and practitioner literatures identify as examples of best practice in JUG (e.g. Pollitt 2005) according to the level of trust between policy actors that must be demonstrated for each process or output to operate (or be operationalised) effectively (e.g. 6 et al 2002) (Table 5.1).

The key factor in evaluating the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and

action within a given policy area or jurisdiction is the preparedness of well-resourced (and therefore influential) policy actors to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty with other actors, some of whom may be less well-resourced (see chapter 2: 40-45). This level of preparedness is itself determined by the extent to which well-resourced actors can trust other actors to hold influence over the nature and trajectory of policy-making: well-resourced actors must *want* to involve a full array of stakeholders in the interests of formulating and delivering better policy, rather than *need* their involvement in order to protect or further their own institutionally-defined policy aims. Chapter 3 explained that the degree of risk an actor feels when contemplating a potential trust relationship me be influenced by a further set of moderating variables, namely: the existing level of policy-making capacity; the political sensitivity of the policy area or issue; the degree of existing consensus within the policy area; the level of legislative competence of the political institution; the overall resources available to government within the jurisdiction; the scale of the policy-making context; and the age of the competent political institution (see chapter 3: 63-65). Depending on how each of these variables plays out within a given policy area (or, as the case may be, a given policy issue), the number and level of trust relationships that form and, concomitantly, the degree of joined-up-ness that exists, may vary considerably. In short, there can be more or less conducive *conditions* for effective JUG.

When used in conjunction with this set of moderating variables, the HJTA allows policy processes and outputs in a given policy area to be evaluated and the degree of joined-up-ness measured. The following section uses the HJTA to measure the degree of joined-up-ness in SEN and ACL policy processes and outputs in Scotland and Wales. The analysis is organised according to the different levels of trust that make up the HJTA and further divided by jurisdiction and policy area. The section begins by identifying examples of best practice in JUG at the HJTA's lowest, 'informational' tier.

Table 5.1 *Hierarchy of joined-up thinking and action*
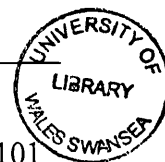
Level of trust	Type of policy process or output
Goodwill	• Pooling budgets • Exchanging key people • Creating 'joint teams' at operational level • Handing over the policy agenda to institutions in civil society • Making the legislature a driver of policy
Contract	• Developing funding mechanisms in which 'pots' of money can only be 'unlocked' when all the key stake-holders agree
Prudential	• Organising effective systems for the consultation of stake-holders • Consulting outside experts • Focusing the business of participation in policy delivery and implementation – application, monitoring, evaluation – on collaboration and partnership
Informational	• Ensuring the 'rules of the game' for collaboration are clearly-defined • Framing problems as 'cross-cutting problems'

5.2 Applying the HJTA to policy processes and outputs in Scotland and Wales

5.2.1 Policy processes and outputs at the informational tier of the HJTA

This section presents evidence of policy processes and outputs that require no trust between policy actors but do require the effective dissemination of information and a certain degree of 'buy in' to the core principles of JUG.

Wales

The key policy issues in the area of SEN in Wales were consistently framed as cross-cutting problems during the period of study. This was equally true at ministerial, official and stakeholder levels. Keith Ingham, then the Head of Children's Health and Social Services at the Assembly government, was quite clear that the specific policy issue of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), for example, required a clearly-articulated, collaborative response:

I think there's more of that than there used to be ... especially as the Assembly has taken on greater powers – we're not just following Whitehall edict, we're not just churning out what came out of central government, we are developing our own guidance. You can't do that without working with others across the Assembly and if you do it the wrong way and it goes out you'll be criticised. You know that people will say, 'well, you're telling us we should work together and you're evidencing that you're not'. So, there's a degree of self-interest, there's a degree of understanding that you can't achieve your ends not doing it but beyond that it's good policy, it's the way that you have to do things. Fundamentally we want to improve the lives of children and young people – at least I hope that's what we're all about – and that's the way we've got to work.

(Interview 12)

The Speech and Language Therapy Action Group's (SALTAG) main criticism of speech and language therapy (SLT) provision, for example, was that there was an absence of effective joint working between education and health, resulting in a fragmented, poorly-sequenced and, at times, incomplete SLT service (SALTAG 2003). The policy issue, then, was not that SLT services needed to be improved, or even invested in, but rather that the education, health and, to a lesser extent, social services agencies involved in policy-making and implementation should better coordinate their activities so that a more joined-up service could be developed. Indeed, the majority of policy-making activity in this field took place within what could be described as a 'collaboration agenda' in which all of the policy actors with an interest in SEN policy wanted to be involved – and, what is more, wanted to be *seen* to be involved - in collaborative working. Collaboration was seen as A Good Thing or, as one interviewee suggested mischievously, 'the true path of the righteous' (Interview 7). Even Ministers were conspicuous devotees. The Ministers for Education and Lifelong Learning and Health and Social Services respectively wasted no opportunity to jointly announce policy innovations or appear together at events where cross-cutting issues, like SLT and ASD, were being discussed (see chapter 4: 73-74).

The majority of stakeholders interviewed as part of the research were very clear that SEN was now being identified effectively as a cross-cutting policy area, but also that this had not been the case prior to devolution. Stakeholders reported a major change in the attitude of key policy- and decision-makers in Wales towards the growing ranks of non-governmental actors in civil society and particularly to those

in the third sector. Rather than being seen as members of a 'Cinderella sector', interviewees reported that voluntary organisations were increasingly recognised as a vital source of expertise and service provision that must form part of any strategy to tackle the cross-cutting issues surrounding SEN (Interviews 1, 2, 3, 4, 6). The Assembly government was consistent in its enthusiasm for involving the third sector in the heart of the policy- and decision-making process (Interview 13) and backed this up with wide and deep consultation on a number of policy proposals.

Indeed, the language of partnership and collaboration provided the vocabulary of everyday interaction in the SEN policy sector in Wales. The *Making the Connections* agenda successfully penetrated the consciousness of both government and non-governmental policy actors and acted as a key reference point to moderate behaviour (see chapter 4: 92). All of the interviewees with an interest in SEN policy brought *Making the Connections* into interview discussions without prompting and it was clear that its aims had struck a chord. Interviewees also reported a new readiness on the part of 'long in the tooth' civil servants to broaden the scope of engagement (Interview 1) and one civil servant identified the same change in attitude among some of his colleagues.[2] At what must still be seen as an essentially rhetorical level, then, even some of the 'dinosaurs' – those faithful guardians of the departmental structure - appeared to have come around at least to the idea of JUG.

On a more practical level, the Assembly government took the opportunity afforded by this clear enthusiasm for JUG to build collaboration in to the business of policy implementation and delivery. The process of applying for funding to provide a particular service or deliver a particular project aimed at tackling problems associated with SEN - as well as the monitoring and evaluation frameworks which examined the work of the applicant following the allocation of funding - placed the requirement to provide clear evidence of collaborative working high on the list of assessment criteria.[3]

ACL policy processes and outputs in Wales shared many features with those in the SEN policy area a this informational level. The key policy issues (particularly tackling low skills levels in disadvantaged communities) were consistently framed as cross-cutting problems in need of joined-up solutions during the period of study and

the *Making the Connections* agenda was similarly successful in setting the tone among stakeholders and government actors alike. Although outside the strict timeframe of this study, a 2008 consultation document demonstrates clearly how *Making the Connections* has set the tone in the ACL policy area. A whole section of the document is dedicated to 'building links across Policy Agendas' and the document makes explicit reference to *Making the Connections* throughout:

> Adult community learning policy reflects the aim of *Making the Connections*, which is to ensure that public services work in a more joined-up way to deliver effective services for citizens ... adult community learning can and should have strong links to a wide range of other Welsh Assembly Government strategies and initiatives .. it [also] has a key role to play in contributing to policy priorities such as social inclusion and health and well being ...
>
> (WAG 2008: 31)

The same document goes beyond mere rhetoric, however, with its 'Policy Gateway Summary' (Table 5.2). This shows not only an awareness of the cross-cutting nature of ACL, but also a desire – at least at this informational level – to develop a systematic way of improving coordination.[4]

There is no doubt that greater collaboration was seen by all involved in ACL policy as A Good Thing. Andrew Davies, the Assembly Minister for Finance and Public Service Delivery, certainly framed the problem of low skills levels in Wales' deprived communities in those terms:

> There has been a very conscious recognition of the need to integrate policy in this area ... If we take one of our high level policy objectives – which is tackling economic inactivity, particularly in our inner cities and the former coal-mining areas of the South Wales valleys – research has shown time after time that issues such as long term unemployment, economic inactivity – however you want to describe it – are closely associated with a number of characteristics: with poor health, restricted life chances, lower life expectancy - educational qualification levels are worse.
>
> ...
>
> And clearly one of the main reasons for this is what is known as the long no (or very low) skills 'tail'. Many of those in disadvantaged communities have very low or very few skills. So the issue of skills is at the heart of a number of social and economic problems and from that flows the idea that we have to work more cooperatively, departments have to work more cooperatively ...
>
> (Interview 10)

Table 5.2 Adult community learning policy gateway summary[5]

One Wales Commitment	Overall Contribution					Explanation
	U	N	P	F	G	
1. A Healthy Future			X			Thought to have a potential contribution, with scope for stronger steer with regard to the health benefits of learning and links with the Assembly Government's Health agenda.
2. A prosperous society			X			Considered to have a potential contribution ... there is scope to build more explicit links with Communities [First]
3. Living communities			X			A potential contribution, with consideration needing to be given to communities of interest and under-represented groups ...
4. Learning for life					X	Considered to make a good contribution, with links to wider Government strategies, such as health and well being, economic inactivity and inclusion
5. A Fair and just society				X		... The policy should reflect to inclusion agenda. It represents an opportunity to develop potential inter-departmental links and to progress the Making the Connections Agenda. Opportunities to develop and strengthen the learner voice should be explored ...
6. A sustainable environment		X				A neutral contribution n. There is a link to sustainability issues through procurement and commissioning for the adult community learning curriculum.
7. A rich and diverse culture				X		A fair contribution. There is a need for a joined-up approach with CyMAL's Gateway to Learning programme.

Key: U: Undermining; N – Neutral; P – Potential; F – Fair; G - Good

Communities First is one of the attempts to regenerate valleys communities that Mr Davies described as being 'overtly, consciously joined-up' in approach (Interview 10). However, the notion of 'programme bending', which was central to the Assembly government's flagship programme for improving the living conditions and life chances of people living in the most deprived communities in Wales, proved to be little more than an eye-catching use of aspirational language – a phrase people used, but not a model that could demonstrate consistent and widespread action. The architects of the Communities First programme imagined that programme bending would be the natural effect of the greater capacity and higher profile disadvantaged

communities would enjoy as a result of substantial investment in the innovative Communities First partnership structure at a local level (WAG 2002, 2007). This, however, was naïve. There was little resource allocated to facilitating programme bending beyond the appointment of Communities First officers to support partnerships. For this reason, programme bending was generally unsuccessful and overly dependent on the network-building skills of individuals, most of whom were not operating at a sufficiently senior level to carry much influence. As one Communities First officer told the Wales Audit Office during its 2009 review of the Communities First programme, there was no resource 'carrot' or statutory 'stick' for agencies to agree to work together and 'bend' programmes into deprived areas in order to tackle a range of problems, including low skills levels:

> [programme] bending can only work if the main service providers are prepared to work in a real partnership. There is little evidence in our ward to support this premise. Where small successes have occurred this has been down to the good relationships between officers below director level. Until the main players buy into the concept of [programme bending] this is unlikely to change ...
> Unnamed Communities First Officer (WAO 2009: 65)

This concept of 'buy in' is undoubtedly important, but only partially explains the failure of this policy. The WAO (2009) was highly critical of the Assembly Government in its review of Communities First for failing to ensure that its own departments – as well as the agencies it sponsors – were sufficiently responsive to the skills and other needs of deprived communities and put this down to a general failure to communicate the concept and requirements of programme bending effectively. However, it is argued below that the absence of any additional or redeployed resource – the 'carrot' described above – was at least equally responsible for the failure of programme bending. Effective communication between actors was not enough on its own to pull off such an ambitious form of JUG. This has since been realised by the Assembly government and the discussion below of the new Communities First Outcomes Fund demonstrates a new approach.

Finally, although the Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs) are characterised later in this chapter as having failed to develop trust relationships between disparate policy actors, the mere fact that they were designed, introduced

and operated for some time (no matter how dysfunctional this was) demonstrates at least a commitment on the part of the CCETs' architects to finding innovative institutional arrangements to tackle cross-cutting issues and, just as important, a certain degree of 'buy-in' from stakeholders who took the time to attend. Those isolated examples of joined-up policy outputs emanating from the CCET structure which include Learning Brokers (see chapter 4: 93-94) showed the potential this structure had for providing a site for innovative collaborative working.

Scotland

As in Wales, the key policy issues in the area of SEN were consistently framed as cross-cutting problems in need of joined-up solutions during the period of study in Scotland. A leading SLT organisation, for example, defined its role in these terms:

> Although we are parent-led we believe that, in order to improve [SLT] services for children, we need to actually work with those services and I think one of the hallmarks of our work is that we try to work collaboratively between parents and professionals but also across the professional areas. In order to achieve this, we have developed a training programme that is open to teachers *and* to therapists.
>
> (Interview 14)

Perhaps more importantly, government actors shared this way of framing policy problems. In re-assessing the Record of Needs, for example, the Scottish Executive saw the need for a 'better multi-disciplinary approach' to assessment and recording as a means of 'avoiding unnecessary duplication' in the system (Scottish Executive 2001a) and, as one interviewee commented diplomatically, prevent agencies 'using their initiative to avoid responsibility' (Interview 22). Moreover, the Coordinated Support Plan (CSP), which replaced the Record of Needs, was heralded by government and non-governmental actors alike as an opportunity to 'promote more effective joined-up planning and provision of services between education authorities, schools, social workers and health professionals' (Unison Scotland 2003) and 'foster co-ordination across the range of services (multi-disciplinary and multi-agency)' leading to a more co-ordinated set of services (Scottish Executive 2004). This was another clear example of policy issues being expressed in ways that acknowledged and sought to address 'wicked' problems. Euan Robson, the Deputy Minister who took the legislation through the Scottish Parliament, certainly saw the

CSP in these terms:

> SEN was, of course, merely one sub set of what was a much broader problem of a lack of coordination. Now, the answer that we came up with in terms of the [Additional Support for Learning] legislation was the Coordinated Support Plan. There was that clear understanding that there needed to be better cooperation between agencies. Now ... there was a complete misunderstanding among some people in the Parliament who thought that the Coordinated Support Plan was somehow a replacement for the Record of Needs – it was nothing of the sort; it was a wholly different *concept* ... two or more agencies had to be involved ... it was a way of bringing together the agencies to address barriers to learning for individuals which came from a variety of causes, not all of which were located within the education department.
>
> (Interview 22)

In a clear parallel with *Making the Connections*, the *Changing to Deliver* agenda successfully penetrated the consciousness of both governmental and non-governmental actors and acted as a reference point to moderate behaviour in much the same way. Despite this, though, *Changing to Deliver* was not cited as frequently or with the same enthusiasm by Scottish interviewees. While it is possible that the greater experience of public policy in Scotland may have contributed to a more sceptical outlook and cooled enthusiasm for the real difference such an initiative might achieve, the fact that *Changing to Deliver* predates *Making the Connections* by three years may be a more likely cause of its marginally lower currency.[6]

The full range of stakeholders interviewed was broadly content with the frequency and quality of consultation on SEN policy issues, but interviewees indicated that devolution had not had the same impact on this as it had in Wales. This response is quite likely to have been informed by the existence in Scotland of a relatively healthy pressure group sector prior to devolution with a number of indigenous Scottish groups having a sound track record of working closely with government for many years. Even so, Richard Parry and Audrey McDougal (2005) cite a 2004 survey of Scottish stakeholder opinion which indicates a broad feeling that the Executive's approach to joint working had improved since devolution and this is generally supported by the interview data.

The key policy issues in the area of ACL in Scotland (particularly adult literacy and numeracy) were consistently framed as cross-cutting problems in need of joined-up solutions during the period of study. As was noted in chapter 4, adult

literacy and numeracy provided the principal focus for policy-making activity during the period in question and there was no doubt as to the cross-cutting nature of the problem.

Once again, the language of partnership and collaboration was the vocabulary of everyday interaction. The *Changing to Deliver* agenda successfully penetrated the consciousness of both governmental and non-governmental actors and acted as a reference point to moderate behaviour and there can be no doubt that JUG was universally regarded as A Good Thing. In many ways, the ILA Scotland scheme is the best example of JUG being attempted principally through effective communication and dissemination of information. The ILA scheme identified the need for central brokerage of learning, particularly for individuals with low skills from disadvantaged communities and used a funding mechanism to ensure learning providers developed courses to address the needs of this particular client group. Although learning providers were clearly motivated by this funding dimension, it is also clear that they have signed up intellectually to the ILA project.

5.2.2 Policy processes and outputs at the prudential tier of the HJTA

This section presents evidence of examples of best practice that demonstrated a minimal or 'prudential' level of trust between policy actors; that is, a level of trust where a person's (or organisation's) statement of intent – à promise, threat or other indication of intention – must be believed for the institutional arrangement or process to be effective.

Wales

There was a frenzy of consultation in the SEN policy area in Wales during the period of study. However, access to the policy process was not only extended by the Assembly Government. The Education and Lifelong Learning Committee (ELL Committee) of the National Assembly undertook widespread and detailed consultation with stakeholders as part of its review of SEN policy in Wales (see chapter 4: 75). The quality of consultation ranged from an opportunity for groups and individuals to make written comments on formal consultation documents, through more restricted opportunities to give oral evidence at Committee, to far

more exclusive opportunities for direct meetings with ministers and committee members on both a formal and informal basis. Some groups had informal access to ministers which, on balance, can be taken as forming the basis of a number of important goodwill trust relationships discussed below. The ELLC Committee undoubtedly deferred to the expertise of certain groups that gave evidence and this can be taken as an indication of (at least) a prudential level of trust between actors.

Any organisation wishing to become involved in, for example, policy delivery would encounter at every stage a range of requirements to ensure that they did not act in isolation from potential partners. These stages included meeting various criteria during the application process; demonstrating that commitment through the variously-configured monitoring frameworks during the course of the project; and being evaluated against those criteria during the evaluation phase.

In the ACL policy area in Wales, there was also wide-ranging consultation with stakeholders and outside experts on a number of important policy innovations, including the Webb Commission, the CCET structure, the Communities First Partnership structure and the Communities First Outcomes Fund. In general, this consultation was restricted to formal settings and did not develop into the kinds of close, goodwill trust-based relationships identified below in the SEN policy areas. One interviewee did claim informal access to key decision-makers and this claim which was confirmed by at least one senior member of the Assembly government. However, there is no evidence that this relationship resulted in any additional influence on the nature and extent of policy-making.

Scotland

The Scottish case studies revealed similar findings to Wales at this prudential level. There was frequent consultation with stakeholders and outside experts during the period of study in the SEN policy area. SEN legislation followed on from exhaustive consultation by the Scottish Executive while the SEN policy review undertaken by the Scottish Parliament's Education, Culture and Sport Committee (ECS Committee) was similarly thorough in the way it canvassed opinion and amassed evidence

An agency wishing to become involved in, for example, a project to deliver SLT

services would encounter at every stage of the process a range of requirements to ensure that they did not act in isolation from potential partners. These stages include: meeting various criteria during the application process; demonstrating that commitment through the variously-configured monitoring frameworks during the course of the project; and being evaluated against those criteria during the evaluation phase.

The ACL policy process was similarly characterised by wide-ranging consultation with stakeholders. The consultation for the ILA Scotland policy innovation, both in its original and 'relaunched' formats, demonstrated that stakeholders located differently in the broadly conceived ACL network – learning providers, business interests, community development interests – were involved to some extent in the shaping of policy.

5.2.3 Policy processes and outputs at the contractual tier of the HJTA

This section presents evidence of those examples of best practice that demonstrate the existence of a contractual level of trust between policy actors. That is, a level of trust where a person's (or organisation's) statement of intent – a promise, threat or other indication of intention – is supported by some kind of independent mechanism that offers legal or financial recourse in the event of a breach.

Wales

The main examples of policy processes and outputs at this contractual tier of the HJTA in all of the case studies are funding mechanisms. Put simply, all of the funds which aimed to improve and cultivate collaboration used the carrot of additional (or in most cases, redeployed) resources to encourage stakeholders (some of which may have divergent views on the direction in which policy should travel) to combine their own resources and work together to tackle particular policy issues. In the SEN policy area, where there was no specific funding mechanism introduced, actors seeking to address problems linked to SEN were able to access the Flexibilities Special Grant (FSG) and Cymorth funding.[7]

The role of this funding mechanism for developing contractual trust relationships is shown more clearly in Wales in the ACL field. As part of the Communities First

programme, a new funding regime to support more effective 'programme bending' has been announced for 2009-12. Although the Communities First Outcomes Fund is outside the time frame of this study, it provides useful comment on the performance of Communities First to date and its programme bending aspiration in particular. This is because the introduction of the fund has now been deemed necessary in order to encourage *real* programme bending. This demonstrates that the Assembly government now understands the limitations of attempts at JUG based purely on good intentions. Its hitherto naïve lack of understanding of what it takes to encourage genuine joint working has recently been criticised implicitly by the WAO (2009).

The Outcomes Fund demonstrates a new understanding on the part of WAG that budget-pooling among policy actors needs to be facilitated by a reliable contractual arrangement. The Family Employment Initiative (FEI) in a number of South Wales local authority areas demonstrates the power of this kind of mechanism to bring together a range of groups – voluntary (the British Trust of Conservation Volunteers), non-statutory (registered social landlords), local government (a number of local authority economic development units) and devolved (WAG) - to tackle the problem of under-skilling through genuine collaborative work including the provision of ACL, local infrastructure improvement and employment initiatives. Interestingly, the change in focus to the Outcomes Fund, with its own focus directly on making the most of Assembly government money and delivering measurable outcomes in exchange for funding, coincides with a new, less generous settlement for WAG (see chapter 6: 142).

The Communities First Outcomes Fund, like all of the funding mechanisms described in this section, requires those seeking to access the fund to trust other actors to deliver shared goals. It requires agencies to conceptualise problems outside of their immediate sphere of interest and to build strong relationships with actors who they would not class as natural bedfellows.

Scotland

The Coordinated Support Plan (CSP) is an interesting example of a policy outcome

which requires contractual trust between actors, but which is not a funding mechanism. The CSP is a statutory tool which requires agencies involved in the provision of services to any child or young person with identified Additional Support Needs (ASN) to work within a statutory framework (see chapter 4: 77).

The ILA Scotland funding arrangements encouraged education providers to focus their provision and, just as importantly, their outreach work and marketing strategies associated with that provision, on those with the lowest skills in the most disadvantaged circumstances. Crucially, it required actors with traditionally divergent ideas about what ACL means and how it should develop to work together. In order to attract learners who would be subsidised by ILA Scotland funding, community development interests, business interests and learning providers had to come together to plan and design innovative courses. They also needed to engage more effectively with deprived communities. This was achieved by allocating resources in a way that encouraged policy actors to moderate their behaviour and consider the needs of a particular client group. It is important to note, however, that this did not involve any goodwill trust relationships. The education budget was not pooled with any economic development money, for example, but was simply deployed in such a way that encouraged policy actors, in this case the learning providers, to develop their provision and marketing in ways that better met the skills needs of the most deprived individuals. As such, it was a successful example of joined-up thinking and action in policy implementation.

5.2.4 Policy processes and outputs at the goodwill tier of the HJTA

This section presents evidence of those examples of best practice that demonstrate the existence of a goodwill level of trust between policy actors and therefore occupy the highest (and most onerous) tier of the HJTA. That is, a level of trust where one expects a person or organisation to act in such a way that protects one's interests without there being the possibility of any contractual or statutory recourse. This, then, is the purest definition of trust and exposes policy actors to the greatest risk.

Wales

The first example of goodwill trust is the budget pooling which took place between departments in the Assembly government in order to take forward the ASD strategy in Wales.[8] As Keith Ingham, then the Head of Children's Health and Social Services at the Assembly Government, noted:

> We recognised we had to cover all the bases in developing [ASD] policy – you can't go ahead and not do that and it's certainly been a helpful process to have that involvement. We've also been able to pool funding [within the Assembly government health, education and social services departments] and, again, it's a combination of understanding and goodwill and coming together and seeing that you can get a benefit out of pooling some resource whether that's people or it's money.
>
> (Interview 12)

There are many further examples of goodwill trust relationships where actors have pooled policy- and decision-making sovereignty in different ways, especially through the extent and quality of consultation with stake-holding groups. The creation of SALTAG and the positive reaction to its recommendations is a case in point (see chapter 4: 73-74). SALTAG identified major deficiencies in the provision of SLT in Wales and the Assembly government responded to its recommendations by, in effect, adopting them. The organisations represented on SALTAG therefore exerted a great deal of influence on the shape of SLT provision in Wales and the major policy developments in SLT since devolution can confidently be described as the product of a highly collaborative process.

This finding is reinforced by the interview data. The director of a SLT organisation recognised the highly influential role her organisation and others similarly placed had played in the development of SLT policy in Wales through SALTAG. Claire Moyle, the Director of Afasic Cymru, reported that the Assembly government routinely sought and acted upon her organisation's advice as an independent organisation, describing devolution as a 'revolution' for voluntary groups in Wales. In particular, she described the possibilities that exist to meet with senior officials and ministers, often informally, and on a regular basis. Furthermore, she was clear that her counterparts in England enjoy few of the same opportunities

to build relationships with and influence key decision-makers in the same way (Interview 1)

There is also evidence that face-to-face contact had helped relationships between officials and stake-holding groups develop, sometimes from a basis of misconception. The Director of a SEN advocacy organisation described how officials had often initially expressed surprise that her organisation employed professionals rather than volunteers, demonstrating an alarming and fundamental misunderstanding of an important sector. However, Denise Inger, the Director of SNAP Cymru, went on to explain that face-to-face meetings had helped the organisation represent itself as competent and professional and it is now held in very high regard (Interview 2). This claim was confirmed by officials (Interview 13), politicians (Interview 9) and a former Deputy Minister (Interview 9). Crucially, it was the opportunity for face-to-face contact that earned the organisation the trust of decision-makers.

Stakeholders in the field of autism reported close involvement in the development of the draft All Wales strategy for ASD. The Chief Executive and another senior representative of a leading Welsh-based autism charity claimed to have written the strategy with a senior official after being personally approached by the minister (Interviews 3 & 4) and this was confirmed in interviews with officials in the education, health and social Services departments department (Interviews 12 & 13). Indeed, the great majority of stake-holding groups in the SEN policy area in Wales reported satisfaction with the quality and frequency of consultation and some claimed close working relationships with ministers and senior officials (e.g. Interviews 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6).[9]

If the *Working Together* initiative and work of SALTAG is an example of goodwill trust between policy actors delivering a genuinely joined-up policy *process*, then the regional SLT projects they recommended – and which were subsequently set up by the Assembly government – are an example of the same high level of trust between policy actors delivering a genuinely joined-up policy *output*.[10] The regional projects for SLT provision involved creating agencies with responsibility for funding and delivering health, education and social services, creating joint teams and pooling, or

at least carefully coordinating, valued resources. The Assembly government's regional schemes for SLT seem to typify a desire on its part to coordinate the commissioning and delivery of services so as to achieve the most efficient use of resources and the most integrated provision of services. Indeed, this quite specific policy aim has been expressed clearly by the Assembly government:

> The highest level of collaboration between the NHS and LEAs would be achieved if NHS Trusts and LEAs provided services in an integrated way, allowing different professionals to work under one management structure ... Since NHS Trusts ... are not coterminous with LEAs, this integrated service could best be organised in some parts of Wales at a geographical level
>
> ...
>
> For effective integrated working the providers need to have resolved that there are clear management structures, professional accountability, clear performance management of the service and a joint location of the service and proper administrative support.
>
> Jane Davidson (ELLC Sep 22 2004)

However, although the available documents and minutes associated with SALTAG's work do not give any indication of disagreement or intransigence within the group itself, the interview data shows how difficult it was for members of the group representing the health and education sectors to agree on a way forward. As one prominent member explained:

> Historically, education and speech and language therapy have been completely removed from each other ... now, even, in Swansea, if children need a speech and language appointment they have to have an afternoon off school and go to a clinic and if they don't go to the appointment they are removed from the list. This was commonly understood as a problem by all of the members of SALTAG. When we got everyone together, though, it was a nightmare ... you just could not get health and education to agree to anything ... even the term special educational needs, there was no consistency on what that meant. I was sitting in between people to stop them arguing. However, we did get, eventually, some decisions and everybody agreed on collaboration, joint working, going into schools - a big change in working for therapists and health professionals. We shared an idea of what needed to done, just needed to be locked in a room 'til we came up with something we could all sign up to.
>
> (Interview 1)

A further key example of a goodwill trust relationship is that which developed between the ELL Committee of the National Assembly and the Assembly government. This relationship was in part made possible by the specific role

envisaged for the National Assembly's committees:

> Are [the Assembly Subject] Committees going to be simply there to probe and scrutinise and find weak points in the armoury of the Minister? Or can you still have Subject Committees which will be scrutinising and being very hostile at times, but at other times sharing the role of developing policy suitable for Wales? I believe that the Assembly Subject Committees have to [perform] this dual function of scrutiny and policy-making.
>
> Rhodri Morgan (2000)[11]

Although assessments of the relative 'strength' and 'weakness' of parliamentary committees are criticised for being impressionistic and lacking in analytical criteria (Arter 2002: 93), there can be no question that some legislatures possess 'stronger' committees than others. In the Westminster Parliament, the committees perform a largely scrutinising role and are arguably only a 'minor adjunct' to the main chamber (Sir David Steel, PCSP 2001). By contrast, the majority of continental legislatures are described by David Arter (2002: 96) as 'committee-based', with some, like the German *Bundesrat*[12], undertaking core activities in committee and holding general plenary sessions only once a month (Hague and Harrop 2004: 252). Furthermore, in certain Scandinavian legislatures, such as the Swedish *Riksdag* and Finnish *Eduskunta*, committees enjoy the power to initiate legislation and policy of their own (Sjolin 1993). In Arter's terms (2002: 99), such legislatures are 'committee-driven'.

The architects of the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly were each clear in their preference for 'strong', Scandinavian-style committees (Rawlings 1998: 462-468; see also CSG 1999; NAAG 1998; Jones and Osmond 2001; Bulmer et al 2002; Arter 2002; Arter et al 2005). Indeed, the minimal role given to committees at Westminster served the Scottish Consultative Steering Group (CSG) as a 'negative template' (Mitchell 2000: 616). In the Welsh context, the National Assembly Advisory Group (NAAG) envisaged a dual role for the Subject Committees, combining a significant function in 'reviewing the effectiveness of policies' with one focussed on 'developing new policies' (NAAG 1998: paras. 5.7 and 5.8). There was thus a clear expectation that the legislature would be closely involved in the process of policy formulation.

In the area of SEN policy, the Assembly's ELL Committee undoubtedly met this expectation. In chapter 4 the committee was shown to be a key player in the SEN policy process, acting *pro-actively* when taking the decision to undertake its review of SEN policy, and acting *effectively* in that its recommendations were accepted by the Minister and subsequently translated into real policy change. There are a number of features of the ELL Committee and its membership that may help explain this considerable strength and influence. Rod Hague and Martin Harrop (2004: 252) argue that the key to the influence of committees lies in, firstly, the existence of a non-partisan, consensual culture and, secondly, the presence of considerable subject-specific expertise among the committee's membership. It is arguable that in its review of SEN policy in Wales, the ELL Committee demonstrated both these attributes.

At no point during deliberations did party loyalties distract ELL Committee members from the review's terms of reference. Moreover, most members were moved to remark in plenary on the consensual nature of the ELL Committee's work and David Melding, the chair of the National Assembly's Health and Social Services Committee, was keen to emphasise the close working relationships he encountered in his dealings with members (e.g. NAW 2004). The relatively small size of the ELL Committee (all of the Assembly's Subject Committees had only nine members at this stage) and the stability of its membership over the course of the review are likely to have contributed to a clear sense of 'Committee identification'.[13] The ELL Committee was also able to draw on a great deal of relevant experience: Jeff Cuthbert is the former principal of an Adult Education Centre, has worked for the Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC) and been a school governor; Christine Chapman has been employed as a secondary school teacher, youth worker and careers advisor; Denise Idris Jones is a former secondary school teacher, as is Owen John Thomas; and Irene James continues to work as a teacher of children with SEN. The ELL Committee also benefited from the availability of sufficient resources for it to appoint a panel of experts in the form of the SENRG. Its members' great wealth of personal expertise was thus complemented by genuinely authoritative and *comprehensive* advice.

It is also worth noting that the ELL Committee was operating within what can cautiously be described as a policy-making 'tradition'. Its two previous incarnations in the Assembly – the Pre-16 Education, Schools and Early Learning Committee and the Post-16 Education and Training Committee - were similarly pro-active and effective in their approaches to policy-making. David Egan and Roy James (2001a: 45) have noted that the Pre-16 Committee was making 'good progress in its chosen policy development areas' and that the Post-16 Committee was 'driving the [education] policy agenda' in Wales (2000b: 63) before both became casualties of the formation of coalition government in October 2000. The work of the Post-16 Committee is particularly pertinent. A conscious decision was made early in its lifetime that it should 'spend a large proportion of its time developing policy on specific identifiable issues' (Post-16 Committee 2000a). In reviewing the work of the Education and Training Action Group (ETAG), for example, a number of key amendments and additions were made which were subsequently adopted as part of primary legislation introduced into the House of Lords (Egan & James 2001b: 71).[14] Further reviews were undertaken of arts and culture policy and higher education policy in Wales, both of which resulted in significant changes to policy in those areas.[15] The Post-16 Committee also managed to remain largely independent of the Assembly government throughout its short lifetime, with its chair, the experienced former Westminster MP Cynog Dafis, instrumental in resisting persistent attempts by the Labour administration to 'make [the Committee] into a rubber stamp' (Egan & James 2001b: 71-72).[16]

The key role of the ELL Committee in placing SEN on the policy agenda, shaping the framework within which policy developments were discussed and arriving at clear and strong recommendations that were acted upon by the Assembly government are all evidence of some considerable level of trust between the ELL Committee and the Assembly government. The ELL Committee fulfilled the role of a kind of 'steering actor' within the policy process, bring together all of the relevant actors. This was certainly the role the ELL Committee saw itself playing:

> Because we are a very small nation we were able to bring in the widest possible range of views, performing a 'conductor' role helping to bring about a consensus not only in the committee itself but in the whole of Wales

More importantly, though, the Assembly government did not attempt to control the work of the ELL Committee, or shape the findings of its review. This relationship of trust was confirmed by both the Chair of the ELL Committee (Interview 9) and the senior civil servant within the Assembly government who had closest contact with the ELL Committee during the period of the review (Interview 13).

The evidence for the existence of this kind of goodwill trust relationships in the ACL policy area in Wales is far thinner. The Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs), the Assembly government's institutional framework designed to encourage and facilitate partnership working among the statutory, private and third sectors at a sub-regional level in Wales, are an interesting example of a policy process arrangement where success was contingent on the existence of goodwill trust between actors. Unlike some of the funds described as examples of contractual trust relationships, CCETs were not supported by any additional funding that could have helped deliver this high trust requirement. There are limited examples of CCETs bringing together disparate interests but, on the whole, there were a well-meaning framework which was defeated precisely because of a lack of goodwill and no mechanism to help build it.

Taking a broader view of ACL in Wales, there was a complete absence of any effective or coherent budget or other resource pooling. This is entirely consistent with the conclusions of the Webb Review, which found:

> ... much disjointed working within WAG and even within DCELLS. Not only is a coherent approach to funding lacking, but people in the field are working in silos defined by those funding streams rather than working strategically and sharing best practice.
>
> (Webb 2006: 58)

Scotland

In the negotiations that led to the development of the CSP, an agreement was made for some budget pooling to take place between the education and health departments of the Scottish Parliament. The amount of funding involved remains unclear, but a senior civil servant in the Scottish Executive described it as 'considerable' (Interview 18). Euan Robson, the Deputy Minister for Education and

Young People who took the legislation containing the CSP through the Scottish Parliament, said that the decision to transfer some of the education budget to health was taken as a way of securing the necessary commitments from health agencies with regard to service delivery (Interview 22). Therefore, for the CSP to find its way from a policy proposal to a piece of legislation it required the inter-departmental pooling of resources. This budget pooling suggests not only a sound appreciation of the cross-cutting nature of the policy problem but also - and more importantly - provides evidence that the actors involved had sufficient trust in each other to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty. Given the purpose of the CSP, its central position within a major legislative development and the goodwill level of trust involved in the negotiations involved in securing it, the CSP must be assessed as an example of JUG in action.

This point is further reinforced by the interview data. Senior education officials in Scotland reported that they have been able to cultivate close working relationships with their counterparts in health and social services in relation to SEN (and other cross-cutting issues such as child protection) since devolution and this has led to what one interviewee called a 'shared understanding' of SEN (Interview 18). Similarly, the Deputy Minister reported 'very strong inter-ministerial relationships' between the education and health ministerial teams and said these had been highly significant in the successful negotiation over the nature of the CSP and, of course, the question of funding (Interview 22). In all cases, interviewees remarked that it was the high frequency of high quality, 'face-to-face' meetings they enjoyed with counterparts in other agencies that formed the basis of these important trust relationships and that this was in part explained by the relatively small number of senior officials involved and their close physical proximity to each other (Interviews 15, 18 & 22). Policy-making in Scotland was on more than one occasion described as a 'small world' in which the key protagonists regularly meet on a formal and, crucially, an *informal* basis (Interview 14, 15, 17 & 18).

The role of the ECS Committee of the Scottish Parliament in agenda setting and driving forward substantive policy change in the SEN area was similar to that achieved by the ELL Committee in Wales discussed above. The influence of a

committee of the Scottish Parliament should not come as a particular surprise. Paul Cairney's (2006; with Shephard 2005) work on the 'outputs' of the committees of the Scottish Parliament has shown that the committees are 'at the heart of the 'new politics' in Scotland'. Cairney's analysis is restricted to examining the role of the Parliament as having a reactive influence on Scottish Executive policy and legislation, either through scrutiny arrangements or amendments, but the picture of resourceful committees with a track record of 'taking on' ministers and the Executive certainly supports the finding that, at least in the SEN policy area, the ECS Committee acted as a proactive policy-maker. As a senior civil servant working in SEN policy-making at the time noted, the Scottish Parliament – the legislature itself - saw devolution as an opportunity for it to assist directly in the development of a specifically Scottish policy response to the cross-cutting problems associated with SEN:

> Up until devolution, we mimicked legislation in the area of special educational needs ... the opportunities for getting legislative change was relatively limited. But when we got devolution the opportunities were there. And one of the first things the new Parliament did was set up an enquiry into special educational needs with a view to making significant legislative changes.
>
> (Interview 18)

There is, however, less agreement between ECS Committee members and the Scottish Executive about the role the relevant Committee played than exists in Wales. Key decision-makers within the Scottish Executive would not accept that the ECS Committee had set the agenda and instead argued that it was the extensive consultation process presided over by the Scottish Executive that generated these key policy ideas (Interview 18 & 22).

No examples of goodwill trust were detected in the ACL policy area in Scotland. Although ILA Scotland can be described as an example of a joined-up policy output – learning providers demonstrated contractual trust very clearly and resources were trained on a cross-cutting problem as a result - there is no evidence that the process involved any pooling of policy and decision-making sovereignty.[17]

This analysis has shown that, while there is some evidence of joined-up thinking and action in all of the case studies chosen, the highest levels of trust (and,

concomitantly, the most effective examples of joined-up thinking and action) were restricted to the SEN policy processes in Scotland and Wales. The Summary in Table 5.3 shows that, at the highest tier of the HJTA, the policy processes and outputs identified during the research are heavily weighted towards the SEN policy areas in Scotland and Wales. SEN policy in both nations benefited from a number of examples of best practice in JUG from the highest tier of the HJA. These included: budget and resource pooling; close working relationships with legislatures; the involvement of stakeholders directly in the process of drafting policy; and the effective creation of one-stop or joint teams at the policy implementation stage. In contrast, the key JUG initiatives in the ACL policy area, while demonstrating a clear aspiration to join-up policy- and decision-making, were undermined by a lack of goodwill trust and by naïve expectations that collaborative working would 'emerge'. Indeed, in so far as a JUG approach makes it possible to rank policy areas in terms of their relative joined-up-ness (and there is no attempt to *quantify* joined-up-ness here), well-resourced policy actors were clearly more willing to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty in the SEN policy area than in the ACL policy area. As a consequence, SEN policy-making in both jurisdictions is described as having been 'more joined-up' than ACL policy-making. But does this variation between policy areas mean that policy-making in one area took place within a 'cultural of collaboration' that was less well-developed or simply absent in the other?

5.3 A culture of collaboration? Did actors demonstrate trust in its normative sense?

Although there is considerable evidence of policy processes and outputs that demonstrated the highest levels of predictive trust, there is virtually no practical evidence that the JUG doctrine acted as the anvil on which the rules of the game for interaction were forged in any of the case studies. Interviewees generally framed their discussion of trust and trust relationships in terms of their confidence in predicting the behaviour of other policy actors based on some knowledge specific to that actor: the actor's general reputation, some experience of having worked with that actor, or a personal relationship with an individual within an organisation. There was no a presumption or, indeed, expectation, that other policy actors would

'abstain from opportunism' (Granovetter 1985) out of a commitment to the doctrine of JUG and it is quite clear that the pooling- of policy- and decision-making sovereignty that did take place was not the result of JUG having been legitimised and embedded to the extent that the pooling of policy- and decision-making sovereignty had become a normalised and therefore expected mode of behaviour. There was not a sufficiently well-developed culture around JUG to give participants in the policy-making process confidence that all actors – regardless of how well they were known to each other, or what their resources might be – would act according to an overarching set of rules.

This is clearly an important finding with implications for the question of whether JUG can be seen as a distinctive response to the need to bring greater coordination to the business of policy- and decision-making. Chapter 2 argued that the rhetoric surrounding JUG emphasised *cultural* as well as *structural* change and the finding that no new culture has emerged clearly diminishes the doctrine as a departure in public administration. However, there is still a great deal of evidence of greater collaborative practice done in the name of JUG and this means that the doctrine has had a real impact on how policy actors behave.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that, while there is some evidence of joined-up thinking and action in all of the case studies chosen, the highest levels of trust (and, concomitantly, the most effective examples of joined-up thinking and action) were restricted to the SEN policy processes in Scotland and Wales. The Summary in Table 5.3 shows that, at the highest tier of the HJTA, the policy processes and outputs identified during the research are heavily weighted towards the SEN policy areas in Scotland and Wales. SEN policy in both nations benefited from a number of examples of best practice in JUG from the highest tier of the HJA. These included: budget and resource pooling; close working relationships with legislatures; the involvement of stakeholders directly in the process of drafting policy; and the effective creation of joint teams at the policy implementation stage. In contrast, the key JUG initiatives in the ACL policy area, while demonstrating a clear aspiration to

join-up policy- and decision-making, were undermined by a lack of goodwill trust, naïve expectations that collaborative working would 'emerge' and an unwillingness to commit new or redeploy existing resources to encourage collaboration.

Indeed, in so far as the framework makes it possible to rank policy areas in terms of their relative joined-up-ness, well-resourced policy actors were clearly more willing to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty in the SEN policy area than in the ACL policy area. As a consequence, it is argued that SEN policy-making in both jurisdictions was 'more joined-up' than ACL policy-making.

There is clearly variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action across case studies, but why should this be the case? Are the policy actors involved in ACL less enthusiastic about – or more resistant too – the principles and *modus operandi* of JUG than their SEN counterparts? Are there some features of ACL policy that cause policy actors to adopt a different, more circumspect mode of behaviour? At the most senior ministerial and civil service levels, some of the same individuals were involved in both of the respective processes: why should these individuals' behaviour vary in this way?

This key question of variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action – between policy areas, but also across jurisdictions and even levels of government – is addressed in the following chapter.

Table 5.3 Summary of joined-up thinking and action

Level of trust	SEN policy processes and outputs		ACL policy processes and outputs	
	Wales	Scotland	Wales	Scotland
Normative	None	None	None	None
Goodwill	Relationship between ELL Committee and Assembly Government Pooling of resources for regional provision of SLT services Handing policy agenda to stakeholding groups in SALTAG	Relationship between ECS Committee and the Scottish Executive Pooling of departmental budgets as part of CSP negotiations	None *The CCET structure ultimately failed as an institutional arrangement precisely because of an absence of goodwill among their disparate stakeholder membership*	None
Contract	Use of finding mechanisms such as the FSG and Cymorth to encourage collaborative work	CSP places statutory requirement on agencies to coordinate activities	Communities First Outcomes fund adds an important funding mechanism to what had been a mere aspiration for 'programme bending'	ILA Scotland funding arrangements encourage partners to focus provision on those in the most disadvantaged circumstances
Prudential	High frequency and high quality consultation Involvement of outside experts	High frequency and high quality consultation Involvement of outside experts	High frequency and high quality consultation Involvement of outside experts	High frequency and high quality consultation Involvement of outside experts
Informational	Policy issues consistently framed as cross-cutting problems *Making the Connections* agenda	Policy issues consistently framed as cross-cutting problems *Making the Connections* agenda	Policy issues consistently framed as cross-cutting problems *Changing to Deliver* agenda	Policy issues consistently framed as cross-cutting problems *Changing to Deliver* agenda

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Notes to chapter 5

[1] Although there was considerable variation between policy areas, there was only minimal variation across jurisdictions. This was restricted to differences in the level of legislative competence and policy-making capacity between Scotland, with its greater history of self determination, and Wales.

[2] Understandably, the interviewee wished this particular contribution to remain anonymous.

[3] However, it is instructive that neither the Assembly government nor the Scottish Executive has taken the opportunity presented by widespread enthusiasm for the broad aims of JUG to undertake any kind of JUG-based evaluation of policy-making in their jurisdictions. Interviewees agreed that such an evaluation would be useful to inform future activity and it was mooted that there could be some kind of JUG 'test' that proposals should meet before being acted upon (Interview 13). However, there was universal agreement that confidence in JUG as a mode of policy- and decision-making (and in the track record of the Assembly government and Scottish Executive in joining-up their activities in the last decade) was not yet strong enough for such an evaluation to become a reality.

[4] The inclusion of 2008 data is justified by the fact that the Assembly government undertook this analysis using its 'Policy Integration Tool' (PIT). The same PIT was used in a number of other policy areas during the period of study and therefore represents a standard approach by the Assembly government.

[5] This table is reproduction of the one produced by the Assembly government (2008: 32)

[6] This is speculation. No interviewee made either link explicitly.

[7] This raises the broader question of 'match funding', which has become a ubiquitous requirement for organisations wishing to apply for funding in a range of policy areas in both nations. While this development may well be motivated by a desire to tackle cross-cutting issues it is, of course, also motivated by a desire on the part of funding bodies (which include, but are not restricted to governments and government agencies) to maximise the impact of their own resource and get 'more bang for their buck'.

[8] The degree of goodwill trust demonstrated in the ASD work is made more remarkable when one considers the close policy relationships between the Assembly government and a small number of actors in civil society that are identified below.

[9] The explanatory utility of scale is discussed in chapter 6.

[10] Whether the *outcome* of this policy innovation has successfully addressed the cross-cutting problem is, however, a moot point. There remain significant gaps in coordinated service provision and the future of the projects is uncertain.

[11] A speech delivered to the Institute of Welsh Affairs (IWA), November 13th 2000 (Morgan 2000).

[12] This is Germany's upper chamber.

[13] As such, the Committee is similar to Lowenberg and Patterson's characterisation of a 'corporate committee' (1979, quoted in Arter 2002: 101; see also Mattson 1996: 137-140), in which 'decision-making processes are highly autonomous [because] members have a strong sense of identification with the committee and satisfaction with its performance.'

[14] ETAG was set up by the Welsh Office in 1997 and charged with the task of re-organising the whole of non-university post-16 education in Wales (see ETAG 1999). The Post-16 Committee's most notable contributions to the resulting Education and Training Action Plan for Wales (ETAP) were the creation of the National Council for Education and Training in Wales and the national careers service, *Careers Wales* (ELLC 2003). For more detail on ETAG and ETAP, see chapter 4: 83-84.

[15] Parts of both reviews were undertaken by the ELL Committee after the Post-16 Committee was wound-up in 2000.

[16] Both the Pre- and Post-16 Committees showed no sign of splitting along party lines during their lifetimes and the latter was the first in the National Assembly to appoint a special advisor of any description when the filmmaker, Ceri Sherlock, took on that role for its review of arts and culture policy (Post-16 Committee 2000b: para. 1.2). This can be taken as further evidence that the ELL Committee's role in formulating SEN policy had a foundation in previous committee work in the area of education.

[17] The contractual level of trust demonstrated by participants in policy processes and outputs associated with the ILA Scotland policy means that it is without doubt an example of joined-up thinking and action. However, goodwill trust creates qualitatively different kinds of JUG and it is arguable that budget pooling between, for example, education and economic development or enterprise in Scotland, could have developed an ILA policy that was far better equipped to tackle the problem of low skills in deprived communities.

6

Analysis: explaining variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action

The analysis in chapter 5 identified a marked variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action between the special educational needs (SEN) and adult and community learning (ACL) policy areas in Scotland and Wales. Policy processes and outputs which demonstrated the existence of 'goodwill' trust between actors were shown to be more common in the SEN policy area than in the ACL policy area in both nations during the period of study and, as a consequence, policy-making in the former was described as being 'more joined-up' than in the latter (see chapter 5: 100).

This chapter seeks to explain this variation by exploring the idea that conditions in a given policy-making context can be more or less favourable for joined-up governance (JUG). To this end, it examines SEN and ACL policy processes and outputs in the light of the set of seven key variables identified in chapter 3 as having the potential to influence the number and quality of trust relationships within a given policy context. It is shown how two of these variables – the level of political sensitivity of a policy area and the level of existing consensus within a policy area - played out quite differently in the SEN and ACL cases (see chapter 3: 63-65). The relatively low political sensitivity of SEN, combined with the relatively high level of existing consensus within the policy area, allowed SEN actors to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty in conditions that did not seriously jeopardise their

narrow institutional interests. Crucially, participation in a joined-up SEN policy process in Scotland and Wales took place in conditions that were perceived to be 'institutionally safe'.

The second section of the chapter broadens out the discussion with an examination of two variables that are particularly relevant for a study of JUG in the devolved setting; namely, the scale of the policy-making context and the age of the competent political institution. It is shown that the relatively small scale of policy-making in Scotland and Wales had a major influence on the formation of trust relationships in all of the case studies and some clear examples are identified where scale was an important factor in cultivating what Jasper Eshuis and Cees Van Woerkum (2003) call 'individual' trust (see chapter 2: 40-43). However, it is also shown how the positive impact of scale was counter-balanced to some extent by the relatively young age of both devolved institutions. There were few relationships within any of the case studies which could be described as having become *institutionalised* and those forms of trust usually associated with more established policy-making contexts were largely absent.

The final section asks whether an appreciation of how these key variables influence the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action can help move the study of JUG towards a predictive model in which the degree of 'joined-up-ness' in a given policy context – at least with regard to its policy processes and outputs – can be confidently forecast. It is concluded that, while identifying the degree of specificity in the chosen case studies may reinforce the legitimacy and validity of some generalisations drawn from their findings, further analysis must be conducted in a range of additional cases if a full understanding of the relationship between the conditions in a given policy context and the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action is to be claimed.

6.1 Explaining variation between policy areas: seven key variables

The analysis in chapter 5 showed that policy processes and outputs in the ACL area were broadly comparable to those in the SEN policy area at the lower tiers of the framework developed for the descriptive evaluation of JUG, the Hierarchy of Joined-

up Thinking and Action (HJTA). ACL policy issues were consistently framed as cross-cutting problems and there was evidence of a widespread recognition among stakeholders with both education and economic development orientations that it was necessary to work more closely together to find joined-up solutions. The *Making the Connections* and *Changing to Deliver* agendas in the two jurisdictions had some success in moving the way ACL policy problems and solutions were imagined in Scotland and Wales towards a new, more joined-up mode of thinking. It is not a finding of the research, then, that policy-makers in the ACL policy area in Scotland and Wales were more resistant to the *idea* of JUG than their counterparts in the SEN policy area or, indeed, that they were any less enthusiastic about the difference greater coordination and inclusiveness could make to policy formulation and implementation in their field. Despite this common ground, however, the analysis in chapter 5 also demonstrated that ACL policy actors in both jurisdictions did not enter into the same number of goodwill trust relationships as their counterparts working in SEN and consequently failed to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty to the same extent. Indeed, ACL was characterised to some extent by a lack of goodwill trust between actors. This section considers how this important variation in behaviour might be accounted for.[1]

The starting point for the analysis is the set of seven key variables identified alongside the HJTA in chapter 3 as having the potential to influence the number and quality of trust relationships that form within a given policy context. These are summarised in Table 6.1. The following discussion examines the ways in which each of these key variables influenced the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action in the SEN and ACL case studies in Scotland and Wales and considers any evidence of variation across policy areas, between jurisdictions and over time.

Table 6.1 Seven key variables which may influence the conditions for JUG

Variable	Potential for influencing the number and quality of trust relationships
Level of policy-making capacity	Well-resourced actors may be forced into trust relationships as a way of supplementing capacity
Level of political sensitivity	Well-resourced actors may be more likely to loosen control over policy-making if developments within the policy area are perceived to have few implications for party or electoral politics
Level of existing consensus	A strong consensus may cause actors to perceive less risk in pooling policy- and decision-making sovereignty
Level of legislative competence	A greater legislative competence can reinforce trust relationships by providing legal recourse for participants
Resources available to government	A need to achieve efficiency savings may drive collaborative practice
Scale of the policy-making context	Smaller scale may increase opportunities to develop policy relationships based on 'individual' trust (Eshuis & Van Woerkum 2003)
Age of the competent political institution	An established institutional context may allow greater continuity in relationships and help actors make trust decisions based on a settled reputation or known history of behaviour.

6.1.1 Variable 1: the existing level of policy-making capacity

The first variable to consider is the existing level of policy-making capacity within each case study; that is, the capacity within government for policy to be formulated and implemented effectively. The level of policy-making capacity has the potential to influence the number and quality of trust relationships in a given policy context substantially because even those government actors that are disinclined to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty may be forced into trust relationships with other, sometimes less well-resourced actors, where there is a real or perceived dearth of expertise and local knowledge or, in severe cases, a simple need for greater manpower. Moreover, it is reasonable to suggest that this kind of under-capacity would be a particular feature of new jurisdictions, where a robust tradition and settled pattern of policy-making is unlikely to have been established. For this reason, the

pre-devolution policy-making capacity in Scotland and Wales forms an important part of the discussion.

The senior civil servants in the Scottish Executive who contributed to the research into SEN policy processes and outputs did not explain their apparent enthusiasm for passing parts of the policy agenda to other actors by citing a lack of capacity within their own departmental structures. On the contrary, all of the interviewees made a point of emphasising the dramatic *increase* in capacity and a related explosion in policy-making activity in their departments since devolution. As Mike Gibson, then Head of the Scottish Executive's Support for Learning Division, noted:

> When I, as an HMI, was involved with the policy people in [the Scottish Office] there was about four people responsible for special needs – and that was called a 'branch' – and basically all they did was look after the funding of seven grant-aided special schools which we still have … there wasn't a lot of proactive policy formulation at all. And now, moving from about three or four people to about twenty five, this is a very active policy-making environment.
>
> (Interview 18)

Despite this, there is some evidence that the Scottish Executive developed links with a number of specialist organisations in the third sector in order to build its policy-making capacity, particularly around the more specialised issues within the SEN policy area. As Ann Auchterlonie, the Director of Afasic Scotland, a leading speech and language therapy (SLT) organisation, explained:

> It's maybe a bit strong to say that the Scottish Executive relies on us exclusively … but what I would say is that it relies on a range of organisations like ours … and it realises that the expertise in these areas for formulating policy ideas is not always available through traditional channels.
>
> (Interview 14)

There is a stronger case to be made for a lack of policy-making capacity acting as motivation for government actors to develop close relationships with third sector organisations in Wales. Andrew Davies, formerly the Assembly government Minister for Economic Development and now with the Finance and Public Service Delivery portfolio, suggested that 'devolution was more of a challenge for civil servants [in Wales] than it was for politicians' precisely because there had been virtually no policy-making capacity in the Welsh Office before 1999 (Interview 10). The new Welsh civil service, he argued, found it more difficult to develop its policy-

making capacity than its counterpart in Scotland because it had been even more reliant on (or beholden to) Whitehall for its policy lead. This was compounded, he argued, by a comparative poverty of resources:

> There have been some real big challenges in Wales that I don't think the Scots have had. The Scottish Office always has been more generously funded than the Welsh Office – it's had more civil servants – and this has continued into devolution'
>
> (Interview 10)

This point of view was echoed by one official during Alistair Cole's (2003: 228) research into the new National Assembly civil service in 2001-02:

> During the Welsh office days, we were staffed as an off-shoot of Whitehall, relying on the lead department of Whitehall to do the bulk of the legwork. We tuned government policy to the Welsh perspective. We are now being asked to act as a free-standing government

Cole (2003: 228) further drew attention to the 'sense of being over-burdened' that was reported in the interviews, along with 'the belief that resources had not increased commensurably with responsibilities', particularly with regard to a new policy development role.

Of course, policy-making capacity is about more than the number of civil servants at the disposal of the responsible department. Just as important is the experience of those civil servants, both in government as policy-makers and in the specific context of the jurisdiction and policy area in question.[2] From this point of view, the level of policy-making capacity in Wales seems to have been particularly low. This can be seen as in some ways an inevitable consequence of a new pattern of governance and the close relationships government actors developed with some voluntary sector organisations – among them NIACE Dysgu Cymru, Autism Cymru and Afasic Cymru – may be indicative of those government actors attempting to develop the policy-making capacity within their jurisdiction. While most interviewees chose not to offer a view on the role of policy-making capacity in specific relationships with other actors, there is some evidence to suggest this was indeed an important factor. The relationship between, on the one hand, ministers and senior officials in a number of Assembly government departments, and, on the other, the Chief Executive of Autism Cymru, might be taken as an example of this effect (see chapter

5: 116). The civil servant responsible for taking forward ASD policy in the Assembly Government explained that Autism Cymru's undoubtedly influential involvement in the development of the All Wales ASD Strategy began as a result of a lack of expertise within the Assembly government in what is a highly specialised area but, crucially, developed into a close trust relationship during the course of the work (Interview 12). Similarly, the way in which both the Assembly government and the Scottish Executive welcomed and encouraged the influential SEN policy reviews instigated by the respective committees in the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly demonstrated a need for an actor other than a government department to take some of the strain of policy formulation.[3] It is important to emphasise that both Committees adopted clear-cut policy formulation roles in their respective reviews and Peter Black, the Chair of the ELLC Committee in Wales, certainly saw it in that way:

> I think it was a very good example of a policy-making role and one which took place over a number of years, which in itself is actually really quite unusual ... most other policy reviews have more of a scrutiny role and this will certainly be more of the case in the third assembly.
>
> (Interview 9)

The evidence suggests that a relative lack of initial policy-making capacity in both jurisdictions may have helped contribute to more favourable conditions for JUG in the years that followed.[4] Peter Black explained that the Assembly government gave the ELL Committee an unusual amount of support and encouragement in what was, after all, a wholly independent review:

> The civil service were extremely supportive of [the ELL Committee's] review and, although it wasn't officially a joint review, on some levels it really did operate like that, such was the encouragement we received from officials.
>
> (Interview 9)

In what may seem a perverse way, then, a relative lack of policy-making capacity in both nations, but particularly in Wales, may have led – or, in most cases, may eventually lead - to more joined-up policy processes and outputs. Relationships such as that involving Autism Cymru that begin as result of under-capacity can change over time and become relationships born of necessity, but grown through trust.

The main variation in the cases studies for this particular variable was therefore between jurisdictions, rather than policy areas. In broad terms, a greater policy-making capacity in terms of the resources held by the civil service, combined with a more established policy-making tradition based around a more powerful and influential pre-devolution set-up in the form of the Scottish Office, meant that developing very close relationships with third sector actors was less of a priority for governmental actors in Scotland than in Wales. However, it is important not to over-emphasise this difference and it is not a finding of the research that this led directly to any marked variation in the extent and nature of joined-up thinking and action between the two nations.[5]

6.1.2 Variable 2: the level of political sensitivity

The second key variable to examine is the level of political sensitivity within the SEN and ACL policy areas in Scotland and Wales. This is a potentially significant variable because government departments and other traditionally-powerful actors may be more likely to retreat to the safety of departmental control of policy processes and outputs when a policy issue is exposed to unusual public scrutiny or has direct electoral or party political implications.

The evidence shows that this is one of the variables where there is greatest contrast between SEN and ACL policy processes and outputs in both nations. Although SEN sometimes registers on the radar of the popular media – often as a result of specific cases – it is widely accepted among policy-makers in both nations that contributed to the research that it is an area of policy that is not consistently under the media microscope or high on the political agenda. Indeed, for Peter Black, the Chair of the National Assembly's Education and Lifelong Learning Committee (ELL Committee) that undertook a comprehensive review of SEN policy in 2004/5, it is not an area of work that, at the moment at least, can even be considered to be party political in any real sense (Interview 9). ACL, on the other hand, is inextricably linked to the skills agenda, is a policy area that receives regular media coverage, and was a high profile component of all political parties' election manifestos for the May 2007 devolved elections. In short, the political stakes were considerably higher in

ACL policy during the period of study.

The influence of the variable is not restricted to relationships between governmental actors and those in civil society. The SEN policy reviews conducted by the ELL Committee and its counterpart in the Scottish Parliament were both marked by an unusual degree of non-partisanship. Peter Black made the point:

> I didn't think there were any party political divisions at all – or even divisions of ideology. I don't recall any disagreement on ideological grounds at all in terms of doing the reports together ...
>
> (Interview 9)

It is important to note, however, that political sensitivity is a highly volatile variable, as fickle and unpredictable as politics itself. A sudden change in the political salience of or media interest in a policy issue – possibly driven by a particularly high profile case or incident - could have the effect of changing the nature and extent of joined-up thinking within a short period. The speed of change in this variable has to some extent been shown in England where, as is noted elsewhere, David Cameron, the Conservative leader, has reflected a renewed interest in the quite fundamental debate on how, where and with whom children with SEN should be schooled in England by introducing the subject into his highest profile political speeches (Cameron 2005; see chapter 4: 77-78). ACL is a further case in point. For many years it was a policy area with a distinctly local profile that was rarely made mention of in regional or national forums. However, the emergence of the skills agenda, and the crucial link that has been made in both Scotland and Wales between ACL and the need to up-skill members of disadvantaged communities in particular, have launched the policy area into the mainstream of day-to-day political debate. More pertinently, ACL has become part of a measurable commitment to raising skills among certain groups that exposes government actors to potential scrutiny from a range of sources, including the media (e.g. SE 2006; WAG 2005c).

Although there is clearly a danger of portraying the political sensitivity of the two policy areas as being static, it is possible to conclude that, in the specific time scale of the case studies, well-resourced policy actors had more to lose by pooling policy- and decision-making sovereignty in the ACL policy area.

6.1.3 Variable 3: the level of existing consensus[6]

Chapter 3 identified the degree of existing consensus within a given policy context as a further variable that may help explain variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action. The extent to which the direction of travel in a particular policy area is subject to debate may condition the behaviour of all policy-actors, not merely that of the well-resourced. Even a well-intentioned government actor that is liberated from any preoccupation with its own institutional interests may struggle to cultivate or sustain effective trust relationships where it suspects that involving actors with divergent views on the direction in which policy should travel may result in unpredictable and unwanted policy developments.

It was noted in chapter 4 that, for many years, the most debated SEN policy issue in the UK was whether to *include* children with SEN in mainstream schooling, or else to *segregate* those children in special schools or other segregated settings. This debate seemed to have been settled on the side of inclusion by the early 1980s, but is slowly re-emerging in the English context. In both Scotland and Wales, however, the hegemonic position of inclusion remains unchallenged and inclusion-versus-segregation is yet to re-emerge as a major issue within the Scottish and Welsh SEN policy debates. Indeed, in Scotland, the right for a child with SEN of any kind to be admitted to a mainstream school remains enshrined in statute in the form of the Education (Scotland) Act 1981. This level of consensus can be contrasted, however, with the contested nature of policy- and decision-making in the area of ACL, where policy actors with economic development and education orientations have competing claims not only over the nature of provision, but also over its purpose.

There was a great deal of evidence in the case studies of the impact this different level of consensus had in the two policy areas. The value of a high level of existing consensus in the SEN policy area is demonstrated clearly by the work of the Speech and Language Therapy Action Group (SALTAG) in Wales and, in particular, the way the group was able to overcome quite serious disagreements about the detail of SLT provision in Wales. As a forum, SALTAG was able to work through differences in the details of policy proposals because participants in the process shared the same fundamental position; namely, that SLT provision needed to be coordinated more

closely (see chapter 5: 116-117). There is evidence of a similar level of consensus having an equally positive impact on the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action in the SEN policy area in Scotland. Euan Robson, the former Deputy Minister for Education and Young People who took the key Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act through the Scottish Parliament in 2003, was in no doubt that the passage of this legislation through the Parliament and, indeed, its reception since, was at least partly a function of the settled debates at the heart of the SEN policy area in Scotland:

> If you were to look at a crude balance of who [was] in favour of [the direction of SEN policy-making in Scotland] I would say it [was] easily 85/90% in favour, possibly 10% with some reservations and about 2% without outright objections. Now, the 2% with outright objections believed in – I would describe them as 'extreme mainstreamers' – in other words, there should be no difference between any child. Now, in fact, when talking to them I had to say that that was the ultimate objective and that they should read the general duty [contained within the ASL legislation] as a step on that particular road and the Coordinated Support Plan as a specific measure to address the specific difficulties of inter-agency coordination ...
>
> (Interview 22)

Even those interests who expressed initial opposition to the legislation and, in particular, to the Coordinated Support Plan (CSP) as the instrument for coordinating services for children with multiple additional needs, occupied policy positions close enough to the prevailing consensus for their objections to soften significantly over time:

> One lady [from a particular interest group] was very much of the view that this was a bad idea, this whole piece of legislation, because it picked people out and stigmatised them ... but talking to her subsequently I do believe that she began to see that our intention was not to compartmentalise, pigeon-hole or single-out or stigmatise anybody – quite the reverse.
>
> (Interview 22)

This picture can be contrasted quite clearly with the situation in the ACL policy area, where good intentions to develop joined-up thinking and action were consistently undermined by a general absence of consensus on the direction ACL policy should move in. The Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs) in Wales are a good example. As is noted in chapter 5, the CCETs were quite similar to SALTAG in their remit and range of membership (albeit with a sub-

regional rather than national focus). However, in spite of some acclaimed but isolated successes such as the Learning Brokers project (see chapter 4: 84-85), interviewees shared the view that the CCETs structure failed in large part because of a lack of consensus among members who had competing ideas of how policy should be developed (Interview 7; Interview 5). Indeed, business representatives largely ignored the Consortia, partly because they did not seem to fit in with their time commitments, but also because theirs and the views of various other stakeholders could not be reconciled (Phelps et al 2006). One ELWa representative told Nick Phelps and his colleagues (2006: 569) during an interview undertaken as part of a research project into business representation in Wales, that the CCETs had merely succeeding in exposing stakeholders' divergent positions:

> The squabbles that go on if [CCET members] are in a meeting together is not really conducive to a bloke giving up his time from running his business to be constructive about the various needs in the area. And I think until we sort this out we are not actually going to get business people involved. I would honestly say that at CCET level ... the business influence in what CCETs are doing is now next to nothing

6.1.4 Variable 4: the level of executive competence and legislative power

The level of executive and legislative power is one of a small number of variables where there is some clear and noteworthy variation between jurisdictions. Although both the Scottish Executive and Assembly government had responsibility for SEN provision in their respective jurisdictions, the former was able to support its SEN reforms with an innovative piece of legislation in the form of the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004.[7] The strength of the Coordinated Support Plan (CSP), a key component in this legislation, as a piece of joined-up thinking and action lies in its power to compel agencies to fulfil their commitments to children with additional support needs (ASN). Although the progression of the CSP from policy proposal to active legislation was entirely dependent upon the high level trust relationships that existed in the background negotiations between education and health actors, the Scottish Parliament's higher level of legislative competence enabled the Scottish Executive to preside over what is arguably a more robust joined-up response to SEN than that which was seen in Wales.

However, the impact of this difference in legislative competence would largely be detectable only in an analysis or evaluation of *outcomes*. The real value of the CSP as a statutory mechanism lies in translating joined-up thinking and action into joined-up service provision. Although an outcomes-focused assessment must be seen as the strictest test of how joined-up policy-making is in any context, it is beyond the scope of this study. As such, is not possible to elaborate further upon a variable that clearly has the potential to influence JUG here.

Although the Scottish Executive enjoyed a similar level of legislative advantage over the Assembly government in the ACL policy area, there is no comparable legislative measure to the CSP to discuss. However, the data is not robust enough to inform any assessment of whether this absence is significant. While it may be the case that policy-makers were unable to commit to the same kind of resource pooling that made the CSP possible, it may also be the case that a legislative response to the problems perceived in the ACL policy area was not deemed necessary or seen as the most effective policy response.

6.1.5 Variable 5: the overall resources available to government

As JUG is closely linked to efficiency and, therefore, to 'efficiency savings', it is to be expected that a less generous settlement for the Scottish Parliament or National Assembly would potentially lead to a more enthusiastic approach to JUG. The period of study was a time of relative plenty for both devolved governments and there is an expectation that budgets for the Scottish Parliament and National Assembly will be far less generous in the coming Parliament. This is therefore a variable that may offer greater insight in a longitudinal case study.

However, the overall resources available may already be coming into when one considers the change in focus with regard to the 'programme bending' aspiration of the Assembly government's Communities First programme. Although not strictly an example taken from either of the case studies (perhaps indicating further the unhelpful arbitrariness of 'policy areas' when problems are so interconnected), the development of Communities First during the period of study indicates this point well. The architects of the programme initially chose to focus on so-called 'soft'

outcomes; that is to say, on building the confidence and levels of engagement of people living in the most deprived communities in Wales. As is noted elsewhere, the notion of 'programme bending' at this stage was restricted to being just that, a notion (see chapter 5: 113). However, a less generous financial settlement has coincided with the Assembly Government attempting to refocus Communities First onto delivering more measurable 'hard' outcomes – including the skills and qualifications gained by members of disadvantaged communities, the associated level of economic inactivity in those communities and, ultimately, the number of people entering employment – and, crucially, programme bending has been endowed with a precious additional (or at least a differently deployed) resource to help achieve this in the shape of the Communities First Outcomes Fund (see chapter 5: 113).

The Family Employment Initiative (FEI), which was described in chapter 5 (113), is a clear example of how the Outcomes Fund is already encouraging a more collaborative approach to tackling low skills and economic inactivity in deprived communities. By requiring policy actors to pool their own resources in order to qualify for Outcomes Fund investment, Communities First has managed to 'procure' collaboration and address the low skills of members of deprived communities in a way that draws on expertise and experience from a wide range of perspectives. Crucially for the analysis in this section, it makes, its architects may argue, efficient use of public funds to tackle a cross-cutting issue.

This analysis of difference in the first five of the set of seven key variables has shown that the level of political sensitivity of SEN, combined with the relatively high level of existing consensus in the policy area, influenced the formation of trust relationships greatly during the period of study and, in turn, the extent to which policy actors were prepared to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty: examples of resource pooling and close relationships between government and non-governmental actors that directly influenced the nature and trajectory of policy-making were exclusive to SEN policy area.

The implications of this finding will disappoint the more committed disciples of JUG. This is because both of these key variables deal primarily with risk: the risk of policy control being lost and there being unwanted consequences for party or

electoral politics (the level of political sensitivity), and the risk that the direction of policy may take an unpredictable and unwanted turn (the level of existing consensus). Crucially, policy actors that are prepared to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty only under these kinds of quite specific, low risk conditions can be seen as behaving in what might be described as an 'institutionally safe' way. Such actors understand that failing to tackle cross-cutting problems will have debilitating effect on the effectiveness of policy formulation and implementation and broadly subscribe to the core principles of JUG, but are only prepared to enter into goodwill trust relationships where they perceive a low level institutional risk; that is, where they do not imagine that doing so will undermine their own position or that of any other actors they are particularly aligned with.[8]

Of course, the failure to join-up ACL policy to the same extent as SEN, and the lack of a normative commitment to JUG as a mode of policy- and decision-making in both policy areas, raises an important question about the limitations of the JUG doctrine in its current form: if, as the case studies suggest, well-resourced policy actors will only enter relationships based on goodwill trust when they perceive a low degree of institutional risk, how will the most acute, cross-cutting, 'wicked' problems (which, almost by definition, are those where there is least consensus within the policy milieu and a high level of political sensitivity), be effectively tackled? This question forms part of the discussion in chapter 7.

6.2 'Smallness', 'newness' and conditions for JUG in the devolved context

The analysis so far has been restricted to an examination of variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action where it occurs across policy areas and (to a lesser extent) between jurisdictions. However, there are two important variables that may cause the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action to vary between levels of government; in the case of this study, between the new devolved and more established UK contexts. The scale of the policy-making context and the age of the competent political institutions in the devolved setting are clearly very different to, for instance, the Westminster-Whitehall setting, and the following section examines the influence these variables had on the nature and extent of

joined-up thinking and action in the case studies.[9]

6.2.1 Variable 6: the scale of the policy-making context

> There are huge positives ... if you just take it at a political level, the fact that – unlike in Westminster or Whitehall – all ministers, cabinet ministers – I think it's still true – are all on the same floor in the same building ... that physical proximity makes a big difference. The fact that the decision-making chain is shorter is also a factor ... there is a complex web of inter-relationships - formal and informal – it gives policy-making a certain intimacy.
>
> <div align="right">Andrew Davies, Assembly Government Minister (Interview 10)</div>

It was noted in chapter 3 that the scale of the policy-making context – the scale in terms of numbers of actors involved and, indeed, of the geographic spread of actors – may be particularly relevant for the individual-type trust relationships identified by Eshuis and Van Woerkum (2003) and discussed in some detail in chapter 2 (40-43). Such relationships are founded on a continuity of face-to-face contacts and the 'orality' – the body language, eye-contact and verbal exchanges - they contain (Bāhre & Smets 1999). Such contacts enable policy actors to develop close relationships based on mutual intellectual respect, or a shared understanding of policy issues. They help cultivate empathy. Stereotyped ideas of certain categories of actors – the 'voluntary sector', say - can also be overcome in a face-to-face context (although one must not ignore the possibility that prejudices can also be reinforced). The point is that relationships based on high frequency, high quality contact often become 'overlaid with social content that carries strong expectations of ... abstention from opportunism' (Granovetter 1985: 490, quoted in Eshuis & Van Woerkum 2003: 381). A smaller policy-making context may therefore help to create a series of relationships within which actors 'will expose themselves [to risk] more easily, are more receptive to other's [sic] ideas, accept more interdependence, and have less need to impose control on others' (Klein Woolthuis et al 2002: 5, quoted in Eshuis and Van Woerkum 2003: 382). Smaller scale can provide opportunities for higher quality and higher frequency face-to-face contact between key policy actors than is possible in larger bureaucratic settings like Westminster-Whitehall.

The importance of relationships between individuals in the policy- and decision-making process was articulated by Keith Ingham, then the Head of Children's Health

and Social Services at the Assembly government:

> Whatever structural arrangement you have – and we have some quite effective arrangements in place, we're certainly less compartmentalised than Whitehall, whatever the proximity and the rest – it still inevitably comes down to individuals ...
>
> (Interview 12)

This was echoed at the ministerial level by Andrew Davies, for whom:

> Scale is undoubtedly one of the critical issues – it's the elephant in the room in this discussion ... I've been a minister from the very beginning ... my first contact with the UK government was on 'egovernment' and it just struck me, I was on this UK ministerial committee and in the end I stopped going ... it was just this debate, this argument between UK Whitehall government departments ... it just struck me that the sheer scale of Whitehall made a joined-up approach hugely problematic ... Scale is an important factor and I think the complexity of modern government is underestimated.
>
> (Interview 10)

Importantly for the analysis here, there is almost the same amount of evidence of scale developing closer individual trust relationships in the ACL field as the following exchange with Andrew Davies reveals:

> CL   Do you find, as a decision-maker, that getting to know people on a face-to face level helps you 'trust' a particular organisation in a way that, if it was just a name and an organisation 'out there' in civil society, you would be less inclined to hand over part of the policy agenda?
>
> AD   Oh, without doubt – I think that's been a big factor. I see [a particular head of a voluntary organisation identified elsewhere as being influential in the ACL field in Wales] formally, informally, we actually meet for coffee. So I think that's a huge advantage ...
>
> (Interview 10)

Euan Robson, the Deputy Minister who took the key SEN legislation through the Scottish Parliament in 2003, also saw the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action as being closely linked to the relatively small scale of the policy-making context. So much so, in fact, that he saw it as part of an argument for strengthened regional government structures south of the border:

> As a Liberal you'd perhaps expect me to want to talk about regional government in England and I have to say that, while it could be *possible* to draft similar legislation [to the ASL legislation in Scotland] in Westminster, it would be entirely necessary for 'buy-in' to that policy change to be delivered in a smaller, regional government setting. A regional government of, say, the South West of England – population 10

million, say – could more easily foster the relationships and would be better placed to coordinate activity in a way in which it can be done in Scotland.

<div align="right">(Interview 22)</div>

Just as ministers perceived the benefits of scale for building individual trust, so their senior officials identified smallness as a key variable. Keith Ingham, the Head of Children's Health and Social Services at the Assembly Government, admitted that the 'smallness' of the policy-making context in Wales made it possible to forge remarkably close relationships with non-governmental actors. In chapter 5 it was noted that the chief Executive of Autism Cymru claimed informal access to ministers and senior civil servants had given him considerable influence over the development of the ASD All Wales Strategy. Ingham confirmed this relationship:

CL   Picking up on what you were saying about how prepared officials and ministers are to work with people from outside the government or departmental setting, do you think this has influenced your relationship with, for example, someone like [the Head of Autism Cymru]? Could such a relationship be so close in the context of a larger bureaucracy?

KI   Well, far less likely and I'd go as far as to say it wouldn't happen. It carries its risks as well. You are potentially a lot more exposed ... but fundamentally it's a more Welsh way of doing things.

<div align="right">(Interview 12)</div>

The influence of scale, then, applies equally to vertical relationships as it does to horizontal, cross-departmental ones.[10] Stakeholders in all of the case studies reported very clearly that the opportunity for frequent and high quality face-to-face contact with decision-makers had transformed their ability to build and sustain the kinds of close relationships that help them to influence policy in a way that is not a function of the resources they can mobilise.

One speech and language therapy pressure group working in Scotland saw the benefits of scale following devolution. Ann Auchterlonie, the Director of Afasic Scotland, noted that the organisation had suffered in the days of the Scottish Office from an image of being militant and problematic for policy-makers, compounded by limited opportunities to meet with decision-makers who were often located in Whitehall. Following devolution, the organisation had the chance to meet with senior

officials from the Scottish Executive to discuss its potential contribution to policy-making in the field:

> I went in for a meeting with one of them and he had on his desk a very large file on us ... and I went in ... and he was very nice but he was quite guarded and we talked about [the organisation] and he asked me about our policy. I said to him I saw our role as working collaboratively in cooperation with the Scottish Executive, with local authorities and that we would advise parents that only when all else fails do you move towards confrontation, because when you do that there is something in the middle and that something is the child and so that for us would always be a last stage. And he looked at me and he put his hands on this large file, pushed it to the side and said 'in that case, let us talk'. And this was the file on this very 'militant' group.
>
> (Interview 14)

This is a clear example of how face-to-face contact, in a situation where each individual could make an assessment of the other based on exchanges that may be off-the-record or candid in some way – Erik Bãhre and Peer Smets' (1999) 'orality' - can make the difference between mutual suspicion and constructive collaboration. More pertinently, there can be no doubt that opportunities for this kind of contact were more frequent in the smaller setting.

Smaller organisations have taken time to get used to this situation which is quite different from the kinds of opportunities they enjoyed in the pre-devolution era. Andrew Davies has experienced their surprise:

> People would often say to me, certainly when I was Enterprise minister [in the early part of his career as a minister], 'Gosh, I would never ever have thought I could get to see a minister ...'
>
> (Interview 10)

Perhaps the clearest articulation of the importance of scale for bringing in small, relatively poorly-resourced actors into the very centre of the policy- and decision-making process came from Peter Black, the Assembly Member who chaired the ELL Committee's SEN Review and who was formerly a Deputy Minister in the Assembly Government. He characterised the SEN policy milieu in particular as one where frequent and high quality contact with ministers and other key decision-makers gave some voluntary organisations influence over policy:

> What I observe is that access [to ministers] here is much better than it is in England. I hear from policy-makers, from the voluntary sector, over and over again, that here you can get a meeting with an Assembly minister, you know, fairly easily – and you

can meet them on a social level. In fact, there may be four or five different events where I come across the same person. In the SEN field, I might meet someone from, for example, SNAP Cymru at an SEN event, a small schools event, a health event, I might meet the same person at a Bevan Foundation event – all sorts of places like that – so you do build up *social relationships* with lobbyists ... and those close relationships mean that they are able to influence policy much more.

(Interview 9)

Crucially, then, it is the social content inherent in frequent and high quality face-to-face contact that moves relationships closer to the heart of the policy- and decision-making process and which can bring greater coordination to policy process.

It should be noted, however, that fewer stakeholders claimed to have had informal consultation with ministers, or an opportunity for future informal access to ministers should they require it, in Scotland than in Wales. Gaining access to the highest level of political decision-making seemed to be outside what some Scottish stakeholders saw as achievable. So, for example, Afasic Scotland had access to ministers formally in the public forum of their annual conference and through restrictive formal consultation structures, but had not made ministers a target for their informal lobbying work. This had been focused almost exclusively on senior civil servants:

Although ministers have opened our conferences and been available there to speak with members and with myself and my colleagues it would be fair to say we haven't sought direct access to influence ministers ... we've tended to work primarily through the civil servants.

(Interview 14)

There is a possibility, then, that even the quite modest difference in scale between Scotland and Wales (certainly when compared with Whitehall) has implications for the number and quality of trust relationships that are formed. Afasic Scotland's counterpart in Wales had also not deliberately sought out ministers, but had nonetheless developed the possibility of informal access through, in the main, having 'bumped into' the minister and her deputy on a number of occasions (Interview 1). The term 'village' is often applied to politics in Westminster, but in Cardiff Bay the 'villagers' include the full range of policy actors, not only governmental actors.

There was even evidence from some senior interviewees that that most enigmatic

of notions, a 'Welsh Way' of approaching the business of policy- and decision-making, had been impacting on the policy process even before devolution:

> Wales is a small country and people get to know each other. And in the same way we get to know each other 'across interests' as well. But I think there is a culture of engagement in Wales that predates devolution anyway – there is a more collaborative ethos in a sense – to the extent that policy officials in Wales are far more likely to go out and speak to and meet the people who deliver services. They ring you up and you talk to them about issues.
>
> (Interview 12)

To portray scale as an exclusively positive feature of the policy-making landscape in Scotland and Wales would, however, be a mistake. While many relationships were reinforced and qualitatively changed over time by individual trust, there were some that were undermined by individual *mis*trust. Both are cultivated in the same hot house of small scale policy-making. A number of interviewees gave examples of relationships soured and potential influence emasculated by face-to-face contact - examples where an organisation's representative had appeared unprofessional, uncommitted, uninformed or intellectually unimpressive – but understandably did not want any details placed on-the-record. Less directly related to JUG, but still a point worthy of making, is the impact small scale may have had on the quality of policy-making.

> But … there's a big down side and that is I've felt very strongly that very intimacy can have an upside and a downside. The orthodoxy can be established very quickly and it can become quite stultifying … There is a danger that a cosy 'consensuality' can emerge whereby – although it may not be articulated – the challenge to the orthodoxy is not there … and that maintaining the relationships becomes the policy objective …
>
> (Interview 10)

If one of the benefits of JUG is that it opens the policy- and decision-making process to the widest possible range of perspectives, it is not clear that smaller scale delivers a particularly 'heterogeneous' policy-making milieu.[11]

6.2.2 Variable 7: the age of the competent political institution

The final key variable to discuss is the age of the competent political institution within a given policy context. This is particularly important for Eshuis and Van Woerkum's (2003) institutional-type trust relationships because these develop

between actors *over time*. Such relationships require a period of incubation. Institutional trust is of particular interest for this study because it flows from, in large part, many of the characteristics that actors in the new context of devolved government are unlikely to be able to demonstrate: longevity of participation, continuity of interaction, proven track record.[12]

As is noted above, there is more evidence of continuity between a pre- and post-devolution policy context in Scotland than in Wales and there are examples where Scottish policy actors have relationships which span the period of constitutional change. Euan Robson explained how he inherited an embryonic form of the eventual ASL legislation (though something quite some way from being a bill) when he arrived in office. SEN, he argued, had been the subject of some limited, Scottish-specific policy activity for some years *before* devolution, principally as a result of Scotland having had its own education system:

> There had been a long history – I mean even as a layman I knew that there were difficulties with 'special educational needs'. The civil service - and Mike Gibson [the Head of Children's Health and Social Services] could without question be able to verify this – had been working on this whole area for quite a long time. I mean in the old Scottish Office days – the pre-devolution days. So Peter [Peacock, then Minister for Education and Young People] and I inherited a corpus of work focussed sharply on this area.
>
> (Interview 22)

However, all of the interviewees with some knowledge or experience in this area accepted that devolution had created a different Scottish Civil service that was 'new' in terms of its responsibilities and scale of operation and that the new structure in Wales amounted to the formation of the 'first civil service for Wales' (Interview 12)[13]

The key point here is that, while devolution has created a smaller scale – with all of the largely positive implications that brings for the formation of trust relationships and the preparedness of actors to pool policy-and decision-making sovereignty – it has also created a new policy context in which institutional trust is more difficult to detect. However, unlike the age of the competent institution, scale is not a time-sensitive variable: the policy-making context in Scotland and Wales will always benefit from the greater intimacy and closer physical proximity of policy actors. The age of the political institutions is, of course, time sensitive and it is to be expected

that institutionalised relationships will emerge as devolution moves into its second decade. Therefore, the net impact of the two variables most closely associated with the devolved setting is likely to be a positive one for better joined-up thinking and action.

6.3 Towards a predictive model of JUG?

The analysis in this chapter has demonstrated that, in the absence of a 'culture of collaboration' founded on a universal normative commitment to the principles of JUG, the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action in the chosen case studies was dependent, to a large extent, on a number of key variables. Put simply, where there was an opportunity for a well-resourced actor to demonstrate a commitment to JUG without jeopardising its own narrow institutional interests, that opportunity was generally taken: control over the nature and trajectory of policy was handed to a range of actors in civil society and the legislature; budgets and other resources were pooled. But to what extent can these findings be extended to policy-making in other policy areas and jurisdictions, and to other levels of government? Can an understanding of the conditions in which JUG thrives in a small number of policy areas in a particular institutional setting be extended into a predictive model?

The answer depends on the extent to which the degree of specificity of the chosen case or cases can be detected and, indeed, the sophistication of how the role of the variables in the SEN and ACL cases is understood. The finding that, for example, policy actors are more likely to enter into trust relationships when the policy area in question is of relatively low political sensitivity is not, in itself, enough to say with confidence that all policy areas of low political sensitivity will be characterised by these kinds of relationships. Rather, there is a complex inter-connectedness between the seven key variables discussed above. It is not clear, for example, whether low political sensitivity is only significant when it occurs *in combination* with high existing consensus and small scale. As with all case study research, generalisation is fraught with danger and claiming a predictive model would require more detailed research in a large number of differently located cases in order to uncover the relationship *between* variables. The conclusions reached in this chapter can only

therefore be used with confidence to predict the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action in those cases which mirror quite closely the quite specific conditions in the SEN and ACL cases.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the broad question of variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action. To this end, it examined SEN and ACL policy-making in Scotland and Wales in the context of a set of key variables identified as having the potential to influence the number and quality of trust relationships that form in a given policy context. This analysis is summarised in Table 6.3. In two of the variables, the conditions for JUG were shown to be significantly better in the SEN policy area. The relatively low political sensitivity of SEN, combined with the relatively high level of existing consensus in the policy area (reinforced by some under-capacity in SEN policy-making in both of the nascent devolved institutions, particularly in Wales), allowed well-resourced policy actors to demonstrate a commitment to JUG, in conditions that did not seriously jeopardise their narrow institutional interests.

Government actors' decisions to enter into a joined-up SEN policy process in both nations were therefore described as being 'institutionally safe' - as JUG, but only on their terms - and this point is reinforced when one considers that some of the government actors operating in the SEN policy area were also operating in the ACL policy area and, in the case of ministers, were sometimes represented by the same individuals. That the same actors chose different modes of behaviour in different policy areas indicates that the conditions within a given policy context strongly influence the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action.

The chapter then turned to two variables that have particular relevance to the devolved context. It was shown how scale was an important explanatory factor in the close working relationships and influential policy roles some relatively poorly-resourced actors achieved, particularly in the SEN policy area. The kind of one-to-one, face-to-face interactions that are vital for individual trust to develop between policy actors were shown to occur on a more regular and frequent basis than is

possible in larger bureaucratic contexts and it was argued that this intimacy – while not without some negative dimensions, including the possibility that familiarity may stultify policy innovation - represented a particular condition for JUG that was very favourable. The temptation to describe devolution as providing highly favourable conditions for JUG was resisted, however, by identifying the 'newness' of the devolved jurisdictions as precluding the formation of many institutionalised trust relationships.

The chapter concluded by considering the utility of this understanding of how a set of key variables influenced the formation of trust relationships for predicting the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action in other policy contexts. However, it was explained that, while the degree of specificity in the SEN and ACL policy areas in Scotland and Wales was made clearer by the analysis of the key variables, this was not sufficient to understand how each of the variables related to one another. Indeed, this level of sophistication in the analysis was beyond the scope of the research and was not supported by the robustness of the data.

Table 6.2 *Analysis of conditions for joined-up governance*

	Conditions for JUG in ACL policy area	
Variable	Scotland	Wales
1. Level of existing policy-making capacity	Neutral	Good
2. Level of political sensitivity	Poor	Poor
3. Level of existing consensus	Poor	Poor
4. Level of legislative competence	Good	Neutral
5. Level of resources available to government	Neutral	Neutral
6. The scale of the policy-making context	Good	Good
7. The age of the competent political institution	Neutral	Poor

	Conditions for JUG in SEN policy area	
Variable	Scotland	Wales
1. Level of existing policy-making capacity	Neutral	Good
2. Level of political sensitivity	Good	Good
3. Level of existing consensus	Good	Good
4. Level of legislative competence	Good	Neutral
5. Level of resources available to government	Neutral	Neutral
6. The scale of the policy-making context	Good	Good
7. The age of the competent political institution	Neutral	Poor

Notes to chapter 6

[1] This variation in behaviour is particularly stark when one considers that, particularly among political and ministerial actors, some of the same individuals and departments were active in both policy areas.

[2] A further consideration is the *quality* of civil servants at the disposal of the responsible department. However, while some interviewees did raise concerns that the best talent was often lost to Whitehall and equally that experienced Whitehall officials were generally disinclined to relocate to Cardiff or Edinburgh, this question did not form part of the semi-structured interview schedule. As a result, the data collected on this potentially significant dimension of policy-making capacity is not sufficiently robust for any clear research findings to be arrived at here.

[3] Those relationships which demonstrated clear trust between actors may have been initiated as the result of government actors being forced to engage through a lack of capacity, but it is important to note that they may equally have been initiated as a result of a new commitment to meaningful engagement with non-governmental actors. Evidence of the former gathered during the interviews is actually quite limited.

[4] It is important to draw a distinction here between close trust relationships born of a need on the part of government actors to supplement policy-making capacity and those relationships which develop between actors in Rod Rhodes' ideal-type policy community (1988; with Marsh 1992; see chapter 2: 26-29). The former are born of necessity – they are 'forced marriages' – while the latter involve choice on the part of participants and the mutually beneficial exchange of resources – they, then, are 'marriages of convenience'. For a discussion of Rhodes' typology of policy networks and the mechanism of resource dependency, see chapter 2: 26-29. The possible implications of JUG for the way policy relationships are conceptualised in the network literature is discussed in chapter 7: 173-176).

[5] This variable may have considerable additional explanatory utility if it were used to inform analysis in any comparison between policy-making in the devolved context and in a larger scale, more established context, such as Westminster.

[6] This variable was considered as a potential influence on JUG during the design of the research. It formed an important part of the rationale for choosing SEN and ACL policy processes and outputs as the key case studies in Scotland and Wales as the plainly visible differences in existing consensus between the two policy areas made sure that the case studies would represent quite different tests of JUG. This is discussed further in chapter 3 (56-57).

[7] It should be noted that the Scottish Parliament did have greater executive competence over education than the National Assembly. However, the point to be made here is that the greatest difference – and the one that made the clearest impact

on the JUG response to SEN in the two nations – was the capacity to introduce primary legislation.

8 Where collaborative practice represents any risk that the core function of a government actor will be compromised in any way, that actor will move away from collaboration. In this sense, the kind of JUG in evidence in the SEN policy area does not represent a set of policy processes and outputs that in themselves indicate that functionalism has been overcome.

9 No attempt is made here to conduct any rigorous *comparative* analysis between policy processes in Scotland and Wales and those in Whitehall. Rather, the aim is to examine what effect scale and age had on the formation of trust relationships in the two devolved nations and whether these defining features of meso-government make the conditions for JUG more or less favourable.

10 Peter Black suggested that scale also had an effect on breaking down or, as the case may be, preventing the formation of departmental silos in the devolved jurisdictions:

> There are silos in the Welsh Assembly Government ... when officials from the education department approached me and advised that we needed some Health officials involved [in the ELL Committee's review of SEN policy], we need to get health officials to give evidence to the review, I got the clear impression that they were saying to me, 'look, we've been banging our heads against a wall with them for long enough, maybe the politicians can sort them out!' But there's certainly less of this than at a UK level, simply because the scale is so much smaller.
>
> (Interview PB)

However, this was not a perspective shared by many other interviewees and there is not sufficient data to make this a finding of the research.

11 It is also worth considering the potential impact of JUG on the quality of policy-making. If proponents of JUG hold up opening the policy- and decision-making process to the greatest number of stakeholders as a means to an end (the end being better policy-making), there a danger that, in achieving a joined-up policy process, the policy goal can become focused on maintaining it; on keeping the all of the policy actors within the process. In this way, JUG can become an end in itself. Of course, whether or not this has any negative, or indeed, measurable impact on the effectiveness of joined-up policy initiatives is something that can only be examined through an assessment or evaluation on policy outcomes. This, as is mentioned elsewhere in this study, is beyond the scope of the research design, but could be explored in future work.

12 It is important at this point to draw a clear distinction between variable 7 (the age of the competent political institution) and variable 1 (the level of existing policy-making capacity). Relationships between policy actors that are the consequence of under-capacity are non-elective in the sense that (usually) government actors are

forced to trust other actors in order to proceed with the business of policy-making. In contrast, the age of the competent political institution affects relationships that are qualitatively quite different. Institutional trust is a function of time; a continuity of interaction between organisations, a shared experience of a policy problem, a common heritage of achievement. There is some superficial overlap between the variables that can not be ignored. For example, the greater continuity between, on the one hand, the Scottish Office and the Scottish Executive and, on the other, the Welsh Office and the National Assembly, has influenced both the policy-making capacity of the Scottish Executive *and* the possibility of institutionalised relationships spanning the period of constitutional change. However, it does not follow that greater policy-making capacity leads to more institutionalised trust relationships or *vice versa*. The two are in fact mutually exclusive. For this reason they are included as separate variables.

[13] It is, of course, technically inaccurate to talk in terms of a 'Welsh' or 'Scottish' civil service as both remain branches of the UK system, sharing its recruitment processes among many other features.

7

Theoretical reflection: is a joined-up governance approach a challenge to the network paradigm?

The analysis in chapter 5 identified a number of key policy processes and outputs in the special educational needs (SEN) policy area in Scotland and Wales as examples of joined-up government (JUG) in action. Although there was no evidence of a normative 'culture of collaboration' in either nation, policy actors of all descriptions entered into 'goodwill' trust relationships and pooled policy- and decision-making sovereignty in a variety of ways. While this finding has clear empirical significance, particularly as an indicator of the conditions which influence the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action in a given policy context, it also raises some important theoretical and conceptual questions: what motivates policy actors to collaborate in this way? How can close trust relationships between powerful governmental actors and small, relatively poorly-resourced groups be explained? And, more broadly, does the principle of resource exchange – the basis of the network approach - provide an adequate account of interaction within joined-up policy processes? This chapter reflects on the contribution a JUG approach can make

to the way the policy- and decision-making process is described, explained and conceptualised.

The first section of the chapter re-examines SEN policy processes and outputs in Wales through the conceptual lens of the network.[1] It is argued that the National Assembly's Education and Lifelong Learning Committee (the ELL Committee) acted as such a pro-active and effective *decision-maker* during the period of study that it may legitimately be positioned alongside government actors in what is termed the 'policy-making centre'. There then follows a detailed examination of the relationships between the centre and the various groups seeking to influence SEN policy in Wales. It is shown that the great majority of those groups observed the 'rules of the game' and sought to operate from a position 'inside' the policy process. However, it is also shown that, despite following the same broad *strategy*, such groups did not enjoy the same *status*; the centre was more receptive to some 'insiders' than others and there were clear differences in group effectiveness as a consequence. An attempt is then made to explain these differences in effectiveness in terms of resource exchange, and some of the most effective groups are shown to have been able to access or mobilise a variety of resources which helped the centre formulate and implement policy in different ways. On this basis, and following Grant Jordan et al (1992; see chapter 2: 33-34), the groups involved are divided into less influential, 'peripheral' insiders and more influential, 'specialist' insiders. It is cautiously concluded that SEN policy actors in Wales participated in a network which shared some important features of Rod Rhodes' (1988; with Marsh 1992) 'producer' type.

The second section of the chapter argues that the mechanism of 'resource dependency', which is central to the network approach and acts as the conceptual glue which holds actors together in 'producer' networks, only partially explains a number of key relationships within the SEN policy network in Wales, particularly those between small, relatively poorly-resourced groups like Autism Cymru and powerful government actors. It is argued that the network approach does not therefore provide an entirely satisfactory account of policy processes and outputs in the case study.

However, the final section restates the finding in chapter 6 that powerful actors, in particular, chose to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty in all of the case studies only when they perceived *limited institutional risk*. Even where there was strong evidence of joined-up thinking and action, institutional interests remained the main dynamic of interaction between policy actors. For this reason, a JUG approach is described as a useful way of viewing the policy- and decision-making process under certain conditions and one that complements, rather than fundamentally challenges, the network paradigm.

7.1 SEN policy processes and outputs through the conceptual lens of the network

This section re-examines SEN policy processes and outputs in Wales through the conceptual lens of the network. The central aim of the section is to describe and classify the SEN policy network in Wales by referring to the typology of networks posited by Rhodes; that is, to position the SEN network somewhere between Rhodes' 'policy community' and 'issue network' poles (1988; with Marsh 1992; see chapter 2: 27-29).

The starting point for the analysis is the role of the legislature in the SEN policy process in Wales. Chapters 4 and 5 showed the ELL Committee to be a key player in the SEN policy process, acting *pro-actively* when taking the decision to undertake its review of SEN policy, and acting *effectively* in that its recommendations were accepted by the responsible Minister and subsequently translated into real policy change (see chapter 4: 75; chapter 5: 117-121). Although it is necessary to emphasise the role of the ELL Committee in this way, it is important not to do so at the expense of the Assembly government. The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning and, to a lesser extent, the Minister for Health and Social Services, also acted as effective decision-makers, jointly developing a number of key policies quite independently of the ELL Committee. Indeed, in accepting and acting on the ELL Committee's recommendations, the Assembly government made a clear *choice* to co-operate with the legislature; as such, the ability of the ELL Committee to perform its policy-making function was to some extent dependent on its good working relationship with Ministers. For these reasons, the ELL Committee can be positioned *alongside* the

Assembly government in the 'centre' of the SEN policy network: though both demonstrated their capacity to act autonomously, they also showed willingness to co-operate.

As is noted elsewhere, both the government and legislative actors occupying this centre demonstrated a broad commitment to engage with a full array of policy actors (see chapter 5: 75-80). In doing so, however, they became the focus of a range of lobbying strategies.

7.1.1 Interest groups and the centre: strategies and status

If the basic criteria are used to test for 'insider' status, then the great majority of groups seeking to influence SEN policy in Wales during the period of study passed the test with some ease. All of the groups that took part in the consultation exercises that formed part of the ELL Committee's review, for example, were willing to take part on the ELL Committee's terms and, more importantly, were clearly 'regarded as legitimate' by the ELL Committee (Grant 1999: 19). Indeed, when the formal and informal consultation exercises commissioned by the Assembly government are also taken into account[2], it is clear that there were literally scores of groups and organisations within the SEN policy network with some kind of 'consultative relationship' with the centre. This, of course, is not altogether surprising. It was noted in chapter 2 (32-33) that the principal weakness of a simple insider-outsider distinction is that it often fails to draw any real distinction at all: the great majority of groups strive for insider status and, when its basic definition is followed, find it relatively easy to achieve (Page 1999).

It is clear, however, that some groups within the SEN policy process had closer relationships with the centre than others. The links between Afasic Cymru and the centre have already been noted, but are worth briefly re-emphasising as an example (see chapter 3, p.37). Afasic Cymru was involved at every stage of the ELL Committee's review of SEN policy, both in its own right and in its capacity as a key member of the Welsh Advisory Group on Special Educational Needs (WAGSEN) and the Special Educational Needs Reference Group (SENRG). It was also closely involved in the Speech and Language Therapy Action Group's (SALTAG) influential

work on speech and language therapy (SLT) provision in Wales. As such, Afasic Cymru enjoyed considerable formal access to both ELL Committee members and Ministers and was fully incorporated by the centre. Claire Moyle, the organisation's Director, also confirmed in an interviewee conducted as part of the research that she had enjoyed a close relationship with key decision-makers in Cardiff Bay during the period of study and was a familiar face to a number of ministers (Interview 1). As if to confirm this close, fully incorporated status, the group announced in February 2005 that the Assembly government is now its most significant source of funding (Afasic 2006a).

Afasic Cymru is joined by a small number of insider groups who can also justifiably claim to have the ear of the centre. One such group is SNAP Cymru which, as well as being a key contributor to all of the consultation exercises discussed so far, had an influential presence as a member of both the SENRG and WAGSEN. Furthermore, its director, Denise Inger, was a main signatory on most SENRG and WAGSEN documents submitted to the ELL Committee (e.g. ELLC Apr 1 2004). As such, SNAP Cymru's representatives acted as expert advisors to both the ELL Committee and the Assembly government on every aspect of SEN policy in Wales, giving the group unrivalled access to elite policy-making circles.[3] The NAS was also a ubiquitous presence in consultations and was similarly well-represented on advisory groups. As such, it can also be said to have been fully incorporated by the centre (although there is less evidence that its senior representatives enjoyed a close, informal relationship with the centre).

The increasing closeness of these groups' relations with the centre is reflected in the rapid development of each of their organisational bases since devolution. Afasic and SNAP had no permanent offices in Wales prior to devolution but their new Welsh sub-divisions have quickly established regional offices in North Wales as well as central headquarters in Cardiff (Afasic 2006b; SNAP 2006). The NAS has stopped short of creating a dedicated Welsh sub-division, but nonetheless has seen its number of offices in Wales increase since 1999 to the extent that its network of volunteers now operates in every region of Wales (NAS 2006). Moreover, Afasic and SNAP have both established dedicated annual conferences in Wales which have

opened up new forums for policy discussion and created new opportunities for formal and informal consultation with policy-makers. In this way, these highly regarded groups have been able to cultivate their relationships with policy-makers by actively engaging the centre.

All of this can be contrasted with the relationships between the centre and the majority of other insider groups. For example, the Welsh Initiative for Conductive Education (WICE) was involved in the ELL Committee's review of SEN policy and was invited to speak briefly at one ELL Committee meeting (ELLC Mar 5 2003). It was not, however, involved at any other stage of consultation, did not sit on any of the key advisory groups and could not claim any informal access to key decision-makers.[4] As such, WICE, like the majority of insider groups, was only partially incorporated by the centre.

It is apparent, then, that both the ELL Committee and the Assembly government held some groups to be more reliable and more authoritative than others, and that they granted those groups elevated status in the SEN policy process by consulting them more regularly, in a greater variety of contexts and by giving their representatives high status seats on the various advisory groups. A key question, however, is *why* such groups were so closely consulted.

7.1.2 Pressure groups and resource dependency

The delivery of SEN provision in Wales, as in the whole of the UK, depends to some extent on the expertise and specialist services provided (or otherwise facilitated) by voluntary organisations (see e.g. ELLC 2004a: para. 3.2). Without the specialist SLT services provided by organisations like Afasic Cymru, the unique advocacy package offered by SNAP Cymru or the Welsh-specific expertise of Autism Cymru, the quality and effectiveness of provision of SEN services in Wales would be diminished. Indeed, the crucial role played by the non-governmental sector in SEN provision in Wales has been expressly recognised by the Assembly government on a number of occasions, with voluntary service providers described as 'major players', whose main attraction is that they are 'in touch with local communities' and 'able to

provide flexible and responsive services which the market and the statutory sectors cannot adequately provide ...' (NAW 2000).

The main resources groups possess in the context of SEN policy can be classified as follows:

- *Expertise* refers to a group's specialist knowledge of a given policy area and, just as important, to the extent to which that knowledge is *in demand.* Where a particular brand of expertise is at a premium, those who possess it have a particularly valuable resource.
- *Service* refers to the specialist services groups may be able to deliver and the extent to which those services can only be obtained through that group. A group may offer a service that the centre identifies as being vital for the effective implementation of a given policy and, moreover, that service may be *uniquely provided* by that group.
- *Support* refers to the ability of certain groups to legitimately speak on behalf of a section of society that will be directly affected by a given policy. This resource can be particularly valuable if the centre is convinced that a group has the legitimacy and wherewithal to 'sell' a policy to a particular audience.

Among the large number of groups knocking on the door of SEN decision-makers in Wales were a small number who possessed resources of this kind. Although the door seemed to be open to all, it was only these groups that were invited inside. It is no surprise to find that the highly regarded groups identified above each possessed one or more key resources (see Table 7.1). However, of equal importance to the possession of resources is what groups did with them. The way groups made the link between what they *wanted* what they had to *offer* is thus a key focus for analysis.

7.1.3 Pressure groups and the language of bargaining

Before turning to the rhetorical strategies pursued by the representatives of groups, it is necessary to note the effect the public nature of consultation exercises had on the kind of language used. Not only were all ELL Committee meetings open to public galleries, they were transcribed and published online, occasionally televised and regularly 'webcast'.[5] Under this kind of public scrutiny, the basic language of bargaining – of *'I'll scratch your back, if you scratch mine'* – inevitably gave way to more sophisticated forms of negotiation.

Most contributions to the ELL Committee's review of SEN policy took place on an *informational* level. That is to say, representatives detailed 'on the ground'

experiences of how particular SEN policies work (or fail to work) in practice. Much of the evidence provided by local authorities took this form: representatives of Denbighshire LEA and Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust, for example, detailed the problems of 'under-resourcing' in SLT provision in North Wales and described their successes in using the Flexibilities Support Grant (FSG)[6] to fund collaborative projects in Rhyl. However, there was no evaluation of the current situation and no recommendations were made as to how SEN provision might be improved (ELLC Jan 28 2004).

Table 7.1   *Selected SEN pressure groups and their principal resources*

Group (selected)	Principal resources
National Autism Society (NAS)	*Support* – the NAS claimed to be 'uniquely positioned' to comment on SEN policy because it could legitimately claim to represent children with autism, their families and carers (NAS 2005).
Special Needs Advisory Group (SNAP) Cymru	*Services* and *Expertise* – it is fair to say that without SNAP Cymru's specialist advocacy services, many of the policy innovations discussed in this study would be entirely unworkable in practice. This is certainly recognised within government. When Jane Hutt was Minister for Health and Social Services she regularly praised SNAP Cymru's 'well-established track record' in providing a vital means of helping parents overcome 'the complex administrative procedures [they] have to confront' (NHS Wales 2000).
Afasic Cymru	*Expertise, services* and *support* – Afasic Cymru is a leading authority on SLT, the key provider of SLT services and training in Wales and the main representative of those children and young people with SLCD, their families and carers.

By contrast, contributors representing groups with resources tended to use the review as an opportunity to *lobby* the ELL Committee. The following contribution by Denise Inger, the director of SNAP Cymru, is a case in point:

> Assessments should take place at integrated centres ... where specialists come to them ... where parents receive information, advice and support from the independent supporter services only SNAP provides.
>
> (ELLC Apr 20 2005)

Even from this brief excerpt (and taking into account the public nature of the proceedings), Inger's strategy is clear. She begins by identifying a lack of co-ordination in the assessment of the needs of children with SEN as a policy *problem*; she then puts forward the creation of integrated assessment centres as a preferred policy *solution*; significantly, she concludes by suggesting that this change can only be effected with the support of SNAP Cymru, in the form of the unique advocacy and information service it provides.

Outside the framework of the review, pressure groups employed similar strategies. Consider as an example the following recommendation made to SALTAG by the NAS:

> It is recommended that local authorities should consider the option of regional planning to create specialist [SLT] provision for children requiring support in resourced provision. The NAS would like to see the implementation of regionally co-ordinated provision for children with autism.
>
> (NAS 2005)

This found its way almost verbatim into SALTAG's report on SLT services in Wales which, as has been noted elsewhere, greatly influenced the Assembly government's decision to set up regional SLT schemes in Wales (SALTAG 2003). More pertinent, however, is the fact that, immediately prior to making this recommendation to SALTAG, the NAS very carefully set out its credentials as the 'voice' of autism sufferers and their carers in Wales and explained how this put it in a 'unique position' from which it could legitimately 'comment on matters of public policy relating to autism' (NAS 2005). In other words, the NAS's recommendation came with an implied promise that it could 'sell' the proposed policy to some of those it was most likely to affect: namely, its own members.[7]

Some statutory bodies used their own more considerable resources in similar ways. For example, in giving evidence to the ELL Committee, Estyn made the following recommendation:

> More initial and update training is needed for teachers to help them to identify and assess needs and pupil progress. A particular 'SEN focus' is needed on curriculum differentiation, performance measurement and target setting. Teachers need training in those specific strategies which do work for many children.
>
> (ELLC Oct 16 2003)

This found its way into the ELL Committee's own recommendations to the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning:

> The Assembly Government ... should give particular attention to the need for all newly qualified teachers to have a better understanding of SEN; particularly in techniques for early identification
>
> (ELLC 2004a: para. 3.31)

It is certainly arguable that Estyn was successful in its aim to develop policy that would improve the standard of SEN teacher training and, more pertinently, that this success was firmly founded on its unique *expertise*. Indeed, the ELL Committee stated as much on a number of occasions, explaining that many of its recommendations, including that reproduced above, reflected Estyn's 'indisputable expertise' (ELLC Oct 16 2003).

The large number of insider groups seeking to influence SEN policy in Wales can therefore be divided into a majority of less influential, 'peripheral' insiders and a minority of more influential, 'specialist' insiders (Jordan et al 1992; see chapter 2, p.20). The former have few resources, relatively low status within the SEN network, and little bargaining power. The latter are seen by the centre as reliable and authoritative, have resources which the centre needs for the effective implementation of policy and, most significantly, are able to successfully translate both those things into something that it is tempting to describe as a bargaining-based, or 'exchange' relationship with the centre.[8]

7.1.4 A segmented, 'producer' network?

The SEN policy network in Wales shares some key features with Rhodes' 'producer' type (1988; with Marsh 1992). It was explained in chapter 2 that such a network is characterised by a series of interdependent relationships between the centre and a small number of non-governmental actors, or 'producers', who deliver the services and provide the expertise on which the centre depends for the effective formulation

and implementation of policy. The SEN network in Wales is certainly characterised by the same kind of relationships, with specialist insiders possessing the same kinds of resources.

However, there are also a large number of peripheral insiders in the SEN network which do not feature in Rhodes' ideal-type. These groups are not entirely excluded by the main players, as would be the case in a policy community, but are instead *partially incorporated* by the centre. It is important not to ignore these groups because they are undoubtedly involved to some extent in SEN policy-making and, as such, form part of the SEN network. For this reason, this section develops the concept of a segmented producer network, in which there is a 'core' of centre-producer relationships and a more loosely integrated 'periphery', inhabited by a larger number of less influential groups.[9]

7.4.1.5 The centre-producer core

At the core of the SEN network are the ELL Committee and the Assembly government and a small number of specialist insiders, or producers (Fig. 7.1). The centre and the producers have relationships that are to some extent based on resource exchange. However, there are no such relationships between the producers themselves. Afasic Cymru and the NAS, for example, did not have an exchange relationship as neither was dependent on or interested in the other's resources. As such, the core of the network is not as highly integrated as a policy community, in which all actors develop mutually dependent relationships (see chapter 2: 27-29).

An important part of analysing policy networks is the stability of core membership (see chapter 2: 26). However, it is difficult to assess the stability of core membership in this case because there has not been a sufficient period during which SEN policy has been made at the devolved level. For that reason, what follows necessarily takes the form of speculation. Some actors, like Afasic Cymru, SNAP Cymru and Estyn, have been routinely involved in the various initiatives, consultations and reviews that have taken place since 1999. As such, the relationships these groups and organisations have with the centre are as close to being *institutionalised relationships* as one could expect to find after so short a period

of time. However, the apparent permanency of these relationships (with the possible exception of Estyn) may be misleading. Within the area of SEN policy it is to be expected that the focus of policy-making will change over time. The focus in the period covered in this study was very clearly on SLT and ASD, and Afasic Cymru, by far the best-resourced SLT pressure group in Wales, along with Autism Cymru, the only indigenously-Welsh ASD organisation, assumed positions of prominence and solidity within the network based largely on the contribution they could make to policy in those specific areas.[10] However, it is likely that the focus will move away from SLT and ASD at some point in the future. Somewhat perversely, this is more likely should the policies Afasic Cymru and Autism Cymru has been influential in shaping be successful. If such a shift should occur, the bargaining position of Afasic Cymru and Autism Cymru will be greatly weakened and their status as a highly regarded specialist insiders may be eroded. Smith (1993: 229) makes the general point:

> Even in the case of the most apparently influential groups ... they only establish institutional relations once state actors have decided, for a range of reasons, to adopt a particular policy ... frequently [such groups are] used to achieve state goals'

By definition, specialist insiders thrive in very specific conditions and changes in those conditions can lead quite quickly to their demise as influential policy actors. A consequence of this is that some *fluctuation* in core membership is likely to occur over time and, on this basis, the boundary of the core is best described as being porous to some inward and outward movement. That there should be some fluctuation in the membership of a producer network is entirely consistent with Rhodes' classification and the porous nature of the boundary between the core and the periphery is significant because it creates the possibility that groups can move between the two.

Fig. 7.1 *The network 'core'*
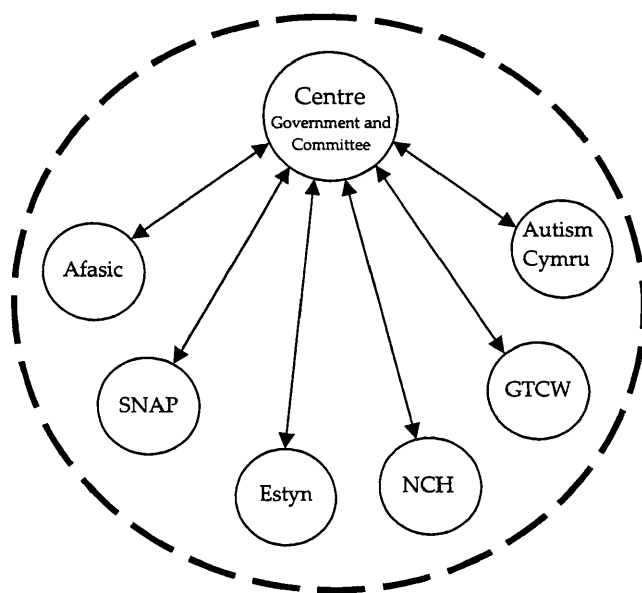
At the core of the SEN policy network is a series of interdependent relationships between the 'centre' (the Assembly government and the ELL Committee) and a number of specialist insiders, or 'producers', from the voluntary and statutory sectors (a selection of these actors is shown). The boundary of the core is porous to a degree due to the potential that a change in policy focus by the centre would decrease its dependence on the expertise and services provided by particular specialist insiders.

7.1.6 The periphery

Beyond the core is a hinterland inhabited by a large number of partially incorporated, 'peripheral' insiders (Fig 7.2). Accounting for the existence of this periphery is difficult, as it is not clear what difference its absence would make to the nature of SEN policy processes and outputs. It may be that peripheral insiders are not really part of the network at all and that their partial incorporation is the result of a mere rhetorical commitment to consult with stake-holders on the part of the centre; maybe as the result of a superficial attempt to present themselves as being committed to JUG. However, it may also be the case that among these groups are some insiders waiting for their own particular specialisms – their own resources - to be required by the centre. It is plausible that a shift in policy focus towards motor disorders, for example, would quite quickly result in groups like SCOPE Cymru, WICE and the NNATPIP being more fully incorporated by the centre and taking up positions within the core. Although there is no evidence that this has happened in the short history of devolved SEN policy-making (there is also no evidence of a change in

policy focus), it may be beneficial to conceptualise the periphery as a kind of 'recruiting ground' for specialist insiders. The partial incorporation of peripheral insiders may be a means by which the centre can maintain relations with groups in anticipation of their resources may be needed in the future.

Fig. 7.2 *The SEN policy network in Wales: a segmented, 'producer' network?*
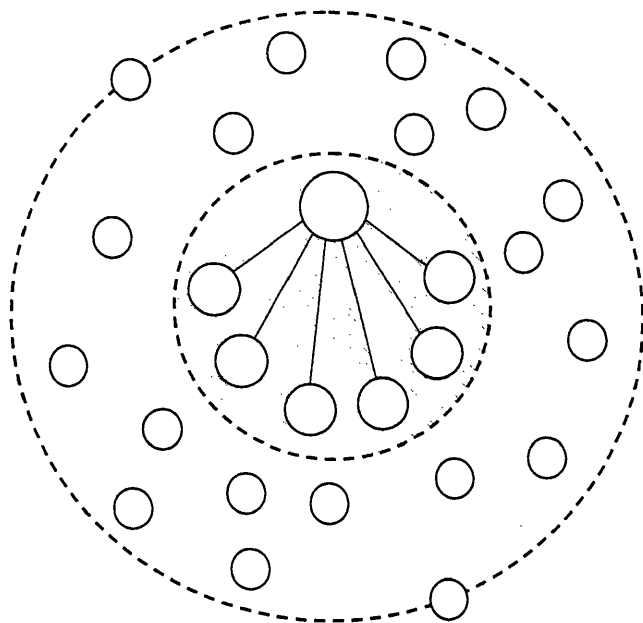
The SEN policy network in Wales is a producer network at its core. However, the network is segmented. Its periphery is inhabited by a large number of partially incorporated groups with little bargaining power and negligible influence on policy-makers - peripheral insiders who are more casually engaged by the centre than their specialist counterparts.

It is also important to note that some actors had relationships with the centre that were so infrequently consummated by consultation that those actors are best positioned 'beyond' the periphery of the policy network. The groups whose involvement was restricted to the written consultation exercises of the ELL Committee's review are possible examples. The individual schools and parents who contributed in this way had no resources with which to bargain and, just as important, had none which are likely to put them in a position from which to bargain in the future. Though consulted, these groups were not part of the SEN network.

It seems from this analysis that the mechanism of resource dependency and principle of resource exchange go some way to explaining policy relationships within the SEN policy network. However, it is far from clear whether the influence of some actors and their closeness to key decision-makers was *proportional* to (and

therefore entirely a function of) the resources they could access or mobilise. Was the place reserved at the top table of policy-making for, for example, Autism Cymru or SNAP Cymru, really due to the bargaining chips they had with which to play the game? Or was their relationship with the actors in the policy-making centre based on some other characteristic of those organisations? The following section asks whether an interests-based account of SEN policy-making in Wales is adequate and considers the contribution a JUG approach can make to a more nuanced understanding of policy relationships in a joined-up context.

7.4 Does an interests-based approach adequately explain SEN policy-making?

Chapter 2 asked whether evidence of a genuinely joined-up policy-making 'universe' might represent an empirical challenge to the network literature. The basis for this question was the apparent inconsistency between, on the one hand, a network literature that explains policy relationships in terms of the resources actors use to bargain with and, on the other, a JUG doctrine that seems to require actors of all descriptions - regardless of their resources - to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty. It was concluded in chapter 5 that a 'culture of collaboration' has not emerged in any of the policy areas taken as case studies and, as such, a joined-up policy-making 'universe' can not be detected. Such a normative commitment to JUG would clearly have represented a significant challenge to the network paradigm as it would have replaced the role of resources within networks with collaboration as a function of a normalised and embedded set of rules for good governance. In the absence of such a culture, however, some of the close policy relationships in the SEN policy area in Wales require more detailed consideration.

The key point to make here is that, while the resources of actors in the SEN policy network do, to some extent, explain their relationships with the policy-making centre, there are a number of relationships which do not have the same simply-defined producer relationship. Uppermost in this list is the relationship between the Assembly government and the ELL Committee at the policy-making 'centre'. Why should this relationship exist? It is not based on the resources the ELL Committee brings to the table (aside, perhaps from some sort of democratic legitimacy) and

therefore can not be accounted for adequately using the network approach.[11] Just as significant is the apparent imbalance between the high levels of influence certain third sector actors had on policy and the tiny resources they were able to access or mobilise.

There are two highly instructive comparisons which can be made here. The first is between two Autism charities working in Wales; namely the NAS and Autism Cymru. Both had similar resources, both were consulted formally in precisely the same way during, for example, the ELL Committee's SEN review, but both did not have a similar degree of informal access to decision-makers or influence over policy. It was argued in chapter 6 (135-136) that the very close relationship between Autism Cymru and a number of key policy- and decision-makers in the Assembly government (including the Minister and civil servant taking ASD policy forward at that time) was 'overlaid with social content' and had an inter-personal as well as inter-organisational dimension. Crucially, there is no evidence that NAS had built up the same kind of relationship based on individual trust. The second comparison is between Afasic Cymru and Afasic Scotland. Again, these two SLT organisations were similarly resourced and were consulted formally in similar ways. However, while the Welsh variant had a close relationship with key policy- and decision-makers in the Assembly government, Afasic Scottish, in sharp contrast, had only enjoyed (and only pursued) ministerial contact in formal settings. In the same way, this difference in influence may be accounted for by differences in the social content within the two organisations' relationships with decision-makers. Although Ann Auchterlonie, the Director of Afasic Scotland, did not make the connection expressly during the interview conducted for the research, she indicated that her location in Dundee, as opposed to Edinburgh, made it difficult for her to benefit from the smaller scale in Scotland in the same way as some of her peers (Interview 14). This was not a problem for Claire Moyle, Auchterlonie's counterpart in Wales, for whom the key policy- and decision-makers were located literally on the same street as her own office and were 'almost on first name terms' with her as a result. Moyle was in no doubt that individual trust was at the core of her close relationship with decision-makers (Interview 1).

This variation in the kind of relationship with government actors developed by similarly resourced actors operating in the same policy area makes it necessary for the segmented 'producer' network identified above – and, more specifically, the 'centre-producer core' that was identified within in - to be reconsidered. Within the core (membership of which was said to be determined by the resources producers could access or mobilise) some actors had closer, more influential relationships with key decision-makers than others, despite their having no obvious advantage in terms of resources. These, then, were members of a more exclusive, 'inner core' (Fig 7.3). Crucially, membership of this inner core relied on the policy relationship becoming overlaid with social content. It is clear that the role of individual trust is therefore an important variable and potentially a conceptually useful mechanism, particularly in a policy context where policy actors are demonstrating a commitment to JUG.

Some accounts of the policy process, like that put forward by Rhodes, tend to conceive of 'atomised', faceless policy actors operating with a corporate mindset. Such accounts have been criticised for being 'under-socialised' (Granovetter 1985: 481). Clearly, there is a danger in analysing policy relationships down (quite literally in the case of Afasic Cymru) to street level, that one may 'over-socialise' the account of policy- and decision-making. However, the analysis here has shown that individual trust helps to account for policy relationships which the network literature finds impossible to fully explain in resource terms.[12]

Fig. 7.3 *The social dimension to the SEN network: an 'inner core'?*
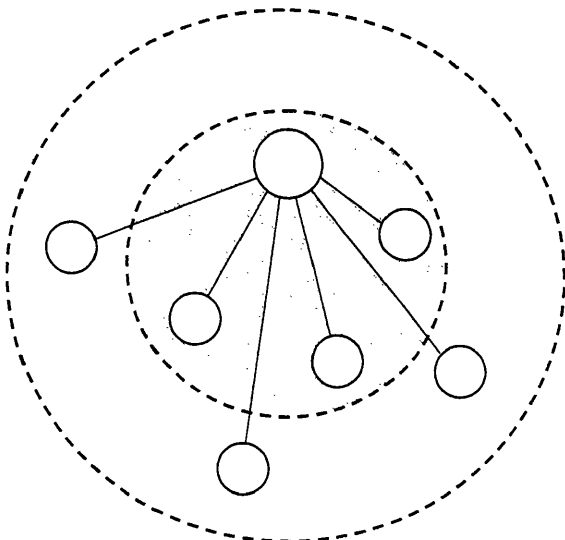
Admission to the centre-producer core is determined by the resources an actor can access or mobilise. However, some actors with similar resources have qualitatively different relationships with key decision-makers. The case study research suggests that the closest kinds of relationship are characterised by and founded upon social content, as well as the exchange of resources. These two factors combine to admit actors to what is described as an 'inner core'.

It may not be over-exaggerating the significance of these relationships in the inner-core to say that they are a function of the JUG doctrine becoming established as a set of legitimised (if not yet embedded or normalised) rules for good governance. The only thing which brings some organisations into the very heart of the policy- and decision-making process is a choice on the part of powerful government actors to behave in that way.

Of course, there are important limitations which restrict the utility of this explanation and prevent individual trust being put forward as a serious challenge to resource exchange. The analysis in chapter 6 reached the conclusion that, in the ACL case studies in both nations, actors of all descriptions perceived there to be an unacceptably high level of institutional risk involved in pooling policy- and decision-making sovereignty. In this sense, powerful actors made the choice not to open out the policy- and decision-making process in the name of JUG. Put differently, the institutional interests, particularly of well-resourced actors – the very core of the network approach – remained the principal motivating factor in the way policy actors behaved. Where actors perceived there to be limited institutional risk in the SEN case studies, a commitment to the principles of JUG led them into the kinds of close policy relationships that do not necessary have an interests-based explanation. However, the first consideration of all policy actors remained their own interests.[13]

7.5 What are the implications of a JUG approach for the network paradigm?

The key overall finding for this chapter is that policy actors behave essentially in line with the interest-based explanation set out in the policy network literature. However, where actors feel little jeopardy – that is, they are confident they can enter into trust relationships with other, often less well-resourced actors, without their own institutional interests or broad expectations for the nature and trajectory of policy development being adversely affected – they are prepared to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty. In these conditions, the dynamics of resource exchange cease to be an adequate way of explaining the nature of policy-making.

The analysis in chapters 5 and 6 showed that these conditions were more likely to happen in small scale policy contexts where there is an opportunity for policy relationships to become overlaid with social content and, therefore, enhanced with a social dimension. This means that a JUG approach - while not representing a challenge to the core, interests-based explanation contained in the network literature – does, nonetheless, provide an additional theoretical framework for engaging with the behaviour of policy actors under certain conditions. In short, the more joined-up policy making is, the more a JUG approach is required to understand the policy relationships involved.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered the explanatory utility of a JUG approach by first examining the SEN case study in Wales through the conceptual lens of the network. It was argued that, while the mechanism of resource dependency and principle of resource exchange go some way to explaining the SEN network in Wales as a segmented 'producer' type, this approach does not offer an adequate explanation of some close policy relationships that are not proportional to the resources involved. It was argued that a JUG approach can help explain these relationships by locating them within a collaboration agenda and by identifying high levels of individual trust as an important variable.

However, the chapter concluded that the explanatory utility of a JUG approach does not amount to a challenge to the network paradigm. Actors are only prepared to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty with poorly-resourced actors where they perceive limited institutional risk. As such, an interests-based explanation of the policy process remains the most convincing. A JUG approach, far from challenging the network paradigm, can complement it by helping identify and explain close policy relationships where there does not appear to be a clear resource basis.

Notes to chapter 7

[1] The Welsh case study is chosen as the principal focus in this chapter because the policy relationships identified within it in chapters 5 and 6 appear to be the most qualitatively distinct and, as such, represent the greatest potential challenge to the interests-based account of the policy process put forward in the network literature. SEN in Scotland shares many of the features of the Welsh SEN network and is not considered separately in the interests of brevity. The ACL case studies are not reanalysed as the analysis in chapter 5 showed clearly that ACL policy processes and outputs in both nations were not particularly joined-up. While there is considerable scope to deepen understanding of JUG through a consideration of why obstacles to JUG existed in this policy area, ACL does not represent a challenge to the paradigmatic way of conceptualising, describing and explaining the policy process in any way. In simple terms, actors in the ACL policy area in both jurisdictions acted in ways that correspond quite closely with the network account - that is, they declined to pool- policy and decision-making sovereignty precisely because of the perceived risk to their narrow institutional interests - and further analysis can therefore contribute little to any theoretical refection.

[2] The consultation undertaken in the process of drafting the All Wales ASD Strategy is perhaps the best example.

[3] The influence of members of the SENRG on the shape of SEN policy in Wales was emphasised in the interview with Peter Black, the Chair of the ELL Committee:

> I'm not sure that any *evidence-giver* was held in higher regard than any other. What I will say, however, is that sifting through the evidence involved subjective assessment of what was and wasn't a suitable proposal and we were very much led through that process by key members of the [SENRG].
>
> (Interview 9)

Mr Black also emphasised the close relationship and influential policy-making role of SNAP Cymru during the interview (see chapter 6: 148-149).

[4] It may indicate the regard in which WICE was held by the ELL Committee that it does not appear that its contribution to the review was published.

[5] See www.webcastingwales.org

[6] For the purpose and funding arrangements associated with the FSG, see chapter 1: 75.

[7] The NAS's aims in producing such recommendations are beyond doubt. All of its contributions to consultation exercises (including those reproduced in this study) appear on its website under the unambiguous headings of 'Influencing Government' and 'Influencing Parliament' (NAS 2006).

[8] It is necessary to note at this stage that the resources available to many of these third sector organisations and the very close, influential relationships they developed with key policy- and decision-makers in Wales during the period of study do not seem to be necessarily proportional. Denise Inger, the Director of SNAP Cymru, is a case in point. She may have used the language of bargaining in her evidence to the ELL Committee, but the resources she pointed to can not be used to fully explain the kind of relationship Inger had with, for example, Peter Black, the Chair of ELL Committee. Inger was chosen by Black in part of the interview reproduced in chapter 6 (148-149), as an example of certain individuals who were very close to ministers and other senior individuals and able to influence policy greatly as a direct consequence. It does not seem that it was simply the bargaining chips Inger had with which to play the game that brought SNAP Cymru to the top table. This points towards a different dynamic in these particular relationships between policy actors and the question of how these close relationships can be explained is explored below, pp. 173-176.

[9] This periphery may well be a function of the JUG doctrine. Whereas actors with no resources would once have been excluded from the process of consultation, government actors now engage in a process of consultation that at least places the views of such actors on the record. While these actors can not be credited with any individual influence on the nature and trajectory of policy- and decision-making, it is reasonable to suggest that they may form part of a collectively influential voice in some cases. Crucially, any influence of this collective voice could not be explained in terms of resource dependency or resource exchange.

[10] Indeed, SLT is the only specific area of SEN provision that is mentioned in *The Learning Country* (NAW 2001). As such, it has been a key SEN policy focus throughout the short lifetime of the Assembly. However, it may be hasty to explain the influence of Afasic as being a result of a chosen policy focus; it can not be discounted that the organisation was at least partially responsible for shaping this focus in the first place.

[11] It is interesting to note that, had a similar re-examination been conducted of SEN policy processes and outputs in the Scottish context, the same close relationship between the Scottish Executive and the Education, Culture and Sport Committee of the Scottish Parliament would have been identified. It is difficult to account for these relationships in resource terms and, as is noted above, the government actors in both case studies had a clear choice whether or not to cooperate closely with the legislature. That they chose to do so may well have been motivated by a commitment to JUG, in which case it is necessary to add an additional layer of analysis to a straight-forward interests-based network approach.

[12] It is important to note here that the role of individual trust and the salience of JUG as a concept are inextricably linked. Those actors who enter into close trust relationships that have this kind of additional social dimension do so not simply to service that relationship, but also from a basic recognition that JUG is equal to good

governance. This is not the same as a 'culture of collaboration' being at work – as is noted elsewhere, such a culture requires actors to act with normative trust and does not require actor-specific knowledge which is, after all, the bedrock of individual trust – but it does hint at the power of the JUG doctrine for informing the kinds of relationships that emerge when the conditions are right.

[13] It may be worth speculating, however, that there was a *degree* of institutional risk involved in working so closely with these groups in the SEN policy areas. As Keith Ingham, the Head of Children's Health and Social Services at the Assembly government admitted in the interview conducted as part of the research, trusting groups like Autism Cymru to take forward policy in an acceptable way, almost on the government's behalf, 'carries its risks' and leaves '[the government] potentially a lot more exposed ...' (Interview 12). Depending on how much one chooses to read into this comment, the idea that a genuine commitment to the principles of JUG could act as an explanatory mechanism within the network may become more plausible.

8

Conclusion

The devolution literature, while providing a range of insights into the nature and impact of a new pattern of governance in Scotland and Wales, does not sufficiently interrogate claims that the devolved context in the two nations is a better site for coordinated, inclusive policy-making (see chapter 1: 4-6). This study has examined the impact of devolution on policy processes and outputs in Scotland and Wales in order to test the thesis that a distinctively 'holistic' policy style will emerge in the new, meso-level institutional setting. In particular, the study has focused on attempts to 'join-up' policy processes and outputs in Scotland and Wales, taking the broad policy area of education and lifelong learning as a key case study (see chapter 1: 10-11). This concluding chapter draws together the main strands of analysis and considers the extent to which the study has been successful in achieving its central aim and filling an important gap in the literature.

The chapter begins by describing the framework which was developed to effectively measure the relative 'joined-up-ness' of policy processes and outputs in Scotland and Wales. This section returns to the working definition of joined-up governance (JUG) posited in chapter 2 and reviews the innovative framework for the descriptive evaluation of policy processes and outputs from a JUG perspective outlined in chapter 3. It is shown that, by arranging policy processes and outputs according to the type of inter-personal or inter-organisational trust that must exist for policy actors to agree to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty, it was

possible - arguably for the first time - to conduct systematic, comparative analysis of JUG across policy areas, between jurisdictions and over time.

The chapter then explains how this 'JUG approach' was used to examine policy processes and outputs in the policy areas of special educational needs (SEN) and adult community learning (ACL) in Scotland and Wales between 1999 and 2007. It is shown how a marked variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action in the two policy areas was the starting point for an analysis of seven key variables which may influence JUG. This section pays particular attention to the variable of scale, both in terms of the numbers of actors involved in the policy- and decision-making process and their physical proximity to one another. It is claimed that the relatively small scale of the devolved context has created conditions that, on balance, are favourable for JUG. The main research finding is that the emerging policy styles in the devolved jurisdictions demonstrate some distinctively inclusive and holistic features which are to some extent a function of 'smallness'.

The chapter then turns to an important research question which focuses on JUG as an administrative doctrine more generally. This section asks whether the case studies offer any evidence that JUG represents a real departure from previous attempts to coordinate the business of policy- and decision-making. It is argued that, while a call for *cultural* change marks out the rhetoric of JUG from that associated with previous attempts at coordination, there is scant evidence that a set of behavioural rules which make pooling policy- and decision-making sovereignty a normalised and therefore expected mode of behaviour has become embedded. As such, the existence of a 'culture of collaboration' is not supported by any robust empirical data from the case studies. However, it is argued that JUG has found a place in the collective consciousness of the policy-making community in Scotland and Wales and that 'collaboration' is now an established synonym for 'good governance': policy actors in both nations see JUG as an ideal state to which to aspire, even if that aspiration is only translated into action under certain conditions.[1]

The final section considers the ways in which the empirical and theoretical study of JUG and public policy in the devolved context might be taken forward. Care is taken not to endow the findings of what must be seen as isolated case studies with

significance beyond their quite specific situation and a call is made for additional in-depth case study research to be conducted in a range of policy contexts so that the ways in which key variables influence the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action can be better understood (particularly where they exist in combinations different to those identified in the SEN and ACL cases). It is also argued that potential linkages between a JUG approach and the paradigmatic network literature should be explored in order to deepen understanding of policy relationships in contexts where there is evidence of joined-up thinking and action.

8.1 Defining JUG: a question of trust

The discussion in chapter 2 identified the lack of consistency and clarity in the way JUG is defined in the practitioner and academic literatures as an obstacle to the effective evaluation of policy processes and outputs from a JUG perspective. Although the term is used frequently by Whitehall modernisers - and there is evidence that this has led to some vague understanding among policy actors that JUG refers to agencies working together to tackle problems that do not correspond to the traditional boundaries of government departments - there is no systematic approach to identifying the kinds of activities and institutional arrangements that could make policy- and decision-making more joined-up. Furthermore, there is no thorough-going attempt in this literature to examine the changes policy actors must make (or, indeed, have made) to their mode of behaviour in order to bring about or effectively operationalise the necessary cultural and structural changes (see chapter 2: 45-47).

In order to develop a precise working definition of JUG and move towards a better understanding of the kinds of interactions that might take place within a genuinely joined-up policy process, a best practice-based approach to evaluating JUG in action was developed, based in part on Christopher Pollitt's (2005) analysis of the practitioner literature (see chapter 2: 47-48).[2] Assembling examples of best practice made it possible to identify a common requirement for all joined-up working; namely, the pooling of what was termed 'policy- and decision-making sovereignty'. It was argued that all joined-up thinking and action - from combining

budgets, to giving stakeholders a say in the nature and trajectory of policy, to sharing key personnel in the delivering of services on the ground – places some demands on policy actors to pass aspects of control over their own resources or policy- and decision-making independence to others. To some extent, this requires policy actors to behave in a way that values the perceived benefits of collaboration more highly than their own, more narrowly-defined institutional interests.

This way of conceiving of joined-up policy processes and outputs was a breakthrough which enabled inter-personal and inter-organisational trust to be identified as the key to understanding relationships between policy actors from a JUG perspective. In order to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty, it was argued, policy actors of all descriptions must trust other policy actors to act in ways that do not undermine their institutional interests. There must be a certain degree of confidence that others will agree, as Mark Granovetter (1985: 431) puts it in his study inter-organisational trust, to 'abstain from opportunism' (see chapter 2: 40-43).

Crucially, while all of the examples of best practice identified required the pooling of policy and decision-making sovereignty in some form (and, therefore, a need for some degree of trust to exist between the policy actors involved), it was clear that different policy processes and outputs were associated with different trust-types. Consulting an outside expert in the development of policy, for example, may require a certain degree of trust that he or she will not use their status or profile within the policy area as the basis of an attempt to seize control over the nature and trajectory of policy-making, but this is a less onerous trust than that required between actors who agree, for example, to pool departmental budgets; that is, to allow another to trespass on that most sacred of ground, their departmental 'turf'. This meant it was possible to arrange policy processes and outputs in what was termed a Hierarchy of joined-up thinking and action (HJTA), depending on whether the actors involved were required to demonstrate 'prudential', 'contractual' or, at the highest tier of the Hierarchy, 'goodwill' trust (6 et al 2002; see chapter 2: 42). The HJTA also made provision for some acknowledgement of joined-up thinking and action which relies merely on better communication or dissemination of information for success. This

type of activity was classed as an 'informational' tier of the HJTA, ranked below prudential trust.[3]

The HJTA framework is a potentially important innovation as it makes it possible to conduct a descriptive evaluation of JUG in any given policy context and, critically for a comparative study of JUG in two jurisdictions and two policy areas, allows comparison to be made between more or less joined-up contexts (see chapter 3: 61-65). Alongside the HJTA, chapter 3 also identified a set of seven 'moderating variables' which it was suggested may influence the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action within a given policy context. This gave the HJTA an additional dimension by making it possible to explain – or at least account for – variation in JUG between policy contexts. This toolkit for conducting comparative analysis from a JUG perspective made it possible to begin to explore the conditions which are most favourable for JUG.

The HJTA therefore represents a degree of innovation in that it brings together two good ideas – Pollitt's (2005) best practice examples and 6 et al's (2002) typology of trust relationships – to create a composite tool for conducting effective descriptive evaluation of policy processes and outputs *from a JUG perspective*.[4] This, then, amounts to a 'JUG approach' to examining the policy- and decision-making process. The following section reviews the way this approach was used as the basis of an examination of policy processes and outputs in Scotland and Wales.

8.2 JUG in the devolved context: the cases of SEN and ACL

The description and analysis in chapters 4, 5 and 6 focused on JUG in the devolved context and on some of the specific impacts devolution and the new Scottish and Welsh policy-making landscapes have had on the conditions for JUG. More specifically, these chapters examined attempts at JUG in the SEN and ACL policy areas in both nations.

The analysis in chapter 5 found a marked variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action in the two chosen policy areas during the period of study. Policy processes and outputs which demonstrated the existence of goodwill trust between policy actors were found exclusively in the SEN policy area in both

nations. These findings are summarised in Table 5.3 (see chapter 5: 127). A key feature of the SEN policy processes in the two nations was the relationships formed between powerful government actors and small, relatively poorly-resourced groups, often from the third sector. Groups that included Autism Cymru, SNAP Cymru and Afasic Cymru in Wales and Afasic Scotland and the SNIP in Scotland enjoyed formal and informal contact with key decision-makers (including ministers in some cases) and had a major influence on the nature and trajectory of policy. By way of contrast, the ACL policy area in both nations, while including a number of examples of best practice at the lower, prudential and contractual levels of the HJTA, was characterised by an absence of goodwill trust. Although some groups did have close relationships with decision-makers they could not be said to have been as influential as their SEN counterparts.[5]

Chapter 6 sought to explain this variation between cases by examining how the set of seven moderating variables played out in each policy area. It was shown that the greater political sensitivity of ACL, combined with the relatively low level of consensus within the ACL policy milieu, led powerful policy actors in particular to perceive greater institutional risk in pooling policy- and decision-making sovereignty with other actors. This was an important finding because it demonstrated that, despite the very best intentions on the part of ACL policy actors (the Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCET), for example, were designed to bring disparate interests together), the perceived benefits of collaboration lost out to narrowly-defined institutional interests.

The same chapter chose to examine more closely two of the seven moderating variables that seem to be most closely linked to the devolved context; namely, the scale of the policy-making context – both in terms of the number of policy actors and their physical proximity to one another – and the age of the competent political institution. The results of this examination were particularly interesting and the explanatory utility of scale, in particular, was shown to be considerable. The analysis demonstrated indubitably that smaller scale was an important factor in the cultivation of qualitatively distinctive, close trust relationships in both nations and showed that these relationships were often not between equally-, or even similarly-

resourced actors. It was shown how regular, high frequency and high quality face-to-face contact between actors in the 'village' settings of Edinburgh and Cardiff had contributed to a reservoir of individual trust dammed in by social interaction. The following extract from an interview with Peter Black, the Chair of the National Assembly's Education and Lifelong Learning Committee during the period of its review of SEN policy in Wales and a former Deputy Minister in the Assembly government, was included in chapter 6 as the best available articulation of the role of scale. It is provides sufficient insight to warrant being reproduced here:

> What I observe is that access [to ministers] here is much better than it is in England. I hear from policy-makers, from the voluntary sector, over and over again, that here you can get a meeting with an Assembly minister, you know, fairly easily – and you can meet them on a social level. In fact, there may be four or five different events where I come across the same person. In the SEN field, I might meet someone from, for example, SNAP Cymru at an SEN event, a small schools event, a health event, I might meet the same person at a Bevan Foundation event – all sorts of places like that – so you do build up *social relationships* with lobbyists ... and those close relationships mean that they are able to influence policy much more.
>
> (Interview 9)

The importance of scale extended beyond vertical relationships between government actors and groups in civil society. Chapter 6 also identified the close working relationships between ministers, deputy ministers and senior civil servants in a number of departments of the Scottish Executive as the key to the resource pooling that made possible the Coordinated Support Plan (CSP), arguably the most complete example of JUG in action discussed anywhere in this study (see chapter 4: 77-78; chapter 5: 108-109; chapter 6: 140-141). Significantly, it was the participants in these relationships who themselves chose to highlight the importance of scale in their preparedness to trust each other and pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty in this most onerous of ways.[6] Interviewees who were involved in the policy process as politicians chose more than any other group of contributors to highlight the role that the close *physical location* of other key decision-makers had made.

Just as important as the existence of such relationships in Scotland and Wales, however, is the impression that they are not a feature of the much larger bureaucratic context of Westminster-Whitehall. It was suggested in the majority of

interviews conducted for the research that the kind of face-to-face contact required to build and regularly confirm individual trust is as inevitable in Scotland and Wales as it is impracticable in the UK context. Although no direct comparison was sought with the Westminster-Whitehall context (and no data were collected there) interviewees were clear about the change that had occurred since the focus of most policy formulation activity (and for SEN and ACL, it is accurate to say the majority of that activity) has been trained on the new devolved institutions. One of the most significant findings of the research, therefore, is that the smaller scale of policy formulation and implementation in Scotland and Wales has the potential (and, in some cases, is already showing how it can be realised) to cultivate the kinds of trust relationships that can, in time, move the policy- and decision-making process closer towards JUG. It may even be true that these kinds of relatively small contexts are some of the few arenas where a real 'culture of collaboration' has any chance of fully emerging.[7]

There are some aspects of smaller scale, however, that may have undermined (or may undermine in the future) the potential benefits of JUG. The achievement of a joined-up policy process, in which the full array of policy actors takes a full part in influencing the nature and trajectory of policy in a given area, may not necessarily lead to more effective policy-making. This is because the achievement of such a joined-up network – and, perhaps more pertinently, the *maintenance* of such a network – can mean that, instead of being a means to an end, JUG can become an end in itself. Particularly where policy relationships have an individual, social dimension, the competition that some argue is vital if policy is to remain fresh and innovative may be replaced by cosy consensus. This is clearly an important question for future research and is discussed further below.

Despite the actual and potential disadvantages of scale, however, the remarkable 'intimacy' of policy-making in the devolved setting was without question an important factor in helping both Scotland and Wales move closer to the vague aspirations to develop a more inclusive and holistic policy style described in chapter 1: in both the SEN and ACL policy areas, actors in civil society were brought into the heart of the policy process; there was an intention to involve the legislature as an

important policy actor which was seen through with action in some cases; and there was an awareness that it was necessary to ensure there were multiple perspectives involved in policy formulation. Furthermore, it was argued in chapter 6 that, alongside 'smallness', the other defining characteristic of devolved jurisdictions - 'newness' – will diminish over time as a restricting variable and the benefits of small scale will be reinforced by the institutional trust that inevitably emerges in more established institutional settings (see chapter 6: 150-153).

The HJTA was an import tool for facilitating this analysis and can be applied equally to any policy context. However, the HJTA is a framework which deals with trust in its predictive sense. If one uses a stricter definition of JUG and takes a view that pooling policy- and decision-making sovereignty must take place within a 'culture of collaboration' in order for the principles of JUG to develop into a *mode* of policy- and decision-making, it is necessary to also consider trust in its normative sense. This is the main focus of the following section, which considers the extent to which JUG can be seen as a distinctive administrative doctrine.

8.3 How distinctive is JUG? In search of *cultural change*

The discussion in chapter 2 highlighted three possible features of JUG that may set it apart from previous attempts to overcome the compartmentalised nature of policy- and decision-making. These were, briefly: the unprecedented continuity and prominence of the doctrine as an idea with some salience and currency in the administrative and political spheres; the potentially distinctive requirement that government actors should collaborate with actors located in civil society; and, perhaps showing the potential for the greatest genuine departure, the requirement for cultural change to take place alongside structural change. But what is the empirical evidence that any of these potentially distinctive features of JUG, particularly the requirement for cultural change, exist outside the rhetoric of JUG enthusiasts?

There is certainly evidence that the prominence and continuity of JUG within the policy agendas of the Scottish Executive and Assembly government over an extended period of time has consolidated the place of the doctrine (setting aside for a

moment the question of whether or not it is a qualitatively new idea) in the consciousness of policy actors of all descriptions. The *Making the Connections* and *Changing to Deliver* agendas respectively helped establish words like 'partnership', 'collaboration' and 'joined-up' as synonyms for good governance in Scotland and Wales. The doctrine's core principles are universally acknowledged as A Good Thing, an ideal state to which all participants in the policy process should aspire. Some actors have attempted to be conspicuous collaborators, indicating that collaborative working carries with it a certain amount of cache, and those who have not been able to demonstrate collaboration have on occasions felt compelled to offer an excuse for such a failure. Significantly, a lack of joined-up thinking and action has become a source of guilt for some.

There is also very strong evidence to suggest that the additional dimension of vertical coordination between government and civil society is being seen through with concerted action. The case studies are littered with examples of organisations in civil society being brought into the heart of the policy- and decision-making process and, more importantly, of organisations operating in more than one area of interest being courted equally. The education department of the Assembly Government took care to ensure that, for example, business interests were be incorporated into the CCET structure and that organisations ostensibly with a health orientation were brought into both the Speech and Language Therapy Action Group (SALTAG) and the Special Educational Needs Reference Group (SENRG) (see chapter 4: 70-71). This indicates a strong sense of awareness of the cross-cutting nature of policy problems and of the kinds of solutions required. Importantly, this kind of activity took place outside of any kind of prescribed institutional framework and generally represents an unregulated desire to explore joined-up solutions where possible.

However, there is, of course, a considerable difference between what policy actors are convinced is the way they should be acting and the way they actually do behave. There are clear examples from the case studies where actors were more interested in presenting an image of collaboration than in actually pooling policy- and decision-making sovereignty. This is where the third potentially distinctive feature of JUG

comes in. The existence of a 'culture of collaboration' turns on good intentions being formed into embedded and normalised forms of behaviour.

One of the key innovations in the thesis is that it explored what proponents of JUG mean when they call for such a culture to emerge. It was suggested that the way forward was to think of the existence of such a culture as being demonstrated by the existence of relationships between actors founded on normative, rather than predictive trust. To this end, Martin Hollis' (1998) definition of normative trust was taken as the basis for a description of an imagined joined-up policy-making 'universe' in which all actors trust all other actors to behave in line with the core principles of JUG and to do so, crucially, without relying on any knowledge of the specific characteristics of the other actors. In this sense, a 'culture of collaboration', as opposed to mere collaboration, relies on there being an embedded and legitimised set of rules that normalise the pooling of policy and decision-making sovereignty to the extent that policy actors can expect other actors to behave in ways that 'abstain from opportunism'. This attempt to define what proponents and practitioners of JUG mean when they refer to a 'culture of collaboration' made it possible to search for evidence of its existing in empirical reality.

There is no reliable evidence that normalised trust relationships were a feature of policy-making in the case studies chosen for study. Where joined-up thinking and action was in evidence, it was restricted to policy processes and outputs that demonstrated trust in its predictive sense. So, where there was evidence of 'goodwill' trust between actors, the existence of that trust relationship was explained either by a track record of behaviour which cultivated confidence that actors could predict how certain identified others would act, or by the social content of policy relationships which were forged on individual trust.[8] Although it was argued in chapter 5 that the existence of a large number of goodwill trust relationships in a policy area like SEN may form a base or 'shared behavioural heritage' from which collaboration could over time become embedded as a set of legitimatised, normalised 'rules of the game', at this stage this is not supported by any empirical data and remains speculation.

However, it is important to note that the definition of JUG developed in this study does not mean that an absence of normative trust relationships is the same thing as an absence of JUG.[9] It is difficult to describe the CSP in Scotland, for example, as anything other than an example of JUG in action. However, the lack of any empirical data to indicate the presence of an emerging 'culture of collaboration' in any case study does diminish the strength of any claim that JUG represents a genuine departure in public administration; policy actors clearly subscribed to the doctrine's core aims and were keen to demonstrate their commitment to collaborative working but were still motivated by their own, narrow institutional interests.

8.4 The explanatory utility of a JUG approach

The discussion in chapter 7 considered the explanatory utility of a JUG approach by first examining the SEN case study in Wales through the conceptual lens of the network. It was argued that, while the mechanism of resource dependency and principle of resource exchange go some way to explaining the SEN network in Wales as a segmented 'producer' type, this approach does not offer an adequate explanation of some close policy relationships that are not proportional to the resources involved. It was argued that a JUG approach can help explain these relationships by locating them within a collaboration agenda and by identifying high levels of individual trust as an important variable (see chapter 7: 176-177).

However, the chapter concluded that the explanatory utility of a JUG approach does not amount to a challenge to the network paradigm. Actors are only prepared to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty with poorly-resourced actors where they perceive limited institutional risk. As such, an interests-based explanation of the policy process remains the most convincing. A JUG approach, far from challenging the network paradigm, can complement it by helping identify and explain close policy relationships where JUG is cited as a motivating factor and there does not appear to be a clear resource basis.

8.5 Summary of key findings

The preceding sections have brought together the main strands of discussion and analysis and detailed the key research findings. Although the findings are

necessarily restricted by the case study method, they indicate there has been some success in finding answers to the main research questions (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1 Summary of key research findings

	Research finding	Location of main discussion and analysis
1	It is possible to examine policy processes and outputs from a JUG perspective.	Chapters 2 and 3
2	A JUG approach can be used successfully as the basis of systematic comparative analysis of policy processes and outputs between policy areas, across jurisdictions and over time.	Chapters 2, 5 and 6
3	Using a JUG approach to examine policy processes and outputs in the SEN and ACL policy areas in Scotland and Wales uncovers marked variation in the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action between the two policy areas.	Chapters 5 and 6
4	There are a number of variables which influence the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action and it appears that policy actors are more willing to collaborate where they perceive low levels of institutional risk.	Chapters 3 and 6
5	One of these variables – scale – has particular explanatory utility in the devolved context, where it has helped build individual trust.	Chapter 6
6	The policy styles that are emerging in Scotland and Wales exhibit some distinctively inclusive and holistic features in line with the expectations associated with a new, meso-level institutional setting.	Chapters 4, 5 and 6
7	There is no evidence of a 'culture of collaboration' in the chosen case studies, but JUG is recognised as an indicator of good governance and policy actors aim to collaborate where there is low institutional risk.	Chapters 5, 6, 8
8	A JUG approach does not represent a challenge to the network paradigm, but may be used alongside the interests-based account of the policy process where joined-up thinking and action is detected or resource exchange does not provide an adequate account of policy relationships.	Chapter 7

The final section asks how these findings can be improved and built upon, and how the study of both JUG and public policy in a devolved context can be taken in new directions. It asks: how can the policy styles of the devolved institutions be further explored and more robustly tested? How can the empirical study of public policy in Scotland and Wales be advanced, particularly using a JUG approach? And

how can the way scholars understand JUG as an administrative doctrine be deepened?

8.6 Avenues for further research

The wider significance of a number of the research findings summarised in Table 8.1 is restricted by the fact that they have been arrived at through a case study research method. There are certain well-documented and, it must be recognised, well-founded criticisms of this research method which focus on the extent to which case study researchers generalise their findings beyond the particular case or cases they have chosen to study (Bryman 1992; Gillham 2000; Stake 1995; see chapter 3: 57-59). With this in mind, there is no attempt made here to claim that any of the research findings which cite case study evidence have any certain application outside of the situation of the particular conditions within the SEN and ACL policy areas in Scotland and Wales.

However, the analysis is chapter 5 and 6 was conducted with this problem in mind and an attempt was made to uncover the 'degree of specificity' in each case by examining how a set of seven variables played out. This analysis means that some of the findings may have an application beyond the chosen case studies where conditions can be identified as being broadly similar. So, for example, a similar policy subject which is located in a meso-level policy context and also shows a high degree of existing consensus among policy actors may be expected to share some features of the SEN case studies in Scotland and Wales. The real degree of specificity of the chosen case studies can only be properly revealed, however, if additional case study research using a JUG approach is conducted in a range of policy contexts. This would be help to generate a sophisticated and reliable understanding of the conditions in which joined-up thinking and action might be expected to exist.[10]

This point raises a further, probably more important, focus for future research. When this study has described 'joined-up thinking and action' it has necessarily been restricted to policy processes and outputs. JUG is, of course, a doctrine whose principal focus is on *outcomes*, on effectively tackling 'wicked' problems. There is a clear danger that research which focuses on process and outputs alone becomes

blind to situations where JUG has become process- rather than outcomes-focussed. Clearly, a joined-up policy process or output is of precisely no use if it is not seen through to a positive result. The work started in this study therefore needs to be taken forward to incorporate outcomes-based evaluation. A JUG approach which is able to integrate an analysis and descriptive evaluation of the impact of an attempt at JUG would also be ale to develop a more sophisticated and useful library of best practice examples.

The importance attached the variable of scale also requires additional data to be considered robust. More specifically, it would be potentially highly illuminating to carry out a comparative case study in a larger bureaucratic setting. This would place the importance of scale as an explanatory factor into further comparative context and demonstrate more clearly the extent to which the defining relationships of a more inclusive, holistic policy style are indeed distinctive. There may also be value in returning to the SEN and ACL case studies after a suitable period of time to consider how (and, indeed, why) the nature and extent of joined-up thinking and action may have changed. It would be particularly interesting to examine the role institutional trust plays in the SEN and ACL policy processes as devolution enters its second decade.

Finally, the JUG approach to public policy research developed in this study needs to e refined further and integrated with the network literature. Although, in the absence of a 'culture of collaboration', Jug does not represent a challenge to the network approach, considering the possibility that some policy relationships may be explained as forming part of a 'collaboration agenda' may bring added sophistication to interests-based thinking.

Notes to chapter 8

[1] A further question emerged during the research: has devolution affected the relationship between local government and the centre, specifically from a JUG perspective, and in what ways? The salience of this question flows from the received wisdom among local government actors and, indeed, commentators, that a great deal of good practice in JUG at the local level is often scuppered by the inflexibility and rigid departmental mode of policy-making exhibited by Whitehall (see e.g. Arblaster et al 1998; Richards et al 1999). Gerry Stoker (2005: 161) makes the point:

> ... in contrast to central departments, local agencies and authorities [i.e. those at a level below the centre, though not, it should be added the devolved level, which can act as a 'regional centre'] are rather good at doing joined-up. They have the commitment, skills, and capacity to make joining-up work and the main block on progress is the heavy hand of the centre ...

The flow of JUG from policy formulation, at the centre, to policy implementation, at the local level, has therefore been disrupted. If, as has been suggested on a number of occasions in this study both the relative success of local government and the relative failure of central government in attempting to join-up their activity are at least partially functions of scale, then clearly a change to a smaller scale 'centre', in the shape of the Scottish Government and Assembly government, may make a considerable difference to this flow from formulation to implementation. As this question emerged during the course of the research, however, it must remain an interesting focus for future research into JUG across levels of government.

[2] It is worth noting that the best practice-based approach did not preclude any innovative activity or institutional arrangement from consideration. Indeed, any policy process or output which required policy actors to pool policy- and decision-making sovereignty was examined as part of the research.

[3] This is not to say that joined-up thinking and action at this informational level is mere rhetoric. There is certainly potential for, for example, the Policy Integration Tool discussed in chapter 4 (106) to lead to a more coherent form of policy development that removes overlap or duplication. Furthermore, it has been shown how *Making the Connections* and *Changing to Deliver* have been successful in making collaboration a synonym for good governance and moving policy actors towards that mode of behaviour as an ideal.

[4] The utility of this framework for descriptive evaluation depends, of course, on whether one accepts the particular reading of JUG it seeks to measure. JUG is a sufficiently vague doctrine for there to be almost unlimited scope for interpretation.

The definition put forward here places some emphasis on vertical collaboration between governmental actors and the array of actors in civil society. This view may not be shared by those who take a narrower, more technocratic view of the doctrine and consider its application to be restricted to inter- or intra-departmental structures and relationships.

[5] Examples include NIACE Dysgu Cymru and the Scottish Adult Learners' Partnership (SALP).

[6] The fact that budget pooling was at the heart of the CSP's passage through the Scottish Parliament is significant in itself as an example of actors pooling policy- and decision-making sovereignty, but it is the specific role of scale in this relationship which makes it a potential example of a distinctive devolved policy style.

[7] Indeed, the research suggests that an effective strategy for small organisations wishing to influence policy- and decision-making in Scotland and Wales is to aim to build social content into their relationships with key decision-makers.

[8] Individual trust is, of course, entirely founded on actor-specific knowledge, even if that knowledge is sometimes little more than impressionistic.

[9] Indeed, to adopt such a puritanical position would seem to go against the essentially pragmatic outlook of the 'joiner-uppers'.

[10] Further case study research in a range of policy areas should take a variety of forms. The connections between the key variables for influencing JUG requires more detailed empirical work to understand their impact in different combinations to those found in the SEN and ACL cases.

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List of interviews

1	Claire Moyle, Director, Afasic Cymru	03.07.07
2	Denise Inger, Director, Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP) Cymru	02.04.07
3	Hugh Morgan, Chief Executive, Autism Cymru	30.07.07
4	Maggie Bowen, Senior Representative, Autism Cymru and Former Civil Servant, Welsh Assembly Government	31.07.07
5	Programme Manager, Communities First Bridgend	08.01.09
6	Liz Withers, Senior Representative, National Autistic Society Cymru	26.07.07
7	Rob Humphreys, Director, Open University in Wales, and former Director, NIACE Dysgu Cymru	16.03.07
8	William Graham, AM	20.09.07
9	Peter Black AM, former Chair of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee of the National Assembly	10.08.07
10	Andrew Davies AM, Minister for Public Service Delivery	18.01.08
11	Chris Burdett, senior official, Department for Education Lifelong Learning and skills, Welsh Assembly Government	14.09.07
12	Keith Ingham, senior official, Department for Health and Social Services, Welsh Assembly Government	31.10.07
13	Mair Watkins, senior official, Department for Education Lifelong Learning and skills, Welsh Assembly Government	22.08.07
14	Ann Auchterlonie, Director, Afasic Scotland	10.04.07

15	Bob Christie, senior representative, Scottish Adult Learners' Partnership	11.04.07
16	Iain Ferguson, senior representative, CBI Scotland	11.04.07
17	Claire Edwards, Director, Special Needs Information Point	11.04.07
18	Mike Gibson, senior official, Education and Training Department, Scottish Parliament	26.09.07
19	George Reid, senior official, Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department, Scottish Executive	27.09.07
20	Audrey Robertson, senior official, Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department, Scottish Executive	27.09.07
21	Don Mackie, senior official, Enterprise, Transport and Lifelong Learning Department, Scottish Executive	27.09.07
22	Euan Robson, former Deputy Minister for Education and Young People, Scottish Executive	08.01.08