

THE UK RESEARCH ASSESSMENT EXERCISE AND THE NARROWING OF  
UK ECONOMICS

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to delineate an empirically grounded, structure-causal going concern recursive model of UK economics that, in the context of the RAE and local department decision-making, explains the progressive elimination of heterodox economics, the progressive homogenization of mainstream economics from 1992 to the present, and the continued rise to dominance of a select group of departments, and indicates whether these ‘regularities’ will continue under the Research Excellence Framework selectivity exercise in 2014.

Key words: UK Economics, Research Assessment Exercise, Critical Realism

JEL Code: A14, B5, A11

## THE UK RESEARCH ASSESSMENT EXERCISE AND THE NARROWING OF UK ECONOMICS<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Introduction

Prior to 1986, funding for research in British universities was built into the state's funding allocation for higher education pro-rated (at different rates) to universities based on student numbers. This was based on the assumption that all lecturers and professors were engaged in research and scholarship as part of their role as academics. Additional funds for specific research projects were available upon successful applications to the various research councils, such as the Social Science Research Council (1965-1983) and its successor the Economics and Social Research Council (1983-present). In the 1960s, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and the Council for Scientific Policy began advocating for funding selectivity. By 1970 the Science Research Council recognized that demand for funds for research began exceeding the amount that was going to be available; so it implemented policies of selectivity and concentration in order to sustain viable research groups. At the same time, the University Grants Committee (UGC) found that the government's grant for the funding of teaching and research in British universities was declining in real terms. Moreover, in the early 1980s, the universities became victims to heavy cuts in public expenditure and it became apparent to many administrators in the field that 'excellence in research' could not be maintained without applying some principle of selectivity in funding (in conjunction with the closure of low-grade departments). Somewhat reluctantly, therefore, the UGC (supported by the Royal Society, the British Academy, and the vice-chancellors from the leading research universities) agreed to a research selectivity exercise (RSE) whereby research funds were

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<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Grazia Ietto-Gillies and Jamie Morgan for their comments on a previous draft of this paper. The usual caveat applies.

distributed to different departments according to the UGC's assessment of their degree of excellence. The first exercise in 1986 was an ad hoc affair with the allocation of about 16.5 percent of the research monies dependent on the research ratings of departments. The second RSE was carried out by the UGC in 1989 with the allocation of about 50 percent of research funding dependent on the ratings of duly constituted subject panels to whom departments submitted more refined applications; and in 1992, its successor, the Universities Funding Council (UFC), carried out a third exercise, now named the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). In 1992 (as well as in the subsequent 1996, 2001, and 2008 RAEs), over 90 percent of the UFC's research funds were distributed by its successors, the Higher Education Funding Councils (HEFCs) for England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, according to the ratings of its subject panels; and the pre-1992 'old' universities had to compete for that money with the new universities (qua ex-polytechnics and other similar higher education institutions) (Williams, 1993; Kogan and Hanney, 2000; Tapper and Salter, 2003; Bence and Oppenheim, 2005; Martin and Whitley, 2010; Morris, 2010).

The negative impact of the 1992, 1996, and 2001 UK research assessment exercises on heterodox economics is well documented (Harley and Lee 1997; Lee and Harley 1998; Lee 2007); and as will be shown below, the 2008 RAE reinforced the efforts of the last two decades to free British economics of economists and their theories that exist beyond the pale, outside of the society of decent, respectable economists. The elimination of heterodox economics occurred at the same time that the concentration and homogenization of economic research and the dissemination of economic ideas of a elite group of economic departments took place. Although these three discipline events or outcomes are distinct, their simultaneous occurrence suggests the existence of an underlying common causal mechanism. Richard Whitley suggests that the

common mechanism is grounded in the combination of a strong RSE and powerful disciplinary elite. A strong RSE is one that "...institutionalize public assessments of the quality of the research conducted in individual departments and universities by scientific elites on a regular basis according to highly formalized rules and procedures" (Whitley, 2007, p. 9). The peer review-based assessments are then used to generate discipline-based quality research (QR) rating of departments, which in turn have a significant impact on state funding and hence on the research activities of the assessed departments. A powerful disciplinary elite is one that can influence the organization and direction of the RSE to favor their conception of research quality, objectives and goals of research, appropriate research methods, and discipline qua professional values. When combined, the RSE is captured so that it not only replicates the disciplinary elite and its research agenda and values, it does so in a mutually reinforcing or cumulative causation manner so that the disciplinary elite becoming progressively more powerful and its research agenda and values increasingly dominate, leading to a decline in the variability in research goals and approaches and disciplinary diversity and pluralism. Economics, Whitley suggests, is a prime example of RAE regulatory capture (Whitley, 2007; Martin and Whitley, 2010, p. 66).

Whitley based his claim on the work I carried out (with Sandra Harley) over the past two decades on economics and the 1992, 1996, 2001 RAEs (Harley and Lee, 1997; Lee and Harley, 1998; and Lee, 2007). I argued that the Royal Economics Society (RES) did capture the RAE panel appointment process, thereby ensuring that the economics and econometrics panel (hereafter economics panel) consisted of assessors that represented its research interests and disciplinary values. However, this initial capture was not done in the interest of an disciplinary elite, but in the name of a specific economic theory, neoclassical or mainstream theory. Once captured, the values and interests represented by the RES became increasingly significant in the

economics and econometrics panel's peer-review assessing of research quality and, hence, in determining departments' research quality ratings. In this context, the categorization of journals as mainstream or heterodox along with journal rankings was introduced to help assessment outcomes; but the recursive relationship between the RAE, the economics panel, and journal rankings qua 'right kind of journals' leading to the increasing dominance of a single 'right way' of economic theorizing and conducting economic research is underdeveloped. Moreover, the RES-capture of the RAE qua economics panel is not sufficient in itself to entirely account for three ongoing events that characterize UK economics: (1) the ostracizing of heterodox economics, (2) the concentration and homogenization of UK economic research from 1992 to the present, and (3) the dissemination of economic ideas of an elite group of UK economic departments. As going concerns, economic departments also have their own causal role in these three events through their hiring and promotion practices, directing research, identifying the right (world class) journals in which to publish research, deciding what material to teach undergraduate and post-graduate students, and the training of research students; and all of these intentional activities affect their RAE rating qua funding which in turn affects the continuation (or not) of these activities. In short, there are three causal mechanisms that account for the simultaneous ongoing of the three discipline events: one being regulatory capture identified by Whitley, the second being the economics panel in its assessment of research quality, and the third being local department 'going concern' decision making. Moreover, the three causal mechanism are recursively connected, reinforcing each other, and operate in the context of various structures to generate (in a cumulative causation, transfactual, demi-regular manner) the above three events. Thus Whitley's claim and my analysis of the RAE are only partially correct.

The aim of this paper is to delineate an empirically grounded, structure-causal going concern recursive model of UK economics that, in the context of the RAE and local department decision-making, explains the above noted discipline events and indicates whether these ‘regularities’ will continue under the Research Excellence Framework (REF) selectivity exercise in 2014.<sup>2</sup> In the next section, the going concern model is set out and explained. The third section deals with the cumulative modification of the structure of UK economics with regard to the concentrate of quality research (QR) funding in a few universities, the values and perceptions of the ‘right’ journals, and the concentration of research and first degree students in the elite and near-elite departments. The fourth section delineates the causal mechanisms—departments, RES-CHUDE, and the economics panel—and their decisions and outputs. The fifth section details the economic events that are generated by the structures and causal mechanisms. The sixth and concluding section considers whether the event regularities will continue with the 2014 REF selectivity exercise.

## **2. Going Concern Model of UK Economics**

The concept of the going concern refers to any organization with continuity of activity and an indefinite life span (as opposed to a organization with a specific life-span). For a UK economics department to be a going concern, it is necessary to keep its productive research capabilities intact and even enhance them; and this requires maintaining if not increasing the flow of QR monies which is dependent on its QR rating that in turn depends on its research capabilities. For a department to exist as a going concern, UK economics itself also has to be a going concern; that is, it must also have ‘managerial’ capabilities and working rules that enable it to have expectations of a future, by which is meant an inflow of QR monies to its constituent

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<sup>2</sup> A similar model (but without the details) has been developed by Donald Gillies (2012).

departments to ensure that they remain going concerns. Thus the going concern model of UK economics—see Figure 1—consists of three causal mechanisms, going concern departments, the RES which provides discipline-level managerial capabilities, and the RAE economics panel which utilizes the discipline’s accepted working rules in assessing research quality. The causal mechanisms operate in the context of three distinct structures, the structure of state funding of research, the structure of UK economics (which consists of three sub-structures), and the RAE. The causal mechanisms make five decisions that produce four outputs: publications and staffing composition of economic departments, the economics panel (which is also a causal mechanism), and department QR ratings. All of the causal mechanisms, structures, decisions, and outputs are real and hence measurable, quantifiable, and/or observable, thus capable of empirical grounding.

[Figure 1 about here]

The starting point of the model is the structure of state funding. The state provides funds for research (and teaching) to the UFC/HEFCs which utilize the RAE department QR ratings to distribute the funds to the various universities who in turn direct those funds to their various departments. Individual economic departments have no say in the state’s process of the allocation of research funds and little say within their own universities. As a going concern, the economics department makes decisions and takes initiatives to maintain if not increase its capabilities for receiving future QR funds. Two of its three decisions, research-journal decisions and hiring decisions, are affected by its own values and perceptions of what are the top economic journals and the right kind of research, and by the three structures of UK economics which the department can only indirectly affect: the current research funding structure of UK economics; the values and perceptions of what are



the top economic journals and the appropriate economic theories and applied economics to teach students; and the structure and composition of undergraduate and post-graduate research students. Thus, the research-journal decisions generate an array of research outputs that are published in a diverse set of outlets. These publications embody the ideas, theories, and methodologies by which the department is identified. Similarly, the department's hiring decisions are made, in part to meet undergraduate and post-graduate teaching needs, but more importantly to improve its research and publication capabilities. Thus, the hiring decisions affect the theoretical composition of the department in terms of staffing and diversity of theories, ideas, and research. The outcome of the interplay between the decisions that produced the publications and the department's staffing composition is a three-part impact on heterodox economics, economic research, and the significance of individual economics departments.

The department's QR funding is dependent on the publications it submits to the RAE. As an organizational structure, the RAE transmits the publications to its economic panel of assessors. However, to select the assessors, the RAE involves the RES which turns to its standing committee, Conference of Heads of University Departments in Economics (CHUDE) to assist it in making recommendations to the RES. Thus, a department's third decision is to become active in CHUDE so to influence the RES decisions regarding the selection and recommendation of panel assessors who will determine their QR funding allocation. Thus, the structural values and perceptions of UK economics in combination with the departments' values and perceptions are transmitted to the economics panel's selection process; and, along with the values and perceptions of the RES, they are used in the selection of the assessors for the panel. In turn, the economics panel assesses the QR of

the publications submitted by the various economics departments and the research quality rating of its output that is then used by the UFC/HEFCs to allocate research funds to universities qua economics departments. If the economics panel appears to denote particular research-publications qua publication outlets as being top in research quality, then going concern departments will use that judgment to make future research and hiring decisions to produce output that will appear in those outlets. This recursive, slowly cumulative transformative structure-causal process means that over the RAEs departments make ‘stronger’ decisions concerning, appropriate economic research, publications qua publishing outlets, and hiring of economists, thus contributing to the aforementioned discipline events.

To establish that the going concern model of UK economics actually accounts for the discipline events, it is necessary to empirically ground the historical evolution of its structures, causal mechanisms, decisions, and outputs. However, given the complexity of the task due to the different QR funding decisions taken by the HEFCs, the paper will restrict the empirical grounding of the model to England as a close approximation for UK economics. This is not at all inappropriate since, of all UK higher education institutions, the ones in England account for over 85 percent of the student population, QR funding, and research active staff. Moreover, in 2008, the number of RAE active economics departments in Northern Ireland was zero, in Wales one, in Scotland six, and in England 28 or 80 percent of all research active department. Thus England clearly dominates UK economics.

### **3. Structures of UK Economics**

The structures of UK economics provide the historical framework in which economic departments make their hiring and research-journal decisions and their decisions regarding

their involvement with CHUDE and, hence, the RES. But these decisions also have an impact on the structures. Therefore, over the past four assessment exercises, these structures have slowly changed so as reinforce the discipline events.

### *3.1 Structure and Concentration of Quality Research Funding*

In light of the selectivity rationale for the RAE, the HEFC for England developed a ranking system for research quality and corresponding funding weights that increasingly emphasized international excellence—see Appendix I.<sup>3</sup> As a result, over the last two decades, national excellence in research quality has gone from being quite important in terms of funding to being completely unimportant, while international excellence has gone from being quite important to being the only criterion relevant for research funding. This, in turn, ensured that QR funding became increasingly concentrated in and among fewer economics departments.<sup>4</sup> That is, in 1992, there were 71 universities (and other institutions of higher education) that had first degrees (BA/BS) in economics and/or post graduate students; but only 46 submitted research to the 1992 economics panel, of which 42 received QR funding.<sup>5</sup> In 1996, there were 74 universities with economic students but only 38 submitted research to the 1996 economics panel of which 35 received QR funding; for the 2001 RAE there were 70 universities with economic students but only 33 submitted research

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<sup>3</sup> The Appendices referred to in the paper can be obtained from the author or found at <http://cas.umkc.edu/economics/people/facultyPages/lee/default.asp>.

<sup>4</sup> Strictly speaking, universities received the research funds awarded by the HEFCs; and they can distribute them as they wish. Since a university's submission to a RAE subject panel, such as economics, was usually based on the fact that it actually had a department of economics, the department received much if not all the funding it earned. Thus, for the paper, a university's RAE submission to the economics panel is treated as a submission made by its economic department.

<sup>5</sup> Buckingham College of Higher Education (now Buckingham New University) did not have any degree-seeking students in economics, but still made a submission to the 1992 RAE for its two economists (derived from economics student enrollment data supplied by the Higher Education Statistical Agency) – contact the author for details.

to the 2001 economics panel and 24 received QR funding;<sup>6</sup> and for the 2008 RAE there were 69 universities with economic students but only 28 submitted research to the 2008 economics panel and all received QR funding—see Appendices II and V.

So, over the course of the four RAEs, the percentage of universities receiving QR funding for economics declined by 30 percent—see Table 1. Moreover, the composition of the universities submitting to the RAE economics panels changed significantly in favor of departments from the ‘old universities’. That is, in the 1992 RAE, twelve new universities made submissions to the economics panel. Four of the departments received a QR rating of one which gave them no QR funding; while seven received a research rating of two and one received a research rating of three which meant they received some research funding.

However, for the 1996 RAE only eight new universities made submissions to the economics panel, for the 2001 RAE only four, and for 2008 RAE only three—see Appendix III. The total amount of QR funding for the twelve new universities for 1993-94 to 1996-97 totaled £1,631,006, which was just 3.2 percent of the QR funding for economics for that period. That percentage dropped to 2.7 for 1997-98 to 2001-02, to 0.1 percent for 2002-03 to 2008-09, and then nudged upward to 0.6 percent for 2009-10 to 2012-13. Thus, the participation of the new universities in the RAE in economics declined by 75 percent and its allocation of QR funding declined from almost nothing to virtually nothing. In addition, the top three research rated categories increased their share of the QR funds from 96.2 percent to nearly one hundred percent—see Table 1. Lastly, the funding per staff, per year for the QR funded categories varied over the four RAEs, increasing from a ratio between the highest and lowest funded categories of 4.3 to 5.1 in the 1996 RAE, but then declining to 4.0 after the

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<sup>6</sup> The eight universities with a research rating of 3a received QR funding for only 2002-03; thus I have classified them as not receiving QR funding.

2001 RAE when the QR funding was restricted to research ratings of 4 and higher, and finally increasing to 5.6 for the 2008 RAE. As a result, the overall structure of QR funding became increasingly structured to favor economics departments at the old universities, to favor qua QR fund only 24-25 (or maybe 28) economics departments, and to restrict the upward migration of rated departments and the inward migration of non-rated departments so to increasingly favor in funding a smaller select group, that is 4-5 elite departments or perhaps circa 13 elite and near-elite departments, within a relatively stable number of 25-28 departments—see Table 2.

[Table 1 about here]

[Table 2 about here]

### 3.2 *Values and Perceptions*

All academic disciplines and professions have a multi-element set (or structure) of values and perceptions that help define what it is to its members and to others, such as external evaluators. They are distinct from the values and perceptions held by economics departments and individual economists (which can differ to some degree) in that if a department or academic ceased to exist, they would continue and be mostly unaffected. Their existence is significant in that they are causally efficacious when causal mechanisms make decisions to generate particular outcomes. In particular, the values and perceptions of UK economics relevant to its modeling are the research quality ordering of economic journals and the appropriate economic theories and applied economics to be taught to undergraduate and post-graduate students. The discipline perceptions and values regarding journals and what is the ‘right’ kind of economics to be promoted and taught to students affect the decisions made by departments, the RES, and the economics panels; and the more

dominant they are, the more likely the department, the RES, and the economics panel will make mutually compatible decisions.

### *3.2.1 Journals*

For the 1986 RSE, each department was asked to submit their five best publications from which its overall research quality was deduced. However, for the 1989 RSE and the 1992 RAE up to two publications from each full-time member of the faculty were submitted; and then for the 1996, 2001, and 2008 RAEs up to four publications from research active faculty was requested. This meant that each department submitted many more research publications upon which it would be judged; hence it became important to consider what publications should be submitted in light of how the economics panel would assess them. However, relying on what is perceived as the profession's view of what are the top research quality journals helps to reduce this uncertainty. In particular, UK economists widely believed that the 1989 economics panel drew upon Diamond's (1989) list of 27 core economics journals in assessing the submissions. This perception increased with the 1992 RAE and subsequent exercises (Harley and Lee, 1997; Lee and Harley, 1998; and Lee, 2007). It is not difficult to discern why Diamond's list of 27 journals obtained such an elevated status among UK economists: those journals appeared repeatedly as top quality journals in journal ranking studies and in articles that used 'professional judgment' journals to identify the top, blue ribbon, or 'everyone would agree are core, mainstream, highly respected, quality' journals prior to 1989 and since 1989 up to the present day (Lee, 2006; Schneider and Ursprung, 2008; Ritzberger, 2008; Da Silva 2009; Halkos and Nickolaos, 2011; Kalaitzidakis, Mamuneas, and Stengos, 2011); and they appeared to be sanctioned by Economics and Social Research Council, the RES, and CHUDE since they represented 16 of

the 22 high impact journals identified in their jointly sponsored study, *International Benchmarking Review of UK Economics* (ESRC, 2008).

Moreover, the department QR ratings outcomes over the four RAEs have significantly reinforced the perception that Diamond List (DL) publications matters. That is, as shown in Table 3 the correlation between the proportion of DL articles in the department's total submissions and the department's QR rating was high enough to make the perception a 'fact' upon which to act. As a result, the proportion of DL journals in all submissions increased from 18 percent in 1992 to 39 percent in 2008; while the proportion of DL journals in all journal submissions increased from 31 percent to 44 percent. Finally, the perceived importance of DL journals has a corollary perception: that only journal submissions (and certainly not chapters in edited volumes and authored books) matter to the economics panel when assessing research quality, the outcome of which resulted in the shifting of the percentage of journal articles in all submission from 53 percent in 1992 to 91 percent in 2008. In short, the perceived significance of DL journals for obtaining a high QR department rating has increased over time to the point that they are nearly seen as the only relevant journals in which to publish.<sup>7</sup>

[Table 3 about here]

### 3.2.2 *Subject Benchmarking and Subject Reviews*

The perception of what constitutes the 'right kind of economics' that should be taught to students is a deeply held value by UK economists. So what is taught as economics is a 'value' that contributes to the self-held definition of what it means to be a 'good' economist, as opposed to a 'bad' economist or no economist at all (in spite of having a

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<sup>7</sup> Marginal variations of the 'top' quality mainstream economic journals are possible; but the majority of such journals will also be DL journals.

doctorate in economics). This self-defining value is not just specific to an individual economist, but is also a 'structured' value for economics as a whole, as captured and represented in my 1994 and 2003 surveys of UK economists, by the 2000 and 2007 subject benchmarking statements, and by the 2000-01 subject reviews carried out by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).<sup>8</sup> In the 1994 survey of British economists, only ten of the elite and near-elite departments included something other than mainstream economics in the aims and objectives of their courses and only 15 of the other 42 departments in the survey did as well. In the QAA 2000-01 economic subject review, departments had a free-hand in specifying the aims and objectives of their first degree programs in economics; hence it was possible to have aims and objectives that included knowledge about alternative qua heterodox economic theory and economic policies. However, none of the elite and near-elite departments had something other than mainstream economics in the aims and objectives of their degree programs, while only 14 of the other 43 departments in the review did. So within a six year period there was a perceptible increase in the perceived value of mainstream economics: the elite and near-elite departments entertain no other view while two-thirds of the other departments endorse this position. This was evident in the QAA's 'act of uniformity', the economic benchmark statement issued in 2000 (and in the 2007 revision). The statement, as noted in Lee (2007: 314), essentially enshrined "neoclassical economic theory as the only economic theory to teach undergraduate students and the only theory they are expected to know," much like the

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<sup>8</sup> The 2000 economics benchmark statement is only available from QAA, but it is virtually the same as the 2007 economics benchmark statement: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/Subject-benchmark-statement-Economics.aspx>. The QAA economics subject reviews are also only available from the QAA. Finally, for the questionnaire surveys, see Harley and Lee 1997, Lee and Harley 1998, and Lee 2009B: Appendix A.20 and A.23.



1662 Act of Uniformity prescribing how all acts of public worship should be conducted.<sup>9</sup> Finally, the 2003 survey combined with the evidence in Lee (2007) reinforces the dominance of this value by showing that departments which had only mainstream economists on staff essentially taught their students exclusively mainstream economics, while departments that had some heterodox economists on staff did not hold such a restricted view of what should be taught. So in the end, the perception that a ‘good’ economist is one that radiates mainstream theory which is considered the only ‘good’ economic theory that students should be exposed to became more powerful and dominate over the four RAEs.

### 3.3 *Structure of Undergraduate and Post-Graduate Students*

The structure of the undergraduate and post-graduate research student population has changed over the four RAEs, but in ways that maintain if not reinforce the dominance of the elite and near-elite departments. In the early to middle 1990s, many polytechnics became universities and hence were able to give doctoral (and undergraduate) degrees.<sup>10</sup> Consequently, as an increasing number of universities were able to have research students combined with an increase in financial support, their numbers increased from approximately 1,700 in 1994-95 to nearly 1,900 in 2006-07, but then dropped by 36 percent to nearly 1,200 in 2010-11. Over this time period, the proportion of universities in the top two research rated categories (the elite and near-elite departments) relative to the total number of

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<sup>9</sup> It has been pointed out that the group which drafted the 2000 benchmark statement included some heterodox economists and intended the statement to be inclusive and not proscriptive. However, in representations to the QAA Benchmarking Committee for Economics and CHUDE, the Association for Heterodox Economics argued that the statement as written appears to enshrine a single view of economics and hence is proscriptive with regard to heterodox economics (Freeman, 2006; CHUDE Minutes 9 February 2008, 1 November 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Prior to 1992, polytechnics could not give undergraduate, masters, and doctoral degrees, but had to award them via the Council for National Academic Awards.

universities that taught economics remained relatively stable around 19 percent and their portion of post-graduate research students remained relatively stable at around 53 percent. On the other hand, the portion of non-research rated universities in the total population increased in jumps from 35 percent in 1994-95 to 59 percent in 2010-11 while their proportion of research students first increased by 150 percent to 20 percent of the research students in 2003-04 and then slowly declined to 17 percent in 2010-11—see Table 4 and Appendix V. So, in spite of the boom-bust cycle of the number of research students, the dominance of the top departments and the reputations of their doctoral programs remained unchallenged by the lesser and non-research rated departments.

The first degree student population increased nearly continuously over the four RAEs, from 17,610 in 1994-95 to 24,480 in 2010-11 or by 39 percent. However, the growth in student numbers for the elite and near-elite departments grew by nearly 44 percent, so that their share of total first degree student population increased from 36.6 to 37.9 percent. Similarly, the growth in student numbers combined with the increased in the number of non-research rated departments resulted in a hundred percent increase in first degree students at non-research rated departments, so that their share increased from 22.6 to 32.8 percent—see Table 4. Consequently, the ‘middling’ research rated departments experienced as a group no growth in student numbers. Moreover, there was a subtle change in the institutional make-up of the students. In 1994-95, four ex-polytechnics were among the ten largest departments in terms of student numbers; by 2002-03 it had dropped to one; and in 2010-11 there were none. In addition, the number of first degree students at the 29 ex-polytechnics qua new universities and other institutions of higher education declined from 6,270 in 1994-95 to 4,565 in 2010-11 or by 28 percent (as total student numbers increased by 39 percent);

and eight of the 29 institutions<sup>11</sup> teaching students in 1994-95 had ceased doing so by 2010-11 (which was compensated by seven new institutions teaching economics). Thus, the outcome of the growth of the number of first degree students were to reinforce and augment the dominance and reputation of the elite and near-elite departments and to concentration the teaching of economics among the ‘old’ universities. So overall, the structure of the research and first degree student populations evolved in a manner that reinforced the dominance of the elite and near-elite departments.

[Table 4 about here]

#### **4. Causal Mechanisms and Their Decisions and Outputs**

Given structures, a causal mechanism generates causal outcomes. The mechanism itself is a well-defined entity that has a stable internal organization whose components are intentionally related; and has the capability to act and the power to generate outcomes. Thus, the causal mechanism takes on the persona of the acting person within the context of a going concern organization. The significance of this is that the acting person qua causal mechanism is reflexive in terms of its decisions and thus visualizes the possible impact of its actions; and it can determine the extent to which its decisions qua actions achieve the desired outcomes. The going concern-causal mechanisms that drive UK economics and generate the discipline events that we are interested in are the economics department, RES-CHUDE, and the RAE economics panel.

##### *4.1 Departments: Publications and Composition*

The economics department, as a going concern, is a well-defined organization in terms of its faculty, teaching, research, and administrative qua decision-making activities.

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<sup>11</sup> Initially there were 30 institutions, but a merger between the University of North London and London Guildhall University creating London Metropolitan reduced the number to 29.

While the decision-making process can vary among economic departments, the decisions regarding hiring, promotion and research emphasis are generally collective undertakings; and perceptions of what constitutes research excellence hence good economics and good economists and world-class, internationally reputable, leading economic journals congeal into department positions.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the research-journal and hiring-promotion decisions produce two outputs: publications and the faculty composition of the department.

In terms of research, the interests of departments' faculty generally span more than a few of the JEL areas classification codes. However, after the 1992 RAE, departments realized that focusing a majority of their research in well-defined research areas was one component for maintaining as well as increasing their QR rating. So decisions were made regarding research areas which resulted by 2008 in five *core research areas* constituting around 50 percent of all department research areas and in five *important research areas* constituting around 27 percent of all research areas—see Table 5. Since research ratings were positively correlated with research in these two research areas and DL (and similar world-class) journals were excellent for the publications emanating from these areas, the issue of research management arose. Research management involved directing and/or redirecting faculty research, targeting publications in DL, world-class journals, and basing hiring and promotion decisions on carrying out world-class research in the targeted areas and publishing in the DL journals. Initially, the pressure intentionally placed on errant faculty was significant, but ultimately successful, in that they either complied or were transferred to other departments or left the university (Harley and Lee, 1997; Lee, 2008B,

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<sup>12</sup> For example, the London School of Economics explicitly stated in its RAE 2008 submission (RA5a section) that it 'specializes' in mainstream economics and considers itself one of the best known universities in the world for work in this area. Thus, 95 percent of its submissions were rated 4\* or 3\*, while 57 percent of its submissions were in DL journals.

Appendix 23). So by 2001 and certainly by 2008 errant faculty ceased to exist in most departments—see Table 6. So over time, the research-publishing-hiring intentionally regime adopted by going departments became increasingly focused on DL (and other world-class) journals and on the exclusive qua restrictive hiring of mainstream economists who can produce DL publications—see Table 6.<sup>13</sup> What made the different research areas hang together as a collegial, cohesive research endeavor, and hence their successful management by the departments possible, was the communality of methodology (such as the exclusive use of econometrics in all research activities) and exclusively working within the theoretical framework of mainstream economics (see for example the University of Liverpool 2001, University of Essex 2001 and 2008, London School of Economics 2008, Surrey 2008, and University College London 2008 RAE-RA5a: structure, environment and staffing policy submissions).

[Table 5 about here]

[Table 6 about here]

The outcome of the interactive process inherent in the research-publishing-hiring regime was, over the four RAEs, an increasing ‘mainstream’ composition of publications and the faculty. As noted in Table 3, the percentage of DL articles of all submissions increased from 18 percent in 1992 to 39 percent in 2008, with some departments—such as LSE, UCL, Essex and Warwick—having more than 40 percent of their submissions appearing in DL journals (see Appendix IV). Conversely, heterodox submissions declined

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<sup>13</sup> In their RA5a ‘Research Environment and Esteem section of their 2001 and 2008 RAE submissions, four of the five elite class, six of the eight near-elite class, and nine of the twelve middle class departments explicitly identified particular DL journals (if not all of them) as world-class, internationally top economic journals—see Appendix VI. This emphasis in terms of publishing and hiring on a narrow range of journals is understandable when the financial sustainability of a going department is tied to publishing in them.

from 3.2 percent in 1992 to one percent in 2008 (with just eight, or 0.5 percent, coming from the elite or near-elite departments)—see Table 7 and Appendix VII. Regarding departments' mainstream vs. heterodox staff composition, the hiring patterns just after the 1992 RAE heavily favored mainstream economists who constituted over 80 percent of all hires (see Appendix IX). In addition, from 1996 to 2012, the number of heterodox economists located in research-rated departments declined by 70 percent, while the number in non-research rated departments remained stable. In fact, by 2012 nine of the 13 elite and near-elite departments had no heterodox economists on staff and two others had a total of four heterodox economists on staff, while the 12 middling departments had a total of eight heterodox economists on staff (see Appendix VIII). On the other hand, the number of heterodox economists located in non-economics departments increased by nearly 240 percent. Moreover, 59 percent of the 68 economics departments (15 research-rated and 25 non-research-rated) in 2012 had no heterodox economists on staff. This represents a 40 percent increase over the 28 departments (7 research-rated and 21 non-research-rated) who had no heterodox economists on staff for the entire time period, 1992/6 to 2012 (see Table 7).

The interactive process between research-publishing and hiring resulted in department-staff compositional change over the past two decades being positively willfully-causally correlated with the concentration of scholarly work in the core research areas and with the increase in DL submissions and negatively causally correlated with the decline of non-mainstream research areas and with heterodox submissions to the economics RAE panel (see Tables 5 and 7). It is also positively causally correlated with the number of heterodox economists who are located in non-economics departments and with the percentage increase

in heterodox RAE submissions outside of economics (see Table 7). In short, the research-publishing-hiring decisions intentionally pursued by economics departments over the past four RAEs has accomplished the goal of making the departments themselves more mainstream, with the side-effect that the departments (and hence UK economics) has become more intellectually and research-wise homogeneous.

#### 4.2 *RES-CHUDE: Economics Panel*

The selection of the members of the economics panels has evolved slightly since the 1989 RSE, with the core RES-CHUDE causal mechanism remaining relatively stable. The RAE (through the chair of the economics panel which it appoints) looks mostly towards the Royal Economic Society to provide it with a list of names from which it can select for the panel. In turn, the RES turns to its standing committee, Conference of Heads of University Departments in Economics to solicit nominations from its members. To enhance its going concern prospects, the economics departments need to have some input in who is appointed to the economics panel; hence they must decide (their third core decision, the other two concern hiring-promotion and research-publications) to become active in CHUDE. From the nominations received, CHUDE via the RES forwards a select list of names to the chair of the panel for consideration. The panel chair, in consultation with CHUDE, also considers the nominations made by other learned and professional bodies. From these two general ‘inputs’, the chair creates the economics panel. Thus, the ‘capturing’ of the RAE panel selection process involved the RES structuring it to its advantage (Lee and Harley 1998; CHUDE Minutes 5 April 2004, 13 November 2004).

The outcome of the RES-CHUDE selection process for the four RAEs is that the economists qua assessors had three characteristics, the first being a mainstream economist

(28 of the 30 economists selected, the two exceptions being Phillip Arestis and Meghnad Desai—see Appendix VIII). A second common characteristic is that most of the assessors held significant positions in the RES, whether it be on the various RES committees, the managing/associate editor of the RES's *The Economic Journal*, being a member of the RES's CHUDE steering committee, and/or engaged in RES-CHUDE economics benchmarking projects (see Lee and Harley 1998: 42-44, and Table 8). The third characteristic is that the assessors published more DL articles than the average economist: 47 percent of the RAE 2001 assessors' submissions were in DL journals whereas it was 28 percent for all the 2001 RAE submissions, and the 2008 RAE, it was 53 percent vs. 39 percent—see Tables 3 and 8. Although not pervasive among the 2001 and 2008 assessors, being involved with a DL journal as an editor or associate editor (or similar fashion) was emerging as an important characteristic (and certainly became so for the 2014 REF assessors—see Table 8). Thus, as a causal mechanism within the RAE, RES-CHUDE structured the selection process so that 'internalized' within the assessors were the values and perceptions that the RES and CHUDE (and the various UK economics departments that constitute CHUDE) consider most important: conducting and publishing 'international excellence' research in DL journals and maintaining the dominance of mainstream economics in the UK economics profession.

[Table 8 about here]

#### 4.3 *Economics Panel: Department Research Quality Ratings*

In peer-review assessment exercises, the peers are supposed to review all submissions. This was possible in the 1986 RSE when each department submitted their five best publications from which its overall research quality was deduced. However, with the



dramatic increase in the number of submissions for the 1989 RES and the 1992 RAE (up to two publications from each full-time member of the faculty) and for the 1996, 2001, and 2008 RAEs (with up to four publications from each research active faculty), this meant that it was not really possible for the assessors to read every submission (in spite of some claims to do so—see Lee and Harley 1998: 32, 46 fn. 10). And nor could they individually clearly discern the overall research profile of all the departments. Thus, mechanisms were adopted to make the assessment possible, such as assigning individual assessors to examine the overall research profile of specific departments (which included more than just reading the submissions). A second mechanism was to examine at least fifty percent of the submissions in detail. Finally, the assessors met as a group to collectively arrive at the research ratings of each department that were comparable. With these three mechanisms in place, it was possible for the economic assessors to carry out the assessment exercise and rate the research quality of each department in a consistent manner (Lee and Harley 1998; RAE Economics and Econometrics Panel ‘Overview Report’, <http://www.rae.ac.uk/2001/overview/docs/UoA38.pdf>; 2008 Economics and Econometrics Panel ‘Criteria and Working Methods’, <http://www.rae.ac.uk/pubs/2006/01/docs/i34.pdf>; Beath 2002).

What made the convergence of assessors’ assessments possible was that they drew upon their commonly held values and perceptions on what was good economics and high quality economic research, and which journals had the greatest international reputations. This is not, however, to say that they substituted Diamond’s list of core economic journals for their judgment of a submission’s research quality. However, the fact is that most assessors satisfied more than one of the following: (1) published in DL journals (see Table

8), (2) agreed on the benchmark statement that defines what is economics and especially good economics (see Table 8), and (3) were members of Departments that (i) emphasis publishing in DL journals (see Table 6) or simply highlighted mostly if not only the DL journals in their RA5a submissions to the RAE (with a side note saying that the department would continue to publish in core journals),<sup>14</sup> (ii) that in the 2001 and 2008 RAEs frequently identified DL journals as having international standing, the research ranking outcomes (see Appendix VI), and (iii) that based hiring and promotion near exclusively on publishing in DL journals (see Table 6). So, it was as if Diamond's list was the sole criterion for assessing submissions and arriving at a department's research rating. As noted in Table 3, with the best correlation coefficient being less than one, this was not entirely the case. What is evident, however, is that DL journals represent a concise set of research and disciplinary values that the assessors (and UK mainstream economists in general) support. So the assessors research rating decisions resulted in rewarding departments that publish in DL journals and hence engage in the core research areas which mainstream economists value.

## **5. Discipline Events**

With the going concern model of UK economics in place, it is now easily seen how and why economics departments made research-journal and hiring-promotion decisions that intentionally (as opposed to being an unintended by-product of dealing with the RAE) lead to the three discipline events noted above: (1) the progressive elimination of heterodox economics from research-rated economics departments and from UK economics in general, (2) the concentration of economic research in fewer departments and the homogenization of

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<sup>14</sup> For example, see Edinburgh's, Glasgow's, and Swansea's 2008 RAE – RA5a: research environment and esteem submissions, available at <http://www.rae.ac.uk/>.

this research across departments, and (3) the dominance of UK economics by a few elite and near-elite departments. The overall decline in hiring heterodox economists by economics departments leading to increasing number of departments with only mainstream economists on staff combined with the progressive decline in heterodox submissions to the economics RAE panels has created the all-too-accurate impression that economics is a discipline with only a single paradigm of mainstream economics. However, there is more in that mainstream economists hold quite punitive attitudes towards heterodox economists and their ideas—both are so unacceptable (the former are strictly inferior and mediocre and the latter are old and should have been buried long ago) that they should not be part of, not just economics, but all of academia.<sup>15</sup> This is evident in the RAEs where the economics panels evaluated heterodox submissions to other RAE panels on the same (negative) grounds that they rate their own heterodox submissions.

The concentration of research into fewer economics departments is evident along two lines: first is that the number of research rated economics departments declined from 46 to 28 while the concentration of research funds in the elite and near-elite departments has remained over 70 percent since 1996; and the second is that the number of departments with post-graduate research students declined from 51 in 1997-98 to 40 in 2010-11 while the number of departments with 20 or more research students declined from 30 in 2002-03 to 24 in 2010-11, and the concentration of research students in the elite and near-elite departments

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<sup>15</sup> The terms ‘inferior’ and ‘buried a long time ago’ were mentioned in responses to my 1994 survey of UK economists (see Lee 2009A: 165, 168); terms which are similar to the assertion of ‘mediocrity of heterodox economists’ made by Richard Portes (2008: 4) in his 2008 RES Annual Report of the Secretary-General (which presumably also reflects the RES’s view of heterodox economists given the official nature of the report). Such views are echoed by mainstream economists elsewhere, such as at the University of Chicago and Princeton University where heterodox economics is equated to astrology, flat-earth theories, or creationism (Alberti 2012: 3-4).

has remained stable at over 50 percent for nearly fifteen years. In conjunction with this is the homogenization of research across departments, as directly evident by the concentration of research in the same core areas and using the same theory and methodology, by the focusing of publications on the DL journals, and by how economics is ‘officially’ defined and what departments teach their students; and indirectly evident by the declining number of research-rated (and non-research-rated) departments that conduct non-mainstream research, publish in heterodox journals, and take a pluralist approach towards the teaching of economics. Lastly, the dominance of UK economics the 13 elite and near-elite departments is not just in terms of QR funding and the numbers of research staff and research and first degree students, but also in terms of the roles they play in the RES and RAE. Their (that is the departments qua assessors) connections with the RES is well-documented and common knowledge. Moreover, they are, for over the four RAEs and the 2014 REF, increasingly connected with the ESRC (Table 8 and Appendix X) whose funding of research projects is becoming an increasingly important factor when assessing departments.<sup>16</sup> But what is most striking is these departments through their assessors have dominated the RAE panels (especially when the obligatory one new university, one Wales, and two Scotland assessors are taken into account). This is especially evident for the 2014 REF panel where nine assessors come from the elite and near-elite departments. So given their RES, ESRC, and RAE-REF connections in conjunction with the DL journal editor connection (see Table 8 and Appendix X), the elite and near-elite departments have turned the assessment exercises into a self-promotion activity where those ‘other’ lower-class departments are marginalized.

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<sup>16</sup>The ESRC is also not neutral with regard to heterodox economics. For example, when appointing members of its Peer Review College for the area of economics, not a single heterodox economist was appointed (<http://www.esrc.ac.uk/about-esrc/governance/committees-networks/peer-review-college/index.aspx>).

## 6. Conclusion: The More the RSE Changes the More it Stays the Same

With the going concern model of UK economics in place, the 2014 REF selectivity exercise will reinforce the aforementioned discipline events. This is evident in the selection of the economics assessors which mostly come from elite and near-elite departments and are (or have been) managing/associate editors of DL journals (including the *Economic Journal*). That is, in July 2010 the HEFCs asked subject associations to nominate candidates for the various subject sub-panels for the 2014 REF; the HEFCs also stated that the criteria for appointing assessors included “the diversity of the research community in the relevant fields should be reflected in the sub-panel membership” (REF 2010: 7 paragraph 55f). The Association for Heterodox Economics nominated several heterodox economists, but none were appointed. So when querying the HEFC of England about the issue of paradigmatic diversity, the response was that “sub panel diversity will not specifically include paradigmatic diversity but in forming the expert panels expertise will be sought so as to cover the various approaches to all the disciplines” (Gordge, 2010). This point was further pursued with the 2014 REF chair of the economics sub-panel who responded saying that the sub-panel does not anticipate a significant volume of submissions that it will be unable to assess (Neary, 2011). Yet, given the professional characteristics of the members of the economics sub-panel (see Table 8) and their home departments, it is plausible to conclude that the sub-panel’s awareness of paradigmatic diversity does not extend beyond a narrow range of mainstream pluralism. But more to the point, given the ongoing discipline events and the long assessment-arm of the economics sub-panel (that stretches across many sub-panels), it is most likely that heterodox economists will attempt to submit publications in other assessment areas that would hopefully avoid their detection and examination. So, it

could well be that the economics sub-panel will not have to deal with submissions that it is unable to assess.<sup>17</sup>

There is a further issue concerning the basis of assessment. The REF's general criteria for assessing submissions is that it must be done so that excellence is applied fairly and equally to all forms of research, which the economics sub-panel identifies in terms of types of research: empirical or theoretical, strategic, applied, or policy focused (REF, 2012: 6, 60, 64). In addition, the assessment of the submissions is carried out by expert peer review, with limited use made of citation data (REF, 2012: 66) and no use made of "journal impact factors, ranking or lists, or the perceived standing of the publisher, in assessing the quality of research outputs" (REF, 2012: 8). However, as argued in section 4.3, expert peer review as carried out by the assessors is embedded in a set of disciplinary values that are represented by DL journals. So the REF assessment guidelines, by not confronting the issue of paradigmatic diversity, permit the 'indirect' use of journal rankings and perceived standing and obscure it with language denying their use. This is a clear example of a supposedly neutral RSE actually favoring a particular set of discipline values and theory to the exclusion of others.

What the going concern model illuminates so clearly is the closed, self-referential nature of UK economics. Thus, it is not possible for external criticisms coming from marginalized groups to have any real impact, whether it be criticisms of the RAE or the impending REF, critical commentary submitted to the International Benchmarking Review

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<sup>17</sup> As noted in Table 7 and Appendix VI, heterodox economists qua research have increasingly been submitted to the RAE Business and Management Science panel. However, given the dominance of the UK Association of Business Schools' *Academic Journal Quality Guide* in guiding the identification of research quality in UK business schools, the assessment of heterodox research in the forthcoming REF is likely to be the same as that of the economics panel (Nedeva, Boden, and Nugroho, 2012).

of Economics (Freeman, 2008), problems with the 2000/2007 economics benchmark statement, or the shortcomings of peer review as carried out in UK economics (Freeman, 2011). Moreover, in due course the marginalized groups are transformed into the ‘other’ whose professional activities are considered anti-scientific, anti-mainstream, and outside the norms of tolerance and acceptability. Hence, the model shows how the recursively related departments, RES, and the state (as represented by the RAE and HEFCs) have, over the past two decades, repressed social qua research activities and the theoretical language specific to it (through which the identities of heterodox economists are demonstrated) and debased, destroyed, or transformed the organizations and institutions that sustain the activities. And in numerous instances, heterodox economists were faced with loss of professional identity and life as an economist if they did not conform. In short, the going concern model of UK economics puts into focus what others have identified as cultural, political, language, or social genocide of the ‘other’ (Powell, 2011; Gomez-Suarez, 2007, Levy, 2006; Jacobs, 2005). But this is not surprising since the point of the RSE was to reduce the number of research universities to 12-15 (Kogan and Hanney 2000: 99); and to ensure that universities conduct research carries out teaching that is consistent with the interest of the economic and political elite qua the state. In the period prior to the 1960s, the interests of the state and universities were compatible, based on elite homogeneity. But this fractured in the 1960s and 1970s, as students and faculty research expressed different interests from the state. From the 1980s onwards, effort was spent on resurrecting this common interest via political, administrative, bureaucratic means. In economics this meant that economists needed to produce an economics that was more compatible with state interests and this meant, in part, the

elimination of the wrong kind of economists and economics.<sup>18</sup> Whether foreseen or not the RSE/RAE became the catalyst through which universities were brought back in line with the interests of the state; and in economics it was the key to cleanse economics of ‘wrong’ views, homogenize and narrowly focus economic research, and re-establish truly elite departments whose views dominate UK economics and elsewhere.

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<sup>18</sup> However, it can plausibly be argued that, given the current economic crisis, the right kind of economics did not serve the interests of the state, whereas some of the wrong kind of economics would have done so quite admirably.



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**Table 1.** *Quality Research Funding in Economics, 1992 – 2013*

	1992	1996	2001 <sup>1</sup>	2008
Percentage of Universities with QR Funding (average)	59.2	47.3	35.9	40.1
Percentage of QR Funding Going to the Top 3 Research Rating Categories	96.2	92.2	100.0	99.4
Ratio between the Highest And Lowest Funding per Capita	4.3	5.1	4.0	5.6

*Notes:* Derived from Appendix II and Appendix V.

<sup>1</sup>Universities with a research rating of 3a received QR funding for only 2002-03. Thus the remaining six years are used to calculate the figures in this column.

**Table 2.** *Stratification and Migration of Research Quality of Economics Department*


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<b>Stratification</b>			
Elite Class	Near-Elite Class	Middle Class	Working Class
LSE	Nottingham	Kent	London Metropolitan
UCL	Bristol	Leicester	Kingston
Warwick	Queen Mary	Birkbeck	Manchester Metropolitan
Oxford	Cambridge	Surrey	
Essex	Manchester	Sheffield	
	Southampton	York	
	Royall Holloway	Birmingham	
	Exeter	East Anglia	
		Sussex	
		City	
		Brunel	
		Loughborough	
<b>Possible Migration</b>			
	Middle to Near-Elite Class	Non-Research to Middle Class	Non-Research to Working Class
	Birkbeck	Durham	Keele
	York	Liverpool	
		Reading	
		Newcastle	

**Table 3.** *Diamond List Journals and the RAE*

	1992	1992 <sup>1</sup>	1996 <sup>2</sup>	2001	2008
All Submissions with QR Funding	1842	840	3017	2789	2601
Percentage of Journals Articles of all Submissions	53	60	62	89	91
Percentage of Diamond List Articles of All Submissions	na	18	na	28	39
Percentage of Diamond List Articles of all Journal Articles Submitted	na	31	na	32	44
Spearman/Pearson Correlation of the percentage of Diamond List Articles and Department Research Quality Rating	na	$r_s = .74$	na	$r_s = .78$	$r = .88$

**Notes:** Derived from Appendix IV and the 1992 and 1996 Research Assessment Exercise Database (<http://www.rae.ac.uk/1992/index.html>; <http://www.rae.ac.uk/1996/database/index.html>).

<sup>1</sup>From the third column in Appendix IV

<sup>2</sup>The data set does not include Nottingham Trent University.

**Table 4.** *Distribution of Post-graduate Research and First Degree Economics Students, 1994-95 to 2010-11*

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	Total Number (and ) of Research Students in the top two Research Rated Departments	Total Number (and ) of Research Students in the Non-Research Rated Departments	Total Number (and ) of First Degree Students in the top two Research Rated Departments	Total Number (and %) of First Degree Students in the Non-Research Rated Departments
1994-95	1,185 (69.3)	140 (8.2)	6,445 (36.6)	3,975 (22.6)
1997-98	970 (49.7)	280 (14.4)	5,150 (29.2)	5,150 (31.2)
2003-04	950 (53.8)	360 (20.3)	6,470 (31.5)	6,200 (30.3)
2007-08	725 (55.3)	245 (18.7)	7,105 (35.2)	5,235 (25.9)
2010-11	635 (52.7)	205 (17.0)	9,275 (37.9)	8,020 (32.8)

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*Notes:* Derived from Appendix V

**Table 5.** *UK Departments Research Area by Research Ratings: 2001 and 2008*

	RAE 2001					RAE 2008				
	5*	5	4	3a/b	Total	5.3-4.5	3.9-3.3	3.2-2.05	1.6-0.8	Total
<i>Number of Departments</i>	4	9	11	9	33	5	8	12	3	28
<b>Core Research Areas</b>										
Macroeconomics, Growth	3	8	5	5	21	5	7	9	1	22
Microeconomics Theory, Game Theory	3	8	4	0	15	5	5	7	0	17
Econometrics, Mathematical Economics	2	8	5	4	19	5	7	6	0	18
Finance and Monetary Theory	1	4	4	4	13	3	5	6	1	15
Development, Transition Economics	2	3	4	3	12	4	5	6	2	17
<b>Important Research Areas</b>										
Labor Economics and Industrial Relations	3	4	6	2	15	4	2	3	0	9
Industrial Organization, Innovation	3	3	4	3	13	4	0	5	0	9
Public Economics and Organizations	2	1	4	2	9	3	2	1	0	6
International Economics, Trade, Migration	1	2	2	2	7	3	1	3	0	7
Political Economy and Public Policy	0	0	3	1	4	2	4	2	0	8
<b>Specialty Research Areas</b>										
Experimental Economics	0	0	3	0	3	1	2	2	0	5
Health Economics	0	2	1	2	5	0	0	4	0	4
Environmental Economics	1	0	2	0	3	0	1	1	0	2
Applied Microeconomics	1	2	0	3	6	1	2	1	1	5
Economic History	1	2	0	1	4	2	2	1	0	5
<b>Peripheral Research Areas</b>										
	0	1	4	3	8	1	3	6	0	10
<b>Non-Mainstream Research Areas</b>										
Heterodox, Islamic Economics	0	1	1	4	6	0	0	0	0	0
History of Economics Thought	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	1
Methodology	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	1

*Notes:* Drawn from the RA5a – Research Environment and Esteem section of the 2001 and 2008 RAE submission:



see <http://www.rae.ac.uk/2001/submissions/Inst.asp?UoA=38>.

see <http://www.rae.ac.uk/submissions/submissions.aspx?id=34&type=uoA>.

**Table 6.** *Department Attitudes in Hiring, Promotion and Journals by Research Rating Category*

	Number of Universities	Emphasis on Publishing in Journals Identified As Blue Ribbon, Diamond List, Core Internationally Reputable Journals	Exclusive Hiring of Mainstream Economists (Explicit or Implied)	Hiring and Promotion based on Potential for Publishing in Emphasized Journals, Diamond List Journals	Emphasis Redirection of Research to fit better with Diamond List Journals or shifted to other Departments	
RAE 1992						
	5	10	9	10(E)	3	
	4	9	8	8(E)	3	
	3	14	12	12(E)	5	
	2	9	4	3(E)	2	
	1	4	0	2(E)	0	
RAE 2001						
	5*	4	2	1(I)	2	0
	5	9	4	4(I)	5	0
	4	11	6	4(I)	5	2
	3a/b	9	2	0(I)	0	0
RAE 2008						
	5.3-4.5	5	5	5(I)	5	0
	3.9-3.3	8	6	5(I)	6	0
	3.2-2.05	12	11	1(I)	3	0
	1.6-0.8	3	1	0	0	0

*Notes:* Drawn from Lee (2009B: Appendix 21 and 23) and the RA5a – Research Environment and Esteem section of the 2001 and 2008 RAE submission:

see <http://www.rae.ac.uk/2001/submissions/Inst.asp?UoA=38>.

see <http://www.rae.ac.uk/submissions/submissions.aspx?id=34&type=uo>.

**Table 7.** *Location of Heterodox Economics RAE Submissions and Heterodox Economists, 1992 – 2012*

	1992 RAE <sup>1</sup> Heterodox Submissions (% of total submissions)	2001 RAE Heterodox Submissions (% of total submissions)	2008 RAE Heterodox Submissions (% of total submissions)	Department Location of Heterodox Economists Relative to the Preceding RAE (in number of economists)			Number of Departments without Heterodox Economists in 2012	Number of Departments that never had Heterodox Economists from 1992/6 to 2012
				1996-2000	2002/3	2012		
Research-Rated Economics Departments	3.2 (840) <sup>2</sup>	2.6 (2789) <sup>2</sup>	1.0 (2604) <sup>2</sup>	83	48	33	15 of 28	7 of 28
Non-Research- Rated Economics Departments				47	58	45	25 of 40	21 of 40
Outside of Economics		60.5 (185) <sup>3</sup>	82.8 (157) <sup>3</sup>	24	48	57		

*Notes:* Sources: Appendices IV, VII, and VIII.

<sup>1</sup> Derived from twenty-one 1992 RAE Economic Departments Publications Submissions Collected by John R. Presely in 1993-1994. Copies in the possession of the author.

<sup>2</sup>Total number of RAE submissions—see Appendix IV.

<sup>3</sup>Total number of Heterodox RAE Submissions—see Appendix VII.

**Table 8.** *2001, 2008, and 2014 Economics Panels: Rae Submissions and Professional Characteristics of its Members*

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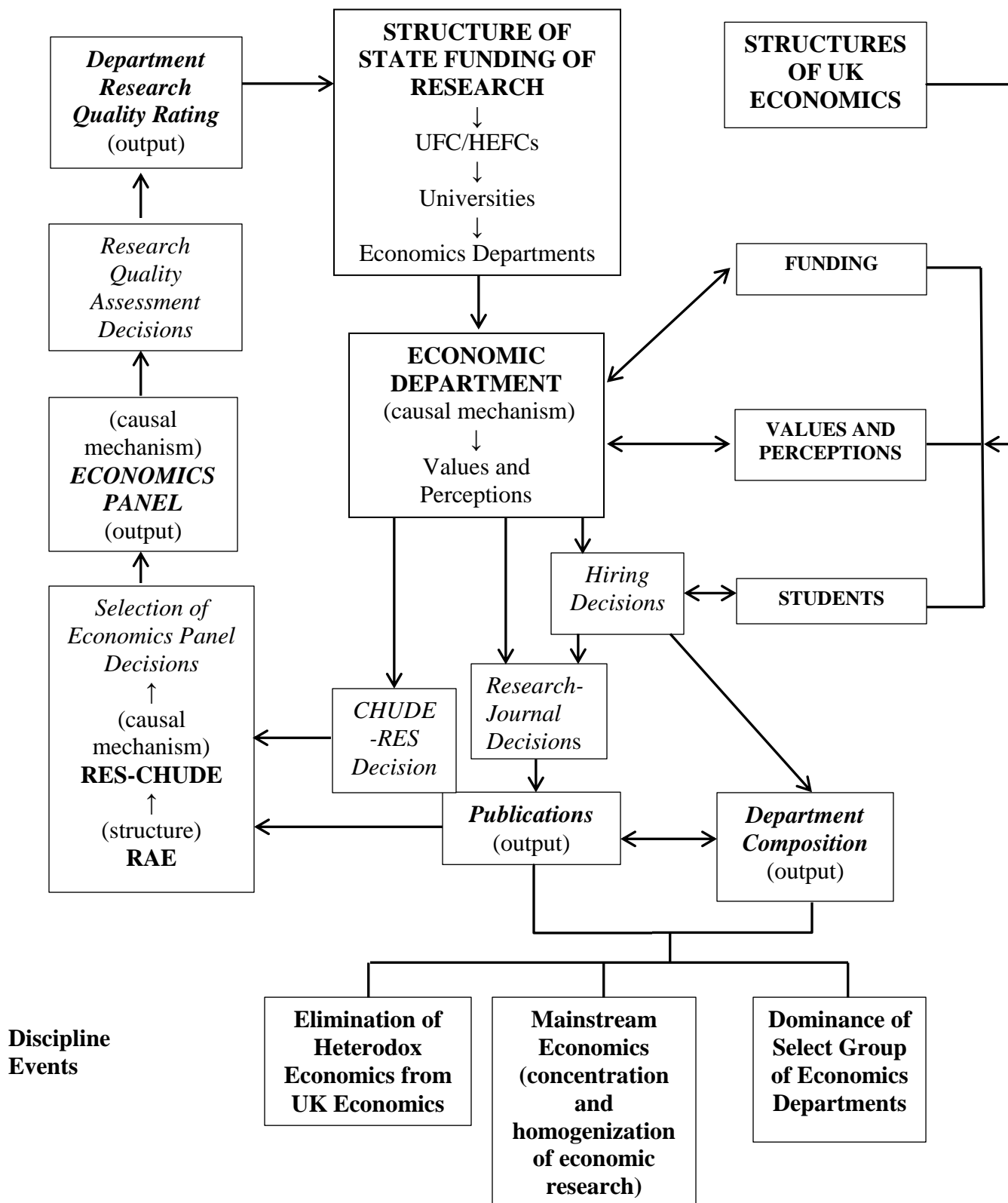
	2001 RAE Panel	2008 RAE Panel	2014 REF Panel <sup>1</sup>
Number of Panel Members	10	10	15
Diamond List Journal Submissions	18	21	41
Heterodox Submissions	3	0	0
Total Submissions	38	40	60
Leadership Positions within the RES	9	5	7
Managing/Associate Editor of <i>The Economic Journal</i>	4	4	5
CHUDE Steering Committee	5	3	2
Managing/Associate Editor of a Diamond List Journals (and Total Number of Diamond List Journals)	1 (3)	2 (6)	8 (17)
Economics and Social Research Council Activities	3	2	5
QAA Economics Benchmarking Group	4	3	1
ESRC-RES International Benchmarking Review	-	1	-

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*Notes:* Derived from Appendix X.

<sup>1</sup>Panel members' submissions to the 2008 RAE are used as a 'proxy' for their submissions to the 2014 REF.

**Figure 1.** *Going Concern Model of UK Economics*



UFC – University Funding Council  
HEFCs – Higher Education Funding Councils (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland)  
RES – Royal Economics Society  
CHUDE – Conference of Heads of University Departments of Economics  
RAE – Research Assessment Exercise