Milestones in Management
June 2015 marks 50 years of Management Studies at the University of Oxford. As Green Templeton College, with colleagues from the Said Business School, prepares to celebrate this important anniversary, we look back at the achievements of the last half century and look forward to the next 50 years. What challenges lie ahead for leaders and entrepreneurs and how can GTC help to meet them?

Management Studies is a young discipline at Oxford, established just 50 years ago, in a University which was founded in the 12th century.

Yet, in this relatively short time, it has achieved much, undertaking world-class research and spawning generations of talented executives who have had a profound impact on global industries and economies. This success is due in no small part to Oxford’s approach to the discipline, rooted in practice, starting with the 12th century.

The College has played an entrepreneurial role in building the discipline at Oxford and continues today to be a leading player. It is the University’s pre-eminent graduate college for Management Studies, home to the largest number of Management students (1,323 in the academic year 2013/14) and with many fellows current faculty members at the Said Business School (SBS).

Today, the Business School, 12th in the Financial Times Executive Business School ranking 2013, is at the centre of the University’s academic study of business and enterprise.

Founding origins & the first 50 years

Rewind 50 years to 1965 and the foundation of the Oxford Centre for Management Studies (OCMS) – later Templeton College – to provide mid-career, post-experience management education and to apply Oxford teaching methods and research to Management, a subject which had not been formally studied at the University before.

The story of Management at Oxford has many origins, but the vision and perseverance of academics such as Norman Chester, Norman Leyland and Uwe Kitzinger – alongside entrepreneurship as Clifford Barclay and Sir John Templeton – helped lead to Oxford’s achievement in building an approach to Management Studies grounded in evidence-based scholarship. Equally important was the insistence that Oxford should embrace Management as a new discipline grounded in professional practice.

Drawing on its founders’ vision, as well as supervising management degree programmes, OCMS, then Templeton College, developed pioneering executive education programmes rooted in practice, starting with the Senior Management Development Programme, (later merged with the Advanced Management Programme), then establishing the Oxford Strategic Leadership Programme and later (jointly with ICF Consulting and Coaching for Change) as specialist programmes and commissioned programmes with major organisations such as M&S, Thames Water, P&G, Standard Chartered Bank and BMW. Strong collaborative academic and practitioner research partnerships also developed within subject specific research institutes.

In recent years, Management Studies at Oxford has expanded rapidly; the Said Business School, now with a top 20 global ranking, was founded in 2001. It now runs a comprehensive executive education portfolio, with origins inherited from Templeton College and a top-class MBA programme. The Oxford Martin School, which explores global issues and futures, and the Blavatnik School of Government, which as part of its remit aims to bring wider management thinking to governance and government globally, are also contributing to Oxford’s unique approach to the discipline.

As the University embraced and developed Management Studies, Templeton College became the natural collegiate home for management scholars and students.

Following the merger with the former Green College in 2008, GTC is now a collegiate home for over 500 students and over 100 fellows, researchers and visiting practitioners, as well as a buoying centre for academic initiatives and a meeting place for policymakers, academics and practitioners to interact.

Making a difference in the next 50 years

So, what is the discipline of Management need to evolve over the next 50 years in order to remain relevant and to continue to make a difference to the major challenges facing the world? Certainly, it will need to be grounded in the issues faced by humanity and potentially different to those we face today.

Thanks to its distinctive heritage, GTC as a graduate college, is uniquely placed to help its future development. GTC’s fellows and students, based in the Business School, and the University, already work on many issues relevant to today’s wider challenges such as complexity, risk and resilience, governance and diversity, new forms of organisation and enterprise; the digital world and big data, futures and scenarios; evidence-based healthcare, governance and government and social responsibility.

The College also has a commitment to the flow of ideas across traditional disciplinary and professional boundaries, together with expertise in medicine health and social sciences, as well as business and management, is already creating exciting new opportunities for interaction between disciplines.

This is particularly evident in the range of academic initiatives that are blossoming at GTC and which bring together academics, professionals and practitioners from all over the world to discuss major issues relating to public policy and professional practice.

Two prime examples are the Oxford Praxis Forum, which works with senior practitioners to explore how they might engage with a top research university in ways that are mutually beneficial, and the Emerging Markets Symposium which brings together influential leaders from governments, the public and private sectors and academia to address issues critical to human welfare in emerging market countries.

But, as well as marking the contribution from the past, GTC is looking forward to the role it can play, with the Said Business School and the wider University, in making sure the study and practice of management is relevant for the challenges of the 21st century and the next 50 years.

Celebrations on Friday 5 June are likely to include:

Morning: Open House

Visit the Said Business School, including the new Thatcham Executive Centre, and hear about latest research and executive education.

Afternoon: Stimulus conference ‘Where Next?’

Held in Oxford’s Observatory Quarter, this annual flagship lecture on Management – Challenges and Responsibilities in a Changing World followed by panel sessions by practitioners and Oxford experts and interactive discussions. Key themes are likely to include: dealing with new global challenges; management for healthcare and human welfare; professional leadership development, and new models and mindsets for enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Evening: Celebration reception and dinner

Hosted at Egrove Park, Kennington, the new Said Business School’s Executive Education Centre and previously OCMS and Templeton College.

Fellows past and present, alumni, supporters and senior leaders from the private and public sectors will be sent personal invitations. Veuve will be served both before and at the event on where GTC, including through its development agenda and working with the Business School, can best help entrepreneurs and practitioners to make a difference.

To register interest or for more information, contact: OCMS50@gtc.ox.ac.uk or visit the GTC website at www.gtc.ox.ac.uk/OCMS50.
From a practical business perspective I think Oxford needs to encourage critical thinking and entrepreneurial mindset. These are the skills that create opportunities for stakeholders who are willing to work with us and risk themselves in the process. I think, as a first step, GTC could play host and be a forum for new thinking by linking with external players to develop ideas. If it evolves there are a number of academics at SBS for whom this is fertile territory.

MS: "We must continue to more closely integrate research into executive education to ensure that our insights actually have a tangible impact in the world of practice."

HS: "The College needs to ensure graduates are exposed to both theoretical thinkers, and a cross-section of businesspeople and leading entrepreneurs."

**Where next for Management? Share your views**

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Share your views by sending us an email at OCMS@go.dox.co.uk or visit www.gtc.ox.ac.uk/OCMS and complete the online form responding to the following questions:

1. The context: Your Oxford degree or course – when, what, and where was the particular subject interest you studied?

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3. The future at Oxford: What needs to be different about the study of Management at Oxford in the future? What new challenges should the future of Management scholarship and professional development be prepared to meet?

If you would prefer to talk to someone, please contact a member of our team by telephone: +44 (0)1865 274797. We will also be meeting alumni in the next few months to gather views and aim to report the results back at the SBS 2015 event.

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**GTC Management Alumni**

Andromache Athanasopoulou

Junior Research Fellow to 2014, MBA and DPhil 2007

After a thesis looking at ethics and corporate responsibility, Andie has been working on a coaching book with SBS colleagues and coordinating the GTC Management in Medicine Programme. She now has a post at Harvard.

Ron Emerson, Barclay Fellow, MPhil 1997

Studied organisational communications in change after a career as an international banker with Bank of America, Nomura and Standard Chartered. Now Chair of the UK Government’s British Bank.

Sir John Hood, Honorary Fellow, MPhil 1978

A New Zealand engineer, Oxford’s Vice-Chancellor 2004-2009 and now senior non-exec with HSBC, President of the Robertson Foundation and Chair of Rhodes Trustees.

Michael Smets, Research Fellow, DPhil 2009

Originally from Germany, he is now an associate professor in organisation at the Said Business School after posts at the University of Alberta and Aston.

Hamish Stevenson, Associate Fellow, DPhil 1984

Studying the hyper-inflating emerging markets systems being used in financial services, his DPhil was embargoed for some years because of its commercial sensitivity. A South African who returned with a significant research in entrepreneurship, he is the founder and CEO of Fast Track, the network of UK’s private businesses which publishes Top 100 League tables with The sunday Times.

AA: We need to equip students with two very important attributes, besides technical skills and knowledge first, they should prepare students to lead in complexity and adapt in a changing world (and the business world in particular) that is much more multicultural now than it ever has been and much more dependent on technology. Being able to adapt and lead effectively as circumstances change is key. Graduate college at Oxford with its interdisciplinary and multicultural mix of fellows and students offers students a sense of what living in a multicultural environment really is. This can help in the ‘leading in complexity’ challenge.

We must go ‘beyond business’

MS: Hope this will be a celebration of the University, not just the School, and because ‘big questions’ reach far beyond the scope of business per se. In fact, increasingly, we see captains of industry helping tackle the challenges of humanity, so the two are becoming increasingly intertwined. As things happen, the more we need to intertwine our business scholarship with what is happening in the University at large. And what college would be better placed to deliver that than a graduate college focused on human welfare at the intersection of business and health?”

We need new mindsets and models of management

HS: ‘From a practical business perspective I think Oxford needs to encourage critical thinking and entrepreneurial mindset. These are the skills that create opportunities for stakeholders who are much more intense now than ever before, demanding ethical and responsible behaviour. Tomorrow’s leaders need to reconnect with values that have been often intentionally or unintentionally ignored. The pastoral care system at Oxford can be a forum for new thinking by linking with external players to develop ideas."

**GTC as catalyst for new thinking and ideas and provide a link to practice**

RE: ‘At GTC there is a willingness to embrace the new and carve out a very distinctive role in the college system. I suspect that, like all change, we will have to find a few change agents who are willing to work with us and risk themselves in the process. I think, as a first step, GTC could play host and be a forum for new thinking by linking with external players to develop ideas."

AA: ‘The study of Management needs to give more emphasis on values and particularly on developing ethical leadership. The expectations and pressures from stakeholders to corporations are much more intense now than ever before, demanding ethical and responsible behaviour. Tomorrow’s leaders need to reconnect with values that have been often intentionally or unintentionally ignored. The pastoral care system at Oxford can be one additional avenue to nurture ethical leadership – after all, it has been most important for Oxford to give their Management students a real understanding of the world in which we live. Oxford is best placed to do this and can do it alongside giving them the functional business disciplines more traditionally associated with an MBA. GTC, as part of the college system to support this, can help maintain that balance”.

**What made the Oxford experience distinctive for you?**

**Personal impact**

Ron Emerson: ‘I was influenced by meeting such a wide range of seriously interesting people who were generous with their time and sharing of views ideas and, through my reading, exposure to ideas I would not have come into contact with in the “real” world. I would describe the Oxford experience therefore as freedom to explore, combined with support and encouragement; freedom did not allow sloppy thinking.”

John Hood: ‘Being at Oxford means being part of an international and diverse community – across many disciplines and a freedom to pursue different interests, both in the degree study and in cultural and sporting activity.”

Michael Smets: ‘I had no intention of pursuing a career in academia when I first arrived at Oxford, so in terms of my personal career and life, Oxford has had a very distinctive character for me. Some of my favourites include: “Don’t waste your time” I always felt that I have been given equal opportunities to those of my male peers to grow academically. Templeton and now Green Templeton have had a long tradition of female academic who have served as role models for myself and other female students.”

The influence of Oxford mentors and their personal touch

HS: ‘I would quote Dan Gawler on a regular basis to my staff and four children. Some of my favourites include: “I don’t want it good, I want it Monday.”

The meaning of management is the management of meaning; ‘Your CV is all about reputation management”

MS: “In between two squash matches Professor Tom Morris (GTC Fellow and supervisor) set me down on a page of exercise main, pulled out a draft of some of my early ideas and started working through them with me and then, being used to the German university system where relationships with professors are far more distant (if they exist at all), this was completely new to me. Being used to the German system, working through them with me there and then. Being used to the German system, working through them with me there and then. I’ll honour this tradition in the ways I supervise research and instruct and make your DPhil your own. I hope those we engage.”

What needs to be different in the future?

Better understanding of the changing context: Oxford has a role

RE: ‘This calls for some views on how the context will evolve. What is going to change and what is going to stay? This calls for some views on how the context will evolve. What is going to change and what is going to stay? I think this is Oxford’s role."

John Hood: ‘My time at OCMJ gave me a chance to pursue many different conversations and to meet different people in a mix of Oxford experts, all of whom were willing to take the time to spend with me’.

MS: “From day one, you were taken seriously as a colleague by senior members, rather than as a student. You had the freedom, but still the collegial support, to explore interesting projects and make your DPhil your own. I hope I’ll honour this tradition in the ways I supervise research and instruct our students.”

The Oxford difference: management in a wider context

JH: ‘OCMS was great in balancing the tension between a functional skills education in business with a wider understanding of what the mature leaders – in business, public, charitable and other organisations – need: to understand power, economics, their communities and organisations and society. This will be key in the future.”

AA: “Besides providing the most up-to-date knowledge on key management theories and having leading academics teaching on the programmes, I find particularly encouraging that the University has been more open to interdisciplinary research than perhaps many other leading business schools are”

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**Personal Perspectives**

Hamish Stevenson: ‘Oxford taught me to be more of a critical and creative thinker, and gave me the confidence to set up Fast Track 18 years ago.” (Although Richard Branson commented to Hamish later that he backed him despite his education)

Andromache Athanasopoulou: “Being a woman initially studying and then working at Oxford I always felt that I have been given equal opportunities to those of my male peers to grow academically. Templeton and now Green Templeton have had a long tradition of female academic who have served as role models for myself and other female students.”