

Managing and/or Leading? Exploring the Identity of Unit Coordinators through Two Case Studies

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Abstract: Literature has shown that unit coordinators at universities, who are considered middle managers, occupy a rather ambiguous space. This is because the nature of oversight employed by unit coordinators could be that of managing or leading. These types of oversights, however, may not be easily distinguished. This caveat serves as the basis for this study, which seeks to explore the professional identity of two unit coordinators — Aileen and Daron. Data was collected from reflections written by Aileen and Daron over one academic year (two semesters) about their experiences of oversight of two separate modules. Then, their reflections were examined using a case study approach. From both case studies, it was observed that managing was integral to the operations of the module; nonetheless, Aileen's case was distinct in that there were also aspects of leading, seen primarily through the open space for communication and feedback, while Daron's case illustrated aspects of managing, through a distancing between himself and the part-time tutors. Besides the working relationship with the part-time tutors being a factor that shaped the type of oversight enacted, the nature of the modules which they coordinated may have also played a role.

Keywords: Managing, leading, unit coordinators, higher education

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Introduction

Besides teaching and doing research, university academic staff may also be assigned as unit coordinators to oversee courses, which may include being responsible for the students taking these courses, as well as colleagues teaching these courses (Marshall et al., 2011). In recent times, reports have indicated that the roles of unit coordinators encompass not only administrative activities but also strategic and staff development activities (De Nobile, 2018). The shift from “middle managers” to “middle leaders” has become more pronounced, and questions regarding the scope of coordinating have been raised. Specifically, the expectations for unit coordinators to manage and to lead have stimulated discussions among scholars in higher education management.

According to Marshall et al. (2011), leadership and management are shared across three levels — the macro (institutional) level, the meso (Faculty and Department) level and the micro (programme and unit of study) level. Within the micro level, individuals such as unit coordinators, tutors, laboratory managers and work placement supervisors make up the teaching team that works with students. The middle leaders such as unit coordinators fill in the layer between the senior leadership teams in the macro and meso level and the tutors, which include casual academics (De Nobile, 2018). Wedged between institutional expectations and the smooth operations of a course, which includes creating a work environment that is suitable and inclusive (Richardson et al., 2021), unit coordinators would find themselves occupying a rather precarious position. This is reiterated by Preston and Price (2012), who commented that those with administrative duties, but who are not or are below the head or dean of a department, are often uncertain of their role.

While leadership responsibilities may be distributed to those occupying middle management, ownership of these responsibilities may lie with middle managers (Lárusdóttir & O’Connor, 2017). A reason for this is that achievements or performances will reflect solely upon the highest leader, which positions middle management as simply having managerial duties. In fact, being a unit coordinator is not necessarily viewed positively especially when the quality of course management is not recognised (Goos & Hughes, 2010; Thornton et al., 2018). At least one study had reported that those who hold the position of program leader at a faculty perceived the role as a “career killer” and viewed it as temporary. For some, they choose to exit quickly so that they can focus on their “allegiance to their discipline” since research directly impacts their career progression and chances of attaining tenure (Heffernan, 2018; Vilkinas & Ladyshewsky, 2012). With these observations drawn from the literature, this study hopes to demonstrate how university academic staff who hold middle management responsibilities hold a complex professional identity, as seen from having to shift from managing and leading in a fluid manner. This is shaped by the way they carry out required duties and relate with everyone else within their oversight.

Literature Review

In literature, leadership in an educational setting may be defined as the propensity to influence others' actions or thoughts, to create professional development opportunities for others, and to direct and motivate others towards a goal (Connolly et al., 2019; De Nobile, 2018). Closely related to leading is managing — another important concept for those who hold positions of authority in educational settings. While leading may be viewed as a response to changes or as a catalyst for change, managing is a response to complexity and is fundamentally concerned with the functioning of a system (Kotter, 1990). Furthermore, educational leadership is the act of “influencing others in educational settings to achieve goals and thus necessitates actions”, while educational management “entails delegation, which involves being assigned, accepting and carrying the responsibility for the proper functioning of a system in which others participate in an educational institution, and implies an organisational hierarchy” (Connolly et al., 2019, p. 505). As an example, one aspect of leadership is the development of strategic responses, or the identification of a direction for an educational institution to take. This responsibility, however, does not always involve overseeing how such a response or plan is carried out; instead, the operational aspects of the response often fall on the shoulders of managers, and this necessitates seeing that the delegated responsibilities are carried out satisfactorily (Connolly et al., 2019).

While Connolly et al. (2019) believe that educational leadership and management are conceptually different, it may be difficult to delineate the two in practical terms. This is the case for those who hold middle management positions. For example, middle managers are expected to implement goals set by their leaders, and at the same time, organise other colleagues to do the same. In such a capacity, there may be instances when middle managers need to be influential over their colleagues, for the purpose of inspiring changes in practices or beliefs supportive of the aims of an educational institution. It is at this juncture, where leadership and management seem conflated, and the notion of middle leaders may be considered. This conflation is seen as one being a component of the other — Tranter (2000) conceptualised leading as a component of managing while Duignan (2012) viewed managing as a component of leading. Drysdale et al. (2016) and De Nobile (2018) take a different approach by viewing both components as distinct, yet complementary. For example, a unit coordinator can take on managerial roles that can be student-focused, administrative, organisational and supervisory. Leadership roles can also be taken, where there are efforts to promote staff development and effective strategies (De Nobile, 2018). Similar to De Nobile (2018), Marshal et al. (2011) also differentiated the roles that dealt primarily with managing and leading as listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Managerial and leadership roles by De Nobile (2018) and Marshall et al. (2011)

	De Nobile (2018, p. 403–405)	Marshall et al. (2011, p. 93)
Management	• Student-focused role – e.g. working with students to deal with issues • Administrative role – e.g. development of procedures and systems for efficient running of tasks; deal with budgets and resources; focus on things • Organisational role – e.g. planning timetables, executing and implementing programmes; focus on people • Supervisory role – e.g. evaluating, monitoring, remediating the performance of the staff	• Planning and budgeting to ensure the desired change in learning and teaching can be realised • Organising and staffing to ensure that individuals with the right knowledge, skills, and dispositions to realise the desired change are available and appropriately deployed • Monitoring and problem solving to ensure that efforts to change learning and teaching remain ‘on track’
Leadership	• Staff development role – e.g. building capacity of members; encouragement, assistance, mentoring, coaching; professional development • Strategic role – e.g. vision forming, goal setting, influencing; motivating and persuading others; use power relationships for compliance for those who resist change	• Establishing a vision and a direction for learning and teaching, • Communicating the vision and direction to stakeholders in a manner that encourages them to align themselves and their resources with the vision • Motivating and inspiring the stakeholders to engage with the vision

The Study

Apart from literature on managing and leading, this study also draws insights from the concept of professional identity of educators. According to Mockler (2011), an educator’s professional identity is “ongoing, dynamic and shifting; influenced by personal, professional and political dimensions of [their] lives and work which interplay in an overlapping and active way” (p. 518). Professional identity may be gleaned through an understanding of an educator’s landscape, and their narratives which contain personal practical knowledge and experiences with others (e.g., colleagues, supervisors, students, etc.) (Beijaard et al., 2004). When the role of

teaching is extended to include that of oversight, other considerations could be included such as one's commitment and autonomy (see Skinner et al., 2021).

Study Context and Participants

This study was carried out at an English language centre (ELC) of a research-intensive university in Singapore. The ELC provides a suite of English language and communication courses to university students. The participants — the researchers/authors of this study — were unit coordinators of their respective modules. Aileen coordinated a professional communication module for second year undergraduate students from the School of Computing. This module is twinned with a software engineering module to provide an authentic context for the development and application of communication skills (i.e. technical reports, product demonstrations and pitches). Students have opportunities to consult with their tutors and receive both peer and tutor feedback regarding their performance. Besides coordinating, Aileen also taught a few sections of this module. Aileen was the only full-time staff working alongside several part-time tutors.

Daron, on the other hand, coordinated an academic writing module for graduate students from different disciplines at both the master's and doctoral levels. Students had to enrol in this module based on their performance in a university English entrance exam. The main objective of this module is for students to enhance their accuracy and fluency in academic writing. This module is taught through tutorials, where students are given opportunities to practice their writing skills with support from Daron, or from their classmates. Furthermore, students have at least two opportunities for one-to-one consultation regarding their work. At the point of the study, this module was taught by several part-time tutors, with Daron being the only full-time staff. Daron has since left the ELC and moved to a public university in Malaysia.

Methodology

Given the complexity of the role of a unit coordinator, it has become challenging to clearly delineate managing from leading, and vice versa. To demonstrate this, our study presents two insider case studies of unit coordinators overseeing two distinct courses. This approach was selected as it offers flexibility to examine a particular object of inquiry or phenomenon, yet still recognises that the phenomenon will be shaped by the context of its occurrence and the unit coordinator's autonomy (Ebneyamini & Sadeghi Moghadam, 2018; Kohlbacher, 2006; Pearson et al., 2015). Moreover, conducting a case study from an insider perspective allows the versatility of data mode, on top of securing convenient access to data (Unluer, 2012). Autoethnography has also been acknowledged to aid researchers in making sense of

themselves, their circumstances and their contexts, and these experiences have been known to be useful to other researchers. Although this method has its weakness in terms of its inability to generalise results, it can still be used as a form of comparison (Costello et al., 2016; Legge, 2014).

Data for the case studies came from the unit coordinators' reflective journals. The reflective journals were kept over two semesters of the 2020-2021 academic year (August 2020 to May 2021), to capture the experiences of being new coordinators of the modules. It is hoped that the reflections could encapsulate the unit coordinators' experiences of oversight, as a gateway to understand their managerial and/or leadership roles (Branson, et al., 2016; Franken et al., 2015). The case studies also hope to highlight the complex networks that are formed through relationships with the tutors or the students. Furthermore, a multiple case study approach can be useful in identifying distinct perceptions or experiences of a shared/common phenomenon (e.g., Mohamad Razak et al., 2022; Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017; Skinner et al., 2021; Unluer, 2012). Finally, collaborative autoethnography allowed this set of researchers to share experiences and clarify their professional identities (Laterza et al., 2016) while responding to the other party's reflections and identifying major themes in their values and beliefs (Lam & Loo, 2021).

Findings

The following are the case studies of Aileen and Daron. These case studies feature reflections, which comprise critical incidents that demonstrate the complexity of being a unit coordinator. Besides providing an insider view through experiences of coordinating, the case study approach also creates space for both Aileen and Daron to elaborate their role as a unit coordinator. Excerpts of reflections are presented verbatim. In this study, they are labelled with our initials (Aileen: AL and Daron: DL) and the excerpt's sequence of appearance in this paper. This is followed by the Semester (Sem 1 or Sem 2), and finally, the week and tutorial number (e.g., 7-2 would mean week seven, tutorial 2).

Aileen's Case Study: Creating an Open Space to Foster Change

A prominent observation from Aileen's reflections is her efforts in creating an open space where change may be initiated. This was observed in the working experience she had with the students of the module and the part-time tutors. In Aileen's case, creating an open space occurred gradually with a distinct initial phase, which also involved different stakeholders. The initial phase was marked by instances of management, such as that seen in AL1 and AL2, where Aileen provided support to the students of her tutors, as well as to her tutors. What can be seen through these experiences is the administrative and supervisory role that Aileen took on for the smooth operations of

the module. Furthermore, at this phase, Aileen was establishing herself as someone who could be trusted to recognise challenges that students and tutors faced, and addressed them. This is a crucial point for leadership, in that leaders would need to understand work processes and the experience of doing them. This is to enable leaders to evaluate current mechanisms and offer new or alternative strategic ways for improvement.

AL1 Sem 1, 1-1

Pre-lesson, I asked the tutors to create recurring zoom sessions and send the meeting ID and password to me. This proved useful as I created a document with all the zoom sessions and uploaded it on luminus (i.e. the in-house learning management system used at the university). Students who did not receive their tutor's emails (because it had gone into the junk mail) were able to go to the right class. Some students who were still confused wrote directly to me and I pointed them in the right direction.

On another note, some tutors were uncertain on how to create recurring sessions and I did a step-by-step guide. Another tutor found out how to set recurring sessions via luminus and shared with the rest of the group.

AL2 Sem 1, 5-1

This week saw many issues with the zoom recording of the oral presentation because of its length and because of what view the tutors wanted to have. I advised them to do a local recording as I thought it would cut down on the steps needed for the tutors. Just click on the record to computer button and put it into a folder when it is done. This turned out not as well as I thought. One tutor had her first few videos go missing and the Zoom helpdesk was unable to help her as it was not a cloud recording and they could not trace the missing videos. [...]. On hindsight, I realised that I had some problems like that too [...].

It should be noted, too, that management in an educational setting not only involves the working relationship with students or colleagues; it may also involve the management of teaching and learning resources. When there are issues concerning the resources, the classroom experience and the work of both the students and their lecturers or tutors may be negatively impacted (AL2). Naturally, a response or action would be conceived to address these challenges; however, the response may not be the most significant aspect when considering how well a problem or challenge was addressed. Instead, what may be more meaningful is the recognition or acceptance that these challenges could also affect those in the position of oversight, such as that seen in AL2. As such, the open space not only served to support students and tutors when there were problems, but it was also a place where Aileen, the unit coordinator, could be candid about challenges that she herself faced.

While the open space that Aileen created was useful to address challenges as they emerged, there were also hidden aspects that were inevitably made visible. This is observed in AL3, where teaching practices were found to differ among those who had prior experience teaching the module and those who did not. Differences in teaching approaches are common and expected even between those teaching the same module. Addressing these differences, according to Duignan (2012) and De Nobile (2018), are important for the continuous function of an educational group. More than this, addressing such differences is important for capacity building.

AL3 Sem 1, 2-1

There is a very diverse bunch of tutors and the truth is that we are sizing each other up. I was taken aback by the questions on WhatsApp which led to me realizing that some of the experienced tutors did not follow the timetable and/or did their own thing. One particular tutor emphasized certain points about the team meeting and the importance of agendas and minutes that other tutors (newbies like me) did not do early on in lesson 2.1 (Week 2, Tutorial 1). This conversation helped us clear the air and those who have not, scrambled to do so [...] the discussion led to some agreement on the flexibility of lessons [...] that shocking sms turned out to be useful as we cleared up our misunderstandings and attempted to build a supportive and open environment for the tutors.

From AL3, we could see that a trusting rapport was being established between Aileen and the tutors, which subsequently had an impact even at the management level (AL5). While the experience shared in AL3 was still centred upon problem solving, it also indicated the necessity of negotiation. This was only possible due to the open space. However, instead of taking the open space only as a means to identify teaching practices or beliefs of the tutors, it was also used for finding a common ground among the tutors, or to learn from one another. For instance, in AL4, we could see Aileen leveraging on the strengths of the tutors, especially those who had taught the module previously. This was valuable for Aileen for her position as unit coordinator, who had a “bird’s eye view of what is going on”. In other words, the open space had allowed Aileen to see how what was done at the ground level would relate to the bigger picture. This was made clearer through AL5, which saw Aileen communicating directly with higher management.

AL4 Sem 1, 6-2

I had a discussion with the tutors on Friday and the experienced tutors shared what to look out for in the second half of the semester. One thing good from this discussion is that the tutor shared how she usually conducted the product pitch and demo (she combined

them) while others shared that they kept it on different days (which is what they were supposed to do in the first place). [...]. I'm thankful that the tutors are open to discussion yet at the same time, I know that I tip toe around the experienced tutors because I feel that they know more about the course than I do (I still think so) though I'd like to believe that I have a bird's eye view of what is going on and I'm constantly looking at what our twinned modules are doing so that we are aligned.

AL5 Sem 2, 13-1

One of the tutors then suggested that we use the time to give OP2 feedback instead – brilliant suggestion! I floated this idea to upper management and they agreed.

Through Aileen's case study, we could see that an open space was helpful in enabling the management of a module, and subsequently, leading those who had a direct impact on the module, namely the tutors. An interesting point for consideration is how the dynamic shift between managing and leading works. This allowed important groundwork for trust to be established, in order to support tutors' capacity development.

Daron's Case Study: Professional Distance through a Transactional Relationship

The reflections seen in Daron's case study were quite different from the experiences of Aileen. Whereas there were concerted efforts on Aileen's part to create an open space, Daron's reflections indicated a preference for professional distance, especially with the part-time tutors. This is partially driven by the Daron's own perception towards his role as a unit coordinator. Based on Daron's reflections, being a unit coordinator involved preparing materials for tutors and to ensure that these were accessible to both tutors and students, as seen in DL1. Daron did reflect on how the tutors perceived these materials, probably due to him knowing that some of the tutors were still using previous materials that were developed by the former unit coordinator. Yet, Daron allowed this by not commenting or instructing them to use what he had provided, nor was there an expectation for the part-time tutors to explain their decision. This may be due to the perception that Daron had regarding the part-time tutors, which was them knowing what was best for their own classes. This was made evident in DL2, where Daron recognised that the part-time tutors had their own approaches. This was also seen through Daron mentioning how he felt "bothered" that he had to tell the tutors what his preference was. As such, the type of oversight seen through Daron's reflections is that of supervision or monitoring of the part-time tutors' use of materials, yet without any further actions.

DL1 Sem 1, 4-2

There was the usual preparation of materials for all of the part-timers, I had to duplicate quizzes and surveys, and made sure that everything was accessible to the correct tutor and the correct class group. I am not quite sure how the tutors feel about these tasks, as some of them had indicated that they are still using the materials from the previous year.

DL2 Sem 1, 5-1

Since the team from CIT (Computer Information Technology) was visiting our lessons, I had to tell the tutors which particular activity they could do without. There were a few suggestions, followed by my preference. This really bothered me, as I would expect the tutors to know what would be best to retain and what could be skipped (or converted into a take-home task). I am pretty sure the tutors have their own approach in their own groups, and this I appreciate – but I do think that there is this invisible deference between us, and that I will always have a final say. Instead me telling them what they need to do, it would be nice if the circumstances allowed the converse – where they told me what they did and how well it worked with their students. I'm pretty sure I can learn a lot from them.

Supervising and monitoring the use of materials was at the forefront of Daron's oversight, seen in DL3. Again, in this instance, there was no negative repercussions; instead, there was a positive response towards the "willingness" shown by the part-time tutors in their use of a new assessment software. As discussed by Ramasamy and Lee (2022), the use of technology to accomplish assessment requires different skills, and at times, would be met by resistance. That the part-time tutors were open to using a new tool was then a relief for Daron, as there was no need for the tutors to be persuaded.

DL3 Sem 1, 6-2

The time has finally come when Exemplify with ExamID and ExamMonitor (online assessment tools) will be used! My only concern was to get the students to complete writing their essays on time. I attended all 14 groups with the tutors. It was actually quite heart-warming to see my tutors being brave through this 'ordeal'. It really was being willing and courageous to do something totally new. There were numerous technical issues but in general, the digital assessment went well.

What may be observed is how the relationship that Daron had with the part-time tutors was more or less transactional, in that information would be passed on from either one or the other. It may be the case that the part-time tutors were also expecting instructions or directives from Daron, as seen in DL2, where Daron

reflected on having to tell the part-time tutors what had to be done. The working relationship being transactional is further illustrated in DL4, where Daron had the part-time tutors “tell him” problematic areas found in the rubric. There was a subsequent effort to identify the root cause of the problem, and this was successful; nonetheless, the outcome of this incident was the impression that Daron formed about the part-time tutors. This is also another example of supervision or monitoring enacted by Daron, where the focus of oversight is to ensure that the teaching and learning processes remained on track.

DL4 Sem 1, 11-2

I started with consultations this week, which went relatively well. I was rather stressed though, because it was also the week where I will be meeting with the PTs regarding the RASCH result. It was interesting to note what the RASCH report told us, it was also helpful that I got the PTs to tell me aspects of the rubrics that may be problematic and would require improvement. From the ensuing discussion about the report, it became apparent that tutors had different understandings of words used in the [descriptors] of the rubrics. What concerned me was some of the descriptors, which had ‘notes’ for clarification, were still confusing to the tutors.

The transactional relationship that Daron maintained with the part-time tutors was observed even in the second semester (DL5). Similarly, there was no overt effort or expectation to find out the experiences or the views of the part-time tutors regarding the materials. It could also be seen that the process of decision-making for Daron and the part-time tutors were confined between them, without the involvement of higher management.

DL5 Sem 2, 3-1

The materials used in this lesson come from papers about human migration as a result of climate change. The reason why this was selected was to show that what we are teaching the students (in academic writing) can actually be seen in published scientific writing. The discussion of the material also gives us a chance to talk about social issues with the students. I wonder if my tutors do the same as I do. I’m curious, yet at the same time I don’t want to be orbiting around them – asking them if they are doing what they think I expect them to do.

The transactional relationship between Daron and the part-time tutors may illustrate an extent of empowerment, in that the tutors were given the independence to decide the best course of action for their respective groups. Nonetheless, while this type of relationship may allow part-time tutors to do what is familiar or comfortable

to them, and subsequently promote agency on the part of the tutors, it may not support a sense of belonging. Maintaining this distance also raises the assumption that the unit coordinator only steps in when there are issues or challenges to resolve, which reflects a managerial stance (Connolly et al., 2019).

Discussion

In this study, we explored the complex professional identity of a unit coordinator, which typically resides at the micro-level of an educational institution. Through the exploration of our reflections, our practices of oversight became apparent. While Aileen's reflections illustrated a combination of both managing and leading, Daron's reflections illustrated an approach that was more managerial. In particular, Aileen created an open space where experiences and perspectives of the tutors were welcome. The intention was partially to determine whether the part-time tutors' teaching practices were aligned with that of the coordinator's and to influence them to consider differing perspectives and epistemologies. The creation of such a space was deemed helpful, as it encouraged part-time tutors to seek help when faced with challenges. It also facilitated Aileen's efforts to lead by example, especially in the use of technological tools. Furthermore, it allowed Aileen and the tutors to consider improvements for existing materials. Hence, in terms of being new, Aileen wanted to learn from the rest, and always took the first step to connect with the other tutors.

Daron, on the other hand, created a distance between himself and the part-time tutors. From his reflections, he viewed his role as a unit coordinator as one who ensured that classroom processes were not disrupted. This did not include discussing matters related to the teaching of content in the part-time tutors' respective groups. This may stem from Daron expecting the part-time tutors to have agency, and to be already empowered and open to share their experiences or perspectives with the rest; yet, at the same time Daron did not overtly seek out to know more about the experiences and views of the tutors. Given this working relationship between Daron and the part-time tutors, communication and decision-making were rather transactional, which stood in contrast to Aileen's approach. Nonetheless, even though the practices of oversight between Aileen and Daron differed, there were some shared beliefs. In particular, they both wanted to minimise disruption, and they recognised the wisdom and experience that tutors have. This prompted them to be self-aware, and being careful to not "tip-toe" or "orbit" around the part-time tutors.

There were also other factors that shaped Aileen's and Daron's identity as unit coordinators. For instance, the nature of the course would have an impact on the management or leadership practices taken up by module coordinators. The structure of the course, and its placement within a curriculum, will determine the extent of ownership assumed by the unit coordinator. Aileen's module, for instance,

is twinned with a course from the School of Computing. As such, the teaching and learning materials developed and used in Aileen's module need to effectively compliment that which is covered in its counterpart. Quite different from Aileen's module, Daron's module focuses on improving graduate students' general academic writing proficiency. Furthermore, it was rather difficult to provide targeted content for language instruction given that the students in Daron's module come from various faculties across the universities. What the students had to achieve in this module was also broad, which was to minimise or eliminate grammar errors in academic writing. Also, there was no specific faculty or department whom Daron had to report to. The broad aim of the module, and the diverse background of the students, may pose as a challenge in outlining specific goals. This could have contributed an extent of uncertainty regarding the role of Daron, given the lack of disciplinary specificity of the module he coordinated.

Conclusion

Through the case studies of Aileen and Daron, we could see aspects of management being enacted. However, for Aileen, oversight extended beyond management; there were instances of leadership seen through her efforts to include the part-time tutors in processes that had an impact on the teaching and learning materials and activities. There were also efforts on her part to influence the tutors to embrace changes. Daron, on the other hand, maintained a distance from the part-time tutors, which rendered their relationship as transactional, indicative of a managerial type of oversight. These observations from our case studies, while limited to our particular contexts, may offer useful groundwork in the examination of the role of a unit coordinator in the higher education context.

Specifically, our study affirmed that management and leadership are distinct, yet complementary (De Nobile, 2018; Drysdale et al., 2016). This was made apparent through Aileen's working relationship with her part-time tutors, where there was the initial phase of ensuring the operational stability of a module for trust to be established to give way to meaningful changes that could affect both Aileen and her tutors' teaching practices and beliefs. In contrast, Daron's interaction with his part-time tutors could be deemed transactional, with information being relayed to either party. On this note, future studies should consider reflections and other forms of data from other qualitative data sources — colleagues, students, or even stakeholders beyond the course or even the university — for further examination. Other specific aspects of the oversight of a module could also be explored, such as the unit coordinator's emotions as seen in Daron's reflections, or the unit coordinator's personality and its impact on the professional identity, such as that observed in Aileen's reflections.

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