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## Planning of the implementation of public policy: a case study of the Board of Studies, N.S.W.

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# PLANNING OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE BOARD OF STUDIES, N.S.W.

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Philosophy

from

The University of Wollongong

by



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1994

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am indebted to many people for support and co-operation in the period of my research, especially Professor Carla Fasano, who has been my main supervisor for the entire period and whose advice has assisted me greatly. I also acknowledge the contributions of Visiting Professor Bob Winder who gave me considerable advice and feedback during the period of developing my thesis topic.

To the staff of the Board of Studies, N.S.W., especially senior and middle management and the Board of Studies Liaison Officers, I owe a great deal as it was the planning decisions of the staff of the Board which were the main areas of focus of my work. They all gave me considerable time as willing informants and provided details of plans and their involvement in producing them.

In particular, I acknowledge the continuous support of the President of the Board, Mr John Lambert, who gave permission to use the Board and its plans as a case study of public policy implementation planning, and who generously gave time to conduct a number of interviews with him and provided considerable written and oral information not available from other sources.

Michael J. O'Mullane

March, 1994

## Abstract

O'Mullane, Michael Joseph. 1994). *Planning of the Implementation of Public Policy: A Case Study of the Board of Studies, N.S.W.* A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Graduate School of Education), The University of Wollongong, N.S.W.

This case study of the implementation of 1990 N.S.W. curriculum and credentialling reform policy by the Board of Studies, N.S.W. explores the planning involved in converting the intentions of public policy into more specific guidelines.

The analysis is conducted within a conceptual framework developed from relevant theories and prior findings on the nature of public policy, of planning, and of organizational processes which bring policy and planning together.

Specific research questions investigated relate to the *characteristics of implementation plans, implementation planning processes undertaken, and the factors which influence the planning process.*

A *multiperspectivist* approach is taken to data collection and analysis, combining the assumptions of *logical-positivism* and *non logical-positivism* through the use of three different instruments: documents, interviews and participant observation.

The findings include the recognition that implementation plans constitute two hierarchies, one based on corporate level plans, the other based on the personal plans of managers. The plans are highly compatible with the policy but there is a tendency for

lower level plans to relate less directly to the policy intentions.

Three implementation planning processes have been recognized: organizational planning and design, macro-planning and micro-planning. Planning processes have been found to involve a high degree of negotiation among managers, between managers and the Board, and between the President of the Board and the Minister. Consequently, consistency among plans is achieved through both consensus and compliance.

A range of external environmental and internal organizational factors have been identified as influencing planning. The latter are found to have a more significant influence.

The study relates the findings to existing theory and indicates the emergence of a theory of implementation planning.

Finally, a number of proposals are made in the areas of public policy implementation planning, curriculum and credentialling policy implementation planning, and epistemological and methodological choice in implementation research.