The Value of Pluralism in Advancing Management Research, Education and Practice
In recent years, it has become evident that pluralism is a defining characteristic of management research, education, and practice. Management research draws upon a diverse range of research paradigms and methodologies to address fundamental social science questions and business research problems. Management education, similarly, draws upon multiple pedagogies and theories of learning to develop social scientists with a focus on work and organisation as well as managers who have both technical skills and well developed moral and emotional insight. The pluralistic nature of organisations as collections of diverse groupings with their own cultural norms, values, and identities has made corporate governance structures, strategy making processes, operations, marketing and human resource management procedures more pluralistic in nature as they seek to engage with an increasingly varied set of stakeholders.

However, while such pluralism has contributed greatly to advancing management research, education, and practice, there have been institutional pressures towards greater homogenization. Measurement and evaluation systems which are applied to research, funding, learning and teaching may, perhaps inadvertently, reward conformity rather than recognising excellent work in its own terms. Popular discourse can lead to stakeholder expectations which underplay the complexity of organizational and business life. Thus, the benefits of a pluralistic approach, enabling dialogue between positions of difference, incorporating systematic, radical and interpretivist approaches (amongst others) is worthy of attention and debate. The dynamics towards diversity on the one hand and inclusivity on the other raise a series of questions that should be of interest to BAM 2015 delegates:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of a pluralistic orientation to management research?
- How might management knowledge and education be developed through pedagogical and theoretical debates?
- How can context-specificity and difference be incorporated into recognised practices of management?

The BAM 2015 conference is intended to facilitate dialogue and open debate in management research, education and practice. Portsmouth Business School is the ideal place to discuss these and other questions related to the value of pluralism. It is based in a city that has transformed itself from an old maritime city to a city with a diverse mix of the old in Old Portsmouth and the new in the form of Gunwharf Quays and with renewed pride in its multiple traditions in maritime, literature, and the arts. The school is also based in a university that has pioneered research in areas as varied as cosmology and brain surgery.

As a faculty, Portsmouth Business School has been able to balance the dynamic of diversity and inclusivity to great effect. With regards research, the faculty has encouraged diversity through the recent setting up of various research groups – ranging from business logistics to sports – and seed funding various research projects whilst ensuring inclusivity by making the largest Portsmouth entry to the 2014 Research Evaluation Framework exercise. In its teaching, the faculty encourages diversity by developing state of the art facilities for innovative teaching such as the Technology Enhanced Active Learning rooms whilst ensuring inclusivity by providing an AMBA approved MBA course.

Doctoral Symposium will take place at the Portsmouth Business School, University of Portsmouth on 7th September.