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**Abstract**

In the current higher education environment, the need to develop and support good leaders and managers could hardly be more pressing. Yet, research on how academic middle managers are supported in their roles is surprisingly sparse. The purpose of this paper is to address this perceived gap in the literature by reporting on the findings from two separate, but related, research projects investigating the role of the academic middle manager in two culturally different English universities, specifically to examine the support that such leaders have received in relation to taking on and adapting to this increasingly challenging role. By drawing on semi-structured interviews with 28 academic middle managers from one pre- and one post-1992 university, the paper argues that we need to provide more support and individually tailored training for today's middle managers so that the best may become the sector's effective senior leaders of tomorrow.(HRK / Abstract übernommen)