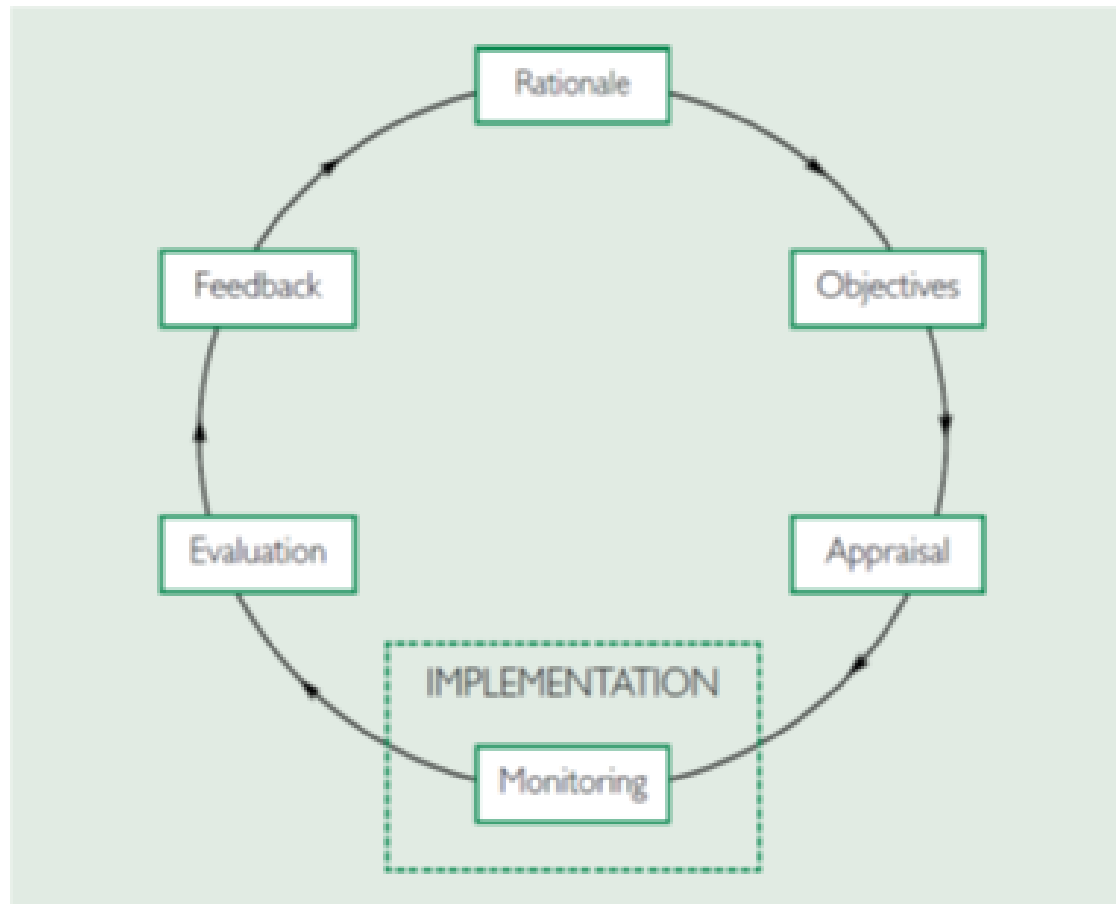


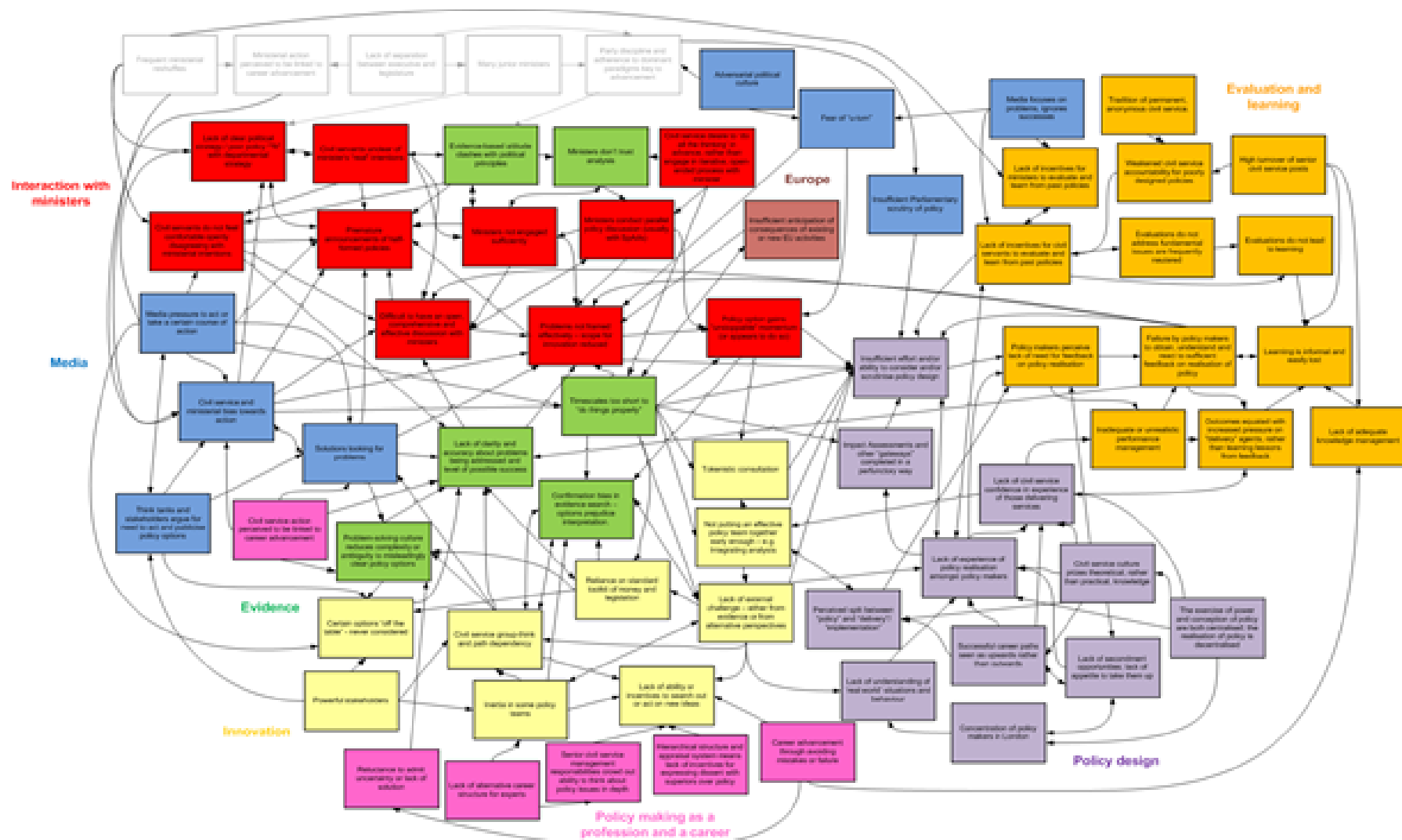
Evidence and policy making



The standard model is of an idealised “cycle”



The “real world” of policy making looks more like this



Why isn't policy based purely on evidence?

- **The constraints of policy makers**
- The culture of academia
- Institutional barriers

We've looked at where policy ideas come from

- Manifestos
- Think tanks
- Media
- Constituents
- Pressure groups
- Business lobbies
- International obligations
- Commissioned research
- Independent academic research
- Civil servants

But policy makers work under many constraints

<p>Politicians</p>	<p>election cycle pressures</p>	<p>Civil servants</p>	<p>expertise not always available where needed</p>
<p>Intelligence</p>	<p>satisfying voters</p>	<p>Lack of resources (inc. budgets, admin support, programme support)</p>	<p>overworked</p>
<p>other politicians</p>	<p>Party politics</p>	<p>Politicians</p>	<p>Clash between politicians and what the evidence says</p>
<p>Public opinion</p>	<p>Lack of subject expertise</p>	<p>layers of hierarchy the contacts they have</p>	<p>reorganisations, etc, lack of stability</p>
<p>civil servants</p>			
<p>Expertise/knowledge - time to understand</p>			
<p>Both</p>	<p>Funding</p>	<p>Beliefs about spending ie Austerity Complex academic language of thter evidence</p>	<p>Environmental ego Oversees affairs short on time</p>
<p>time</p>			

Policy makers work under many constraints

Politicians

Political constraints

- Fit government narrative
- Voter impact
- Priority
- Speed of results (electoral cycle)

Personal power

- Personal clout
- Ability to persuade colleagues/PM backing

Parliamentary constraints

- Securing space in the legislative programme
- Parliamentary arithmetic

Civil servants

Resource pressures

- Knowledge
- Capability and capacity
- Implementation

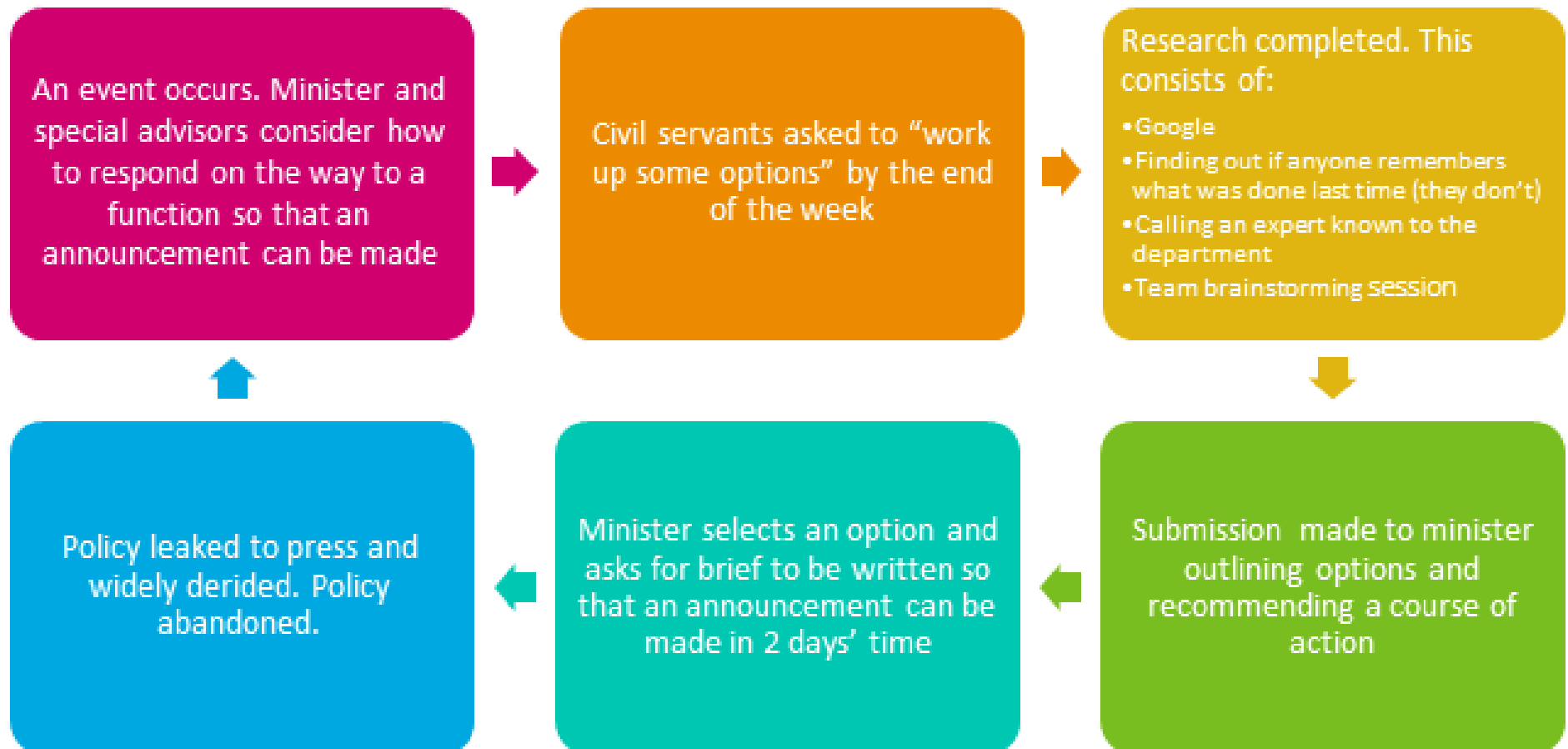
Both

Time

Budget

External events

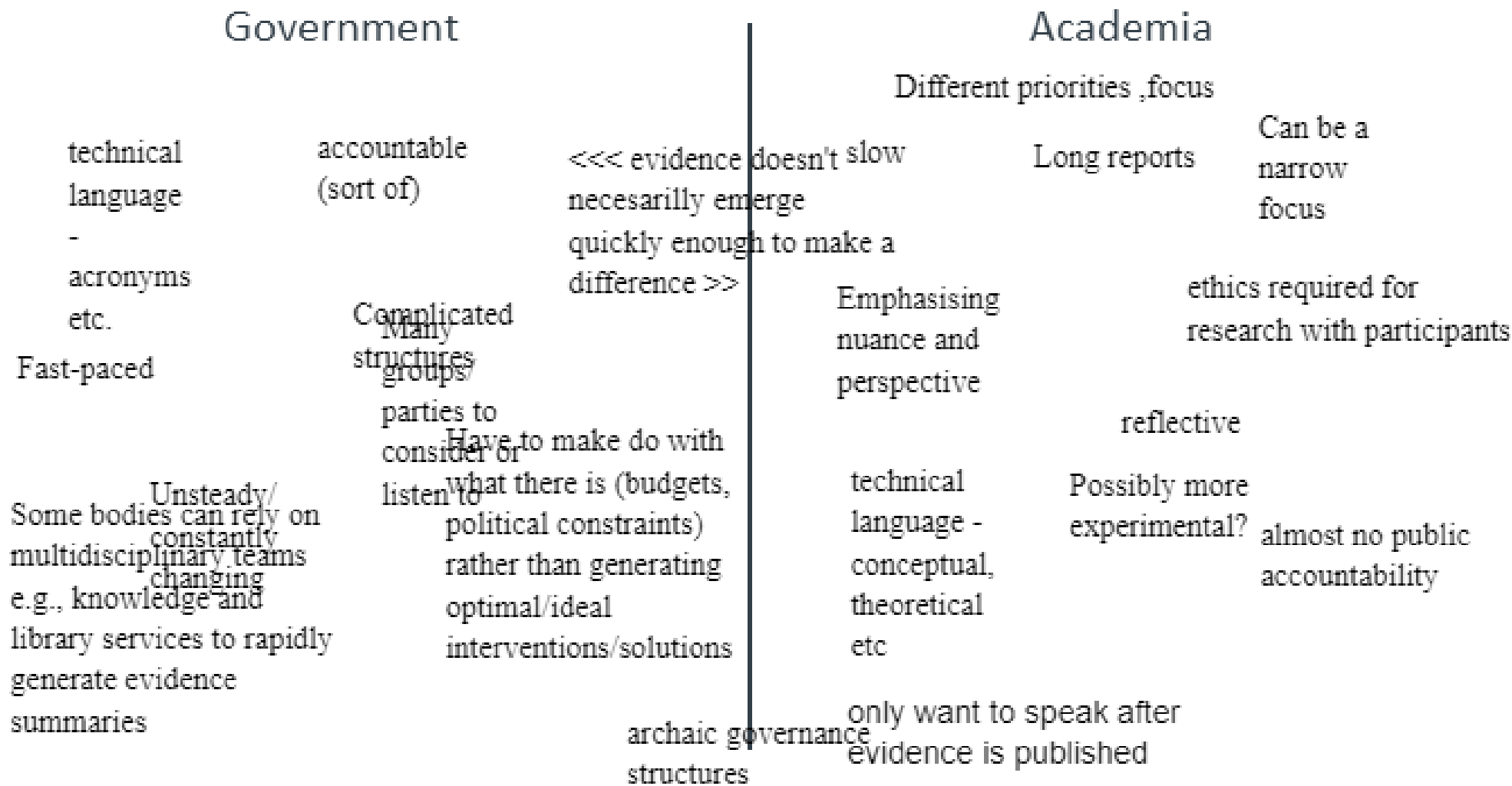
Which sometimes leads to this...



Why isn't policy based purely on evidence?

- The constraints of policy makers
- **The culture of academia**
- Institutional barriers

How do the cultures of academia and government differ?



How do the cultures of academia and government differ?

Area	Government	Academia
Aim	Policy output	Knowledge creation
Career incentives	Breadth of experience	Depth of specialism
Timescales	Short-term, responsive	Long-term, funding-driven
Mode of communication	Memo, briefing, report	Journal article, monograph
Style	Simplify, persuade	Explain, contextualise, caveat
Conclusions	Concrete recommendations	"More research is needed..."

Why isn't policy based purely on evidence?

- The constraints of policy makers
- The culture of academia
- **Institutional barriers**

Institutional barriers to use of evidence

- Lack of shared networks between academics and policy makers
 - High staff turnover
 - Generalist model means lack of deep expertise and contacts
- Poor institutional memory
- Unclear responsibility for how evidence is used and accessed

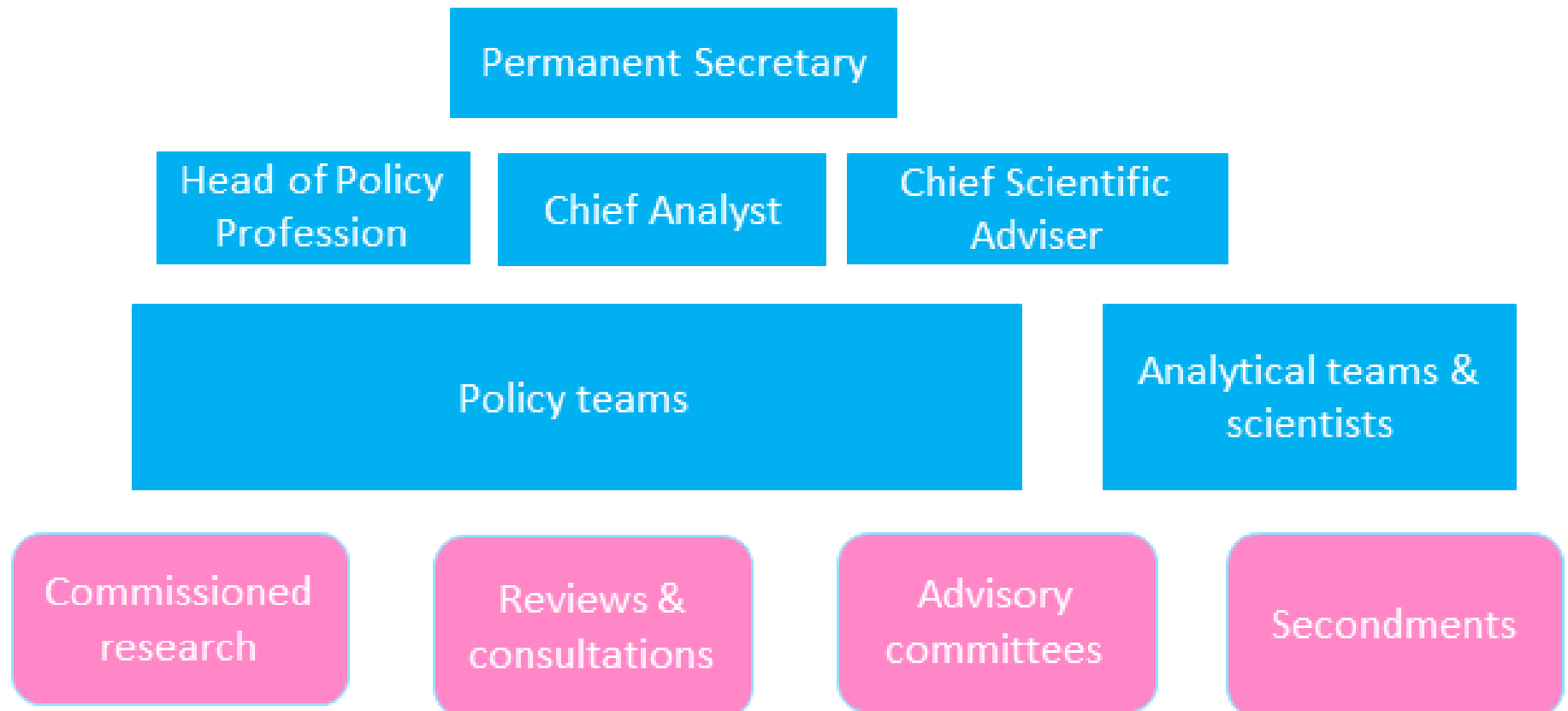
The problem with institutional memory (in three quotes)

The move from paper to digital has “undermined the rigour of information management across much of government” – **Allen Review**

Most of the information accumulated in the past 15 to 20 years is “poorly organised, scattered across different systems and almost impossible to search effectively” – **Cabinet Office**

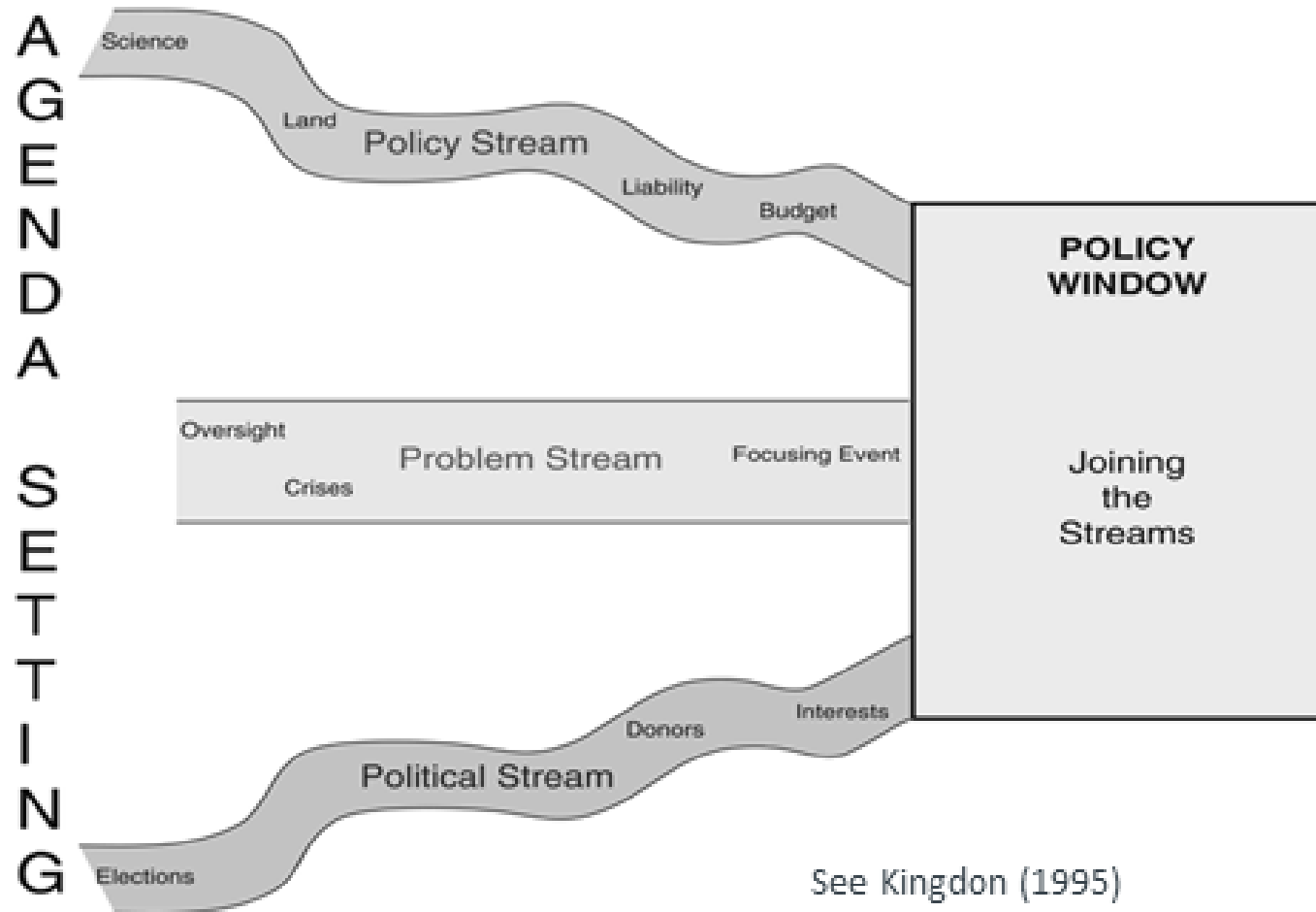
“There’s always something going on about knowledge and information management but they don’t have the most effect. [W]e’re just all very busy, and the amount of my time that I can spend thinking about the file structure on a shared drive is quite minimal.” – **IfG interview**

Responsibility for how evidence is accessed and used is often unclear



So...how can research influence policy?

Multiple streams framework



Problem stream

Is there a “problem” which people believe requires attention?



What focusing events could there be?



Political stream

What is the political context?

- Who are the relevant politicians? Their political fortunes matter
- What are the dominant narratives?
- What could motivate politicians to turn ideas into policy?

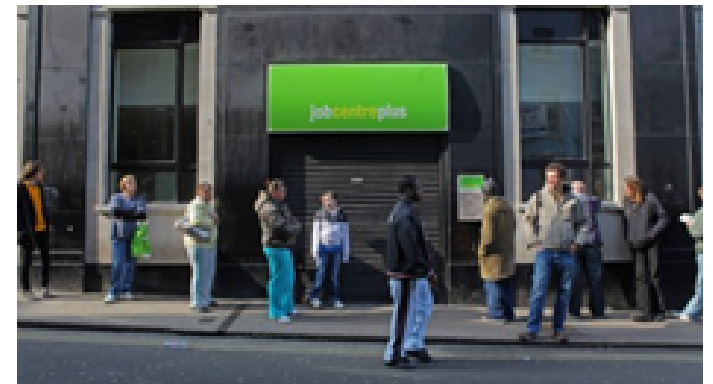
Policy stream

Who influences policy in your area of interest?

- Are there recognised experts or public figures who could promote your ideas?
- Are there special interest groups and think tanks?
- Do you have links into populations and communities affected by policies?



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Maximising influence

Problem stream	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is there a problem which people believe requires attention?• What focusing events could there be?
Political stream	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who are the relevant politicians?• What are the dominant narratives?• What could motivate politicians to turn ideas into policy?
Policy stream	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who influences policy in your area of interest?<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are there recognised experts or public figures• Are there special interest groups and think tanks?• Do you have links into populations and communities affected by policies?

Practical Examples of Engagement



Brief for influencing skills session

Imagine you are meeting a policy maker or influencer at an event. As you queue for coffee, they ask you about your work. How do you reply?

Aim for a 2 minute explanation that is suitable for someone from a non-academic background. Try and interest them in your work and show why it's important and/or interesting!

Thank you

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