## Listening for clues to help you understand a lecture

**Lecturer:** *Before that, I want to finish off, (umm...with) today's session talking about, a very, well a very basic topic really, of risk infrastructure, but one that is extremely important and is often (er), not addressed enough.*

**Lecturer:** ***Now just remember where we're going. We've...we've already been talking about what are we looking at, the sources of uncertainty;*** *we've been looking at how organisations could address uncertainty without using formal processes, and then we've said 'okay, if you had formal processes, who would be involved?' And we've looked at the roles of the different (erm) levels of manager and we've looked at the role of the risk manager. Now I want to complete that by talking about infrastructure.*

**Lecturer:** ***Now to begin with, let's be clear what we mean by infrastructure.*** *If you think about the university...let's cut it down...if you think about the School of Management, what would you include in infrastructure?*

**Student 1:** *Buildings*

**Lecturer:** *Buildings, yes. (Is) that it?*

**Student 2:** *Staff*

**Lecturer:** *Staff, yeah...so **we're talking assets now, aren't we? And we're working our way through a list of assets.** Okay, but what else have we got besides assets? We've got processes, haven't we? So what kinds of processes?*

**Student 3:** *Admissions process*

**Lecturer:** *Admissions process. And how does the admissions process manage to take effect? What do we need in order to operate the admissions process?*

**Student 4:** *Information systems*

**Lecturer:** *We need information systems, absolutely...and we need the staff of course. Alright, **moving on a bit**...well okay, take admissions. **What else do you know about admissions?** It's not that long ago.*

**Lecturer:** *What else supported the admissions process? Very important...UCAS, yeah? So you've got this whole organisation with information systems, with computer technology and methods of working, a detailed handbook on how to apply and what to do if you're late, and what to do if you're early, and what to do if you want to delay and apply the next year and what to do if you go into clearing - **in other words, a whole bunch of descriptions** of different contingent situations. **And when we're talking about Risk Management, it's the same thing,** we're talking about an activity which involves lots of decision making and thinking on the part of the*

*individuals. But it's supported by that infrastructure, by obviously physical assets, but also information systems, and by methods of working.*

*Lecturer: **With for example UCAS, the method of working is well standardised isn't it?** For obvious reasons we want the system to be fair, we want it to work the same for all organisations. That kind of infrastructure does not exist for postgraduate applications, so when people apply for a masters programme, there is no UCAS, and you can apply for as many programmes as you want and you may get replies and you may make decisions to any timescale that you like.*

*Lecturer: So you might question whether that is desirable; whether it would be better if it was a more efficient and uniform process. And we could go on; we could go right through the whole of your experience here, and we could look at assessment as another activity, and say, 'well what the infrastructure that supports assessment?' And, of course, we can do this for any activity in an organisation, so risk management is no exception.*

*Lecturer: **Now what I find extraordinary, is that so often, the notion of Risk Management infrastructure and Risk Management process are not properly separated;** they are treated, very often, as one and the same thing, so when we say, 'right, we need to operate enterprise-wide risk management,' which is something we've talked about (er...) Then in so many people's mindset there is not a clear distinction made between the infrastructure and what the activity is, so they lump the two things together.*