##### Researcher

OK, great. So if you're ready to make a start, then I'll just sort of fire away, so just for kind of like a first question. Could you just tell me a bit about yourself, your career and your background, please?

##### Participant 2

OK, well, for the record, my name is [participant’s name]. And yeah, I have recently arrived in the UK. I taught in [home country] at a research intensive institution for 13 years before coming across here. In [home country], we have a very different focus in terms of research. So just a research article in that is in a recognised journal is, is what is required, whereas, here, the focus is very much on the standard of the journal. So that was very, very interesting to me. Yeah, I, my focus is teaching the first year students [discipline]. So, you know, I'm very interested in the pedagogy and encouraging students as opposed to, I want to say, as opposed to the technical aspects. But obviously the technical aspects are important, but at the first level it's really getting students over their uncertainty about the discipline and the fear of working with [element of discipline]. I'm not sure if that, if you want a broader outline.

##### Researcher

So you talked about your background so, well, I kind of obviously read you information. So I know you recently completed your PhD in [home country]. I also did have a look, I know you've got a few publications mainly focused on kind of the teaching of [discipline]. So that's kind of your area of interest?

##### Participant 2

Yeah. So that's, that was my comment. You know, that I'm very much interested in pedagogy and that is what's important to me.

##### Researcher

So why did you become an academic?

##### Participant 2

Oh, that's interesting. I fell into the position. I know that sounds peculiar. I was working in admin in my previous institution and I started studying there and I studied through a correspondence course. So a distance learning institution, and it wasn't even online because, you know, at that stage they weren't really online except in terms of being able to access information. But it wasn't an online programme. And I just happened to be leading an academic procession one day. And a friend came to me and said, "don't you have an undergraduate degree in [discipline]?" And I said, "yes, I do". And, and it transpired they were looking for a junior lecturer to teach [discipline]. And, and I literally fell in love with teaching. And, yes, I just took the [element of discipline] side of it. So that started my, my long journey in terms of scholarship, of teaching and learning, pedagogy, and how we do it. And so that is also why I've only been teaching for 13 years and not, you know, what you would sort of expect to be sort of 40 years. It really was, I was an accidental academic.

##### Researcher

And so what kind of brought you to where you are now? So obviously you're in [current institution] teaching first year.

##### Participant 2

Yeah. I'm not sure what you know about the situation in [home country], but it's becoming increasingly precarious. And I am a British citizen. And, and I just, I wondered where I would be happy when it came to the stage for me to retire. And once I had decided, I needed to leave sooner rather than later, because I wanted to be able to establish myself in a career here and I wanted to be able to carve out a social circle. And so that's that's why I came here and why [current institution]... well, they offered me a job, so. So, yeah, I mean, let's be honest. The current institution, I knew that I couldn't go wrong coming to [location], coming to [location]. It's a beautiful part of the country.

##### Researcher

Yeah, it's lovely.

##### Participant 2

You know, when, when I was offered to me, it just seemed like a no brainer.

##### Researcher

Yeah. Yeah. I'm, I'm originally from [location], which obviously is kind of, one of the next counties along. And my family are from [location]. So it's like almost smack bang in the middle of, like, my kind of area. So I think I'm the only one who's sort of moved a little bit closer to [location]. OK, great. So what do you think is the purpose of academia? It's a big question.

##### Participant 2

What is the purpose of academia? It's the space to teach people how to think. So yes, to teach them skills but also to teach them how to research and how to think and how to understand things differently, how to grow people, as people, how to grow people intellectually, how to grow people as thinkers. Yeah, I think in terms of [discipline], there's a certain amount of teaching of skills, but part of that is teaching people to move outside of what they already know into what they don't. I think.

##### Researcher

Yeah, that's a good answer. Thank you for that. So obviously, I know you're on an [education] contract. So how much of your time is dedicated to different aspects of your job? Do you have any research responsibilities at all? Or is it 100 percent education and maybe like administration kind of things as well?

##### Participant 2

Yeah, so, so as much as there is no expectation in terms of research, my interest is obviously disseminating information from, particularly my PhD. But once I move beyond the PhD, I would have sort of carved out a bit of a niche area for myself. And it's really critical for me that information is disseminated further and that I grow that space. So, as much as we are not required to do research, to conduct research, it would be welcomed if we did it. So, in terms of my actual breakdown, you know, it's still difficult to say because, you know, so many things overlap that you can't say, "well, now I'm teaching and now I'm researching and now I'm doing admin" because they really are quite interwoven. I would say that probably 60 percent of my time is teaching. This is at a guess. 20 percent admin. 20 percent, no that can't be... so 15 percent admin, 15 percent... I'm not going to get the numbers right... 15 percent research and maybe 10 percent student support, which is also research because with student support you, you're enacting what you, what I discovered in my, in my research. I mean, that's definitely not clear cut percentages. And I mean, it can't be correct because, you know, part of my admin is research-based so they really are, sort of, a bit of an amorphous lump, you know.

##### Researcher

Yeah. You're in quite a unique situation whereby your research interests being kind of education and how teaching is carried out. Every time that you're doing your teaching and admin and student support it's kind of like you're learning new things that will inform your research all the time.

##### Participant 2

Exactly. Yeah.

##### Researcher

So it's almost like, you're always kind of doing research in the back of your mind, almost as is, it's interesting.

##### Participant 2

And every time a student asks a question, that pedagogic brain kicks in. And it's, it's, it's really useful though because I can then share it with students and I can say, you know, "it's interesting that you ask that question or you ask the question that way, because this is an example of..." and I won't do it if it's not of relevance to the students, but if the bigger cohort can learn from that. And be able to, you know, I always believe that if you can label something, you can understand it. If you know that that's something that commonly happens, "oh, OK, so it's not just me". So it really is useful to students. Yeah.

##### Researcher

Great. Excellent. Thank you for that. I kind of want to move on now and talk a bit more about [current institution], kind of as a university, and kind of how it effects your job role. So, if you could, it would be great if you could kind of summarise the formal requirements that are expected of you in your role. So as an example, from an education perspective, kind of like how or what kind of level you're supposed to achieve from like student ratings, for example, like student evaluations at the end of modules. So could you kind of just talk me through the formal requirements?

##### Participant 2

So, it's quite interesting. I can't remember exactly what the requirement is. There is a requirement, and I don't know if it's [number] out of 5. No, no, I got [number]. I think it could be [number] that is required, in terms of student ratings. Well not required, preferred. So it's not a requirement. It's just that where they'd like to see it, you know. In terms of mine, I was disappointed with the [number]. But I also recognise that, number 1 I was a new lecturer and I was still finding my feet, and number 2, I teach a large class. I had 450 students in my class. You better believe you're not going to please everyone all the time, and, and yes, so that, in terms of teaching, that, that's very much what is expected. And obviously, student ratings are not the be all and end all. And they obviously look at your pass marks as well. But what does a pass mark mean, you know? Have you marked too leniently? Was the exam too difficult? So, so, all of these things happen within a context. So, yes, so obviously to get decent rankings, student ratings, and to have a decent pass mark, and yeah, that's in terms of the teaching. In terms of my personal situation, I would imagine that it's similar to others. But I don't know because I only know about my own contract because obviously I'm still on probation. There is an expectation that I would be made a senior fellow of [learned society]. So that's what I'm needing to do at the moment. I don't, I don't see that being a problem, but it's still a process that I need to go through. As I've said there's no expectation in terms of research. But it's something that I want to do anyhow. A comment has been made that, given my interest in education, that they would very much like me to take over - and I'm not sure how it is at [researcher’s institution] - but within the business school, within the department, you would have a [senior position]. And, you know, back in [home country], there would be one [senior position], and that would be for the entire university. So within the department, there is a, I'm not quite sure of what word to use. But, sorry, I've got a washing machine on if you can suddenly hear rattling in the background. Apologies.

##### Researcher

That's OK, I can't hear it.

##### Participant 2

I thought it would only happen later. So, there is sort of a hope and anticipation that I would take over as the [senior position]. And that is very much something that I would like to do, because there is a slight frustration that there isn't more attention, or the decisions are not being made on a more pedagogically robust basis. But none of those are expectations, more of someone expressing a thought that that's how they would like me to grow.

##### Researcher

Right. OK. Excellent. And with those student evaluations, does that also include qualitative feedback, so like comments?

##### Participant 2

Yeah.

##### Researcher

OK, and what, what is more important to you? Is it the ratings or what the students actually have to say?

##### Participant 2

Ah, interesting. So, I mean, obviously at a certain level you feel like you're being judged. So I would very much like my ratings to be higher. And obviously I'm not only being judged by the students, but at a certain level being judged by the department. So obviously, the ratings are quite important. In terms of the qualitative feedback it's quite interesting because I sometimes think "gosh, do these students actually sit in my lectures?" And, you know, one student actually said "it's unacceptable that a [reference to job title] is not able to manage technology". What are you talking about? I know how to use technology and it could be the fact that there was a day that the computer failed, but then it would have been a hardware or a software issue, which is not a failure on my part. And so, yeah, I mean, comments like that, I mean, I think any lecturer will tell you, as much as I don't believe that they hold water. I mean, except maybe at the beginning when I started and it was like, "oh my gosh, you know, I've been trained to work on this console, but am I going to do it?" You know? So maybe there was a little bit of stress that I exhibited and students picked up on that. But yeah, it is stressful and it is a little demoralising when students do make comments, which you really feel don't hold water. And, and you also have very contradictory feedback. So some students will say, "oh, she has a lovely sense of humour" and others will say, "oh, you know, she has a very immature way of being". And you know, I read a lovely article, I can't remember the actual, the actual term, but it's, it's, oh, sorry. But it has something to do with being a light-hearted academic and I haven't got the right term but I can send it to you. A playful, a playful academic. And that is how I am, you know, I am a more playful academic. I'm not this terribly serious professor who walks into the theatre and tries to command attention, that's just not my way of being. And so it's interesting how things are seen differently. But that's OK, you know. Yes, so do I pay, I pay serious attention to qualitative feedback, it's very important and students will give you pearls of wisdom, which, if you spot them, can seriously be used to improve your teaching and improve how they would like you to interact with them. I pay attention to both is the answer.

##### Researcher

Excellent. Thank you. OK, so I kind of want you to imagine that, say if you were in the position where you were the [senior position] for the entire university, so you kind of had a say on on the rules and stuff, what would, what do you think you would make the formal requirements of someone in your position? So, a teaching focused academic, what do you think the requirements should be?

##### Participant 2

I mean, there's one thing that I would like to change immediately, and I actually cannot believe that the university, and it's not only this university, it's other universities as well. But we have one formative assessment, which happens in the second half of the semester. And given our numbers, it's a multiple choice questionnaire. And then the exam is also partially multiple choice, but also partially written. So, one of the things I'm already changing in my course for this year is to have two tests, two formative assessments, to give students a greater opportunity to see whether they understand what's happening, you know. If you leave everything until the end, what are the students gonna do? The students are going to leave everything until the end. I am generalising, let me say, the lazier student, the student who needs more encouragement. Your good students will always work hard throughout. So I don't want to be generalising with them. And I have to be honest, I have been so surprised at [current institution] students really are very good. Secondly, I would suggest that, that qualitative feedback is obtained from students early in the term. So we have, what they call traffic light feedback, which is basically red, orange, green - we hate this, this is OK, we love this. Or, we don't want to do that, we want to be doing this, you know. So it's just sort of to red flag anything students are struggling with at the beginning so that the lecturer has an opportunity to fix things. However, I believe that it shouldn't so much be red, orange, green. But to get students to talk about what they're struggling with because, you know, it's all very well hearing that students don't like this, why? What is it about that they don't like? Because maybe that is a very useful tool, but the way it's being implemented isn't useful. So for me qualitative feedback is the way to go. But lecturers need to pay attention to that feedback. So, I think that lecturers need to be engaging with their HoDs or the [senior position] around what students are saying, because I think, and I'm half referring to my previous institution, but also partially referring my current institution, there's still too much of "our students, students are lazy, students are this, students are that", and not understanding that actually most students are here because they want, they want a degree, maybe their understanding of how to get the degree is different to the lecturers. But how do we find a middle ground on this so that we have engaged students and engaged lecturers? Yeah, I think, I think, and I think also I think that maybe your question is a little difficult for me at the moment, given that I'm new to the UK and not fully understanding what, how it is that students would like to learn in the UK, because in [home country] we had such a problem in terms of students not having access to resources, to data, et cetera. Clearly that's not as much of an issue here, but, but what is the situation here? At a certain level, you know, I want to be saying, "should we be looking at more online interaction? Do we still do things too much the way they used to be done?" And we need engagement with students to find out where we are in that, to know how to how to go forward.

##### Researcher

OK. Excellent. Thank you for that. I want to move on now and talk about impact. Impact is kind of like maybe it's treated as a bit of a buzzword sometimes. But I know that universities are kind of shifting a lot of focus on to the idea of impact, both through education and research. So I'd be interested to know what kind of attitude does the business school have towards impact?

##### Participant 2

So when you say impact, can you just be clear? So obviously you have your impact factor with your journals. Are you also talking about relevance of the teaching?

##### Researcher

Yeah, yes. I'm talking about, yes, sort of relevance, external engagement, engaging with stakeholders. And kind of like maybe impact through education, so, I don't know if there's any kind of metrics or ways that they might measure that, of how you create an impact through education. And I'm not, I'm not talking about, like, academic impact, unless that is a focus of [current institution] in terms of impact, I'd be interest to know.

##### Participant 2

Yeah, so there is obviously a strong push for making your teaching relevant. [Discipline] is slightly different, though, because we have [discipline-specific characteristic]. And so we need to make sure that students gain a certain level of knowledge. And especially as I teach at the first year level, it's not that, you know, I'm sort of pushing, you know, the impact of your third-year lecturing on what is happening in the workplace, I think that at a certain level, I'm slightly divorced from that or removed from that, should I say. Yeah, I think I'm going to duck that question slightly. I know that in terms of the university, in terms of the department, in terms of the business school, yes. There is a strong push towards making your teaching relevant. Absolutely. But I don't think it impacts on me to the same degree. And so I think I'm going to dodge that question slightly.

##### Researcher

OK, excellent, thank you. So, well, I was, I was going to follow up with that saying, does that kind of affect your role? But I guess you've kind of answered that in saying that you don't feel like maybe that is totally relevant to your kind of position.

##### Participant 2

Yeah, especially given that I teach at the first year level. But I think that what it does do is it does make me think about what I'm teaching and how I could make it more relevant. So, it does make me think about whether I could and should be doing things slightly differently. Yeah.

##### Researcher

OK, excellent. So moving on from talking about impact, I'd be interested to know kind of what, so we talked about formal requirements and you kind of clarified that maybe they're not formal requirements, but it's kind of like, what is maybe more expected, formally, formally, expected. Would that be a fair way to describe it? Like formal, like formal expectations?

##### Participant 2

Are you talking about the research outputs?

##### Researcher

Well, so like the student ratings and things like that, so it's like kind of like a recommendation of what you should achieve. So it's like formally known, but it's not an absolute requirement kind of thing.

##### Participant 2

Well, I think that it is an absolute requirement because I think that if you drop below a certain level, then there wouldn't quite be an inquiry, but there would be a serious engagement as to why things went wrong. And certainly if, if my ratings had been, my student ratings have been much lower, it could have resulted in me maybe having my probation extended, for instance, unless I was able to defend it at whatever level, and say there was a particular issue in the class. And I can't imagine what that would be, because it would need to be something significant to be able to defend or question student ratings. Yeah, I would say it's a fairly formal expectation. Yeah, because, I mean, the fact that I was told anything over [number], would be green, [number] to up to [number] is sort of the amber zone, and I think anything below [number] is the red zone, where there would be concern expressed. And maybe that's a better way of putting it, concern would be expressed. I'm sure anything below [number] and there would be a fairly serious intervention. Yeah.

##### Researcher

Of course. So in contrast to that, then within the business school, are there any, I wanna use the world norms, so like professional norms and by that I mean not a formal requirement, but kind of like an implied expectation. So something that is expected of you, but almost like an unwritten rule, does anything like that exist in your role, things that you feel you need to do kind of by pressure, but not by being told to do it? Does that make sense?

##### Participant 2

I suppose, I suppose the one, the one thing is that, in terms of availability on campus, it's a fascinating issue. So, our requirement, our formal requirement is that we need to be available for two hours a week outside of your teaching, your tutoring. And so those are your formal office hours, which need to be there, so they need to be on your learning management system, they need to be on your door, and students need to know about it. So that is the formal expectation. The unspoken expectation is to be around and available more often. And so they are often comments about people who are not in their offices, and you know there will be comments like "oh well there's some people who you just never see". And so there are negative comments about people who aren't around, which sort of puts you in this position of, "well, I'm supposed to be around more often, but I don't quite know what that means". And then you, you have that, I want to say balance, but, so, on the one hand, you're supposed to be there, on the other hand, if you don't get to university by 8:00 in the morning, there's no parking. So, so the expectation is to be there, but your presence is not facilitated. And you have to pay to park on campus. Why would they want you to pay to park at your workplace? I mean to me, this is bizarre. And I just think, you want your academics there, you make the space and you make it easy for them to be there.

##### Researcher

Absolutely.

##### Participant 2

And also, you know, I just feel we don't - sorry this has got nothing to do with anything that you've asked - but I don't think that they create a useful social space on campus. If I say social, so, a tea room, a dining room, a space just to sit down and interact with your colleagues, a collegial space. So, yes, we have the cafeteria which is available. But, you know, the students are all there. And sometimes when you've been teaching, you just want space away from students. So as much as the expectation is to be there, they don't facilitate your presence on campus. They don't make your presence easy.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting.

##### Participant 2

Something like a tea room is what I'm talking about. And also, you know, we teach over lunch time. You know, the teaching just goes on throughout the day. In [home country], there was nothing between 5 past 1 and quarter past 2. So, you know, a lot of people would gather in the tea room. You know, you bring out your sandwiches or whatever you have for lunch. And it was a lovely space to interact with your with your colleagues. I really do get that there are pressures on time and space, resources, but, but I just feel that it is something that's lacking. And it's just, it's just this tension between presence and, and yet not being, not feeling that it's that welcoming a space.

##### Researcher

OK, excellent. That's a really good example of talking about kind of like the actual environment, like the lack of social spaces, that is obviously important as well. But when you mention parking, it just like, parking is such an issue with us as well. But it seems to be a common thing with higher education, that parking is an issue everywhere. And I don't know why.

##### Participant 2

To be honest, parking is a problem in the UK. There's a shortage of space. So, [home country] is this vast land, this vast country. And we have the same population as the UK, which is this tiny little space. So, you know, space is at a premium. I mean I can park in town, sorry, this is a little bit of a diversion, and I pay six pounds for my parking. You know, it's crazy.

##### Researcher

It's ridiculous.

##### Participant 2

And, you know, part of it is because I haven't found the better places to park, but it's a huge parking garage and it's convenient. And I just want to nip in and nip out. And, yes, so it's a way of making money, but it's irritating.

##### Researcher

Very much so. Yeah. I could talk all day about my problems with parking. OK, so I'm just conscious, we've got about seven minutes to go. So I kind of have one final overall question I want to ask. And you can kind of have a bit of time to think.

##### Participant 2

Please remind me, I do want to make a comment to you about growing one's research. So, you know, please write that down, because I do want to make a comment.

##### Researcher

OK, yeah. OK, great. OK, so I just wanted to ask, so you've got quite a varied role and you are in quite a unique position where you're educating and then the education is actually part of your research as well, so it's all very interesting. But there's also seems to be quite a few different requirements placed upon you and kind of expectations. So, if you could kind of just summarise how you navigate that arena, because it's obviously a varied environment you work in. How do you navigate that?

##### Participant 2

Yeah, I think that's an interesting question [researcher’s name], and I think that, you know, I think it's something I do struggle with, especially as I am new and especially as I'm on probation. And so I'm never quite sure whether I'm doing the right thing, whether the expectations are that I do more or less. So, [researcher’s name], you know, and I had a change of HoD in January, and my previous HoD and I were absolutely on the same page. And I knew that he absolutely celebrated, supported everything I did. Then I got a new HoD who is far more research focused. And I don't feel since the same degree of support, appreciation and understanding of what it is that I do. And, yeah, it does, it creates uncertainty and it does make me feel quite vulnerable, to be honest. And, and, but how do I navigate it? I navigate it by keeping my head down and doing what I do to the best of my ability, of trying to make sure that when I make contributions to departmental discussions that they, they would... so I'm not one for biting my tongue. I am one for saying things when I feel something, but I think I'm doing a fair amount of biting my tongue at the moment, because I don't want to feel that I'm sort of labelled as a troublemaker. I mean apart from which I am new, so I need to also see what the context is here and what the culture is here before feeling that I, you know, know better than everybody else. So, yeah, it's a matter of moving forward but moving forward slowly and cautiously. And, you know, part of that, as I say, is because I am new. Can you hear my washing machine now?

##### Researcher

No, no. I actually can't, you must have a good microphone that filters out kind of outside noise.

##### Participant 2

Sounds like it.

##### Researcher

Oh, well, thank you for that. If you had anything else to add then of course you can. But I think that was actually a really good answer. I like the use of the word cautiously because I do feel like, I also like the phrase "biting my tongue". So, thank you so much for your honesty and sort of talking candidly, I really appreciate it.

##### Participant 2

Isn't that what this is about? Hahaha.

##### Researcher

Yeah. Yeah, of course, I know. I really appreciate that. So thank you. I don't have any other questions per se.

##### Participant 2

So let me come back to what I feel is missing, there is a missing link at the moment. And you have your PhD candidates, well, PhD students. And they do their research and then suddenly they are miraculously expected to morph into productive research, researching academics. And I know that I came to academia late. But it's a far more iterative process. I start with a story which I present at a conference and I get feedback from the conference, I then have a conference paper, may not even be a conference paper that has any research output. But, I mean, part of going to a conference is being able to go and see beautiful places, which we can't do at the moment. But it's then the incentive to build on that article and be able to present it somewhere else in, in, as a formal paper and then to be able to submit it to a journal. And it feels to me that, that the space of growing a paper doesn't exist here because the expectation is that you are just producing, producing, producing. And I do know that, I mean, I don't have those pressures because I'm not in a research post. But I think that, that, that there is too much of an expectation to be producing papers at these high levels. And that, I mean, when I talk to my colleagues who are in research posts, they are under pressure that is virtually breaking them. You know, where I've seen people in tears, and these are, you know, high ranking academics who are struggling with that research output. And I just feel that there is this academic arrogance, or an intellectual arrogance. There is a research arrogance, or a publisher arrogance where... you know what, your research may not be perfect for a four star journal, but it's still interesting. So why not celebrate research in a two star journal? Why is that problematic? And I, I know that the university rankings are based on their research outputs in these four star journals, but I think that we are losing the bread and butter of research because we're looking at the caviar of research, and I think that is a problem. I think that the bread and butter needs to be celebrated as well. Sorry, I'm using extremes. And I think that we're losing something in that. Yeah, so that's, that's something that I feel quite strongly about.

##### Researcher

Yeah. It perhaps is the wrong message, at an early stage as well, to show that you should be celebrating based on the ranking of the journal.

##### Participant 2

It's elitism. It's elitism. That's what it is. And I, I think it's the wrong message to be sending out.

##### Researcher

Definitely. Definitely. And I also think if your research is something really niche, for example, like [niche discipline], there is one journal that I know of, the [journal], that I think is maybe one or two star. But if that's your field of research and that's the best place for you to disseminate that, then why should you feel that you need to go off somewhere else and try and publish? It might not be the right fit.

##### Participant 2

Exactly.

##### Researcher

I just think the whole system is interesting.

##### Participant 2

Skewed, skewed.

##### Researcher

Which is why this topic is important to me, because I want to understand how it's affecting people. And it's not just in research, it's in education as well.

##### Participant 2

But I think what would be interesting for me is to know whether, for instance, my colleagues, who I was referring to, whether you would even have those people participating in your research because the pressure to publish is so significant, they don't have time to spend talking to you. That time is to be spent writing. So there you are. I'll be interested to see what you come up with in the end.

##### Researcher

Yeah, yeah. I think once I come to the end of interviews, it will be interesting to see the composition of different academic types to see if I end up talking to more education focused or research focused. It will be interesting to see. Obviously it's too early to say at the moment, but yeah, like the response rate is obviously going to be quite low. And I think obviously the current pandemic makes it even lower because people are so busy trying to reconfigure their entire working lives at the moment. But people are just so busy.

##### Participant 2

Can I comment on that? When, when I sent out invitations to [participant’s research subjects] to participate in my research, what, what was intriguing to me was that I thought I was troubling them, so I would be so reluctant to send out a reminder. And in fact, when [participant’s research subjects] came back to me they would say, "[participant’s name], I really don't mean to bother you, but do you still have space in your research?" You know, and I know that academics are different and I know that the power dynamics are different. What I'm saying is that don't think that you shouldn't remind people. So, you know, maybe in 10 days time after your first email, you know, send out a reminder, because people, as you say, are busy or they think "that person will get enough respondents", and, you know, just a reminder, and you know what? What is the worst that they can do? They can to just tell you to go away. And I mean, it's no skin off your nose, you won't know them anyhow. If you find your response rate is low just send out reminders, you know. Because, funnily enough, there were two requests that came through in exactly the same week, literally within two days of each other, and I first thought that yours was the other person following up. And so it could be that other people thought it was the same, you know. It was only when I read your blurb that I thought "oh hang on, this is a totally different focus". But just be aware of that as well, you know, and yes, people are busy, but this is the best time to do it. Because you know, come September, people are going to be teaching and it's going to be crazy. So now really is the best time. And I think especially as we are starting to emerge from lockdown. I know we are not really, but, you know, things are starting to happen and there is sort of whispers about lockdown being lifted at a certain degree, or to a certain degree. And so I think sometime this week or next week would be a good time to send out invites. What response rate, well not rate, but how many respondents are you looking for?

##### Researcher

I'm hoping, kind of a ballpark figure, maybe between 40 and 50 interviews. I would feel happy with, obviously with qualitative, like, it is hard to put a number on it. And you have to consider like, theoretical saturation and stuff, to see when the responses start to sound more similar and stuff. But I would, I would like to have upwards of 40 interviews.

##### Participant 2

Yeah, I think most people say a minimum of 30. Although, you know, where does 30 come from?

##### Researcher

Exactly. Exactly. Yeah. We, we use like a research methods like, textbook. I used it throughout my undergrad, my master's, and it has a page on sample sizes and I think it's, for semi-structured interview, it should have somewhere between five and fifty or something, and it's like, well, what does that mean, like five and fifty? So I could have 6 interviews and that's fine according to this book? But then if I go above 50, then is that wrong? I don't know. It's a funny one, but yeah.

##### Participant 2

I know somebody who did a PhD, talking to three people, but those were obviously extremely in-depth interviews whereas your semi-structured one hour interview is different. I think, you know, looking at 40 would be a good number, because if you, you may, for some reason, find some of them are, I don't know, not usable for whatever reason. There are always a couple who just somehow don't seem to add anything to what you are doing.

##### Researcher

Yeah.

##### Participant 2

So good luck.

##### Researcher

Thank you very much. Thank you. I really appreciate your time. I don't know, you're obviously a very busy person and everything, but I really appreciate it. So thank you.

##### Participant 2

Well funnily enough, I'm not terribly busy at the moment, but I have got some papers I'm working on. I was up until 12:00 last night working on them which is great because I have really been struggling to get back into them. So it's wonderful that last night I felt like I could, so, that's what I'm going to be doing.

##### Researcher

Oh, that's good. That's good. Have you had to do much online teaching at all?

##### Participant 2

No, not at all. I'm not teaching at the moment. I'm not teaching, I'm not marking. I'm quite serious when I say at the moment I'm actually not, not terribly busy. So it really has been a matter with the lockdown of keeping my head above water emotionally, and its very peculiar being so isolated. Being in different country.

##### Researcher

Yeah. Very strange sort of situation we find ourselves in. But yeah, I've really enjoyed our conversation. It's been really interesting to speak to you. So thank you so much for your insights.

##### Participant 2

I enjoyed chatting to you too [researcher’s name].

##### Researcher

I really appreciate it. Oh, also, just one final thing. I am making a note of everyone I speak to if they would be interested in receiving my thesis when it's finished.

##### Participant 2

I'd be very interested. Yes, please do.

##### Researcher

OK, I'll make a note of that then. Likely to be in about two years time, so if you get a random email, then it is me with my thesis. So, yeah.

##### Participant 2

Lovely, I look forward to that.

##### Researcher

Excellent. Well, thank you again for your time. I really appreciate it.

##### Participant 2

My pleasure. Take care.

##### Researcher

Take care as well.

##### Participant 2

Bye.

##### Researcher

Bye.