##### Researcher

So, I've had a look at your your profile and stuff, so I know a bit about you and your research and your teaching. But just in your own words, can you tell me about yourself and your background and your current job role?

##### Participant 10

Right. Yes, sure. I'm a [subject specialist] and I came to the business school in [university] [years] ago. I can't believe it was that long ago. From doing a PhD in a [subject department] in [institution]. So I, it was a bit of a strange move, to be honest, because most people in [subject departments] at that time thought that the business school was the enemy. I was slightly kind of uncertain about what I was, what I was coming to. But I started on a [funded] project, which is about [research project], as it turned out to be. So I came for the job and I did not think I would stay, to be quite honest, because I didn't really like the environment of the business school when I started. After being in a [subject department], which was very diverse, both gender and ethnically, come into a business school environment was really quite a, quite a transformation. And it was very, very "blokey", for want of a better word. It used to be called the "Boy's Club". And [university] was renowned in the [time period] for the, for the whole kind of [transformation of an industry]. So it was very highly gendered in that there was a lot of men doing research on [topic]. So I really, really didn't, didn't take to it initially. But [years] later I'm still there. So I went from having about [years] on research contracts and then a [position] and I'm now a [position]. My web profile is woefully not fully developed. In fact, I've just had an email this morning saying to me "you really need to put your proper web profile up". So I don't know how up to date is, but it's not, it's not particularly. So I've done I've done research and teaching, been on a T&R contract for most of my academic career.

##### Researcher

Excellent. So in your current role, how much time is dedicated to the different aspects of the job? So research and teaching and maybe admin as well?

##### Participant 10

Yeah, it's a very good question. That has, I mean, partly from being here for such a long time, you can kind of look at how things have changed and it has changed quite considerably within the last [years]. So I'd say, I had a year's sabbatical research leave and came back about [years] ago and basically the workload had doubled in that year. And so it went from having quite a decent balance, I would say, of research and teaching, probably about two thirds teaching, a third research. So you had some opportunity of doing research. And then all of a sudden really kind of moving to much more teaching intensive. I also came back to take on the programme management role of the [programme], which is, like most business schools, is a bit of a beast of a programme with about [number] students on it. And I was also tasked to revise that programme. So the administration side of things was really, really heavy. I didn't carry on with that role partly because I did it without any remission on my teaching. So I've, I, I am one of these people, I'm afraid, that has an incredibly large workload. I frequently will work 60 hours a week. And that's, that's not through choice. It's out of the increasing demands on time within within the academic work labour process. So I would say now currently, teaching dominates, research time is normally carried out - basically, I can only carry out research during the summer holidays and I frequently take my summer holidays to do research. Because I'm in the union as well we did a survey of workload at [university] because we were very concerned in the business school in particular about the kind of increasing demands. We found that [the majority] of colleagues who responded to the email actually did their research during their holiday leave. So I'm not, I'm not alone in that. So that has become really quite a pressure. Because it means that there's very limited time. So last, not last summer, the summer before I undertook [number] interviews during my summer break. Well I didn't have a summer break effectively. I had a weeks holiday, I think. So, you know, it's not, that's not an insignificant amount of research to be doing whilst also doing postgraduate supervision. So I think like lots of business schools, we've seen a real increase in our postgraduate numbers and so a lot of supervision in the summer. So we, for example, for many years, we used to have about three students to supervise. Now we've got anything between six and eight. We used to have a system where we'd have one relatively, maybe a small module, which would be maybe 30 students, and then maybe one large module for the second semester. So that used to be the kind of teaching pattern. Now, invariably it's kind of two relatively large modules. I teach, I have a module that I teach alone, which is quite, is quite unusual, most people share. So my module has gone - as an indication - when I first started teaching here my module was about 40 students. Now it's a hundred and fifty. Also partly my own fault, but I do all my own tutorials, face to face tutorials with the entire group because I think it's really important to have that interaction. So, so you can see how going from having kind of quite a small module and one big module to suddenly having one very large module and doing all of that, the workload has really kind of increased. And a lot of admin, a lot of bureaucracy, a lot of form filling, which, which is the bane of most of our lives. So I think we've seen an intensification of teaching and of administration, and that has really sort of squeezed out our research time.

##### Researcher

And so, like you said, it's very teaching heavy. Is that actually reflective of what is expected of you in your contract? Do you have a workload split?

##### Participant 10

No, it's not. It's not, it's just literally a thirty five hour week. That's the contract. So it doesn't specify. And so, yeah, I think now it's become more sort of, I would say the ratio has gone from being two thirds teaching and a third research, to now probably four fifths teaching to a fifth on research - but doing that literally within holiday time. So it has, it has changed quite radically. [Years] was the big one for us. I'm in the [department] of the business school, but things like [other department] saw an increase much earlier than we did because they have the very, they've got master's with three hundred Chinese students on it. I think the other thing with business school and the internationalisation of the, of the student cohort, is that, that also adds an extra work burden. So supervising students where Chinese is, mainly Chinese students, where English isn't their first language means that it makes the process a lot more long winded and difficult and it requires a lot more supervision than maybe supervision in the past. So those kinds of factors make a difference as well. And I think a lot of us really feel for these students because I don't think they have much of an idea of what to expect. And I think they're probably being mis-sold master's programmes, being promised lots of support in terms of English language, that they don't, they don't then kind of fully receive.

##### Researcher

Yeah, it is similar here. Some master's programmes have traditionally always been so big, like [programme], which I think is the biggest. And it is just growing and growing.

##### Participant 10

Absolutely, growing and growing. Yeah. And to give an indication of that we've had a significant rise in the staff-student ratio. So our staff-student ratio had been something, I think it was about nineteen. And now it's gone up to twenty-nine.

##### Researcher

Wow.

##### Participant 10

So it's quite interesting, I looked at some of the staff-student ratios for the Russell group as a comparator, and a lot of them are around the nineteen, twenties kind of range, but you know, we're edging towards the kind of thirty students per member staff and that's been in a [year] period that we've seen that rise. I mean, one of the other things that we've, we've looked at, and we have to get this through a Freedom of Information Act - we weren't allowed to see the data on staff numbers. But in [university] as a whole, in that [year] period, we saw just [a handful of] full time equivalent members of academic staff being appointed. So just [number]. And [hundreds of] professional services staff being appointed at the Central University Administration. So, universities are very good at saying "yes, but we're recruiting staff". But when you actually look, the pie chart that we did on this, this was a very, very small segment for the, for the academic teaching staff. And then this huge wedge for basically quite high-paid professional service staff to administer the centre. So we've seen this explosion in student numbers are not a commensurate rise in academic staff. At the same time a rise in the kind of bureaucracy and in turn that fuelled its own kind of bureaucratic cycle where they then require us to fill out more forms. So, you know, you're kind of lost on both grounds.

##### Researcher

OK, thank you. That's all really interesting. I want to talk a little bit about you in terms of sort of why you decided to become an academic. So what is it that actually made you want a career in academia and why you chose to pursue a PhD and go into that kind of industry?

##### Participant 10

Yeah, I think, I think like a lot of people I sort of fell into it. I didn't really know what I wanted to do and I was interested in research. I liked doing research. And I did a sort of postgrad at [institution] after my degree, and started doing some research there and I really enjoyed it. And then I took a research position in [city] and it was at [institution] at the time. It was on a project on [topic]. And I got the job. What I didn't realise fully was that the job required me to register for a PhD. So I kind of fell into it mainly through kind of interest in research and then realising I had to do a PhD as part of this. And then I think, like I saw, once, you've gone through the pain of a PhD process, it's the apprenticeship for an academic career. And then you're kind of on that, you're on that sort of treadmill. So, yeah. It was, it was quite, it was very difficult for me because I did, I did a very large research project. I did [number] of interviews as part of my research project. It was in the days where research really, quantitative and qualitative distinctions didn't really make that much of a distinction. So it was an absolute, it was a beast of a project, quite frankly. And I was, I didn't have a lot of time for my own PhD, as you can imagine, as part of that. So my PhD was sort of half finished when I took the position at [university] to do another project. That actually was nearly [number] interviews in two years. So that was even more horrendous. And so, so then that also meant that my PhD got completely stunted, because obviously trying to finish your own PhD when you're collecting [number] interviews. And so I then, I then had a two year research position at [university] where they were, they were really good to me in a sense that they allowed me to finish my PhD. So it took me kind of [many] years to finish it. But it was mainly because it was part time and because, so in the space of four years, I had done not far off [number] interviews. It was just sort of crazy. So I think in my overall academic career, I've done nearly [number] qualitative interviews. I'm quite research intensive as you can see which, which is increasingly more difficult with a, with a big responsibility, with teaching to do. So, so I kind of fell into it. But my [family member] was an academic and we often laugh about this because he was an academic in the kind of 80s and he used to have this wonderful life where the pay was actually really quite high for academics in those days. So you had a very lovely home and he had fantastic holidays. So he literally could finish term in May and come back in October. And he used to travel the world within those months, to Thailand and Kenya and India, all these wonderful places. And so I was like "this has got to be the best job in the world, wow, I want to do this". So I kind of was really attracted to this lifestyle and this wonderful, kind of, existence. And of course I kind of, he's, he's just retired, actually, but I tease him now and say, "wow, talk about of mis-selling of an academic career, it's it's nothing like it was". So, yeah. So sort of, sort of interested in him and his work and also then the actual - I'm interested in research and I love the [discipline]. And so that's what, that's what keeps me, keeps my interest.

##### Researcher

Excellent. And just sort of following on from that, what would you say in your own kind of opinion the purpose of academia actually is? So why does academia kind of exist, do you think?

##### Participant 10

I mean. Yeah, I think, I think, I think there is a really important purpose of universities on both sides, you know. The kind of the teaching side, I think teaching is very important. And I think it's really important for society to have an educated population. And I think research is really important, especially at the moment, with sort of a lot of the distrust of experts and fake news and these kind of arguments, I think sort of having a well-informed research position is really important for society. But I think, I do think there is, you know, there is a broad public value in what universities do. And I think they provide an important role within the communities in which they're located. I do feel as if the marketisation of higher education has weakened that kind of public ethos, sadly. So I do think that it's now become much more business oriented. It's become much more financially based, much more based on market principles, much more based on competition. So all of those elements of it, I think, do undermine that broader public ethos that universities should be about, in my view.

##### Researcher

Excellent. So I want to know a little bit more about the specifics of your job. So would you be able to tell me the kind of formal requirements of your role? And by that I mean things that you are required to deliver or maybe achieve in, for example, a given academic year or a given time period. So, for example, it could be perhaps a certain number of publications. Or if you're thinking about teaching, it might be a certain evaluation score from students on an end-of-module survey. And if possible, could you tell me where these requirements come from, so maybe business school level or university wide or something else?

##### Participant 10

OK, there's, there's not actually any formal requirement in the sense that there's nothing actually written down that says you have to, you have to have so much teaching scores, you have to have a certain amount of publications. So there's nothing specified in terms of the quantity of any of those things. But it's just kind of an expectation that you will will undertake your teaching duties. That's the kind of core. So that's the main kind of activities where there is a formal requirement to complete, is your teaching and your assessments and this kind of thing. But in terms of the quality of that, we have, like most cases, an annual review process. We call it PDR in our case, and those things are reviewed then. So you provide your teaching scores, you discuss what your research plans are. And at the end of that, every year, sort of what we're going to achieve for the following year. And that gets addressed. So, so you set your own targets, but obviously they're kind of loosely agreed by the business school. So we are expected to have a REF return, but it's not specified how many you're supposed to have. I think the big issue would be if your teaching scores were consistently very poor and if you didn't publish at all. Then I think, and actually we've be very slow about this. We don't really manage poor performance until recently we've kind of started. But up until then, I think, you know, there was, lots of things kind of went through without there being much oversight of. So it's not overly managed, but a lot of it is... it's partly as well for our own promotion, our own development that you want to publish and you want to do well for your students. But there's nothing written down formally.

##### Researcher

Right, OK, so maybe these kind of expectations are more normative, kind of like professional norms and not so much things you have to achieve. But there very much is an expectation there?

##### Participant 10

There's an expectation there. And I think that it's really hard because I've not, I think it's a different story if you've not achieved them. Because that's not, that's not been my experience. It's not what's happened to me. I've never been performance managed on my performance, if you know what I mean, whereas I think if you fall short consistently, then you would get a bit more of a - I think, for example, if people are consistently not performing, they then are set targets. So then it would be, well, we are going to expect you in the next year to have published an article or to improve your scores. So I think that's when the formal requirements are made more explicit. So it's, it's done in a lot more kind of professional kind of context rather than being overly target driven.

##### Researcher

OK, excellent. So, obviously you're expected to do a certain number of hours of teaching and research, et cetera. How does impact, so external impact with stakeholders beyond academia, how does that come into that? Is that a requirement or is that something that's more kind of expected, kind of a pressure, but not maybe a requirement?

##### Participant 10

Yeah, it's not again, it's not really a formal requirement, but those PDR forms that we fill in every year and we're appraised upon always has a kind of an impact and engagement section. So I think what we've, a lot of us have found, is the job has become much more enlarged. So it's not just teaching and research. It is impact, it is engagement. In our case, it's also kind of [societal value]. So even though they say, "look, you don't have to perform on all of these areas", there is a sense where you do feel like a sort of normative pressure that "I have to be seen to do this as well". So, but there's no actual time given dedicated to our job. So if I said, "well, where am I supposed to do this? Because there's nothing in the work allocation", because it's not specific enough to sort of break down all of these areas.

##### Researcher

And so obviously, we've touched on the business school's attitude towards impact, they have the kind of [impact] strategy. You mentioned that does kind of form an element of your, of your PDR. Is there any other areas of your work where that kind of comes into it, like, do you feel like you are reminded of that very frequently, this [impact] thing, is it a central part of the ethos of the business school?

##### Participant 10

Yeah, I think for me and my research, I think my research has kind of mainly had societal value. So and also the kind of teaching that I do, which is very research-led teaching, also very much has a kind of societal value. So, so it's not been too much of a kind of culture change for me, whereas I think colleagues in maybe other departments who do different types of research and different types of teaching, it might be quite, quite a change. So in many ways it kind of reflects what our section in the business school has always done. You know, we've been quite a kind of, kind of liberal kind of group within the business school. And I've kind of naturally done this kind of research anyway and kind of engagement is quite a big part of what we do. So that's not so different. So it's kind of a broader sort of ethos. It's talked about there's lots of kind of symbols around the school about it. But I wouldn't say it's changed my practice because I think it kind of already speaks to a lot of what, the kind of, what I used to do anyway.

##### Researcher

OK, excellent. So we talked about sort of why you became an academic and also what you think the purpose of academia is. So it's, you're kind of maybe of the attitude that it does have, that societal value is a central part of that.

##### Participant 10

Yeah.

##### Researcher

And then we've also talked about the kind of normative pressures to have a certain number of publications, perhaps. Do you feel like they kind of align with each other? So think about the purpose of academia from your point of view. Do you feel like that is something that can be achieved with these normative pressures in place? So the kind of pressure to publish and so on?

##### Participant 10

Yeah, I think you're right. I mean, it's definitely a tension. And the tension really is one of time, I think. Because if, to get publications and to get four star publication, I guess the normative sort of target, I guess, for us, would be three or four star publications. So that's what counts. So to get four star publications takes an incredibly long time. And so that then, how do you actually do that and then do a lot of the engagement work as well? So, because my research currently is on [a practical topic], there's a lot of kind of engagement in that role because I've kind of developed a sort of an [outcome] which works with lots of [stakeholders]. So it kind of, if you like, by its nature of engaging in that sort of subject area, my work has taken on quite a large social engagement feature, and there's just not enough hours in the day. So, you know, with my research, with my teaching and with trying to get high quality publications, that's why I work, very often I work 60 hours a week. Because it is a real tension. The publication side of it obviously means that if you didn't have that pressure, it would be great just to have more of an engagement role. But it takes away then from the publication time.

##### Researcher

So, yeah. So your research just by the nature of it, is quite engaging anyway and impactful just through what your research is.

##### Participant 10

Yes.

##### Researcher

So in that way, that is I guess, kind of one strategy you could have to deal with that kind of environment. Would you say you have any other kind of strategies for dealing with the workload pressures? And there's also kind of these not so complimentary messages of "you must publish and you must make impact". Is there any other ways that you deal with that?

##### Participant 10

No, I can't think of anything else. No.

##### Researcher

Just kind of get on with it?

##### Participant 10

Just to just try to do what you can. You know, you try to do, you try to do a bit of everything. And I think that's what that's when it becomes quite frustrating, because if you, if you're professional and you want to do well at everything, then to try to do well at everything is really tough. So you're trying to kind of do everything while in an increasingly difficult context.

##### Researcher

Great, excellent. And we did, we did touch briefly on the effects of COVID before the interview, but I did want to ask, from your point of view, how is coronavirus and the pandemic kind of changed things within the business school and how might that change things in the future?

##### Participant 10

Yeah, hugely. I mean, obviously at the moment we don't have a kind of business school physical infrastructure to work in, you know, we're all working from home. And so that has been really difficult because, you know, you haven't got a physical workspace. You haven't got social spaces to see your colleagues. And we've not, I mean, I personally find it really sad that I've not seen my final year students and they're going to graduate and I haven't had a chance to say goodbye to them. And of course, because I take, I have a module for a whole year myself, I get to know them quite well. So I do all the tutorials and that's one of the things I really enjoy. So that's been really tough. And then, of course, my research has been impacted because, like I said, the sort of research I do in [area] means that it's a really problematic time to try to get access to do, to do research. So the research side of things is finished. And then there is the uncertainty of what's going to be coming next year. I mean, in terms of the kind of broader issues around the business school, I hope it makes our senior group finally realise that we cannot focus entirely on becoming a cash cow for the rest of the university based on an overseas student market for postgraduates. So it is kind of, at a strategic level, it is really, really not sustainable to put all our eggs in one basket, if you like, and kind of think that this postgraduate model is going to kind of see us through and sustain us. And I think that this shock, and potentially this decrease in our postgraduate international student numbers will realign, if you like, and get people to kind of consider that this might actually be the future, because the Chinese have been saying for many years that this boom of international students is not going to continue ad infinitum. China is building its own universities, it's going through the ranks of world institutions. And this kind of heyday is not going to be forever with us. But our entire model on expansion is based on this. So let's hope it sort of reminds people of what the purpose of the business school is. And are we really just a cash cow for the rest of the university? Which is what I think a lot of us have felt like in the last few years, that we are, we're the ones that are constantly expected to add more and more and more student numbers so that we subsidise, cross-subsidise other departments. It's particularly problematic in part because we have a [particular] structure.

##### Researcher

Right.

##### Participant 10

I don't know if you've come across other [universities] that have this structure, but essentially what it means is that from having schools which are relatively autonomous and have a link directly to the VC, we've gone from having maybe twenty-five, thirty schools, business school, law school, medical school to then having a structure of, we're in the [department]. And then there's [other science-related departments]. So there's just [number]. So each of those [departments] then means that the heads of the schools have less autonomy and the heads of the [departments] have much more power. And the [department], as you might imagine, then has its own bureaucratic structure. So the [department] has teaching, research, impact, engagement heads. It has lots of very well paid professional services. It has a HR, you know, it has finance. So, you can imagine. So because of that, once you have this structure, it also means that the [department] becomes a budget holder. So the schools within it then cross-subsidise one another. So the business school is under a lot of pressure to subsidise the rest of the schools in the [department]. And so we've been asked to give up more of our money to the [department] for cross-subsidisation. So I hope that will, I hope that will change. I also really hope, and I know I'm not, I'm not the most techy person in the world by any stretch, but I do hope that this kind of experiment with online teaching and online marking does kind of make a change. I mean, I really like face to face teaching, but I think there is a place for a bit of online, better online work as well. So I hope that will happen. Doing exams online this year, I think has been, has been really good. I think returning to gyms filled with students writing on paper forms is a thing of the past, I hope. So, maybe some benefits in that sense. And I think, you know, working from home, we already do quite a bit of working from home. I wouldn't want to work from home permanently. I think it has diminishing marginal returns, doesn't it? When you, when you work from home for a long time.

##### Researcher

Absolutely. Yeah. I only really have one more actual question I want to ask. It's kind of like, maybe where you see yourself in the future, so maybe think like five, five or ten years down the line. Do you see yourself remaining in that kind of business school environment? Or do you see yourself perhaps moving onto something else and, and maybe why, why that is the case? Why you think you would stay or leave? Or, whatever you are thinking you might do.

##### Participant 10

Yeah. Well, I think after [many] years of being at [university] - which again is even kind of a shock to even say it because I never thought I was going to stay longer than two years - I don't see myself changing at this point. I mean, I think the sector as a whole has problems. And I can't see myself going to another university because I don't think the future is that bright anywhere. I mean, I've got, I think, you know, what we, what we see, we just had a sort of staff survey and results of that. I think what makes it for most places are colleagues. So that's what keeps me there. I've got, I've got some great colleagues and friends and that keeps me in the institution. And that's quite important. So I don't, I don't see myself going. No, I don't see any change there. I'd like to get [a promotion]. That has been really quite a tortuous process. I think a lot of us, because if you've been, if you're at the business school for a long time, the promotion process has changed in that period. So when I was first appointed, it was very, very difficult to become senior lecturer and it would actually, you'd need to have 10, 12 publications to become a senior lecturer. And so the process of getting that was always quite tricky. And then, then the clock stops basically, and then you have to start again for the next promotion and then it stops again. And then what's happened subsequently is the process has become much, much more streamlined. So you no longer have to have 12 publications to become a senior lecturer. You can have four. You can have four good publications to become a senior lecturer, then you get another few publications, you become a reader and then you become the chair. So I have colleagues who started years, years later than me who've now got promoted to a senior level with half the publications I've got.

##### Researcher

Right.

##### Participant 10

So because I've been there a long time and it took a long time to get to my current level, it's just completely stunted my progress. I just think this is crazily unfair. There is, I think there is a gender element of this as well. I know you haven't asked about gender, but I think gender is quite a significant feature in academic careers. And so we do see quite a lot of women who take maybe a longer time in their career to kind of get to that level, being kind of discriminated for want of a better word. And it does really irk me. So I want to get to that level more than anything, because I feel really, really kind of aggrieved that it's just such an unfair system, that the process changes and the people who are already on a completely different trajectory of time are not, not kind of addressed.

##### Researcher

Yeah. So you mentioned the gender aspect earlier on and you kind of said it has progressed slightly.

##### Participant 10

Yes.

##### Researcher

But maybe not as much as you would hope. Why do you think that's the case?

##### Participant 10

I think it's, I think it's a really tough career to blend anything but work in. And the business school, as I said, was very, very renowned for being male dominated. That has changed. We now have the first ever female [senior position] in the business school in [university]. But, you know, it took to [recent year] for that to happen. We've got oh, gosh, I'm trying to think how many, how many chairs we have, female chairs. Less than [small number]? And we've got about [large number] male chairs. So compared to other business schools, [university] is really quite anachronistic in terms of its gender profile. The reasons for that, I think culturally women have not been, because if, if there are no women leaders, and there are few female chairs, you don't get encouraged. I personally have never had mentoring for my entire career. I've never had much support from anybody about my career development in all this time. And on top of that, I think there is, there is the classic gendered argument that if you do your job well - and I kind of would fit into a model where I'm not an out and out research star by any stretch - I've always had a very strong research record and I've gone into every REF there has been, but I also take my teaching really seriously and I really invest a lot in teaching - and I think what happens is you become very aware that to get on, you don't actually invest in your teaching. You do just focus on your research. You don't do admin, you don't become a good colleague. You're not there to support PhD students. And I think all those things are really important. And I'm not saying men and women do, because I don't think it's that, it's that divided, but I think in the main, women tend to sort of do the broader elements of the job. And I mean, things like pastoral care, you know, I was always kind of identified as somebody that's a very good personal tutor. So I would take on more of the difficult cases, those kind of classic kind of gendered assumptions. So I think if you are savvy and strategic, you wouldn't build a career like I've done. And I think women do. And the women who are in senior positions very often don't have children. I don't have children. I don't have a family. I don't have that. I don't think I could even think about having a family with the job. So, and most of us in senior roles are actually childless. So it's, I think, coming back to the question that you had about formal expectations, I think this is part of the issues with the profession. It is what you want to make it. Yes, there is a degree of expectation if you're in a Russell Group university. But there's also an awful lot of latitude about how much you want to actually put into different facets of your job. And I've been criticised probably throughout my my whole career for being too conscientious, you know. "Oh, it's your fault, you take teaching too seriously, it's your fault, you prepare too much, it's your fault, you update everything, you don't need to update everything every year". And I'd think, "no, my professional identity is very important to me and I'm going to do those things and I'm going to carry on doing them". And, yeah, I'm going to get to [a more senior position] a lot later than some of my peers, but I know I'll have done it my way and I'll have done the things that are important to me. And it's sad really that institutionally, those aren't the things that are considered to be important.

##### Researcher

Yeah. Absolutely. I do kind of wonder why this is the case.

##### Participant 10

I think it is partly because it's so hard to combine research and teaching, to do both, to do both really well. And I think that's what women often want to do. They want to do something they do well. They don't want to wing it. They don't want to, you know, kind of breeze in and not having prepared. So I find that my female colleagues kind of, they want to do both really well, and sometimes when they can't do that, a lot of my colleagues did the same and they said, "I'm just going to do teaching only". And it removes the pressure from these other things. Because if you have got kids, you know, you haven't got time to work 60 hours a week and you haven't got time to dedicate your summer break with doing research, which is what I do, you know, it's just something you can't do. So I think gender is quite, is quite a significant story in some of this.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. I'm glad you mentioned that because it's another thing to think about. I hadn't, I hadn't really, I guess, considered it because as a student, you don't really see these things as much.

##### Participant 10

And my experience of PhD supervisions with male colleagues as well is that, you know, I'm always like, "do you want to kind of share comments before we have the meeting? Because I've read everything and I've got loads to kind of contribute". And they're like, "oh, no". And they obviously haven't read it. So it's, sadly, it's, I think, you know, it's partly reinforced by the culture, which is when I went to the business school, it was very much sort of like, well, you're a bit of a mug if you take teaching seriously, we're not a polytechnic. You know, we're a proper university, nobody really cares about teaching. And it's been very much like that. And, and then obviously teaching, I think this is one of the things with COVID and if we do see a kind of change, it would be maybe focussing more on teaching, which is, which is good. But, but as I said, the problem we've had is trying to get time for research. So, as I said, if you are savvy and strategic, you really don't care about teaching and you really don't invest in it. And you just spend as much time as you can getting research publications. Now, institutions, to me, I think it's absolutely appalling that they're the kind of people that they they promote because what does that tell us about what is valued? And then, of course, on top of that, they outsource promotion to an external person. So actually, if you're, you know, I would probably call myself an institutional builder in that I run, I run the [research group]. I am heavily invested in the school and in all elements of that, research, teaching, and, and I'm involved in programme development, all sorts of things. And yet that does not convey in promotion in terms of the work that I do. So there's this huge kind of unseen work that people do who are institutional, who actually make the place a better place to work, and yet that's not counted. So it's a real, you know, when you look at it, it's a really messed up system. And I don't know who kind of is benefiting from it very much. I don't think, I think students are getting increasingly a bad deal, you know. These large, large lectures. And, you know, again, I'm told, I'm completely, in fact, I've had real issues with my senior management because they're really unhappy that I do my tutorials because now tutorials are more or less subcontracted to PhD students. So because I do that myself, I get really penalised for it and told my workload is my is my problem. Because I do the, I run the module on my own, they say "all modules have to be shared", so we don't know. So, yeah, it's, it's, it's tricky. I mean, I know you talked about complexity and I think, I think it is a really complex job that requires such a huge range of different skills and in a way, kind of, kind of almost like mind blowing kind of array of skills that you have to have. So it's, it's, I don't know if I was a PhD student knowing what I know now. I mean, I still think it's a great job. I still think, you know, that it's, to do a job that you genuinely enjoy and you learn all the time. And that you have interest from, it's, it's, it's brilliant. And there's not that many jobs that are like that. But I think the workload issues have become so pressing, and I don't think the [university] is unique to that. I think that is an issue. A lot of us are very cynical about the [impact] ethos, because it's great rhetoric, but, you know, don't your employees and your students count as [societal] value and the commercial pressures to increase the numbers, internationalise the programmes is not [societal] value. You know, like I said, Chinese students who really struggle and pay very large fees - there's no [societal] value about that. That is ethically problematic for most of us. So, yeah, it's, it's a, it's a, it's a job that is what you want to make it. But also it's, it's very pressurised in terms of workload. I don't want to put you off [researcher's name] because we need good people in the profession!

##### Researcher

Yeah. I mean, I'm in a very unique position where I'm sort of doing the PhD but kind of looking into the, maybe, career that I will have in the future sort of thing. So with all the pressures, the freedom is perhaps a bit of an illusion?

##### Participant 10

I mean, you have that freedom as long as you do what's expected of you. It's like I said, you know, those expectations are there, they're not enforced with targets. But if you, if you say stopped performing, that could be very different, you know? So if you suddenly said to yourself, "well, you know, I'm not going to really focus much on research anymore", and you made that choice, then it would be kind of alerted quite quickly that that's not what you should be doing. So like you said, there's an illusionary freedom to a certain extent. But, but yeah, not being, you do, you do set how you want to do it yourself in many ways.

##### Researcher

Yeah. Well, it's, it's all fun and games, isn't it? A lot to look forward to for me. Well thank you. I really appreciate all of your honesty and stuff, so unless, I don't have any other questions, I think, I want to ask, so unless you've got anything else kind of off the top of your head you think is important to add, I can stop recording. Excellent.

##### Participant 10

That's great. Thank you. Thank you, [researcher's name].