##### Researcher

So, I'm now recording. So, I've read a bit about you on your profile, so I do know a bit about you from that. But I guess kind of just in your own words, could you tell me about yourself in terms of your background, your career to date and your current role, please?

##### Participant 34

Yeah, sure. So my name is [name], I'm a [qualified professional], I had qualified with [organisation] in [city] prior to joining the business school. I've been in the school since [year] and I came in as what we call a [education-focused title], and other places call it a teaching fellow, which meant that I was teaching as a lecturer but also doing a PhD on a part time basis. So I had six years to do the PhD, which is far too long. So, in terms of my sort of trajectory then really, so I was a [education-focused title] for about nine years, I suppose, and then went to [current role] about three years ago. Currently I am [role] for education in the school with a specific role for student support. I teach on undergraduate programmes. I have taught on postgraduate in the past, but I'm not teaching on them at the minute. I also teach for our executive education. So I have an external module, like a short course that we do, a two day course, which I do a couple of times a year. And then I also teach on a postgraduate diploma as part of our executive education offering as well. So those would be the sort of main things that I would do. So I always teach in the [sub-discipline] space.

##### Researcher

Okay. And ever since you did your PhD at [current institution], have you been there continuously since?

##### Participant 34

Oh yeah, yeah. So I was already a member of staff while I did the PhD, so yeah, it's just been a continual employment.

##### Researcher

Okay. That's really interesting. Thank you. I guess I kind of want to ask, so obviously you became a [qualified professional] and then did this PhD, sort of moved into academia - what kind of inspired that move?

##### Participant 34

So, I had done a little bit of teaching. When I was doing my master's, I'd done a little bit of tutorial teaching. I kind of came from a place, my dad is a teacher, I had thought at a point in time, I had thought about whether to - even when I was on the, I did the [sub-discipline] degree here - and when I was on the degree, I had really toyed with going back into teaching. And then I went and taught some children in Brazil over a summer and realised I'm not cut out for teaching children. But actually still really enjoyed teaching and enjoyed the teaching that I was doing then as tutorials. And when I was out working in practice, I got involved in sort of mentoring and training there, and I think that probably really solidified the interest really. So I very much came into academia for a teaching reason. And I have to say, the fact that I have then found research that I've enjoyed has sort of been a happy accident in all honesty. Because it was a requirement of the job that I did the PhD. And now actually, they can't recruit in that way anymore. They used to be able to recruit in that way so they could recruit, so they were able to recruit me with a master's and as professionally qualified, on the condition that I would do the PhD. But they actually don't do that anymore. You actually now have to have a PhD to be a lecturer. So that's sort of the reason why I kind of came in that way. From a research point of view, I'm just conscious I didn't actually mention the research, so my research is in [type of organisation] and things like that. And I've actually continued to publish in subject specific research, despite the fact that actually, as an education-focused academic, I'm not required to do that. And I could, for example, publish on more educational things. And I probably need to do a little bit more of that in honesty. That's possibly one of the pressures. But for now, I've been primarily focused on my subject specific research for a number of reasons.

##### Researcher

Yeah. Okay. That's really interesting. And you said that there's no expectation on you to really be doing research as an education-focused academic. So is that kind of reflected in your, I'm not sure what you maybe call it at your institution, I know many call it a workplace allocation model?

##### Participant 34

Yes, funny, we call it the same, yeah. What we would have is, normally somebody in my role would be 60% teaching, 20% scholarship and 20% admin. And the scholarship is quite widely defined. So the scholarship can include, it can include, as I do, kind of subject specific research, but it wouldn't have necessarily the sort of targets associated that a typical lecture would. So, for example, there's no requirement to get funding, and there's not necessarily a requirement to have journals at a certain level or anything like that. So I could do, for example, so under that heading, I could be writing textbooks. I could be writing educational based stuff. I could be doing pedagogical research, which in our field would be kind of lower ranked journals quite often. I could be doing any of that stuff. It's much less defined for me. I need to do something in that space. But what it is, is really defined very broadly. And that's my 20%. And then, as I say, 20% for admin and 60% teaching. By contrast, somebody who is on the comparable lecturer track would be 40% research, 40% teaching, 20% admin.

##### Researcher

Right. I see.

##### Participant 34

So that would be the differential there.

##### Researcher

Okay. That's interesting. So you said the 20% admin role as well, so you mentioned you're [role] for education and for student support. Is that your primary admin responsibility or is there anything else you do on the side?

##### Participant 34

No, that would be it. So that's actually a 25% full time equivalent in our school. So the kind of 60, 20, 20, is a little bit mixed for me because of that 25%. So that's basically, what that role does is it takes a lot of the duties that would normally be the director of education's duties, and kind of bundles a few things together because we're such a large school, with such a large undergraduate cohort, it was felt the last time the role changed hands that it was worth splitting it out. And interestingly, one of the reasons for that was because of the difficulty that we had in getting people into those administrative roles, because academics in the school have been historically very reluctant to take on those administrative roles, especially if they were on the lecturer track, because it was seen as something that was just really going to take away time from what was important for them, more important for them, which was research. And another reason for it was actually we've been going through the Athena Swan programme, and I formally was [involved in the process], and one of the things that we worked on was kind of trying to build pathways into those administrative roles for more junior levels of staff. So historically, a director of education has always been senior lecturer or above. And similarly, with most of our, most types of directors in schools tend to be at the very least a senior lecture or a professor. And it was kind of supporting the person in the role, but also giving somebody a bit of experience to come behind and kind of create a pathway of people who could do these sorts of admin roles in the school.

##### Researcher

Okay. And you mentioned there about some people have a kind of attitude that they don't really want to take on admin because it might take away from their research. Have you found in practice in doing this role that it has taken away any of your time from any other activities, obviously mainly teaching, but you do have that 20% scholarship as well, has it kind of infringed on that?

##### Participant 34

It could do. I think it could do. I think it's a very considered effort to make sure that it doesn't. Because the nature of, especially that role, because of this, and I think part of it is because a lot of it is student support related, so more often than not, there's a crisis. And the immediacy of that - I mean, you're never going to turn away a student in need to work on a paper. You just don't do that. Well, I wouldn't do that. But I think the immediacy of teaching and admin, they can be very kind of urgent at the time. And I think that's the thing, you have to be quite careful to ringfence time, whereas, you know... and actually certainly for me anyway, I would find that a lot of scholarship things - you'll know this yourself - takes a wee bit of a considered period of time, you know. Although I'm actually a fan of "I'll do something for half an hour every morning on something research related just to make sure that something gets done" - you can get a lot done in a half an hour, as it extends into an hour some days - but actually, you need focused time, most of the time you need focused time, but I don't always get it. So yes, no, they're absolutely correct. And we've seen evidence of it in this school that actually the person who was in that role before me, really, her research did suffer as a result. Because you're fighting fires all the time. And it's a very, very busy job, especially in a big, busy school.

##### Researcher

And can I just ask, I guess, I want to know why that particular role appealed to you? Was that something that you sort of foresaw yourself doing at some point, or was it more of just kind of an opportunity and you thought "that might fit my skills well", or, what kind of motivated you in that sense?

##### Participant 34

Well, it was a compromise. So I came back off maternity leave and was asked to take on the original director role, and I wasn't happy to do that at that time because... first baby, and I didn't know what end of me was up, quite frankly, and I didn't know what the next year was going to look like. And I just thought, no, I'm not happy to do that. And it was a bit of a compromise. And I sort of said, well, look, if you can take out - it was already planned to split the role - and I sort of said, well, look, if I take this part of the role, because I had been - we call them advisor of studies in the school - for the [sub-discipline] students. So I had been senior personal tutor in the school, which was a role around organising various pastoral activities. I'd had background in organising induction for the school. There was a variety of things that I had done that sort of made that a very natural progression for me where it might not have been for other people. So in a way it was a bit of a compromise. I sort of said, well, look, if I do that the next time director of education comes up, potentially, I'll go for it. But it also should make it easier for you to recruit somebody into that position, because at least then they know there's somebody else. Because I wouldn't have taken the director of education role knowing that there wasn't anybody recruited for the other two. Because, interestingly, there was supposed to be two [associated admin roles] and the other one never materialised. And funny, the director of education took on that part of the role, because I just said no. Just because, actually, you need to sort of protect yourself a little bit.

##### Researcher

Yeah. Okay. That's really interesting. So I want to move on slightly, I guess, and talk about your kind of teaching and that kind of thing. Obviously, that is the main bulk of your job, the kind of education side of things. What I want to ask is, I guess, what are the kind of expectations placed upon you, and not just for your teaching, but for everything? I mean, you've already talked a little bit about the scholarship side, it's a very sort of loosely defined aspect, so that has maybe not got many sort of concrete expectations. You've got your admin, which obviously is kind of fighting fires all the time, as you said. With the teaching, what are you kind of, I guess, expected to achieve in a given time period? What are the kind of, not so much metrics, but the kind of expectations placed upon you as a senior lecturer and obviously in your [admin role] as well?

##### Participant 34

Your tape is not picking up me laughing, haha. The expectations placed on me are very low, extremely low. There is an expectation in terms of I am given a number of modules, but I think maybe it's partly because of the seniority at this point and I'm seen as an experienced pair of hands, I'm known, I would have a fairly good reputation from a teaching point of view. My line manager, our subject leader, would know me, and I don't think would feel the need to have too much of a conversation with me about anything. And honestly, it's really very much left to me. I say that, but as I say that, I'm not sure that, I think it's something that we don't have right in this school. I think we're not clear enough on what the expectations of teaching are and actually metrics are not necessarily the right thing. They're not necessarily the right angle to approach this from. Because we have all sorts of nonsense metrics. We have nonsense metrics about, you know, we've had module evaluations this year, my module evaluation for semester one, 11% percent of students completed that, whereas in previous years on an online basis, we would have had - I was a part of a pilot the previous year with online evaluations - and 35% of the students completed it. But in normal years, what we tend to do is we tend to have, people come into the classroom and they hand out paper copies and... okay, that's very, it takes up our time, takes up the administrative staff's time, but at least you tend to get everybody who's in the lecture, so you get probably 70% of your cohort. There are all sorts of arguments why metrics are not right, especially at the moment, especially when people are under the sort of pressure that they are because of the pandemic. There are also very strong arguments why they are gender based, why they are racist. So, our school has, one of the things I think for probation purposes is that you have to get a score of four out of five. But that is so meaningless. It's so meaningless, so subjective. So much comes down to whether the students like you or not. It is horridly gendered. I mean, I've experienced that myself. You get comments about, I've had one or two comments about appearance and things like that, which is just annoying. What's also annoying is the expectation that you're there to be kind. The conversations about how much I care about my students and things like that. Which are lovely to read, but I know rightly are not made about my male colleagues. For my male colleagues, it's enough to be good at what you teach and be organised and those sorts of things. Whereas there is a different standard that you're held to as a female member of staff, I definitely do think. And female staff who don't necessarily conform to that I think get a very raw deal, because I do know a few people who are excellent lecturers who get a very raw deal from our students, because they're perceived as quite cold and quite distanced. But they go in and they're really good and, so, the metrics are one thing. I suppose one of the things that, I probably should tell you about this. So I actually set up what we call a teaching and learning forum last year. I think some other institutions, you may have heard about this in some other institutions, I don't know if you have one yourself. Basically what it is, you normally have a seminar series, okay. But that tends to be about sort of subject specific research. And within our school it's like there's an accounting group, and a finance group, and other groups, and things like that. And I set up a teaching and learning forum, basically to kind of encourage conversations around teaching and learning. Because I just think for too long, I think there's been an assumption that if you're here, you're a good teacher. And I think there has been a lack of direction in terms of... not necessarily that this is what good teaching looks like, but these are the expectations in terms of, this is how you interact with students. I think that actually expectations around teaching have been much less well defined than expectations around research. And part of that might be because actually, we've got better metrics in research. They're not perfect either. But at least you can, there's something there that's a bit more measurable. So the teaching and learning forum was there to say, to kind of give us space to kind of talk about teaching, talk about what constituted good practice, highlight good practice that was going on in the school - because there's fantastic stuff that goes on in this school, and you never hear about it, other than that you happen to be talking to somebody about it in a corridor, and you happen to be talking about teaching, which isn't a given. So I set that up two years ago for, partly for that, but also because it was something that I always thought, at some point I'm going to be a [education-focused leadership role], and I always wanted to do that, I always wanted to put down that marker that actually teaching and learning is important enough to talk about and to have a research seminar about and to kind of build a bit of cohesion around. Because the other thing that's happened in this school since I started is, we have a lot more [education-focused roles] than we used to. We used to be very much, I mean, we were very much kind of unusual. There used to be maybe two or three of us in [sub-discipline], because that was how you got people to come in and teach [sub-discipline]. And actually, over time, we've moved to having many more [education-focused roles] who come in with a PhD already, but have chosen to take on a role that has that greater teaching component and the lower scholarship requirement. And actually, I think part of it was also about, I wanted to build a bit of a community among us, and to build that importance. Because all of that, that's all important as well, that's important in the context of the school. It's important in the context of the student experience, but it's also important in the context of people's progression. My progression, yes, absolutely. Because I'd like to be an education professor, thanks very much. We've never had one in the school. I'd like to be one of those, thanks. We've got one in the university. I'd like to be one of those. I'd like to see my colleagues here, I'd like to see the education lecturers going up to education senior lecturers. We had no education senior lecturers three years ago, and now we have four, you know? And one of the interesting things about the education lecturers is they're more inclined to stay. The turnover in education lecturers is much, much lower, because most of us are here because we made a choice to be specifically here and to come out of practice. And actually, for a lot of us, actually, [city] is part of that. So we would have quite a few people who've moved to [city] or have moved back to [city] for that job, and they tend to be [local] people. Everybody has kind of chosen to be in that space. And actually, ten years from now, I can tell you, most of us will still be here. Couldn't say the same about lecturers - lecturers turnover an awful lot more quickly, because people come to [city], particularly [university] because it's Russell group, but it's peripheral. And it's probably, you know, they can do three years here and say they've been at a Russell group, you know, without necessarily, you know, it's not as hard to get by as some other places. Sorry, I may have digressed there a wee bit.

##### Researcher

No, no, that's all really interesting. I could ask you like a million questions about the stuff that we've spoken about, it's extremely interesting. I guess, I do have a few questions based off of all of that. Firstly, the teaching and learning forum that you set up, what kind of uptake did that have with other members of staff? Is it generally quite good or are you quite disappointed? How has that panned out?

##### Participant 34

That's a really pertinent question, because actually funny, we've probably just had our most successful session that we've ever had. We had probably 25 people in the room. Now, we’re a staff of about 85? That was people that were, sorry, in the virtual room. And in honesty, 25 in a virtual room for a seminar is amazing in this place. Like even for a research seminar it's really good. So there's been really good uptake on specific things. We also did quite a bit of stuff kind of through the summer, we got people to come in and talk about some of the digital learning stuff. We sort of reached out and did a wee bit about that. And that, again, those were probably quite popular. I think probably the least popular ones are anything in the student support space, which is interesting because we have had two international student advisors who have presented and both times the take up was quite low. It's a mixed bag. Similarly, one of the things that, when I set it up, I did a consultation on it and sort of said, look, if we were doing this, what would you want it to look like? Because my initial idea was of the seminar. But one of the things that was actually suggested there and people were very keen on the idea of, was that we would do like a coffee and chat kind of in between, so there's an event every couple of weeks kind of type thing, but every other event is like a coffee and chat. And I have to say those are not well attended at all. Sometimes there's me and two people kind of type thing, and they're probably two people I would talk to anyway, haha. So, you know, those sorts of things I think, there was a good idea, and actually they were probably better attended in the fresh lockdown, actually, funny. People found them quite helpful at that stage, and it was giving me a way to share information. We have a Team as well, actually. So we share information through the Team. And if people are doing things they might sort of share, "oh, this is something, you might want to go to this" or "I found this online, here you go". That sort of asynchronous kind of sharing of information has been quite useful too. So actually, yeah, broadly speaking, you're never totally happy, but it's good enough. It's certainly good enough. But it's been interesting that the fact that somebody external the got the really strong, the real interest, you know. Which I think is a little bit sad because I think there's such great stuff that goes on in the school. But you know, I get it. People come for the external.

##### Researcher

And I guess why do you think specifically the student support sessions didn't get as much attention?

##### Participant 34

This is an interesting one. I think there are too many of my colleagues who think student support is not their job. And to some extent, it's not. Okay. But actually, it can make a huge difference when a student contacts a module coordinator and says, you know what? I'm struggling. If that module coordinator responds sympathetically and refers them to support, which they all should know how to do, it can be really supportive for the student. And there's a really good chance that we catch something before it becomes a real issue for somebody. If a member of staff responds unsympathetically or dashes off or doesn't even respond at all, quite frankly, then that can be very demoralising for the student. It can really send them further down. And when we talk about student support, I suppose from a module coordinator level, for us, it's also bound up with things like having an understanding of, normally, who's attending your classes. But for now, what's the participation or things like that. And even at that level, we would have a lot of blowback from certain academics who sort of feel like, well, why should I have to monitor attendance? Can somebody else not do this? Surely some secretary somewhere can do this? And you sort of go, it's about three minutes. It doesn't take any time here, and it's actually about, well, do you not want to know who's not engaging? But there is a very different mentality there. I suppose some of the student support stuff, I think sometimes as well, I mean, one of the things I think, funny, there's been a real blowback about, is the university has tried to do some things around accessibility. And again, for the same reason, there's been a few people who have said, well, is this not the disability office's job? Now, I had to try very hard not to go through somebody in the meeting for saying that, because, actually, you know what? For certain things, that's absolutely correct. We want them to do assessments and we want them to write us forms so that we know what to do and all those things. 100%. And we know when we refer, when somebody tells you they've got something that's a long term condition, you should go to refer. But actually, from a point of view of accessibility, well, actually, sorry, should you not be interested in making sure that your resources are as accessible as they can be? Because nine times out of ten, anytime I look at anything that's about supporting students, accessibility, supporting international students, anything like that, they're just good practice. It's actually just the stuff you do to support accessibility probably makes your PowerPoints clearer for a lot of people for a lot of reasons. It probably makes it easier for international students. There are so many knock-ons where actually so much of this stuff that is good for one group of students is actually good for a lot of students. And actually, again, the time that's required is not unreasonable. But again, I think that we kind of butt heads against this idea of, I don't think we've been clear as a school, sometimes, in sharing our expectations around this. You know, the expectation that actually, do you know what, if you need to do something in this, then you do it. You know, so yeah, I think that's been part of it. So funny, interestingly, we've got a session coming up on accessibility. That's where this came from, because it was a bit of a conversation about that at one of the chats.

##### Researcher

Okay, that's interesting. Another thing you mentioned that I wanted to ask about is that you said you've never had an education professor in the school. Why do you think that is the case?

##### Participant 34

So, I suppose it's probably a slightly historical thing. The role of professor of education is not that old. So, I think, technically, you could have been a principal teaching fellow, I think? So there was, in the old system, there was teaching fellow, senior teaching fellow. We would have had one of those as I came through, she was an accountant who never did a PhD, didn't do any research, just taught both semesters with adviser of studies and all that sort of thing. She was fantastic. And she was a senior teaching fellow. But I don't really think there was a progression available to her to be honest with you. I think there was always a sense that if you were a professor, the professor was reserved for that lecturer track. And one of the things that's really interesting and slightly comical in one case, is that what they've done now is they've made sure that the lecturer education track actually now mirrors the lecturer track. So I can be, my next step, technically, would be to be an [education-focused reader]. I have no idea what that looks like because a reader, surely the point of them, is that they go and do loads of research. I don't get that. It's also, the top of the pay is at the top of the senior lecture scale. It doesn't put you into the professor ranks. So you have a choice. You could either go for [education-focused reader] or you could go for education professor. I'm keeping my focus on education professor, thanks. Haha. Because you're only going to use up things in one application that you might want to use again. Haha. So, historically, the progression wasn't there. But also there wasn't the critical mass of people. And it may well be that maybe in some parts of the university, they may have had principal teaching fellows, and specifically, probably, thinking about, I would bet you they probably existed in medicine or pharmacy, because you would have a lot of people there who were not researchers. A lot of your senior people would not necessarily be that way research active, if you know what I mean. But you'd have a lot of clinical fellows or something I think they called themselves. But yes, so there are really two reasons for that one.

##### Researcher

OK, that's interesting. Thank you. And another thing that you mentioned was the pandemic pressure on teaching staff. I guess, obviously, the move to online teaching has been challenging for teaching staff. Have you felt that your workload generally has been quite badly affected in that sense?

##### Participant 34

Yeah. I suppose we all know, I'll not labour the point on online teaching, because I'm sure you've got it from everybody else. But it is just a fact of, fundamentally, even if you're teaching a course you've taught before, you're fundamentally redesigning that course, you're teaching things very differently. If you have any sort of technical elements in your course, that can be particularly time consuming. So, for example, I teach [software], which I've always done in a computer lab. I have to teach it this year through Windows Virtual Desktop, which does not like [the software]. So I literally spent lost days and days that I really didn't have to lose trying to solve a problem with Windows Virtual Desktop, to which the answer ultimately was, well, we can't fix that. So can your students do their project outside of working hours? Super! And can you not do live classes? Can you do recordings instead so that they can watch them at different times? Great. So there's things like that. There's things like that. And we've had that on a couple of things, I suppose maybe just to give you something a wee bit different in terms of workload, one of the big things we're very aware of is student queries have absolutely rocketed and a lot of the conversation in the school has been about how to manage those. So some of us find discussion forums helpful - I do, that's what I do. So certainly some of the discussion forums helpful. Some people are very into using Teams for chat kind of type things because I think sometimes you look at your emails and they are kind of huge, otherwise it becomes very pressurised. I certainly find emails quite pressurising sometimes. So we've all been trying to find ways to deal with that. I could say comfortably they've trebled - student queries. Online exams have been an enormous, enormous additional workload for a whole range of reasons, not just because we've had to completely rewrite our exams because actually, in [sub-discipline], we are doing our exams and students have to complete a statement of integrity to say that they are not going to look at their books. But we are not doing anything that will stop them looking at their books. So we have to effectively, we have to make sure the right questions that couldn't be answered from the textbook are there. So therefore, you have to, so, for example, I've had to make a lot of changes to my exam because it was [topic] - it was very textbook oriented. It was like, can you give definitions of this and what are the benefits and challenges of this. And you had a bit of case based stuff, but not huge amount, they are first year. So not only have I had to change my exam, I've actually had to change a lot of my content as well to make sure that I was teaching them to be able to do the exam. The actual facilitation of online exams as well, historically, we wrote an exam paper, it was dealt with by the exams office, they timetabled the exams, they dealt with any issues, all of that sort of stuff. Everything now is going back down to the individual academics. So we're having to take all the kind of stress around making sure your exams are uploaded in the right way, securely. I'm quite tech literate, it doesn't really bother me. It's just time consuming for me. But I have colleagues who are nowhere near as savvy as I am. And for them, that's a huge commitment of time, checking and double checking because they don't have that confidence, you know? So there's a huge amount of time in and around that. Managing issues with, for example, people have IT issues. Requests for exceptional circumstances around exams have trebled this year because people were saying that they'd had IT issues around submissions - we had 80 exceptional circumstances requests related to IT issues this year. Normally we have maybe 60 exceptional circumstances requests, and this year we had 80 on IT issues alone, and another, I think another 50 on other things. So the administrative load is much, much higher. We are also seeing from a support point of view, we have seen a trend in the last number of years where students, there are too many students that we're getting at the point of crisis. And I think that trend has continued this year because particularly with just lack of visibility in classes and things like that, I think that has been a continuing trend. So there have been a number of students, we've had quite serious cases that then take up a lot of time. And I think we've probably had more of those than usual this year. Having people at distance is hard as well, you know, not being able to say "come and see me", that's hard as well. So unquestionably, this has been the hardest year of my professional life. And I used to work in practice, haha. This is not what I came here for, haha.

##### Researcher

Yeah, that's really interesting. So I guess I want to ask as well back to kind of the research stuff, because obviously that is not a sort of concretely defined part of your job, and you just said this has been the hardest sort of working year yet. But looking at your publication record, for someone who is education focused, I thought it was really quit impressive. And also you mentioned in one of your initial emails that you're not a REF returnable academic.

##### Participant 34

Yeah.

##### Researcher

So your outputs, are they completely not submitted to the REF whatsoever because of your, I guess, position as an education academic?

##### Participant 34

Yeah. It seems crazy to me because there are good publications in there. There are some that form part of other people's REF. So if you were looking at my publications, there's quite a few there with [academic], who was my PhD supervisor. So that was the kind of stuff kind of falling out of the end of my PhD, and some of that took quite a while. In [sub-discipline] it can take an awfully long time to get stuff published. So, some of that is even the end of that. So that's actually all in our REF return as his. So it is being used, if you know what I mean. But, yeah, there are a few other things there that, the more recent stuff that I would have done, you'll notice there's a great gap - it's hilarious. Roughly around the time that I took maternity leave, because you can see there's like a drag. I took maternity leave and then about two years later, there's this big gap kind of type thing because I was pushing stuff out before maternity leave - that's the wrong phrase. I was pushing stuff out before maternity leave to kind of get things going. Do you know what I mean? And then those kind of got published. I actually got, I think I had two or three papers published the year I was on maternity leave. So it looked like I had this really productive year. But actually, all that work was two years prior to that. So, there's been a gap. And actually funny, this year has not been too bad. I've got good co-authors as well. And I've got people that I actually really want to work with, as opposed to my PhD supervisor. You know, especially if you've done a six year PhD, and we published a lot out of that PhD. We maxed most of the papers that we have, that actually, which, you probably might notice, they all have his name first, but they're all out of my PhD, and I did all the data collection. That is why I no longer write with my PhD supervisor. So, he insisted. He insisted everything was alphabetical because I was a colleague and not a PhD student. He insisted everything was alphabetical, which obviously always meant his name was going to go first. So you have to protect yourself. But yeah, I have an interest, okay, so that part of the story is I have an interest. I do also think that although there's a credibility thing here as well. In this school, we're Russell group. It does no harm for me to be on the education track and still have a very credible research output. I could do less. I know that I could do less, but I probably push myself to do a wee bit more because I just think from a credibility point of view, which is an interesting internalised pressure. And you know, I suppose at a point in time, maybe part of where this comes from, I was recruited as an education lecturer, but the intention was always that I would move across to a full lecturer once I completed the PhD. And that was always my intention. And whenever we sort of got to the point of me doing that - because nobody had actually done that yet, there was a couple of us in a similar boat - nobody had actually done it yet. And when I went to do it, they basically said, well, that's okay, great, but you'll have to do a three year probation, and I was, at that point I'd been seven years in the school at that point. And obviously hadn't been promoted because I was doing the PhD and all that sort of thing. And I just said, no, I'm not willing to accept that. I said, that's fine, I'll stay and be an education lecturer, because I can be a senior education lecturer next year if I stay. So I think part of that comes from, that was always going to be sort of my trajectory. And I'm lucky that I'm quite involved in a few things in the [sector] and things like that. It's lovely. Research in the [sector] is really nice, much nicer than talking to other academics. They're really good. We ask for interviews, you get hold of people and stuff, and it's a nice area to work in. It's been quite publishable. We've been quite successful kind of type thing. So yeah, I do have an enjoyment of it. I know that my next move probably is, I've got a couple of papers that are kind of on the boil at the minute, and after that, I'm probably going to do a wee bit, make a point of doing a little bit more in the pedagogical research space, primarily to support the application to professor, to be honest. Because probably I think that's definitely where I'm weakest. When I look at our academic profile for education professor, that's where I'm weakest, in kind of pedagogical outputs. So I think that's probably the next box that needs to be ticked. Because you just look at it and you go right, okay, tick things at different points in time. I'm not that ambitious as you've probably picked up, haha.

##### Researcher

I mean, I would say, I mean, aspiring for professor, I would say is ambitious but, obviously I'm quite junior. So, yeah, I think that's really interesting. Obviously you mentioned that you are looking towards that education professor, getting to that kind of next stage kind of thing. And you mentioned the pedagogic research is quite important for that. Would you say that you wouldn't be able to get to that stage if you just did that sort of [sector] [sub-discipline] research? Would you need to have that kind of pedagogic stuff as well?

##### Participant 34

It's one of those things, I mean, I've had the conversation with our subject leader, and the conversation we had was, if you could write a textbook, you'd be sorted. And you're kind of like, oh, do I really want to write a textbook? Haha. I don't want to do that, it sounds awful, which is hard to say to him because he has written a textbook. But actually, genuinely, it sounds awful. And I think what I'm hoping, I'm doing bits and pieces of other things. So I'm doing, for example, I'm doing a chapter in one textbook, and I'm going to be an editor on an edited volume, and I'm doing those sorts of things. I do quite a bit for the profession as well. So I would be an examiner for one of the professional bodies and then I teach for another. And there's a third body that I do material stuff for. So I'm kind of hoping that all counts towards it as well. So I think what I have is, I probably have bits and pieces, but I'm going to need to tell a good story, if you know what I mean. Because the conversation that we've had over the years is, you look too much like a lecturer, and it could be, there is a potential that it could hurt you and they could kind of say, well, this person should be, why is this person not on the lecturer track? When actually, quite frankly, well because I tried to be on the lecturer track and you tried to put me on a three year probation. So I think there's a wee bit of that. I mean, I would not want to be on the lecturer track. I'm really quite happy that this has worked out the way it has, because it means I can do the research that I want with who I want, and I don't have to worry about funding. That, to me, is the biggest benefit of being on the education track, not having to go for funding, because I was involved in one or two grants at various times. And to see the amount of admin and hassle associated with all that, plus the chances of actually getting any of it - nightmare. And my research doesn't need a lot of money anyway. It's not the sort of thing where, you know, some research lends itself more to getting funding than others. And mine doesn't. If you handed me 50 grand I wouldn't know what to do with it.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. Another thing I wanted to ask, which I guess is another kind of part of the job, and you sort of picked up on this in my information sheet, the impact side of things. And I know that impact in the kind of really formal aspect is impact case studies, which obviously, as a non REF returnable member of staff, you wouldn't have involvement with that?

##### Participant 34

But I could.

##### Researcher

You could?

##### Participant 34

There's a REF impact case study in this school on [sector], and I could be part of it. And I'm not. Which is very interesting. So all of my research is on [sector], I do work with, one of our members is a member of the [committee], which is the [standard] for [sector], and I'm an engagement partner to that process as well. And I've done quite a lot in that space. All of the stuff that I do in the [sector] would fit into that. And just literally, it's like I don't exist. I'm not in that impact case study at all. Which is interesting.

##### Researcher

Is that because you're not allowed to be because of your role?

##### Participant 34

Yeah, I mean, I'm not sure where that has come from. I think that is an internal university politic. It's a strange thing, whether they've taken it, they've certainly taken a blanket view that education lecturers don't need to be returned and don't need to make any returns to it and all this sort of thing. So I don't know. Don't get me wrong, we're not talking about loads of papers here. There's much stronger people here than I would be. So maybe, they probably don't need it, but I did think it was interesting not to be included.

##### Researcher

That is interesting. And in terms of impact in general, impact, I guess, can take a lot of different definitions. I guess what I want to ask is where does kind of impact come into your job, obviously, mainly as an educator, I would assume that your main impact would be impact through education - is there an emphasis put on that kind of thing in the business school? And for you? In terms of having that actual focus on impact, really thinking about it and that kind of thing.

##### Participant 34

A short answer? No. But your question has prompted me to maybe tell you something else you might be interested in. One of our, the school has been going through a bit of a kind of navel-gazing, we're going for Triple Crown accreditation. So one of the things that we've been looking at is about our impact into the local community. Okay. Because obviously, [university] in [city] is a big fish in a small pond. The business school is in an area of very, let's say, interesting history and interesting present. And in an area of very severe deprivation, very low productivity. And the things that they would say about a lot of the UK are magnified in [region]. And one of the things is about the impact that the school can have on the community. So actually, out of interest, the [governmental department] has just sponsored a range of places on our exec education programmes. So funny, I run a course called [course], and I've got ten funded places coming into my March cohort and another ten into May. And I thought that was a really interesting bit of impact for the school. When I saw it, I thought, wow, there's us ticking a box somewhere. But actually I thought, well, what a good wider impact, because those courses are, you know, that's a two day course and it's £1,200 normally for somebody to join. And there's somebody who's going to be able to come onto that course and it's around people whose careers have been impacted by the pandemic. So if they've been furloughed or if they've been made redundant, they can come on and kind of do that. And there's my course and there's a whole bundle of others that are involved in that. And I actually thought that was a very interesting societal impact beyond the norm that we would expect, because I think a lot of our impact is probably, we are impacted by the profession, but also we impact on the profession. I think it's probably more the profession impact on us. But actually, I suppose we would like to think that we have a bit of a line there as well in terms of what good practice is and things like that as well, and pushing things in terms of, I think we're probably stronger on teaching ethics and things like that than I think the profession would be. You know, they do lip service to it, but doesn't everybody? You know, so there are things like that, those sorts of impacts, I think might be probably where we are. Not an awesome answer to that question. But I just thought it might be something that is interesting.

##### Researcher

That is interesting. And I know you've done some stuff with [governmental department] I read on your page. Do you see that as kind of like an impact activity?

##### Participant 34

Oh, it absolutely is. Yeah. So that would have been part of the case study. That would have been part of the impact case study. Yeah. Absolutely. So the [government department] is one of the partners within the creation of this statement of recommended practice for [committee]. [Committee] for [organisations] is about, yes, it's about [topic], but actually, it's much, much broader than that. It's a very unusual standard because it has a lot of additional requirements of it as well. And it's quite an influential standard. It's quite an influential standard worldwide, actually, as well. It's quite often held up as an example. And I'm part of the, they have a committee of I think, something like ten or fifteen people who ultimately make the decisions, but outside of that, they then created, like, eight subcommittees, and I'm on one of those subcommittees that feed into that process. So, yes, that would have absolutely been part of the impact too.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting in terms of impact and that kind of thing. I guess I want to know why you would choose to kind of engage in that activity. Is that something that is personally important to you? Or is that something that would be expected of you, or is that something that you think would be beneficial to your future sort of career trajectory and achieving your goals?

##### Participant 34

There are complex motivations there. I suppose, interest, yes. I would also like to potentially think about in the future, I'd like to be on the main committee. I think, so, I'm seeing this as a bit of a stepping stone into the main committee. As it is at the moment, I don't think it's particularly of huge benefit to me, and it's not a huge imposition either in fairness. But actually being on the main committee would be something quite impactful, and it's possibly something that might maintain that impact case study going forward for the school. Because, yeah, it'd be interesting to see if I'm still not returnable if I'm doing that, haha. That may depend on personalities and when people retire and things like that, because actually, the person who's sitting on the committee has actually just retired, was an emeritus and has now retired fully. So that might be interesting to see where that goes in the next few months. It is also interesting, I have to say, I work with quite a lot of people in the [sector]. I think it's nice to be part of that process. It's nice to give back. It's nice to be involved, actually. I write a lot now about, not just about [discipline], but actually the regulation around [discipline]. So there's an interest. It probably opens doors from a research point of view, but it opens doors from a research point of view not into the avenue that I need to go, but into the avenue that I'm interested in. So I suppose there's a bit of that. There's a bit of kudos with it as well. I think there's a wee bit of, it's nice to say you're involved in that.

##### Researcher

Yeah. Okay. Yeah. That's really interesting. I think that is probably the end of my questioning. We've covered sort of all the topics I would want to talk about, so I won't take up any more of your time. But yeah, I really appreciate your honesty. It's been a very interesting interview. I've really enjoyed hearing about your experiences and everything.

##### Participant 34

Thank you very much. And, listen, all the very best for the PhD.

##### Researcher

Thank you.

##### Participant 34

Yeah. It's lovely to do something through interviews, though, as opposed to the kind of crunching the numbers kind of stuff. I do a lot of interviews myself. That's why I always say yes when somebody asks. Well, within reason, haha.

##### Researcher

That's interesting because I think I would automatically kind of assume a [discipline] academic would do research with numbers almost exclusively. But that's interesting to know that you still do interviews as well.

##### Participant 34

Well, funny, a lot of us do that, actually, because a lot of our work is kind of either in the not for profit or the public sector. And actually a lot of what we do is probably more focused on the motivations of what and why. So I do a lot of content analysis stuff and then sort of interviews around that. But especially in the [topic] stuff, yeah, it's all interviews now.

##### Researcher

That's very interesting.

##### Participant 34

Listen, all the very best and good luck. And I'll hopefully see, maybe I'll see you at a conference in the not too distant future.

##### Researcher

Yeah, maybe. Thank you very much. And thank you for your time. And best of luck with everything. And I hope you will be an education professor in the very near future. I'm sure you will.

##### Participant 34

Haha, thanks very much. We'll not hold our breath, but sure, you never know, haha. Take care. Bye.

##### Researcher

Take care. Bye.