##### Researcher

So, the first thing I want to ask is obviously I've had a look at your profile. So I do know a bit about you, but I guess kind of in your own words, can you tell me about your background in terms of your kind of career to date and also your current role, please?

##### Participant 35

So my current role, I'm a [role] in [sub-discipline] at [current institution], and how I got there... well, how far back do you want me to go?

##### Researcher

Going back to, I guess, your PhD and your route into academia.

##### Participant 35

Well both my parents are academics. So, and my mum, in particular, she looked like she had a nice job, because when I was a kid, she got to go travelling all the time. And I thought, that sounds cool. And then when I got to university, I liked studying and I was like, oh, well, I'll carry on studying. So I actually did my undergraduate at [current institution] in [alternative discipline]. And then I got really interested in a course that I was doing on [topic]. I wanted to study it further. So then I went to do an MRes because I also thought I'd be interested in a PhD. So I applied for an MRes, and I was fortunate at the time that there were scholarships as well, because the government had just realised that all of their [subject] experts were busy retiring and they hadn't invested in producing anymore. So there were some scholarships to do [subject], and as I'd already come from a similar background I kind of just moved and ended up looking at [a different area]. And it was two year master's, MRes. There I met the person who became my PhD supervisor. He supervised my MRes dissertation, and he was very encouraging. And I applied for two scholarships to do a PhD, and I got one from [MRes and PhD institution] so I stayed there for my PhD, and it was that at that point that I shifted to [current discipline], because what I'd been studying in my master's dissertation, I was really interested in trust between businesses and how that was impacted by [context]. And that's what I applied for my PhD for. But when I started, my supervisor was like, oh, I've got this colleague at [another university] who would like to do this project on [topic]. And I was like, well, you know, it's still in the same area, so why not? So I shifted into [current discipline], which was a very good move. So he guided me well, given that it was an expanding field and there are plenty of jobs because every university, when I got on the market, was suddenly wanting [current discipline] lecturers. So that was a good move. Yeah. So that's how I got into [current discipline]. It wasn't that I was particularly interested in it myself. But the nice thing about it is that it's a field which is very varied, so everyone comes from different, it's a multidisciplinary field. And I've always come from multidisciplinary backgrounds. And I like that about it. And you can basically study what you want to study within the field of [current discipline]. So it's quite broad. And in terms of then getting onto teaching it, I didn't actually teach it until I got my first job at [previous institution]. And yeah, I got that job, so when I was finishing off my PhD, I went and did an internship at [intergovernmental organisation] for six months in [foreign city] because I wasn't sure whether I really did want to be in academia or if I wanted to do more policy work. But I learnt from that experience that policy work wasn't for me because I didn't like the, it felt really rushed, and the product wasn't very good at the end, it didn't seem thorough enough. And then you were pushed around by politics. So I decided I preferred academia where I could actually have more control over what I'm doing. So when I was there, my supervisor, he had moved to [MRes and PhD institution] to [previous institution], and they had a position open, which he forwarded to me. And I applied just because I thought, well, I need to get experience on the job market. I didn't really think I would get it. I really didn't. I had no idea. And then I went to the interview, and that was very nerve wracking, and because he was the head of the department there, my supervisor, when he phoned me up on the train, I thought he was going to phone me up to commiserate and say, oh, you haven't got the job. And he offered me the job, and I couldn't quite believe it because I hadn't finished my PhD at that point. So I was really shocked. But I think they said the reason they went for me over some people who'd already got their PhDs and were more qualified was because they saw that I had greater future research potential, because I'd already published and got an article accepted by that point. And I think the competition wasn't so high because it was just a two year fixed post at that point, because it was for a, covering a professor who'd got an [funding body] scholarship. So it wasn't for a full time fixed permanent contract. It was just two years. So I started at [previous institution], and that's when I started teaching [current discipline]. And that's another thing that I actually do really like about [current discipline]. It's a really nice discipline to teach because it's something that actually you're teaching students skills that are useful, not just for business, but generally, I think you're teaching them kind of empowering skills and attitudes, and it's nice to see. And because it's quite active type learning, it's really nice to see how students flourish through the different exercises and tasks that you give them. So, yeah, [current discipline] has been really good. And then after a year and a half, my supervisor and boss, he managed to get me onto a permanent contract at [previous institution]. So I was there for four years. And then the reason I left there was just because everybody else started leaving. So, two of my really close colleagues who I worked with most of the time were leaving. And I just thought, I didn't really want to... but then I saw the job at [current institution], and I'd lived in [current city] the whole time because I never actually wanted to move to [previous institution's city]. And I thought it would be a bit easier if I'm just based in [current city] and I have a job at [current city]. So I applied to the [current institution] job. And, yeah, I was really happy to get it just because it simplifies life, actually living in the place where you work. And one of my colleagues from [previous institution], she'd got a job at [current institution] already. So it was nice to be kind of moving with her. And it was a new, they were just setting up [current discipline] at the business school here because they hadn't, this was the first time... they had a few undergraduate [current discipline] courses, but they were setting up a new master's. And so this is why they were hiring people. And because the business school a new as kind of a faculty and has been expanding, they've been growing quite rapidly. So that's how I ended up at here.

##### Researcher

Back where it all started.

##### Participant 35

Yeah, exactly. I think that might have helped in the interview. There was one other candidate... because they did this, our head of group at the time was an American, and he did this American approach where you meet all the other candidates at lunch, which you don't normally get in British universities. But I understand is the norm in America. And it was just really awkward. I was just like, oh, this is awful. And I clocked the one candidate who I thought was like the real competition. He was one of these ones who'd been in America, he was a very smooth operator around the room. And then I looked at his profile. Fortunately, I was first for the interview. Afterwards I looked at his profile and I was like, ah, I'm not going to get the job. He's got better publications than me. And look how good he is, he ran a [business] as well - I've got no chance. But I think it was the [city] connection and the fact that I was quite passionate about [current institution]. That might've help.

##### Researcher

Yeah, definitely. That's a lot of really great information. You said about [previous institution], how everybody was leaving and you sort of then wanted to leave as well. Do you know why your colleagues and others in the school were wanting to move?

##### Participant 35

I would say part of it was the culture that was there because there were quite a few tensions because we had a dean who came from... I liked him a lot, but he came from [industry]. So he came from outside academia. He had done a PhD and he taught at [a foreign university] back in the 70s. But then he'd gone into [industry] and this was kind of like I guess his retirement project. And he put up, I think, quite a few people's backs, particularly with the professors, because there were a number of really prominent professors. Like the professor who I was hired to replace for teaching on the [grant], he also left after, halfway through his [grant] to go to [another university], because, partly, I think, power dynamics. Because he'd been the previous dean. And at that period, it wasn't very, like, when I started [previous institution], it was really great. And it's a very nice community. And I enjoyed all my colleagues. But then about one and a half years in, they decided that they needed to do a reorganisation to kind of make things more efficient. And I could see the rationale for it because they were reorganising the administrative side. And it was very funnily organised because you had complete separation of undergraduate and postgraduate, complete separation. So there were some roles that were duplicated. And you thought, why are you duplicating these things? And then they followed completely different processes. So there was some point to it. But the way that it was done was really, it made you feel like you weren't worth, that the university didn't care about you as their employee. Not that I was affected, obviously, because I was an academic. But they basically, the way that they announced to the administrative staff the restructuring was that they sent them round an organogram with a traffic light system of red if your post was to be culled, amber if they weren't sure and green, you're okay. And they hadn't even gone around and asked people what they were actually doing in their jobs. So they hadn't even got a proper understanding of the organisational processes. So it was a really nasty period because we rely so much on the admin side of things. And they're part of the kind of team and the atmosphere. And it didn't feel very nice. I always got on with him very well because he really appreciated [current discipline]. So I never personally felt that our department was in any way threatened by him. Also, my boss was very good at the politics at [previous institution], haha, but it wasn't a nice atmosphere to feel like... I think universities rely so much on goodwill because we do so much more than our job roles, and that made you feel like it wasn't returned. And actually, that was another thing, when I was leaving. I think another problem at [previous institution] was that, so, we had the dean who wasn't really an academic, and then all of the vice deans that came along or got promoted into vice deans, the people who wanted to be vice deans, basically were the people from the teaching fellow track, because they didn't have any other option for promotion. And so you had everyone who was sort of in management coming from business and not coming from the academic side of things and not really properly understanding all the time what it is to be an academic. So one of the vice deans got this bee in their bonnet about how we should be in our offices from nine to five, and why weren't people on campus? You're like, it's a university? How are we ever going to think if we're always on campus and students are knocking on our doors all the time? So he started writing these emails and kind of threatening that he'd come around checking in the offices. And I just thought, I don't know, he seemed to be trying to push the dean to make... oh, there was an email that was sent around saying that we should be in from nine to five, and at that point I was like, well, I'm living in [another city], I'm not coming in nine to five. I don't think this is reasonable anyway. So that was another sort of thing to think, the culture wasn't quite what I wanted it to be.

##### Researcher

Yeah, that's very interesting, actually.

##### Participant 35

And some of the colleagues who left, I think they were a tight knit group. And I think if you annoy the professor who leaves one university, offers another one a really nice cushy deal where you don't have to do so much teaching, here you go. I think that becomes, they get their little fiefdoms. I think what happens quite a lot, though, is they then sometimes move back. Because what we have is going between [previous institution] and [nearby universities], there is like a ping pong. I think the other thing is as well, it's the best way to get a pay rise, because you don't get them internally. Especially once you've gone up the points system. But when you move universities, you normally get to jump several points and get a better salary.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. So obviously coming from a very sort of more social science background I guess, kind of thing. And you explained why you moved into [current discipline], it was sort of like an opportunity that arose. What I want to know is, I guess, coming from that kind of more social science background, did you ever envisage that you would actually end up in a business school?

##### Participant 35

Never, never, ever, ever. And when I was at [current institution] as an undergraduate student as well, I was like, I don't want to go into business. The one thing I do not want to do is to go into business. So the thought of ending up as an academic in a business school is quite funny. However, I think business schools are changing, and [current institution], actually, I like going here because it's much more academic focused and most people do have a social science basis. So they're not business, business. They kind of come from another discipline and then move into business. And also there's much more emphasis on the, [current institution] has this strategy and their sort of vision is that they want to be a university that's actually doing good in the world. So they've got a tagline. And I actually do think they try and follow through on it. Like, I don't think it's just marketing and you can see it in the way that as a business school, we're developing. It's not just about business and profit and growth. It's about how can we be a positive force for society as a whole? And so I think that was my, when I was younger, I didn't see business in that way. Whereas I think there's been a shift in how business also thinks of itself, and that the business school is part of that shift, too.

##### Researcher

Yeah, definitely. That's really interesting. So in terms of what you're doing at the moment, then, in your current post, what are the kind of expectations of you? Obviously an academic job can be very varied, you've got your teaching, you've got your research, you've got admin. I guess a bit of a two parter question, A, what element of sort of an academic career was it that drew you in that sort of you were passionate about initially, and B, at the moment, what sort of thing are you kind of doing at the moment in terms of admin, teaching and research? And what are the kind of responsibilities that you have?

##### Participant 35

Well, I think what drew me in is that I like the mix. I like both the research side and I like the teaching element. I like the fact you get to do both of these things. I've always actually liked kind of teaching. I remember my first year of my undergraduate I spent the summer in [European country] teaching English. I've always enjoyed that part of it, but I do like the research side of things because that's the point where you actually get to sit down and think a bit more deeply about things. So it's a mix that's good for me. In terms of what I do now, our workload is basically that we're meant to be doing 40% teaching, 40% research, and then 20% sort of admin roles. I'm not quite sure what it was that I was meant to be doing at [previous institution] in terms of splits, but I can definitely say that at [current institution], I do much more teaching than I did at [previous institution], which is a bit strange because you don't normally expect that given that [previous institution] is a teaching focused university, much more than [current institution]. But yeah, my teaching load is much heavier at [current institution]. But it is for everyone. Professors as well. No one escapes the teaching. And what I'm teaching at the moment, we have a workload model where - we're currently shifting - but what it is currently based on is that we have 100 hours that we have to have, which is kind of equivalent of face to face contact with students. So it's 100 hours a year where we're doing something face to face with students. So lectures, tutorials, and there are some other admin roles that they then put into these equivalent hours. So for that, I run two of the master's optional modules on our master's in [subject], and that's with about 45, 50 students on each of them. And then I run our undergraduate [project module], which is like, they do a project which is looking at business issues surrounding sustainability and researching it at one that they've chosen in detail and providing some ideas for solutions - so that's for the undergrads. And then I have hours left over. So those hours I have left over I teach tutorials for another colleague's undergraduate module on [topic], so that's the teaching side of things. And the [project module] counts as my admin part because I'm coordinating it. And then in research, well, yeah, you are left to do what you want to do, basically. This term I haven't done very much research at all, because it's my very intense teaching term. And with moving online, it has made it much worse than normal. So currently my hours are kind of like nine to nine, just trying to deal with teaching related stuff. But yeah, research, last year I was fortunate enough to win a research grant in collaboration with researchers at [another university] and the [foreign university]. And it is from [research council] so it's on the [hard science] side things. Because, I have a friend who, we became friends because we did our MRes together at [university], and she's gone on and done a PhD and now is a researcher in [another discipline]. We were talking at the pub one evening and realised that there was actually quite a bit of overlap between our research because I'm interested in [topic] and she's interested in [similar topic]. So we actually saw that there was a good overlap in that in her area they could actually use some of the theories from my discipline to help understand how these organisations work. So we put in a joint bid and we bought in the [foreign university] because I have a colleague who I worked with quite closely on looking at [topic] and she was based in [foreign country], and she actually has colleagues there who were interested in [topic]. So we're doing a kind of comparative study of [topic] in the UK and in [foreign country] and what impact they can have on society and how they create this impact. So we've got a two and a half year funded project for that, which we just started in September. That's one of my major bits of research focus at the moment, and that's nice as well, because it's supposedly given me 20 hours off. But unfortunately, I didn't realise. No one told me that I could get this. In fact, I was told that I couldn't get this. And then I saw a document in December saying, oh, I should have got this, like, if you got a research grant, you can get time off. But at that point, I couldn't get a replacement for my teaching. So I lost my 20 hours this year, but I will get them next year.

##### Researcher

Okay.

##### Participant 35

And then in terms of other research, you end up having so many different research projects that you're doing papers that hang around and you wait until colleagues are available to work on them, or you have time to work on them. So I have a number of those, which I really need to finish, but it's difficult to find a time when we're all ready to be able to sit down and kind of finalise them.

##### Researcher

Okay. That's really interesting. You mentioned that things have got a bit more difficult since you've had to move online. Things have been a bit crazier. Can you tell me a bit more about that in terms of what you mean by things becoming a bit more difficult?

##### Participant 35

Well, because, so, at the beginning, like all universities in the UK, they didn't want to say they were going fully online, and they sort of said they were doing half and half, which doesn't make it particularly easy for planning, because then you have to think, well, how will this work in an online tutorial? And how will this work in a face to face tutorial? I mean, I think the business school at [current institution] was quite far forward in planning, and they came out with quite a developed plan of how we would do our blended learning back in June last year. But they decided that the way that we would do teaching, we've got a very good vice dean of education who really wants to promote new practices and move us into the 21st century. She's very good, and she does actually consult people, and she brings everyone on board. But they've used this as an opportunity to try and push us into creating things that could be used later. So we are doing video recordings and we've got, our [virtual learning environment] pages have been redesigned. So our online learning environment has been redesigned to make it look nicer for the students. And it does look so much nicer. And I agree that they can actually follow things much better, but it's so hard as an academic because to fill it out, I think I spend about 4 hours a week clicking, just to put all the information on it. And yeah, doing these videos, I mean, there are only three videos, which are 20 minutes long, so it's less than the amount of time you spend in a lecture. But the fact that you don't have the students there and you can't see what they're doing, then we have to design an activity for afterwards, you have to really think through everything in so much more detail because there's so much more ability for students to not understand because you're not there to be able to catch that they haven't understood. And then they can't ask you a question. So it takes a lot of planning and thinking through how does this all work? And how do these integrate with each other? And there's lots of things that, when you're in a classroom, just happen naturally and you can see and you can communicate and you don't need to spend ten minutes worrying about how am I going to communicate this thing and then writing stuff. Also, with lectures, when you're at in person lectures, you go, you communicate with students, you see whether they've understood or not, whether you need to give more information or not. You can do all your announcements and they have things to say to you, they say them to you there. Whereas online we have tutorials, so they see me once a week for tutorials. But there's more email communication and announcements and thinking about all of these kind of things, which just takes, again, more time. There's lots of little bitty things that, you can't really have any time for thinking, especially because I'm currently running two and a half modules. Because I'm doing half the [project module] and my two master's modules. Yeah. And then the other thing I think that's been more difficult is that they reduce the class sizes. So I'm teaching more tutorials than I would because the student numbers are smaller, and they did that because they thought we were going to be moving back to face to face teaching and timetabling decided they couldn't do two timetables. So I got one class with five students in it because they were the ones that wanted to be online all the time, and the other ones wanted to come in. And I'm just like, well, it's quite a nice experience. They're all very dedicated students, and we have a nice conversation. So it's nice in that respect. But in terms of the use of my time, there's just all of these little compounding factors that are stealing bits of your time. I don't think they realise to what extent this occurs. And then here, we have this personal tutoring system, which they put forward as kind of their most important way for getting students to engage in catching problems and things like that. I've got 22 personal tutees who I'm meant to have, for the undergrads, I'm meant to have, like, four meetings a year with them. And the postgrads it's just two meetings a year. And then because of online and the students being disconnected and the problems that they're facing, we, last term they asked us to do all of these, like weekly clinics and sort of just sit there for an hour waiting for students to turn up. I mean, students don't turn up because they don't really have, they don't know what they want to say to you anyway. So it was a bit of a waste of time, but, yeah, I think this term... they did a survey at the end of it, the student experience team who are involved in that. And they asked us academics what we thought about it, and I imagine that they must have got a lot of feedback saying that we can't cope and this is a bit of a waste of time, because they've been a bit less heavy handed this term with our time. Yeah, those are the problems with teaching online.

##### Researcher

And something you mentioned. You said you're working like nine to nine, crazy hours dedicated to this move to online teaching. You said this is your more teaching intensive term. So that would be your focus anyway. But it seems like it's kind of been amplified a bit.

##### Participant 35

Yes.

##### Researcher

In a normal kind of situation, do you think you would be having more time to do some research on the side? Have you had to kind of put that to the side a little bit?

##### Participant 35

Yeah. Normally on the teaching... also, because now I'm in my third year, I've taught these modules three times. And by the time you get to the third year, everything's kind of down pat. You don't have to do so much prep. But this has felt like starting again from scratch, you know, like this is a new module and the amount of effort that's had to go into it. So last year I managed to get a good day and a half, I think, of research, especially because they also, they put all of our... my teaching was condensed into two days. So I'd probably spent three days focused on the teaching side of things and then... maybe a bit more because you've got some admin things, but yeah, I'd have more time to actually, I could actually dedicate a day and say, this is my research day. Whereas currently, the only way that I can not work in the evening is if I work at the weekend for doing teaching stuff. So, yeah, there's very little room for putting research in.

##### Researcher

Okay. Yeah, that's interesting. So I want to talk a little bit more about research and the kind of expectations in that area. So I guess in terms of what you're supposed to achieve with your research, what are the kind of expectations on you in terms of publications?

##### Participant 35

Four star ABS list journal articles, haha.

##### Researcher

Haha, is that the sort of main thing?

##### Participant 35

Yeah, that's the main thing that they like to tell us all the time. There is a bit of confusion on this. In fact, I can probably send you if you'd like, I can send you what the requirements are for our role.

##### Researcher

Yeah. That'd be really interesting.

##### Participant 35

When I started here, when I got the job, they told me I had a two year probation period, and then when I got my contract, it only had one year on it. So I was like, okay. And my mentor told me not to bother saying that I'd got one year, just go with it and try for one year. But the probation period is quite stressful, and it's not just me, it's my colleagues who are also on probation - I'm no longer on probation, but my colleagues who are on probation still - many of them are three years because this is their first academic position as a lecturer. They really emphasise that in this time, in two years, three years, you're meant to have published a four star ABS level article. Which is, I mean... not that you had it previously, but it has to be a new one, which is a bit ridiculous when you start looking at the timescales for publishing. If you haven't got one that's already nearly there, you're not going to achieve it in that period. And so this was kind of the messaging that was coming out from meetings. But when you read what the requirements were, it looked like they were making a bit of a leap in their interpretation, because written down, it says you have to be publishing at the level of three to four star ABS. So it was kind of inclusive of level three, level four, level four star journals in how it's written. But whenever they were talking about it in presentations or in meetings and things, they would twist it to being this means you should be aiming at, in the long run, having three to four four star ones. And you're like, well, that's not actually what is written down. So it was a bit stressful. But my mentor, who's a professor, she said to me, oh, you don't need to worry, because I looked around and I don't think people are achieving at that level, so don't stress about it. But it's difficult not to stress about it when that's the messaging that you're getting all of the time. Even if, you know, she said that to me, I'm like, well, because she came from [previous institution] too, I'm like, well, you're new here, so perhaps you don't know? So, yeah, that's quite stressful, because also... I haven't cracked that yet. I haven't got a four star publication yet. And it's not even as though... you know, there's a lot of luck in it. It's not just about talent and hard work. It's also about who do you get as your reviewers and who is your editor? And do they take a dislike to what you're doing? And there is definitely, once you've got your name out there and you're a professor, you have it easier. You can see from some of the things that get published. It's not the meritocracy that it sort of claims to be, I don't think, exactly. So yeah, it was a bit stressful, but thankfully it was just talk. So I managed to pass my probation without any problems. And they, because they've been getting bad NSS scores - [current institution] doesn't do very well with NSS scores because they haven't really put, until recently, they didn't put much emphasis on teaching, it was very much a research focus - so now you're judged on a more balanced scorecard. You have to achieve in the research. But you also need to be a good teacher. So I had very good student reviews, and I'd also applied for quite a bit of funding and made some good contacts with [stakeholders] and things like that. So there's things on the other side in terms of thinking about impact and being part of the community at [current institution], which are also things that they do pay attention to. But, yes, the research is definitely, they're always kind of pushing for getting to these top level journals.

##### Researcher

And from your experience and your perspective, why do you think that is the case? Why do you think so much emphasis is put on these four star journals, as opposed to teaching metrics? Or taking up leadership roles? Why do you think that is the case?

##### Participant 35

I think because [current institution] is, like, an academic focused, it is a research focused university. And I think there's a perception in the business school that other faculties here see us as not being as good at research as them. And I think there's also the kind of, you know, we're a new business school. So it's trying to be the best at all of these things. But [current institution], I think, does have quite a culture of being focused on research. And my understanding, more from corridor chat, is that here, the medical sciences are the dominant players. They're the dominant ones. And I think the business school, especially as it's a new faculty, is still trying to prove itself. So it's part of that. And wanting to do well in the REF. And just the fact generally in the UK university sector there is this real, well, I think one of the major problems is more the fact that it's so quantified. That they are all obsessed about metrics. And metrics don't capture everything. I guess they want to be able... also, the other thing is, the reason for the obsession with metrics, is they do try to be kind of fair to people, and it's difficult unless you have ways to compare people, to be equitable in how you're treating people. So there's a variety of different reasons, I think.

##### Researcher

Yeah, that's really interesting. Thank you. So the next thing I want to talk about is the impact side of things. So you actually just mentioned there about the kind of obsession with metrics, and of course you have the REF impact case studies. Also, earlier, you talked about empowering students and that kind of skills growth, and that in itself could maybe be an impact. And then another thing you mentioned was the strategy for [current institution], they're trying to move towards societal impact. So based off of all of that and what we've spoken about so far in terms of those kind of impact oriented activities, what is the kind of, I guess, sort of institutional attitude to impact? Is it something that sort of comes into your day to day expectations and activities? Is it something that you're supposed to be aware of and thinking about?

##### Participant 35

Yeah, it's thought about in all of those different forms of impact. I mean, I think you have to as a university because there are metrics for all of these forms of impact. But there is the broader facts of [current institution] trying to connect with wider society and the vision as well. In our requirements for the role and what they expect of the different bits of the role, there's one part which is about impact, which I think is quite normal now in universities, to have that, because it was there at [previous institution] too. At [current institution], there isn't an expectation that everyone's going to be doing all types of impact because obviously this is one of the challenges. As an academic, there's just too many things that you maybe ought to be doing, but you can't actually do them all because you're just one human being. So I don't feel like there's... there's a lot of... we have a research impact office support officer who helps you with thinking through impact in your research. Not the academic side of impact, but the kind of societal side of impact. She was a bit more visible last year because of the REF coming up and the collecting of impact case studies. But they do a lot of events as well like getting speakers to talk about different aspects of impact and how you can build impact. There's quite a bit of support. And then we have a [research council] impact accelerator fund at [current institution]. So there's always ads about that going, "do you want to apply for money for doing this?" So in terms of that, research then having impact on society, it is seen as definitely a good thing, but I wouldn't say it's seen as though we're all expected to do it, which seems realistic to me, because obviously you need to have the research there first to then be able to deliver any impact. And for me, that's also one of the things that is really great about this research project that I've got with the [research partners], because we've actually designed impact into it. And my friend at [partner institution], she's actually got a lot of experience in doing cocreation projects with communities. So our research is going to feed into that at the end of it so that we should have a link between our research and impact. But I think that kind of impact is challenging because it's such a long lead up. Because you have to really understand and do the research before you can then go and say, well, I have some findings that might be able to have impact. So I think it's also, and the thing that [current institution] is also quite good at is just fostering connections with, or encouraging us to foster connections. I think that's a way that you can then actually build impact, because if you're connected in areas where you might potentially have something of use, then you can learn, what do people in that area and organisations in that area need? And how can you then build your research to help supply that? But, yeah, it's a longer term strategy, in terms of kind of like moving away from the government REF impact. But the more engaging stakeholders, [current institution] does encourage that. And the business school does encourage that as well. So we have, like, a [local area] strategy of how can we be more engaged with the communities in [local area]? So, for example, recently I wrote a piece for [news outlet] with a colleague here, which is talking about [topics]. And from that, a local [entrepreneur] got in touch with me because he was interested because he does [activity]. And so we were talking and I think from that we'll probably do something where our students can mentor [his beneficiaries] who are developing entrepreneurship projects. And I just brought it to the attention of some people in the business school to say, would this be something they're interested in? And they are really interested in it because it deals with a lot of... because they're interested in actually connecting to the wider community, but also because he's dealing with [stakeholder group] from disadvantaged backgrounds. And [current institution] is making lots of efforts to try and reach out to those backgrounds that are underrepresented here and don't necessarily have connections to universities. So [current institution] and the business school are doing quite a lot of outreach in that sense. And that kind of stuff is really encouraged. And we also have here, they've got a whole section devoted to service. So they actually have, part of the university, they have a group which is thinking about how we and the university's employees can sort of provide service to the world, to our local communities. And so as part of that, you're allowed to take two days off to do kind of volunteering and things like that. I don't think that really applies to academics because our holidays are kind of... you know, when you take a day off, it's more that it's harming you than necessarily... you've got your work, you have to get through it. So I think it applies more to the admin staff side, the professional service staff. But there's a lot of encouragement here for staff and students to engage in volunteering and service and see how they can actually have a positive impact on society outside of the university.

##### Researcher

Okay, that's really interesting. Thank you. We've only got a few minutes left, so I'll keep this to one final question. So obviously we've talked about a lot of different things, a lot of different aspects of your kind of job, a lot of different aspects of the business school, impact, research, teaching, admin, all these different kind of hats that you have to wear as an academic in the business school. I would be interested to know what your kind of future ambitions are in terms of where you would like to get to in terms of a future role and perhaps if you would be interested in staying where you are or moving on or whatever in terms of where you want to get to? And do you kind of have a strategy in mind of how you would get there? What kind of things, out of all the stuff we've spoken about, what you would perhaps need to prioritise and really think about? Or, you know, perhaps you may not have so much of a strategy, maybe you think you'll just take things as they come, more like a day to day kind of thing? What is your kind of stance on that?

##### Participant 35

Well, we're required to write five year strategies in our PDR review. Which I always find a bit difficult because I don't really know where you're going to be in five years. Also, I think the thing that's challenging for me, you know, I don't have any kids, but I'm at the stage where I either have kids or I don't have kids. So there's also personal life and how that fits in with academic life. Right now, I mean, when I was younger, I always thought, yeah, I want to go straight to, I want to climb the ladder and get to the top. Well, not the top, I don't want to go into management. But you know, become a professor as soon as you can. But actually I realised there's more to life than your job.

##### Researcher

Yeah.

##### Participant 35

And I think... I feel like there's a, in academia, there's kind of an expectation that your job is your life. And all the professors I see, they work all the time. Working in the weekends for them is the norm. My supervisor, he always gets me to send him things for Saturday morning because he's going to focus on things on Saturday morning. And I'm not sure I want that for my life. Because I have other things that I enjoy in life too. I don't think I'm willing to put in the amount of time that other people do to really move up quickly. I think my strategy is to have more of a work life balance and just hit the targets that I need to, to be able to stay at [current institution], because it's a nice place. It was nice moving up from [previous institution] because the students are a much better quality. So teaching is more enjoyable because you get them to actually, they tell you things that you haven't thought about before, which is nice. And supervising dissertations is lovely because they actually come up with really interesting ideas, whereas at [previous institution] it was a pain because it was just getting them to understand, how do you write an essay, or how do you analyse something? And I do find that the research atmosphere is much better here. There's much more discussion of ideas. So I'd like to stay here and I'm a [local], I don't really want to leave [city]. In my future, I would see myself being at an equivalent institution, probably in the [city] area, but I don't see any need to move from [current institution] because it's a nice place to work. The reason to move, I guess, would be to get a better salary, because as I said earlier, you just stay on the increments, which are quite small when you stay within an organisation. But I'm fortunate enough that I've got somewhere to live and I don't need to worry too much. I'm on the property ladder, I can cope. So I don't have massive ambitions in terms of my salary. So I guess it's, yeah, in the long run, it would be nice to... I guess my ambitions are that... I still feel like I'm not quite settled in the research track. I need to get to that stage where I can produce those top level journal articles. I mean, that's more for hitting the points that I need at the university. But what I would really like to do, what I really like, is more the research that can actually lead to some impact on society and can be used and is useful. So that's what I'm trying to do with this funded research project that I've got looking at [topic], that's kind of shifting that way. And I'm hoping from that, that can build a good stream of research that sort of broadens out into community based enterprises and how we can help and support them more generally. And I guess in the long run I'll apply for promotions when I hit the points that I need in terms of research. But I'm not going to work all my weekends to achieve it.

##### Researcher

Yeah, absolutely. Okay. Great. Thank you. I don't want to keep you any longer, so I'm happy to leave it there. I think we've covered everything I wanted to talk about anyway. So unless there's anything at all you can think of based on what we've spoken about you that you think might be interesting or useful, then I'm happy to kind of end things there.

##### Participant 35

I guess, earlier, talking about [previous institution] and the culture there, I'd say one of the things that I love about [current institution] is that it is completely different in its culture. When they make organisational shifts and changes, they actually consult with us and they actually pay attention to what we say. For example, this year they were changing the workload model and they sent out this workload model, which suddenly had you getting points for your quality of research and you would get a certain number of hours depending on how many four star journal articles you'd published. And they asked for our feedback on it. And everyone kind of, I think most people were like, this is not going to work. Because the whole point of a workload model, it's not a performance management system. It's about workload management. And they actually paid attention to that and so scrapped that part of it. So it's nice to be in a place where you do actually feel valued and that your voice is listened to and that you have a voice. Whereas previously, I was at an institution where it didn't really feel like they cared what you thought.

##### Researcher

That's really interesting. Thank you for adding that. I appreciate that. So, yeah. In that case, I'll stop the recording now.