0:0:0.0 --> 0:0:1.970  
Shahenda Shehata  
I think the recording started now.

0:0:2.560 --> 0:0:5.590  
3  
I think so. It says transcription has started on my screen.

0:0:5.930 --> 0:0:26.0  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah. So it's all personal information, university, position, name. This information would not be collected and would not be part of the data, would not be revealed or shared with anyone to keep anonymity and confidentiality of my participants. So I would thank you so much for your time and accepting my invitation. I just. I'd like to know. I know you have experience in teaching in the UK, so I'd like to know how they evaluate the performance of the academic?

0:0:38.970 --> 0:0:49.760  
3  
You mean how do I how is the performance of the academic evaluated in the UK? Or how was my personal performance evaluated? There's a slight difference between the two.

0:0:50.170 --> 0:0:52.100  
Shahenda Shehata  
Uh, please. The two please.

0:0:52.160 --> 0:0:53.590  
3  
OK, well.

0:0:55.320 --> 0:0:57.990  
3  
You have evaluation evaluation so. Officially at Aston. So I worked for almost three years at Aston University in Birmingham. That's where I know you're supervisor from as well. While I've known, known her from before that time, but that's when we became direct colleagues.

0:1:13.120 --> 0:1:15.60  
3  
At the time at Aston. A great emphasis was placed on student evaluations as the main source of evaluation of teaching.

0:1:27.360 --> 0:1:33.430  
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And you basically did well, if you had at least a four on a 5 point scale. I never really cared that much about those evaluations. Because if you look at them too much and focus on them too much, they will only lead to a decrease in quality. So I mainly looked at how my interactions with the students went personally, and my own impressions of how they went and whether they could be improved and what could be improved. And I also occasionally checked with students whether they thought the module was still on track, whether they liked what I was doing, and on the session by session basis, and that interested me much more in terms of information than the student evaluation scores at the end. And I think by trying to interact with students, even if they are from different cultural backgrounds and of course you need time to establish a relationship when they are from different cultural backgrounds, they will tell you how things are going and whether you're going to slow, whether you're going to fast, whether they want more examples, less examples, more focused on some topics rather than another topics. So I always evaluated my own personal little evaluation of the module, always meant like that.

0:2:44.50 --> 0:2:57.470  
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And of course, I hoped that the overall scores all that five point scale would come out well as well, but that only was a secondary or tertiary measure for me to look at. Of course, we were also evaluated by the head of department. Who also only partially looked at the evaluation scores of the students and basically looked at how we felt at the session, went and she also taught. So she also saw some of the students herself, and she did some checking of her own. When she encountered the students. So that's how it went. So officially, we were evaluated all these five point scale. I did it on a on a session by session basis and I know that he had a department. Looked at teaching evaluations also through student interaction, and she did keep an eye. On the student evaluations, if they were really low, like below two, then something probably was a miss. An intervention was necessary, but she never really cares about whether it was a 3 1/2 or 4 or 4 1/2 or five.

0:4:4.510 --> 0:4:7.210  
Shahenda Shehata  
But how this affects the way of your teaching?

0:4:7.620 --> 0:4:12.980  
3  
Umm, you mean the official evaluation that that, that's not at all.

0:4:14.10 --> 0:4:14.390  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah.

0:4:14.70 --> 0:4:34.140  
3  
I it back in the day. So I've got 30 years of experience in teaching. Back in the day, yes, these scores really, really matter to me and I wanted to get a higher grade and a higher grade and even higher grade. And the 4.2 has to become a 4.3 has to become a 4.4 et cetera. The cable point where I thought I'm not gonna do this anymore. And I'm gonna do it the way I just mentioned. There are always a couple of spokespersons in a room who will tell you what the vibe and the group is, who will tell you how things are going well, always willing to engage and when they're engagement lessons or when they give you an unhappy face or when there's a lot of rumour, a lot of noise in a room, then you know that something is a mess and you can usually ask a group. There was one type of a group, which this was difficult but you can usually ask a group. How are things going? What do you want? And then you can change the session in the session while the session is running and that that to me is a much more fruitful approach and then satisfactory grades will come. Uh and I became teacher of the year and the last two years based on those scores at my current institution.

0:5:38.400 --> 0:5:38.860  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah.

0:5:39.120 --> 0:5:40.640  
3  
And I didn't care of a single bit. Umm but what I did know was that Sessions went well and that to me was the real award that that the student said hey, too bad that's that this module is over. So back. So there's a little bit of experience behind that. There's a burnout behind that as well at. But that was 50 years ago that I thought, well, I know I can teach. I know how to teach. Yes, I have to adapt to different cultural backgrounds. How do I adapt by engaging with the students? And there were always some students in the room who are willing to tell you once you've gotten to know them a little bit better, how things are going.

0:6:19.640 --> 0:6:32.100  
3  
What? What? They sense the vibe in the room is and then you can check whether that corresponds to yours and what you what you have to adapt. If I would ever get a grade of two. Even though I followed this approach, then I'm doing something wrong and then I would look at the forms. And learn from there. And apparently then people told me something different than the session. Then they entrusted to paper. And then I would probably have to change something then. There were likely afraid to tell me, or they only gave me socially desirable responses. Umm, but no at Aston things took a turn for the worse in my last couple of months, but I even said if you had a score lower than 4.9 on that five point scale, you should get a buddy who should correct your teaching. And I thought this was simply outrageous. It upped your teaching load. You have to participate in all the people's sessions. Who could bloody well teach and they had on the five. If you translated to a 10 point scale, they had to have over 9.

0:7:28.10 --> 0:7:28.360  
Shahenda Shehata  
Uh.

0:7:28.330 --> 0:7:28.920  
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Well. Not many teachers at that excellent. And it's not just your teeth when you're teaching also depends on the group on the history of the group. whether do you like the subject or not? that three or four or 4.5 or that five point scale says really little at a very high over level, it tells you something about how things went, but normally you know, as a teacher how things went. Unless you've totally misinterpreted or misunderstood the group but, with experience that is less likely to happen.

0:8:7.730 --> 0:8:21.90  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah, but what other ways do you follow to meet this requirements? Like you mentioned, you ask the students what their experience like. Are you asking them face to face within the session or yeah.

0:8:20.660 --> 0:8:32.770  
3  
Yes, some sometimes face to face. So when there when there is noise, sometimes the crowd is so big in the room that it will always be noise. And if the isolation in the room is subpar, you hear that noise. As a teacher. Then I would be tempted to ask the group and also it. It depends a little bit on the cultural background. In Asian group I would never ask. How are things going? Because they will say great or nothing or yes.

0:8:52.40 --> 0:9:1.490  
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So you really have to do that face to face and you do that after class or in the what do you what hours the one-on-one sessions you have to schedule. Once you've built a bond of trust with a students, then they're willing to tell you. But German students, for example, will tell you in class how things are going. Dutch students will tell you Spanish students will tell you Italian students will tell you. So most continental European students will tell you in class how things are going. Asian students won't African students a bit mixed. The South American students will tell you the Middle Eastern students mixed, but they will tell you.

0:9:38.530 --> 0:9:48.490  
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I had one student in one module. Uh was participating with her husband in the sessions and she always stepped forward during the intermission break to tell me how things were going. And I didn't have to do a thing. To do that, she noticed that I liked handling things that way and. Hence, she felt compelled to give her the feedback. So it depends on the background and the vibe in the group. But usually when there was a big row in a room, I will confront the group directly.

0:10:8.610 --> 0:10:13.190  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah. So I think Aston is the teaching focus, isn't it?

0:10:13.800 --> 0:10:17.260  
3  
They will happily deny this. They will happily deny this but between you and me, yes, it has been. It has turned into a teaching oriented university. That wasn't the case 25 years ago. I was attracted to student to ask him 25 years ago because it was a heavily research focused institution. Actually, it was one of the universities in the Netherlands that we looked at, no. So university in the Netherlands looked at Aston and Alice and Sheffield in a couple of other places. To check what they were doing and I can't deny that we occasionally copied what, what, what they were doing because we considered them to be frontrunners. But those days are long gone. And yes, Aston has now become certainly the accounting department a heavily teaching in the Business School at large and heavily teaching and fused university.

0:11:8.100 --> 0:11:14.150  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah, yeah. So do they apply like the REF or the TEF or?

0:11:13.960 --> 0:11:15.410  
3  
They apply both.

0:11:15.890 --> 0:11:27.360  
Shahenda Shehata  
Both of them. OK, so how do you see the other colleagues, the other academics within the UK universities are doing to meet the requirements of whether the TEF or the REF.

0:11:28.730 --> 0:11:31.90  
3  
Well, let me say the bylaws are struggling. And for many academics, I think it burden REF and TEF. But there was no escape from REF and TEF in the UK. So you simply have to adapt or go or go somewhere else fighting the system can get you somewhere or on your own little square centimetre, but it won't change the system itself, because you need a larger, larger group of people who offer pushback.

0:12:2.710 --> 0:12:3.0  
Shahenda Shehata  
Ah.

0:12:2.860 --> 0:12:6.270  
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And that's not the case. So you either succumb or you have to leave. But I think it would be a stretch to say that academics in the UK have no issues with REF and TEF. That focus on student evaluations has to do with, I think excessive ranking that is taking place in the UK when it comes to academic institutions, but also to ranking departments and even though people say we don't rank academics in the UK, we rank departments. You better believe that on the inside, inside universities it is cascaded down to individuals. People know management knows within the department who are the good teachers. Well, even though they only look at those information course that we just discussed. Or they know who who've got the greatest number of publications, and hence they grant you fewer or lesser a fewer or more favours. So even though it's a departmental analysis, departmental ranking that is made, it is cascaded down to individuals and so individuals are hit are impacted by REF and TEF. The publication standards are brutal in REF, especially for young academics. They are really brutal. I stem from a time that you were given time to develop your first three star publication. Let's not mention a four-star publication and all PhD students now have to prepare. Preferably a 3 star publication during or right after their PhD. Well, there's a steep learning curve there and not all students, and I would say the vast minority of students is able to do that during the PhD. So this rate race for three star publications in order to safeguard a contract.

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And to get a fixed position as a lecturer at a university is certainly going and going on, and this is REF induced. But some people need time to develop. Some people are like diesel engines, they need a bit of time to get started and a bit of time can cost a number of years, but they can still be of value to an institution as a teacher, as a colleague, as a somebody who fills the gaps that occur in the department when somebody falls ill or becomes pregnant or certainly leaves for another institution.

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And that is. The not. And that is not valued as much as it was before the advent of REF, and TEF. And TEF is together with the QS rankings. Leads to far too great an emphasis on what students want in curriculum. And. What is offered by universities is more and more seen as a commodity, and I wonder that it's what they are offering should be seen as commodities. So it's too much of what the what the client gets or what or what the customer wants the customer gets or what the client wants the client gets. Uh, and that has certainly led to a decrease in quality of UK based teaching programs, also in accounting across the UK and I've.

0:15:28.40 --> 0:15:29.460  
Shahenda Shehata  
How the quality decreased?

0:15:30.260 --> 0:15:33.810  
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Uh, easier exams, less content. Uh, less broad content. UMAA lot of practice, practice, practice of example exams which are very close. We aligned with the actual exam.

0:15:51.450 --> 0:16:22.220  
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Umm, so the example exam. Is it meant to be it? I've seen exams which are almost a carbon copy of the example exam that I've given and that's simply not the way it should go because you want how high pass rates because if you get high pass rates, you're student satisfaction rates will go up, means a higher place on the ranking. So it's really perverse system. And I'm not saying that measuring performance is bad, but the way it's organized, especially in the UK, is really perverse.

0:16:22.850 --> 0:16:23.120  
Shahenda Shehata  
Umm.

0:16:22.650 --> 0:16:24.950  
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And then you have government funding attached to that. Uh, and that's it puts you puts many universities on a downhill slope in terms of quality.

0:16:35.810 --> 0:16:46.760  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah. And for the research, do you have, like any experience with this part? Like, how do other academics or you personally do to meet these requirements of the REF?

0:16:48.350 --> 0:16:49.500  
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I always. Thought it was funny when I came to the UK. Umm, I was a professor in the Netherlands and the publication standards in the Netherlands are different than the ones set forth by the REF. And I met all Dutch standards to be a professor. I came to the UK and they said, well, you don't have, you don't hit all the REF targets. And I'm very easy going about these things. So I said well, then you don't appoint me. And I don't care. I'm happy with my job in the Netherlands, but I like this group and I would like to come and they found that strange answer. But if you look at my pipeline, you will see that I will get you your publications within the next three years. And I will meet REF. And I met him a year later. Uh, I had two additional publications. I needed one more. I had that and in the. So I had five publications 3 star in in the three years I was in the UK and I only needed one to hit the REF target so they were happy.

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But they really primarily look, so I think somebody put in a good word for me in order to be shortlisted, but they really only looked at publications say, OK, this person has such and such amount of three stars, two stars, funding, they like funding, no funding is no appointments or you get lower on the pecking order. **So it's really measure driven and you don't look at somebody's abilities anymore. You think that around output is a direct reflection, a direct representation of somebody's abilities**, and sometimes it isn't, especially for younger researchers. And that's another reason why I think that the REF is so brutal for especially younger academics.

0:18:37.490 --> 0:18:37.830  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah.

0:18:38.590 --> 0:19:9.700  
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How did REF inform peoples research activities? Well, there was a huge emphasis on three star publications in accounting because we have a lot of value. Now there are a lot of three star journals out there, fewer 4 star journals, and those four-star journals hardly ever published interpretive research. And the department at Aston was a heavily interpretive research focused department at the time. As you already indicated, that's now become a teaching focused department, but at the time. 2017 It wasn't interpretive research. Devoted department, one of so 20 years ago, you had many of these departments in the UK, Aston at that time to 17, was one of the few remaining departments left, although there were individual researchers spread across the UK focusing on interpretive research departments. That said, we are focusing on this. We're far in between at the time already.

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So they had to hit because the four star journals usually did not appreciate a slight changes come, but they usually didn't appreciate the interpretive research they had to aim for three star journals, so everybody was hitting three star journals at the time with their research also to safeguard their contract to satisfy conditions of that contract to safeguard a promotion, to safeguard that possibility, to go somebody, somewhere else.

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3  
In case they thought Aston wasn't a good fit anymore, so you really saw that and people loosened up. Also quite literally, once they had gotten that three star publication had hit the target, had met whatever requirements people have put in front of them, and then they did the research, they really wanted, slightly exaggerating, they started doing researching the topics that they wanted. They didn't really care where these publications ended up if they ended up in a three star journal, great if it ended up in a two star publication or one star publication. Fine as well because this was the research that was really close to their heart and as long as it got out there, it was fine. So there wasn't this tension to hit the three star publication or next number of three star publication target always and that leads to stress. That led to individualization. So less Boom rat ship, less cooperation between individuals, while that such collaboration could have been fruitful.

0:21:30.270 --> 0:21:31.600  
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Uh, so? If I collaborate with you on a 3 star publication. And then you and I both have a 3 star publication, but I if I write it on my own I have a 3 star publication and I have a three star publication advantage over you. If you don't manage to write your own 3 star publication in that same period of time, so there was this competition element who's going to be promoted first? Playing a role in the background, hampering collaboration?

0:22:3.290 --> 0:22:10.340  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah, but what do you think the reasons for moving from a research to teaching focus within the department? At the uni.

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3  
money. The only money? accounting and you see that happening even in in Russell Group institutions, the change is coming and that will universities before Aston, who followed the same path. Bangor is a famous example of that moved to a teaching oriented accounting department seven or eight years ago. Uh. And even at that, then at the time we thought, OK. What they thought I wasn't there yet. Hey, look, look. What's happening to Bangor? That sure ain't gonna happen here. We have this interpretive research department, which is really good.

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But then that move also started to happen at Aston and it has now been completed more or less so very few active researchers left, and those who do active research still have enormous teaching load. That is why I asked you about your teaching load in the beginning, before the recording started. Money. Accounting sells accounting brings students in. Accounting fits in MBA's accounting fits and MBA's off very diverse nature. You can make some great accounting modules that you can sell in company. Accounting does well in undergraduate programs. In postgraduate programs, you can sell it all over the place.

0:23:48.430 --> 0:23:51.370  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah, but I mean, research also could bring money.

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Uh, well, not in the way Aston thought about accounting, certainly not so quick cash. Uh short term wins. Short term gains I agree with you that research brings you long term gains, not only monetary but also reputation wise, and Aston had that reputation, but that reputation is gone as if apparated and that was. The that was that was a strategic move for the liberate strategic move.

0:24:23.650 --> 0:24:33.260  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah. So do you have any other experience facing the REF or the TEF like a previous experience with their positive or negative?

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Uh, with well, to be honest, I never really cared that much about the TEF for the reasons I outlined. I did care about I did care about REF because as a professor in the department, that is where the reputation. And by the way, it's right to base your reputation or reputation or that once reputation on that is another matter, but people's reputation hinged on the how the department and hence also they did in the REF and Well, as mentioned you want to offer, you want to give something to younger academics. You want to give them a path, show them a path. Preferably a content related path that that gives them a career if they look at their REF scores every single week or every single day, that's something is wrong. A ranking shouldn't drive research. Research should lead to a particular ranking and it's a bit the other way around right now in the UK. So as a professor, I looked at how we could improve people people's REF scores, but the base was always what they wanted to research.

0:25:52.80 --> 0:25:56.800  
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And what they could think particular projects could go. Uh. And then we together would see whether. That could end up in a three star publication, and if so, which one? And then I would encourage people to collaborate.

0:26:9.960 --> 0:26:21.490  
3  
But also to learn from each other and not to think well. Then we both have three star publication and then John or Mary with will get the promotion sooner or quicker than I will. So yes, we played it by the REF book. But not in a way that managers, university managers who operate at a distance often treat. These REF. Uh. Criteria. You've met him. You're great. You haven't met him. You go. You would disgrace to the department.

0:26:44.840 --> 0:26:50.980  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yes, it's only the REF criteria about only publications like the you don't have any other measures.

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Uh, yes, they do. The automatic measures involve grant money that you would track especially important once you go higher up to ranks. And impact case studies now that impact case studies, which are supposed to be based on your research, has become an industry in itself. So I've sat in Sessions where people literally created a case study. In that case, study in the presence of a ghost writer. So somebody did a session somewhere in, let's say, Uganda. And it was a different country, by the way. But let's say Uganda somebody. Did a 2 hour session with some local farmers Tea farmers. And. Then of course, the way the tea farmers approached their harvesting changed entirely. That that was a critical few corners, but the this is the this was the line of the Impact case study. And that session did take place and that will Tea farm was present, but they didn't change it. A whole demeanour and approach of harvesting, obviously overnight, because they're mercilessly, mercilessly poor. But still that didn't matter. And the case study was written up accordingly. So there was a wee bit of fiction, including the impact case studies. Why are they so light so much because they bring in money and impact case study that is. The. Uh. Graded by the by the REF team as an impactful impact case study get you £33,000.

0:28:37.70 --> 0:28:37.530  
Shahenda Shehata  
OK.

0:28:37.400 --> 0:28:52.630  
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And I've said in Sessions, where university managers said I'd rather have one impact case study, then 3-4 star publications because they get me nothing. The impact case study gets me £33,000. Give me another impact case study.

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And that, of course, such an attitude by university managers. Especially those who have a short term and hence monetary focus will emphasize and move to teaching. And I think in the aftermath of COVID. Well. 140 universities in the UK can only run based on international students, so if if less international students are coming, which is happening post COVID. Then a lot of university will be in trouble. Well, then you either have to close your doors, or you have to merge, or you have to do a little trick or reinvent. Reinvent yourself in order to attract greater numbers of foreign students, and how do you do that? By introducing more teaching and not saying we do great research here because research doesn't bring you money, but if you start another program or we juggle your existing programs and manage to create a new program based on that, you can attract hopefully another group of students. Then you used to attract and incomes the money.

0:30:9.960 --> 0:30:36.320  
Shahenda Shehata  
the impact cases that the uh, you know, one of my participants say that another professor in another uni told him that how to manipulate the impact cases, study how to get the game it and then it was successful for him you know. But he refused to tell me how to manipulate the impact case study. So I'd like to know what's the impact case study itself because I didn't get the idea like how do the people do it. OK, so the impact case study is you have a piece of research, so it's about valuation of research. So you do you do research and you hope that it impacts practice no matter how you define practice, you hope it impacts practice. So a good impact case study is a study in which you show how your research has impacted everyday organizational, professional, individual practice. And there are some people in universities who like doing that. So they really do research to change existing practices. And a popular example today is sustainability and sustainability research. There is sustainability research being done that deliberately wants to change practice. It's academic, but it also has this really practical undertone. This really practical consequence or the consequences.

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That I strive for. And you can write a damn good story about that and try to attract funds that damn good story is the impact case study. And in order to come up with a compelling story, a university sometimes higher. Ghost-writers so experienced writers who let the academic talk because academics are not necessarily the greatest sellers of their own produce of their own impact. So they bring in people who can write a spicy story about how this person's research has impacted.

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Every day. Well, the everyday life of tea farmers in Uganda, that example that I gave you. But this impact case studies are embellished. Not always, but occasionally. If an impact case study cells, and if you get £33,000 for them, you better come up and your competitor might also get 33 thousand pounds for compelling case 30. Then you better make your story more compelling than your competitor story. Which might also be about Ugandan tea farmers. And that's where a fiction enters the realm of the real.

0:33:1.670 --> 0:33:2.50  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah.

0:32:50.850 --> 0:33:14.0  
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So yes, I know of fabricate not 100% sucked out of your thumb, but slightly massaged impact case study stories. Yes, they exist and everybody who says they don't exist or who say horror. How is this possible that lying especially university managers because they know damn well what is going on.

0:33:14.520 --> 0:33:14.800  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah. But how did he, the ranking, the measures, the REF, the TEF? How this affect the advancement of the scholarship or the knowledge accumulation?

0:33:29.180 --> 0:33:58.340  
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Well, it depends on how you define advancement and scholarship. So at a very superficial level, I could say it advanced at it advances scholarship because it defined in terms of number of applications. I think the number of publications in high ranked journals by Accounting Scholars has gone up in recent years. Certainly if you also factor in that some departments have turned into teaching. Yeah, institutes. So if you do some relative measuring amount of academics, amount of public with research time and you add up that research time and you set that against the number of three and four-star publications, then yes, I think there has been an advancement of scholarship. But to me that is not the true measure of all the best measure, there is no true measure. But the best measure of advancement of scholarship to me is about development and growth of individuals and of lines of thought and hopefully these will lead to publications.

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Uh, but as stated, publications take time. Sometimes there might be advancement that never leads to publications that are shared between individuals and that help to change the knowledge base of these individuals which will help them progress and which ultimately find a way in the publication of theirs. But at impact might not be immediate. That impact might not be that visible in the long run. So the whole learning and growth and deliberation bit that I think is part and parcel of the advancement of scholarship is deemphasized by this great emphasis on outputs according to REF.

0:35:27.830 --> 0:35:32.480  
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I also think that scholarship is about collegiality. I mentioned individualization. I think this has impacted collegiality. But as noted, there is no escape. The that that there exists nothing outside the REF. So you either succumb, but you get the hell out of there to a different country or to a different profession.

0:35:52.230 --> 0:36:0.380  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah, but, but do you think the academic himself change the academic ethos or the academic identity changes?

0:36:6.900 --> 0:36:10.500  
3  
Well, the that in in a way I would say yes. And the doubt you hear is whether people care. So yes. When somebody puts the sword above you, and I'm gonna chop your head off unless or I'm gonna put a carrot or sausage in front of you, try to catch that character sausage and I'll promote you. That will change people's behaviour. So whenever you change something contextually, when you induce something like the REF and TEF, when you change things in the REF and the TEF, this is likely to impact people's behaviour because they either like the sword or not or they like the carrots. Or to sort it or not?

0:36:57.470 --> 0:36:58.270  
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Do they care?

0:36:59.590 --> 0:37:2.660  
3  
That's an interesting story. Interesting question in my book. People will respond, but what are they fine? Just chasing the carrot, chasing the sausage. Having that sort of above them? Or not? And if they do care, then it's likely that they want to change something about the carriage, the shortage or the sword. Then what is it? And how will they go about doing it? Umm so. As I already mentioned it, it's difficult to change these things on your own. And you need a group of supporters. They need to be needs to be critical mass for things to be changed. I think that change is slowly coming. It's certainly coming in the Netherlands. So in in the Netherlands. There are ranking systems as well, but they're not as brutal as in as in the UK? Absolutely not. And even there, there was now pushback against him. So universities are dropping. Or changing the own ranking systems. We don't have a REF or tap system. We don't have a national system in the Netherlands, but universities have their own individual systems. But even those are often considered to be too tight and hampering scholarship and the advancement of academia broadly defined, so they're now dropping them or changing them. And I think this is a good sign. And I would hope for the UK to that's something. Similar would happen there, which you need critical mass and I do think it is coming.

0:38:38.560 --> 0:38:48.470  
3  
Umm, you can see that at conferences in the young scholar debates you can see that there is more pushback from academics. Against REF and TEF, uh, the perverse effects have been singled far and wide in in academic research, there was more pushback against certain type of university manager whose only in it for short term goals. But at the same time, there was that. Well, the other hand, there is also this post code for the departments where development my departments or universities have to keep their head above the water. Uh, and of course, UK laws or any laws don't change overnight. So it there, there there's a collection of forces playing a role. But I do think that is great. Push back and disagreement and dissatisfaction with REF and TEF currently.

0:39:37.880 --> 0:39:47.830  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah, but if it pushed back and the criteria reduced the evaluation like reduced no measures at all, would academics in the UK work differently?

0:39:48.540 --> 0:39:49.940  
3  
Yes, they would, no doubt. There's no doubt.

0:39:53.960 --> 0:39:56.790  
3  
Would I want to go to a system without measures? Absolutely not. Because we do talk about public money being spent. And I can imagine that you would want to have a view on how that money is being spent.

0:40:11.470 --> 0:40:34.250  
3  
But I would give universities considerable leeway, at least considerably more leeway on how to attract government funding and how they spent that government funding. Then this extreme focus on impact case studies and teach every way shins that are above four or five point scale the three and four-star publications, et cetera, et cetera.

0:40:36.400 --> 0:40:36.820  
3  
It's Julie output measurement. It is excessive output measurement that has happened and negatively impacted the process that is becoming a scholar and advancing scholarship.

0:40:51.990 --> 0:40:59.620  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah, but like the academics choosing of the topics of the research, would it change if there is no measures?

0:41:0.70 --> 0:41:12.800  
3  
Yes, it would certainly also change the methods they use. Quantitative papers are often quicker to write and qualitative papers. A survey paper takes like 2 years to write.

0:41:13.520 --> 0:41:42.630  
3  
**A case study paper often takes at least three years to write, so within a particular time frame, I can write more quantitative papers than qualitative papers. That's has certainly changed that the meter of academics I know personally know academics who'd rather do qualitative research, but they do quantitative research because it costs less time. They get that publications quicker, they get the promotion chances quicker sooner and time earlier in time, etc.**

0:41:43.150 --> 0:41:50.650  
3  
In terms of topics, yes, because methods and topics are not closely aligned, but they're not totally disjoint either. So when a journal editor says I want papers on budgeting this this is a little almost little quote from somebody from a couple of years ago. I want papers on budgeting reward systems and the balanced scorecard. Guess what? You're going to get S people are yearning for three and four sub publications. A lot of papers on budgeting reward systems in the balanced scorecard. Does that advance scholarship? Absolutely not. But people in their quest for the publication follow the stick. Follow the carrots. Follow the sausage.

0:42:26.340 --> 0:42:26.970  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah.

0:42:26.630 --> 0:42:42.30  
3  
And when you when you change the sausage or take away the sausage, yes, it'll change. And I don't know how massively it will change, but I think you will see a considerable change, not just two or three people changing their research outlook and emphasis.

0:42:42.380 --> 0:42:52.10  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah. And for the teaching, would they change the way of teaching the way of treating the students, the way of providing the exams?

0:42:52.820 --> 0:42:54.230  
3  
That would be far less pampering. I think as students abilities would be stretched to a greater extent. So the spoon feeding is really popular. Is so my how do you? The shells fell off my eyes when I sat. I just watched.

0:43:14.380 --> 0:43:21.930  
3  
Somebody delivering the first session in the first module I was supposed to be in as well when I got the appointment at Aston.

0:43:23.820 --> 0:43:52.270  
3  
She was literally spoon she was teaching well. She was a very good teacher. Not no quibbles about that, but she was spoon feeding the students dish you got in the first session. This you got to know for the exam on the page number basis this you don't have to know for the exam. You're gonna get this group assignment. This group assignment is about this and this subject matter. Follow this template and you can do the group assignment. Well the template wasn't just about the structure of the essay that had to be handed in. It more or less prescribed half the essay.

0:43:56.980 --> 0:44:26.690  
3  
Then then your spoon feeding. And I think these things would be deemphasized and taken out and you would automatically when you don't treat students as customers and isn't a black and white thing because to some extent students are customers, they pay in order to be taught. But being taught means their abilities being stretched and the ability is being stretched and being confronted with stuff that you might find challenging or download frustrating or annoying is part and parcel of this thing called teaching.

0:44:32.60 --> 0:44:35.890  
3  
And you have to buy the apple or bite the bullet. And that's how you progress. And that's also how you grow in life. It's not about throwing fun stuff at students that they like and that they can easily pass. That's not teaching, but it will get you great evaluation scores. So I would expect a change in teaching approach, far more stretching subject matter. Also more stretching, more variety and less of an emphasis on this idea that students are customers.

0:45:5.400 --> 0:45:11.490  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah. Thank you so much. I really appreciate it. May I stop the recording, please?

0:45:11.640 --> 0:45:12.440  
3  
Yes, you may.

0:45:12.670 --> 0:45:12.980  
Shahenda Shehata  
Yeah.