
Poetry, prose, literature and insights

1858

Government research evaluations

Universities were once founded, for the public good
It seems that this goal, is no longer understood
Government research evaluations, now rule the day
Having come to Australia, from the UK
They have moved beyond a periodic exercise
And have unconsciously transformed academic lives!

We've become professional players, of this evaluation game
With scholarship no longer valued the same
Colleagues and friends, in fierce competition
Sharing of ideas, are replaced with suspicion
Academic freedom is so fast disappearing
As it is the metrics that we all are fearing

Inquiry and teaching once ruled academic life
Now these evaluations are causing much strife
No points did we earn for our creative piece
As our metric count, it did not increase
We raise important issues, that is for sure
To think we'd get applauded, would be premature

SCImago, Quartiles, and Citation scores
We find ourselves facing new kinds of wars
Clarivate has now been added to the measure
There's no time at all for any type of leisure
Accounting scholars are certainly under the hammer
As for a small group of top journals we clamour

DVCs vigilantly monitor their publication bank
Because all that they care for is a good university rank
The funding model now to the metrics is tied
Those bringing in money are viewed with pride
Business school income helps ease funding strains
Yet accounting scholars see little of those gains

Deans, they play the game of name and shame
With accounting scholars, so easy to frame
Do they care for the increasing student numbers these scholars teach
And that time for research is out of reach?
Anger and aggression of scholars are common threats
While physical and mental stress both cause regrets

You may be writing a book that will be widely read
If you think that counts, you are sadly misled
The fact that your research may help the nation
Can be lost in the government's research evaluation



Publish or perish is never enough
Impact and engagement is our new handcuff!
What should we do in this world of metrics?
Perhaps to best go with the words of Maverick
Choose a path fuelled by your passion
Do honest work and trust your senses, not fashion
Write to make the world a better place
In this relentless metric craze!!

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Further reading

- Guthrie, J., Parker, L., Dumay, J. and Milne, M. (2019), "What counts for quality in interdisciplinary accounting research in the next decade", *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal*, Vol. 32 No. 1, pp. 2-25.
- Martin-Sardesai, A., Irvine, H., Tooley, S. and Guthrie, J. (2017a), "Government research evaluations and academic freedom: a UK and Australian comparison", *Journal of Higher Education Research and Development*, Vol. 36 No. 2, pp. 372-385.
- Martin-Sardesai, A., Irvine, H., Tooley, S. and Guthrie, J. (2017b), "Organizational change in an Australian university: responses to a research assessment exercise", *British Accounting Review*, Vol. 49 No. 4, pp. 399-412.