

0283

The Universities and Education: The Implications of the RAE

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Background

John Furlong will reflect on, and respond to, the findings of the UCET/BERA review of the impact of RAE 2008 on education research. Please see symposium description and paper 0266 (Oancea) for an outline of the findings. The UCET/BERA review analysed the influence of RAE 2008 outcomes and processes on a) individual departments; b) different groups of researchers; and c) the education research field as a whole (as perceived locally). It considered the impact of the RAE as perceived by different categories of staff and as evidenced by the available RAE-related data and analysis. It focussed on the perceived immediate impact; likely future impacts; and relative impact across different types of institutions and (sub)fields, and over time (including the specific impact of changes in the methodology adopted for RAE in 2008). The review addressed these issues in all countries of the UK.

Research Questions

John Furlong will consider the changing nature of the compromise, in education research, between a commitment to make both an intellectual and a practical contribution to the advancement of the field. He will reflect on the impact of this compromise on Departments and Schools of Education in the contemporary University. He will do so with reference to the UCET/BERA RAE review (see paper 0266), which had aimed:

1. To obtain and examine critically evidence on perceptions of RAE impact over time on departments, researchers, and the field of education research as a whole.
 1. To identify the aspects of the functioning of individual departments which are perceived by respondents as having been influenced by the processes and outcomes of RAE 2008.
 2. To explore the perceptions of existing and likely impact of RAE processes and outcomes on individual researchers and on the profile of education research as a whole.
 3. To analyse the variation of (perceived) impact across types of institutions, categories of staff, sub-fields of research, and across all countries of the UK.
2. To consider the nature of the processes by which RAE preparation, RAE panel decisions, and RAE funding outcomes have come to influence departmental practices.
3. To explore perceptions of the specific impact of changes in the methodology adopted for RAE 2008, compared to RAE 2001, and the anticipated impact of the REF

Methods

This contribution will reflect on the UCET/BERA RAE review, which drew upon three main categories of data (see paper 0266):

- 1) Survey data;
- 2) In-depth interview data;
- 3) RAE 2008 and RAE 2001 submissions and outcomes databases.

Frame

Education as a field of enquiry throughout the Anglophone world is built on an enduring and unstable compromise - a compromise between a commitment to be make both an intellectual and a practical contribution to the advancement of the field. It is this unstable compromise that was behind the long struggle to establish education as a legitimate field of study within universities in the first place; it is this unstable compromise that has had to be accommodated (or tolerated) by universities during the process of massification in the last 20 years. In this paper John Furlong will draw on the findings from this research to consider the changing nature of this compromise and its impact on Departments and Schools of Education in the contemporary University.

Research findings

This contribution will reflect on, and respond to, the findings presented in paper 0266. Please see symposium description and paper 0266 for an outline of the findings.