

Prof. Lykourgiotis: Yes, that's what I was going to say to Mr Bar. For example, when Faraday discovered his famous law with which all electricity is produced, I think even his colleagues remarked "and what is the use of that". And his reply, instantaneous reply, was "what is the use of a new-born baby". So, it is the time element and I think in research you cannot really anticipate. Even if you subscribe to the view of useful research you don't really know ahead of time at the end what is going to be more useful.

So I mean, I agree with your criterion in principle, but in practice you have to be flexible in how you apply this. Otherwise the university might lose its whole significance. I mean, its whole role might go away.

Prof. Panaretos: Before we move to the next question I think you have raised an interesting and important point, when you sighted the example of the two teachers that you had. And you said that at the end of the year you remembered the lousy teacher, to use the American expression. I am wondering whether this was the reaction of a very good student or whether that was the reaction of the class in general.

Prof. Hanham: Well, I have often thought about that. I know that most of the class was very grateful to the good teacher because he not merely read out things they could write down, but, if they listened very carefully, they could hear the answer to most of the examination questions. They could then learn enough of this to get by to the end of the year. And they could never have to think about the subject again. What I was talking about was somebody who can course even, I think, not very good students. People who became professional politicians. They still remembered.

Prof. Panaretos: Professor Tsaoussis from the Pandeion University of Social and Political Sciences, who is in the Committee of the Rectors on evaluation, sorry, the European Affairs Committee.

Prof. Tsaoussis: It is the eye looking over Europe in what is going on to inform the Rectors.

I wouldn't like to enter into semantics, but I think it is good to remember that the three words quoted here, accreditation, evaluation and assessment, mean totally different things. And this difference

might be crucial. And I have to underline that, because in our language for the time being we have not similarly three different terms indicating that difference. We speak of *áíéíëüãçóç* more or less and we think they are totally the same, whereas they are not.

I want also to underline the fact, it was stressed a while ago indirectly, that behind the word university there is a whole philosophy. And I think that the universities, this kind of institution, is the least interested in professional training. I think it is much more than that. Not the least in terms of importance but the least in terms of, if you want, intent.

There are other things involved. Research is not only applied research, it is fundamental research, it is pure research. Teaching is not for training but it is teaching for a way of looking at things, an attitude in life. The professional training is the professional training of the scientist, not of the professional. And that is very important. And I think it is very important because, when you evaluate universities, you cannot use the same criteria that you use when you evaluate professional schools. And in the 70's what happened was that a great range of professional institutions had been developed practically because the society and the economy needed more professionals and the thought that the universities could not or should not care for this kind of training.

It seems now, however, that in Europe, in most of the countries, the State is directly involved in setting the rules for the universities to function. And it seems to me that at a certain moment a great injustice is being done, because there are other people who set the rules and then other people who have, how should I say, the responsibility and are being judged for things for which they are not responsible at all. For instance, if the government tells you how many students you are going to register annually and if the government doesn't allow you to have the necessary amount of teachers you need to train these students, you cannot be evaluated in terms of teaching or research or I don't know what.

Because really the next question that comes to the picture and I don't know whether we have put it down at all, is who is evaluating government policies. We take it for granted more or less that you are responsible for things. No, it is not the electors. I think that the point is that we should also, at a certain moment, concern ourselves with evaluating what is demanded from ourselves. And what the evaluation formula really means in terms of what you are supposed to do in terms of the philosophy of university teachers.

Thank you

Prof. Sterling: One of the problems that you get in any evaluation process is setting up a system where you can measure the outputs accurately, fine. We have been trying to do that, but you should also set up a system that recognises the inputs, as well.

Now in research we know, this is the third research assessment exercise that the UK is being through. But no one has yet looked at the amount of research money that is going into a particular institution to achieve the grade of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Now, until we do that, you are not actually getting an efficiency or performance related criteria. Now that there is talk of doing it in the next round, that is quite difficult to do.

It is even there in teaching. Our two oldest institutions for example are in receipt of a very substantial subsidy for every student that goes through. Now, let me give you an idea of the order of that. That's about 2000 pound sterling per student, extra, on top of any other university. Now that at the moment is not evaluated in any way. This does not come into the assessment of the output of those institutions at all. It is hidden. If they did I suppose they would still probably be better. But they wouldn't be quite as good as the impression that is currently given indicates.

Dr. Page: Most British Vice-chancellors went to either Oxford or Cambridge.

Prof. Panaretos: I would like to raise a question, if I may, with reference to the research assessment exercise. Assessing the assessment process you said before that, because of the research assessment exercises, better research is being done in British universities. How do you assess that? Is it numbers? Do we have more publications now? How do you define the word "better"?

There are 3 or 4 questions there. I mean, do you have any figures as to the expansion of journals published since research assessment exercises started?

And another thing is, I suppose, since this process started there is a lot of time spent in the process itself, a lot of time spent in understanding the different forms, discussing what to put in, understanding what is happening, deciding whether to put one unit here, one unit there. Have you assessed at all whether what you get

back in return from the whole process compensates for the amount of time you have spent in going through the process?

Prof. Hanham: But of course what I gave before was a subjective judgement. And when I was talking about "better" I was particularly talking about my own institution.

I believe that people normally perform better, if they know what it is they are trying to do. And that the most valuable thing of the exercise for me has been the business of dialogue with the departments, about what it is they are trying to do, what it is they are trying to achieve and whether they are, in fact, setting their targets right. I mean, that is actually in every-day life a very important thing.

The fact is that as a result of the departments' thinking hard about how they are going to deploy their man-power, I mean, are they going to put X and Y and so on more into teaching, because they are not going to be very helpful for the research and we worry about in the research getting things complete for instance, where there is a natural tendency to say, well good research lasts for ever and, I mean it is not the research I do. It takes a very long time to come to fruition.

Now, that is the way in which I was trying to use the word. Now, there is always a risk, when you set targets of this sort, that people will be unduly impressed by the mechanical side of the target because for all these purposes you have got lists of staff members, you've got lists of research students, you've got lists of full-time research staff, you've got lists of publications and different types of journals, you've got the name of a couple of publications, you've got lots of statistics that come out of it.

Now, there is a real danger which you as a statistician will know, that people are engaged in the manufacture of statistics. And there are areas in which that has happened. And it is obvious that the fact that the international monitors of publication have picked up a substantial increase in British publication since 1986, that that is one of the ways in which the exercise has affected people.

I cannot yet say whether it is the case that the publications are being better. They would certainly be more, if the old business, which is very common in America, that if you can split a publication into 12 it is better for your career. And so the 12 small ones count the same as it were, as one bigger.

And there is a good deal of manufacturing of statistics. I think that having the statistics is useful. I can well believe that at some point the manufacture of statistics might get out of hand. Certainly the number of journals was increasing already at a unwholesome rate. I am hoping that a large proportion of the journals will die as the electronic devices take over.

That's against the trend. But I worry about this at the moment, but I think that people are not yet experts enough for the manufacture of statistics for it to be an overwhelming problem. Speaking of somebody who worked in an institution that needed more sense of direction. Now, it was great help to talk to people about the direction. That is what I think is being a good thing.

Dr Page: Thank you. I think I have exactly the same subjective view as Professor Hanham. I do believe that in my own institution since the research assessment exercise is started there has been an improvement.

Now, there are some worth-while statistical information, statistical justification, of that. Now, I am thinking particularly of competition for research grants from the research councils. Every application is in competition with those elsewhere in the system. And an examination of the figures shows that, taking account of the decreased value of money, that per capita in several departments there has been a marked increase over this period of 8 years. So, there has not been all that much more money in real terms around the system. So my people must of been winning it from other places. And there are figures which give me some comfort. At any rate, when I get some statistics which comfort me, I treasure them.

Prof. Sterling: I'll just add a comment on that. Having been on one of the research assessment panels, the difficulty that we run into was not so much in how we could establish which publications, which journals, were of merits and which were not, the panel was able to do that with a fair degree of consistency. The problem was that we learned we could not convey this information to the people being assessed. Now the difficulty of doing so was legal, in that, if we published a list of journals ranked in group 1, group 2, group 3, the publishers would immediately would be writing to the funding councils contesting it and perhaps taking legal actions. So, whereas the panels were very clear which journals within the particular subject

area were worthy, I am afraid those not on the panels would not know that information.

Prof. Panaretos: Professor Christou, Rector of the Athens University of Economics.

Prof. Christou: I see that tomorrow we'll talk about indicators and statistics and all that. So I don't want to raise those questions today. But may be I missed the point. I am not sure I understood how you have used your evaluation results in Britain. Have you utilised them for example to differentiate faculty salaries? In other words have you used the results of your evaluation to differentiate among faculty salaries? Or to distribute research money? How?

Prof. Sterling: He is much more ruthless than I am.

Dr Page: Following the assessment of the research exercise those particular departments that had done well and improved a lot were the recipients of rather more of the discretionary money than other departments. In our pay exercise there was a certain amount of money which could be given out at the discretion of the institution. And I quite clearly selected individuals from the departments that had been ranked well. And incidentally, when I believe the ranking I pay them a bit more.

Prof. Lykourgiotis: And you are still alive after doing so, ah!

Prof. Christou: You see that there is a big question here in the Greek universities. There is no differentiation. All salaries are the same across the board and across disciplines. Therefore that is a big question in Greece. What are the incentives that faculty members are given to be good teachers or to be good researchers. That, I suppose, is a question that is going to be a big problem in the evaluation process.

Prof. Panaretos: Professor Panayiotopoulos, Vice-Rector of the University of Piraeus.

Prof. Panayiotopoulos: The only way to say that the quality of one is better than the other is to have all the positive characteristics of

the first as a subset of the set of the positive characteristics of the second. Consequently, there are some methods that try to do it. For instance, hierarchical analysis with Goodman scales and questionnaires, and so on. Therefore I think that to write down now on the table clear scientific criteria in order to measure quality is a difficult job. And sometimes very close to what we call utopia. It is not possible to get an optimal solution. Just a heuristic one. And nobody knows if this heuristic solution is a good one or just a feasible solution among a billion others.

So, Professor Hanham, Dr Page, do you know some polynomial type algorithm to measure the quality exactly?

Dr Page: It is probably a non-computable function.

Prof. Vergatos: Or a function with very many parameters.

Prof. Hanham: The real difficulty with anything like this, of what we have been talking about, is whether the exercise is what you are really interested in or the un-intended consequences. I mean people do all sorts of things for good or bad reasons. And the results may or may not be good.

Now, what it appears to me to have been good about the assessment of research is that every individual in the older British universities had to ask themselves questions about where they thought they fitted. Now, some of them had difficulties. And of course there were problems about subjects, because the leaders would define a subject in one way and the troops will define it in another.

[end of tape]

Prof. Hanham: [not heard]... who, I thought, needed encouragement. For instance, I wanted to make sure that those people, who were doing more teaching and did it well were awarded because they were taking on an institutional burden. So that what happened was that when we were given money, as it were, essentially 1% of the salary bill for several years, I had a number of categories of people who I wanted to benefit.

One of the curious results of the research assessment exercises for us, therefore, was that more people who were primarily teachers got promoted. Because they would seem to be more valuable to the institution, they were for the first time sharing the primary burden. And that is very important.

Prof. Panaretos: Professor Karamanos, the Vice-Rector of the Agricultural University of Athens.

Prof. Karamanos: Yes. Among the three criteria you used to evaluate a certain institution, namely research, teaching and organisation, could you give any specific weight to any one of the three, or you just contemplate all of them in the same way, equivalently? And I am just referring to an old British institution doing teaching and research, not the new ones you just mentioned.

Dr Page: I think I must emphasise that none of us believe, I don't believe, I don't think my colleagues believe, that it is possible to represent the performance of an institution by a single number. Now, that is not perhaps the answer, it is just not possible, because if you want to do that, you have to agree on how you will combine the rankings of all the other facets. All that has been done with us so far, is that there has been a research assessment of certain subjects, certain departments in each institution under 72 different heads. The newspapers have taken all the ranks in those 72 heads, or however many of them were represented in a university, combined them in some peculiar way and produced a table. But that is journalism.

Prof. Hanham: I think that the importance of the three-fold distinction I drew is that, if you are talking to ministers you can deflect a lot of difficulties by recognising that you have to take those three things together. And that the success of an organisation depends on pulling together a whole lot of factors.

It is possible to say that certain universities are run better than others. And that the sort of procedures they are adopting are likely to provide more in the way of countable success. Now, one of our difficulties at the moment, and this is a perennial difficulty in Britain, is that everybody believes that getting a job after graduation is one of the most important performance indicators of the universities. OK. That is true, I think, all over the world.

Now the statistics relating to jobs immediately after graduation are a nightmare. And you will be hearing something about this tomorrow. But it is the case that a combination of subject mix but also of the way in which an gets about organisation thinking about that problem.

Actually, there are things there that you can learn. It is obvious that if you have certain types of students, who are being prepared directly for certain types of professions, I mean, we know that we have sandwich-course students largely, who are closely connected with industry, you would expect them to be near the top of the league and normally are. But, anyway, you understand what I am talking about. There are a whole lot of those things that you've got to look at to see whether in fact the institution can actually do anything to influence them.

You know, that are some performance indicators which are just there, a sort of sitting, glaring at you. There are others that you ought to be capable of doing something about. The question is what are the parameters within which you can be more effective. And that is a tricky one.

By the way, our experience is that the only group of students who habitually get virtually 100% employment immediately on graduation are those who do theatre studies. There were no jobs in the theatre, but they get jobs elsewhere and they are in great demand for in industry, because they project themselves so well. This is a counter-intuitive proposition. I mean, until I follow the statistics, year by year, I could not of believed it.

And there are lots of things like that about education, I mean, a lot of things we take for granted, are just not true. And traditionally in Britain one of the things you never thought about was the fact that the highest unemployment rates were always in biology. Now, why biology you may ask? Well, it is the wrong sort of people going to biology.

Prof. Panaretos: Professor Siomos, from the Technical University of Crete, and then Professor Siderides, who is the Vice-Rector of the Agricultural University of Athens.

Prof. Siomos: Thank you Mr Chairman.

I should like to make one very short comment on a last comment made a few minutes ago that the Greek university does not have the ability of providing extra finances to professors. This is not quite true to some extent.

Through research money which come into the university, the Greek professor can obtain up to 100% his or her salary in addition, if money is coming through. So this is possible and this is a very

important point of evaluation and assessment of the performance of a Greek professor.

Now, I would like to come to a very fundamental and may be some of you distinguished guests will consider, may be, very simple-minded question. Now, you have presented to us all possible facets. How you organise an exercise of evaluation and accreditation assessment, and so on. But I miss to understand which is your basic definition of the object which you are going to evaluate, assess, accredit.

Thank you.

..... [not heard]

Prof. Siderides: First of all I may have got confused, but I haven't really understood and I haven't got a few basic conclusions. What are the parameters that you are using? I may be tired and missed them, but how can we discuss about evaluation and not be made to answer to fundamental sort of questions like, a university is an open system, right? And as such, there shouldn't be to my point of view at least, either other bodies internal evaluating bodies or external ones. It should be a mixture, a kind of mixed bodies, associations of professionals, plus academics, etc., etc. So, that is one question we should answer. There should be a kind of this body which should involve people from the university and also from the environment.

The other basic question that I have is should we follow in Europe, we should talk about that, uniform criteria or not? To my point of view, for example, it is unjust for a German student to be able to benefit from being a student up to the age of 27 as you mentioned. For the Greek up to the age of unlimited. And for the British up to the age of 22 or so. So this is a matter of, it is completely out of my mind. I cannot understand. Certainly we should answer that question, too.

And another thing, do you really know a bit about the Greek system? So that we can share our experiences, because you should at least know, for example, that, though you are not good in numbers because you have a decentralised system, the numbers of students you've got, etc., etc., were very good at it, because we have a highly centralised administrative system and we know what the exact numbers of students are etc., etc. What we do not have are the numbers of student classes, because there we have a highly decentralised system. And we do not have students in classes, I mean, about 10%-20%, which is unjust because we have to share resources in Europe now, right? So, the Greek government

subsidises the Greek universities, but the money is coming from the EEC. So, a uniform law should apply, my point of view. Not to help the situation in Greece but also to be just.

Another thing is what question of evaluation I think it is, what was the resistance of the British universities? And Professor Lykourgiotis raised this question, too. But I want an answer of another dimension. When the British government went ahead and joined the Market. Now, what was your resistance in the sense is any evaluation now of the students coming out of these three-year courses, and both institutions are going to come to the Market, to join the Market?

Another thing that I would like to know from your own parties, what about the department shut down in Britain. Not due to an evaluation process but due to certain policies. For example, we don't need any more mathematicians, let's shut down the mathematics department and then centralise to more industrial-oriented courses, etc. Your experience should be very valid to us on this very account, because we produce students that we don't actually need. So, you should know all these problems that we have, so that you have been faced with these problems in the past perhaps. So, we can discuss about it at least tomorrow, because today we shouldn't have much time.

Here I will stop. Thank you very much.

Prof. Hanham: What I was going to say is that you raised a whole range of questions, some of which will come up naturally tomorrow.

But the question, what are you evaluating, which is what you are asking is a particularly difficult one, which I did not wish to give a lecture on. Because in Britain it is always said to be quality, and because we now have British standards for quality management and British standards for quality this and that, we are heading on the face of things toward quality standards to universities. Now, I am not the warmest enthusiast for that particular line of development, but essentially there is a whole set of issues there depending on the quality literature. And if you look at government pronouncements they are all concerned with quality and there are a whole range of things, that we've got to find a way of evaluating higher education that is better in a way than the government has for its civil servants, for government agencies, for the army, and so on. I mean, unless we do it there will be a problem.

Now, who does the evaluation and the principle in Britain has always been that, when governments get to the point of wanting to do

something, they usually do involve large numbers of the people who are actually in the business. So that the Funding Council Committees consist largely of people who are practitioners from the universities.

So, similarly you know, when you look at the thing, you end up by having a whole lot of academics co-opted in this and working on the system. And this is particularly important, I think, in quality assessment where there are general difficulties of the sort that you are talking about and finding the common language, I talked about the difficulty of finding a common language, that is very severe business, because people start from quite different points of view.

Now, the background of that is partly the existence over a long period in the polytechnics of an evaluation system run by the Council for National Academic Awards, the CNAA, which was a central government body set up when the new polytechnics were established essentially to make sure they are stuck to university standards and the committees were dominated by university academics. And that is why, though there are differences in quality between the degrees, they are not nearly as great as you might expect.

The other thing is that the vast majority of students in the polytechnics, were in the humanities, in social sciences and in business where they have more students than the universities. And you are, therefore, more likely to have quite high quality students. The low quality tends to be in areas where there are some difficulty in knowing what the subject is. And, also, in those areas where you've got low quality students.

Now, I am not one of those who believes in uniform laws for Europe. I am sufficiently reactionary to believe that culture belongs to the nation-states. And, therefore, [not heard]

But in terms of the labour market it is manifest that having such different labour markets based on different years length of term for higher education is difficult and some countries are changing. Denmark is going over to a version of the British system, the Germans are ringing their hands and will have to do something, because they cannot afford to pay for these long periods.

But remember, one of the most efficient countries in Europe in higher education by most criteria is Norway. The average age of an undergraduate in Norway is 28. And nearly all students are married with children. And have jobs, full-time.

Prof. Panaretos: May I add something: Professor Siderides raised a point about students' numbers, and he said that in this country we know exactly how many students we have. As a matter of fact, when Professor Hanham raised the point, I felt that, well, we are not the only ones who don't know the number of students. And the reason why we don't know, at least the state doesn't know, is that universities get money from the state for some activities in relation to the number of students that they have. And as my good friend Professor Evangelides knows, the University of Athens, for example, always puts forward a number of something like 15.000-20.000 students in the Law School just because those students have never taken the degree, which doesn't mean, of course, they are active students. This is just an example.

.... [not heard]

Prof. Hanham: So, anyhow, you'll see when I raised the question of numbers. It turns out you disagree about numbers I think probably more than we do. Because I was talking about students, real life students on-the-job, as it were.

.... [not heard]

By the way, German law prohibits the Germans from keeping distinctions in statistics of being full-time or part-time students, on the ground that it is an un-wholesome interference with the freedom of students.

Prof. Vergados: I just want to say something for the people who are afraid of the one number. There is no reason to go to one number. If we take as an example the United States experiment that you mentioned, and let us say we would like this evaluation to be for the future students who want to go to the university, you see there are many parameters. Some of them do prefer a university where they are expected to find a job after they graduate. Others may be they want to have a little bit of good time, they don't want as much pressure, they want to go to a place, which is nice, with very good climate, etc. There are very good institutions that do not have graduate departments, they do not do research, and yet they are famous for their undergraduate curricula. And I think all these options are open.

The only difficulty is if these are going to be used by the politicians for their own purposes. And then of course you cannot produce a

whole spectrum because they might decide to select, as you mentioned, just one particular parameter, which you are afraid may be very harmful to your own institution.

Prof. Hanham: Yes, quite right.

Prof. Panaretos: I think that we promised in the program that we will finish at 7:30. We started about 20 minutes later and now are past 16 minutes past 7:30.

I think we had a very interesting and fruitful discussion, we touched upon many points, and I think we have set the stage for tomorrow's discussions. So, we can relax this evening and come back tomorrow morning.

Thank you very much.

[end of tape]