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RÉSUMÉ DE L'INTERVENTION

Research assessment and the rising tide of metrics

Citations, journal impact factors, H-indices, even tweets and Facebook likes – there are no end of quantitative measures that can now be used to assess the quality and wider impacts of research. But how robust and reliable are such indicators, and what weight – if any – should we give them in the management of the national research systems? To help answer these questions, in July 2015 HEFCE published the findings of an extensive review of the role of metrics in research assessment and management. The review has explored the use of metrics across the full range of academic disciplines, and assessed their potential contribution to processes of research assessment like the REF. It has looked at how universities themselves use metrics, at the rise of league tables and rankings, at the relationship between metrics and issues of equality and diversity, and at the potential for ‘gaming’ that can arise from the use of particular indicators in the funding system. In this presentation, Ben Johnson will present the key findings and recommendations of the review, and reflect on what the future might have in store for metrics in research.

BIOGRAPHIE

Ben Johnson is a policy adviser at the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), where he has worked since 2009. He has a first class honours degree in music from the University of Southampton, and over ten years’ experience working in strategic planning, process improvement and risk management. Ben has worked in a variety of roles within HEFCE and joined the research policy team in 2009 to lead the development of an open access policy for the REF. Ben has oversight of a range of policy issues that affect research culture and infrastructure, including open access, open data, metrics and research integrity. He worked most recently on HEFCE’s Independent Review of the Role of Metrics in Research Assessment and Management. He can be reached on Twitter at @ersatzben