

The Rankings and Beyond

— Challenges and Opportunities for Academic Leadership

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Building World Class Universities
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Research

“An Increasingly Complex Business”

- Hypercompetitive, Interdisciplinary, Globalized
- Increasing Institutional Expectations
- Multiple Points of Failure (known and unknown)
- Regulated and Scrutinized (compliance)
- Increasing Reporting and Accountability
- Management / Leadership Challenges
- Growing Levels of Frustration
- No Easy Solutions



“Dog eat Dog”





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Why care about ranking and metrics

- *Evaluations by Politicians, Peers & Parents*
- *Benchmarking against friends and foes*

How to think about rankings & beyond

- *A brief history of rankings*
- *The value of research*


What is good practice to “move the needle”

- *Principles of good performance metrics*
- *Metrics initiatives;*

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Rankings – “What are they good for?”



“Rankings are here to stay. Even if academics are aware that the results of rankings are biased and cannot satisfactorily measure institutional quality, on a more pragmatic level they also recognize that an impressive position in the rankings can be a key factor in securing additional resources, recruiting more students and attracting strong partner institutions.”

http://www.eua.be/news/13-04-18/EUA_publishes_second_rankings_review_report.aspx

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Rankings & Performance Metrics



- Rankings provide an outside view, reducing complexity
⇔ *a first indicator “the symptoms”*
- Transparent performance metrics provide an inside view
⇔ *making in-depth analysis possible – “the recipe..”*
- Use rankings, metrics & faculty discussions to identify areas of strength & weakness, to drive change towards excellence

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Academic Competition and Return-Of-Investment

Before: Focus on Purpose
(e.g. mission)

Now: Push to focus on Product
(e.g. graduation rates, patents and licenses, publications, grants, winning athletic teams)
...more recently Productivity

UK's national **Research Excellence Framework** assessment program, 2014

academicexecutives.elsevier.com **THE Academic Executive Brief**

Shaping our future: The University of Birmingham's challenge to attain research excellence

By Adam Tickell, University of Birmingham

Introduction

The University of Birmingham was founded in 1900 as the UK's first civic university. During its history, it has produced eight Nobel Laureates for contributions as diverse as the discovery of Vitamin C to counteracting climate change. However, during the past 15 years or so, the university progressively slipped according to the UK's research evaluation measures. As one of the major universities in the country, it was imperative for the university to improve its performance. Thus, under the leadership of a new Vice Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood, the university went through an ambitious transformation to achieve its goal of becoming a leading global university.

The competitive research funding landscape of the UK

Research in the UK is recognized for its international excellence and having the best return on public investment in the world. Much of this success rests upon the highly competitive allocation process for research funding.

The path to research funding and the role of research evaluation

Public funding for research in the UK comes through two major routes:

- Block grant funding which is distributed by the government
- Competitive grants from Research Councils, charities, the European Union and governmental departments for specific research projects and programs for which individual academics apply

The results of an institution's research evaluations are critical to successful outcomes in both of these funding routes.

REF results

REF results will be published in December 2014 in the form of a quality profile awarded to each submission. Quality profiles show the proportion of each submission that is rated:

- 4* World leading
- 3* Internationally excellent
- 2* Internationally recognised
- 1* Nationally recognised
- 0 Unclassified

Source: <http://www.ref.ac.uk/>

The UK conducts a Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in order to rate universities' submissions into five quality levels from unclassified (0*) to world-leading (4*), and uses the quality profiles as the basis for awarding research funding. RAEs took place in 1992, 1996, 2001 and 2008, and the evaluation always involved elements of peer review, faculty activity data and research metrics. The preparations for the RAEs imposed a heavy administrative

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Why care about ranking and metrics

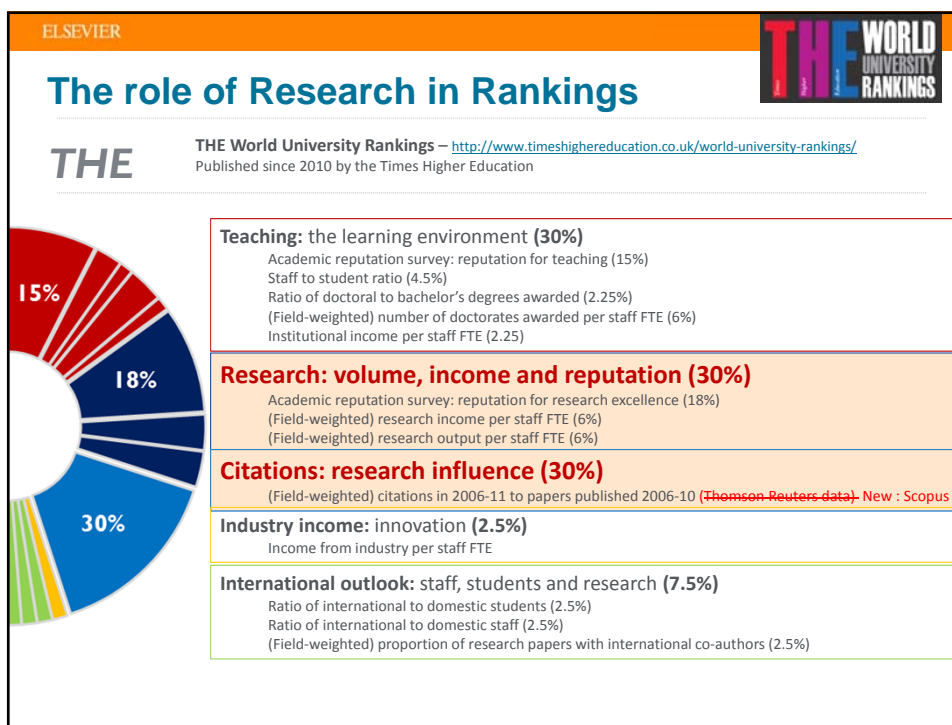
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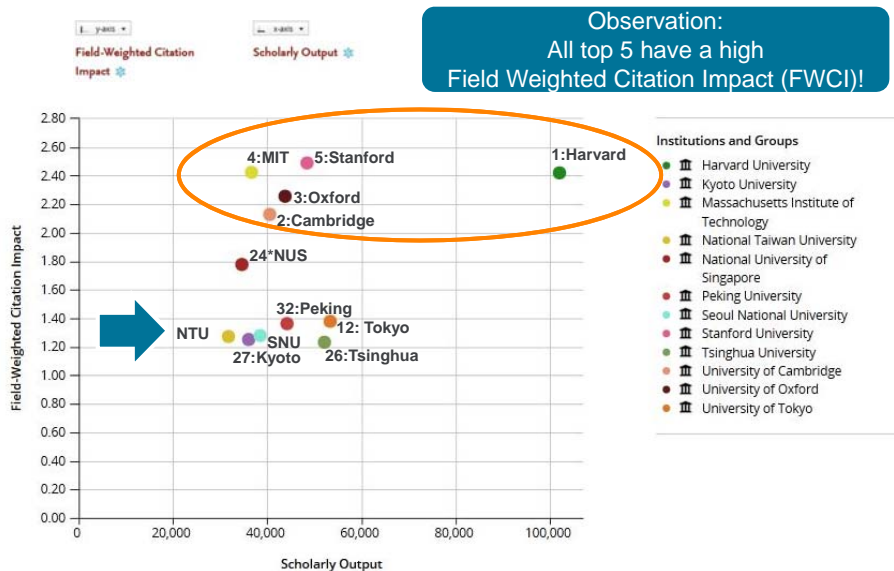
Reputation vs. Research Excellence - A simple case!

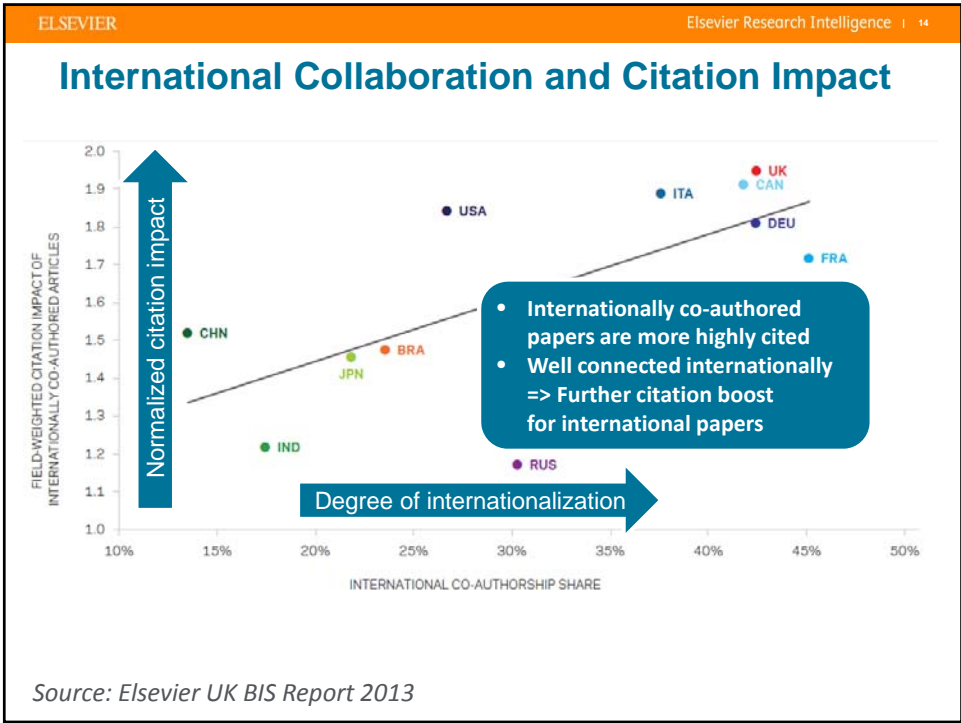
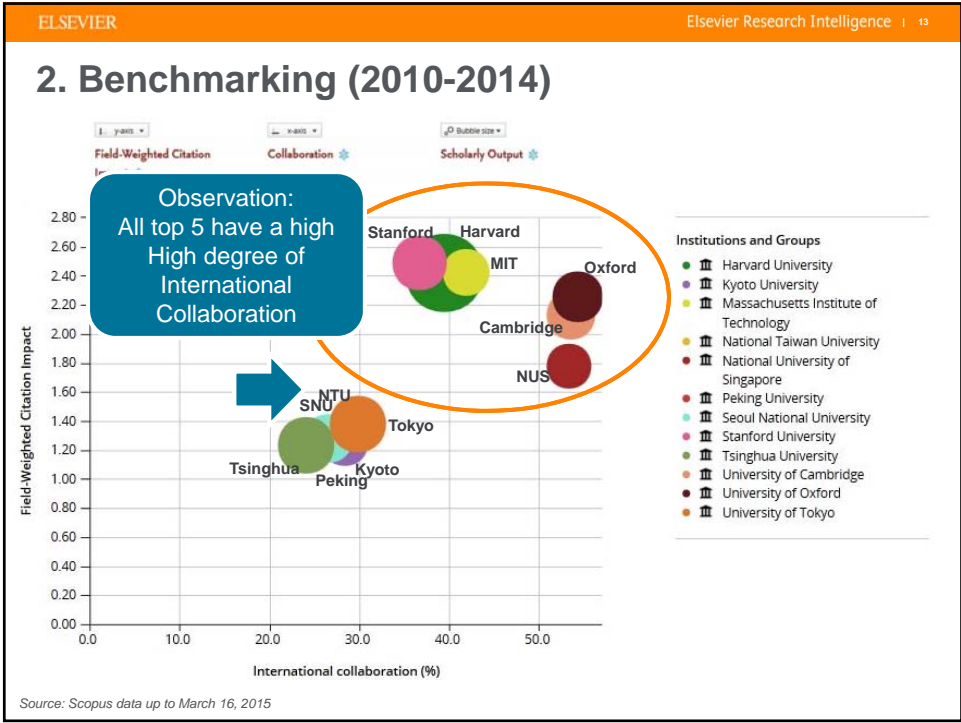
- Look a **NEWEST** THE World Reputation Rankings 2015
- Take top five global universities (US/UK) – And Top Asian Universities
- Look at how they compare on
 - “Research Output” and “FWCI” (FWCI- normalized citation impact)

Can we find some interesting correlations?

Ranking	Name	FWCI	Scholarly Output
1	Harvard University	2.42	101814
2	University of Cambridge	2.13	40320
3	University of Oxford	2.26	43702
4	Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)	2.42	36481
5	Stanford University	2.49	48238
12	University of Tokyo	1.38	53181
24	National University of Singapore (NUS)	1.78	34588
26	Tsinghua University	1.23	51989
27	Kyoto University	1.25	35879
32	Peking University	1.36	44184
51-60	Seoul National University (SNU)	1.28	38308
61-70	National Taiwan University (NTU)	1.27	31640

Benchmarking (2010-2014)





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Universities are not Businesses but they are Economic Enterprises

Return on Investment (ROI) = Investment of a resource to yield an outcome or impact. Used to critically evaluate the “**Opportunity Cost**” of one option over another.

Process
(Policy / Practice)

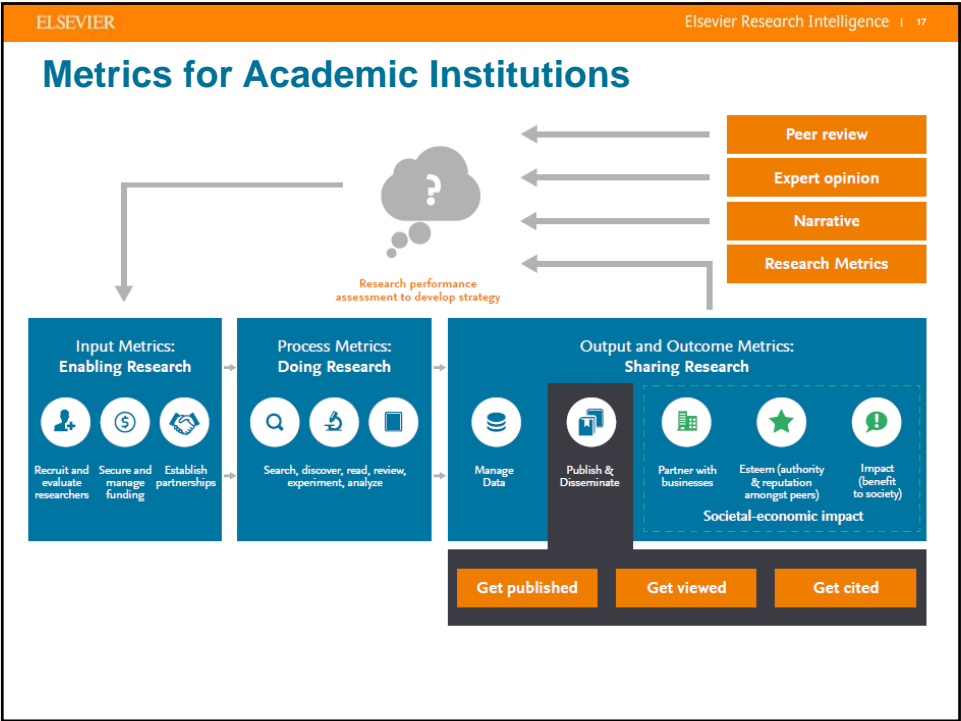
Resources → Inputs → Outputs → Outcomes

Efficiency

Effectiveness

Productivity = Outputs / Inputs

Top Level Research Papers / Unit Research Expenditure
(People, Money, Infrastructure)



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Elsevier's perspective on metrics

HEFCE
Higher Education Foundation Councils for England

Response to HEFCE's call for evidence: independent review of the role of metrics in research assessment

30 June 2014

Yes, Elsevier would be interested in participating in a workshop / event to discuss the use of metrics in research assessment and management.

This response covers the following sections:



- A. Why is Elsevier responding?
- B. For what purposes are research metrics used?
- C. Guiding principles for use of metrics in research assessment
- D. A model for generating and using metrics in research assessment
- E. Implications for using metrics in research assessment
- F. Response to the specific questions posed by HEFCE

Empowering Knowledge

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Elsevier perspective 1:





Empowering Knowledge

- Metrics should complement, not replace human judgment
- Metrics should be used together with peer review and expert opinion

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Elsevier perspective 2:




Empowering Knowledge

- Metrics embody human judgment, they are not independent of it
- When metrics and peer review or expert opinion give different answers, probe further

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Elsevier perspective 3:



- “Metrics” is not only bibliometrics
- Metrics also describe activities related to funding, collaboration, commercialization, and impact
- Multiple metrics gives the richest perspective

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From Institutional to National Research Assessments





Efficient

→ Easy for institutions
(no adm. overload)

Informative

→ Thorough &
enough detail

Excellence in Research for Australia, 2010, 2012 & 2015



Evaluation of Research Quality, Italy, 2012, 2013



Research Excellence Framework 2014, UK



Evaluation of R&D Units, Portugal 2014



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What Can be Captured will be Captured

- Academia will increasingly need to support with an evidence base for Return-of-Investment
- Performance data is expected to be captured and used
- The research community should guide: "Why, How and What" is measured



"Control your own destiny or someone else will"
Jack Welch, CEO GE 1981-2001

Elsevier Research Intelligence



APAC RESEARCH INTELLIGENCE CONFERENCE

"Building World-Leading Research Universities"
June 11-12, 2015, co-hosted with Fudan University (Shanghai, China)



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Next event in Shanghai!

Elsevier is proud to present the second annual APAC Research Intelligence Conference, which will take place in Shanghai on Thursday and Friday, June 11 and 12, 2015. The conference will be co-hosted with [Fudan University](#) of Shanghai and will bring together the region's leading Vice Presidents of Research, Research Managers and Research Administrators to share and build upon valuable information in support of long-term research management efforts.

This is the second time the conference is held in this format, inviting an array of world renowned speakers from across APAC and Europe. For an impression of last year's highly successful conference, jointly hosted with Tsinghua Technological University (NTU) in Singapore, you can view an [ElsevierConnected](#) article that details the key highlights of the 2014 conference.

Thank you!