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Predicted Unintended Consequences of the Research Excellence Framework

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The Rumsfeld legacy

- ☐ **Known-knowns**
- ☐ **Known-unknowns**
- ☐ **Unknown-unknowns**

Known-unknowns

- **RAE to REF – the ‘same difference’?**
- **Interdisciplinary and applied research**
- **Impact of measurement (playing the ‘game’)**
- **Institutional strategies: income v. reputation**

RAE to REF

- ✓ **Tweaking the RAE / REF ‘step change’**
- ✓ **Winners and losers – same or different?**
- ✓ **‘Mode 1’ science >>> ‘Mode 2’ innovation**

Interdisciplinary / applied research

- ✓ **RAE definition of 'research' comprehensive**
- ✓ **REF 'impact' wider still?**

BUT

- ☐ **Conservatism of panels**
- ☐ **Presumptions made by institutions**

Impact of measurement

POSITIVE EFFECTS

- ✓ **Higher quality**
- ✓ **Increased productivity**
- ✓ **‘Nowhere to hide’**

NEGATIVE EFFECTS

- ☐ **Premature publication**
- ☐ **Institutional ‘game playing’**

Institutional strategies

- **‘Top’ universities: funding and reputation both essential**
- **‘Post-1992’ universities: reputation before funding**
- **‘Squeezed middle’: sacrificing reputation to maintain funding?**

Unknown-unknowns

- 1. Interaction between research (QR) funding and new teaching funding regime (high fees)**
- 2. Research assessment as tool to differentiate (stratify?) HEIs**
- 3. The impact agenda: measuring (and rewarding) innovation**
- 4. Simplifying research assessment = fewer unintended consequences**