

# The Academic Pledge

I recognise that:

1. Universities' increasing emphasis on rewarding 'excellence' is based on the flawed and exclusionary principles that:
  - not all can be excellent, and
  - it is possible to measure and categorize excellence objectively.
2. I and my colleagues are part of a society and university system which involve multiple inequalities.
3. Both my failures **and my successes** should be understood as conditioned by the social context in which I work. This context includes:
  - my personal qualities and background, among which are my gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexuality, social class, family responsibilities;
  - many other factors, including the idiosyncrasies of disciplinary fashions, social networks, structures of academia, institutional differences, historical change and a considerable amount of luck.
4. In a context of competition and individualism, my collective action with, and collegiality towards, other academics within and beyond my institution and discipline is a political act and a necessary part of resistance to the neo-liberal university.

**In light of this I pledge to:**

1. Resist the ranking of academics, including the identification of 'excellence', *however advantageous such ranking may be to my own career.*
2. Resist the ranking of universities or departments, including the identification of 'excellence' *however advantageous such ranking may be to my own career.*
3. Work on the assumption that all colleagues in my and in other institutions, when sufficiently supported, are as capable of producing interesting research and stimulating teaching as am I.
4. Support all colleagues subjected to Performance Management in resisting this fear-based system of academic management.
5. Seek funding, and support colleagues seeking funding, *where this is necessary for academic work*, but never treat the receipt of research or other funding as a measure of success or failure.