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**Abstract**

This paper provides an insight into the debate about academic work as a profession. It refers to the sociology of professions and explores how academics in a pre-1992 university in England understood their work as a profession and how they interpreted their professionalism in the context of an audit culture for teaching. It reveals that academics' professionalism has affected their attitudes towards audit-related quality mechanisms and resulted in a perceived tension between professional values and the audit. This tension was caused by the perceived bureaucracy of the audit, its time cost and the perception that the audit is a symbol of distrust in the professionalism of academics. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)