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Current science policies and their implications for the formation and maintenance of academic identity

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Abstract

The paper draws on communitarian theory to suggest that the traditional strength and stability of academic identities are strongly associated with membership of communities, primarily the discipline and the university, that together constitute a coherent, bounded world. It analyses how science policies have helped to weaken these boundaries over the last 30 years. It then examines the implications for academic professional identities, focusing on natural scientists, and considers, in particular, how they are reflected and taken account of in policies for doctoral education, which has in the past constituted a key form of induction into academic community membership. It argues that these policies have the potential to help students to continue to build the foundation of a strong epistemic identity in the context of change but that they contain contradictions that must be confronted. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)