

‘I just want to get something clear,’ said Glenda. ‘You can actually disobey the orders of someone like the Archchancellor?’ ‘Oh, yes,’ said Hix. ‘I am under instruction to do so. It is expected of me.’ ‘But how can that possibly work?’ said Glenda. ‘What happens when he gives you an instruction that he doesn’t want you to disobey?’ ‘It works by common sense and good will on all sides,’ said Hix. ‘If, for example, the Archchancellor gives me a command that absolutely must not be disobeyed, he will add something like, “Hix, you little worm (by university statute), if you disobey this one, I’ll smack your head.” Though in reality, a word to the wise, madam, is sufficient. It’s all done on the basis of trust, really. I am trusted to be untrustworthy. I don’t know what the Archchancellor would do without me.’

— Terry Pratchett, *Unseen Academicals*, 2009