

CHANGES IN ACADEMIC WORK

**IMPLICATIONS FOR UNIVERSITIES OF THE CHANGING AGE
DISTRIBUTION AND WORK ROLES OF ACADEMIC STAFF**

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The opinions expressed in this report are either those of the authors or – in most cases – of the anonymous respondents to the questionnaire.

Summary

This report covers two topics: the ways in which academic life has changed in the last twenty years or so, and the impact on universities of an ageing academic workforce. The first two chapters provide some background to these studies. Part 2 deals with changes in academic life. Part 3 deals with issues of ageing.

Academic life has been affected by large growth in the number of students without a matching increase in the number of academics, so that the student: staff ratio has risen to unprecedented levels. It has been affected by pressures on universities to raise funds by taking in fee-paying students at undergraduate and graduate levels and by undertaking educational and research work under contracts with industries. It has been affected by the great growth in communications and information technology; by a strong change in management styles from the collegial to the managerial style of businesses; by greatly increased use of casual staff, and the extra pressures this places on the full-time continuing staff; and by a decline in the relative status, salaries, prestige and general attractiveness of employment as an academic.

While some developments have been welcomed – for instance, greater attention to the quality of teaching, the greater access of students to university education, or the ease of modern electronic communications – the overall picture is of frustration and disillusionment, to the point where many respondents to a questionnaire said they would not recommend an academic career to anyone.

The ageing of the academic workforce is a phenomenon of some concern in Britain and in the USA. It is recognised here, but seems to be of less concern to universities. It is more complicated than simply the fact that the average age of academic staff is rising; it affects different departments or sections of a university in different ways. ‘Bunching’, where several members of a department retire at much the same time, can either give an opportunity for renewal or can lead to loss of significant areas of study. In the second case, decisions taken in department after department around the nation can lead to a national loss before anyone is aware of it happening.

Some universities have procedures for gathering data internally and for dealing with ageing according to the university’s own priorities. There seems to be no body to oversee the national interest in the decline or disappearance of areas of study of national importance.

Preface

On hearing of this inquiry into the implications for universities of changes in the academic workforce and work conditions, one biblically-minded academic remarked to the authors: 'For DEST to do this resembles Yahweh enquiring into flood damage on Day 40'. Such bitterness is widespread in the universities, though usually expressed with less wit – for instance: 'Line the University Council, including V-C and at least two rungs beneath him up against a wall and machine-gun the lot of them.'

Much damage has occurred. However, a balanced picture would also look for any beneficial changes over the last decade or two. This inquiry attempts to provide that picture. Part 1 of this account includes the historical background and is a common introduction to the two topics of the investigation, Part 2 reports on the implications for universities of changes to the academic work role and Part 3 reports on the implications for universities of the age structure of the academic workforce in which older categories predominate.

In part this inquiry proceeded by survey of academics in twelve universities – three each from four categories of university. In the report the categories are frequently used in abbreviated form, as follows:

G8 = Group of Eight (as they have defined themselves)

Tech = University of Technology

Regional = Regional university (universities outside a mainland State capital city)

Metro = Metropolitan University. This is a category difficult to define; it is 'the rest' when the other three categories are taken out.

With respect to the report on the implications of ageing workforce a declaration of interest is necessary: the three members of the research team are all retired from full-time academic work.

Part 1 Background

Chapter 1

Australian Universities since the 1940s – four discontinuities

The Commonwealth becomes involved: 1939 to 1972

The modern history of Australia's university system begins with the involvement of the Commonwealth Government during the Second World War and is marked by four major discontinuities. The Commonwealth's involvement and contribution of funds was limited until the report of the Murray Committee and the establishment of the Australian Universities Commission (AUC) in July 1959 – the first discontinuity. In 1951 the Commonwealth's direct share of the funding of universities was about 20 per cent of their total income; within ten years it stood at 44 per cent, with about 36 per cent coming from State governments.

The model established after the Murray Committee's report is still alive in the memories and folklore of many current and recently retired academics. Universities were left very much to run their own affairs, determine what courses they would offer, how they would teach them, whom they would admit as students, how they would organise their internal administration, whom they would appoint as staff and what duties would be expected of staff. Salary levels, which accounted for much the greatest part of university expenditure, were standard across the nation and determined by an independent tribunal. Most of the income of universities came from State and Commonwealth governments on the advice of the AUC, and was guaranteed by legislation for three years at a time.

The Commonwealth takes over: 1973 to 1987

On the election of the Whitlam government in 1972, the Commonwealth assumed full responsibility for the public funding of universities, taking over the States' roles and abolishing student tuition fees. At the same time, it set up a Schools Commission to facilitate greatly increased Commonwealth expenditure at the school level. Commonwealth spending on education (university and school) almost quadrupled in the two financial years from June 1973. In this same period external events – especially the 'oil shocks', price rises initiated by the major oil producing countries – led to rapidly rising inflation and unemployment in Australia. In this hard economic climate the AUC produced its recommendations for the triennium 1976-8. The Whitlam Government was under criticism for its economic management and in 1975 its new Treasurer, Bill Hayden, said the Government would not accept the recommendations; 1976 would be a year 'outside' the triennium while the position of the universities was reassessed. This was the second major discontinuity.

By the end of 1975 the Whitlam Government had been dismissed and a Coalition government under Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser had been elected. Determined to assert its economic credentials, this government reviewed all areas of public expenditure – one of the largest of which was education. The Commissions overseeing the various sectors of education were given ‘guidelines’ by the Government which indicated the emphases which Government wished to see in the provision of education, and the levels of expenditure which it considered acceptable. However, apart from closer financial constraints universities conducted their own affairs much as before, under the supervision of the Universities Council of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (established in 1977).

The binary system ends: 1987 to 1996

Universities continued under this regime until the next major discontinuity in 1987, when John Dawkins became Minister for Employment, Education and Training. He classified all Colleges of Advanced Education as universities and pressed amalgamations on many institutions, so that the number of universities (after amalgamations) almost doubled from the 19 before he became Minister. This placed on many academic staff expectations of duties which they had not faced before – such as the expectation to conduct and publish research. Dawkins also abolished the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, which had included in itself a Universities Council, and set up the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) including a Higher Education Council with responsibility for policy advice but not for allocating funds. Universities were expected to make greater efforts to contribute to national economic growth, with more emphasis on close relations with industry and on provision of vocational courses.

Fundamental industrial changes followed the Dawkins white paper of 1988. Universities became ‘industries’ and academics ‘workers’ or ‘employees’ as industrial laws came to regulate academic work. The efficiency principle was invoked and enterprise bargaining began. Academic staff associations became unions and registered themselves with the industrial Arbitration Commission. The Vice-Chancellors created a new employer organisation called the Australian Higher Education Industrial Association (AHIAE). These two bodies would bargain: greater efficiency or productivity gains from the workers in return for improvements in working conditions or salaries. Later these central negotiations would be replaced by ‘enterprise bargaining’ within each institution sharpening the new adversarial roles of academics and university senior administrators¹.

For students tuition fees were introduced and they were expected to contribute about one fifth of the estimated cost of their courses. Payment could be deferred however through the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS), income contingent repayments being made via the taxation system.

The entrepreneurial university: 1996 -

That framework has continued to this day. The most recent discontinuity came with the election of the Coalition Government in 1996 and its subsequent re-

¹ For an account of the new industrial regime and its implications for academic work see Hort, 1997

elections. Public funding of universities was sharply reduced to the point where now it provides less than half the expenditure of many universities. The proportion of universities' operating grants from HECS has grown from 20 per cent in 1991 to an estimated 32 per cent in 2002.

Growth in student numbers outpaced growth in academic staff so that the student to staff ratio increased 75 per cent over the decade from 13 per cent in 1990 to 19 per cent in 2001. Perhaps the most remarkable change in students' circumstances is in the amount of outside work that is undertaken. Full-time undergraduates now work on average more than 14 hours per week during semester, up from 5 hours in the 1980s.

NBEET and the HEC were discontinued, so that the Government's only source of official policy advice is the Department – currently the Department of Education, Science and Training. Universities are much more energetic in seeking funding wherever it can be found; much more rigorous in scrutinizing the performance of their staffs; much more rigorously accountable to Government through the Department. Many of today's academics look back fondly to the early 80s before the Dawkins changes; many however have never known that more relaxed environment and regard the present situation, for better or worse, as normal.

Things that have not changed

If Murray of the Murray Report (1957) were to return to Australia he would no doubt be astounded at the expansion of universities and the use of electronic technologies in teaching and administration. But he would see that despite demographic and technological revolutions many things remain the same, for better or worse. Six constants are noteworthy.

1 Governments remain the chief patrons of universities as they have been for a hundred years, being by far the largest contributor to their coffers. As we have noted above, whereas once both state and federal governments contributed to the core now the Commonwealth assumes sole responsibility. This change has made it easier for the Commonwealth to steer universities in directions it regards as efficient and contributing to national economic objectives.

2 The basic design of the Australian higher education remains as it was 50 years ago: all institutions engage in teaching and research; all have undergraduate degrees and postgraduate studies. The so-called binary system initiated in the 1960s included a large number of colleges which specialised in teaching and had no postgraduate research programs. The innovation lasted only 20 years. There are no residential universities and no liberal arts colleges of the sort found in North America. The only fully residential university college was established at Mildura after World War 2. It lasted scarcely half a dozen years. La Trobe and Griffith universities were designed in the 1970s as innovations to replace the hegemony of the traditional disciplines with inter-disciplinary studies and scholarship. They and other such experiments have regressed to the disciplinary mean.

3 Despite the exigencies of funding and pressures to commercialise, universities are still autonomous institutions governed by statutory councils, and academics still have the freedom to pursue their own scholarly interests and to determine the content of their teaching.

4 Universities remain part of an informal international network exchanging ideas and staff. As they have done for centuries, academics continue to travel abroad to teach or to sit at the feet of famous scholars.

5 The student mix has not changed all that much despite enormous expansion of the university system – those from the lower half of the social order remain grossly under-represented whether status is measured by the wealth, education or occupational status of their parents.

6 The lecture theatre remains the main technology for the delivery of the curriculum to students.

Chapter 2

The academic cycle

Previous policies

According to AVCC figures, fewer than 500 academic staff in any classification were under the age of 25 in any year from 1994 to 2000 (1994 = 481; 2000 = 332). Four or five times as many are in the next age band, up to age 29. If one therefore regards this band as the age at which significant recruitment to the academic staff takes place – almost all at level A, the level below Lecturer – then one concludes that almost no current academics under the age of 40 experienced the conditions before the Dawkins changes. That is almost half of all current academics; soon fewer than half will recall academic life at that time.

In those days, and well into the present era, universities recruited staff very largely on the basis of potential or proven research achievement. It helped if referees said one was a good teacher, but a research record usually counted the most, and completion of a PhD was becoming necessary².

Are previous policies relevant? Given the changes in academic work in the last 20 years, is that what universities should be looking for now? Or – not to devalue the research task – is that all that universities should be looking for? The PhD is a preparation for a research career; is it an adequate preparation for an academic career, with all the varied abilities that are now expected of an academic? Do we need something other than the PhD, or more than the PhD?

The new academic

The typical academic career begins with a bright school student who then has an excellent record as an undergraduate, proceeds to a postgraduate research degree (usually the PhD) and is offered an appointment at Level A (tutor/senior tutor). There are exceptions, especially in the fields of study that came into universities recently, where successful practice often substituted for the research degree, but in the long-established fields of study the route described above is the usual entry to academe.

The new academic then teaches undergraduates, often under supervision in courses devised by a more senior colleague. With growing experience the time comes for the newcomer to develop his or her own courses, and perhaps lead other colleagues in teaching them. At the same time the newcomer is attempting to pursue a line of research, to get articles published in learned journals and to extend a range of professional contacts. An interested mentor can be a great help at this stage.

Consider the expectations placed on people taking up academic posts for the first time. Obviously they are expected to be of high calibre in their field of study or practice. They are expected to continue research and publication or comparable

² In 1996 just over one half of all academics possessed a PhD – science with 82 per cent and engineering with 68 per cent were the two highest fields. Universities tended to recruit their own graduates – 22 per cent overall, one third in G8. See Anderson et al, 1997.

appropriate activity in their field. They are also expected to be professional teachers. What does that involve?

The teaching role traditionally embraces curriculum development, preparation of courses, face-to-face teaching and interaction with students, assessment of students' progress and provision of feedback, and professionally competent examining. Nowadays changes in technology and increases in off-campus teaching and flexible delivery have modified the teaching role. Academics are now expected to be familiar with information technology (IT), computer-assisted learning (CAL) and on-line delivery. It seems likely that the stage performance – the academic transmitting information and insights from a podium to a theatre full of up to 400 students – will no longer be such a dominant part of the university experience. That information, those insights can be placed on-line for students to access at their convenience.

Does that mean there will be more time for the academic to engage in small-group teaching, tutorials and one-to-one discussions? Not likely. The ratio of students to staff has risen to the point where in many areas this would be impractical. The preparation of CAL and on-line delivery demands much time; so does conscientious assessment and feedback; so do the pressures of accountability and evaluation. If academics want promotion and career advancement, they must maintain their research, and that often means chasing research grants – another time-consuming task.

University teaching nowadays means:

Planning a course of study: What are its objectives? What emphases? What topics? In what order and timing?

Deciding on modes of delivery: lectures, group discussion, practical work, fieldwork, printed materials, online materials, visual aids, email, other?

Preparing reading lists and a book of readings ('the brick'); preparing lecture notes, practical classes, discussion notes, visual aids, printed materials, online materials; supervision of practical classes and setting up online access if required

Deciding on assessment methods and topics, whether for continuous assessment or end-of-course assessment

Monitoring students' progress, identifying and resolving difficulties facing individuals or the whole class; providing feedback on exercises; maintaining interest and encouragement.

To do these properly requires a good understanding of learning theory and student motivation. It requires an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the different modes of delivery. It requires ability in written and spoken expression and a good understanding of information technology and its potential applications for educational purposes. It requires familiarity with the principles of valid assessment and the educational uses of assessment. And it requires a lot of time.

At the same time the academics are writing research proposals and grant applications, pursuing their research, taking part in meetings of their departments and faculties, responding to questionnaires from inside the university (from the library, the central administration, the traffic authorities and so on) or from outside (such as the questionnaire used in preparing this report). In many fields they are expected to maintain good links with related industries and be ready to assist those

industries with specialised knowledge. They will see their own graduates go into those industries and fairly soon earn more than the academics who taught them.

The mature academic

The academic advances in age and scholarship and university experience and fairly soon has the opportunity, perhaps even the duty, to serve on faculty or university committees and to take some share in running the department or faculty. With increased seniority and promotion either in the original university or by appointment to another, the administrative and managerial tasks tend to increase, and there may well come a point at which the academic virtually ceases to teach and examine students and becomes a full-time manager – a dean, pro-vice-chancellor, deputy vice-chancellor. In the 38 universities there would be several hundred at these levels, with a fair amount of turnover every few years. For the great majority of academics levels C and D (senior lecturer/associate professor) will be where they spend their careers, often occupying positions such as dean or PVC for a time.

In academe as in policing, nursing, retailing and other occupations promotion tends to take one away from the tasks in the field and into those of management.

However in academe as in law or medicine it is also possible to move to the forefront of the profession and high international recognition while remaining 'in the field', that is, in the classroom, the library and the laboratory through scholarship, research and publication.

In the United States particularly, and to some extent in Britain, there is some movement of academics out of universities and into industry or government service, at least for a time, and then back to the university. In Australia, while this is by no means unknown, it is much less common. That tends to raise the premium on 'tenure' or guaranteed continuity of employment, which would be less of an issue if academics could be reasonably confident of alternative satisfying employment.

There are differences between the work of the new academic and of the mature and experienced academic. The more senior person is likely to be engaged in administrative and managerial tasks, for which she or he should receive suitable training and career development, especially in the management of people and finances. These tasks will be additional to those expected of the commencing academic. Mature academics also will often have responsibility for directing the work of others and for evaluating the performance of others – tasks which require skills not necessarily innate and not always found in practice.

PART 2

CHANGES IN THE ACADEMIC WORK ROLE

1. Introduction

In this part of the report we present the results from the group interviews and internet survey with academics. In Part 1 it was pointed out that the academic work role, which used to be conceived simply as teaching, research and scholarship along with some administration and services to the community, has become more complex because of technological changes affecting teaching and administration. This change has come about partly because university work is now governed by industrial legislation and agreements, because internal management has become professionalised, and because of changes in funding.

There are a number of ways in which these changes have affected academics. First, new tasks, new technologies, and new accountability and bureaucratic procedures have added to the traditional academic responsibilities. Nothing has been taken away. One consequence of this change has been the increase in stress amongst academics.

Second, twenty years ago there was little or no job of 'research management'. Now it is a career in its own right. It is necessary because of the complexity of modern research: finding funding, arranging partnerships, managing projects, commercialising outcomes. What used to come from the core funding of universities now comes from contestable funds, so that grant applications have to be developed and managed. There is much more international research activity than there used to be. Modern communications technology has transformed the types and complexity of projects.

Third, there are more issues of compliance, for instance with ethics committees, progress reports, financial accountability and quality assurance. All these things take up time. An immediate example is the study for this report. Since it was classed as 'Research involving human subjects' it required approval from the University Ethics Committee, which took many hours to obtain, before the questionnaire could be distributed or the interviews conducted.

Fourth, unit resources have declined, especially for teaching. Academics are expected to be entrepreneurial bringing in funds for their department or for their own work. Often departmental resources are needed to cover technical support staff, secretarial and accounting work, which used to be provided as normal infrastructure by the university. Senior researchers with big laboratories and numbers of graduate students can cope with these demands, but the smaller research groups and individuals find them very difficult.

Other changes which have impacted on academic work roles can be summarised in a series of dot points.

- There are now more research-only staff; this has implications for teaching-and-research staff, since universities' recurrent funding has not increased to cover this situation.
- Casual staff, paid by the hour, are taking over a good deal of teaching and assessment of students.
- The ethnic mix and educational background of graduate students has changed, even amongst Australian students, let alone international students. This imposes extra demands on supervision and research training.
- Supervisors and academics generally need to be much more cautious about the potential for accusations of sexual harassment, for instance with graduate students working back late in laboratories.
- There is a greater sense of accountability to students and the possibility of lawsuits from them.
- The roles of dean and research leader have changed from being mentors to being managers

We are starting to get a run of books on change in universities and the adaptations that must be made if they are to cope with the new environments in which they have to operate. We have drawn on four in particular:

- Peter Coaldrake and Lawrence Stedman, *On the Brink: Australia's Universities Confronting Their Future*
- Simon Marginson, *The Enterprise University*
- Sheila Slaughter and Larry L. Leslie, *Academic Capitalism*
- and Elaine Martin's *Changing Academic Work: Developing the Learning University*

They make an interesting package of reading. Coaldrake and Marginson emphasise the importance of flexibility, entrepreneurialism, links with industry and so on. Slaughter and Leslie agree with that, but say: That is all very well, but it really applies only to a portion of the university - the faculties of Business, Engineering and Computing; there's not much commercial scope for philosophy or physics. Also, the whole business of turning basic research discoveries into profitable industries is far more complicated and expensive than most people seem to think.

These three books deal pretty much at the level of the whole university, its policies and its senior administration. Martin deals at the level of the individual academic or the department: how are they to adjust to the new world order? She certainly pays some attention to senior management; for instance, they ought to listen to their academics more, and utter words of appreciation when they do well; but mostly it is a book for lecturers and heads of department, whereas the other books are for that group who have 'vice-chancellor' in their titles.

All the books naturally pay some attention - with different emphases - to the activities of the university in teaching and research.

A fifth book is an account of a survey of some of the topics reported in our own work:

Craig McInnes, *The Work Roles of Australian Academics*

Following analysis of a sample including well over 2000 academics from 15 universities McInnes (1999) concluded that:

As academics confront the growing pressures of competing demands on their time, they are, collectively and individually, faced with the choice of attempting to find new ways of balancing traditional work patterns or alternatively, concentrating their energies on a narrower set of more specialised activities. At the most basic level this amounts to finding creative solutions in the management of the tension between teaching and research, or simply opting to give more or less substantial, if not exclusive, weight to either teaching or research. ...

If the results of this survey are any guide, we have possibly reached a limit to the total time academics can reasonably be expected to spend on their work, even with their propensity for altruistic commitment. We are perhaps at a critical point for the academic profession where the amount of hours worked, and the diffusion and fragmentation of tasks seriously threatens the quality of both research and teaching. (p 63)

Following the literature review and interviews with academics and senior managers in eight universities we identified ten components of academic work as a basis for a survey: Student and staff interactions, teaching, academic standards, research, administration, entrepreneurship and community links, collegiality and corporatism, the academic career, and work satisfaction and stress. After several pilot trials, and keeping in mind the need to keep the survey a reasonable length, we settled to questions on 40 topics relating to possible changes in the academic work role. The final questionnaire consisted of these 40 questions plus 12 questions on the respondent's background. Provision was made for written comments after each topic and at the end of the questionnaire. Nearly all respondents added some written comment to their multiple choice responses. The total amounted to over 600 A4 pages.

For each of the 40 topics respondents were asked: 'How important is it in your work?' 'What is the extent of change over the last two decades or since you became an academic?' and 'Whether it is for the better or worse?' Answers to each question could be made by indicating the point on a scale that was closest to the respondent's position. In some topics the personal pronoun was used indicating that we were interested in respondents' personal experience, for example 'the influence of my research on my teaching'. In other cases respondents were asked to report more general perceptions, for example 'the use of casual staff for teaching'.

To illustrate: the question and response categories for first topic were presented as follows.

Topic: My Contact with students

1. Importance

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Of some importance
- Not at all important
- Not applicable

2. Extent of change

- Increased a great deal
- Increased a little
- Not changed significantly
- Decreased a little
- Decreased a great deal

3. Better or worse?

- Change is for the better
- Neither better or worse
- Change is for the worse

Respondents were invited to elaborate their answers in a box following each topic. This format was repeated for each of the 40 academic work role items. (See Appendix 4 for the complete questionnaire)

The survey was anonymous and web based. After pretesting the internet version of the questionnaire was posted on the web in early April 2002 and remained open for 6 weeks. All academics in 12 representative universities received an email invitation to participate forwarded by a contact officer in their university. By the time the site had closed 2075 useable responses had been received representing an estimated response rate of 50 per cent (see Appendix 2).

The following nine chapters present the quantitative results from the survey together with a rich selection of respondents' written comments on each of the main topics.

2 STUDENT STAFF INTERACTION AND TEACHING

I love working with the students, but can't possibly meet current expectations without working 18hr days. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

The quality of teaching is an overwhelmingly important topic for academics. Apart from 107 of 'research only' academics, who said the question did not apply to them, fewer than 3 per cent rated it as of 'only some importance' - this despite the fact that a majority (54 per cent) said their interest was more in teaching than research. Respondents were divided on whether quality of teaching has improved or not - 45 per cent say that it has, 20 per cent report no change and 29 per cent say it has decreased at least a little.

Scholarly and practical interest in university teaching has a long and respectable history in Australian universities, going back at least to the mid 1950s when the University of Melbourne established units in higher education research and teaching. Subsequently most universities entered the field and took steps to recognise and reward good teaching. Even so a bias towards research has surfaced from time to time as in the advertisement for a senior post '... include all research publications and teaching experience if any'.

Staff told us in the interviews that, while they have less time to work with individuals, students have become more demanding. It is suggested that this follows from students seeing themselves as customers now that most pay through HECS or fees. Academics also reported that the diversity of the student body, ethnically and scholastically, adds to the teaching workload.

Many students - from overseas, or from immigrant families, or indeed traditional Australians - can be quite weak in English comprehension and expression. Academics have to spend more time than in previous years explaining concepts and terminology to them and in correcting and improving the students' written work. This is true both at undergraduate and at postgraduate levels. The drive for fee-paying overseas students has meant some leniency in the requirements for competence in English. Amongst students schooled in Australia, the relaxation of old-fashioned emphasis on grammar and spelling has meant that a proportion of students are simply not up to the demands of a university course.

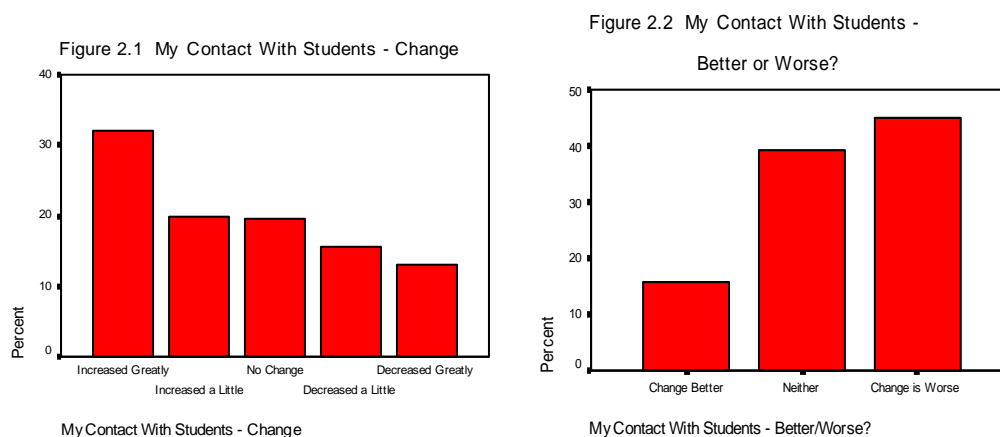
2.1 My Contact with Students

This topic was rated as most important of all - 90 per cent said very or extremely important; and 50 per cent said contact had increased compared with 27 per cent that it had decreased. The quality of contact has declined for many - 45 per cent say it has changed for the worse, 16 per cent for the better and 29 per cent neutral.

The evaluation of a perceived increase in student contact tended to be more negative than positive. For those who thought contact had increased a great deal, 23 per cent thought it was a change for the better. However 60 per cent thought it was a change for the worse. On the other hand, the perception that contact with students had decreased was uniformly seen as a change for the worse: 78 per cent who thought contact had decreased a great deal, thought it was a change for the worse.

By and large, our academic respondents seem to remain student-oriented, and positive about student-staff contact.

The frequency distributions for responses to contact with students for perceptions of change and evaluation are given in Figure 2.1 (N=1987) and Figure 2.2 (N=1949).



Generally, female respondents were slightly more likely than male respondents to say that contact with students was important. However there were no differences between them in the extent to which contact had changed, or whether it was better or worse.

Older academics were slightly more likely to regard contact with students as very important (52 per cent for the 55-59 age group compared to 37 per cent for the 35 to 39 age group). They were also more likely to regard contact as having increased, but there were no age differences in the evaluation of changes in contact.

There were no major differences by rank or by university group.

In cases where contact has increased, it is likely to be over administrative matters or via email as the following comments illustrate.

Students contact me as Program Director to solve problems with the University system - not to engage in discussions about their learning and how it could be advanced. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Science)

Contact used to be a rewarding part of the job - is now under-recognised & undervalued - not good for teaching or promotion. (Senior Lecturer, Nursing)

Management treat students as clients and they in turn treat us as service providers. The focus on equity is demanding; yet senior management show a real lack of understanding what this means for the way academics need to work with equity students. Proficiency with English language skills is a major concern for increasing numbers of students - again this places added demand on our time. (Lecturer, Humanities)

Increased contact through use of email; I am able to give very quick, very personalised, responses. (Senior Lecturer, Management)

2.2 The Time I Spend Reading Students' E-mails

We were reminded of the daily 'email burden' when academics in the pilot run informed us that an email invitation from us inviting academics to participate in our survey would probably be regarded as just another intervention 'from the authorities' adding to the workload caused by demands from students. As one of our many respondents said:

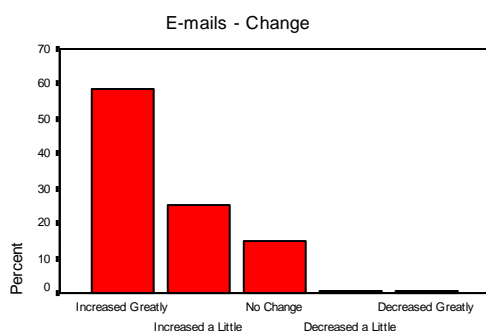
Despite all the wonders of e-mail, I reckon I was less stressed before it arrived! Even this questionnaire has given me guilt feelings - I wanted to do it, as after all how can I expect people to be participants in my surveys if I don't do the same for others. (Lecturer, Education)

We included a topic on our survey, which asked about the time academics spend on reading students' emails. Over 50 per cent of our respondents said that the use of emails with students was important; only 6 per cent said it was not at all important.

Over four out of five, 84 per cent, said that the use of emails had increased. However our respondents were split as to whether the use of emails was better or worse: 25 per cent said better and 29 per cent worse.

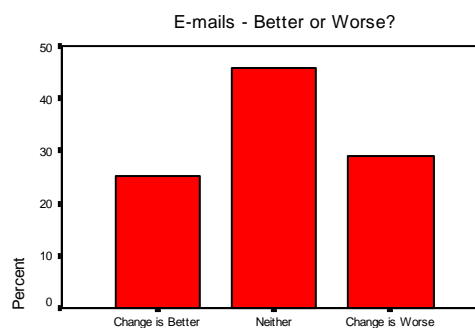
The frequency distributions for the change and evaluation of use of emails is given in Figure 2.3 (N=1891) and Figure 2.4 (N=1860).

Figure 2.3 Time I Spend Reading Students'



Time I Spend Reading Students' E-mails - Change

Figure 2.4 Time I Spend Reading Students'



Time I Spend Reading Students' E-mails - Better/Worse?

Older respondents were more likely than younger respondents to say that the use of email had increased a great deal (65 per cent for the 45-49 age category compared to 49 per cent for the 30-34 age category). Level C academics were more likely to regard the change as for the worse. Academics at regional and technical universities were more likely to say that the use of emails had increased (About 70 per cent compared to 50 per cent for the others), and they were also more likely to regard this as a change for the better (31 per cent compared to 20 per cent for G8 academics).

Most comments remarked on the amount of time needed to deal with students' emails, as reflected in the following examples.

I like to help, but I get 40 emails a day. (Tutor, Law)

It is an additional, increasing, hidden workload which nobody wants to acknowledge. I can spend the first hour or two just responding to student queries - especially as assignment time creeps up. It's a huge workload!! (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

This can take ages, and ages. I spent 8 hours with a half hour break (noon til 8.30pm) the other day trying to deal with my emails, putting student emails first. A student asked me how come I hadn't responded by lunchtime the next day. Very demanding especially when overseeing 200 students in a course! (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

This can consume the day - particularly when one attempts to answer all student mail promptly or when one has to read student assignments on-line. Students demand quick response and are particularly demanding -

as they should be - but this adds hours to the normal week's work load. There is as yet no compensation or discussion of what this means in terms of overall workload. (Professor, Humanities)

I am deluged with email, every day. I cannot hope to answer it all. Much of it is trivial stuff from lazy students who won't read the material I give them. Other emails are much more important. I do what I can, but this is many hours every week, and it can be a great burden. (Senior Lecturer, Maths)

Takes longer to deal with, versus talking briefly to students after a lecture. (A/P Reader, Science)

The testimony is near unanimous that dealing responsibly with students' emails takes a large amount of time – more time it seems than in the pre-electronic era. But this prompts the question whether students are benefiting from this extra time.

Some respondents clearly think the email innovation is a good thing.

Students' emails are very worthwhile in many instances. In an up-to-date word processor they can submit attachments as drafts for comment and development. I can insert notes indicating corrections and points of development. Email facilitates a lot of effective and efficient work with students. (Lecturer, Education)

Written communication with students keeps lines of communication clear. I find this form of communication preferable. It's easier to give students written feedback on longer writing assignments because I can type faster and clearer than I can write! (Lecturer, Creative Arts)

A number of the positive comments pointed out the advantage of email for students studying via distance education or off-shore.

Use of e-mail for off-shore students is their major means of communication with academics. This makes the program manageable. E-mails also provide a good tool for the dissemination of information to the on-shore student body. Unfortunately, this comes at considerable time expense in reading and replying to messages. (Lecturer, Engineer)

Email is a mode of communication that works for some students extremely well, is cost effective for distance students and helpful in ensuring contact around busy schedules (theirs and mine). Student email has not increased greatly over the last couple of years as I have less tutorial and more lecturing tasks. In addition I suspect that students are only too aware of the pressures on some staff. (A/P Reader, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Several respondents point out that, for one reason or another, email does not meet the needs of all students.

Only pass students seem to email me much; honours and grad students tend to know what's going on, and know they can come and see me any time if they need me. Many undergrads use email just as a way to avoid having to ask their more clued-up classmates about timetables and topics. (Professor, Science)

Good contact, but it means I/we are available almost 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Reading/responding takes a lot of time. Time is not evenly

distributed amongst students, i.e., the squeaky wheel syndrome. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

In some respects, e-mail is a great way of communicating, especially with external students. However, on units with around 500 internally enrolled students, the quantity of e-mails is at times difficult to deal with. While some enquiries are important, other students use it as an alternative to spending time in their books to find solutions. (Lecturer, Economics)

I despise this mode of contact, and the lowering of threshold for asking questions, which are often trivial or poorly phrased. (Professor, Science)

Finally, in spite of some of the advantages of email, some staff indicated that they preferred to deal with students face to face, for a variety of reasons.

E-mail is a great way to communicate, but it is no substitute for face to face interaction. Sometimes it is too hard and time consuming to type something that is better explained in person. (Lecturer, Creative Arts)

Email is often a poor substitute for face-to-face contact. But it is very useful for simple notification etc. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

Face to face contact is preferable, whether as undergraduates or graduates, but this is increasingly impractical. The open-door policy we have typically operated is unsustainable at present. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

Email questions require very careful and precise answers, and for that reason take heaps of time. Generally unless it is a simple one I ask them to come and see me to explain. This way I can check their understanding as well. I am unclear about what are reasonable student expectations on this. It has the potential to get out of hand, although isn't yet. At least they are asking questions! (Senior Lecturer, Law)

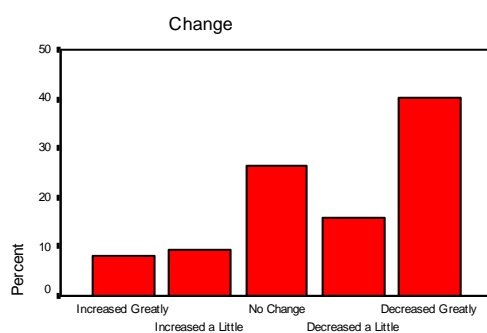
2.3 Small Group Teaching

Whether in tutorials, seminars, laboratories, or one to one encounters of student and teacher, small group teaching has always been a highly valued; some would say essential, part of the university learning experience. We asked our respondents about the importance of the topic and any changes in recent years.

Three out of four of our respondents rated small group teaching to be very or extremely important. Only 4 per cent thought it to be not at all important. Over half of our respondents, 56 per cent, thought that small group teaching had decreased. Only 26 per cent thought it had increased. Similarly, 58 per cent thought the change had been for the worse; only 10 per cent thought it was for the better. For those respondents who thought that small group teaching had increased a great deal, 39 per cent thought it was for the better. Of those who thought that small group teaching had decreased a great deal, 96 per cent thought it was for the worse. Clearly there is strong sentiment among our respondents in favour of small group teaching.

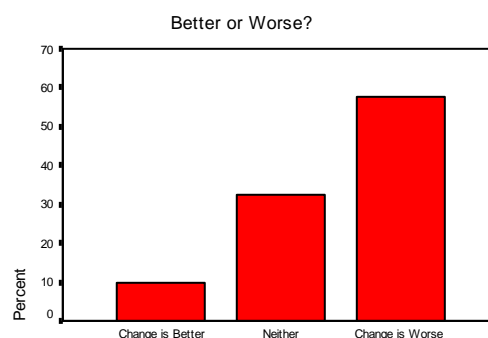
The frequency distributions for this topic are given in Figure 2.5 (N=1674) and Figure 2.6 (N=1658).

Figure 2.5 Small Group Teaching (Less Than 12) -



Small Group Teaching (Less Than 12) - Change

Figure 2.6 Small Group Teaching (Less Than 12) -



Small Group Teaching (Less Than 12) - Better/Worse?

There were no differences between males and females in perceptions of change and the evaluation of change in small group teaching. There was a slight tendency for older academics to perceive small group teaching to have decreased a great deal, and for the worse. There were no systematic differences by rank.

G8 and Metro universities were more likely than regional universities to regard small group teaching as very important (41 per cent compared to 21 per cent). However it was the technical universities which thought it had decreased the most, compared to the regional universities (49 per cent compared to 25 per cent). Somewhat in similar fashion, the technical universities were more likely to think the change had been for the worse (62 per cent compared to 44 per cent for the regional universities).

One of our questions asked about small group teaching instancing a small group as one with about 12 or fewer students. The suggestion attracted scorn and derision: 'where have you been for the last 10 years?'

I have not seen a class this size for more than 10 years; the smallest I have is 33 (Professor, Humanities)

Class sizes are ever increasing in our area with fewer staff so small group teaching just doesn't happen. (Lecturer, Science)

A tutorial in my School is a class of 25 - 35. The days of small group and intensive tutor-student interaction have long since disappeared. (Professor, Humanities)

Teaching small groups is almost impossible to do now due to University policy re viability. PG not so restricted (yet?) (Senior Lecturer, Education)

We are expected to do more and more with less and less and more and more students - what quality this means is irrelevant. I have literally fought about quality teaching and learning to be constantly told they are not feasible, not realistic, not possible etc. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

Many respondents pointed out why they think small group teaching is so important and should be protected.

I think this is vital at postgraduate level. (A/P Reader, Nursing)

In terms of teaching satisfaction and sense of really teaching theory, substantive issues, this is a major source of job dissatisfaction for me. Its total absence from my teaching means that I do not get to think anew through changing student contexts and experience, the works that are

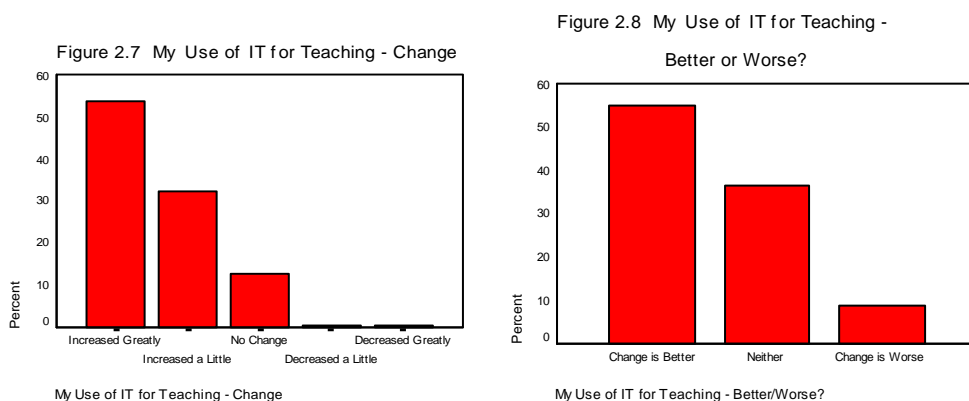
still crucial to actually knowing the field. In this sense the implications are that students leave undergrad with a more superficial rather than in depth knowledge of aspects of their field. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

All the evidence suggests that small group work is the best approach for teaching and learning. Despite this, due to funding shortfalls, we have moved to longer lectures and less tutorials with larger amounts of students. (Tutor, Humanities)

2.4 Use of IT for Teaching

In higher education information and communications technology is generally understood to mean the use of computers to assist learning. While giving it a positive rating respondents do not see it as important as face to face contact with students or small group teaching - 42 per cent 'of some importance', 43 per cent 'very important'. Most say that use IT has increased a great deal or a little (33 per cent). A majority, 55 per cent, also say the change is for the better (55 per cent), 36 per cent say that change is neither better nor worse, and 9 per cent say it is for the worse.

The frequencies for change and the evaluation of change in the use of IT for teaching are given in Figure 2.7 (N=1630) and Figure 2.8 (N=1611).



Despite 20 years of application numerous evaluations of IT remain cautious about its contribution to improved learning. For example Alexander and McKenzie (1998), in an evaluation of 104 CAUT funded IT projects, concluded that:

A particular information technology did not, in itself, result in improved quality of learning or productivity of learning. Rather, a range of factors ... are necessary for a successful outcome, the most critical being the design of students' learning experiences.

Almost all academics who responded to the survey use information technology of one form or another. Mostly it is used as a supplement to their lecturing, and is found useful for that purpose. Students generally do not like it as a substitute for face to face teaching, although if material is put on-line, attendance at classes falls off. Email is much used for communication between students and their teachers and is valued by academics for its convenience in communicating with colleagues around Australia and overseas. IT is especially useful in distance education, both within Australia and for students offshore.

Many respondents nevertheless mentioned the negative aspects of IT. It takes a long time to prepare materials for on-line or other elaborate formats. It requires skills that have to be learned in courses – again, taking up time. It facilitates plagiarism by students and makes it harder to detect. Students use email to ask questions, often the same question over and over from individual students, so that a great deal of time is used which could be more productively used by addressing the question once in a class. Not all students have the necessary skills; and the technology from time to time goes down.

This qualified evaluation of the usefulness of IT – that benefits for teaching and learning depend on creating an appropriate educational context – is implied in a large number of survey comments that are generally in favour, especially when there is a clear pedagogical application or when it can reduce the teacher's work load.

My willingness to try new innovative IT strategies for teaching and assessment has overall helped my workload and the students generally feedback that these strategies have been beneficial. For example, the use of electronic submission of assignments, course home pages where students download information, lectures, tutorials. (A/P Reader, Other Health)

The use of the web and IT based resources is for the better in that it allows us access to new student groups. This is necessary with the decreasing number of on-shore students interested in engineering. Staff are placed under pressure though to develop their web based material in parallel with their normal duties. (Lecturer, Engineering)

For many however, the jury is still out. It does not necessarily reduce work load, in fact it might add to it because of the time taken to master the technology.

An interesting one: using IT is way time consuming, changing from OHTs to power point is a time eater and also I suspect, has implications for how students read, the lectures. I would like to know if it does indeed position students more as spectator than scholar and do they read it through TV/screen practices rather than ?? Would really like to know more about this as I am not convinced being hip with IT works. Also, using Power point, putting those lectures on electronic reserve, having a course web-page, is very screen intense - again am not sure about this and more students than anticipated do not have the skills or home access to computing that is assumed by going this way with teaching materials. So, I am curious about this and engaged in trying to work out, does it really work? Does it work better? Final comment is that it takes an enormous amount of time which really is technical rather than scholarly and ought to be done by admin techo's than researchers!! Is killing my reading/research and writing time. A serious consequence! (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

In some ways better in other ways worse. IT allows you to do more, ie distribution of info, contacting students, accessing info. But it is also used by universities as a way of reducing contact with students, depersonalising teaching, reducing the numbers of teaching staff. It can also take up valuable time, ie things invariably go wrong and one can waste much time. (Lecturer, Education)

I am becoming increasingly less skilled at IT, with no time for upgrading my skills. IT has also meant that some of my courses are now online - they are out of date very quickly, but there is no account taken of this on an ongoing basis. The general attitude here is that once the course is online that's it - job done, and no more resources are needed to ensure it remains up to date and relevant. Much of what is now on line is thrown together and is absolute rubbish - some time soon, a student will twig to this and sue the hell out of us - that would probably be the best thing to happen - then management may listen (but I doubt it) (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

More time spent at the computer and less time available to interact with the students face-to face. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

On the positive side is the greater flexibility, access to the information etc and on the down side are the lack of IT skills and/or student resources for the students to use the online content. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Programs that rely on teaching practical skills do not benefit substantially from IT (ie web based teaching). Professional organisations and registration boards have an expectation that students will graduate with specific entry-level competencies. In many programs these requirements preclude the use of IT. (A/P Reader, Other Health)

Using the net for course delivery is an option I chose to take as a way of reducing the sheer number of hours in face to face teaching, travelling between campuses and doing repeat lectures. Despite being called flexible, it is actually a very inflexible mode of delivery in some respects. If I put up the materials at the start of semester, I can't change them without some students complaining. Responding to student needs can be done at a moment's notice in face to face teaching. Creating material in finished form, getting them linked to appropriate resources etc takes many hours of unsung work, apparently invisible to university management. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

As one of my core areas in teaching and research has always been the use of IT, there has not been a great change – although the increase in the number of ready-made programs has significantly reduced the students' actual understanding of the use of technology, despite their being more facile with it. (A/P Reader, Science)

Too much emphasis is placed on doing PowerPoint presentations and using bells and whistles rather than actually supplying students with the necessary information and skills to be successful contributors in society. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Science)

As the majority of students have part-time work this gives them access to materials at a time that is convenient to them. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

IT tends to detract from the personal relationships between students and staff if taken to extreme. E.g. lecture/class notes on line. However, communication is made easier for broad issues – e.g. assignment reminders. The effort involved in becoming IT literate is enormous and at times stressful. I don't have adequate IT support – there's some, but IT staff tend to be difficult to access when you need them – just give up in

the end and waste time trying to figure things out for myself. To attend IT course is useless, often too broad – time-consuming and uses up valuable time for other things. (Lecturer, Education)

The pressure to be seen to be adopting online education has led people within my own faculty to develop web-based case material which is significantly lower in academic standards than traditional assessment, but online education is heavily sponsored and funded by the University. (Tutor, Management)

Once teething problems are eliminated (and this consumes a HUGE amount of time/effort) then the implementation of IT in my courses means less time with mundane chores like bulk marking. (Lecturer, Other Health)

I don't use subject websites unless I can get specialist help because I cannot put the time in to develop skills in this rapidly changing area. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

As a teaching device it is fetishised in my university. Moreover the support is grossly inadequate. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

IT has provided potential to provide more flexible teaching options and to reach students who might not otherwise participate in tertiary education. It has provided me, and students, with faster and better access to a range of publications, information that would be difficult to access otherwise. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

IT has brought a creative component to work and is much appreciated by students. (Tutor, Other Health,)

It has led to higher workload for me, but is better for the students. Emphasis on the use of IT, rather than the content that will be conveyed by IT is often pointless and time-consuming. Needs to be a recognition of the value of IT as a tool for teaching, not a replacement of teaching. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

IT is making it possible to provide more effective illustrative examples to support theory etc. Properly employed, IT is most helpful in getting information and ideas across to students. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

Uni administration assumes that web teaching is easier because of less student contact. I estimate that I spend ten times the effort for a distance student that I spend for a local student. Am now swamped by email demands, and requests for more extensive notes on the web, information which I would previously have given in lectures. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

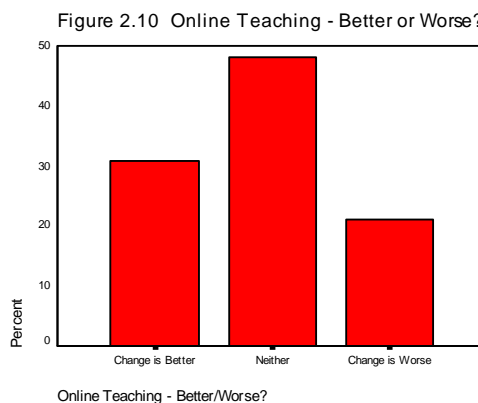
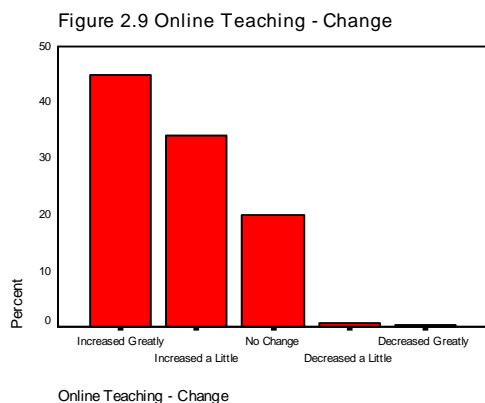
2.5 Teaching Courses Online

Delivery of course online is a recent application of IT. Statistics of online teaching, collected by DEST for the first time in 2001, indicate that the practice is increasing rapidly and that in some cases initiatives at department level are unknown to central management.

As with IT, respondents were inclined to be positive about online courses, but do not see it as important as some other aspects of teaching. Forty-nine per cent said it was 'of some importance' and 37 per cent that it was very important. Forty-eight

per cent said the change was neither for better or worse, 31 per cent for the better and 21 per cent for the worse.

The frequency distributions for change and the evaluation of online teaching are given in Figure 2.9 (N=1630) and 2.10 (N=1611).



No academics who commented gave unqualified approval to the online innovation. For some there were pedagogical issues, particularly that if online delivery is used it should supplement face to face teaching, not replace it.

IT should never completely replace live teaching. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

Undoubtedly this adds to our teaching repertoire, but it is not the panacea for all ills and certainly should not be seen as a viable alternative to in class teaching. It does supplement that teaching effectively. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

In fully online courses, this is clearly extremely imp. It is not as effective a teaching tool as face to face teaching and it actually harms when all of the teaching materials are provided on line - it does not allow the student to develop independent learning styles as readily. (A/P Reader, Science)

On line teaching is an important issue to me even though I am not involved at present. The pressure is on to use online teaching but I do not agree with this for my subjects which are very practically orientated. I see few differences between online teaching and reading a textbook or notes unless it is interactive. (Lecturer, Science)

Use of online teaching is engaging some students and drawing others out, as well as losing some students. Larger classes mean I do not know students - which is counter to establishing relationships that enhance learning. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

One can supply student with materials, pose questions, deal with assignment questions en bloc, but who knows whether this means anything in terms of quality. Certainly it's about quantity. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

In addition to reservations about the pedagogy of online delivery a number of respondents reported that online adds to work load.

While there are some clear advantages, it has tended to increase workloads as administrators feel it is time that has been freed up for you to do more work. More students expect immediate email responses on a

variety of aspects of each section. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

When staff are given teaching relief and IT support to set up online teaching the results can be terrific but more often than not online teaching is an extra burden in an academic's already excessively long working day. (Tutor, Humanities)

The need for infrastructure and tech staff support is imperative - this is not always available and staff struggle to develop new skills and make online learning a priority for development. (Professor, Humanities)

I approve of the increased flexibility that the use of IT provides, and I feel it is necessary and important to incorporate IT to prepare students for the future. However, it places staff under a great deal of stress and pressure to prepare on-line courses as they are very time consuming. I do not feel the Uni. has allowed for this by provided extra resources to support the development. In fact it is gradually withdrawing resources and devolving responsibilities. (Tutor, Humanities)

Pushing too far in this direction now, & support being withdrawn. Needs a lot of keeping up with technology; very time intensive; more can access- but who, & ? the quality. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

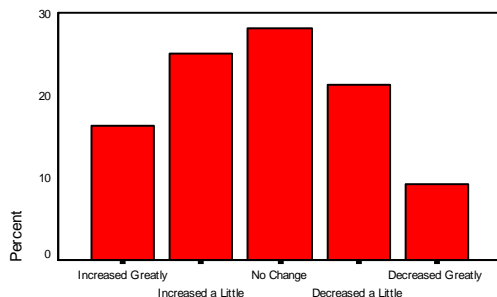
Too much work, expected to be 'jack-of-all-trades'. Notion of education and student as 'client' who's every whim must be considered. Lack of funding and resources. Move to on-line, this is time-consuming, require time to learn new skills which are interesting, but where is this time to come to. On-line type learning tends to increase workload, not decrease it. On-line learning makes it harder to incorporate new, more recent information into lecture material. With a stand-up lecture one can incorporate it up to immediately before the lecture. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

2.6 Feedback to Students

Giving feedback to students on their learning has top rating from academics. More say the practice has decreased than increased – 41 per cent against 21 per cent. Evaluation of the change is balanced: one third saying for the worse, one third neutral and one third for the better. But while being regarded as central to the learning process most respondents reported difficulty in giving the time that is needed to give students adequate appraisal of their work.

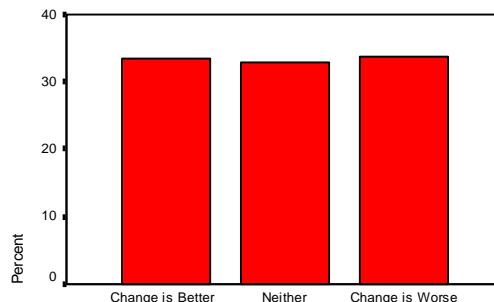
The frequency distributions for change and the evaluation of feedback given to students are found in Figure 2.11 (N=1910) and Figure 2.12 (N=1899).

Figure 2.11 Feedback Academics Give to Students - Change



Feedback Academics Give to Students - Change

Figure 2.12 Feedback Academics Give to Students - Better or Worse?



Feedback Academics Give to Students - Better/Worse?

Actually, the change is for the worse in terms of academic workload, but is probably for the better from the students' point of view. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

While the time required to provide feedback is enormous, this is extremely important in terms of learning and altering some-one's progress. (A/P Reader, Other Health)

It is an extremely important way of communicating with students but it doesn't happen. I now have exams worth 50% for most courses in order to deal with plagiarism and reduce the feedback I need to give. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

For me nothing has changed. It is part of my teaching / learning processes. Is very time consuming for equity and ESL students. (Lecturer, Humanities)

As with high quality teaching, feedback that is useful, educative and likely to lead to better understanding and successful work remains a priority. It's a non-negotiable. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

Has always been critical for learning and development. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

I don't know whether the change is for better or worse. I support giving good feedback to students and I encourage debate from them about my comments, but sometimes that has turned into being abused and threatened by students. The Uni has done nothing to help - even though I've reported it. I'm now more guarded in what I say and how I say it to students. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Of course it's better for the students but it is not reflected in workload allocation for Academics. (Lecturer, Creative Arts)

For some IT facilitates reporting back to students on their work:

Electronic communication and changes in teaching style have increased feedback. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

Communication alternatives allow more timely feedback to students. However the decrease in the number of assessment items given to students actually results in less feedback overall. (Lecturer, Maths)

I always worked in systems that gave lots of feedback. IT helps here too – makes it more manageable and clearer. (A/P Reader, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

The rapid growth in the use of casuals for teaching and assessment (see next section) means that students are liable to get less feedback because these staff are generally paid by the hour for formal class time, not for time with individuals:

Using sessional staff to do all our marking, has undoubtedly restricted the amount of feedback given to students - we are just not paying them enough time to do justice to the task. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Students expect a great deal of individual feedback that is very unrealistic given that many assignments are graded by casual tutors. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Most comments report that with larger classes and more administration there is just not the time available to do the job:

Not enough time to do a decent job of it - too much time doing admin. (A/P Reader, Nursing)

Not being able to give the necessary feedback is another negative consequence of large groups. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Increased workload to over 60 hours per week to do this as directed. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

Reduction of time available has detracted from the quality of feedback. (Lecturer, Management)

Numbers mean you can't give as much feedback - this is one of the most detrimental aspects of higher enrolments and larger classes. (A/P Reader, Education)

When you are faced with 197 assignments it is much easier to give them a mark than to give them feedback. I generally take between 20-30 minutes on each paper, even if I am faced with 197, so that students can learn what to do and what not to do. (Lecturer, Management)

Written feedback has decreased but direct personal feedback during tutorial has increased. Don't know how long this will last especially there is pressure to cut down tutorial time to save money. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Change is better for the students, but more time demands on lecturers. All students should be given feedback to justify the grade the work was given and suggestions on how to improve. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

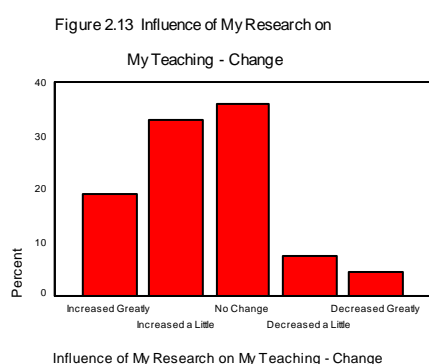
2.7 The Nexus between Research and Teaching

A distinguishing characteristic of university education is that the teachers are at the forefront of knowledge and actively engaged in scholarship and research. This connection is manifest in the curriculum in a number of ways. Obviously where the subject is close to the lecturer's own speciality, students may experience some of the excitement of discovery. More generally an active scholar or researcher will impart to students, even to undergraduates, some of the methods and intellectual

values of discovery – the need for evidence, hypothesis testing and logical argument. In professional fields students will learn the empirical and scientific basis of the techniques they will use in practice. And, in all fields and disciplines, where the curriculum uses problem-based learning methods, students will ‘learn by doing’ a scientific approach to knowledge.

That at least is the theory of university education, but with a few exceptions survey responses reflected a much less exalted view. Nevertheless ‘the influence of my research on my teaching is very important’ was attested to by two-thirds of respondents. One quarter said it was only of some importance. The question was at fault perhaps in assuming that all university teachers were engaged in research. Nevertheless 53 per cent reported that the influence of research had increased, 36 per cent that there was not much change and 12 per cent that influence of research on their teaching had declined. Forty-five per cent said that things had changed for the better, 42 per cent said neither better nor worse, and 14 per cent that the change was for the worse.

The frequency distributions for the change and evaluation of the nexus between research and teaching are given in Figure 2.13 (N=1867) and Figure 2.14 (N=1833).



When the data are examined more closely, academics clearly favour a connection between research and teaching. Of those who thought the nexus had increased, about 83 per cent thought it was for the better; of those who thought it had decreased, about 90 per cent thought it was for the worse.

Analysis of the comments revealed three groups: those who reported a direct influence of research in their teaching, those whose teaching subject was unrelated to any research they had ever done, and, the largest group, those who had neither the time nor motivation to engage in research. The first group included a number with positive comments on the value of their PhD for teaching:

When I first started as an academic I did not have a higher degree and having just completed a PhD, the ethos of research has contributed a lot to how I now go about my teaching responsibilities. (Lecturer, Science)

Evidence-based practice is fundamental to my role as an academic and a practising health professional. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

Just finishing my PhD. This has had a big influence on my teaching. (Lecturer, Education)

I am now in a position where the units I teach are directly related to the research I am doing, which is very satisfying. (Professor, Humanities)

I have recently completed my PhD - I am now in a position where I can use my research to a greater extent in my teaching. (Lecturer, Education)

The more research I do, the more it affects my teaching. Also because I have greater freedom than before to suit the content of my teaching to my own area. (A/P Reader, Humanities)

If there isn't enough time for research, teaching becomes dull. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

The second group included those who are sceptical that good teaching performance counts for career advancement, and others who realistically observe that many areas of the undergraduate curriculum are so basic that there is little opportunity for a research perspective.

Where does being a good teacher as opposed to a good researcher get you? (A/P Reader, Other Health,)

Research is narrow - teaching broad. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

My teaching areas are broad and my research specific. (Lecturer, Nursing)

Makes it more rewarding for me. However, most courses are taught at such a basic level that the interesting, more rigorous research aspects are glossed over. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

The third group reflect the recurring theme of the survey responses, that work-loads have become so heavy that something has to give; in this case it is research.

My teaching workload is so large there is little opportunity to engage in meaningful research. Grant applications take so much time and effort - means that those who have large teaching / marking loads are disadvantaged. (Lecturer, Humanities)

I don't have time for research... I'm too busy maintaining teaching commitments. (Lecturer, Creative Arts)

It's a great challenge to get time for any personal research. Very little time, space equipment or money is allocated for this. I have to work at home, at nights to do anything interesting. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Creating new units and writing and re-writing units is taking more and more of my time so that my research is suffering. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Everything more regulated and directed towards the lowest common denominator. No room for it any longer other than in research degree supervision. (Professor, Architecture,)

When you don't have time to do research, it can't influence teaching. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

2.8 Summary and Comment

‘Teaching is as much a social activity as it is a cognitive one.’ This aphorism is implied in the majority of survey responses evaluating the changes that have occurred as teaching methods are adapted to a declining student to staff ratio. ‘It is rare these days to get to know students as individuals.’ Interacting via email is a substitute up to a point, especially in dealing with administrative matters. Use of casual staff to take over some of the teaching load allows some academics to get on with their research but teaching suffers because staff who are paid by the hour don’t have much incentive for those less formal interactions that are important to good learning. The increasing use of IT and online learning are seen as a positive development by many, but not to the extent that it replaces face to face encounters.

Some of the major points to emerge from the survey with respect to contacts with students, personally or via email, were that:

- Nine out of ten, an overwhelming majority, of academics regarded contact with students as very or extremely important.
- While a large increase in contact received a mixed evaluation, almost four out of five academics thought a large decrease in contact was a change for the worse.
- Older academics tended to regard contact with students as more important, and were more likely to say that it has changed.
- Over four out of five academics were in agreement that the use of email had increased a great deal, but they were almost evenly divided as to whether this was a good or bad thing.
- Dealing conscientiously with email adds to the work load.

With respect to teaching:

- More than half of our respondents said that small group teaching had decreased, and 96 per cent who took this view thought it was a change for the worse. Feed back to students is central to the learning process, but the opportunities for this have declined.
- More than four out of five of our respondents said that the use of IT had increased, and over half thought this was for the better.
- More than four out of five respondents said that online teaching had increased, but they were split as to whether this was for the better or worse, 31 per cent compared to 21 per cent respectively.
- Twice as many respondents said that giving feedback to students had decreased, and they were split into thirds as to whether this was for the better or worse, or neither.
- More than half of our respondents said that the nexus between research and teaching had increased, and 45 per cent said this was for the better; about 83 per cent who said it increased thought it was better, and about 90 per cent who thought it had decreased thought it was for the worse.

Although we did not ask a question about workload the comments from respondents made it abundantly clear that this has increased to the point where the quality of teaching and learning is threatened. At root of the problem is the decline in resources: more students, many students needing more attention, fewer teachers. New technologies, if used properly can assist, for example in giving feed back to students. There are, however, plusses and minuses to be taken into account. Staff require training and administrative assistance if effective use is to be made of the new aids – ‘it is not just a matter of dumping the lectures on line and expecting the students to learn. And once something is online or in a CAL package it is less likely to be revised and kept up to date.’

Email also has great potential for assisting interactions with students, but if it is not managed effectively conscientious teachers are liable to be overwhelmed. This is a universal issue. For example in USA faculty are moving to protect themselves from unremitting demands from students.³

³ See ‘The 24 Hour Professor’, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 31 2002.

3 USE OF CASUAL STAFF FOR TEACHING

We now have a student culture determined by a first year of almost exclusively casual staff. (Professor, Architecture)

The proportion of casuals used for university teaching and assessment has doubled over the last 10 years. Overall casuals make up about 25 per cent of the academic work-force. A disproportionate number are women. The group interviews revealed sharply contrasting attitudes between managers and academics.

University managers tended to argue that employing casuals makes for greater efficiency: 'each dollar spent on an academic buys 65 per cent teaching and 35 per cent research; the same spent on a casual buys 100 per cent teaching, and at a lower rate.' Casuals who are employed at an hourly rate make for greater flexibility in allocation of resources compared with academics whose terms of employment tie up resources for long periods. Thirdly employment of a professional expert as sessional staff is valuable for specialised topics not covered by the expertise of the full time academics.

Academics familiar with the use of casuals in teaching had reservations about the practice. They referred to them existing on the margins of the departmental community, to the difficulty in teaching a coherent curriculum when there is considerable reliance on casuals, and to problems of linking the assessment of students' work to course objectives. Cases were reported where casuals received little supervision, and the standard and consistency of marking was not checked. In other cases, however, there was close briefing, training and supervision of casuals before they took on teaching responsibilities; and before acting as examiners they would be required to 'co-mark' a proportion of scripts with an academic, and subsequently to have samples of their marking checked independently.

It was pointed out that postgraduate students frequently found part-time employment as casuals. Properly managed with tuition and supervised on-the-job learning this could be a valuable academic apprenticeship. Mentoring and supervision of casuals tended to vary greatly between particular universities, or between faculties within universities. In some we were informed that there was no attempt to prepare casuals for their teaching or monitoring of their progress. Casuals would be given examination responsibilities without any checking of their work. In the majority of cases efforts were made within departments to brief casuals, check on their progress and, when they were required to assess students' work, double marking of samples by a full-time academic.

Use of casuals for teaching was a very important issue for half of the survey respondents and 'somewhat important' for another 31 per cent. Only 4 per cent said it was of no importance. And generally, consistent with staff statistics, two thirds reported that the practice had increased, one quarter that it had not changed

much and 12 per cent that there had been a decline. Over half said the change was for the worse; only 9 per cent that it was for the better.

The frequencies for change and evaluation of the use of casuals in lecturing are given in Figure 3.1 (N=1807) and Figure 3.2 (N=1792).

Figure 3.1 Use of Casual Staff for

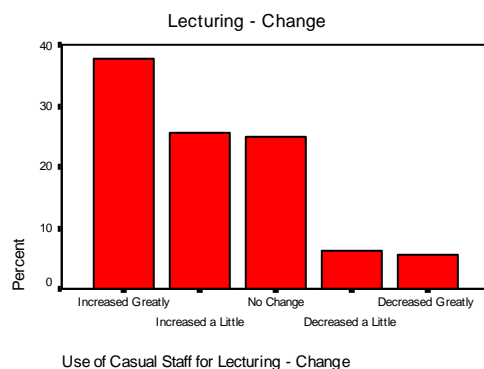
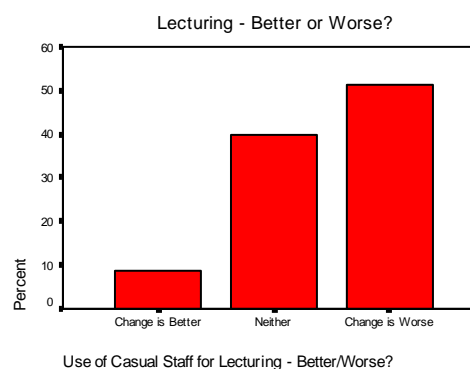


Figure 3.2 Use of Casual Staff for



In the survey, a majority of the respondents regard 'casualisation' as a change for the worse. For some staff, however, the availability of casuals provides flexibility and relief from the 'grind' of tutoring and marking, freeing up time for research:

We use short term contracts to replace staff on leave for various reasons, this allows for flexibility and is important for supporting permanent staff to undertake other scholarly activities. (A/P Reader, Nursing)

As a unit co-ordinator it is essential to give myself the occasional week off from lecturing. Otherwise I'd burn out. Plus, it exposes students to alternative viewpoints. (Lecturer, Creative Arts)

Also on the positive side is the experience and expertise that can be brought into teaching through recruiting appropriate casuals:

Allows clinicians to provide relevant lectures. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

Although these staff bring to us a great deal of field experience which we value, they are not focussed on teaching and have not been developed as teachers. Students who are struggling are not necessarily identified. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Where these staff bring contemporary skills no longer held by permanent staff this is ideal - it has reshaped the permanent academic role but that is OK - more useful demarcation between academic & clinical performance is inevitable when teaching in a factory mode. Remember the days when we could do it all. Long gone !!! (Senior Lecturer, Nursing)

It's better in that it allows students access to a greater range of staff; but their input into the school is limited so lots of casual staff places extra administrative burdens on continuing staff. (Professor, Creative Arts)

Use of casual staff has many advantages (new blood, new ideas, enthusiasm etc.) but not when it is a direct replacement for 'real' staff. THEY are grossly exploited; students are short-changed; and staff like me spend huge amounts of time trying to manage it all and keep it from falling apart. (Reader, Humanities)

There is only a skeleton full-time staff left to co-ordinate largely sessional staffing of our teaching. Casual staff come in and do a pretty good job overall but they just don't get or can't get into it as much as they should do - they are on the run and suffering from the effects of a fast pace. (A/P Reader, Nursing)

A majority of the comments explain why 'casualisation' is a change for the worse. The quality of teaching and learning is diminished because casuals are liable to be less committed to the task and less available when students need them. Using casuals can make for less continuity and cohesion in a course. The administrative and supervisory work for the academics in charge is considerable. And casuals are exploited.

Although the use of casual employees saves the university a lot of money and is therefore good for the budget, I believe that it is dangerous to rely on casual staff to fill vital teaching posts. There is a general lack of commitment both on the part of the employee AND the employer! (Lecturer, Management)

Building academic programs requires staff which feel some 'ownership' of that program.... It is difficult to feel that when living the 'hand-to-mouth' existence of a casual lecturer... (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

When casual staff have to take on a teaching load, we lose continuity in our curriculum. Students have trouble finding casual staff, too (they're not around). Plus casual staff usually aren't engaged in research. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

I am entirely dependent on sessional staff to manage almost all of the courses that I am listed against, including smaller courses as well as larger 220+. The conditions they work under are shocking. It is often a case of managing their discontent at levels of university support, dead-end jobs, can't get car parking, no access to a desk or phone, 30+ students in classes when they were tried to be capped at 25-28, websites that don't work... On top of this the turnover from year to year is extremely high, thus requiring more meetings and administrative support from co-ordinators. Also there is insufficient admin support to carry them, thus as co-ordinator to ease the time they spend on preparation, etc. I supply additional materials eg. supply them with copies of all Reserve readings, advance lecture notes, etc. These are things that ought be done by admin support. When the going is tough, it is really very, very tough (am loathe to complain about it, because it is not a unique problem or issue, rather endemic at present). Sessional staff are calculating their workload (student numbers, hours of preparation, consultation, on-line, students email, running around, attending lectures) as a pay rate of \$2.00 an hour - the veracity of this is not what concerns me, rather that they feel the urge to quantify it in these terms suggests that something is amiss. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

Increased casual staff means that admin of courses etc and other activities falls back onto a few permanent staff - casual staff can bring many important qualities and much experience to a teaching program but many of the extras expected by the University cannot be handled by

casual staff. The work load and responsibility for permanent staff increases. (Professor, Humanities)

We don't have enough funds to employ many people in this way. Most good people we approach find the remuneration so unattractive that they decline the offer. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

Using casual staff degrades the quality of teaching - no commitment, no continuity. This is not the fault of the casual staff, most of who should be in permanent positions if the institutions actually funded enough academic positions. (Lecturer, Science)

This means inconsistency, erratic communication, limited commitment, high frustration with constant orientation and support of casual staff and failure of the head of school to develop a projective staffing plan. It is very time consuming working with someone you need to carry, to get them through and this is not their fault it is the reality that they are employed at the last minute and spend their whole contract time trying to learn, catch up, survive and cope. This is contemptuous towards the students who deserve much better. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

Some staff are exploited as a result of this practice. I feel guilty about the school's use of this as a strategy. (Lecturer, Humanities)

Increases workload for permanent staff and denies casual staff a career path. (Lecturer, Nursing)

An underclass has developed that require huge amounts of time to co-ordinate. (Senior Lecturer, Creative Arts)

We pick up the mess, and it generates more work for full timers. (A/P Reader, Maths/IT)

Casual academics often work outside the system. They are expected to act autonomously and often are excluded from the collegial processes that structure the everyday life of a department. (Tutor, Humanities)

High turnover of casuals - problems in assessment as some tutors are keen to get popularity ratings from students in the hope of keeping jobs. Also casuals don't take on admin, can't apply for promotions or research grants. (Lecturer, Management)

Too often senior management use casual contracts to cut costs and in so doing reduce the quality of the teaching, administration and research being carried out by permanent staff. (Lecturer, Management)

Increased casualisation is bad for the casual staff as well as for course / teaching continuity and for students - who have fewer opportunities to contact their lecturers when they are casuals. (Lecturer, Education)

Casuals are being used to replace permanent staff who are not being replaced. Bad for students; bad for staff; bad for those hoping to enter academe as a profession. (Professor, Humanities)

Enterprise bargaining has made it difficult to get good casual staff; also less \$ available for tutoring. (A/P Reader, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Casual staff have no long term commitments. They are paid pathetically and thus appear to offer great savings to the university financially. All too often casuals do the work with as little effort as possible commensurate with their remuneration. More experienced staff become the casuals' supervisors by default. Thus staff take on extra administrative work for which there appears no workload reward. In many cases academics choose to do the extra work themselves than to work with casuals. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Casual staff are cheaper to employ - are not around to do proper supervision - have little security for the future - and are not motivated to improve the course. (Lecturer, Creative Arts)

Many staff spend much of their time supervising casuals. Students complain that they are not available. Their extensive use is exploitation of casuals and a major threat to academic standards. (Professor, Education)

Casual staff are paid poorly, and simply can't afford time needed to do a really good job - or are being exploited if they do it, on what they are paid. (A/P Reader, Humanities)

There are pluses and minuses. Makes for a more diverse teaching staff - some casuals bring great experiences from other fields, which the students really appreciate. On the other hand, we need a core of people on the ground. It is partly an issue of quality control and good supervision of casuals. (Senior Lecturer, Law)

Not fair on either casual staff (who do more for less money) or full-time staff who have to pick up the slack and try and communicate with people who are only there some of the time. (Lecturer, Creative Arts)

Unis are obviously saving money by exploiting untenured casual staff; the main goal of teaching staff nowadays is to get into fulltime research and out of teaching because changes allow little time for research. (A/P Reader, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

It is appropriate that the final comments are from a casual, who somehow slipped into the survey, and from a senior academic who asserts that universities need a policy regarding casuals and supernumeraries.

I am a casual lecturer so I have a vested interest in this. I would prefer to be full time though. I think I would be able to do it better, for students. (Lecturer, Engineering)

As the former apprenticeship positions in tutoring have become bureaucratised, gaps have opened up in the provision of teaching. No University that I know has satisfactorily defined a policy framework to guide the use of academic supernumeraries, (casuals, emeriti and adjunct professors). Many staff spend much of their time supervising casuals. Students complain that they are not available. Their extensive use is exploitation of casuals and a major threat to academic standards. (Professor, Education)

Summary and Comment

Our survey of academics' perceptions of casual staff in teaching is complemented by that of McInnes (1999) which included responses from casuals themselves. He found that casuals as a group are likely to be less committed to teaching than full-timers and to spend less time working informally with individual students. This is consistent with our academics' observations.

From an analysis of motives and work satisfaction McInnes concluded that the 'casual and part-time academics are clearly less likely to subordinate their lives for their work than the full-time mainstream academics and their jobs are apparently less stressful.' (p. 51) Slightly fewer had received training for teaching either before or during their careers.

This account of the average casual should not be taken as a criticism of the individuals who take on this role, but seen rather as a result of a system that, according to many of our respondents, 'exploits casuals unfairly'. They are likely to be paid poorly, made to feel on the outer, not provided with much guidance or training and neglected by over-worked academics for whom 'casuals provide relief from the burden of teaching'.

Casuals are not a homogeneous group. Some are graduate students wanting experience in teaching and some extra income. Others are graduates hoping to get a foothold on an academic career. Others again are academics who have opted out of stressful full-time appointments for the simpler role of teaching so many hours and no take home work, no administration, and no hassling for resources. An important sub-set of casuals is professional experts and clinicians hired to teach their specialty. Many of our respondents testified to the enrichment they bring to the course.

We estimate that casuals now carry out about one quarter of teaching and assessment. Apart from those casuals hired for their expertise the remainder are employed because they help ease the burden on over-worked academics or because, as more than one manager told us, they are cheaper. In the view of the majority of our respondents, casualisation of university teaching is having an adverse effect on quality and academic standards. The practice is also diminishing the strength and continuity of some disciplines and departments because retiring staff are not being replaced. And, in the view of some, training and supervision of casuals results in a net addition to their work.

We know of no university or faculty that has reviewed the growing practice of using casual staff for teaching and assessment. We recommend that universities assess the situation, taking account of the variety of services contributed. One question is whether through better selection, training and supervision the contribution of casuals to teaching and learning can be enhanced. More important however is the issue of the system itself. Are casuals being exploited? Is the arrangement contributing to diminished coherence of courses and continuity within disciplines? Are academics being replaced? Is there a better way of inducting young graduates into an academic career?

4 ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Lecturers let students through exams as they are too scared to face the fuss so many make when they fail. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

It is now more than 20 years since the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (AVCC) reviewed the intellectual standards of degrees in selected disciplines (See section 4.5 below). Despite the various quality exercises since then there has, as far as we know, been no systematic enquiry apart from McInnes' survey of academics in 1999. He reported that almost one third thought that their current undergraduates were worse than 5 years earlier; 11 per cent thought they were better.

There may be individual universities or departments with the means for benchmarking their standards over time or with other institutions, but we did not come across them in the course of our investigation. In some interviews for a project related to the present one we asked VCs, deans and others about their academic standards. (Anderson et al, 2000). We were told that they were 'high', or 'with some exceptions, very high' or 'as good as any in the State' or 'as good as Melbourne's.' But, when we asked how they knew, there was no VC or dean who had any valid or reliable means of knowing about the intellectual standards of their university's degrees, e.g. how they might have changed over time, how they compared between departments or how they compared with other universities'. The sort of evidence relied on was that some of their best students were accepted into distinguished graduate programs, that drop-out or failure rates were low, that there was positive feedback from employers, that admission levels were rising, that grades were standardised, that staff were well qualified, that a vehicle for common standards was staff movement across universities.

When reminded of the inadequacies of such evidence our interviewees agreed that they really had no means of knowing about standards – comparative or absolute, within or between fields and institutions, or over time.

This is a bit odd. Given that intellectual standards are the central and distinguishing characteristic of universities one would think that knowing about them would be top priority – a matter of pride even. And - given the publicity given to falling standards, the likelihood of there being substance in the allegations, and the importance of reputation -you'd think there might be a sense of urgency about it all. As will be seen from the responses to the survey there is a deep sense of concern about standards; a concern that many feel is not shared by their university.

Four survey questions asked about any decline or improvement in academic standards: the intellectual standards of incoming students, the level of grades given to students, the number of students wanting to do honours and the academic standard required for students to graduate. There are also questions about quality assurance and plagiarism.

The general perception of academics is that standards are lower than they were 10 or 20 years ago, but that the decline is not dramatic. Perhaps the most important conclusions are that many respondents believe the top students to be as good as they ever were and that an increasing number of students wish to do honours. At the same time many also report that a proportion of new students are less able than

previously and not well prepared for university study. If they are to succeed these students require special teaching assistance. There are also many comments, backed up by the overall statistics, that it is easier to pass than it used to be; and that graduation standards have declined. It is important to note that there is considerable diversity of opinion and practice across the system and that, with respect to changes in standards, there are many who report that there has been little change, and a minority who say that standards have improved.

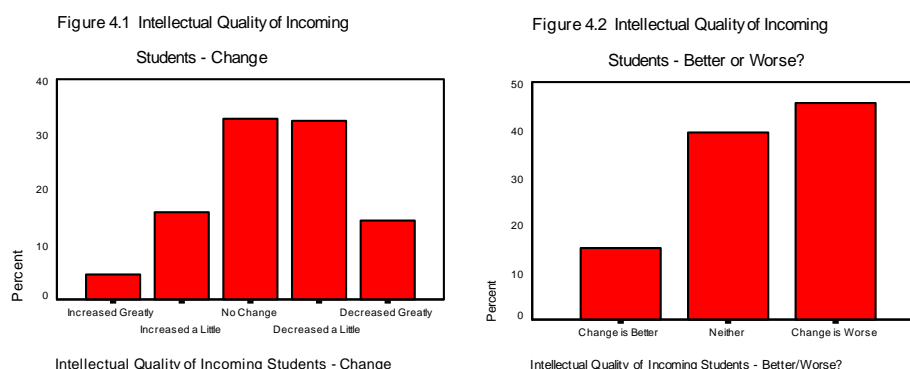
There were few variations between fields and type of university. Of particular interest is the absence of much variation in the reporting of changes in standards between the sexes or between age groups. This is not an unwelcome finding because it adds to the validity of the results: if perceptions of standards varied with personal characteristics of the observer, other things equal, we would be less confident of objectivity.

The results for each of the six topics are now reported in detail.

4.1 The Intellectual Quality of Incoming Students

Not unexpectedly this topic was rated as 'very' or 'extremely' important by just on 90 per cent of respondents. Ten per cent said it was 'of some importance' and virtually none regarded the issue as of no importance. Almost half said standards of incoming students had declined, one third said there wasn't much change, and one fifth said there had been some increase, (see histogram). The largest group of respondents said that the change was for the worse but almost as many were neutral and 15 per cent believed the change to be for the better.

The frequency distributions for the change and the evaluation of change in student quality are given in Figure 4.1 (N=1948) and Figure 4.2 (N=1923).



The following two comments illustrate the qualified view typical of many respondents.

The students have changed over the last 10 years, so more foundation work has to be done but perhaps that is just a healthy balancing of a teaching process that too often relied on the innate ability of students. I don't think standards have necessarily changed that much, although obviously there must be some change brought about by each additional 10% increment of the population that are newly encouraged to attend university.
(Senior Lecturer, Management)

Students' technical ability is often worse. Students are not doing as high levels of maths as 10 yrs ago but their personal skills, work ethic, oral

presentation skills and ‘getting the job done’ skills have improved. More responsible. Very little late handing in of assignments etc. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

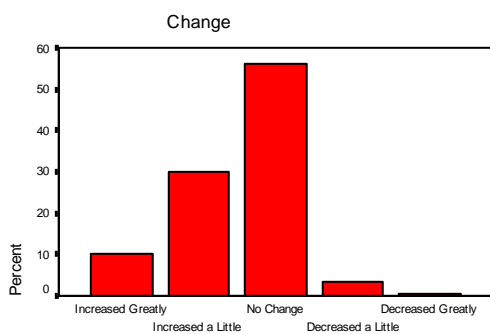
4.2 High Grades Given to Students

Only 5 per cent said this topic was of no importance. Most reported little change, about 40 per cent reported an increase in the award of high grades and only 3 per cent said that the incidence of high grades had declined.

The corresponding evaluation shows a large majority neutral, one quarter believing things have changed for the worse and 7 per cent for the better.

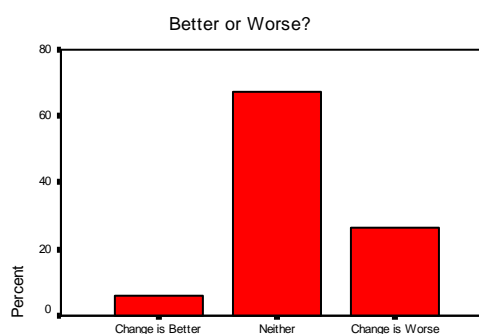
The frequencies for the change and evaluation of higher grades given to students are found in Figure 4.3 (N=1799) and Figure 4.4 (N=1767).

Figure 4.3 High Grades Given to Students -



High Grades Given to Students - Change

Figure 4.4 High Grades Given to Students -



High Grades Given to Students - Better/Worse?

It is a little difficult to judge exactly what the nature of this change is as some of the harder third year subjects have been removed from the course. I'm not sure whether this is the cart driving the horse or vice versa. My university also gives students every opportunity to demonstrate that they can pass a subject, though the rules have recently changed regarding multiple fails. The effect of this is yet to be felt. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

The majority of comments are from academics who reported change for the worse.

This issue is the most important in Australian Higher Education today. The dumbing-down over the past 15 years has been the equivalent of at least one entire level, ie today's masters = the mid 80s bachelors. I don't believe the allocations should be norm-referenced, but when you see 30% of students in a course getting High Distinctions, we KNOW something is wrong! (A/P Reader, Architecture)

A Credit these days is about the equivalent of a Pass in years gone by. Failures are generally earned by students who do not complete the course. (Professor, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

A significant number of comments referred to pressures on academics towards lowering standards so that fewer students failed. Similar observations were in the interviews, but not in all universities.

Lecturers let students through exams as they are too scared to face the fuss so many students make when they fail. (Senior Lecturer, Nursing)

An instruction from the VC's office stated that in future a HD would correspond to an exam mark of 80 or more and a D to 65; previously these points were 85 and 70. (Group Interview)

We are lowering the TER scores. I have been forced to pass a number of students who should have failed - In fact I have failed them and my grades have been overridden! We are given a very clear message that students must pass, at all costs, and that we must maintain good retention rates - in fact we're blamed if a student leaves the program. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

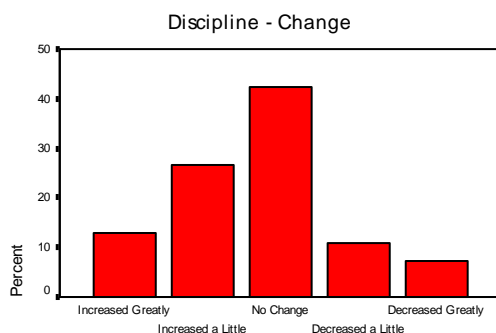
Grade inflation is a huge issue. Getting a credit is regarded by some students as tantamount to failure. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

4.3 Students Wanting to do Honours

Only 5 per cent said this was not an important issue. Forty per cent reported that the number of students wanting to do honours had increased, 42 per cent said the number had not changed and 18 per cent that it had declined. Respondents were evenly divided on whether the change is for the better or worse: 26 per cent better, 21 per cent worse and 53 per cent neutral.

The frequencies for perceived change and evaluation in the numbers of students wanting to do honours are given in Figure 4.5 (N=1664) and Figure 4.6 (N=1633).

Figure 4.5 Students Want Honours in My



Students Want Honours in My Discipline - Change

Figure 4.6 Students Want Honours in My



Students Want Honours in My Discipline - Better/Worse?

The division of opinion as reflected in the above figures turns on the satisfaction to be had from teaching at an intellectually challenging level versus the additional time involved in working with honours students.

There has been a steady decline in the number of students seeking to take up honours in my specific subject area and I believe this is a direct reflection on my reduced access, availability and contact. Students generally feel more positive and motivated through personal contact with a potential supervisor who is enthusiastic and motivated within their area and as the majority of potential honours students see less of me, they are less inclined to seek me / my projects out for honours. I believe the subject area is as important as previous experience and access to the supervisor. (A/P Reader, Other Health)

We have had limited offerings in this area in my discipline. It is good that we now have an honours program, but the tiny slot available for the project results in frustration for staff and students, especially as research skills

are not adequately covered in a program designed to produce practitioners rather than thinkers and researchers (to my sorrow). (Senior Lecturer, Education)

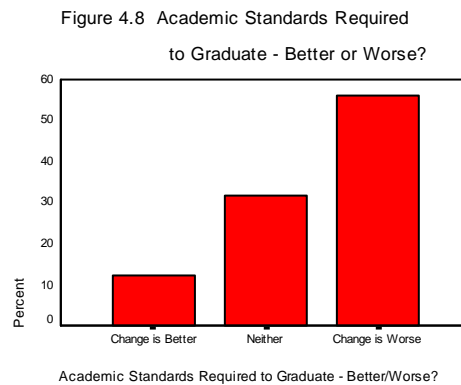
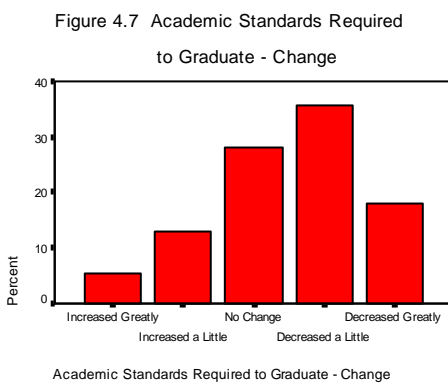
There is a huge push to get more and more students to do Honours. Some of the students are really not up to standard. I have been compelled by my supervisor to sit down with weak students and virtually write the theses for them! The most important thing is outcome - not process. Increasing numbers of Honours graduates mean prestige. When Honours graduates fail, individual staff members are made to feel responsible. (Lecturer, Education)

Each year the level seems a little higher with a very high standard this year. These current students are highly motivated and well committed to their studies. It makes teaching and learning a sheer joy. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

4.4 Academic Standards required to Graduate

Not unexpectedly virtually all respondents regard this topic as important, 62 per cent saying that it is extremely important. A majority report that standards have decreased: 36 per cent say 'a little' and 18 per cent a 'great deal'. Twenty-eight per cent believe there has been no significant change, 13 per cent that standards have increased 'a little' and 5 per cent 'a great deal'. Most – 52 per cent – think the change has been for the worse, 30 per cent are neutral and 12 per cent think the change is for the better.

The frequencies for change and evaluation with respect to changing academic standards required to graduate are given in Figure 4.7 (N=1949) and Figure 4.8 (N= 1924).



How could decreasing academic standards be anything other than worse? Higher grades are reflecting changes in assessment procedures which favour continuous assessment over traditional exams but leave the door open for plagiarism (cheating). Another example of falling standards. (Lecturer, Science)

I continue to be able to award high grades for outstanding work. The frequency has steadily declined over the past five years but a minority of students generally consistently work at this level and they should be rewarded for their standard and work. (A/P Reader, Other Health)

While I don't have sufficient knowledge to make comparisons over the years, it worries me that some of our graduates are still poor communicators! (Lecturer, Education)

I suspect that we always perceive a decrease in the academic standard of incoming students. I do believe however that as interest in engineering has diminished. There has been a tendency to admit students that would normally go to TAFE. My major personal concern has been the decrease in the general work ethic of students. (Lecturer, Engineering)

Employees are not considering post-1985 degrees in the same light. They are expecting the marks to be higher. As the standards drop most people are marking relatively. If they don't, they end up decreasing their chance for promotion because they get poor evaluations. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

One tries to maintain standards despite the pressure - there still seems to be a similar ratio of outstanding students to other levels and students either cut the mustard or they don't. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

Throughout the past 10 years, standards in many programs have slid ever lower. Only professions resist the slide. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

4.5 Quality Assurance

The idea of having independent assessment of academic standards is not new to Australian universities. Towards the end of the 1980s AVCC, concerned at 'the variations in honours grades which exist across different subject fields', and also hoping to head off government intervention published a code of practice for monitoring academic quality and standards and set up an imaginative program of quality assessment known as the Academic Standards Panels. The aim was to investigate all departments teaching a particular discipline or field. The focus on honours level made the exercise manageable, and there was the assumption that what happened in honours influenced standards at all levels. Some panels extended their work to cover pass programmes. The scheme worked well – it was thorough, a panel taking up to three years to complete its work which included assessment of samples of students' scripts. The reports were influential in changing practice within universities and helping to create a shared understanding of standards across the system. Panels had been established in history, psychology, physics, economics, accountancy, computer science, biochemistry and English.

Subsequently there have three government initiated initiatives directed at quality although the focus has not been directly on intellectual standards of degrees as it was in the AVCC exercise.

In 1993 the Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (CQAHE) was established. This committee operated for the three years 1993-5, each year receiving a submission from every university and visiting them for discussions. The committee's brief embraced quality assessment as well as assurance and, in evaluating performance in each university, it was required to look at outcomes. It was however unable to find much in the way of valid measures and as a result the main thrust throughout the three years was to concentrate on processes for ensuring quality in teaching, research and community service.

Since 1998 the Government has required universities to include quality assurance and improvement plans in the documents they prepare for the annual profile negotiations. The plans are expected to include goals, aims and the strategies for achieving these along with performance indicators for assessing the quality and success of what is being achieved in teaching and learning, research, community service and management. While the content of plans are a matter for each university it is expected by DEST that all will include descriptions of the attributes graduates are expected to possess, feedback from graduates on the teaching they received, and feedback from employers on the quality of graduates. Plans for 1999-2001 are published in *The Quality of Australian Higher Education* (DETYA 1999)

In 2002 the newly established Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) began its cycle of university quality assurance reviews. Each institutional review will take place against the university's own statement of objectives and a self assessment. There may be more focus on academic standards than previously. AUQA is required to report '... on the relative standards of the Australian higher education system ... including their international standing as a result of information obtained during the audit process.' It can be expected therefore that AUQA will want to know how universities go about setting their examination and degree standards and how they check on how good these are.

The focus of AUQA reviews is on entire institutions and it is not yet known how this latest quality initiative will influence practices at the coal face or add to academics' work load. A senior manager with responsibility for quality in one university told us that 'the job of management is to protect academics from quality enquiries.'

Turning now to the survey results: although only 5 per cent said that quality assurance was not important the strength of ratings was a bit less than for most other topics: 31 per cent very important, 41 per cent of some importance and 23 per cent not at all important. About half thought the topic had increased in importance. Only 25 per cent thought the change was for the better. Forty-one per cent thought the change was for the worse and 28 per cent were neutral.

The frequency distributions for perceived change and evaluation of quality assurance are given in Figure 4.9 (N=1899) and Figure 4.10 (1877).

Figure 4.9 Quality Assurance of Universities -

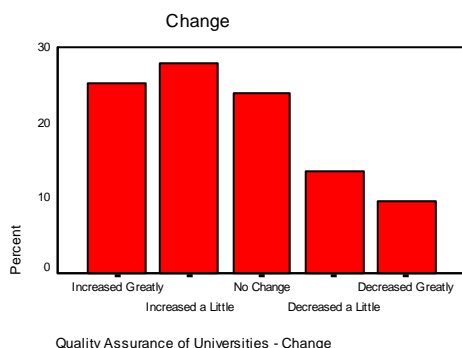
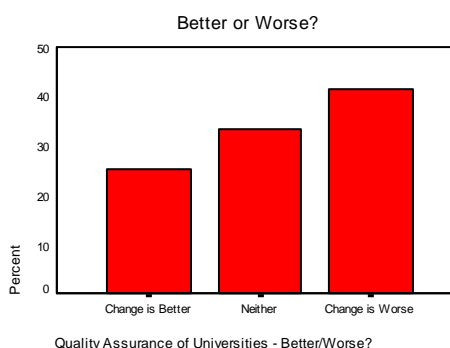


Figure 4.10 Quality Assurance of Universities -



Among the many comments on the quality question it was difficult to find much support for the concept. It must be noted however, that very few academics would have had any experience of AUQA and the negativity refers in the main to internal quality exercises, or perhaps memories of the three annual rounds of CQAHE in the early 1990s. The following three comments are about as positive as they get.

The university has a well documented and laudable quality assurance process. The actual compliance with the process falls far short of what it should be. The University is good on documentation, but does not provide sufficient resources at the School level to support it. (Lecturer, Engineering)

More emphasis on quality assurance, possibly at the expense of delivering such quality - but generally strongly support emphasis on quality. (Senior Lecturer, Creative Arts)

The principles of QA are important to keep in perspective, but it is being overdone at the moment, in view of other more important issues to universities, teaching and research. (A/P Reader, Science)

The remaining comments are typical of a pervasive scepticism about the value of quality exercises and a complaint from many that compliance simply adds to the work load. It is also clear that, for some, these exercises compound the deterioration of relations between academics and managers. (See also section on Corporatism and Collegiality).

No measures of outcomes. Too process oriented. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

A mechanical, bureaucratic approach to quality has taken over universities. (Tutor, Humanities)

I'm not sure anyone knows, either what constitutes quality or how to measure it in a university. You only have to look at the current fad for surveying students about their opinions on the courses they have taken: as if they would know! (Senior Lecturer, Management)

Accountability places extra pressure on already overworked people; it can be overdone. (Lecturer, Other Health)

University imposes their model of quality assurance, and we have to implement it, whether it really applies to our field or not. (Tutor, Creative Arts)

Far too onerous, esp in paper work. must be better ways to do this. There is a climate of no trust (and little respect) now. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

At my university, despite advice from many academics, a new Academic Management System (AMS) was introduced. It's done more harm than a ship load of incompetent academics and it was introduced by people spouting Quality Assurance principles. Hopeless. (Lecturer, Engineering)

The methods for assessing quality (produce enough documentation so that you can tick the right boxes) only add a greater burden. They don't assure quality in any way, shape or form. (Lecturer, Engineering)

Created an unmanageable paper work load that interferes with all other work. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

The importance given to this area by people who are not at the coalface is disproportionate such that many activities make extra work for academics. (A/P Reader, Creative Arts)

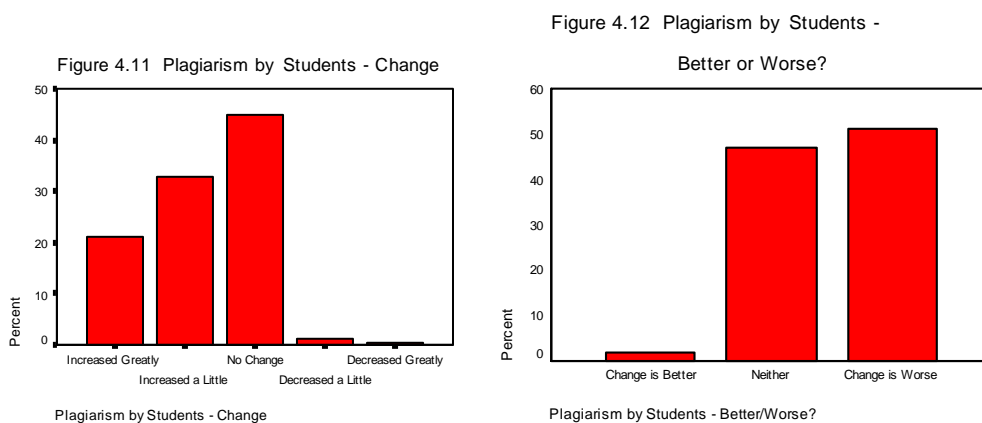
4.6 Plagiarism

Copying someone else's work and presenting it as your own is as old as publishing and is by no means confined to universities. And there are blurred lines between presenting an assignment containing ideas that are not your own but are in common currency, paraphrasing without acknowledgement, and including unacknowledged text. As will be seen many academics do come across blatant cases where students import slabs of another's text into their essays without acknowledgement.

Judging from media accounts the incidence of plagiarism may have increased in recent years. It was a topic mentioned in the group interviews: we were told that the practice has increased because of the wide availability of electronic text; and because of the popularity, in the last decade or two, of giving weight in final assessments to work done during the year. Dealing with the problem has added to academics' work load.

No respondent quibbled about what plagiarism means. Some define it simply as cheating. Nearly all gave the topic a high rating on importance: 78 per cent said it was very important, 19 per cent of some importance and only 2 per cent not at all important. Most - 54 per cent - thought the practice had increased; 45 per cent that it had not changed significantly; and only one per cent that it had decreased.

The frequency distributions of the change and evaluation in plagiarism are found in Figure 4.11 (N=1823) and Figure 4.12 (N=1800).



The following comments illustrate the extent that the practice of plagiarism adds to academics' work, not only the time spent detecting it but the heavy responsibility of confronting alleged offenders and, if necessary following through with formal procedures. There is no way of knowing just how many cases go undetected – reading between the following lines one suspects there must be many. The recent practice of entrusting much teaching and assessment to casuals must add to the problem.

Plagiarism results from students pressed for time or inadequately prepared. Part of the problem results from academics who continue to turn a blind eye to this or complain that their marking loads are too great to be able to identify examples of plagiarism. In part this also results from the generation of students who do not see that paraphrasing

/ copying another students work is plagiarism. The time required to identify, counsel the student, apply a penalty, and go through the subsequent appeal process ultimately stops academics from bothering. (A/P Reader, Other Health)

This is a serious problem. University management roll over and support the students on every occasion it comes up. I've given up using the official channels to combat it. I just fail the assignments outright and wait to see what happens. Most students realise they have been let off lightly and say nothing. I am supposed to report, have a big hearing, go through student appeals etc. It takes a year or so and everybody is bitter at the end. Not worth the bother of chasing it up. (Lecturer, Education)

I now have exams worth 50% for most courses in order to deal with plagiarism and reduce the feedback I need to give. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

Higher grades are reflecting changes in assessment procedures to continuous assessment over traditional exams but leave the door open for plagiarism (cheating). (Lecturer, Science)

One has to be constantly vigilant and set assignment tasks which prevent students using other work - particularly that which is grabbed from the internet. (Professor, Management)

With current workloads it is hard to pick up and if we are forced to give the marking out to others so we can take more lectures, then the probability and motivation for picking it up decreases. Added to this problem is the fact that because staff are so busy they are not finding out till after the fact that the same student has plagiarised in multiple courses. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

I don't feel well positioned to answer this. It is of concern and where it has occurred it is, in my most recent experience, being acted upon and dealt with in no uncertain terms. I have recently on a few occasions suspected that a couple of students have been putting their papers, even a thesis thru some system that polishes it up, but impossible to track. Thus it remains suspicion, is an unpleasant situation, but does not qualify me to reach any conclusions or pass any significant and informed comment on it. I am satisfied where plagiarism is shown to be unequivocal that it is dealt with accordingly. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

As students became clients the plagiarism increased. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

Students buy essays and see education as a commodity, as indeed it is now. (Senior Lecturer, Creative Arts)

4.7 Summaries and Comment

- Almost one out of two of our respondent's thought that the intellectual quality of incoming students had declined, and that this was a change for the worse.

- About 40 per cent of our respondents thought the giving of high grades had increased, and 25 per cent thought this was a change for the worse.
- About 40 per cent of the respondents thought the demand for honours had increased, and a smaller percentage thought it had decreased; respondents were split as to whether this was for the better or worse, about a quarter each way.
- Over half the respondents say that the academic standards required for graduation have decreased, and most say this has been a change for the worse. A number of respondents reported pressures against failing too many students and towards giving more credits and distinctions.
- About half the respondents thought quality assurance procedures had increased, but 40 per cent thought it was a change for the worse; only 25 per cent thought it was a change for the better.
- Over half of the respondents thought the incidence of plagiarism had increased, and most thought it was a change for the worse.

There are implications for universities in the widespread belief that standards are not as high as they used to be. The reports seem not to be related to any particular field or type of university. It is not implied that there exists an absolute Kelvin scale of intellectual standards that is valid across time and disciplines, or that uniform standards should apply across institutions. It would seem to be important, however, that universities had the means of checking on whether there has been slippage and, if there has, whether it is justified.

5 COLLEGIALLY AND CORPORATISM

I find a great generosity of spirit around the university by very overworked people to ...ah...we have a lively academic development program on teaching

and learning, and largely it ...because academics...there is only me...other universities have three or four people like me...but the staff come and do the teaching in it. So they are really busy, they've got research grants, but they'll come and run a workshop for early career researchers about how to plan a research career, they put a lot of preparation into it... and they are very kind and open ...deal with new academics very generously with their time, all our mentors don't get any reward or other than being in the mentorship. We have a line-up of people to mentor new staff, so I think here there may be places where there is competition and failure on the part of some individuals to act in a collegial manner, but by far the greatest proportion are very collegial...

I think one of the reasons why I am still an academic is that I like that sort of thing and it's been very evident and quite strong over the years...

It [collegiality] is unravelling, people are...ah... there is so much pressure you can put on people and people are getting burned out and the willingness to take on new things, to continue teaching as they have done before or take on new roles, people reach a point where they say no. They start from saying yes to everything they are asked to do...eventually people start to become able to say no, and protect themselves, I suppose.

I think places where the collegiality goes is where a particular AOU adopts a high managerial approach, almost like an industry-based approach, corporate approach, and it is very top-down management and it stifles collegiality and a lot is lost, a lot is lost, for everyone then, and there are a few patches here, but they are patches.

(Comments made in a group interview)

One of the frequently mentioned changes in the academic work role in our group interviews was the decline in collegiality and collegial decision-making and the rise of corporatism. When asked about the impact of recent changes in universities, one participant in one of our group interviews replied that it had brought about the 'death' of collegiality.

'Collegiality' refers to the participation of academics in the decision-making processes of the university. More generally it also refers to the type of interaction which prevails between the academics themselves that includes the professional sharing of ideas and advice, as well as social support and sociability. 'Corporatism', on the other hand, refers to a type of university management that largely excludes academics from decision-making, at least in those areas that do not involve academic matters.

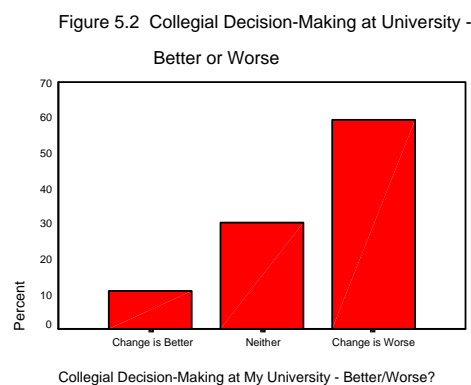
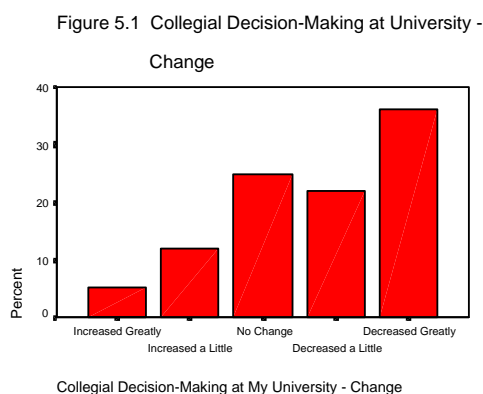
We had a number of questions in our survey that focussed on collegiality, university management and decision-making.

5.1 Collegiality

Over 78 per cent of those who responded to this question (1850) regarded collegiality as very important. Only 4 per cent regarded it as not at all important.

Furthermore 58 per cent thought that collegiality had decreased. Only 17 per cent thought the change had become better, and 59 per cent thought it had changed for the worse.

The frequency distributions for the perceived change and evaluation of the collegial decision-making topic are given in Figure 5.1 (N=1867) and 5.2 (N=1846).



There were no significant differences between male and female respondents in the perceived importance of collegiality. Male academics were only slightly more likely to say that collegiality had declined, and that this decline was for the worse. There was also a relationship between age and the perception of a decline in collegiality. Generally older academics felt that collegiality had decreased 'a great deal'. For example 47 per cent of the over 55s thought so, compared to 18 per cent of the under 40s.

Some of the negative comments about the decline of collegiality are illustrated by the following comments, which were volunteered by our respondents.

Our management structure has become much more hierarchical - we no longer have faculty meetings to discuss issues and make recommendations or decisions. (Lecturer, Education)

Collegial decision-making is, in my view, an illusion. Opinions are sought, but the opinions are selected so as to produce the desired outcome. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

The corporatisation of universities has undermined collegiality substantially. (A/P Reader, Nursing)

My belief in its importance or the reality? I believe it's vital while the senior echelons don't seem to. (Senior Lecturer, Creative Arts)

Generally, academics felt that the decline of collegiality was bad for the university. Of the 653 respondents who said that collegiality had 'decreased a great deal', 97 per cent said it had changed for the worse.

However many did recognise that collegiality was complex, and that it did not necessarily apply to all decisions made in the university. This view is reflected in the following comments.

At faculty level there is still a reasonable degree of collegiality, but at university level very little. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Collegial decisions still there, are at the department level within the ambit of our 'authority' - not at other levels – the commercial pressures are significant. (Senior Lecturer, Law)

There were some respondents who felt that collegiality, as a form of decision-making, was acceptable for academic matters, but was inappropriate for other levels of decision-making. The following illustrate this perspective.

[There is] a paradox here. The bigger the committee the more talking is done but the less likely it is that any decision is made. So we have an appearance of greater collegial decision-making while the decision-making bodies are hamstrung by competing political agendas. (A/P Reader, Engineering)

In my brief academic experience, the historical dependence on collegial decision-making at my university has placed many obstacles in progress. There is definitely a place for collegial decision-making on intellectual and scholarly matters (e.g. research and teaching programs), but unfortunately this need to have a finger in every pie has slowed many important administrative reforms. (A/P Reader, Science)

There are values and cultural principles in academic activity which are best discussed and supported by collegial decision making. However most demands and most demands on even academic committees, work forces and so on are actually aspects of commercial managerialism and do not benefit from collegial decision making. There is very little collegial decision making at 'x' university. (A/P Reader, Law)

Finally, there were a number of academics that regarded collegiality in their university with a certain amount of cynicism. Committees simply give the impression of shared decision-making, but the decisions are made elsewhere. Consider the following comments.

The worst thing is that they still PRETEND that it's collegial! It's really now a cosmetically enhanced version of the IBM management bible. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

Most university administrators here couldn't spell 'collegial', far less explain what it means, in my experience. Rather like Bjelke-Peterson trying to understand the interviewer's question when asked about 'the doctrine of the separation of powers' or the Westminster system. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

However, many decisions are merely disguised by collegial expressions. The general feeling is that decisions were already made before consultation and that the results of the changes (eg shortening semester lengths) are inevitable and resistance is useless. (Lecturer, Creative Arts)

The VC is the second coming of Mussolini - his idea of collegiality is to talk to himself in a mirror - the only difference is the trains still don't run on time. (A/P Reader, Education)

5.2 Academic Management : Roles and Relations

Because collegiality represents a traditional style of university management, recent changes in university funding, size and complexity have inevitably brought about a change in university management. The findings in 5.1 reflect the perceived impact of this change, namely the decline of collegiality. Another impact has been the emergence of professional management of universities, otherwise known as the corporatisation or bureaucratic control of universities.

The separation of management roles from academic roles has had a dramatic effect on the ways that academics see themselves, and more specifically, the ways they perceive their own relationships with those who manage universities from above.

We included two topics concerning this issue: 1) Interactions between academic staff and university administrators, and 2) University leaders' knowledge of the academic coalface. First, we examine the interactions between academic staff and university administrators.

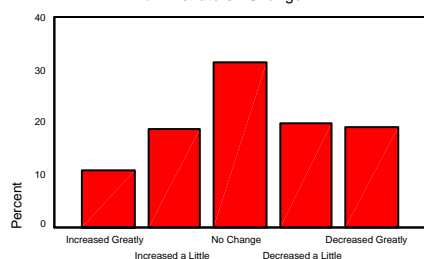
5.2.1 Interactions between academic staff and university managers

Our respondents felt that relations between themselves and those who manage the universities are important; 70 per cent said that interaction with administrators was either very or extremely important. Almost no one, 2.4 per cent, said that these links were unimportant. Almost 30 per cent saw these links as having increased, while almost 40 per cent said that they had decreased. Overall, 50 per cent of our respondents said that these links had changed for the worse, while only 12 per cent said they had improved. Of the respondents who saw interaction as having decreased, 93 per cent thought they had changed for the worse. But so did many who saw interaction with administrators as having increased a great deal; of this group, 66 per cent thought the change was for the worse.

The frequency distributions for the academic: administrator interaction item are given in Figure 5.3 (N=1907) and Figure 5.4 (N=1888).

Figure 5.3 Interaction Between Academics and

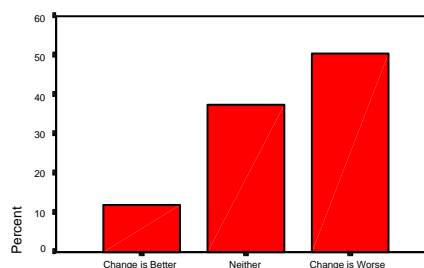
Administrators - Change



Interaction Between Academics and Administrators - Change

Figure 5.4 Interaction Between Academics and

Administrators - Better or Worse?



Interaction Between Academics and Administrators - Better/Worse

Older academics and males were more likely to perceive interaction as having worsened, as did academics from the technical universities.

So what did our respondents say about the relations between academics and administrators? Here are some of the written comments.

The short length of my term as an academic once again conditions my answer. Communication between the university administrators and the academic staff seems to me to be very poor. Both sides seem to have contempt for the other. This is not good. (Lecturer, Architecture)

It has always felt as if the two parties are from different planets - there needs to be more connection. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

Senior administrators are building walls around themselves. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

[There is] more interaction in the form of reporting or dispute rather than genuine consultation and involvement in decision making. (Lecturer, Engineering)

Occasionally, there were comments that suggest that the interaction was not bad, and that there was some understanding between the two parts of the university.

There is a lot more constructive interaction now than there was in the past and I think this is probably good and could be developed further to the benefit of the whole institution. (A/P Reader, Science)

Said corporate management style has led to a belief that no-one in administration needs to know anyone in academe and vice versa. People in jobs in administration change positions - every year there is someone different in the job who never seems to ever quite learn the ropes before they move on. I'm sure administration people find academics who never deal properly with admin tasks just as frustrating. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

5.3 University Leaders' Knowledge of the Academic Coal Face

One of the difficulties in the academic work role is having confidence that the university leaders understand what actually is happening in the day-to-day life of academics as they teach and do research. As is apparent in the previous section, many academics feel that there is too little contact between themselves and university administrators. One consequence of this lack of contact is also a lack of knowledge about what each does, and hence misunderstandings, bad feeling, and conflict.

Academics regard this question as extremely important. Over 93 per cent of our respondents said that administrators' knowledge of the academic coal face was either very or extremely important. Less than one per cent thought it was not important.

Furthermore, over 62 per cent thought this knowledge had decreased in recent years. Of this 62 per cent, 98 per cent said this was for the worse. Generally the older academics thought that the decrease in the administrators' knowledge was for the worse, but there was no difference of gender or between university types.

The frequency distributions for perceived change and evaluation of university administrators' knowledge are given in Figure 5.5 (N=1863) and Figure 5.6 (N=1847).

Figure 5.5 Uni Leaders' Knowledge of Academic

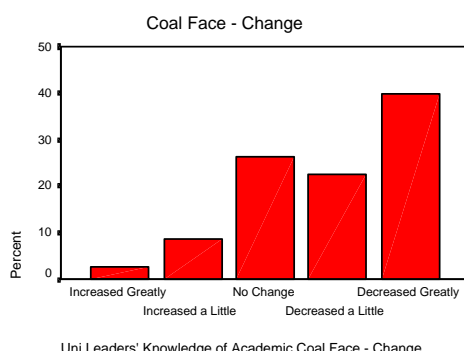
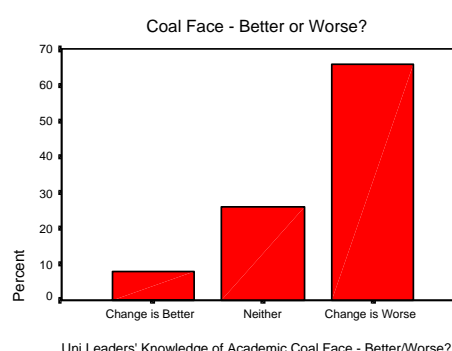


Figure 5.6 Uni Leaders' Knowledge of Academic



The comments which academics made about the knowledge which university administrators have about the day-to-day activities and problems at the coal face were uniformly scathing. Consider the following.

In a University, there are 3 major players: staff, students and management. The staff assesses student's performance, and the students assess staff performance. The management assesses staff performance, but neither the students nor staff gets to assess management performance. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

In our faculty the lack of management understanding has probably been a contributing factor in the high proportion of colleagues who have become very ill. (Lecturer, Education)

To explain. I'm certain that the university administration is aware of what happens at the coalface. They just choose to have their own interpretation of it to justify the decisions they make for other reasons. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

I honestly don't think the senior administrators live on the same planet as us at the coal face. (A/P Reader, Science)

You can tell from some of the shocking gaffes they come out with sometimes, which prove they have been living on another planet for years! (Senior Lecturer, Education)

[They are] just so far removed from the real experience - almost none have any idea of a class with 400 in it of 50% NESB and working online with hundreds of e-mails each day and the threat of management jumping if one complains. (Lecturer, Management)

Provided we teach the large numbers of foreign students who help balance the books, the leaders couldn't care less about what happens at the coal face. (Lecturer, Management)

This is possibly one of the greatest problems we face in universities at present. Those who lead tend to get into positions of leadership not on the basis of their competence and wisdom but because they sell themselves and fudge their abilities. The system seems to be geared to rewarding cunning and entrepreneurialism rather than knowledge, wisdom and commitment. Raw self-interest seems to be the most essential quality to have these days. (Lecturer, Law)

Most wouldn't have a clue. They are addicted to AV-Gas and five-star hotels and generally have their noses in the trough, while level A, B and C academics do the hard yards with the students. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

The Executive members appear to simply not want to know what is going on at the coal face. Decisions that they repeatedly make regarding the allocation of resources clearly demonstrates that this Uni is now being run as a corporate business and the key outcomes are no longer quality of teaching and learning. (Senior Lecturer, Management)

The perception that the VC and other academic leaders are remote from the coalface is widespread. The VC and academic leaders now see their job as basically PR. Naturally they don't want to hear 'the bad news', especially any talk of the 'dumbing down' effect of treating a university like a business. Their ability to refuse to face the obvious is only rivalled by the Federal Government's obdurate blindness to the truth of the children overboard issue during the election campaign. But then for our academic leaders, the campaign to get good publicity for their university is never over. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

They have no fucking idea. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

A few, and very few, comments reflect sympathy for university administrators in this regard. The following are examples of a more moderate view of university administrators.

[Their] knowledge is still OK - just! Their empathy is what has vanished. (Lecturer, Management)

My impression is that some 'University leaders' don't care. But others, and this describes most of them, I suspect, feel powerless to act on their 'knowledge of the academic coal face.' (A/P Reader, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

My perception is that university leaders are in very difficult and stressful positions themselves and, like academics, are short of time. This means they tend to be less aware of what's really happening at the grassroots - especially in terms of the consequences of increasing class sizes, increasing diversity of students and reduced resourcing. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

Both the statistical data from the survey, as well as the qualitative comments volunteered, make it clear that academics hold very negative views about the knowledge which the administrators have about what really goes on in universities. The scathing, cynical and abusive comments, which were frequently articulated, suggest that there is a serious problem of credibility between academics and university management. Very few academics showed signs of sympathy, and even those who did, portrayed university managers as victims of their own environment.

From an organisational perspective, this could be one of the most serious crises currently facing Australian universities.

5.4 Autonomy

One of the main features of a profession, and of the academic profession, has been the ability to exercise autonomy in the area of one's professional expertise.

Traditionally, academics have looked to their professional colleagues when making decisions about their teaching and research. However with increased concern over university funding, many formerly professional decisions are now becoming financial ones. Thus decisions about academic programmes, course content, course delivery, and course scheduling (including sequencing) are being made on the grounds of attractiveness to students, novelty, or change for change's sake.

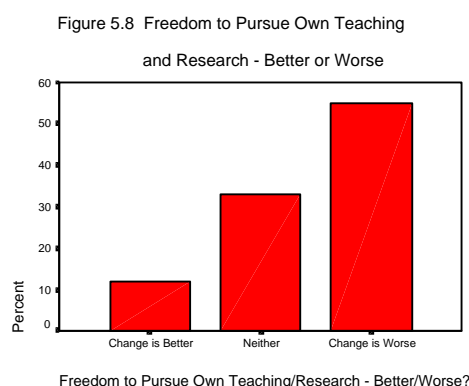
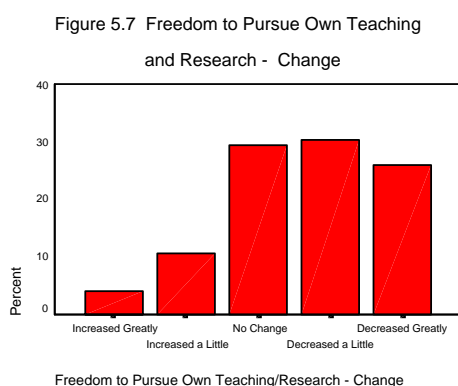
The same applies to decisions about the funding of research. Many of the factors that drive marketing decisions are now driving academic and other intellectual decisions. Thus academics are losing autonomy over the very area of their expertise, and those who do not possess this expertise are exercising control over these areas. In the short run, this may solve a particular university's problem in attracting students or research funding. In the long run it will be detrimental to a university's contribution to teaching and research in the big picture, and also to the attractiveness of an academic career.

In our survey we included one topic which directly addressed academic autonomy: The freedom to pursue one's own teaching and research interests. How did our academics respond to this topic?

Overall, 92 per cent of the respondents replied that autonomy in teaching and research was very or extremely important. Only .3 per cent said that it was not important.

Furthermore, academic autonomy is perceived to have changed in recent years. About 14 per cent said they thought it had increased, but almost 56 per cent thought it had decreased. Of those who thought it had decreased, 92 per cent thought this had been for the worse.

The frequency distributions for change and evaluation of freedom in teaching and research are given in Figures 5.7 (N=1964) and 5.8 (N=1937).



Therefore academic autonomy, which most think has decreased, is seen as another recent change in the academic work role. What did our respondents say about their freedom to pursue their own teaching and research?

Some of our respondents report that they continue to experience considerable freedom. Their statements reflect the value that this freedom has for them.

I am fortunate in that I can still largely determine what I do. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

The main reason I am in this game is because it offers you the freedom to choose your area of interest to pursue. So anything that detracts from this freedom is detrimental. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

With the revolving door on our immediate supervisor, we've pretty much been left alone...I love that. (Tutor, Humanities)

Many respondents feel that they have lost their professional autonomy.

[Academic freedom is] now non-existent. (A/P Reader, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

[I am] no longer free to pursue curiosity-based research. (Tutor, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

If your research interests do not fit the priorities set by the mandarins, or do not have any commercial potential - goodbye academia! (A/P Reader, Architecture)

Many of our respondents went into more detail as to why professional autonomy in teaching and research has been lost, and also some of the consequences of this change. Some reflect anger and dismay, while others are more reasoned.

Loss of autonomy over teaching

Unless the returns are great, no course gets off the ground for long. An absolute disgrace, as if 18 year olds know what they should be studying. (Tutor, Humanities)

Too much managerial control over all aspects of teaching - lack of effective tenure means you take a big career risk if you criticise in any way powerful interests - means academics are being marginalised from the major public debates. (Lecturer, Law)

What is taught is consumer driven, so if the bulk of students want a subject, majority rules. Too bad if the students who will ultimately stay to become researchers would have preferred the more challenging course, their wishes get subsumed by the whole. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Loss of autonomy over research

When granting agencies, bureaucrats and administrators spend so much time demanding [that] academics justify what they are doing against some criteria set up by outside agencies (and usually dictated entirely by money), then we do not really have academic freedom. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

There is enormous pressure to meet other people's targets, and to bend to political dictates. e.g. we have been instructed 'No more work in Asia', not for monetary reasons, but the (then) Federal minister wants us to stay at home. (Professor, Science)

Most academic groups are forced to pursue a strategy of concentrated interests to maximize earnings for group. There is no support for developing research interests that do not promise high earnings margins for university. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

A few respondents reflect a more reasoned interpretation over the loss of professional autonomy:

I suspect the country can't afford hobby research -- it needs to be well coordinated. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

Overall, one aspect of the academic work role that has changed for most academics is the loss of freedom over their main tasks of teaching and research. The reactions to this change are largely negative, although some see it as a necessary response to limited resources.

5.5 Academic Freedom

One of the most highly valued and defended aspects of the academic work role is academic freedom. From the very beginning of universities as social institutions, the professional freedom of academics has been the subject of much debate and controversy. This freedom, as understood here, is closely related to academic autonomy that was discussed in Section 5.4. There the focus was on the freedom of the academic to pursue his/her own preferred areas of teaching and research. Here the focus is on the academic's freedom to exercise a full role as a member of an institution, and a member of society, namely the freedom to speak out openly on matters of university politics, and to include all ideas in the process of teaching.

Our survey included questions relating to both of the above. They will be examined separately in this section.

Freedom to Speak Out on University Politics

Over 66 per cent of our respondents thought this freedom was very/extremely important. Only 5 per cent thought it was not important. However, over 41 per cent thought this freedom had decreased in recent years, and 44 per cent overall thought the recent change was for the worse. Of those respondents who thought the freedom to speak out had been very much or extremely curtailed in recent years, 96 per cent thought the change had been for the worse.

The frequency distributions for perceived change and evaluation in freedom to speak out on university politics are given in Figure 5.9 (N=1866) and Figure 5.10 (N=1842).

Figure 5.9 My Freedom to Speak Out on University

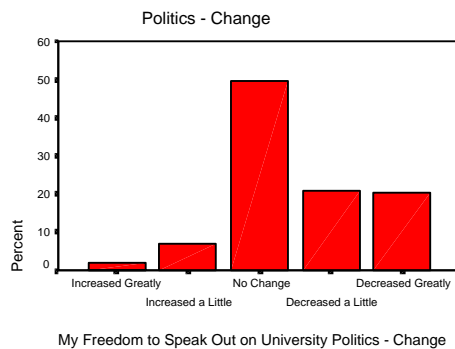
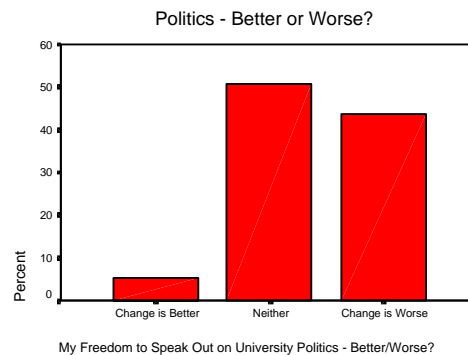


Figure 5.10 My Freedom to Speak Out on University



Although the younger academics were more likely to consider this freedom as important, it was the older academics who thought it had changed, and changed for the worse. Male academics were more likely to think the situation had got worse. There were no differences by academic rank.

How did our respondents express their views on this topic?

This university is a dictatorship. Managers use any method they can to get rid of anyone who opposes them - the only safeguard many people have is that they have so many skeletons in the cupboard that if you know of them they cannot afford to sack you without negotiating a good payout because they are frightened of the bad publicity. (Lecturer, Law)

Current HOD will crush ruthlessly any voice seeking discussion and choice. HOD insists on the blind following of faculty requests. ...The last 3 years have been a worsening nightmare. Prior to this my first 8 years have been within a great collegiate environment. Sudden changes, which have resulted in failing health of Dean, and associate deans taking a more controlling role with a new ruthless and incompetent HOD have resulted in an environment that is unpleasant. (A/P Reader, Engineering)

Once you speak out against the ruling opinion you are a marked person. The NTEU has dealt with many a case of victimisation in promotion and allocation of study leave and bullying. (A/P Reader, Education)

The more one is involved with the hierarchy, the more important it is that one knows when to shut up or the program and individuals will be punished. (Senior Lecturer, Nursing)

I fear the bullying and intimidation from senior management; while they don't make this explicit or public, they do get people, ... you can be told you don't have a value fit, - because you question or offer advice contrary to the desires of senior management. Senior management no longer has the capacity, skill or know-how to use criticism, dissent. At [x university] it is very ugly and vicious. (Professor, Education)

On the other hand, some comments suggest that the freedom to speak out without the fear of reprisal does exist in some academic environments.

I have always had my say and have not noticed any significant effect on my relations with other staff or career progression. (A/P Reader, Food/Health)

Freedom to Present Any and All Ideas in Regular Classes

Closely linked with the above freedom is intellectual freedom. This too has been a long-cherished freedom among academics. This applies to their choice of what to teach, or what theories to put forth in the classroom.

Academic freedom, in the sense in which it is used here, is the freedom of individual academics to teach and to conduct research in accordance with their intellectual inclinations and standards and to espouse in their academic activities, through spoken discourse and through written or printed publications, propositions that they have, on the basis of their studies and research, concluded to be true. (Shils, 1991, p. 3)

About three-fourths of our respondents regarded this freedom as very or extremely important. Only three per cent did not think it to be important. Very few respondents felt that there had been any change in this aspect of the academic work role (85.4 per cent). Only eleven per cent said they thought it had increased, while about 15 per cent thought it had decreased. Again, most of our respondents, 80 per cent, thought nothing in this respect had changed. Of the other 20 per cent, 14 per cent thought the situation had become worse, while six per cent thought it had become better.

The frequency distributions for change and evaluation for freedom in the classroom are given in Figure 5.11 (N=1765) and Figure 5.12 (N=1736).

Figure 5.11 My Freedom to Present Any and All

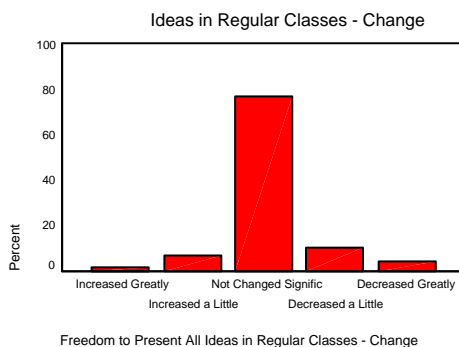
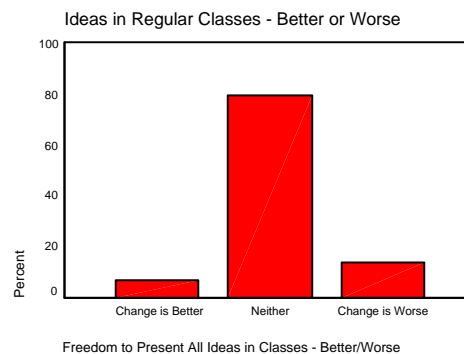


Figure 5.12 My Freedom to Present Any and All



The general view that academic freedom in the classroom is secure is reflected in the following comment.

I feel free to do this and I don't feel threatened in any way - assuming I put forward considered arguments. However, computing is not that contentious an area (though it can be, but often no one would notice). I guess I do not go around criticising xx and its IT development policies - this is partly because we are not consulted, we are not involved at all, so I am unlikely to say anything very contentious that anyone would notice anyhow. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

I believe I have the academic freedom to intellectually interpret subject matter as I see fit professionally and artistically. (Senior Lecturer, Creative Arts)

Two respondents who regard the freedom in the classroom to be under threat made the following comments.

I feel less free, but perhaps this is a reflection on general social mores rather than universities. A generally increasing sense that it is very easy to offend because there are many who might not share your point of view or sense of humour, and may even lodge a complaint about it. (Lecturer, Management)

You can't tell students why they have come to a third world uni - not only because of the need to protect the uni reputation, but also to keep your job. So it is difficult to explain to them why their results sheets are all wrong, why they can't get enrolled, why they can't get a library card, why they can't get a student card, why they can't get a proper classroom - though we try. (A/P Reader, Science)

Two years ago, I received a directive to 'cease teaching that way'. I took my time to address the root causes - did not in the end appeal to academic freedom, nor to existing appeal procedures, although did explore these. It was a toughening experience. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

5.6 Colleagues in Other Universities

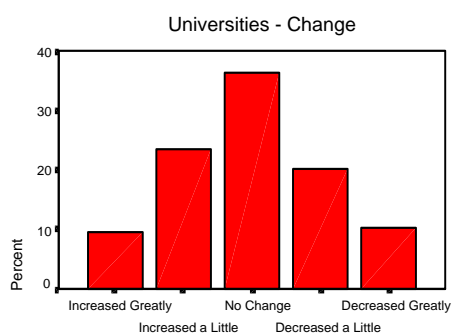
An important part of professional and collegial academic life is contact with academics in other universities, both within Australia and overseas. The purpose of study leave, conference attendance, and more recently the facility of e-mail and other forms of communication, are indicators of the necessity of contact between academics in order to maintain a high quality, stimulating intellectual life, and remain in the forefront of both teaching and research.

One question in our survey asked respondents about their contact with colleagues in other universities. About three-fourths, or 74.7 per cent said this was very or extremely important to them. However they were split on whether this contact had changed: one third said it had increased, while another third said it had decreased and the final third indicated no change.

A similar pattern occurred with respect to the evaluation of that change. Our respondents were almost equally divided into thirds: 30 per cent saw the change for the better while 31 per cent saw it as worse.

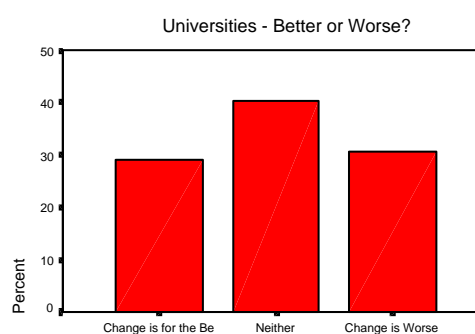
The frequency distributions for change and evaluation of contacts with colleagues are given in Figure 5.13 (N=1940) and Figure 5.14 (N=1929).

Figure 5.13 My Contacts with Colleagues in Other



My Contacts with Colleagues in Other Universities - Change

Figure 5.14 My Contacts with Colleagues in Other



My Contacts with Colleagues in Other Universities - Better/Worse

There were no differences between male and female academics. However older academics were slightly more inclined to say that the possibility for contact had changed for the worse. This is also reflected in the fact that academics at Level D and E regarded contact more than those at lower ranks. Academics at the Group of 8 universities were more inclined to say that contact had changed for the better (33.6 per cent compared to 22.8 per cent for regional universities). Conversely, academics in regional universities were more likely to say that changes in contact had become worse (40.2 per cent compared to 25.2 per cent for academics at G8 institutions).

Ninety-four per cent of the respondents who said that contact with academics at other universities had declined, also said this change was for the worse. These sentiments are reflected in the following statements.

Being in a regional university this is particularly important. Opportunities for physical meetings have decreased due to declining conference attendance budgets, but email access has made up partly for this. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

As the only academic in my field I have to work with colleagues in other universities and interact with them to remain in touch with my area. The down side is things like research grants (eg ARC) do not recognise cross institution research and provide funds to all institutions involved. So my Uni is not very encouraging of joint proposals - yet it is the only way I can work with colleagues - a bit of a catch 22. You must be part of a research group or team but you can't be in a cross-institutional group but we will only employ one person in your field. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

Not enough time/funds to travel as much as I would like - problem with not being in a capital city and with other work pressures - thank goodness for e-mail. (A/P Reader, Law)

Not enough time, and research has been marginalised so that these contacts have fallen off due to re-organisational problems. (Lecturer, Science)

Everyone seems to be ridiculously pressured. Too many of my colleagues are falling ill from overwork. I can no longer sustain scholarly conversations with colleagues, whereas this was at least possible - if difficult - only four years ago. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

Funding constraints and time seem to have been the primary reasons why about a third of the respondents felt that they were falling behind in this aspect of collegial research and scholarship.

6 RESEARCH

Philip Altbach writes: '*The defining characteristic of the academic profession is teaching*.' But he adds that doing research has also become a *key role* of the academic profession (Altbach, 1991, p.23). Teaching was the original role of the academic when universities were established from the Middle Ages until the 19th century. Research became part of the academic work role toward the end of the last century when the roles of both universities and academics expanded. Both activities are now seen as core activities of the academic work role.

Universities differ in terms of their stress on the research role of both academics and the university itself. Nevertheless research has become the single most important criterion for the career success for many academics.

Research can take many forms, ranging from laboratory research in the sciences to library research for the humanities. Research and scholarship are seen as two aspects of the same activity, as both have the generation of new knowledge as their primary objective. Thus when we refer to scholarly writing, we are referring to a research-based activity.

Of our respondents, 14.7 per cent defined their interest as 'very heavily in research'. Another 40.7 per cent said that while they were interested in both teaching and research, they leaned toward research. This means that slightly over half of our respondents, 55.5 per cent, identified themselves primarily as researchers. Of the rest, about 40 per cent, identified themselves as teachers, and 4.6 per cent as administrators.

Our survey contained a number of topics related to the research role of academics. In this section we will examine four topics dealing with research: 1) research resources, 2) time for scholarly writing, 3) writing research proposals for funds, and finally 4) the pressure to publish.

6.1 Resources for Research

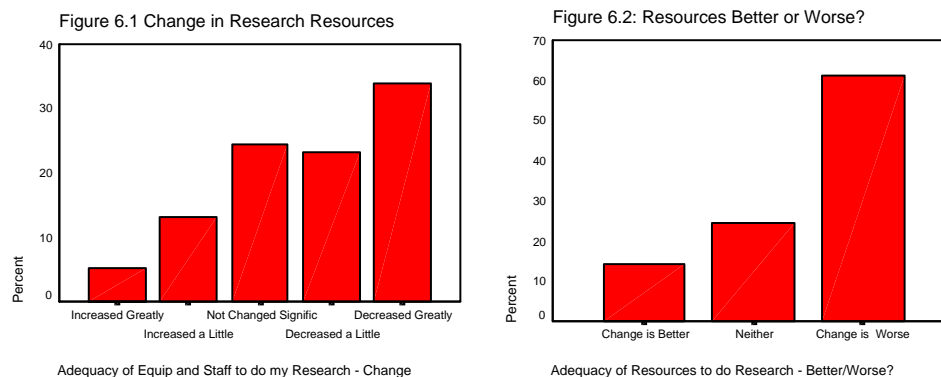
Research of any kind cannot take place within a vacuum. The scientist who needs well-furnished laboratories shares the same concerns as the humanities researcher who requires an up-to-date library well stocked with monographs and journals. Both the scientists and those who primarily research in libraries often require other forms of support, such as research assistance and supporting equipment such as computers, photocopiers, paper, and so on.

What did our respondents think about research resources?

Over 88 per cent of our academics regarded the adequacy of equipment and support staff to be at least 'very' important. Only 1.2 per cent of our respondents said it was not at all important. Furthermore 57.3 per cent said that research resources had declined, while only 18.2 per cent said they had increased. Finally 61.2 per cent said the change was for the worse, while 14.1 per cent said it was for the better.

A further analysis showed that of those respondents who said that resources had declined 98 per cent saw this as for the worse.

The frequency distributions for change and evaluation concerning research resources are given in Figure 6.1 (N=1840) and Figure 6.2 (N=1810).



There were no differences in perceptions about research resources between males and females. Older and more senior academic staff were slightly more prone to say that resources had declined and worsened. Academics at the G8 universities were more likely than the rest to regard resources as important, as having declined, and as having become worse. The regional universities were the least likely to articulate these views.

However, what is clear is that most of our respondents experienced declining and worsening research resources.

Here are some of the comments of our respondents regarding these worsening research resources:

I have never had significant access to support staff. IT infrastructure support is manifestly inadequate and a significant impediment to my research and teaching. (Lecturer, Law)

Absolutely could not get any worse. No research staff and no money for any department funded equipment. (Senior Lecturer, Agriculture)

[Research] quantum is no longer returned to researchers, but sinks into the university's black holes of deficit. This is occurring all over the country and not necessarily in my own institution only. (Professor, Nursing)

The main problem is that now staff are expected to do tasks that were formerly done by general staff. I am the most expensive photocopier I know - but there is no longer provision for such support. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Has been bad for the last 9 years since I entered academia on the downhill slide. Trying to get research funding is like trying to win tattsлото! (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

This university is vastly under-resourced in my opinion. There is no way we can hope to do cutting edge research in technology with equipment that is not even up to contemporary industry standards. I have to scratch up or build equipment for my experiments. And there is virtually no lab space for my experiments. My house is better equipped than this School. That situation is ridiculous. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

This comment points to some wider implications of lack of research funding, namely the recruitment and training of PhD students, foregone research opportunities, and students generally.

Apart from time, the lack of resources and equipment severely limits my access and ability to continue with a number of research streams/projects. This also limits the type and number of research students who we can accept into our School for PhD programs. So despite having a large number of applications for PhDs, we can only accept very few due to resource limitations. This is the main reason academics who should/could supervise choose not to, as they have to find/develop links with departments that have the equipment but who also have limited time for their own students to use the equipment. (A/P Reader, Health)

We have no allocated technical staff to help us with experiments, setting up, etc, and no secretarial staff to speak of. This really hinders research, and the only way to succeed is to be part of a large rich group. This means the diversity of research is decreased, and a lot of good research is not done. (Lecturer, Science)

There seems to be less and less funding from the university/government for equipment and support staff. Each lab then has to try and cover this loss. In the end it is the students who suffer, using inadequate/antiquated equipment and having to complete housekeeping tasks that in the past would have been done by technical staff. They lose precious time which wouldn't happen overseas, say in the United States. (Tutor, Science)

Many comments revealed cynicism and sarcasm about the issue of research funding. We found a chorus of negativity about the condition of research facilities. Comments like the following were extremely numerous.

Is there any support? (A/P Reader, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

What support staff???? (A/P Reader, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

No support in reality. (Senior Lecturer, Management)

What equipment? What support staff?? (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

There isn't any and this is not likely to change. (Lecturer, Science)

Always been zero! (Lecturer, Architecture)

What support staff? (Lecturer, Health)

There is NO support - none – zilch! (A/P Reader, Engineering)

Ha! (Senior Lecturer, Education)

Occasionally a positive comment suggested that research funding is sometimes, and in some sectors, seen to be adequate. But these comments were very rare.

Probably personal, but as [one's] research profile and familiarity with systems of grants etc improves, so too do facilities available. (A/P Reader, Architecture)

6.2 Time Available for Scholarly Writing

Research and scholarship are two sides of the same coin. Sometimes it is said that research is what scientists do in laboratories, and scholarship is what humanities academics do in libraries. Both however have as their goal the production of new knowledge, so both are part of the overall research activity of universities and of academics.

Scholarly writing is an essential part of research. Even scientists must write-up the results of their research for publication in scholarly journals, monographs or research reports. Scholarly writing in any discipline is intended to adhere to strict conventions which make it different from journalistic reporting or popular writing for the general public. Scholarly writing is a contribution to the generation of, and cumulation of knowledge of which universities are the primary agents.

Scholarly writing does not come easily. For many academics it is a slow and painstaking exercise, requiring a great deal of thought, drafting, and revision. In other words, it requires time. Scholarly writing lies at the core of research activity, and is therefore central to the academic work role in modern Western universities. It therefore was of interest to us in our study of the changing academic work role.

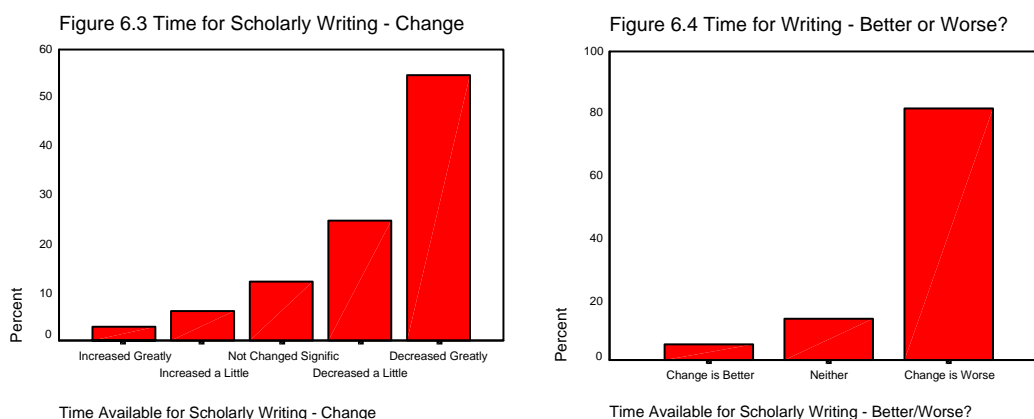
We asked our respondents to tell us about the time available to them for scholarly writing, and whether and how this had changed in recent years.

Almost all of our respondents (there were 1924 who answered this topic) said that time for scholarly writing was at least of some importance to them. Over 93 per cent said it was very or extremely important. In fact, the 0.3 per cent (six persons) who said it was not at all important represented one of the smallest numbers who chose this latter response category in the entire survey.

Among our respondents, 79.1 per cent said that time available for scholarly writing had decreased. Only 8.9 per cent said time had increased for them. Twelve per cent perceived no change.

Over 81 per cent saw this change for the worse; only 5.3 per cent saw it for the better. Of those respondents who perceived that their time for writing had decreased, 97.4 per cent felt that this had been for the worse.

The distributions of perceptions of change and evaluations of change in time for scholarly writing are given in Figure 6.3 (N=1929) and Figure 6.4 (N=1913).



Female academics were more likely than males to perceive time for scholarly writing to be more important, and to have decreased. However there were no

differences between males and females in the evaluation of this change, as about 81 per cent saw the change as a worsening condition.

Level E academics were more likely to consider time as extremely important, compared to around 57.5 per cent for Level As and Bs. Likewise, the more senior levels were more likely to perceive time to have decreased, and for the worse.

There were differences between groups of universities in the perceived importance of time for writing; 68.3 per cent of respondents from the G8 said it was extremely important, compared to 47.9 per cent in the regional universities. However there were no differences between types of universities in perceived change or the evaluation of change.

The views about the importance of, and changes in time available for writing, do seem to differ between types of academics, suggested by the above patterns. This is most clearly seen by the differences in how academics see themselves. For example of those academics who saw themselves mainly as researchers (even if they liked teaching), 72.8 per cent saw writing time as extremely important, compared to the 46.8 per cent who said their interests were mainly in teaching (even if they liked research). However, as counter-intuitive as it may seem, it was the teachers who were more likely to say that writing time had decreased, and that it resulted in a worse condition.

The above is not an unusual pattern; it has been found in previous research. One explanation for the above pattern is that academics committed more to research will find or make time to write, possibly at the expense of their teaching, while those more committed to teaching will not sacrifice their teaching priorities.

Having considered these patterns, what have the academics told us in their volunteered comments? Many of them simply say that their writing has to be done on their own time, not the university's.

I now do all of this at night, on weekends or on leave. There is no time during the 'normal' working week. Keeping up with [the] literature has become a problem. (Professor, Education)

It has always been a real problem. To write papers you have to hide, or go home, or work on the weekend. I'd like to write a book, but the time required seems out of the question. So, a real problem, career wise. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Most scholarly writing has to be undertaken away from the workplace often during weekends. I have also taken recreational leave in order to have uninterrupted time to undertake scholarly writing. The pressures during the working day are so great it is virtually impossible to write under these circumstances. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

Because my teaching load has more than doubled and publications in the discipline needed for teaching have more than quadrupled, there is no longer enough time to keep up with the scholarly literature in a research field, let alone produce research papers, except in periods of study leave. Summer and semester breaks are taken up with course design and preparation. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

I have no time for writing during the working week. I write in my own time, at home. I believe this is the normal perception of research, that

writing and reading are to be done outside normal work hours. (Lecturer, Science)

Some of our respondents pointed to the reasons for the lack of time during the working day, such as administrative duties, pressures for grant writing.

Paper preparations always seem to be last minute activities. Scholarly writing is prevented through grant writing. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

University administration has heaped too much work on us. They should use some of their resources to help academics rather than taking trips around the world at our expense. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Ten years ago I could find two days in a week to devote to my own work. Now I struggle to find a half-day per week. (Senior Lecturer, Creative Arts)

Some academics have pointed out some of the consequences, both to universities and to themselves, of the increased pressures on their time and inability to find writing time.

The amount of time available for this has decreased dramatically, because of ever-mounting pressures of other kinds. The result is grim. (A/P Reader, Humanities)

Complete failure of the system to allow teaching academics time to write that is in work time. The increase in teaching loads and trivial admin has all been at the expense of thinking and writing time. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

Research is the only real basis for academic career advance. The only serious way of getting enough time to write is to avoid commitment to other university activities other than one's teaching responsibilities, which are then often minimised wherever possible. (Senior Lecturer, Economics)

Writing is a time of consolidation of current knowledge and gaining of new knowledge and understanding. It is essential if senior staff are to remain able to lead their junior staff and to ensure the efficiency of the research in progress, thereby producing maximum results for the research dollar. (Tutor, Science)

Once again, increasing student:staff ratios increasing, administrative load on academics increasing, time gets squeezed. The university yells if the administration work doesn't get done, the teaching has to get done, and no one but me loses if the scholarly work (the thing that I am actually qualified to do) doesn't. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Science)

Occasionally, an academic would indicate how scholarly writing was maintained.

A deliberate focus on writing papers has increased my productivity significantly in the last year. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

Overall, however, the results of the written comments are very negative and are consistent with the responses to the questionnaire: academics are finding less and less time to pursue their scholarly writing. In some cases, they take away time from other academic duties, but it seems a larger number are simply doing this aspect of their research on their own time. Yet scholarly writing is integral to the academic work role. Older academics seem well aware of the worsening changes which have

taken place to prevent the exercise of this role. Some younger academics, however, seem to regard the present situation as 'normal'.

6.3 Time Spent Writing Research Proposals

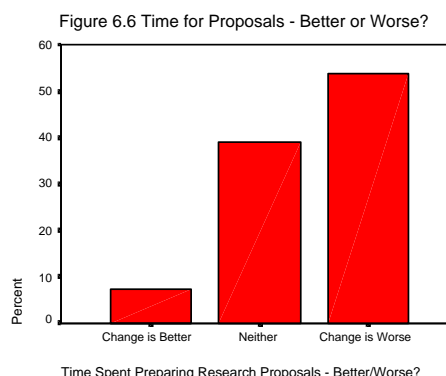
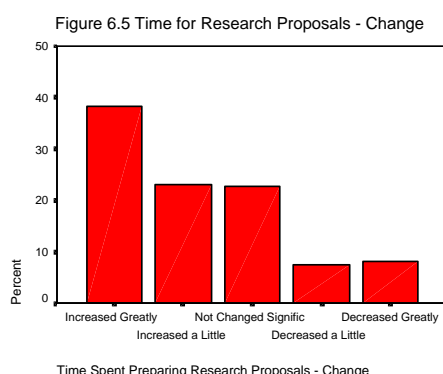
In our group interviews and our survey, writing research proposals was often mentioned as a new expectation of the academic work role. Clearly this development is the result of the new entrepreneurial ideal of the university, and the notion that research should be funded from the outside.

However research proposals represent a quandary in understanding the academic work role. Where do they fit in the teaching-research dimension? We often heard in our group interviews that writing research proposals was like writing an article for a professional journal. If so, does it carry the same professional esteem? Can an academic put a research proposal on his/her CV in the same way as a published article in a refereed journal? We know that some universities encourage grant proposals by giving a certain amount of money simply for the proposal, for example two or three thousand dollars. However, does a submitted proposal, with or without a reward, carry the same weight for a promotion committee? If not, then why should academics be expected to spend time on them? What is their importance for the changing academic work role?

These were the questions which motivated our inclusion of this topic in our internet survey. We also asked the question in our group interviews.

Over 70 per cent of our respondents indicated that the preparation of research proposals was very or extremely important. Only 4 per cent thought this activity was not at all important. Over 60 per cent of our respondents thought the time spent writing proposals had increased, and 53.8 per cent thought it was a change for the worse.

The frequency distributions for perceived change and evaluation of time spent on research proposals are given in Figure 6.5 (N=1718) and Figure 6.6 (N=1707)



However the relationship between perceived change in the preparation of research proposals, and whether or not this change is better or worse, is somewhat mixed. For example, of those who thought the time had increased, 75.5 per cent thought this was for the worse. Of those who thought the time writing proposals had

decreased a great deal, 93.6 per cent thought it was for the worse. In effect, the survey data suggest that most respondents thought writing proposals was either neutral or for the worse, and those who thought it had decreased were most likely to think of it in negative terms. Very few thought writing proposals was for the better, no matter what they perceived to be the change in time spent. But it may be that the reasons for the negative views might be very different.

Male and female academics pretty well agreed on the importance, the increased time spent, and the negative outcome of writing for research grants. Younger academics were more inclined to see the activity as important, but all ages felt that the time spent had increased and the outcome was worse. The amount of time spent writing grants seemed to increase more for the more senior academics, and they also saw the outcome as worse. Academics from the G8 universities saw grant proposal writing as more important than academics from the other universities, they perceived the time spent to have increased, and they also were more likely to see the change in negative terms.

When given the chance to comment on grant writing, a number of themes emerged which explained why the growing pressures to spend time doing it were seen in such negative terms. First, many academics clearly saw spending time on grant proposals as a waste of valuable time, particularly given the low odds of success. A great deal of frustration is reflected in these comments, which were typical of many. Consider the following comments.

I really do resent this appalling waste of time. Weeks and weeks... with no guarantee of success. Indeed, there is little hope of success. The ARC's 80% failure rate in funding is a national scandal. It is bloody depressing to put heart and soul into a proposal (on which your career may depend)... only to be advised that it won't be funded. No explanation. I'm fed up supporting my research out of my own pocket - and seeing the university claim credit (and financial reward) for my published results. (A/P Reader, Science)

It's taken far too much of my time. It's a depressing and boring activity, unless I'm particularly passionate about the piece of research. But I have to prepare quite a few. I'm less interested just to 'hedge my bets'. It's the single factor that would get me a burn-out from academic life. (Lecturer, Engineering)

The granting system in Australia needs an overhaul. Too many people spend too much time on committees and writing applications that are unsuccessful. The wage costs alone would fund a substantial research effort. We need mechanisms to get the money to the universities without the pleading processes. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

I've given up applying for research grants. I've had 2 ARC grants in the past - but the time involved in preparing a grant eats so much into my only time for WRITING, that I'd rather write during the academic vacation rather than invest all that time in a process that is such a lottery anyway. Besides, in my field, I don't NEED the \$25,000+ p.a. which is more or less the minimum you can ask for. I need about \$10,000, so that I can pay for travel and accommodation, and maybe buy some research materials such as microfilms. And the current research grants simply

don't recognise this need. So I pay my own way overseas, and claim as much as possible off my tax. (A/P Reader, Humanities)

I have shifted my effort to funding sources where the chances of success are highest and only try for funds that I have a reasonable chance of getting. I have dumped ARC as a huge risk and lottery. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

A second interesting theme which emerged from the volunteered comments is that grant proposal writing has become an end in itself. The purpose of a successful grant proposal, the opportunity to conduct valuable research, is not seen as the reason for the pressure to write proposals. There is a cynicism toward university administrators and managers reflected in these comments.

There is pressure to apply for grants all the time, even when one doesn't have time to do the research for the grants you already have. The university just wants the money and shows little concern for the researcher. (Professor, Humanities)

Managing my own projects is not a bad thing, I just wish there was more departmental support for such things as well as time to actually do the contracted research! Administration wants the money, but doesn't want us to actually take time to do the work!!! (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

A third theme reflected the personal cost of the increasing pressure to write grant proposals in an already crowded academic and personal schedule:

To make it in the higher echelons of university life this is a reality we have to face. Hence I'm currently spending many evenings working to develop ARC proposals and the like. It means working very long hours that I can only do now (as a woman) since my family has grown-up. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Late at night or weekends is not a top option, but it is all I have. Then I feel guilty because my children miss out. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

The many volunteered comments indicate that there are many consequences to the perceived pressure to write grant proposals. It may be argued that grants are a means to an end, namely the ability to conduct research, one of the core activities of the academic work role. However, many academics see it as having the opposite effect, namely as an obstacle to engaging in academic work role activities.

Our comments suggest that academics deal with the increased pressure in many ways; some have bailed out of the activity, while others reluctantly engage in it. The latter is reflected in the following comment that probably reflects the attitude of many. *You gotta do it! (Professor, Medicine)*

6.4 The Pressure to Publish

'Publish or perish' has been a part of the academic culture for a long time. Over thirty years ago a study at what is now called a G8 university found that academics thought it almost impossible to get tenure or promotion without a string of publications. Frequent debates about the recognition of good teaching or administrative contributions often get a sympathetic hearing, but in the end the

perception has been that publications are the main road to promotion. Publications are the end point of research and scholarship. They are integral to the academic work role.

Our interest in this issue is to find out whether or not it has changed in the past ten years or so, and how it is perceived by members of the academic community. We therefore included it as one of our topics; our respondents were to indicate whether the pressure to publish was important, whether it had changed, and whether this change was for the better or worse.

The pressure to publish was clearly regarded as important by our respondents. Over 78 per cent said that it was very or extremely important; only 2.4 per cent said it was not at all important. Similarly 76.5 per cent thought the pressure to publish had increased in the past ten years or so, while about 20 per cent thought it had remained pretty much the same. Only 3.6 per cent thought it had decreased.

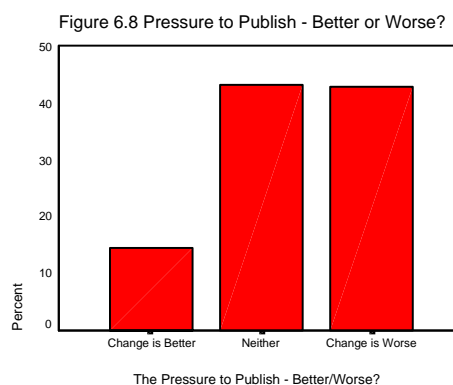
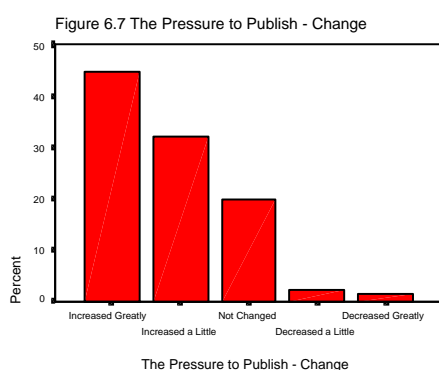
With respect to evaluation, 42.7 per cent thought that the change was for the worse; only 14.3 per cent thought it was for the better. The remaining 43 per cent thought it was neither.

The increase in the pressure to publish was seen by some academics as a good thing. Similarly, the decrease in the pressure to publish was seen by some as a bad thing. Of those who thought that the pressure to publish had increased, 18 per cent thought this was for the better while 51.5 per cent thought it was for the worse.

There were not many among our respondents who thought that the pressure to publish had decreased, but of those who did, the vast majority, 67.1 per cent, thought this was for the worse.

Clearly there are many among our respondents who thought that the pressure to publish serves a useful purpose in the academic work role.

The distribution of responses to change, and the evaluation of change, in the pressure to publish are given in Figure 6.7 (N=1931) and Figure 6.8 (N=1920).



Among the academics, females were more likely than males to say that the pressure to publish was 'extremely important'. They were also more likely to say that the pressure had increased, but there were no differences between males and females in judging the change as better or worse.

Younger academics were more likely to perceive the pressure to publish as important, but older academics were more likely to say it had increased. There were few discernible patterns in the evaluation of this change by age.

Academics at all levels thought the pressure to publish was important, but the Level A academics thought it more important than the others. There were no important differences between the academic levels in the perception of change or the evaluation of change.

Academics at the G8 universities clearly were more likely to perceive the pressure to publish as 'extremely important'. However academics at all universities in our sample were pretty much in agreement about the extent to which it had increased or decreased, and they were in agreement about whether it was a good or bad thing.

What have the academics told us about the pressure to publish?

A very common comment was that the pressure to publish had put too much emphasis on quantity rather than quality, and that much of what was being published was not up to standard.

It's important to be productive and keep writing. But the pressure to just churn out papers has become preposterous. Quantity, not quality, is all that is counted. It produces huge quantities of junk papers which should never have been written, choking the literature review process, the conferences and the journals with low grade material. It also increases the temptation for people to find shortcuts and to exploit students to get themselves more publications. This is leading us ever deeper into trouble. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

As the authorities pressing for more and more publications are incapable of developing appropriate mechanisms of quality assurance, the outcome has inevitably [become] one which enthrones quantity of publications over their quality. (Professor, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Due to increasing publication pressure the paper quality decreases. Often premature results are being published, or good comprehensive studies are being chopped to bits by the authors in order to increase the number of papers. As my main goal as a researcher is to do and publish good work, I am being disadvantaged by competitive grant schemes, which are largely based on publication record. (Lecturer, Science)

Also a common comment was that the pressure to publish was not necessarily a bad thing, but that increasing work loads prevented it, and that it produced stress and forms of compromising on other academic duties.

We're under more pressure to publish, yet receive less support to undertake research (and this comment comes from an academic who is known as a productive researcher). (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Just adds more pressure when there is more than enough pressure just trying to deal with the current workload. Promotion depends on publication and research and when do you get the time to do this??? (Lecturer, Nursing)

Well, the pressure is there...isn't it! (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

Most recently, less pressure to publish. More pressure to get grants and industry linkage, regardless of whether they lead to publications or not. (A/P Reader, Humanities)

There is only lip service to teaching. Publishing is when you get promoted. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Some comments took a more positive view of publishing and the pressure to do so. They defended publishing as a core activity of the academic work role, and accepted the pressure that went along with it.

Still too much work wasted by not being published. I regret every opportunity that passes. I am also working to get grad students published. (A/P Reader, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

I don't like your use of the word 'Pressure' to publish - I LIKE publishing my research findings. (Professor, Science)

If you don't like the heat, stay out of the kitchen. (Lecturer, Science)

6.5 Section Summary

Some of the major points (but not all) to emerge from the survey data on the administration aspects of the academic work role are given in the following dot-points.

- Almost two thirds of the respondents thought that research facilities and resources had declined.
- Academics at G8 universities felt more strongly about this than those from other universities.
- Almost four out of five respondents said that time for scholarly writing had declined and become worse.
- More senior academics were more likely to say that time for writing had declined.
- Almost two out of three academics said that time in writing research proposals had increased, and although a large proportion the change was for the worse, almost a similar proportion thought it was for the better.
- Senior academics were more likely to see the change as for the worse.
- Three out of four academics thought the pressure to publish had increased in recent years.
- Over 40 per cent thought the increase was for the worse, about the same said neither, and only 14 per cent thought it was for the better.

7 ADMINISTRATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

How much of my life outside of my work am I prepared to sacrifice in order for this job to go the way that it could. Am I prepared to... I mean I have colleagues who work a six day week, who work to 9pm every night, and I look at that and think do I want to be an Associate Professor enough to do that, and quite frankly the answer is no I don't. So for me, I

partly think I don't know how realistic it is for a person at my stage in life to kind of go....what are my prospects for advancement in this career, and what would they involve me doing? And I can look around me and see a whole range of different approaches to juggling all the different components of that picture. And as far as the way it looks to me is, I could juggle out my community service, as the university kind of refers to it. I could juggle that out because it doesn't produce a lot of publications and it doesn't bring in a lot of money. It probably never will, but I really enjoy it and I am very good at that. I could juggle that out even so, and I could spend less time being acceptable to students, make myself a very defended person who communicates to students 'you are not welcome in my office. I am not interested in you', and so forth, and thereby get less applications for extensions, deal with less people who are in distress, have less people crying in my office, and so forth. But I have to pay a cost of my own humanity or my preparedness to communicate it to students. I could spend less time caring about my teaching, and really if I want to advance in my career I should do that because I should be publishing instead. I should be trying for grants, and I can't do all of that and do the things that I care about at teaching. You know, the juggling act doesn't look very good to me. (Comment made in a group interview)

As the above participant graphically comments, the academic work role now requires a 'juggling act', and sometimes a painful and agonising one. While teaching and research are considered 'core activities' of the academic role, as we have seen in chapters 2 and 6, there are other activities which are increasingly expected of academics, and which are sometimes sought out by academics.

Contribution to university administration at various levels is one of these 'non core' work roles, but which nevertheless compete for time. To a limited extent, universities articulate their expectations that all academics 'serve their turn' at contributing to various administrative duties, such as committees, headships and so on. The design of promotion procedures often gives weighting to administrative service, although not as much as to teaching and research.

In recent years universities have been expected to raise a larger proportion of their operating budgets through various forms of outside funding. These so-called entrepreneurial activities range from the recruitment of students to outside grants and consultancies, and gifts of various kinds. While many universities appoint full-time personnel to carry out entrepreneurial tasks, often academics are expected to take part.

Finally, academics are expected to represent the university to the wider community. This manifests itself in various forms of community service, which again is given a certain weight in promotion applications.

The increasing expectation that academics become involved in these academic/entrepreneurial/community activities has created considerable resentment. In the group interviews we often experienced negative comments about the number of hours per week that they were expected to contribute to these activities.

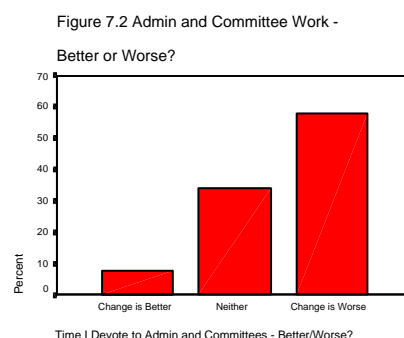
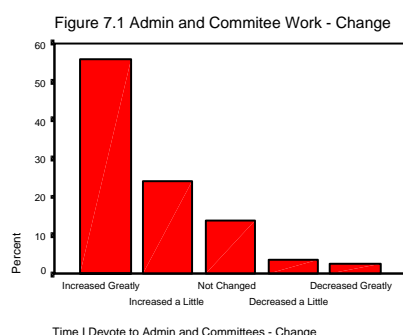
In our survey we included four topics which asked respondents to indicate how they perceived change in the three general areas of administration, entrepreneurial activities, and community service.

7.1 Time Devoted to Administration and Committee Work

Our respondents thought that time spent in administration and committee work were important; 46 per cent thought they were either 'very' or 'extremely' important. Only 6 per cent thought that they were not at all important. Over 80 per cent of our respondents thought that the time given to these tasks had increased while only 6 per cent thought that administrative time had decreased.

Our respondents largely took a negative view regarding the increased time doing administration; 58 per cent thought the time spent had become worse while only 8 per cent thought the change was for the better. There was a strong pattern between the change in time spent on administrative tasks and whether the change in time was better or worse. About 80 per cent of the respondents who perceived that time spent had increased a great deal, thought the change was for the worse. Conversely, of those who thought time spent had decreased a great deal, 57 per cent thought the change was for the better. The correlation coefficient between the two variables was -0.51 , one of the largest in the survey. There was a very small group of academics, 15 of the 1903 who responded to this item, who thought the decrease in administration was for the worse.

The distribution of responses to the change and evaluation questions regarding time for administration are given in Figures 7.1 (N=1929) and 7.2 (N=1915).



There were no differences between male and female respondents in perceived importance of change, and of whether the change was better or worse. Older academics were more likely to think that the time they spent on these tasks had increased, with the academics between 45-49 having the highest percentage (68 per cent) with the young academics between 30-35 having one of the lowest (40 per cent). Likewise, it was the older academics who were more likely to think the change was for the worse.

Rank also differentiated between perceptions of change in time spent for administration. Level Es were more likely than Level As and Bs to perceive the time to have increased, but academics at all levels saw the increase as for the worse. Academics at the technical universities were more likely to perceive administration time to have increased, particularly compared to the G8 universities. The academics at regional universities were the least likely to perceive time to have increased, and least likely to see it in negative terms.

Our respondents had much to say about the increasing amount of time being spent on administration work and on committees.

Most respondents commented on the amount of time taken up by administrative work, and committees in general.

There is a lot more administration and committee work. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

The demands of the university for administration seem insatiable - but so too are the expectations of excellence in teaching, research, publishing etc. etc. There are only so many hours in the day - one does one's best. (A/P Reader, Social and Behavioural Science)

Takes away from time you can spend on teaching. Committees [are] good but administrative work [is] a joke. (Lecturer, Nursing)

I think it is an important part of academic life that we should be involved in helping to run our university, but the demands are too much. Staff have been slashed at universities, but someone has to still do the administration and committee work. Those that are left have to take on huge loads. At our university we are increasingly being asked to do more administrative work such as purchasing, travel and the like. I feel that academics are at the bottom of the barrel; if someone in administration doesn't like doing a particular job, get the academics to do it. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

Really, there are only 24 hours in a day. I work somewhere between 60 and 80 hours a week already (lets say 70 on average). I sleep say 60 hours a week, I commute for 7 hours a week. That leaves an average of about three and a half hours a day for life outside work. It's ridiculous when you look at it like that. I might get a job as a gardener! (Lecturer, Agriculture)

The number of committees has grown enormously, much of them forced on us by Canberra. Being a female means you get on heaps more committees in the name of gender equity! (Professor, Maths/IT)

Some respondents expressed some cynicism about the effectiveness of administrative duties and committee work. They felt that it appeared as the sharing of decision-making, but in fact was not.

In part this is inevitable given external pressures. In part it is simply bad management practice by people untrained to manage, who substitute pseudo consultation for decision making. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

Administration - too many systems to learn. Committees, well I have no power, the meetings are generally just there to inform us about what the Head is going to do anyway. (Tutor, Management)

Attend meetings only to have decisions overridden. A waste of time! (Lecturer, Food-Hospitality)

Committees which used to decide things are now replaced by a fascist hierarchy. But their place is filled by quality committees filling in questionnaires to fill the hard disks of DETYA. (A/P Reader, Science)

In conclusion, it seems that the main concern which academics have about participation in university committees and other forms of administrative work are 1) it is taking an increasing amount of time with little reward; and 2) that the real decision-making does not occur at this level, and therefore much of administration and committee work has the appearance of shared decision-making, but in reality is not.

7.2 Time Spent on Entrepreneurial Activities

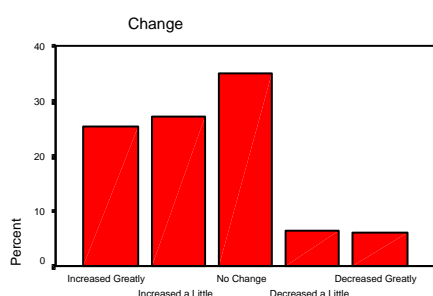
In recent years, as a result of government's reduction in funding, universities are expected to be more entrepreneurial with respect to the provision of additional funding to replace the shortfall. This entrepreneurial activity is often concentrated in the central administration of universities, but it is also often devolved through the system to the individual academics.

We asked our respondents a similar question to that addressed in Section 7.1, namely whether the time they spent on entrepreneurial activities had increased over the past ten or so years.

About 40 per cent of our respondents said that time spent on entrepreneurial activities was very or extremely important. Only 18 per cent thought entrepreneurial time was not important. Over 52 per cent thought entrepreneurial time had increased while only 13 per cent thought it had decreased. Finally 31 per cent thought the change was for the worse while 18 per cent thought it was for the better. There was no clear pattern between perceptions of change and evaluations of better or worse. There were as many academics who thought an increase in time spent on entrepreneurial activities was a good thing as there were academics who thought a decrease in entrepreneurial activity was a bad thing.

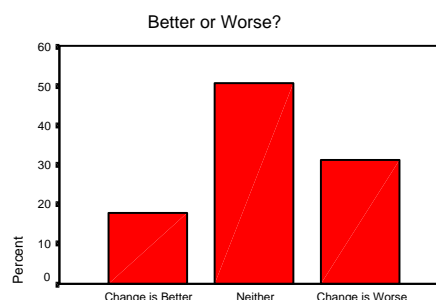
This spread of opinion about time spent on entrepreneurial activities is apparent in Figures 7.3 (N=1575) and 7.4 (N=1551).

Figure 7.3 Time on Entrepreneurial Activities -



Time I Spend on Entrepreneurial Activities - Change

Figure 7.4 Time on Entrepreneurial Activities -



Time I Spend on Entrepreneurial Activities - Better/Worse?

The perceived increase in entrepreneurial activities seems stronger among middle-aged to older academics, as is the extent to which the change is considered worse rather than better. The same pattern occurs with respect to rank: academics at higher ranks are more likely to perceive change to have occurred and to regard it as negative. There were no differences by type of university.

What did our respondents say about entrepreneurial activities? Here are some examples.

We all now need to show how we are helping to keep the faculty afloat - but I, for example, was not trained in private sector work / business, and as a teacher educator I feel a lack of desire and skill in the business world. (Lecturer, Education)

Our Faculty has lost more money than it has ever made over these activities. All it has done is make our professoriate better travelled than James Bond! (Senior Lecturer, Education)

These activities have a 95% failure rate. Management expects 100 % success - makes me feel most of them (management) have never had an original idea in their entire lives. (Senior Lecturer, Agriculture)

Academics expected to be entrepreneurs, which isn't my idea of what the profession should be about. (Tutor, Social and Behavioural Science)

As director of a program I spend a great deal of time doing marketing type activities for which I am untrained, not very good at and therefore which take me longer to accomplish. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Change is both for the better and for the worse. It is good to feel a part of the bigger picture but too much pressure to attract funds from the corporate sector. The Humanities and the Arts in particular are not areas that attract strong corporate funding! (Lecturer, Creative Arts)

[I] like it. Extra money, interesting teaching, seeing the world... the only thing that keeps me in the place. (Lecturer, Management)

In spite of all the rhetoric, most administrators are mediocre, and do not like to hear about entrepreneurial ideas. They are only there to STOP entrepreneurial ideas. (Lecturer, Humanities)

The pressure to engage in this at the expense of teaching is growing rapidly. (Lecturer, Science)

While academics saw value in entrepreneurial activities, there were others who were more cynical about it.

7.3 Service to the Community

Universities do not exist in a vacuum. They are part of a surrounding community. Furthermore, the relationship between the two is symbiotic, that is, to the benefit of both. One of the expectations of the academic work role is to engage in free community service. This community service can include a multitude of activities, for example providing free professional service to needy community organisations or individuals, participating in community organisations, and so on. Many universities include community service as one component required for promotion.

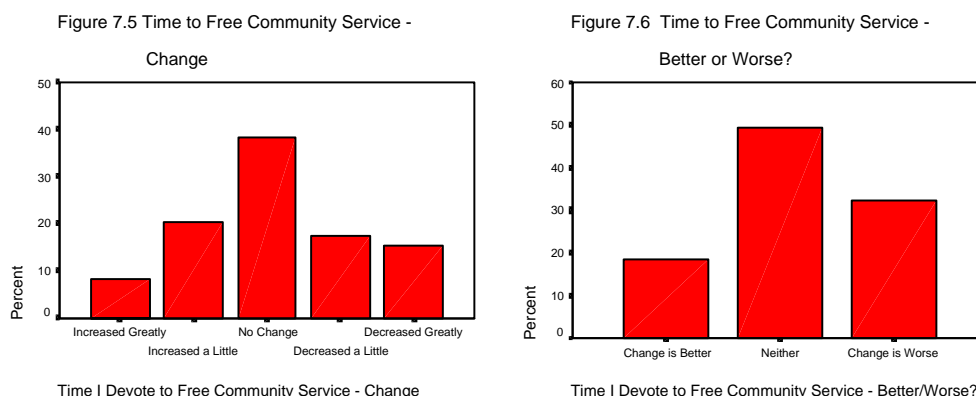
But like other aspects of the academic work role, community service can be time consuming. However as the need for universities to seek outside funding and support from the surrounding community, the pressure to engage in some form of community activity on the part of academics increases.

We included a topic about change in time spent on community service. A little over one half of our respondents, 51 per cent, felt that time for community service was very or extremely important for them. Only 7 per cent said it was not at all important.

Our respondents were almost evenly split as to whether time doing community service had changed. Twenty-nine per cent said time spent had increased whereas 33 per cent said it had decreased. On the other hand, they were almost twice as likely to say that change was for the worse: 18 per cent said better while 33 per cent said worse.

When examined more closely, of those who thought time for community service had increased, 60 per cent thought it was for the better. Similarly, of those who thought time for community service had decreased, 87 per cent thought it was for the worse. The correlation coefficient for this pattern was .74, very high. This pattern suggests that academics do regard community service as a positive aspect of the academic work role, and that any pressure that brings about its reduction is a negative.

The distributions for change and evaluation of time spent on community service are given in Figures 7.5 (N=1793) and 7.6 (1763).



There were no large or clear differences for males and females, and by age, on stated importance, change or evaluation of change.

There were differences by academic rank. The importance of time for community service was lower the higher the academic rank, with 26 per cent of the Level A respondents saying it was 'very important' compared to 13 per cent of the Level E respondents. The Level A respondents were also more likely to have perceived the time they spent on community service to increase than the Level E respondents, the figures being 14 per cent to 7 per cent respectively. However there were no differences by academic rank in evaluations of any change in terms of better or worse.

There was a tendency for the respondents from the G8 universities to regard time for community service to be lower (14 per cent) than the high figure for regional universities (20 per cent). However there were no differences between type of university on either change in time for community service, or the evaluation of change.

What kinds of comments did our respondents volunteer regarding time for community service?

The first cluster of responses indicate the recognition that community service, as an academic role activity, is highly valued.

Communication to the public is essential in increasing understanding and knowledge. (A/P Reader, Science)

I try to keep up these areas of life [community service], at some cost to my own family and to my research, but it is important. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

There are so many competing priorities in academic work. I admire those who give lots of free time to the community but I don't find a lot of time myself. (Senior Lecturer, Nursing)

Privatisation of government agricultural activities has left the university as one of the last sources of free, impartial advice. Our involvement in this has increased dramatically. (A/P Reader, Agriculture)

This was once valued. (Senior Lecturer, Management)

Other respondents took a more cynical view of community service, especially in terms of the intentions of the university

No time for this. Lip service to this category from administration. More important problems at the uni than public relations. (Lecturer, Science)

[The] contribution to society is valued only in terms of getting increased funds for the organisation. (A/P Reader, Education)

Other saw community service in competition with the other demands on the academic work role.

There is less time given to local community work because of the demands of off-shore work - things are a little out of balance and this is bad. We are losing touch with our local community I feel. I hope the new VC will address this and our new Pro-VC (Head of Division). Certainly our School is trying to address this but the previous VC signed us up for a lot of difficult off-shore work (without consultation in my opinion). (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Increasing work demands impact negatively on capacity to engage in free community service. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

Increased workload has meant that the stuff which doesn't generate revenue doesn't get any attention. Universities are now run as a business. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

In my role there has been significant changes in my capacity to undertake free community service activities. I now charge for consultancy work and do not undertake much other work. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

I have in the past been very active within the community. This has played a strong role in developing my skills, knowledge, and networks to function as an academic. With an increased workload, I have had to reduce my level of involvement within the community, though try to maintain some key activities. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Overall, the results of the quantitative survey, and the written comments volunteered by respondents, suggest that community service is highly valued among academic staff. There are some, however, who see it as a clever way by which the university can obtain additional revenue from individual members of society: community service is just another way of improving the image of university to the wider community, and thereby improve the possibilities for consultancies, grants, gifts, and so forth. But all academics seem to agree that the community service role of academics, whether seen in positive or negative ways, is under pressure from other demands of academic work, from the more important aspects of the academic work role.

7.4 Section Summary

Some of the major points (but not all) to emerge from the survey data on the administration aspects of the academic work role are as follows.

- More than one half of our respondents perceived administrative time to have increased, and thought it was for the worse.
- Older and higher rank academics were more likely to perceive that administrative time had increased and was for the worse.
- About half of the respondents thought time spent on entrepreneurial activities had increased.
- Older academics were more likely to perceive time spent on entrepreneurial activities to have increased.
- Respondents were almost split into thirds in perceptions of time spent on community service: increase, no change, and decrease.
- There were no major differences in perceptions of time spent on community service, except that higher ranked academics tended to regard it as less important.

8 THE ACADEMIC CAREER

The academic profession is at the heart of the university. Without a well-qualified, committed, and adequately compensated professoriate, no academic institution can be fully successful. The professors teach, do research, and through their activities define the university. Their work is, in essence, the university. Everything else – administrative structures, laboratories, libraries – exists to assist the academic profession in the basic task of teaching and research. (Altbach, 1991, p.23). We have trouble recruiting in certain areas where the rewards outside in the private sector or the general workforce are just so much better, that a person with financial commitments with family or mortgage or whatever would, I suppose, be a bit crazy to choose ...the academic option, and that's becoming a reality. We haven't been able to fill one or two positions last year because of difficulty of finding the right people, when there must be people out there but they are choosing to do other things. (Comment made in group interviews)

If I had a 23 or 24 year-old niece or nephew who told me they were contemplating an academic career in an Australian university, I would say you must be completely out of your mind. (Comment made in group interviews)

In the above quotes, we regress from the ideal portrayal of the academic profession, to the reality. The view put forth by Altbach represent the traditional view that is enshrined in universities throughout the world. The latter two views suggest that, at the grass-roots level, the profession does not appear so attractive. Why?

The major focus of our research is the changing work role of academics. Up to now, we have considered various aspects of the academic work role and how our respondents saw them. We now want to turn our attention to a larger issue, namely how the academic profession is seen by Australian academics themselves, and how they think society sees it. In this respect we are concerned with what Altbach calls 'the essence' of the university. The strength of a university lies in its ability to attract and keep the best talent possible. This includes not only the ability to recruit, but also the ability to provide a suitable reward structure, and suitable facilities to create the best possible environment for excellence in academic performance.

A number of themes emerged repeatedly in our group interviews. Our participants frequently made reference to problems they saw in the current condition of academics in their university, and in Australian universities generally. These problems were not simply the complaints of a group of people in a cushy job situation who were resisting the financial constraints of the present university environment. They reflected the concerns of professionals who were struggling to practise their profession at a high level. Their concerns were what they perceived to be the obstacles to that performance. In the end, they remained committed to their profession and they frequently indicated that it still had its attractions.

We included a number of topics in our survey that addressed concerns central to the academic profession itself. In this section, these topics will be grouped under

three headings: the attractiveness of an academic career, career development, and resignations and retirement.

8.1 The Academic Career

One of the participants in our group interviews, after having said what was wrong with the condition of academics in her university, commented that ‘it still has its attractions’. We want to know more about those characteristics which contribute to the attractiveness of the academic profession, and also those which make it unattractive. To this end, we included two topics, the first asking specifically about the attractiveness of an academic career, and the second, the prestige of the academic profession. We will consider each of these in turn.

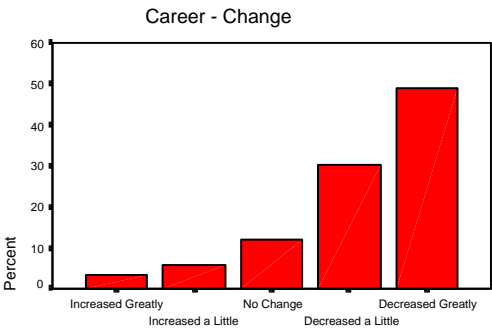
8.1.1 The Attractiveness of an Academic Career

Why become an academic? Would academics recommend their career to others? If yes, why? If not, why not? How did our respondents regard the academic profession? Our topic was simply, the attractiveness of an academic career. We wanted them to indicate the importance of this attractiveness, the change that had taken place, and whether the change was for the better or the worse.

As we might expect, an overwhelming percentage of our respondents, 83 per cent, said that attractiveness was important. Only 2 per cent said this was not at all important. More importantly, 79 per cent of our respondents said that the attractiveness of an academic career had decreased; only 9 per cent thought it had increased. Furthermore, 81 per cent thought the change was for the worse. Only 4 per cent thought the change was for the better. Of those who thought the attractiveness of an academic career had declined, 98 per cent thought this was for the worse.

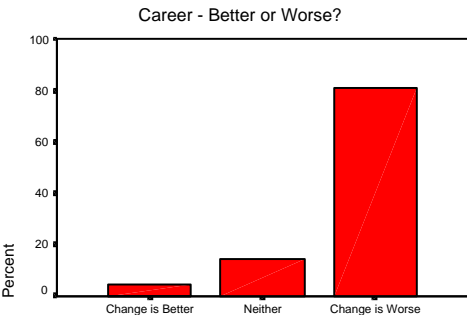
The response distributions to the change and evaluation items are given in Figures 8.1 (N=1973) and 8.2. (N=1958).

Figure 8.1 Attractiveness of an Academic



Attractiveness of an Academic Career - Change

Figure 8.2 Attractiveness of an Academic



Attractiveness of an Academic Career - Better/Worse?

Males were more likely than females to consider the attractiveness of an academic career to be important, more likely to say it had decreased, and more likely to say that the decrease had been for the worse. The differences were in the order of 8-10 per cent for all three items.

There were virtually no differences in importance by age, but the older academics were more likely to think that the attractiveness had decreased a great deal (57 per cent for those 50-54 years of age to 28 per cent for those 25-29). Similarly, the older

academics were more likely to see this as a change for the worse (90 per cent for those 60-64 years of age to 66 per cent for those 25-29).

There was also an important variation by academic rank. The Level E respondents were most likely to think that the 'attractiveness' of an academic career was important (50 per cent compared to 34 per cent for the Level Bs). Similarly the Level E and Level D respondents were most likely to think the attractiveness had decreased a great deal (about 59 per cent compared to 30 per cent for the Level A respondents). They were also most likely to think that the change was for the worse (about 88 per cent compared to 71 per cent for the Level A respondents).

Type of university also made some difference. The G8 respondents were most likely to consider attractiveness important (46 per cent compared to 33 per cent for those from regional universities). However it was the respondents from the Metro universities who were most likely to think attractiveness had decreased a great deal (53 per cent compared to 44 per cent for the regional respondents). There were no important differences in evaluation of the change. Respondents from all universities saw the change as for the worse (between 80 and 84 per cent).

Overall then, male, older, higher rank, and G8 or Metro respondents seem to perceive these changes in the attractiveness of an academic career more than the others.

What kinds of comments were volunteered for this topic? Are the above feelings reflected in the comments?

Some academics were concerned about the inability to carry out their profession as they thought appropriate.

[The] pressure of academic life has become more widely known. This means that along with the minuscule academic salaries, it is very unattractive to work as an academic. How are we going to attract innovative thinkers and teachers in the future if this continues? Long term this will have a considerable impact on the future of intellectual life in Australia. (Tutor, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

No time to think, create and do research. Can anyone remember sabbatical leave? (Professor, Food/Hospitality)

Most academics, however, were concerned about the salary. The sentiment in the following volunteered statements suggests that being an academic in a university is seen as just another job.

The rates of pay do not recompense for the number of hours spent. Research must be done 'in one's own time', i.e. weekends and nights. Previously (ten years ago) this was built into the working week. Salaries have not kept up with work increases. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Salary relativities have collapsed to the point where I would be irresponsible to recommend an academic career to my children, able though they are. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

In the wider community academics are valued, however, the financial reward doesn't compensate the years of training. In the past some may have compromised financial reward for lifestyle, but that has changed. The lifestyle is less attractive than it once was. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

The job sucks! Pathetic pay and decreasing job satisfaction. Flexible hours and independence in choosing research area are the remaining pluses. (A/P Reader, Science)

Some of our respondents indicated that they would not recommend an academic career to others, or that they themselves were going to leave the profession. And as one of the respondents below indicates, even for those who still want to pursue an academic career, the prospects are increasingly limited. Yet the final quote below indicates quite a contrary view.

For me, at the end of my career, it is irrelevant. As a career structure I would not recommend it to students, and my own children have opted for the non-academic careers, albeit with postgraduate degrees. (A/P Reader, Science)

I no longer expect to pursue a full-time academic career once I complete my PhD, nature of work has changed, pay is poor, expectation of long long hours. (Tutor, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

I have to warn people seriously about what it now means to be an academic - the pay is lousy - the hours are long, the contempt with which you are held within your own organisation is huge. Basically the hierarchy that has emerged is that academics and general administrative staff are now at the bottom of the system. The valued expertise in the university are those who can do IT in accordance with the university desire to capture intellectual property and those engaged in the compliance industry - finance, quality assurance etc. These people are the new power in the university. (Professor, Education)

Corny though it sounds, at the end of the day, I personally think of the job as a privilege. However for those trying to 'break into' the profession, the prospects are much reduced with casual and contract staff levels increasing and reduced opportunities for tenure. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

While many decry the changes occurring in tertiary education I have no serious complaints. I believe that all university staff should be accountable to students and the community and be able to demonstrate their value. The opportunity to explore ideas as academic in an Australian university is a privilege. From my observations, critics of recent changes to Australian universities are more concerned about loss of an easy life-style where they can do as they please. I think that as academics we must demonstrate our value to society, otherwise we risk the danger of becoming isolated and irrelevant. Demanding that students and taxpayers should fund without question our careers is naïve. (Lecturer, Medicine)

8.1.2 The Prestige of the Academic Profession

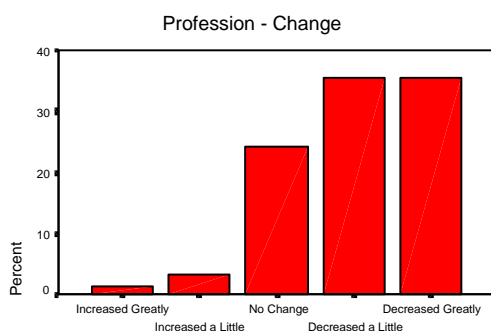
The prestige of any profession or occupation varies by country and culture. Prestige can also change over time. Academics would argue that they are not in the profession for the prestige or for the salary. Some argue that the academic profession is a vocation, a 'calling', in which the pursuit of knowledge, and the

passing on of knowledge, brings its own rewards. However this too may vary across countries.

Recent changes in Australian universities, and the ensuing publicity that the universities have received, make the question an empirical one. But it is also an important one. Perceptions of the prestige or status of one's position in the community can affect self-image and feelings of self-worth. Commitment and performance can be adversely affected if these perceptions are negative.

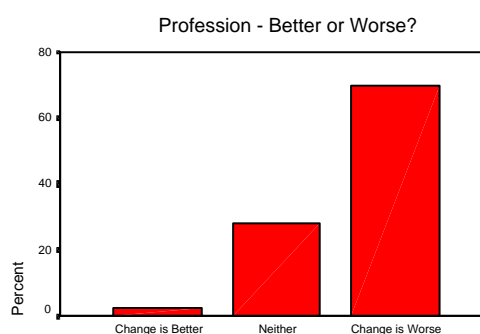
We included the topic of the prestige of the academic profession in our survey. Of our respondents, 59 per cent thought that prestige was important. Only 8 per cent thought that it was not important. About 71 per cent thought that the prestige had declined, and 70 per cent thought it was for the worse. Of those who thought that academic prestige had declined in recent years, 95 per cent said that the change had been for the worse. The frequency distributions for perceptions of change and the evaluation of that change in the prestige of the academic profession are given in Figures 8.3 and 8.4. The extremely skewed nature of these distributions reflects the consensus of respondents on this topic.

Figure 8.3 Prestige of the Academic



Prestige of the Academic Profession - Change

Figure 8.4 Prestige of the Academic



Prestige of the Academic Profession - Better/Worse?

While males were more likely to think that prestige was an extremely important aspect of the academic profession, there were no differences between males and females in perceptions of change and the evaluation of that change: both thought it to have decreased and for the worse.

Prestige was extremely important for older academics (about 29 per cent for the over 55s compared to 18 per cent for the 30-34 year olds). Similarly academics over 50 were more likely to think that it had decreased a great deal (about 40 per cent compared to 28 per cent for the 30-34 category). They were also more likely to consider it a change for the worse (about 74 per cent compared to 63 per cent for the under 35s).

Academics at higher levels were more likely to think prestige to be extremely important. However the differences between the levels in perceptions of decreased prestige, or that it was for the worse, were less apparent.

There were no differences between universities. Academics in all universities were in agreement that the prestige of the academic profession had decreased a great deal, and this was a change for the worse.

Many reasons were volunteered by respondents to explain the decline in academic prestige. A number of comments equate salary with prestige. Others refer to the standards within universities themselves. And finally some see the decline in academic prestige as a general anti-intellectual trend in society as a whole. No single

explanation stands out. It's as though academics themselves are perplexed by what they feel has happened. In its extreme form, some academics even distance themselves from the profession.

No standards are applied by universities and so there is little respect in the community for academics. (Lecturer, Law)

The industry KNOWS we are paid nothing, and this greatly devalues our standing. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

We are now seen as tertiary school teachers. The use of the professorial appointment as a reward for some staff (non-research) has even devalued that title. (A/P Reader, Health)

Critical intellectual concerns are becoming increasingly marginalised in Australian society. (Tutor, Humanities)

I no longer wish to acknowledge that I'm even in the profession. (Tutor, Maths/IT)

8.2 Career Development

One of the themes, which frequently emerged in our group interviews, was the extent to which academics have an opportunity to advance in both their expertise and recognition. Like most professions, pursuing a career in an academic discipline requires growth and development. In similar fashion, the talents of teaching and dealing with students are not acquired automatically, but as a result of mentoring, training and experience. Therefore in understanding more about the academic work role, we included topics which addressed the extent to which academics have an opportunity to develop in their career. We examine three in this sub-section: 1) opportunities for promotion, 2) academic supervision, and 3) the opportunities to keep up with one's intellectual discipline.

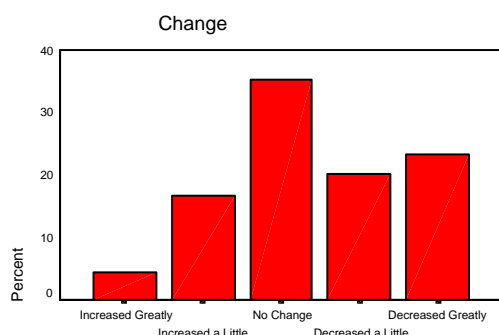
8.2.1 Prospects for Promotion

Academic promotion represents both a reward and recognition of one's performance and attainment, primarily in teaching and research. However most promotion procedures include some acknowledgment of performance in other academic work roles such as administration and community service.

Of our respondents, 64 per cent said that prospects for promotion were very or extremely important to them. Only 8 per cent said that promotion was not at all important. About 21 per cent of our respondents said that their prospects had improved, but 43 per cent, or twice as many, thought their prospects had decreased. This was reflected in their evaluation of the change: 15 per cent thought the change was for the better while 44 per cent thought it was for the worse. This is reflected in the fact that 73 per cent who thought their prospects had increased, thought it was for the better. Similarly 95 per cent who those who thought their prospects had decreased a great deal thought it was for the worse. Keep in mind that the latter group is twice the size of the former.

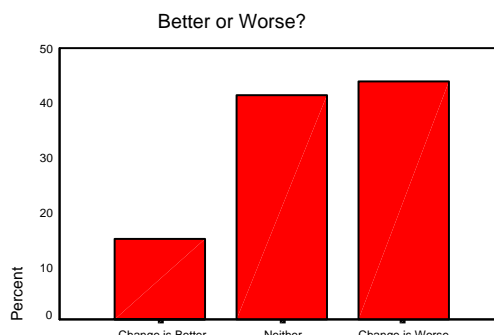
The frequency distributions for the change and evaluation in prospects for promotion are given in Figure 8.5 (N=1908) and Figure 8.6 (N=1885).

Figure 8.5 My Prospects for Promotion -



My Prospects for Promotion - Change

Figure 8.6 My Prospects for Promotion -



My Prospects for Promotion - Better/Worse?

There were no differences in the perceived importance, change and evaluation of promotion prospects by gender.

Older academics were more likely to say that their prospects for promotion had decreased a great deal (35 per cent for those 55-59 compared to 9 per cent for those 30-34). They were also more likely to see this as a change for the worse (52 per cent compared to 32 per cent). Promotion was seen as extremely important for lower level academics, as might be expected: 35 per cent for the Level As compared to 16 per cent for the Level Es. Younger academics were also more likely to say that their prospects had decreased (about 25 per cent for Level A and B, compared to 10 per cent for Level E). The same pattern prevailed in the evaluation of the change in prospects: 48 per cent of those at Level A thought this was a change for the worse, compared to 22 per cent of the Level Es.

There were no differences between the different types of universities.

The comments volunteered by our respondents reflect a certain cynicism about the procedures, and also a recognition that pressures of the academic work role prevents the very kind of performance required for promotion.

It is hard to get promotions because the goal keeps moving and the assessment criteria keep changing. (Lecturer, Creative Arts)

Universities keep shifting the goal posts. Those who were promoted many years ago are often less qualified than junior lecturers. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

I doubt if I will receive further promotion, as there is not enough time to put into the kind of research that I would need to complete, in order to get it. (A/P Reader, Humanities)

Well, funny you should ask. My promotion application is currently under appeal, because it was denied, and the reasons for denial were entirely unclear. THAT's the problem: no indication is given about how your chances could be improved, etc. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

My perception is that Level E posts are reserved for administrators --- top-quality academic work is neither required nor sufficient, yet, academic work is the bread-and-butter of what we are about. (A/P Reader, Maths/IT)

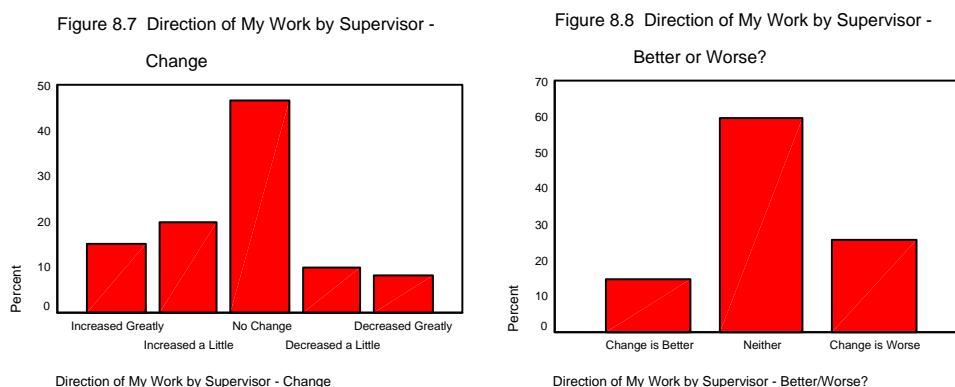
8.2.2 Direction of My Work by Supervisor

The second aspect of career development relates to supervision.

About 42 per cent considered some form of supervision as very or extremely important, while 17 per cent said it was not at all important. About 35 per cent said it had increased while 18 per cent said it had decreased. Only 15 per cent thought the change was for the better, and 26 thought it was for the worse. Most respondents, 60 per cent, said neither.

Academics, however, seem to be somewhat ambivalent regarding direction by a supervisor. Of those respondents who perceived direction to have increased a great deal, 23 per cent thought it was a change for the better, but 62 per cent thought it was a change for the worse. Conversely, those who thought direction had decreased a great deal, 25 per cent thought it was for the better, while 61 per cent thought it was a change for the worse.

The frequency distributions for the change and evaluation in direction by a supervisor are given in Figure 8.7 (N=1835) and Figure 8.8 (N=1797).



There were no differences in this topic between male and female respondents.

Older academics were less likely to consider this important (33 per cent of 60-64 year-olds thought it was not at all important compared to 6 per cent of the 30-34 year-olds. However the older academics were more likely to think that it had increased a great deal (22 per cent for the 50-54 year-olds compared to 7 per cent for the 25-29 year-olds). The younger academics were more likely to think that supervision had changed for the better (24 per cent of the 25-29 year-olds compared to 6 per cent for the 60-64 year-olds).

As might be expected, the Level Es were more likely to consider direction by a supervisor to be unimportant (29 per cent compared to only 6 per cent for Level As and 15 per cent for Level Bs). However there were no marked differences by rank in perceived change in supervision, or in the evaluation of change.

There were differences by university type. Academics at G8 universities were over twice as likely to regard supervision as extremely important than academics from regional universities, the percentages being 17 and 8 respectively. However there were no differences between university groups in perceptions of change or in the evaluation of change.

Many of the comments say that formal academic supervision is non-existent.

Commencing work as a level A in an understaffed regional university I never had effective supervision and typically undertake duties above my level. The lack of change in this regard is a problem in itself. (Tutor, Humanities)

Don't get supervision. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Other comments admit to having academic supervision, but regard it as largely negative, either because of lack of ability or supervisory style.

The university tends to employ a manager based on their social profile, rather than their capability. (Tutor, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

So-called supervisors often have no conception of our work or teaching and little experience in or empathy for the supervisory position and process. (Lecturer, Humanities)

No trust. Becoming bureaucratic and dictatorial. (Senior Lecturer, Management)

Poor leadership, with the person concerned giving little time to anything other than his own self-interest. (Senior Lecturer, Management)

This aspect has caused me to take leave from the university. (Senior Lecturer, Economics)

Changed my mind after I'd answered. I don't really consider myself supervised, per se. (Senior Lecturer, Science)

I have been directed to shift markedly from research and teaching to new income earning activities (full-fee on-line courses). (Senior Lecturer, Science)

Occasionally, a respondent made a favourable comment about academic supervision.

Always have been supported and encouraged. I think my department is unique in this area. I have not seen this support in other departments, rather the opposite! (Lecturer, Health)

8.2.3 The ability to keep abreast of developments in my field

One very important aspect of the academic career is the ability to keep up with one's discipline. This ability is related to many aspects of an academic environment, including the obvious provisions such as a good library, research facilities, opportunities for conference attendance, and study leave. Some less obvious requirements, at least in some disciplines, might also include a critical mass of like-minded colleagues and a supportive collegial environment generally.

The figures speak for themselves: 63 per cent said the ability to keep up-to-date was extremely important, and a further 34 per cent said it was very important, giving a total of 97 per cent. Only 0.1 per cent said this aspect of the academic career was not at all important.

A little over 29 per cent of our respondents felt that this aspect of their academic condition had increased, while 48 per cent felt that it had decreased. Over 21 per cent thought their situation had improved, while a large percentage, 51 per cent, thought it had become worse.

The pattern is what one would predict. Of those respondents who perceived an increase in their ability to remain up-to-date, about 70 per cent thought it was for the better. For those who saw this ability to have decreased, about 97 per cent thought it was for the worse.

The frequency distributions for the change and evaluation of the ability to remain up-to-date in one's discipline are found in Figure 8.9 (N=1984) and 8.10 (N=1963)

Figure 8.9 Ability to Keep Up With My Field -

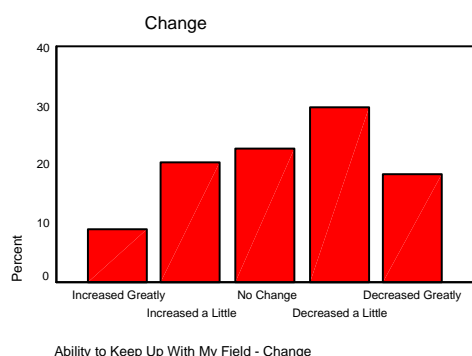
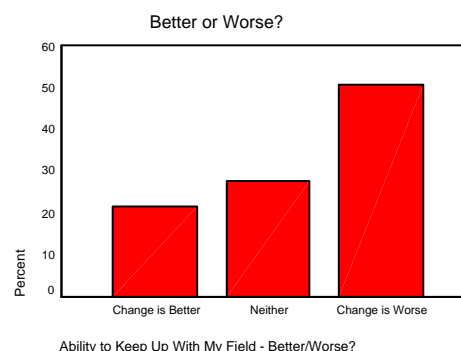


Figure 8.10 Ability to Keep Up With My Field -



There are no differences between males and females in terms of perceived importance, extent of change or the evaluation of change in the ability to keep up with one's discipline. The same was true for age, except that older academics tended to think the situation had become worse (54 per cent for 45-49 year-olds compared to 40 per cent for the 30-34 year-olds).

Level E academics regarded the ability to keep abreast as more important than lower rank academics (72 per cent compared to 60 per cent for Level Bs). But there were no other differences by rank.

Academics at Metropolitan universities were more likely to perceive the ability to keep up-to-date as having worsened (61 per cent for the Metro academics compared to 47 per cent for the Technical universities). There were no other differences by university group.

Three themes dominated the volunteered comments submitted by our respondents: 1) the lack of time, 2) lack of facilities, and the 3) advantages of new information technologies. Most comments were fairly even and measured, but they do reflect considerable thought and effort about the commitment of academics to their disciplines.

Clearly time is important. Consider the following comments.

Changes in work demands have made this a luxury. Plato was right - the acquisition of wisdom requires a leisured class. (Senior Lecturer, Other Health)

I cannot cope with the amount of work and added responsibilities, with decreased resources and staffing. (Professor, Science)

More and more of my time is taken reacting or responding to random demands from an out of touch administration. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Occasionally, respondents saw increasing demands on time as compensated for by the new information technologies. However the new information technologies have created another problem, namely information overload.

Lack of time and lack of money for conference attendance is compensated for by improvements in communication and information technologies (ICTs) to some extent. But there is probably no substitute for conference attendance. Better databases give access to a much wider range of scholarly journals than in the past, especially for a rural

campus library. Our library has done very well in the last few years to increase purchase of relevant electronic databases, but these are becoming increasingly expensive, and some resources are disappearing as funds run out. (Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Plethora of journals, but great advantage of database and internet searches. My time is the limitation. (A/P Reader, Science)

Part of the problem here is the volume of information that is now available, in addition to all the other demands on time. (A/P Reader, Science)

Other commitments have made it harder to find time to keep up with the literature. Also the profusion of new papers that has to be worked through to find the really important material is another hindrance. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

Electronic means enables this, as well as being able to attend conferences. Time is a constraint. (Lecturer, Education)

Bioinformatics and electronic resources have significantly improved my ability to keep abreast of developments. This is very important as it can have profound effects on the experiments I carry out. (Tutor, Science)

Facilities are also seen as posing problems in keeping up with one's discipline.

Given low library acquisition rates, and the complete de-funding of journals, the lack of conference funding, etc it is very hard to keep up at all. It is also hard to afford or find the time to read books. I do better than some as I get a little assistance for conferences from an ARC SRC but this is marginal given that I struggle to find time for reading. (Tutor, Humanities)

One of the few benefits of IT is the ability to keep up with the literature etc very quickly and easily. One of the downsides for my University is increasing usage of online subscriptions to journals not held by us but by our neighbouring institution and to which we no longer have access. Previously I could walk across the road to the neighbouring library and photocopy any papers, now I have to pay for interlibrary loans. (Lecturer, Science)

8.3 Resignations and Retirements in My Own Department

Stability and continuity are thought to be important aspects of a sound and supportive academic environment. At the same time a turnover of academic staff is necessary to maintain a healthy level of new ideas and intellectual stimulation.

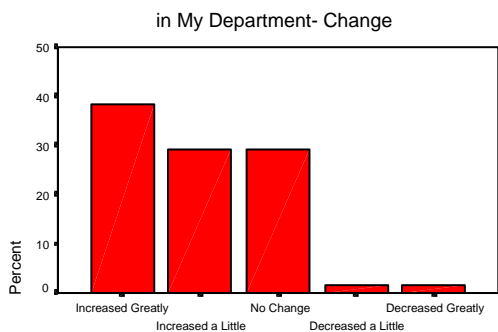
Over 61 per cent of our respondents thought that resignations and retirements were very or extremely important. Only 8.4 per cent thought they were not at all important. Almost 68 per cent said that these types of departures had increased in recent years while only 2 per cent said that they had decreased. Only 11 per cent thought these departures were a good thing, while 51 per cent thought they were a change for the worse.

There was no clear pattern to help understand the responses further. Both groups of respondents, those who thought resignations and retirements had increased and

decreased, thought the change was for the worse. This might suggest that any extreme condition, too little or too much academic staff turnover, is seen as disruptive to productive academic work.

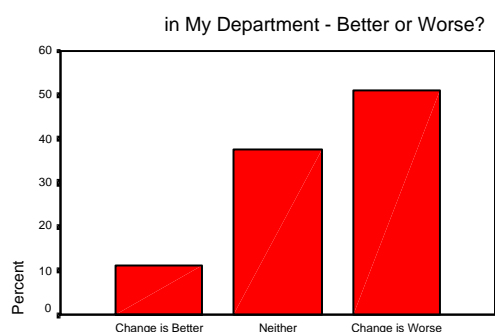
The frequency distributions for change and evaluation in resignations and retirements are given in Figure 8.11 (N=1855) and Figure 8.12 (N=1834).

Figure 8.11 Resignations and Retirements



Resignations and Retirements in My Department - Change

Figure 8.12 Resignations and Retirements



Resignations and Retirements in My Department - Better/Worse?

There were no differences between males and females in perceived importance, change or evaluation of resignations and retirements. Older academics were more likely to perceive that resignations and retirements had increased (46 per cent for the 55-59 year-olds compared to 30 per cent for the 30-34 year-olds). However there were no differences by age in perceived importance or in the evaluation of increased resignations and retirements.

With respect to rank, Level Cs were slightly more likely to perceive that resignations and retirements had increased, and also that they were for the worse, than other ranks.

There were no differences between the different groups of universities with respect to perceptions or evaluations of resignations or retirements.

Some volunteered comments concerning resignations and retirements are given below. There were a wide variety of comments about this topic.

Many of the comments expressed concern that resignations and retirements simply meant that the staff who remained behind would have larger workloads. Empty positions have not been refilled.

We have lost approximate 5 positions over the last 7 years that have not been replaced, but we have continued to take large over-enrolments.
(Senior Lecturer, Nursing)

We have lost twelve academics in the last year - and not one has been replaced. NO one can function effectively in a stagnant environment. Most staff are looking for new jobs as the loads are become totally untenable while we cover the span of tasks within our large school.
(Senior Lecturer, Management)

Another theme in the volunteered comments refers to the reason for the departures, namely, low morale or illness, both due to conditions in the academic environment.

Demoralised and underpaid academic staff cannot be blamed for looking for better jobs. (Lecturer, Economics)

People have left because they felt they got little support. The department did not replace these people because of budget cuts - however the need for teaching staff remained the same so more casuals were hired.
(Lecturer, Management)

Underwent a merger in 1997. Still recovering. Many left due to morale problems. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

In my three years we have had two staff members have nervous breakdowns and one resign from 'sheer frustration'. We only had 6 staff to start with. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Finally, there were some volunteered comments which regarded these departures as an academic loss, or as an opportunity to get 'new blood'.

Retirement and resignation of the wise and politically savvy, as well as world experts and more experienced staff, means a lot more pressure on early career academics and limited mentoring within the department as the guard changes. (Lecturer, Education)

We need new blood (though not necessarily at the cost of the old) to improve flexibility. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

8.4 Section Summary

Some of the major points (but not all) to emerge from the survey data on the academic career are as follows:

- Academics believe that the academic career has lost its attractiveness; male academics perceive the decline more than female academics; older more than younger; higher ranks more than lower;
- Academics believe that the academic career has lost its prestige; males and females agreed on the decline in prestige;
- Salary is not the only reason for the perceived decline in the academic profession, but it is important as it is thought to reflect prestige; decline in standards is another;
- Most academics think their prospects for promotion have declined; there were no gender differences; older academics perceived this decline more than younger academics; no differences by rank or university group;
- Views of academic supervision was mixed – some said it increased and some decreased; no gender differences; older academics thought it had increased; younger academics thought supervision had become better;
- Academics generally believe it is becoming more difficult to keep up with their discipline; systematic differences between academics were few;
- Pressure of time was perceived to be a major factor, but so was the growth in access to information through the electronic media; some thought lack of facilities a reason;
- Academics generally regard the increase in resignations and retirements as a negative factor because of the loss of expertise, lack of replacement, and

the creation of an environment of instability. There were few differences between types of academics.

9 JOB SATISFACTION, MORALE AND STRESS

The level of general job satisfaction has dropped from 67 per cent to 51 per cent, and there has been significant increase in the proportion who say their job is a source of stress (from 52% to 56%). (McInnis 2000, p.1)

Over 50% of respondents found their job stressful on a regular basis, while only 5.1% of respondents reported that their job was almost never stressful. (NTEU 2000, p. 30)

Karasek (1979), for example, has proposed a theory of occupational stress (the demands-control theory) according to which jobs that combine high levels of demand with low levels of autonomy, control, or decision latitude should be the most stressful. In the past, academic jobs would clearly not have fallen in this category. (Winefield 2000, p. 437)

Low job satisfaction, low morale, stress and burnout – these words were common in our group interviews with academic staff. However, it is unlikely that academics have a monopoly over concerns with workplace problems such as these. The increased tempo of modern life, and the increased demands on work roles in most sectors of the industrial world, have created a climate in which workers at all levels are finding it increasingly difficult to cope. An imbalance between demand and capacity, and the loss of control, are two major factors contributing to job stress (Fisher 1994). The burgeoning research literature on these topics bears testimony to this reality.

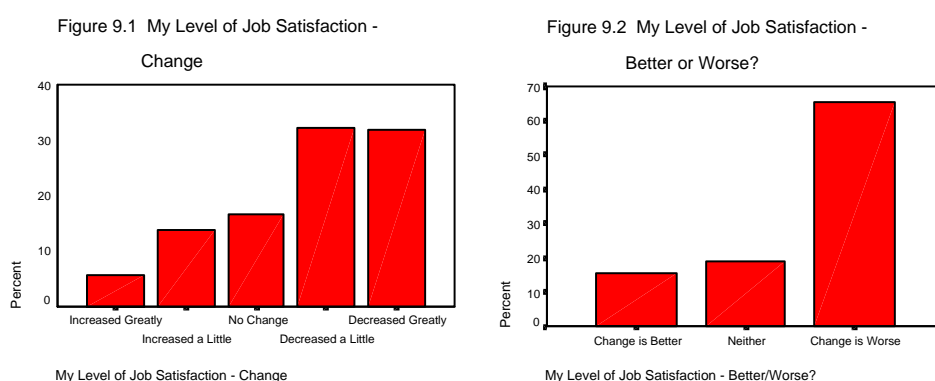
In recent years several studies have addressed work-related problems among academics in Australian universities. The findings provide overwhelming evidence that Australian academics are experiencing levels of job dissatisfaction, low morale, stress and burnout unknown ten or twenty years ago.

9.1 Level of Job Satisfaction

Our respondents overwhelmingly thought that job satisfaction was important; 97 per cent considered very or extremely important. Only .1 per cent considered it not-at-all important. Almost 20 per cent thought that job satisfaction had increased, but 64 per cent, or three times as many, thought that job satisfaction had decreased. About 17 per cent thought it had remained the same. About 16 per cent thought that job satisfaction had increased, while 66 per cent, or two out of three of our respondents thought it had decreased. Clearly the vast majority of our Australian academic respondents were not happy with their jobs.

The relationship between perceived change and evaluation of the change is striking; the correlation is .84, extremely high. Of those academics who perceived their job satisfaction to have improved, about 76 per cent said the change was for the better. Of those who said their job satisfaction had decreased, 98 per cent thought the change was for the worse. Given that two-thirds of the respondents fell into this latter category, a serious problem is brewing among the Australian academic staff, at least among those who responded to our survey.

The frequency distributions for the change and evaluation items for job satisfaction are given in Figure 9.1 (N=1990) and Figure 9.2 (N=1980).



Who are the academics who felt most strongly about job satisfaction, or its absence?

First, there were no differences between males and females regarding the importance of job satisfaction; almost all of both sexes regarded either as extremely important or very important. Similarly there were no differences in the extent of perceived change in job satisfaction, with about 64 per cent of each saying it had decreased. Finally, there were no significant differences in the extent to which the situation was perceived as worse, as two-thirds of both gave this response, but the males exceeded the females by 6 per cent.

There were minimal differences in perceived importance of job satisfaction by age, except that the 35-39 category were most likely to feel that it was extremely important. Again, it was in the middle age range that our respondents felt that it had decreased. Similarly it was in the middle to upper age brackets where the situation was seen to be the worst; 74 per cent of the 60-64 age group said it had become worse compared to 52 per cent of the 30-34 age group.

With respect to level, the Level A respondents were least likely to regard job satisfaction to have decreased, and similarly they were the least likely to say it was a change for the worse.

There were no differences between academics from different university groups in any of the three aspects of job satisfaction.

What did our academics say?

Many of the volunteered comments suggest that the lack of job satisfaction is due to the frustration of not being able to perform the core academic activities to the extent to which they are able. Consider the following comments.

Job dissatisfaction is a better descriptor. Workloads and the reduction in funding mean I can do my job less effectively, therefore there is less satisfaction to be derived. Along with the political disparagement of the education field, there is little incentive to do the job well. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

While I have been quite successful in my academic career, this has relied chiefly on my skills as an administrator, which is not my first or strongest priority. I thought I was trained to think and write. (Professor, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

Enjoying most of what I do a great deal - but satisfaction diminished because of having many too many things to do, and not being able to get to them. (Senior Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Maintaining the energy to drive with change as required by DEST and my corporate management structures etc etc and to generate income - from international student or other entrepreneurial activities - means that one is rarely able to be a scholar/ researcher and teacher with some time and space to genuinely generate knowledge and expertise in one's field. (Professor, Humanities)

Some respondents express dissatisfaction because of the lack of rewards or recognition for the work that they have done. The result is that their work seems to lack meaning, or is therefore devalued.

As I said, I'm planning a career change. I would not counsel anyone to join the academy right now, as the financial incentives are inadequate given the 8-10 year training involved, the lack of autonomy, and the loss of status even within the university itself. (Tutor, Humanities)

Some of our respondents express dissatisfaction because of the changes they see in the way universities, and therefore academic life, are now managed.

Would like to finish my post grad and get into research. Workload increases. Dislike corporate restructure - not due to dislike of change per se, but dislike of mentality driving the changes. (Lecturer, Law)

This stems from various things, one of which has not been asked as yet. Apart from the obviously increased workload and diminution of the ability to self-determine one's work, I have observed an increased degree of bias in Universities. Jobs for the boys; positive bias to certain disadvantaged groups (women, homosexuals of both persuasions, friends who will build up research groups and political support) increasing to the detriment of quality and academic merit. These are excellent motives, and I am pleased we have them, because some dreadful bias has occurred in the past, but we have to balance it. (A/P Reader, Science)

Just waiting to get the bullet. Career planning? In a place built on shifting sand, inhabited by ant-lions? (Lecturer, Medicine)

Too much time spent on non-productive, low-grade and bureaucratic activities. (Lecturer, Science)

There was a time when the life style compensated for lower salaries of industry. Not any longer. (Senior Lecturer, Management)

I can clearly see the need for change and the need for strong management, yet I am frustrated at every turn by procedures that are no longer relevant and attitudes towards change that make me feel like I'm working in the 1970s. (Professor, Management)

Some point to physical symptoms as a sign of their dissatisfaction, which is not an uncommon occurrence.

Don't think I can last much longer in this occupation. It has become one of survival rather than enjoyment. (Professor, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

It's not good when one doesn't want to be at work, and physical symptoms like headaches, nausea and muscle pain are in evidence. (Senior Lecturer, Education)

Some of our respondents expressed satisfaction in their academic jobs.

[Job satisfaction] has always been good. (Lecturer, Humanities)

I love what I do, and the improved skills I see developing every year. For all its failings, this has been a much better workplace for me personally. It has rewarded hard effort with recognition and opportunities. (Senior Lecturer, Management)

9.2

My Job Security

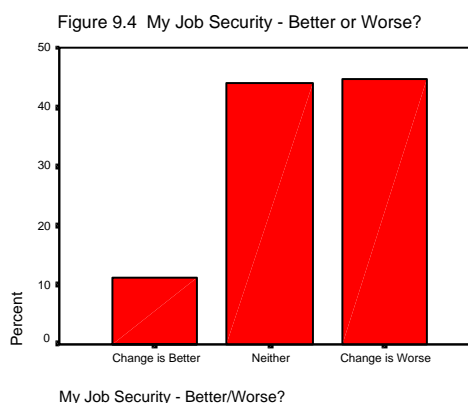
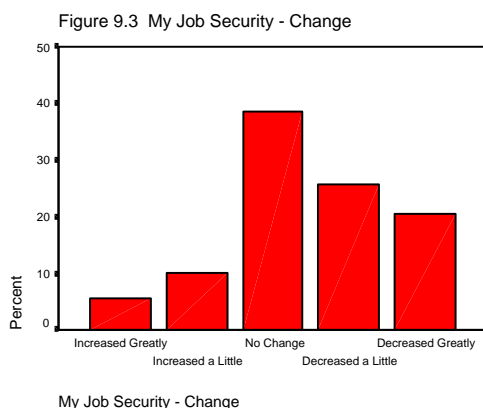
Job security, which for academics mostly means tenure (but not necessarily), is an essential component of the academic profession and an academic career. Winefield (n.d.) comments that 'tenure has been regarded as the only guarantee of academic freedom. Consequently, although academic work has not been highly paid, academics have traditionally enjoyed high levels of autonomy, freedom to publish and to speak openly, even when their views are unpopular with authority, whether it be the university administration, the scientific establishment or the government.' (p. 2)

Thus job security means control, and control is related to job satisfaction and low levels of job stress.

With this aspect of the changing academic workload in mind, we included a topic which we called 'job security' since it captures more than tenure. Given that the concept of 'tenure' has been undergoing a transition in academic circles, we wanted some indication of the extent to which academics felt in control of their jobs.

Of our respondents, 78 per cent thought that job security was very or extremely important. Only 2.5 per cent thought it was not at all important. About 21 per cent thought that their job security had increased while 46 per cent, over double, thought it had decreased. As we might expect from these figures, 45 per cent thought that this change was for the worse. Only 11 per cent thought the change was for the better. Of the academics who thought their job security had decreased a great deal, almost all, 98 per cent, said it was for the worse.

The frequency distributions for perception of change and the evaluation of that change are given in Figure 9.3 (N=1969) and Figure 9.4 (N=1945). The skewness of the distribution to the right is indicative of the increasing decline of perceived job security among our respondents.



When we look more closely at these figures, we find that there is no difference between males and females on any of the three dimensions we measured: importance, perceived change, and the evaluation of that change.

As we might expect, job security was more likely to be extremely important for the younger academics than the older (51 per cent for the 25-29 age group compared to 38 per cent for the 50-54 age group). However there were no large differences between age categories in perceptions of change, or in the evaluation of that change. In other words, the extent of change in job security, and particularly its decline, was equally perceived across all age categories.

Academics at lower levels regarded job security as more important than the higher rank academics (as we might expect from the age relationship). The Level A academics were more likely than the higher levels to perceive it to have decreased a great deal (30 per cent compared to 17 per cent for the Level Ds). There were no large differences in evaluations to have changed, except that more Level As perceived their security to have changed for the better (15 per cent) than Level E academics (5 per cent). This probably reflects those Level A academics who were relieved to have gained access to an academic job.

While there were no differences between the university groups in perceived importance or change in job security, academics in G8 universities were more likely to perceive their situation as worse than academics at regional universities (47 per cent compared to 35 per cent).

What did our respondents say in their volunteered comments? This was not an item which elicited a large number of comments. However those presented here suggest that security is on the minds of academics, and in various ways they cope with it.

Job security should be tied to financial reward--- it is not. Financial reward should be tied to teaching quality, [and] like research --- it is not. (Lecturer, Law)

I feel my 'permanent' position could prove less permanent than one would expect. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

Just let them try and shift me. I have so much dirt on them it would stink forever. (Lecturer, Maths/IT)

I am good at my job and as the Uni Executives repeatedly seek my input and assistance in certain areas of management, then I think that I am fairly safe - whatever safety in academe means nowadays! (Senior Lecturer, Nursing)

There is less job security, but I feel I have improved my ability to cope with personal threats in this area. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

9.3

My Experience of Job Stress

There are many ways to define or describe job stress. Adverse reactions to the lack of control over a demanding work environment, as suggested by Winefield, is one definition. Another is simply the reaction to work overload, with fatigue and other symptoms as a result. A third could be a reaction to a particular type of interpersonal environment, or management style which an individual finds difficult to cope with. However, as all writers argue, individuals differ considerably in their ability to cope with stress, and some are more successful than others.

Academics probably are more prone to stress than other professions or occupations. The need to achieve, to be productive, to be creative, is driven from within so that academics continually measure their own attainments against themselves as well as against others.

Recent studies suggest that job stress is increasing in Australian universities. McInnis (2000) gives a figure of 56 per cent for those who say that their job is stressful (p. 1). Winefield (n.d.), while measuring stress much differently, found in his study that 50 per cent of his academics produced a stress score which was high by Australian standards (p. 7). As mentioned at the outset of this section, the NTEU (2000) argues that 50 per cent of the academics in their university study were stressed, but they found that 57 per cent of the academics said their job had become more stressful (p. 30).

We included a topic on stress, and simply asked our respondents to indicate whether they thought job stress to be important, whether it had changed, and whether the change was for the better or the worse. What did they say?

Over 80 per cent, or four out of five, of our respondents said that their experience of job stress was very or extremely important. Only 2 per cent said it was not at all important. Virtually the same percentage, 82 per cent, said that job stress had increased; only 5 per cent said it had decreased. Finally, 78 per cent said that this change in stress was for the worse. Only 5 per cent said the stress situation had become better. This suggests a very stressed out academic population.

When examined more closely, we find that 98 per cent of those respondents who said that their job stress had increased, also said it was for the worse. Interestingly, of those who said their stress had decreased, 63 per cent said it was for the better, but 31 per cent said it was still for the worse! Clearly this seems to suggest that even a decline in stress does not imply its complete eradication.

The frequency distributions for change and the evaluation of the experience of job stress are given in Figure 9.5 (N=1866) and Figure 9.6 (N=1842).



Are some academics more stressed out than others? When we examined the relationship between stress and characteristics of academics we found the following patterns.

Female academics are more likely than males to say that job stress is important (44 per cent compared to 36 per cent). They are only slightly more likely to say that stress had increased a great deal, but there are no differences between the sexes in their evaluation that their experience of stress had changed for the worse.

There are some age variations. Older academics are less likely to regard job stress as important than middle-age academics (30 per cent for the 60-64 age group compared to 43 per cent for the 40-44 age group). All age groups experienced increases in job stress, but it was the middle-age academics who were more likely to say it had increased a great deal (59 per cent of the 45-49 age group compared to 34 per cent of the 30-34 group and 46 per cent for the 60-64 age group). This was also the pattern for the evaluation of job stress. From the 40 to the 60 age groups, 80 per cent or more said job stress had changed for the worse. The comparable figures were 73 per cent for the 60-64 age group and 70 per cent 30-34 age group.

Clearly, middle-age academics are more prone to experiencing job stress than their older or younger counterparts.

There were no strong differences by academic level in the perceived importance of job stress. However the middle levels, Level C and D, are more prone to say that job stress increased a great deal (58 and 57 per cent, compared to 38 per cent for Level As). These same middle levels also were more likely to say that the change in job stress was for the worse (82 and 83 per cent respectively, compared to 64 per cent for Level As).

There were no differences by university group in perceived importance, change or the evaluation of job stress.

The picture which emerges from our respondents is of an academic community which is experiencing a high level of job stress in all our surveyed universities, and that it is the middle-age academics who are experiencing it the most.

What do the academics themselves say? This was a topic which elicited a large volunteered response. Several themes emerged in comments about job stress: 1) the detrimental effects of stress (productivity, health, family), 2) the difficulty with management both as a cause or a support, and 3) mechanisms to deal with stress.

As was discussed earlier, long-term stress can be very debilitating in loss of productivity, illness, and disrupted social relationships. These themes are represented in the following.

Have had two serious illnesses in last 2 years which all co-workers agree were probably at least contributed to by overwork. The only solution to prevent a similar episode is to leave a backlog of unfinished work (but this in itself is a source of stress). All faculty members are claiming to be stressed and morale is rapidly declining. (Senior Lecturer, Agriculture)

Have always been able to cope with stress and have obvious mechanisms in place in my work time to deal with it. Across my school, there are many individuals who exhibit signs of real fatigue and this is of concern. I could not honestly describe my work place as a happy place. This is not because of the people but because of the constant pressure, competition, uncertainty, frustration, etc. (Lecturer, Education)

The pressure is very high - if your personality is a high achiever, then trying to meet the loads of teaching, administration and still keep your research output at a level you want is extremely stressful and lead to overwork. My average week is 60hrs. (Lecturer, Other Health)

Very high stress levels, low morale. (A/P Reader, Science)

The inability to do all that one is asked to do to a level that one is happy with causes stress, as does the need to sacrifice home life to keep up with the demands of work. (Senior Lecturer, Engineering)

Although I believed I have coped well with the stress overall. Last year was particularly bad and some of colleagues had to have considerable time off work due to stress (6 months). (Lecturer, Nursing)

Many comments included management when discussing stress. In some situations, poor management is the cause of stress. However it also seems that management does not know how to deal with job stress.

Is this year, but in the past it has been high. I found it necessary to get out of a situation that was stressful, and am amazed that it took management so long to also see the problems and the number of staff ill. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

In the last ten years I have suffered severely from stress and depression. No supervisor manager has cared a fig because I just keep on working. I believe they do not want to know. (Senior Lecturer, Humanities)

I can cope with enormous loads and stresses but I've adopted new strategies to get away from impossible executive style stress and avoid contact with the monsters that make my blood boil. Counselling does not help develop a more constructive approach. (Lecturer, Medicine)

Some academics indicate that they have learned how to cope or deal with stress.

This is probably less because the job has become less stressful than because I have learned to ignore things that would have once annoyed me. (Senior Lecturer, Social and Behavioural Sciences)

My own accommodative abilities have improved although the potential stress has increased. (A/P Reader, Medicine)

Individual capacity to deal with distressing situations varies from person to person. I tend not to become 'stressed', but one of the ways I avoid it is by working very long hours, thereby keeping on top of my work. (I know that I become distressed when, over the medium term, I'm not on top of my work.) (Lecturer, Other Health)

In conclusion, the figures which we have obtained from our respondents suggest a higher figure for job stress than other studies have produced. It also shows that stress is not experienced equally by all academics, but appears more focused in the middle years and at the middle ranks. The volunteered comments provide the variety of ways in which some of our respondents see and react to stress. However in considering these figures, one must

keep in mind that our methodology was quite different from those in other studies and must be interpreted accordingly.

9.4 Section Summary

Some of the major findings of this section are included here as dot points. This list does not contain all distributions or patterns related to this section.

- About two-thirds of the respondents in our survey said that their job satisfaction had decreased and become worse.
- There were no differences between males and females in job satisfaction.
- Job satisfaction seems to be of greater importance to the middle-age academics, and it was among the middle-to-retirement ages that it was more likely perceived to have decreased and become worse.
- There were no major differences between universities in job satisfaction.
- Four out of five academics thought job security to be very important, and 45 per cent thought it had changed for the worse.
- There were no differences between male and female academics in perceptions about job security.
- Job security was more likely to be seen as important for the younger academics.
- Academics at G8 universities were more likely to perceive their job security as worse.
- Overall, almost four out of five of our academics said their job stress has increased in recent years.
- Female academics regard job stress as more important, but there were no differences between males and females in the experience of job stress.

- Middle-age and middle rank academics were more likely to say that their job stress had increased a great deal and that the change was for the worse.
- There were no differences by university group in the experience of job stress.

Conclusions: implications for recruitment

The project brief on the topic of changes in academic work says: 'The report will document changes in academic work and discuss the implications for future training and recruitment of academics.' The changes are many, some for the better, some, in the opinions of academics, for the worse, some in any fair-minded judgement clearly for the worse.

For the better: academics note more emphasis on the quality of teaching, and an improvement in it. They note a more diversified student body, with wider access and a more interesting student mix. They note (some of them, ruefully) more emphasis on research and publication, more emphasis on collaboration with industry, more on service to their communities. They note with almost universal approval the spread of communications technologies, in particular email, which enable them fairly easily to communicate with specialist colleagues world wide. It is still a pleasure to be involved in a highly intellectual community and with very able students at the top level.

They note the costs. The less able students, and those with inadequate skills in English or other basic skills, are very demanding of time. Email, for all its virtues, can take up over an hour a day, sometimes half a day just answering queries; and students are not discriminating in asking questions to which they would know the answers if they would attend to what they had already been told. The pressures to publish, and to bring funding into the university by way of contracts, can be excessive and unrealistic. Academics are under great stress, as studies other than this one have already shown. Casual staff, who can be a relief to a hard-pressed teacher, can also be a burden to be recruited, organised, supervised and encouraged. The implications for university teaching are serious, and we recommend that universities investigate the extent and effects of using casual staff for teaching.

Most of all, today's academics note that one task after another is loaded onto them but nothing is ever taken away. They are hard-pressed for time, not only during the day but in the evenings, and the weekends, and what the general public thinks of as their extensive vacations. They often (not always) find their managements inconsiderate, unhelpful, even bullying, and largely unaware of what the academics are actually doing, and coping with. They know their salaries are well below what equally or less able, equally or less qualified people can command outside academe; they value the opportunity to pursue their intrinsic interests and the public good, but they do not see why they should be financially penalised for doing so. They know that the general public, and to all appearances governments and the media, do not place much value on what they do, and their status has declined over the years.

In this situation, few would recommend an academic career to their children, their friends or their students. To redress that view will take a lot of effort. It will take effort from managements, who need to be much more consultative and

encouraging. It will take effort in the form of resources from governments to reduce the overload and stresses on the academic workforce. It will take a change of attitude in government rhetoric and the media and the public generally, to value more highly the people who educate the leaders of the next generation – unless we want the leaders of the next generation to be second-raters, taught by the disenchanted and disappointed.

A recent article describing the situation in the United States seems also to be describing Australia. A single paragraph sums it up:

The danger lies in the cumulative effect of the incremental changes, each one seemingly minor but collectively altering the nature of the enterprise. At some point, quantitative change yields to qualitative change. The quality of faculty life may slowly erode to the point that highly talented people are no longer attracted to the academic profession. The freedom to conduct meaningful research may be undermined by pressures to teach longer hours and more students. The constant search for new sources of revenue may irreducibly change the social role of higher-education institutions, as they become increasingly entrepreneurial enterprises. All of these changes are visible in today's colleges and universities; it remains to be seen whether their onward march will prove to be inexorable.

Breneman, David W. 2002 'For colleges, this is not just another recession' Chronicle of Higher Education 14 June.

Part 3 – Ageing of academic staff

The statistical picture – the present situation

‘Just under 30 per cent of academics are 50 to 59 years old and many can be expected to retire over the next ten years. The problem for the universities is how to accommodate the implied loss of experience and expertise’ (Project Brief).

In the November 2 2001 issue of *The Times Higher*, Maslen observed that ‘Australian universities face a staffing crisis over the next five to ten years as one in every eight academics reaches retiring age’. (Maslen 2001) What makes this trend a crisis, according to Maslen, is that these academics will probably not be replaced with conventional new academic recruits to tenurable positions, but rather by casuals. This pattern highlights a range of issues relating to ageing and succession in the academic profession.

The problem of the turnover of academic staff is not new on the higher education agenda, but has tended to have a cyclical trend. The expansion of universities in Australia and overseas during the 1950s and 1960s occurred during a time of scarcity of academic human resources. Rapid hiring during one period is inevitably followed by rapid retirement 20 or 30 years later, creating a focus on a range of questions, including the nature of ageing of staff and academic performance, and the succession of leadership from the junior ranks. The concern which is reflected in Maslen’s article is but one manifestation of a wide concern over these issues which dominate universities in many countries.

The global statistic in the project brief disguises considerable variation between fields of study, between universities, between males and females, and between individuals. According to DEST statistics for 2001, out of a total of 27 561 full time academics there were 296 between the ages of 65 and 79 full-time on staff, plus one in the age band 80-84 and one in the band 85-90⁴. Women outnumber men in the small age bracket 20-24 (112 to 59) but men predominate in every other age range, especially 55 and over. In the range 55-64, in the Group of Eight universities such staff comprise 17 per cent of full-time academics; in metropolitan universities, 22 per cent; in regional universities, 18 per cent; and in universities of technology, some 20 per cent. In the five biggest Academic Organisational Groups (to use the DEST terminology) of Administration/Business/Economics/Law (total 6004), Humanities (5294), Visual/Performing Arts (3686), Health Sciences (2696) and Education (2199), the ‘oldest’ group is A/B/E/L with 22 per cent over the age of 55 and 61 members over 65 years old; next is Humanities (19 per cent over 55 and 52 members over 65); then Health Sciences (17 per cent over 55, 30 members over 65), Education (17 per cent over 55, 8 people over 65) and Visual and Performing Arts (16 per cent over 55, 47 people over 65).

⁴ The authors happen to know at least one of these two – one of the most distinguished scientists Australia has ever produced, and still a productive figure.

This does not suggest to the authors that the ageing of academic staff is in itself and everywhere a problem; nor do the senior university personnel to whom we have spoken suggest that it is. Rather, it appears that there are particular problems in one area or another, which different universities are addressing in their own ways. There is also inevitably a problem when staff leaving are not replaced, or are replaced only by casuals.

In the teaching task, replacing a person in his late fifties and sixties with someone in her thirties is likely to bring new expertise, especially in CAL and IT, and may well bring fresh enthusiasm and innovative approaches. It is not simple age that is the problem but the length of time an academic has been in the one post, with loss of enthusiasm and stimulus. Students nowadays like to see vibrant young staff, whereas in general older staff tend to resist change. On the other hand, we should bear in mind that today's older staff are the survivors, the ones who have adapted to major changes and are therefore adaptable.

Some quotes suggest that in some quarters there is a problem of perceptions. 'Yes, a lot of people in my department are made to feel unwelcome'. 'There is pressure from management on heads of departments to get rid of the over 50s'. 'There is a squeeze on over the last 10 years'.

In research certainly the breadth and depth of a researcher's knowledge builds up over time, and it would be a waste to lose this advantage. The bright newcomer may well bring novel insights and techniques, but it is likely that this person also will improve over time.

Also, retired staff can be very valuable for supervision and for help in preparing grant applications. Older researchers can be very useful on committees, boards of management of projects and so on, because of their experience and sense of policy. Retirees continue to serve as mentors and moral support to younger researchers.

The ARC Guidelines now preclude funding research by retirees, which is an incentive not to retire. A number of researchers want to use the leisure of retirement to continue research, and are inhibited by this policy. On the other hand, it provides more opportunity to encourage new researchers. It is interesting that by contrast the NHMRC guidelines do permit grants to retirees. Some fields of research take years to mature (for instance, in areas of Biology) so that older researchers can have a lot to offer.

With frequent and rapid advances in technology and techniques there is a growing need for short courses to give researchers new skills in a wide range of tasks.

It is in management and administration that long experience and hard-won expertise are likely to be missed when the person retires. Corporate memory can diminish, and mistakes made and recognised years ago may well be repeated if newcomers are unaware of them.

'Bunching'

Rather than a simple question of ageing staff, the most pressing problem seems to be the occasional 'bunching' of retirements and resignations. When a group of academics in a single department or field retire at much the same time, it can cause problems with supervision of research students. The remaining members of the department are likely to be younger, perhaps not yet appropriate people to supervise. Should a person without a PhD be permitted to supervise PhD candidates? Should a brand-new PhD supervise PhD candidates, or should the

newcomer get some academic experience first?

'Yes, a whole bunch will leave at the same time. It won't be easy to find that experience; even if we are allowed to replace'.

What are the implications for mentoring when a bunch of senior staff retire together?

Are they nurturing or mentoring the young to succeed them?

There can also be an issue of a whole specialisation disappearing, with none of the remaining staff interested in pursuing it. In a small department of people of similar age, their bunched retirement leads the university to face the question whether it wishes to make efforts to maintain that field. The university senior management may well leave the decision to the relevant faculty. Should the senior management monitor such decisions? With one university after another making a negative judgement, it is possible for the field to cease to be offered anywhere in the nation without any national decision on the matter. Who should be monitoring this situation?

For instance: In *The Australian* for Wednesday 12 June 2002 (p.29) was a story *Untapped Asian expertise in danger of wasting away* which drew attention to the piecemeal decline in Asian studies, university by university. 'Universities' scholarship in Asian knowledge is strong, but the scholars are ageing and being headhunted by overseas institutions.' This is a matter of national concern, but there is no official national body charged with monitoring such developments. A similar picture could be provided in other subject areas; ageing can be a problem without being a problem everywhere.

One deputy vice-chancellor told us:

Those staff who can remember how things have changed are by necessity on a career track that is taking them up through the ranks. As they age their experience will change with more managerial and governance activities and less time for research. The percentage of staff at level C and above is rising rapidly in universities so it may well be that the current impressions of changing experience reflect ageing and career progression as much as a change in the objective experience of staff at the same level and career point in different years.

Good practice – UTS

Ageing is an issue for the university, on both financial and quality grounds. Financially, older academics are relatively expensive because of high salaries, large payouts for long-service leave, large unfunded superannuation payouts for academics in the old state super scheme. Qualitatively, a large cohort of staff will retire in the next few years and this will deplete the University's skill and experience levels. However, it does provide an opportunity for UTS to renew its workforce to pursue its strategic agenda.

UTS undertook a staff profile review at the end of 2000 and found that 20 per cent of academic staff would be retiring in the next five years. The majority of staff leave at age 60 after a minimum of 20 years service, to take advantage of the provisions of the old state superannuation scheme.

UTS management developed a strategy of offering pre-retirement contracts on a selected basis to staff two to three years before retirement age. The strategy

involved an offer of a 10-20% salary premium in exchange for the academic entering into a fixed-term contract (ranging from one to five years). This is especially attractive to people on the old super scheme.

The application of the strategy to individual cases is left to the Faculty, but if there is a substantial need to reduce numbers in this way the Centre may subsidise the premium element. The strategy is an aid to Faculty planning and is preferable to university-wide voluntary redundancy schemes as a means of creating planned turnover. It is a targeted strategy, rather than a broad brush approach which is more effective, particularly in terms of cost.

Quite a few retired academics are involved in casual teaching duties, but less are involved as honorary researchers.

Relatively few appointments are currently made at Lecturer A level, and time in that rank is relatively brief in any case due to the promotion of such staff to level B. New appointees at UTS tend to be middle-aged anyway, a function of rank of appointment and desire for professionally experienced staff in most UTS areas. Little use is made of fractional appointments. Good quality appointments can be found, though competition from some other universities is strong, given their capacity to pay premiums. The Faculty of Law introduced a strategy to recruit young academics by targeting University medallists and offering research funds.

UTS management has developed staff profile planning models which enable Faculties to analyse their own profiles and use 'what if' techniques to plan recruitment strategies. In UTS now there is a shift from wanting to shed staff, to wanting people to stay on, to retain proven skills. However, the impact on student preferences of their perceptions of an ageing staff is not known.

The learning community or culture has suffered from the pressure of time on both staff and students, but UTS is looking to develop 'knowledge management strategies' and 'communities of practice' to ensure continuity in institutional learning culture.

Good practice – University of Melbourne

At the University of Melbourne planning for the continuity of staffing in disciplines and fields is initiated and carried out at department level. When a department wishes to re-deploy its 'human resources' the Head may prepare a Workforce Plan for transmission to the DVC (staff and students) via the faculty dean. Departments are not obliged to do this and there is no prescribed format. Nevertheless a typical plan will include:

- 1 Background giving the Australian and perhaps overseas context of the department, and its broad objectives.
- 2 An evaluation of the department's present strategic position; eg: Statistics of staff by age, level, classification. Linkages with other institutions
- 3 Research teams and their performance
- 4 Income sources
- 5 Courses taught
- 6 Details of each academic staff member's role and expected retirement date; comments on possible redundancies of particular members.

Recommendations concerning retirements, redundancies and appointments are made. These are accompanied with a financial analysis showing costs and savings.

A Workforce plan is the responsibility to the Head of Department, but is prepared after discussions involving all members.

Incentives towards retirement for full-time academic can include a 20 per cent loading; and an option of part-time but with superannuation maintained at the full rate.

The University conducts retirement seminars and 'exit surveys' of retirees.

At Melbourne University a problem of age bunching was identified in a particular department by an external review 15 years ago. They recommended that one new appointment be made every year for 15 years. The University supported the recommendation. Now, for the first time one of the 'young' is head of department. The idea of 'succession planning' being routine on departmental reviews might be worth considering.

Succession planning

Since decisions about replacement of staff tend to be left to faculties and departments (within the constraints of available resources) it is at these levels that the question of 'succession' is addressed. Broadly, it takes the form: What kind of person do we want to recruit? That might focus on field of scholarly interest, or personality, or age, or particular skill, or management style. None of that is succession planning as commonly understood, that is, grooming a particular individual for a position some years ahead of when the position is likely to be vacant. The authors have no reason to believe that such grooming is at all widespread in Australian universities, and – given the high mobility of the most able academics and managers – it seems unlikely to be successful; the able person groomed by one university is likely to be poached by another which wants the same combination of talents.

Recruitment

In a national meeting of deputy and pro-vice-chancellors (academic) attended by one of the authors, all agreed that they had difficulty recruiting good academic staff. In discussions with current academics the authors were told in several universities and by several people that they would not advise others to enter academic employment; the pressures were too great and the rewards too few. We were told over and over that in fields such as accountancy, information technology, and the areas related to management (including psychology) a graduate with no more than a first degree, after two or three years experience, could expect a salary greater than a senior lecturer who would have at least two degrees (and foregone income) and some ten years of experience as an academic. The only strong attraction in the academic life appears to be the intrinsic interest of a field of study; and the current conditions of academic life do much to frustrate that interest, as the responses to the questionnaire indicate.

'When we want new staff we just go back to the industry. But this has its problems – they are not likely to be abreast of the whole field and 10 years out of date'.

'In creative marketing it has not been possible for two years to find a head of department. At bottom it is the salary and the A\$.'

'How much money can you bring in is becoming an unwelcome condition in some recruiting'.

'An apprenticeship is essential in my field (electron microscopy). Therefore you start young, are initiated into the field, it has to be one on one, like surgery or learning to fly – it can't be done in groups or by IT'.

Retirement

Some universities have formal organisations for their retired staff. The University of Melbourne has a Retired Academic Staff Association which keeps retirees in touch with the University, with intellectual issues and with each other. ANU performs the same functions through its Emeritus Faculty. Other universities might not have any formal organisation, but many, perhaps most keep the more valuable and active of their retired academics in some association with the university. Some continue with some teaching, with reduced rates of remuneration – for instance, casual rates for specific courses in which the retiree has particular expertise. Remuneration does not appear to be a major issue for either the retirees or the universities.

Below are some views of academics and recent retirees, some not drawn from the project survey but from an informal questionnaire.

'Use of retirees is very difficult to manage; you must not come to rely on them.'

'There is a role for older academics to help mentor the young; it's like an apprenticeship. Retirees have the time to work with honours students'.

'We'd love to work two days a week, but bits and pieces of outsourcing doesn't provide continuity, supervision or motivation'.

'At (University X) departments work out their own plan (on planned retirements). Here (at University Y) it is done by managers who don't know what goes on'.

'All Emeritus Faculty should be welcome to use the libraries and the on-line journals, web, etc, and to turn up for a chat at coffee time because they may be writing a book at home. For further privileges, perhaps it would be best that an invitation would be required, and that all retirees could apply, for a desk, telephone, photocopying, email and so on. In my experience, if they have real skills, someone will offer them lab space. Every university I know already has some retired faculty continuing to do excellent work. Most of the retired faculty who are worthy and whose research costs little can find facilities to continue to write and give seminars. There is no system in Australia that gives funds to enable retired faculty to do experimental or field work'.

'Remuneration is not important, while job satisfaction is extremely important in this scenario. Retired people are often the only ones around with the experience and the available time to do something almost perfectly'.

'Incentives could range from no-cost options like honorary titles and other forms of recognition to low-cost options such as free access to university services and free parking to higher cost options as below. Privileges which come at a cost to the university should only be offered on a case-by-case basis and some return to the university should be expected in terms of such things as research output, research grants and other forms of grants and other benefits to the university. Retirees

should also expect to pay to the university a percentage of research income'. 'Space will always be a limiting factor. The major barrier is the lack of a room in their former Department or School, or in another area related to their discipline and interests. Regular contact with like-minded people is important, as well as access to libraries, telephone, a computer and e-mail and in some cases to laboratories. In order to justify these some evidence of a genuine continuing involvement in research or other intellectual activity would be needed. A report on activities, say every two years, would be reasonable. Both the individuals and their universities benefit by encouraging the continued involvement of superannuated retirees'.

'Obviously in the humanities someone may only need access to a good library and pencil and paper. In science, there may be a need for access to specialised and expensive equipment, so the work can only be done within an established department. CSIRO Entomology is not a university but its activities would be severely curtailed without its many retired taxonomists pursuing their passions within its walls. The university must not come to rely on such assistance. I know a number of cases where retirees are employed on contract. I think that the availability of more such arrangements would be an incentive'.

'The major incentive to continue academic life after retirement is keep on exercising one's mind. This is facilitated if the staff of the particular group within the University he/she is joining, warmly welcomes the person, and encourages him/her to participate in seminars and where appropriate in other activities associated with that group in the University. A person should be offered those incentives if the available evidence is quite clear that the person would make full use of the offered facilities to the benefit of the University as a whole'.

Retirees' contribution to research

The investigators used the good offices of the AVCC to ask DVCs (Research) whether they had information on the contribution people in retirement made to research in their universities. Most universities appear not to keep records about these people as a defined group. Below are edited versions of the replies received.

University A –

This group is very difficult to identify: if they have an honorary appointment they are simply part of a much larger pool of honorary appointments, particularly those associated with a medical department; if they have virtually retired, but have an appointment for a few hours a week, once again, the system is unable to sort them. So it depends on being able to name certain academics. In this Office we came up with a list of only some 8, who might make grant applications, but only 3 of them have applied this year. They are somewhat more obvious in contributing research publications: in this year's collection we estimate they have accounted for 9.3 publication points, and in a university total of around 1400 authors publishing in any of the DEST categories. I asked my colleague in the Research Graduate School if retired academics had a place to play in research supervision. She considered there was no significant contribution, and given the processes required in order to be a supervisor or associate supervisor, did not see that there could be. This all seems rather subjective and anecdotal, but our impression is that there is not a large contribution being made.

University B –

Figures are extracted from those that were collected as part of the DETYA 2001 Higher Education Data Collection of 2000 data. They are as follow:

PUBLICATIONS

2.62 per cent of the total weighted points claimed were attributable to retired academics

4.62 per cent of the total publication events claimed were attributable to retired academics

1.59 per cent of the total university personnel on these publications were retired academics

RESEARCH INCOME

0.54 per cent of university research income claimed (excluding controlled entities) was attributable to retired academics

University C –

In response to the request for information about the contribution of retirees to University research, forwarded to us via the AVCC, this University has analysed the publications and research grants of 'Professores Emeriti' conferred since 1985.

This group seem to have been responsible for approximately 2.2 per cent of the University's 'DEST reported' publications output from 1997 to 2000; and had some involvement with approximately 2.13 per cent of external research grants in the period 1996-2001, which in turn accounted for about 1.9 per cent of the total external grant income. Note that they were not necessarily lead investigators on all of these grants.

From our sample it's obvious that this would be a conservative estimate of the total output of retired staff.

University D –

The short answer is NO, I'm afraid we can't get information on publications of retired academics readily. The main difficulty is in identifying retirees. I'm told that retirement is not differentiated from resignation in [our systems]. Also, not all those who retire and continue to publish are given honorary appointments. Some are not currently showing as honorary appointees because they have small paid appointments. Others who remain active don't get honorary appointments at all. And lots of honorary appointees aren't retirees.

University E –

Below is a response to the questions posed at PVC/DVC(R).

- figures (or even impressions) of the number of publications in retirement by retired academics of their universities -

About 2 DEST points

- what proportion these are of all publications by university staff -
About 1 per cent

- figures (or even impressions) of the number and/or value of grants won by retirees -
2 grants/ \$25,000

- and again, these as a proportion of all grants won by staff? -
About 0.5 per cent

University structures/obstacles

Clearly, retired academics can only retain an active involvement with the university (as a teacher or researcher) if there is space to accommodate them and facilities available to them. Retirees do not have a right to such advantages but must earn them by active and valued service.

Continuing usage of retirees should not lead to any diminution of opportunities for existing staff or new appointments. Those retirees whom the university wishes to retain in some active positions should be regarded as a bonus for the university, not as substitutes for regular staff. In general they would receive no remuneration.

Does the university have any control over retirees? It can always revoke their formal appointments and privileges. Such appointments should be for limited periods, renewable but always subject to review. While an individual might serve from time to time on an ad hoc committee or be asked for advice, it would be unusual for a retiree to be a continuing member of a standing committee in the university.

Do they continue with research? Many will continue to do so if they have access to facilities. Teaching? If they have expertise in a particular specialist area, not otherwise available to the university, they may well be asked to continue teaching in that area. They should not be used for regular and standard teaching, since they would then be replacing regular staff. Administration? This seems unlikely.

Assessment? Only in specialist areas otherwise unavailable.

Access to the library is a privilege which many retirees would greatly value, and it need cost the university nothing in provision of space or facilities.

Access to laboratory space and to equipment also would be greatly valued, but there is a cost involved. These might be offered if available and if the future work of the retiree is valued by the university.

In general university research funds are available only to regular members of staff. Retirees may, and do, compete for external funds which are then counted as being brought into the university. Exceptions to this situation appear to be very rare.

Institutional Responses in Australia and USA

a) Australia

Many Australian universities are now developing official policies regarding ageing and retirement. Recent examples are the Australian National University and Flinders University, both of which have put their policies on the web for public knowledge. Other universities may be doing the same. In both of the above universities, various options are presented which make the transition into

retirement, and the continued affiliation of the retired academics with the university, more flexible. With regard to the first, this includes various forms of pre-retirement contracts whereby academics might spend a number of years on part-time contracts prior to full retirement. With regard to the second, continued affiliation, usually as visiting fellow or similar designation, is possible. This continued status brings with it access to academic privileges (office space, e-mail, telephone, parking, and so on), in return for continued academic activity such as supervision, teaching, and institutional recognition for research publications. Policies such as these are particularly well documented in the Flinders University web site at <http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/acadstatus.html> and <http://www.flinders.edu.au/ppmanual/staff/flexstaffing.html>. The ANU policy can be found at <http://www.anu.edu.au/hr/policies/retirement.html>.

b) The United States

There has been increased interest in questions relating to ageing and retirement in American Universities since the effective ending of mandatory retirement in 1994. In response to this concern, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) conducted a survey (The Survey Of Changes In Faculty Retirement Policies

by Ronald G. Ehrenberg at <http://www.aaup.org/Issues/retirement/retirepg.htm> and <http://www.aaup.org/Issues/retirement/retrpt.htm>) which obtained data on retirement policies from 608 American institutions of higher education (about 44 per cent of the target population).

Almost half of the responding institutions (46 per cent) had various retirement incentive schemes to encourage academics to retire before the age of 70. Phased retirement programs were also in place in about one out of four responding institutions. In many American universities, retirement effectively means leaving the institution. However about one-third of the universities in the survey did have various programs for retired academics whereby they might, after successful negotiation, engage in part-time teaching, supervision, and even committee membership. Access to facilities such as office space, e-mail and parking are also negotiable. Private universities, and PhD granting universities were the most likely to have academics continuing to teach and research after the age of 70; it was in these universities that issues about retirement were most problematic.

Universities would do well to consider the following two paragraphs from an American study, where the issue has been live for years longer than in Australia.

It would be in the institution's interest to position itself in planning about roles for emeritus professors as a partner with the present emeritus faculty body and with emeriti-soon-to-be. Some schools are already well along in such planning for the decade ahead, but many have yet to begin. The faculty senate could be the vehicle of choice in which to vest the planning function and operations, at least at first, in cooperation with the administrative planning office.

Basic data useful for planning about emeriti consist largely of information about the emeriti. Yet many institutions have little hard data bearing on the intentions and aspirations of either active faculty or emeriti. That is especially noteworthy because the emeriti themselves are generally interested in and willing to help garner and analyse such data.

Conclusions: Strategies on ageing

Australian universities are varied in their responses to the ageing of the workforce. Those that are well aware of it and taking steps to address it are – naturally enough – concerned only with how it affects their university. It can be both an opportunity for change and a challenge of loss.

Within each university, it would seem beneficial to collect data on retirees and those soon to retire (which few indeed seem to do); to decide which retirees should be encouraged to continue contributing to the activities of the university, whether in research, teaching (including postgraduate supervision), mentoring or policy advice; and to formulate a policy of incentives and privileges, which need not be costly – library access, computer access, in some cases laboratory access, a suitable academic title (Visiting, Adjunct and so on). Not every retiree should have a claim on such privileges, only those who continue actively to contribute to the work of the university. As far as remuneration goes, casual rates seem to be acceptable both to the retirees and the universities which make use of them in this way; remuneration was the least of considerations amongst those we consulted.

In the national interest it seems negligent not to have some authority charged with tracking what is happening when one university after another takes decisions based only on its internal developments. What is happening nationally in the teaching of Asian languages? Of physics, chemistry, mathematics – and so on? Once upon a time the Universities Commission, then the Tertiary Education Commission, then the Higher Education Council had this responsibility. They have all disappeared. The Department of Education, Science and Training is not charged with this mission, nor staffed for it; but somebody needs to do it.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Project Brief

This project proposes two reports on issues of future concern for the higher education sector. The first is the issue of the ageing academic workforce and options for overcoming the difficulties associated with future loss of experience and expertise. The second is the issue of the past changes in the nature of academic work and the implication of these changes for future recruitment and training of academics.

The findings of these reports will complement the more quantitative reports aimed at projecting staff numbers and the influence of the provisions of superannuation schemes on staff decisions on whether to leave the academic workforce.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONTINUING ENGAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION BY RETIRING ACADEMICS

Purpose and scope

The objective of this study is to identify options for universities in response to the changes in the age structure of the academic workforce.

Just under 30 per cent of academics are in 50 to 59 years old and many can be expected to retire over the next ten years. The problem for the universities is how to accommodate the implied loss of experience and expertise.

The report will:

- Advise on the extent to which universities are aware and have factored the expected high exit rates into their plans;
- Document strategies already in place or planned which will assist in retaining key staff, eg short term contracts, part-time work, provision of facilities etc;
- Explore and document any barriers to flexible working arrangements, eg industrial relations concerns, workers' compensation etc.
- Develop additional strategies to offset the expected loss of experience and expertise.
- Where possible explore the experience of other countries relating to the ageing of the academic workforce

It is expected that the main focus will be on institutional responses.

Methodology

The aim of this project is to inform the Minister on the extent to which universities are and can overcome the problem that will arise as a result of an ageing academic workforce. To this end the project team will collect qualitative information from a wide range of universities by interview of appropriate university officers. The team will also hold focus groups with a number of older academics and retired academics to assess what conditions would be necessary and what form of services they would be willing to provide after retirement.

Expected outcomes

The report will:

- Describe the range of strategies already in place or planned to address the problems associated with an ageing academic workforce; and
 - Develop a suite of possible strategies.

THE CHANGING REQUIREMENTS OF ACADEMIC WORK

Purpose and scope

The objective of this study is to explore and document changes, over the last two decades, in what academics do and how they do it with a view to informing academic recruitment and training activities.

There have been major changes in:

- pedagogy and the technology of teaching ('from cottage industry to mass production')
- the structure of the academic environment, eg new interdisciplinary areas, development of managerial decision making and an increase in administration functions
- work conditions and incentives –later tenure; need to seek grants and be entrepreneurial; performance-based funding in research; commissions and other outside income; hiring staff of other universities for part-time work ('moonlighting').

Responses to these changes are likely to vary with field, gender and age. Are there marked inter-generational differences: (pre Baby Boomers, Baby Boomers, Gen X, Gen Y)? The project will investigate differences (if any) can be related to different age groups in: perceptions of the changing nature of academic work; the role of new technologies; new approaches to teaching; age related cultural attitudes and values, eg to cross-disciplinary work and commercial linkages.

Methodology

The project team will interview an appropriately structured (age, gender, level and discipline) sample of academics and conduct focus groups

Expected outcomes

The report will document changes in academic work and discuss the implications for future training and recruitment of academics.

Appendix 2: Methods used in the two projects

Information was obtained using interviews, surveys and statistical collections; the same sources being used for both projects. Choice of topics was shaped by the questions contained in the brief (Appendix1), from findings of previous investigations and some broad hypotheses about influences behind changes in academics' work. The early interviews helped to define topics and questions for the survey.

The project generally and the survey in particular received support and publicity from the National Tertiary Educators Union, The Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee and all of the participating universities. Advice was received from the ANU Ethics Committee and their endorsement of the project was received and accepted by other universities.

At the outset advantage was taken of the recent formation of an 'Emeritus Faculty' organisation at ANU to conduct an email survey. All of the questions, apart from biographical ones, were of the open-ended variety allowing respondents to define the issues and events important in their own experience of retirement from full-time academic work. Those members who had continued a connection with a university were asked to describe the form of this association and the nature of their work.

The second step was to pilot test interviews with small groups of academics, senior managers and retirees. From these the questions for framed for group interviews with academics and retirees and individual interviews with senior managers. Interviews were conducted in eight universities.

Group interviews with up to eight participants provided multiple perceptions of issues where the interviewees shared experiences. Information pertaining to individuals or individual differences is not wanted – the focus is the issue or series of related issues. The group is in effect a set of expert observers. Because experiences differ there may initially be a range of responses to an initial question. The group is then encouraged to discuss these until consensus is reached, or genuine differences of opinion or experience are identified.

A particular advantage of the group interview is the stimulus from others. Ideas are recalled and perceptions sharpened in a way that cannot happen in an individual interview. A group interview should correct any wrong preconceptions researchers may have when choosing closed questions for a survey.

The record should:

- Note all important issues raised and positions taken on these including disagreements and divergent perceptions. (In practice with homogeneous groups, e.g. students in a particular course, a good deal of unanimity is usually reached.
- Be such that a content analysis may subsequently be made showing the importance of topics and the frequency of responses.
- Identify possible illustrative quotations for reporting (if possible identify where if there is a tape recording)

- Identify questions that may be asked in a multiple response survey.
- Note topics requiring further investigation in subsequent group interviews.

A survey of academics directed at changes in their work role comprised the third stage of the project. Advantage was taken of some pioneering work at ANU Information Technology Services to conduct the survey electronically rather than by the conventional paper questionnaire posted to a sample. The questionnaire was placed in a dedicated web site. Each university in the sample forwarded an email letter of invitation from the project directors to all academic staff members. By clicking on the web address in the email recipients were taken directly to the questionnaire. When completed a click on the 'submit' button transmitted the responses to a secure database within the ANU mainframe computer. The survey was anonymous and neither the research team nor any individual in the participating universities had any way of knowing who had or had not responded. Because non-respondents could not be identified a short reminder was sent via the participating universities to the entire list. A linked web site contained further information about the project and the research team.

With an electronic survey economies of scale are not to be had from sampling, so we asked our contact officers in 12 selected universities to forward the invitation to all of their academics.

All told 2150 electronic responses were received. (An option to respond by post was not taken up by any respondent.) Although identification of individual respondents was not possible we were able to check if more than one reply came from the same computer. No such cases occurred. The period during which the survey remained open was limited to 6 weeks in order to minimise the chances of contributions from outside. Examining for face validity the academic profiles of a sub-sample checked the authenticity of responses. No unlikely cases were discovered.

All questions were cast in a multiple response format. Each of the 40 topics on changes in work activities involved three questions: 'How important is it in your work?' 'What is the extent of change over the last two decades or since you became an academic?' and 'Is the change for the better or worse?' With this format topics of particular importance could be identified, and the extent of change identified and evaluated. With each question a comment box allowed respondents to elaborate on their answers. In addition to the three ratings made on each topic, on average one third of respondents added written comments. An opportunity was given at the end for final written observations and 44 per cent contributed. (All told written contributions to the survey amounted to about 400 A4 pages, all of which were read by the research team.)

We hypothesised that responses to changes in work role would vary with sex, age, field of teaching and research, type of university, academic rank, managerial responsibility, level of qualification and relative motivation regarding teaching or research. Each respondent's status was established with respect to each of these. A question was also asked that enabled us to filter out casual staff (3 per cent) or non-academics with no teaching or research responsibilities (1.5 per cent).

There are some complexities in calculating the response rate for a survey that is electronic and where the list is controlled by each participating university. Seven of the 12 universities provided estimates of the number of academic staff on their lists. For the remainder we used published lists. The total population was estimated to

5,000. It became apparent however that some groups of academics were overlooked – for example those at a remote campus or with a ‘research only’ designation. A spot check of a random sample after the survey found 1 in 2 stating that our letter had not been received. It is not possible to determine precisely in how many cases the letter was not sent, and in how many there was a sort of cyber blindness, the letter having arrived in the potential respondent’s computer but was not noticed. (In this context it is of interest to note the many respondents who reported impatience in dealing with ‘official’ emails).

Assuming that the invitation to participate in the survey was actually ‘seen’ by 5000 potential respondents gives a response rate of about 50 per cent.

Following the survey a web-based forum was opened for debate on the main topics of the survey. Contributions and responses of up to 350 words were invited. Because of the large amount of written comment from the survey, the team had little time left to manage or analyse additional material. It was therefore decided not to advertise the forum widely.

For the ageing project the final source of information was a set of tables from DEST containing details of age, sex, rank, field etc. for all Australian academics from 1989 to 2001. These have been analysed for trends over the period, and for fields within and across universities where a high concentration of older academics would suggest that problems of maintaining continuity of teaching and academic leadership may be in the offing.

Appendix 3: Literature review

In the November 2 2001 issue of *The Times Higher*, Maslen observed that 'Australian universities face a staffing crisis over the next five to ten years as one in every eight academics reaches retiring age'. (Maslen 2001) What makes this trend a crisis, according to Maslen, is that these academics will probably not be replaced with conventional new academic recruits to tenurable positions, but rather by casuals. This pattern highlights a range of issues relating to ageing and succession in the academic profession.

The problem of the turnover of academic staff is not new on the higher education agenda, but has tended to have a cyclical trend. The expansion of universities in Australia and overseas during the 1950s and 1960s occurred during a time of scarcity of academic human resources. Rapid hiring during one period is inevitably followed by rapid retirement 20 or 30 years later, creating a focus on a range of questions, including the nature of ageing of staff and academic performance, and the succession of leadership from the junior ranks. The concern which is reflected in Maslen's article is but one manifestation of a wide concern over these issues which dominate universities in many countries.

During the past five years, there have been about 600 articles appearing in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* concerning ageing and retirement. This number reflects the awareness, and newsworthiness, of the issues related to ageing and retirement in universities, not only in the United States but also in other countries.

The vast majority of these articles have simply called attention to the demographic profile of academics, and the assumed consequences of retirement. However there are other issues which are beginning to appear. There is a growing awareness that the demographic profile of ageing academics is likely to create problems of replacement, or what can be called the problem of succession. This leads to the question of what institutions are doing to prepare for the large numbers of retirements, and whether there are suitable policies which have been generated to cope with this phenomenon.

The following review addresses each of these issues. The first section examines a selected body of research on the question of ageing and academic productivity. The second addresses the issue of the demographic profile of ageing academics, and the awareness of it as a problem. The third examines some attempts to respond to this issue in terms of policies, both nationally and internationally.

Ageing and academic productivity

One of the earliest studies of academic retirement in the United States was conducted by Patton (Patton 1979). The study was stimulated by the US Government's 1978 amendment to the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 that extended mandatory retirement age from 65 to 70 for private industry and non-federal employees. At that time this amendment generated a fear among university administrators that staff turnover would slow down, budgetary planning would become more difficult, and new academic areas would become difficult to develop, particularly in what was then called a 'steady state' environment.

Within this context, research failed to support arguments that there was any correlation between chronological age and academic productivity:

The evidence about the correlation between age and productivity is equivocal. Both positive and negative relations can be found, and they vary by field. In some fields – history and philosophy, for example – great productivity occurs in older years, but much of this productivity may be due to help from assistants and the ageing professors' methods of work. One study found that scientists produce more than their share of high-quality research before age 39. Nevertheless, researchers have had little success finding an equation that describes the relation between productivity and age. Bayer and Dutton examined the relation between age and career performance of academic scientists. Discovering that no one model fit all disciplinary fields, they concluded that career age is a poor predictor of research and other professional activity. (Patton, 1979: 9).

Not only did research not support any biological argument in favour of mandatory retirement, but the American Medical Association in 1972 openly opposed it, arguing that '...the sudden cessation of work and the loss of earning power can lead to serious physical and emotional deterioration for retirees, even early death.' (Cited in Patton, p. 9.) Interestingly little attention was directed to whether age or retirement were related to the quality of teaching in universities.

In spite of the fact that a survey conducted about the same time found that only 22% of American academics said they would continue working after 65, the focus of attention shifted to various incentives for early retirement. Obviously the issues were multifaceted, including the economic (did it pay to provide monetary incentives for early retirement?), psychological (how to prepare academics for retirement and possible career alternatives), and finally biological (how to continue an active physical life after retirement). In addition, some attention was given to various re-invigoration policies whereby older academics might be re-trained to teach and research in new fields, or simply be refreshed in their own disciplines.

The debates of the late 1970s have recurred with certain regularity with the rise and fall of budgetary pressures. In some countries like Australia they have emerged for the first time in the 1990s with new legislation against age discrimination in the workplace.

However in the late 1990s and the early 2000s the concern has somewhat shifted. With the bulk of the 'baby-boom' academics nearing retirement age in large numbers, there is now a perceived crisis of succession in the near future.

An examination of the research literature on ageing and retirement in recent years reflects the focus of the current debate in universities.

In Australia, a study by Battersby (Battersby 1993) found that of academics 45 or older (40% of the Australian academic staff at the time). Older academics do not experience a decline of teaching or research performance. The findings call into question the practices of encouraging early retirement or of targeting older academics for performance review.

In the United States, Crawley (Crawley 1995) conducted a study of 80 research universities examined which of 46 policy initiatives relevant to senior faculty were in use or being considered. He found that the most popular strategy to guard against both declining productivity and a succession crisis was to recruit more diverse academics (17 policy initiatives). Providing incentives for early retirement

and implementing a strategic planning process were the most common with respect to faculty seniority.

A survey of staff in 974 representative institutions in 1992-1993 (Chronister, Baldwin et al. 1997). Plans for retirement within 3 yrs increased from 7% for 47-48 yrs old faculty, to 64% for those who were 70. Overall about 40% said they planned to retire in next three years to take up another occupation. Of these, about 40% of those planning to retire said they were dissatisfied

The importance of monetary incentives in taking retirement has been demonstrated recently by Lewis in a study of academic retirement programs (Lewis 1996). Lewis found that at 65 (combined with social security) most academics could retire at their effective current salary. However faculty retirement programs generally provided incentive for continuing work after 65 because of additional contribution benefits. He concluded that it was this incentive which kept some academics going.

In a somewhat related study, Pollio was also concerned about the ageing academic staff, both with respect to their decline in productivity and also attitudes toward retirement. (Pollio 1996) He conducted a review of the literature on age and academic performance and found that older academics were more comfortable with teaching, and more interested in administration. Most seemed satisfied with their careers, but worried about retirement '...and were unable to imagine life without work.' His research suggested that it was not only money, but also satisfaction related to work which accounted for their desire to continue.

Although older academics felt more comfortable teaching, some of their other characteristics worked against their popularity among students. Renaud and Murray (Renaud and Murray 1996) conducted a study of 33 full-time academics, aged from 33 to 64. Their results found a negative relationship between age and teaching effectiveness, as measured student and peer ratings. However the study also found a negative relationship between age and other characteristics which might have made them more appreciated. Some of these positive characteristics were sociability, approval-seeking, seeks help and advice, liberal, and extroversion. These personality traits, in turn were directly related to teaching effectiveness according to student evaluation and peer ratings.

But can these characteristics be avoided? A review of the literature on programs designed to maintain faculty vitality and productivity (Bland and Bergquist 1997). Bland and Bergquist examine the factors related to decrease in performance and ways to avoid it.

Overall, recent studies suggest that academics, at least in the United States, do like their jobs. They can remain in their jobs after 65 years of age and continue to perform adequately, and those conditions of retirement can be an incentive to retire or to continue, depending on how one sees the situation.

Appendix 4: The survey instrument

The Changing Nature of Academic Work and the Ageing of the Academic Workforce

The project has been commissioned by DEST and is being conducted by Professor Don Anderson, Professor Richard Johnson and Dr Larry Saha of the Australian National University. It proposes two reports on issues of future concern for the higher education sector. The first concerns the issue of the past changes in the nature of academic work and the implications of these changes for future recruitment and training of academics.

The second report examines the issue of the ageing academic workforce and options for overcoming the difficulties associated with future loss of experience and expertise.

The project will have four major components: 1) a literature review; 2) an analysis of the DEST (publicly available) statistics of university academic staff; 3) group interviews with academics and retired academics at about 8 universities; and 4) a survey of academics from about 12 universities.

The group interviews with current and retired academic staff take from one to two hours. Views are obtained on the changing nature of academic work, on the recruitment of new academic staff, on the ageing of academic staff, and finally on retirement, and the ways that retired academics may continue to contribute productively to their disciplines and to their university.

The following survey asks academics about changes over the last two decades. The topics include teaching, research, administration, facilities and resources, technology, academic freedom and collegiality.



Changes in the Academic Work Role

This survey is about academic work, and the changes that may have taken place since you commenced as a university staff member. It is a paper version of the on-line survey located at <http://www.anu.edu.au/cedam/agerole/academicwork.html>. If you cannot use the on-line version, please print this file, mark your responses on the paper and return to:

Academic Survey
5 Liversidge St.
ANU 0200
ACT

We are interested in responses from both academic staff and non-academic university staff who have research and/or teaching responsibilities.

Most of the questions can be answered simply by ticking the response closest to your view in the list of answers provided. This part of the questionnaire should take about 15 minutes. Written comments about the extent of change, causes, and what might be done to improve things will be appreciated, and add to the validity of the survey.

No one at your university, the researchers, or anyone else will know your identity or even if you responded. Because the survey is anonymous, there can be no follow up. But we will need a high response rate to convince the readers and policy makers of our report's reliability.

Results and further information about this survey are available on a web site at:
<http://www.anu.edu.au/cedam/agerole/academicwork.html>.

Background Information

Q 1. Sex

Select one option

male	
female	

Q 2. What is your approximate age?

Select an Age Group

Less than 25	
25 - 29	
30 - 34	
35 - 39	
40 - 44	
45 - 49	
50 - 54	
55 - 59	
60 - 64	
65 or more	

Q 3. Your University:

Select one option

Australian National University	
Flinders University	
Murdoch University	
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology	
Southern Cross University	
University of Canberra	

University of Melbourne	
University of South Australia	
University of Queensland	
University of Southern Queensland	
University of Technology, Sydney	
Charles Sturt University	
University of Sydney	

Q 4. Which of the following best fits your university appointment?

Select one option

Part-time academic	
Casual academic	
Non-academic with teaching/research responsibility	
Non-academic: no teaching/research responsibility*	

* If non-academic with no research/teaching responsibility please submit the questionnaire at this point. Thank you for your cooperation.

Q 5. Which of the following is closest to your field?

Select one option

Science - Physical	
Science - Biological	
Maths/Information Technology	
Engineering and related	
Architecture and Building	
Agriculture/Vet. and related	
Medicine	
Nursing	
Other Health	
Education	
Management and Commerce	
Law	
Economics	
Humanities	
Social and Behavioural Sciences	
Creative Arts	
Food, Hospitality and Personnel	

Q 6. Which is closest to your academic level?

Select one option

Level A	
Level B	
Level C	
Level D	
Level E	

Q 7. Do you currently occupy one of the following management positions? (If more than one, please select the highest).

Select one option

Director	
Dean	
Head of School	
Head of Department	
Convener of a Program	
No Staff Management Responsibility	

Q 8. What is your highest academic qualification or equivalent?

Select one option

PhD	
Master	
Bachelor	
Diploma	
Certificate	
No academic qualification	

Q 9. Where did you obtain your first degree?

Select one option

My Present university	
Other Australia	
UK	
USA	
Canada	
Europe	
Asia	
New Zealand	
Other	
Do not have a degree	

If you do not have a second degree, skip to Question 11.

Q 10. If you have more than one degree, where did you obtain your highest?

Select one option

My present university	
Other Australia	
UK	
USA	
Canada	
Europe	
Asia	
New Zealand	
Other	

Q 11. When was your first academic appointment?

Select an option

Less than five years ago	
Between 5-9 years ago	
Between 10-14 years ago	
Between 15-19 years ago	
Between 20-24 years ago	
Between 25-29 years ago	
More than 30 years ago	

Q 12. Do your interests lie mainly in teaching, research or administration?

Select one option

Very heavily in research	
Both, but leaning to research	
Both, but leaning to teaching	
Very heavily in teaching	

Changes in Work Activities

The next set of topics are about academic work. For each topic (e.g. My contact with students) you are asked three questions:

How important is it in your work?

The extent of change over the last two decades or since you became an academic?

Whether the change is for the better or worse?

Tick the option that is closest to your position.

Some topics use a personal pronoun and refer to your own position; others ask for your more general perceptions. If the topic does not apply to you, tick 'not applicable' after 'importance' and skip to the next topic. Space for your comments has been allocated after each topic. If you require additional space, please use that provided at the end of the survey, specifying the topic to which your comments relate.

Topic: My contact with students

Q 13. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 14. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 15. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments (if you require additional space, please use that provided at the end of the survey, specifying the topic to which your comments relate).

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Topic: The quality of teaching

Q 16. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 17. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 18. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: My use of IT for teaching purposes

Q 19. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 20. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 21. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Students wanting to do honours in my discipline

Q 22. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 23. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 24. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The direction of my work by a supervisor

Q 25. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 26. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 27. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The influence of my research on my teaching

Q 28. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 29. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 30. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Loss of teaching expertise in my department due to resignations and retirements

Q 31. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 32. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 33. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Time I spend supervising graduate students

Q 34. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 35. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 36. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Time I spend reading students' e-mails

Q 37. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 38. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 39. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The academic standard required for students to graduate

Q 40. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 41. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 42. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The intellectual quality of incoming students

Q 43. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 44. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 45. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The use of casual staff for lecturing

Q 46. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 47. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 48. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Small group teaching (less than 12 students)

Q 49. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 50. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 51. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Online teaching

Q 52. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 53. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 54. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Plagiarism by students

Q 55. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 56. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 57. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: High grades given to students

Q 58. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 59. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 60. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Feedback academics give to students

Q 61. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 62. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 63. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The adequacy of equipment and support staff to do my research

Q 64. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 65. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 66. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The time available for my scholarly writing

Q 67. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 68. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 69. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The pressure to publish

Q 70. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 71. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 72. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The time I spend preparing research proposals

Q 73. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 74. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 75. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The time I devote to administration and committee work

Q 76. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 77. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 78. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Collegial decision-making in my university

Q 79. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 80. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 81. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Interactions between academic staff and university administrators

Q 82. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 83. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 84. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The time I devote to free community service

Q 85. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 86. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 87. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: My contacts with colleagues in other universities

Q 88. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 89. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 90. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: University leaders' knowledge of the academic coal face

Q 91. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 92. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 93. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Group or team teaching

Q 94. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 95. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 96. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The time I spend on entrepreneurial activities

Q 97. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 98. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 99. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The attractiveness of an academic career

Q 100. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 101. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 102. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The prestige of the academic profession

Q 103. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 104. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 105. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: The freedom to pursue my own teaching and research interests

Q 106. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 107. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 108. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: My prospects for promotion

Q 109. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 110. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 111. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: Quality assurance of universities

Q 112. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 113. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 114. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: My ability to keep abreast of developments in my field

Q 115. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 116. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 117. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: My level of job satisfaction

Q 118. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 119. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 120. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: My job security

Q 121. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 122. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 123. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: My experience of job stress

Q 124. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 125. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 126. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: My freedom to speak out on university politics

Q 127. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 128. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 129. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Topic: My freedom to present any and all ideas in regular classes

Q 130. Importance	Extremely important	Very Important	Of some importance	Not at all important	Not applicable

Q 131. Extent of change	Increased a great deal	Increased a little	Not changed significantly	Decreased a little	Decreased a great deal

Q 132. Better or Worse?	Change is for the better	Neither better nor worse	Change is for the worse

Comments

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Final Observations

Do you have any further comments on changes of particular significance, the effects these are having in universities, and what might be done about them?

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Thank you for your contribution. Please send to:

**Academic Survey
5 Liversidge St.
ANU 0200
ACT**

Appendix 5: One academic's estimate of a year's workload

I've put some thought into your request for a tally of hours spent on the job according to the headings you suggested. I am not sure that I can do better than extrapolate annual figures from average estimates per week calculated both during and outside teaching periods. Bearing in mind that there are 48 work weeks left after we take 4 weeks annual leave and approximately 12 days of that are taken up by holidays, there are effectively 227 working days with 7.5 hours of work-time available (according to the pay slips) for a grand total of 1702.5 hours a year that we can be held accountable for.

I teach two units, and Coordinate two others in the undergraduate program, and will be responsible for one external research project unit in the latter half of this year as part of my undergraduate teaching responsibilities. Typically, each semester I handle a unit by myself as lecturer and coordinator, and coordinate another unit irrespective of the other things I'm involved in.

So here's my anonymous, confidential response to your query. I've included estimates for some tasks I have performed in the past, but that do not form part of my brief this year (they are NOT in bold).

Marking

Preparation of examination materials (i.e. formative online assessment, MSTs, Practical Examinations, and Final Theory papers, Special Examinations, and Additional Assessments) usually takes the better part of a day for each assessment instrument each semester for each unit for which I am the sole assessor. Working with Staff in units that I coordinate to organise examination materials usually takes a day all up per semester-based unit (meetings, reading, corrections, etc.).

So over a year like this one I reckon 10 days or **80 hours** on assessment preparation.

Proctoring assessments (i.e. online formative quizzes, mid-semester exams, and Laboratory assessment, as well as Special Examinations and Special Assessments for the stragglers) - about **24 hours** per year.

Actually marking assessment items for internal students in units for which I am the sole assessor depends greatly on the units involved but a crude average is a minimum of 2 hours per student per semester-based unit. This year there is a cohort of at least 63 2nd years in my units. So marking, including unit statistics, grade assignment, BOE (and moderation of results in units that I coordinate which takes the better part of a day each semester) involves around **269 hours** per annum.

The **External Research Project Unit**, which is a double-weighted unit with 3 major assessments over 2 semesters is tricky, but will probably involve about 12 hours of marking per student per year in order to mark and provide adequate feedback on the assessment items. The External

Studies Coordinator anticipates 3 - 5 students in the unit sequence starting next semester, so initially **30 hours** of marking is anticipated for this unit, not inclusive of phone, email, online, and unit administration time required to make this sort of 'high maintenance', external, independent study unit a success. As this task is tantamount to supervising honours students, I recommend that no more than 6 students be attempted in this unit by one academic at one time.

Marking of Honours, Masters Qualifiers, Masters and PhD Theses averages around 1 day for Honours and Masters Qualifiers, a good 12 hours for a Masters Thesis, and usually 2 to 3 days for a PhD Thesis. I average about one Honours or Masters Qual thesis per year and one or two Masters or PhD theses per year, so in round figures about **36 hours**.

Undergraduate Student Consultation

Let's stick to the 1 hour allocation per unit per week of teaching semester for units with between 15 and 40 students, but allow an additional hour per week for each additional 20 students (considering online, email, phone calls as well as face-to-face). For the units I teach and coordinate, a conservative annual estimate is **90 hours**.

Laboratory

This is pretty straight forward. Development of laboratory activities for a new prac takes about 3 days, each lab involves at least an hour's preparation, and then face-to-face time with students in the lab sessions occurs according to the timetables. This year it will be approximately **120 hours** for one, **78 hours** for another and **28 hours** for the third.

Clinical

Not applicable

Tutorials/Seminars

As per the timetables I am involved in **13 hours** of Tutorials in one unit, and **18 hours** of Tuts and **36 hours** of Repeat Tuts in another this year. Associated preparation time is 1 hour per hour of tutorial i.e. **31 hours** per annum.

Seminars are infrequent in terms of my undergraduate teaching program, however I attend postgraduate seminars in the CPCG, RSM, and CP as often as I can (an hour a month on average). I also attend Staff training seminars regularly, for instance, this year I completed the first three Online Staff Training Seminars put on by the relevant Centre. All up I spend about **16 hours** a year in seminars on campus. Also, I participate in at least one Conference per year usually involving two days of work time i.e. **16 hours**.

Lectures

I give lectures on the same topics from year to year that involve less preparation than lectures on new topics. In this context I spend **26 hours** giving lectures in two units according to the timetable plus an average of **3 hours** a year giving once-off guest lectures in other units. Preparation time for lectures varies from topic to topic, but is easily 2 hours prep per hour of delivery of familiar material and 4-6 hours of prep per hour of lecture dealing with rapidly changing topics and/or new topics. A conservative estimate of the time spent in revising familiar lecture topics and preparing new ones in a year like this based on an average of a 3:1 ratio is **90 hours**.

Writing new external unit

F.....g huge job!!! Hard to put a 'real' hour figure on it. Suggest you refer to the contractual arrangements used for contract writers for some idea of time-frame and hours spent on the activity.

Partial rewrite

Depends on how 'partial' the rewrite is. Once the basic unit statement is sorted out it's probably not a bad idea to treat each lecture as a 'New Topic' with the corresponding 6:1 ratio of preparation to hours of lecture.

Reviewing a New Unit

It took me 3 solid days to review the double-weighted two-semester long, external Research Project i.e. **24 hours**.

Masters/PhD Supervision

Depends greatly on the student and project type. I have had very different experiences. On average I'd estimate 2 hours per week, comprised of dedicated meeting, reading, reviewing, and project administration time per student. The benchwork-related science projects that I am involved with also require time with the student in the laboratory that boils down to the better part of a day a month (say 6 hours). Thesis preparation and draft revision comes on top of this at the end, worth 3 solid days of work (reading, editing, meetings, fighting, etc.). I crudely estimate a minimum of **200 hours** per full-time graduate student per year. I have one Masters student supervision at the moment.

Honours Supervision

This task is similar to the Masters/PhD supervision task although on a smaller scale; there's easily an average of 2 hours a week in it per student, and there is a similar amount of time devoted to thesis preparation and draft revision, and seminar presentation. However, a full-weighted Honours student should only be around from January to the end of

October. So I estimate a minimum of 100 hours per full-time Honours student per year. I started with one student who deferred in March and co-supervise one student so I will probably get off light this year with **50 hours** all up.

General Unit Coordination

Unit statement, unit timetable and unit materials preparation, online communication and site maintenance, text evaluation, maintaining attendance records, evaluating advance standing applications, special considerations, special examination applications, shuffling tutorial arrangements, supervision of casual academic staff, and external unit administration and student contact consume on average 2 hours per week of the teaching semester per unit i.e. **130 hours** over 5 units this year. The number of students in a given unit has a bearing on the time required to do the job. Cohorts greater than 80 students warrant another hour per week. My external students will require a lot more individual attention than internal students.

Course Coordination

Based on my experience, consistently 6 - 8 hours a week are devoted to course coordination issues i.e. 400 hours. However, Course promotion and student selection activity adds to this figure to varying degrees dependent on the level of support from administrative and lecturing staff.

Director of Research

In this School, the tasks associated with this role not restricted to processing forms, monitoring student progress, preparation of reports, and responding to internal and external queries (see School Director of Postgraduate Studies and Research Duties Description) chew up an average of 3 hours per week, inclusive of Honours Coordination, which is considered a separate role in other Schools. Agendas of the monthly GRC, HDCR , and DBA advisory group meetings take a couple of hours to digest and the meetings last 3 to 4 hours. Scholarship Subcommittee meetings take the better part of a day. A crude estimate of annual time expenditure is **215 hours**.

Chair of School Board

Based on my experience, this involves an average of 4 hours per week i.e. 192 hours per annum. However, during Course Reviews, when involved on sub-committees of Academic Board, and when contentious things are going on in the School that get people riled up, a lot more hours can be chewed up.

Clinical Education Director

I imagine that this one is about as busy as running a small business.

Head of School

Based on my experience, you could easily spend half your week looking after this one properly. I guess it depends on how committed you are to the 'selfless-leader-working-to-facilitate-the-good-of-the-School-at-the-expense-of-your-academic-interests' role. It is a job that needs daily attention, so it makes it difficult to do it efficiently in terms of effective use of time.

University Committees - major

Occupational Health and Safety Committee - 4 hours per month (2 meeting and 2 reading) or **48 hours** per year.

Restructure Reference Group - 6 hours per month (3 hours meeting and 3 hours reading, discussing, gathering responses) or **72 hours** per year.

University Committees - minor

School Board - approx. **20 hours**.

Staff meetings - approx. **20 hours**.

Laboratory Committee - **6 hours**.

RAGS Committee (Chair) - we are supposed to meet 3 - 4 times a year for 2 hours, so approx. **16 hours**.

Research

So far, estimates have been conservative and they already amount to 1773 hours.

I spend time reading in an attempt to keep up with my areas of interest and identify new areas of research opportunity (I manage probably 3 hours a week in journals, texts, and via the web usually at night after hours) so about **160 hours** a year. This is critical to stimulate the sort of creative ideas that innovative research depends on. I would like to have the time to triple this activity, but the majority of what I do in terms of research comes at the expense of my weekends, family time, personal time and sleep already. If the University really wants to see my research activity (and my research output) increase, then they are going to have to give me less teaching and administrative responsibility. Since there is a 'snowball's chance in hell' of that...an alternative is to allow me to do all my teaching in one semester per year. I would be quite happy to do nothing but teach and administrate during one semester (for instance, I could take a Biological Chemistry unit in the first year program and one of the Biochemistry Units in the corresponding semester of the second year program and get it all over with at once, freeing me up to do pretty much nothing but research in the other semester (with the exception of maybe a unit coordination of the

external research unit sequence that would run over the whole year, and honours program coordination, and supervision of students, etc.). What do you reckon?!!! The Uni would get the same amount of 'teaching' out of me and make enough time available all in one big chunk for me to actually get something done in a laboratory research context. The other biomedical science lecturer would similarly benefit. A win - win situation as far as I can see.

I usually have a stab at writing at least one grant application each year. The literature review process in this respect is very time consuming and is difficult to estimate, but would increase the above figure by a solid week of reading (**35 hours**) in most cases. IRG applications only take a couple of days to organise. ARC SPIRT Grant applications take around a week to organise due mainly to the meeting time required to negotiate with and include the industry partner. In my case, ARC Large Grant applications are a collaborative effort with Principal Researchers on campus, usually involving a lot of running around on my part to obtain papers, fill in budget details, and tidy up loose ends. Other small grant applications vary in the length of time required to prepare them, depending on the topic and the granting agency. I usually spend the equivalent of at least 2 weeks (**70 hours**) each year chasing research funds of some description by way of writing grant applications (and usually to no avail!).

Writing papers for publication in journals and conference proceedings seems to happen about twice a year on average. Of late this has only been possible as a result of the collaborative nature of the work I do with my graduate students 'cause there just ain't been no money or time for me to get down to the lab to do anything as a 'wet lab scientist' worth publishing by myself. Nevertheless, as a very crude estimate I'd say I spend the better part of 2 full days per paper, writing and editing (**32 hours**) to get the raw data and rough drafts to publication standard once there is enough to write about.

Professional Activities and Service to the University and Community

We usually have a 2 to 3 day staff development activity that accounts for at least **16 hours**.

I spend the better part of a day each year (**8 hours**) preparing the required documentation and engaging in the University Annual Review process.

I organise and present a Health Science Seminar and Laboratory workshop for regional High School students to promote interest in science and its perceived relevance and to promote tertiary science study at this University (**10 hours**). I am also employed with the responsibility to act as a University First Aid Officer and University Fire Warden. These activities require training amounting to **10 hours** per year, and the occasional first aid and drill/emergency.

Miscellaneous

Contributing to things like the Course Review processes, writing the Honours Handbook take time. A large amount of time is spent on miscellaneous activities like trawling through staff emails, interviewing students during the selection process, participating in open days, and the regular informal meetings I have with members of staff and students to share ideas, discuss issues, and participate in University culture at a local level independent of my unit coordination and research activity. It's hard to put a figure on it, but I can confidently underestimate these sorts of activities contributing at least an hour a day (**227 hours** per annum).

In summary, based on the conservative estimates of time spent on the various activities listed above the Grand total of hours comprising my activity as a senior lecturer at this University is 2342 hours per annum. This represents an average of 10.3 hours per day. Much of this work occurs out of hours and during holiday and leave periods in order to fit it all in. In other words I work about 38% more hours than I get paid for. The time I spend on 'Research' (approx. 297 hours per year) represents 13% of the time I spend working at this job. Too often, the research is done in my own time after I've finished priority teaching and administration activities. Although I am generally satisfied that my teaching and administrative activity is of the highest standard, my potential for research 'output' is neither fully realised nor supported appropriately in the current allocation of work-load within the School.

I am very interested to see what you make of all this in terms of a 'work-load allocation' formula. I am also keen to convince you that it is appropriate to consider arranging all my teaching commitments for next year into the first semester in anticipation of 6 months study leave in the later half of the year. If the study leave application is not successful I still think it is a WONDERFUL idea to put all my teaching into one semester so I can work for uninterrupted periods of time necessary to make progress with the research I am qualified, capable and motivated to do.

Cheers!

P.S. This exercise took about 5 hours ;)

Appendix 6: Bibliography

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