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WOMEN, CAREERS *and* UNIVERSITIES:

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

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Introduction

Employment in Australia is marked by ongoing gender inequalities. Women have increased their representation in employment since the mid-1990s, but significant patterns of gender segregation remain, especially the under-representation of women in senior positions. In order to understand these issues, this project undertook a detailed analysis of the university sector, with particular focus on contrasting pressures from entrepreneurial developments and advances in equity policies. The aim of the project is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the gendered nature of employment, working conditions, and career patterns of university staff, with emphasis on key points in the career life cycle. The project covered three groups of university staff: professional staff, academic staff, and casual academic teaching staff. Its ultimate aim is to provide insights which will assist universities and professional associations to devise practical strategies to promote gender equity in universities.

Issues of equity in universities cannot be seen in isolation from the changes in governance and operation of universities in the past three decades with all staff experiencing changes.¹ The rapid changes towards an entrepreneurial climate and market orientation of universities that focuses on measurable and marketable consumer satisfaction, performance outcomes of students and staff and international rankings have brought changes in the nature of employment and employment conditions.² In the UK there is evidence that 'these new labour regimes are highly gendered, seriously disadvantaging women academics in areas such as contracts, conditions, promotions and pay'.³ The increasing work intensity for university staff is well documented with Australian academics working among the highest number of hours among 18 countries

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2. Fletcher, C., Boden, R., Kent, J. & Tinson, J. (2007). Performing women: The gendered dimensions of the UK new research economy. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 14(5), 433-53; Junor, A. (2004). Casual university work: Choice, risk, inequity and the case for regulation. *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, 14 (2), 276-304; Blackmore, J. & Sachs, J. (2003). Managing equity work in the performative university. *Australian Feminist Studies*, 18(41), 141-162.

3. Fletcher et al (2007). Performing women, 437.

and senior academics the highest of any country.⁴ These changes, and the changes to come in universities, mean that an on-going focus on gender equity is needed as each new change brings fresh equity challenges.

Today, a large proportion of the university workforce, both academic and professional, are NOT employed on on-going (tenure / permanent) employment arrangements. The literature has identified many issues for insecure academic staff who are employed on limited term contracts or hourly paid casual contracts. This group of employees has less access to university resources and support than staff with on-going contracts, and has difficulty in making the transition into on-going positions.⁵ These staff have fewer equity policies applied to them and, in the case of casual staff, generally fall outside of the majority of the equity policies.

The literature on gender equity in universities is skewed towards academic staff, and usually academic staff who have employment security with on-going appointments. This copious literature has uncovered many of the barriers women academics face in the quest for gender equity. The research makes it clear that the explanation of women's disadvantage is multi-factorial, the end products of multiple, interrelated causes operating across society and within organisations, perpetuated by often concealed gender-biased assumptions. This research has shown that small advantages that favour men, and inequities that disadvantage women – but many of them over time – accumulate to create large differences.⁶ Discrimination against women occurs in daily interactions and the ways in which power is relayed in everyday practices, the gendered micropolitics of universities, which allows discrimination to emerge in subtle ways.⁷ Women remain outsiders in university senior management: recruitment and selection processes, exclusion from male social networks, and a perception of gendered styles of management all reinforce that women have a different experience of management.⁸

Academic staff have experienced a change from 'a relatively homogenous profession' to one which has 'become more diverse'⁹ and now encompasses a high proportion of staff on contracts or employed on a casual hourly-paid basis. Fragmentation of the academic profession is occurring in three ways: nature of the employment contract; role of individual academic (more academic staff on teaching intensive or research intensive contracts); differences between universities, particularly groups of universities. In addition, 'the "horizontal" disciplinary distribution of women and the lack of congruity between this distribution and the concentration of research by discipline' adds to the fragmentation of women's experience.¹⁰ These changes mean that a focus on gender equity needs to be maintained.

The data negates the inevitability of a simple 'supply' or 'pipeline' paradigm, showing that high levels of participation and success of women at undergraduate and post-graduate levels are not translating at the expected rate into similar patterns of participation and success in research. Women are under-represented and almost absent in the senior levels of research teams and research management and only approximately 20 per cent of members of the Learned Academies are women.¹¹ Recent reports have focused on women in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines and professions, and highlighted the on-going issues of the lack of women.¹² In 2015 the Australian Academy of Science commenced the

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Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) initiative with a number of participating universities.¹³

The very limited literature on the large professional workforce in universities shows that while this is a feminised workforce, women are under-represented at senior levels. Evidence of gender segregation is longstanding and persistent.¹⁴ Qualitative studies of professional staff in universities have provided evidence of the impact of such gender segregation. Women in middle management have a variety of concerns including discrimination; homosocial cultures with hidden decision making processes; unsupportive human resource practices; lack of senior female role models; and work/family conflict.¹⁵

The issue of gender equity is not new for universities which have actively engaged in the development and promotion of gender equity strategies for over two decades and have tackled successfully some of the overt issues. Indeed, universities have the highest proportion of organisations in any industry (12 universities in 2015) that have achieved the supreme accolade for high performance in gender equity, the Employer of Choice for Women, awarded by the federal government Workplace Gender Equality Agency and its predecessors.¹⁶ While Australian universities have a strong record on gender policies,¹⁷ major challenges to the goal of gender equity remain. What remain are complicated issues.

The major data collection method used in this report was a survey of university staff. The Work and Careers in Australian Universities survey undertaken in 2011 reveals that staff want to remain in university employment and both women and men want to progress in their careers. The findings, however, show that clear patterns of gender inequity remain. The major issues uncovered are the large proportion of staff on insecure contracts, with women more likely than men to be employed on fixed term contracts and as casual academic teaching staff. Women are still not equal to men at senior levels, in both the academic and professional staff. The initial level of appointment is lower for women than for men. Where part of the salary package is deregulated, men are more likely to receive a loading and the amount of the loading is higher for men than women. In addition, harassment and bullying remain an issue for some staff. Mothers are more likely than fathers to access flexible work provisions. On many issues the patterns uncovered were complex and specific to a particular group of university staff.

There is no single policy change that can be nominated to 'fix' gender inequity, rather the study reveals a number of issues that need to be addressed. Universities are characterised by many different labour markets – different professions and specialities for professional staff, and different disciplines for academic staff. Gender equity strategies need to take account of these different labour markets, their particular characteristics and the gendered impact of the changing university workforce. Because of the complex nature of university employment, there are few 'magic bullets' in the report and its recommendations. The issues are complicated and inter-related, and need dedication and perseverance in order to progress to gender equity.

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Executive Summary

1. Vertical Segregation

- Vertical segregation by gender remains in Australian universities, with women disproportionately represented at the lower levels and men disproportionately represented at the higher levels of both academic and professional staff.
- Between 2001 and 2011, women's attainment of higher level appointments among both academic and professional staff increased; however, inequity persisted relative to men.
- Approximately 67,000 individuals worked as casual academic teaching staff in 2010, approximately 54% of whom were women according to Unisuper data, and 57% were women in the WCAU survey. In comparison, women formed 45% of the permanent and fixed-term academic workforce.
- Gender equity in Australian universities amongst academic staff, as benchmarked against the Australian Public Service (APS), was relatively poor. Women were especially under-represented in senior academic levels, when benchmarked against the APS. Even for upper-middle tier academics (level C) there was a sizeable gap with women's employment in the benchmark tier of the public service.

2. Horizontal Segregation

- There were differences between professional staff areas in their degree of gender concentration, though most (with two exceptions) were female dominated. In all but the area of facilities management, women were under-represented at senior levels.
- For academic staff, horizontal segregation occurs through both discipline and role specialisation. Both have an impact on women's advancement.
- There was not a single labour market for academic staff, but rather a series of segmented labour markets organised around disciplines. Some of these had higher levels of female participation than others. Gender inequities varied by discipline and role specialisation and therefore require action that takes account of disciplinary and specialisation effects.

3. Work and Working Conditions

- Approximately three-quarters of the professional staff and just over half the academic staff held permanent appointments (excluding consideration of casual staff). More women than men among all university staff held fixed-term appointments.
- Almost half (43%) full-time professional staff usually worked more than 40 hours a week. Almost all (90%) full-time academic staff worked more than 40 hours a week. Nine per cent of full-time professional staff and half the full-time academic staff (51%) worked 50 or more hours per week.
- Consistent with other industries, women were more likely to work part-time than men. Part-time staff were more likely to have fixed-term appointments than full-time staff.
- Academic women were more likely than men to undertake more teaching, and especially more administration, than their contract indicated. Such 'overloads' in teaching or administration tended to lead to staff wanting to work fewer hours, and expressing lower satisfaction with careers or work-life balance.
- Receipt of pay loadings among both professional staff and academic staff was higher for men than for women. In both groups, this was especially the case for market and, to a lesser extent, performance loadings, and not all of this could be explained simply by differences in level. The value of the loading was greater for men than women.
- One-quarter of staff had experienced harassment or bullying in the workplace, and this was slightly greater among women and highest for academic women.
- Fewer than half of the staff who had experienced harassment considered taking formal action due to the adverse impact it was expected to have on their career.
- Reported harassment rates for women in regional universities (48%) was greater compared with non-regional universities (35%).

4. Insecurity in the Academic Workforce

- Casual academic teaching staff, typically hired on a semester by semester basis, formed the largest component, on a headcount basis, of the academic workforce. Women constituted more than half of the casual academic teaching staff workforce.
- The overwhelming majority (84%) of research academics were employed on fixed-term contracts, and women were a little more likely to be on a contract than men (88% of women, 82% of men).
- A characteristic of fixed-term and casual academic teaching staff was the lack of career path. New appointments were frequently made at the lowest level of appointment irrespective of the staff member's experience. The nature of their contracts limited opportunity for conversion to a permanent position which offered career advancement.
- Women and men had a similar desire for more secure work, and there was no evidence to suggest that casual or fixed-term work was favoured by women as a means to achieve flexibility.
- Despite their important work with students, casual academic teaching staff were often invisible in the university and struggled to gain access to basic resources, as well as often being excluded from university activities.
- A significant proportion of the casual academic teaching staff aspired to an academic career. However, while their work experience was viewed as preparation for an academic career, they received limited access to resources or supported professional development to assist.

- Fixed-term positions were significant in all disciplines, but were rife in the research-heavy (mostly STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics]) disciplines. There is a strongly gendered aspect to this insecurity. Women were more likely than men to be in insecure positions and more likely to end up in insecure career pathways.
- Fixed-term academic women, both research intensive (RI) and teaching intensive (TI), were much more dissatisfied with support in their careers than men.

5. Work, Family and Careers

- Mothers were more likely than fathers to perceive problems with the attitude within their university to workers with family responsibilities, with the majority of fathers neutral on this issue. Mothers were also more likely than fathers to report missed opportunities for promotion or other career-related opportunities.
- Mothers were more likely than fathers to want, request, and be granted shorter working hours. These findings suggest that the male breadwinner model persists, and its prevalence is impeding efforts to reduce gender inequities.
- Mothers were more likely to perceive problems with attitudes within their university and to report some missed career opportunities in male dominated, compared with gender neutral or female dominated, work units. However, there were contrasting patterns across work units between academic staff and professional staff, and fathers and mothers, in access to flexible working arrangements.
- Overall, the findings were consistent with the persistence of male breadwinner norms, indicating that in spite of the introduction of a number of 'family friendly' measures, universities are making only limited progress towards more gender egalitarian outcomes.

6. Career Advancement

- The initial level of appointment for women was in a lower classification than for men, among both academic and professional staff.
- Part-time work acted as a small but measurable 'brake' on career progression for female professional staff. Women who had only worked part-time were less likely to have advanced than those who worked full-time or those who had periods of working both full- and part-time.
- Women aspired to higher-level positions at least as much as men, among both academic and professional staff.
- Women, both academic and professional staff, applied for promotion at the same rate as men, and were just as likely to be successful in these applications. Among professional staff, success rates in reclassification applications were the same for women and men.
- Two-thirds of research intensive (RI) academic staff, the majority employed on fixed-term contracts, had made no advancement since their first appointment.
- Casual academic teaching appointments do not provide a career path.
- There was not a single labour market for academics, but rather a series of segmented labour markets organised around disciplines. Some of these had higher levels of female participation than others.

- There were three important structural ways in which women academics were disadvantaged in seeking to advance academic careers and which related strongly to discipline:
 - *insecurity* – the tendency, within each role specialisation, for women to be more likely than men to be in fixed-term rather than continuing jobs; and
 - *marginalisation* – the greater tendency for newly appointed women to be placed into teaching-intensive positions (some of them teaching-only positions), which are widely seen as lacking the career opportunities that are available in more balanced teaching and research (TR) positions; and
 - *funnelling* – the reducing proportions of women with movement into higher academic levels.
- Each of these was linked to discipline, and was a particular problem for women in research-heavy disciplines (that is, mostly STEM disciplines).
- Approximately two-thirds of university staff wanted some form of change in working arrangements prior to retirement, usually a reduction in the number of days worked each week. About two-thirds thought that they would be able to achieve these changes.

Recommendations

We recommend that:

Both professional and academic staff

1. universities recognise that vertical segregation by gender persists among both academic and professional staff, and that women continue to be under-represented particularly at the senior levels. Current policies should be reviewed and further policies and practices developed to reduce these inequities.
2. because of the 'local' characteristics of horizontal segregation, gender equity strategies become the responsibility of managers across the university, in addition to centralised university HR functions. Line managers should be asked to devise specific strategies for gender equity within their organisational units.
3. universities continue to monitor promotion and reclassification processes in order to ensure that these career advancement mechanisms are accessed by women and men equally and that the success rates are similar.
4. universities provide all staff who have managerial and supervisory responsibilities with mandatory training in combatting 'unconscious bias' which has been shown to lead to a stronger weighting being given to the qualifications and achievements of male candidates and a lower weighting to the achievements of female candidates for positions in areas that historically were male dominated.
5. each university reviews the gender distribution of loadings (those who participated in WCAU can consult the confidential WCAU reports distributed in 2012). Figures on all types of loadings and gender differences, for all categories of staff, should be obtained annually by universities and analysed as part of their workplace gender equity reporting arrangements, and targets set to remove gender discrepancies.
6. universities establish clear and transparent, gender-neutral policies regarding loadings, and merit and market loadings in particular. Universities should handle loadings (bonuses) with full transparency, by:
 - a. internally publishing the criteria by which loadings are calculated and offered;
 - b. publishing data to university staff showing the distribution of loadings by type of loading, by gender, and other relevant variables (for example, faculty/discipline); and externally publishing a summary of those distributions.
 - c. creating staff awareness of these gender-neutral policies as part of regular performance management and promotions processes;

- d. ensuring that staff applying for jobs at the university are aware of these policies early in the selection process, and that 'zones of negotiability' are established;
 - e. training senior managers in appropriate, gender-aware negotiating styles.
- 7. universities carefully examine the workloads expected of staff, with a view to eliminating long working hours.
- 8. universities emphasise the importance of dealing with harassment and bullying, both sexual and non-sexual, in the training of managers, and of building up confidence among university staff in the integrity of complaint systems, to ensure that cultures of non-harassment are promoted within the organisation. Particular attention should be paid to academic areas, among which higher rates of harassment of women were found.
- 9. universities liaise with professional bodies and the Academies across the range of disciplines and professions represented, to counter sexism and discrimination in career progress. Deans, Heads of Departments and Managers of professional areas should be asked to devise strategies for engagement with professional bodies, with a view to encouraging the development of policies that address gender equity.
- 10. Universities Australia collaborate with professional bodies and the Academies relevant to academic disciplines and professions represented in the sector and encourage joint action between universities and these organisations to address gender inequities in labour markets in which universities participate.

Professional staff

- 11. universities regularly review the levels of 'first appointment' for both female and male professional staff to ensure they are similar, and investigate any biases in recruitment and selection.
- 12. universities promote, among professional staff, the relative success of reclassification applications and the fact (where this is indeed the case within those universities) that professional women's success in promotion applications is comparable to men's.
- 13. universities review their part-time work policies to ensure transitions between full- and part-time work (and back again) are as seamless and rapid as possible, and that barriers are not erected to 'reversion' from part- to full-time work (or vice versa).
- 14. universities investigate ways in which staff whose initial appointment is on a part-time basis can convert to a full-time position if desired.
- 15. universities actively create awareness among employees at higher HEW levels that part-time work is available, and ensure senior managers do not overtly or subtly discourage any employees from working part-time.

Academic Staff

- 16. universities recognise that gender equity within academic staff remains below benchmarks in the Australian Public Service and is unlikely to be removed simply through the passage of time. While some progress has been made, further steps are required to achieve gender inequity within universities.
- 17. universities examine the workload and expectations of academic staff regarding teaching, research, and service/administration. In particular, the 'informal' expectations on staff should be consistent with their academic profile (that is, what their contract says are their responsibilities in these areas).

18. universities develop explicit career paths for teaching intensive (TI) appointments to ensure that extended career paths are available through to levels D and E, and provide genuine opportunities for academics starting in TI positions to undertake sufficient research to transfer into a combined teaching and research (TR) position if they wish.
19. universities pay particular attention to the relationship between gender and teaching intensive (TI), fixed-term academic appointments in research-heavy (STEM) disciplines, requiring managers in areas where gender inequity has been identified to play an active role in the development of specific equity policies and their implementation.

Staff on fixed-term and casual contracts

20. universities investigate ways to create more secure employment and career paths for insecure staff (casual and fixed-term) who aspire to an on-going appointment in an academic position.
21. universities monitor and 'profile' their casual academic teaching workforces to better understand the needs of this workforce. Faculties and departments should conduct audits of their casual academic staff to determine their access to induction, workspace, teaching development and resources, research support and professional development and ensure provision of these resources.
22. universities seriously investigate ways in which casual academic teaching staff can access and compete for permanent appointments.
23. Universities Australia and its member universities investigate developing with stakeholders a new model for what is presently fragmented PhD training and casual employment in universities, with the aim of:
 - a. extending integrated teaching and research training for full-time PhD students, to encompass both the research training that is expected in a doctoral program as well as training and meaningful experience in teaching;
 - b. payment of a meaningful annual income to full-time PhD students that encompasses both PhD training and part-time teaching;
 - c. involvement in their department's teaching program, including access to teaching resources such as a room and other forms of support;
 - d. guaranteed teaching for a defined period after completion of the PhD.
24. universities investigate whether women fixed-term research intensive (RI) academics are adequately able to access appropriate career supports such as access to internal funds for attendance at conferences, opportunities for leadership, guidance in promotion and support from supervisors, and ensure that they are meaningfully integrated into the working life of departments, centres and institutes.
25. universities introduce and implement (or continue to implement) pathways to conversion from fixed-term to permanent status for academic staff, with special attention to the large group of RI academics on contract, and that these processes be monitored to ensure conversion is occurring.

Work and family issues

26. universities develop (or extend) 'egalitarian' work/family policies, that is, policies designed explicitly to erode male breadwinner/female carer norms. These could include extending parental – as opposed to only maternity – leave entitlements and ensuring that policies such as temporary, part-time, or other flexible working arrangements explicitly state that they are open to men as well as women. These policies should be publicised internally and include examples of successful flexible arrangements taken by individual staff.
27. universities develop implementation processes that support both mothers and fathers in combining careers and parenthood, and facilitate their application across all work units. These implementation programs would include monitoring patterns of applications for flexible arrangements and outcomes, and analysing data to identify gender imbalances.
28. universities provide training programs on flexible work arrangements for line managers and HR staff, emphasising the importance of gender neutrality in promoting flexibility, for example by:
 - a. encouraging fathers as well as mothers to apply for flexible working arrangements;
 - b. ensuring that rejections only occur where there are genuine business reasons and there is no feasible alternative;
 - c. ensuring applicants are aware they are able to take a colleague with them to any meeting to discuss an application.
29. universities ensure that there are adequate internal review and appeal processes where applications for flexible work arrangements or extensions of parental leave are unsuccessful, and enable external appeal to the Fair Work Commission via enterprise agreements for applications under the right to request provisions of the Fair Work Act.
30. universities offer a wide range of ways in which staff can modify their work patterns in the transition to retirement and assist staff in accessing arrangements appropriate for their individual circumstances.

Methodology and Terminology

The Work and Careers in Australian Universities survey (WCAU) project was a major component of the Arc Linkage Grant LP0991191, Gender and Employment Equity: Strategies for Advancement in Australian Universities, undertaken between 2009 and 2014. Most of this report is based on the WCAU survey data collected in 2011, apart from: (a) national census statistics (2001, 2011) of university employees presented in section 2, which were collected and published by the Australian Department of Education and Training; and (b) data from UniSuper (the industry superannuation organisation) on casual staff for 2010.

Terminology

The university workforce is made up of three groups of workers. There are different terms used to refer to each of the groups of university workers, and the terminology used to describe their employment contract varies within the sector. National statistics collected by the government refer to 'academic' and 'non-academic' staff. The non-academic staff are often referred to as 'professional', 'allied', 'administrative support' or 'general' staff, but there is a wide variation of roles among these workers. We refer to this group as *professional* staff.

Professional staff are employed on the Higher Education Workers (HEW) classification. There are 11 levels in this structure, encompassing HEW levels 1–10, plus the highest level, the category 'above HEW 10', which is the most senior managerial staff.

Academic staff are mostly employed on five levels: Associate Lecturer (level A), Lecturer (level B), Senior Lecturer (level C), Associate Professor (level D), and Professor (level E), which is the most senior level. Some academic managers are Heads of Schools or Departments, or Deans. The senior management positions in the universities are Pro Vice-Chancellor (PVC), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) and Vice-Chancellor (VC).

The duties of an academic appointment can be categorised by the main responsibilities that a person is required to undertake in their employment. These are classified into three categories or *role specialisations*, which national data distinguishes between and on which it provides statistics. In this report, we refer to these breakdowns as: *teaching and research combined* (TR); *teaching intensive* (TI), in which 20% or less of the job is research; and *research intensive* (RI), in which 20% or less of the job is teaching. The first two (TR and TI) are collectively referred to in this report as teaching staff.

The employment contract of the professional and academic staff in the WCAU survey could be either an ongoing/permanent contract or a fixed-term contract, varying in length from months to several years. We use the terms *permanent* and *fixed-term appointments* respectively to describe these.

A third group of workers are academic teaching staff employed on an hourly, casual contract based on their hours of work per week, though they may often be engaged for a semester at a time. Various terms are used for this group of teaching staff including 'sessional' or 'casual' staff. We use the term *casual academic teaching staff* and not sessional, as some staff are employed for more than one session or semester. The WCAU survey did *not* survey professional staff on casual contracts.

We also distinguished between academic disciplines. We defined the teaching or research component of a discipline according to the work of the people within it. We defined a *research-heavy* discipline as one in which 40% or more of the jobs were RI (most science, technology, engineering and mathematics [STEM] disciplines were in this category). Conversely, we defined a *teaching-heavy* discipline as one where less than 40% of jobs were RI.

Australian public universities have been grouped into five categories based on their membership or non-membership of university organisations. In this report, we make reference to these groupings:

- Group of Eight (Go8) (Australian National University, Monash University, University of Adelaide, University of Melbourne, University of New South Wales, University of Queensland, University of Sydney, University of Western Australia).
- Innovative Research Universities (Charles Darwin University, Flinders University, Griffith University, James Cook University, La Trobe University, Murdoch University).
- Australian Technology Network (ATN) (Curtin University, Queensland University of Technology, RMIT University, University of South Australia, University of Technology Sydney).
- Regional Universities Network (Central Queensland University, Federation University Australia, Southern Cross University, University of New England, University of Southern Queensland, University of the Sunshine Coast).
- Unaligned Universities (Australian Catholic University, Bond University, Charles Sturt University, Deakin University, Edith Cowan University, Macquarie University, Swinburne University of Technology, University of Canberra, University of Newcastle, University of Notre Dame Australia, University of Tasmania, University of Wollongong, Victoria University, Western Sydney University).

Methodology: The WCAU Sample

The WCAU survey collected information from three groups of university workers defined by their staff classification and employment agreement at the time of the survey in 2011:

- Professional staff (permanent and fixed-term employees);
- Academic staff (permanent and fixed-term employees);
- Casual academic teaching staff (engaged on an hourly basis during the pay period prior to the survey).

Three separate surveys were developed, one for each group of workers. Each survey contained approximately 150 questions. Questions covered a broad range of aspects on working conditions, work history in the sector, first appointment, career progression, job satisfaction, work-life balance and workplace culture, and was tailored to address the relevant working conditions for each group.

Data collection was undertaken in the second semester of 2011. A total of 23,869 workers from 19 of the 37 public Australian universities returned survey responses. There were:

- 11,674 professional staff – 8,117 (70%) were women and 3,549 (30%) were men;
- 9,032 academic staff – 4,625 (51%) were women and 4,387 (49%) were men;
- 3,163 casual academics – 1,799 (57%) were women and 1,359 (43%) were men.

Response rates of 37%, 35%, and 13% for each group respectively were obtained. (Fifteen respondents did not provide information on their gender.) The full details of the project methodology and data collection are available from the main report.¹⁸

University employees from each of the major university categories participated in the WCAU study: five of the Group of Eight universities, four of the Innovative Research Universities group, two from the Australian Technology Network, two from the Regional Universities Network and the remaining six universities were from unaligned public universities.

WCAU Sample demographics including age, educational qualifications, and country of birth for each of the employee groups can be found in Appendix 1.

Comparisons between national statistics and the WCAU sample workforce on gender, age, permanent appointments, and position level classification can be found in Appendix 2.

This report explores the findings of the WCAU survey under six headings:

1. vertical segregation
2. horizontal segregation
3. working conditions
4. insecurity in the academic workforce
5. work, family and careers
6. career advancement.

18. Strachan, G., Troup, C., Peetz, D., Whitehouse, G., Broadbent, K., & Bailey, J. (2012). *Work and Careers in Australian Universities: Report on Employee Survey*. Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing, Griffith University. https://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/469192/Work-and-Career-Report-on-Employee-Survey_Final-v2.pdf

1. Vertical Segregation

Key Points:

- Vertical segregation by gender remains in Australian universities, with women disproportionately represented at the lower levels and men disproportionately represented at the higher levels of both academic and professional staff.
- Between 2001 and 2011, women's attainment of higher level appointments among both academic and professional staff had increased; however, inequity persisted relative to men.
- Approximately 67,000 individuals worked as casual academic teaching staff in 2010, and approximately 54% were women (Unisuper data) and 57% were women in the WCAU survey. In comparison, women formed 45% of the permanent and fixed-term academic workforce.
- Gender equity in Australian universities amongst academic staff, as benchmarked against the Australian Public Service (APS), was relatively poor. Women were especially under-represented in senior academic levels, when benchmarked against the APS. Even for upper-middle tier academics (level C) there was a sizeable gap with women's employment in the benchmark tier of the public service.

Vertical segregation of jobs by gender is a key pointer of gender equity/inequity. Vertical segregation refers to the level of the job in the organisation and is a major issue in many industries where women remain the minority in senior and managerial positions.

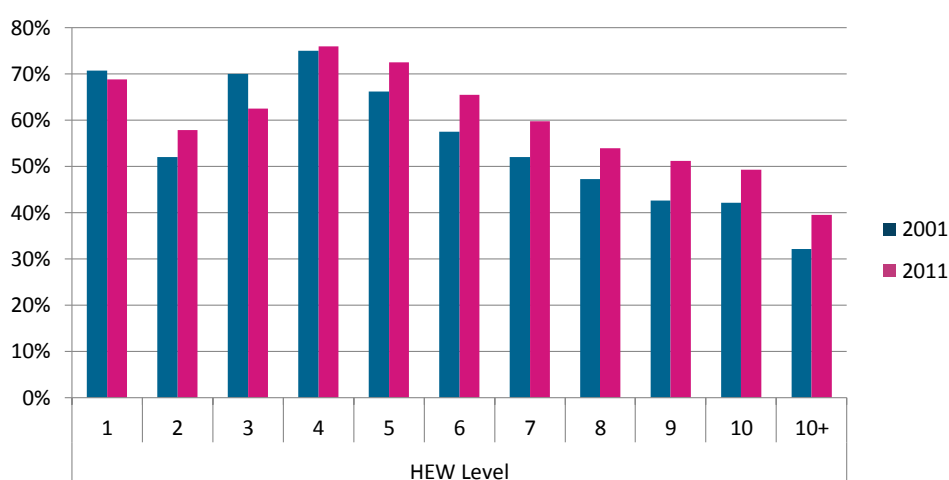
This section is based on Australian Government (Department of Education and Training) statistics of the 2011 university workforce, professional staff and academic staff, permanent and fixed-term appointments. Data for the casual academic teaching staff is based on UniSuper 2010 data. The national figures are consistent with those found among the WCAU study sample (see Appendix 2 for comparisons).

Professional Staff

The national data show that the proportion of women in the permanent and fixed-term 'non-academic' workforce has increased by 3 percentage points to 64% between 2001 and 2011.

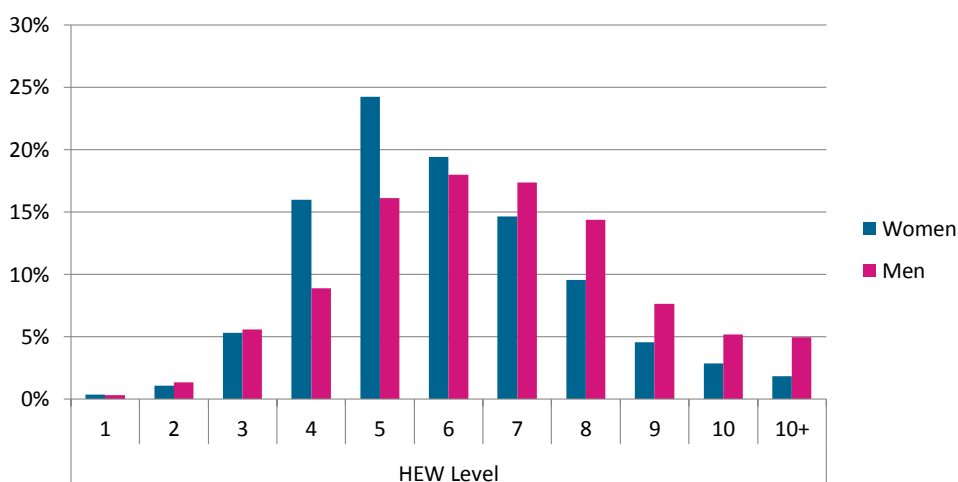
Women's representation has increased at the higher levels since 2001 (see Figure 1). This change has been slow and relative to men in 2011, inequity persists. In 2011 women predominated at HEW level 5, whereas men were dispersed across HEW levels 5-7 (see Figure 2). Examining the level of appointment in 2011, 5% of women and 10% of men held the most senior levels, HEW 10 and above HEW 10. Few staff were at the lowest HEW levels 1-4, but women held a higher proportion of these positions than men.

Figure 1: Incidence of professional staff women within each HEW level (%), Australian public universities, 2001 and 2011 (permanent and fixed-term employees): women in each level as a proportion of total employees at that level.



Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission).

Figure 2: Distribution of professional staff by HEW level and gender, Australian public universities, 2011: men or women in each HEW level as a proportion of total male or female employment.

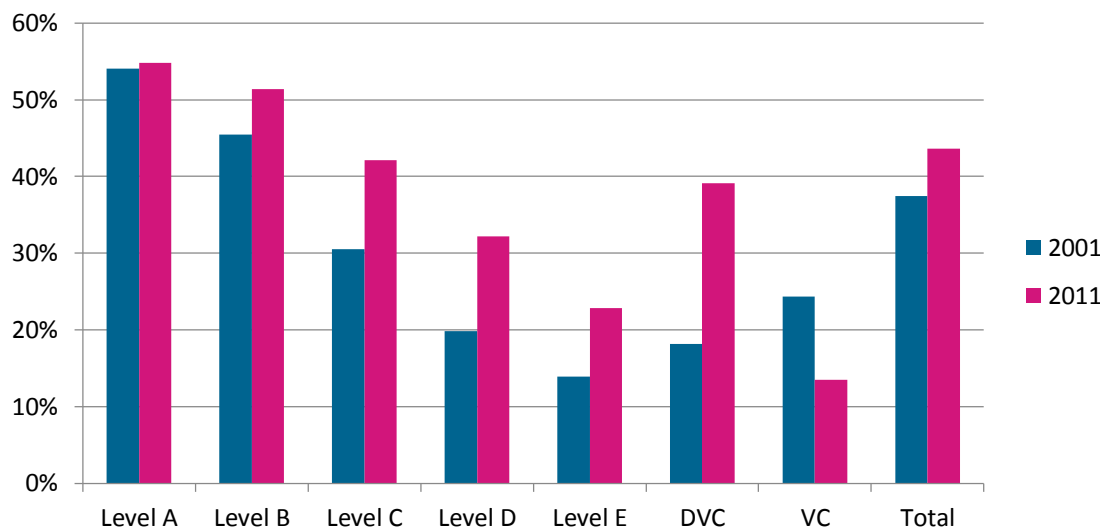


Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission).

Academic Staff

The national data showed that the proportion of women in the permanent and fixed-term academic workforce increased by 7 percentage points to 44% between 2001 and 2011 (see Figure 3). UniSuper data estimated that women's share of academic employment in 2010 was 45%, very close to the 44% estimate from Australian Government statistics.

Figure 3: Incidence of academic women within level (%), Australian public universities, 2001 and 2011 (permanent and fixed-term employees): number of women in each level as a proportion of total employees at that level.



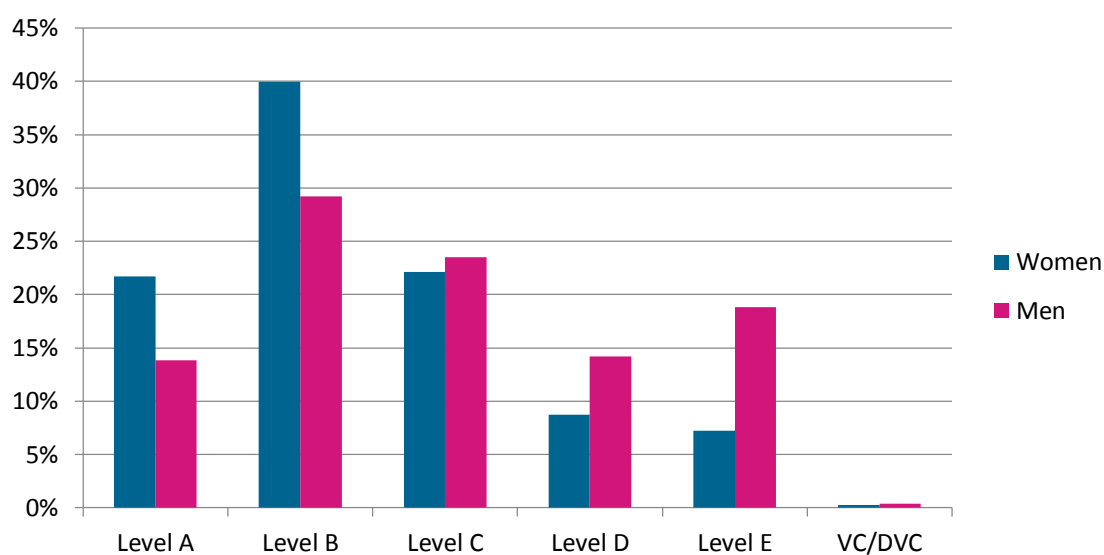
Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission).

Between 2001 and 2011, women's attainment of higher level appointments had also increased. Again, however, relative to men there remained inequities. In 2011, 62% of academic women were at levels A and B, compared with 43% of men. There were relatively similar numbers of academic women and men at level C (22% women, 23.5% men), but at the professorial ranks of levels D and E men predominated (see Figure 4), with the greatest difference between women and men at level E (7% women, 19% men).

The national statistics provide data on the proportion of the permanent academic workforce by role types (TR, TI, RI). The majority of academics employed on a permanent basis were in teaching and research combined positions (89.5% of women and 90% of men). TI positions accounted for 6% of women and 4% of men; the proportions in RI roles were 4% of women and 6% of men.

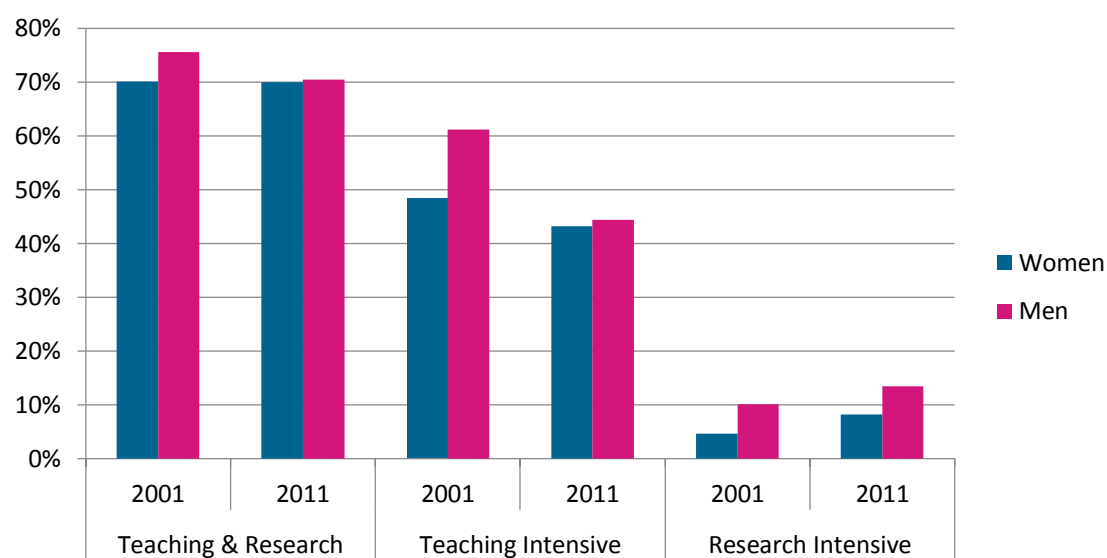
Figure 5 shows that in 2011, 70% of TR academics were on permanent contracts, with the remaining 30% on fixed-term contracts. The overwhelming majority of RI academics were on fixed-term contracts, with only about one-tenth on permanent appointments.

Figure 4: Distribution of academic women and men by level classification (%), Australian public universities, 2011: men or women in each academic level as a proportion of total male or female employment.



Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission).

Figure 5: Distribution of academic staff in permanent positions (%), by role type, and gender, Australian public universities 2001 and 2011: women (or men) in permanent jobs in that role type as a proportion of all women (or men) in that role type.



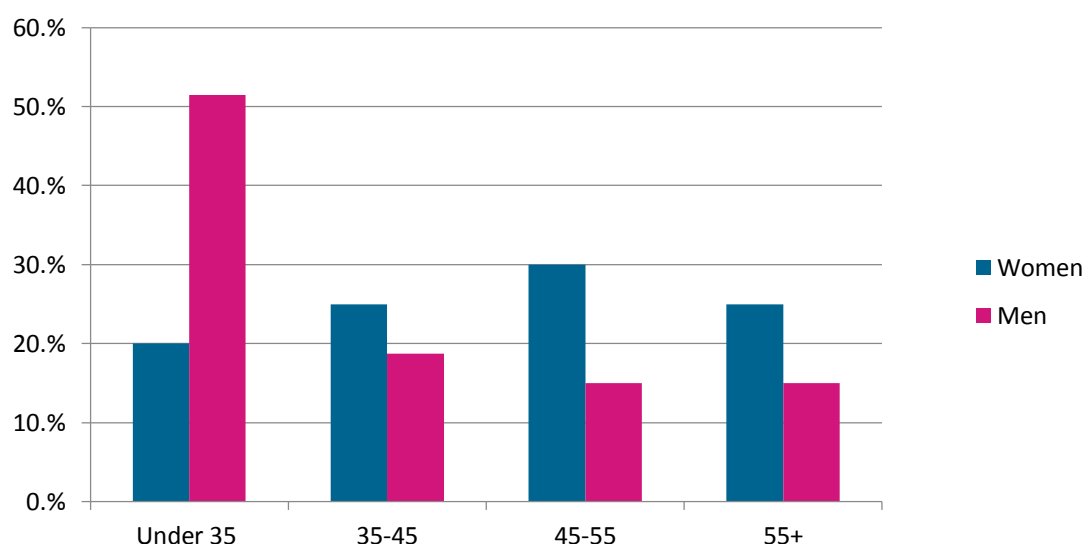
Source: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission).

Casual Academic Teaching Staff

The casual academic teaching workforce is large and growing, yet due to the diverse nature of the workforce and poor record-keeping by universities, the workforce is ignored in much of the discussion about academic workforce planning and renewal. Between 1990 and 2011, the ratio of full-time equivalent (FTE) casual to non-casual academic staff doubled from 11% to 22%.¹⁹

From UniSuper data we estimated that, in 2010, approximately 67,000 university employees worked as casual academic teaching staff, approximately 54% of whom were women (see Figure 6). In comparison, 45% of the permanent and fixed-term academic workforce were women. More women than men were in older age groups.

Figure 6: Casual academic teaching staff by age and gender (%), Australian public universities, 2010: women (or men) in each age group as a proportion of total women (or men) employed as casual academic staff.



Source: UniSuper data.

Benchmarking Academic Staff Against the Australian Public Service

Against the ideal model of even gender representation across all levels, universities clearly fail. However, to make it easier to benchmark gender equity in universities against what could be *reasonably expected* of them now, given their gendered histories, we compared them with the Australian Public Service (APS). Universities share many characteristics with the public sector, resembling the public service more closely than private sector organisations. The public service has a long history of constructing obstacles to women's advancement, where until 1967 women were forced to resign their permanent positions on marriage, so it is not an unreasonably high benchmark. More recently, the APS has sought to implement policies aimed at offsetting women's disadvantage.

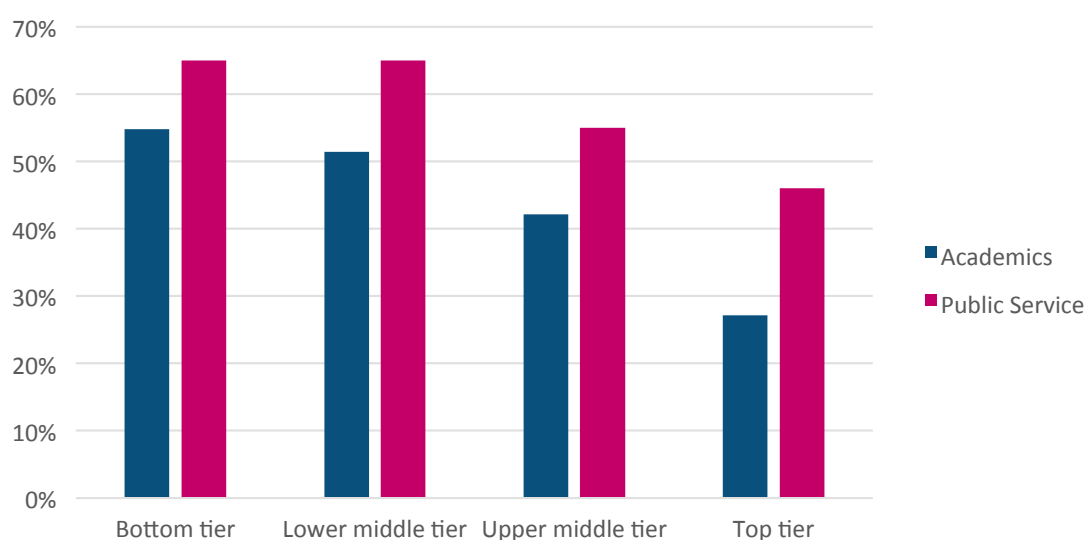
Figure 7 compares the composition of employment by level in academic staff and the APS in 2009, by four tiers of employment. Each tier is of broadly similar size in the two sectors. In both sectors, women's share of employment declined moving up the organisational hierarchy. However, what is noticeable is the greater

19. May, R. (2014). An investigation of the casualisation of academic work in Australia. PhD thesis, Griffith University.

decline in women's representation among academic staff in the higher levels as compared with the APS. In the APS, women's employment at the lower-middle tier was similar to that at the bottom tier, but in academia women's employment at the lower-middle tier (level B academics) was below the bottom tier. In the upper-middle tier (level C academics), there was a sizeable gap with women's employment in the upper-middle tier of the public service.

Women's representation in the top tier of academia (levels D and E) was only half that in the bottom tier (level A), whereas in the APS women's representation in the top tier (executive and senior executive service [SES]) was seven-tenths that of the bottom tier (APS levels 1–3). Indeed, women comprised just 25.9% of academics at level D or above, but they comprised 45.5% of executive level staff in the APS and even 37.1% of the elite 1.7% of APS employees who were in the SES. Women were a majority of the SES in some departments such as the then Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations which was responsible for university policy, where they represented 57% of the SES.²⁰

Figure 7: Universities versus the public service: female employees as a proportion of total number of employees at that level, Australian academics and Australian Public Service, 2009.



Definitions: Bottom tier: Academic level A (19% of staff); APS levels 1 to 3 (including trainees and graduates) (18% of staff); Lower middle tier: Academic level B (33% of staff); APS levels 4-5 (34% of staff); Upper middle tier: Academic level C (23% of staff); APS level 6 (20% of staff); Top tier: Academic levels D & E (25% of staff); APS executive level and senior executive service (27% of staff).

Source: DEEWR 2009. *Higher education statistics*, Table 2.9 Number of Full-time and Fractional Full-time Staff by Age Group, Current Duties Classification and Gender; Australian Public Service Commission, *Australian Public Service Employment Database Internet Interface*, Canberra. Comparisons are between academic staff and continuing APS staff.

Overall, the data indicate that gender equity in Australian universities among academic staff, as benchmarked against APS employment, was relatively poor. A comparison with the SES suggests that women were under-represented in university managerial elites, but were even more under-represented in the senior academic levels, when benchmarked against the APS.

20. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (2012). *Annual report 2011-12*. Canberra, 292. https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/deewrannualreport_2011_12_fullversion.pdf

Recommendations

We recommend that:

- universities recognise that vertical segregation by gender persists among both academic and professional staff, and that women continue to be under-represented particularly at the senior levels, and review current policies and develop further policies and practices to reduce inequities.
- universities recognise that gender equity within academic staff remains below benchmarks in the Australian Public Service and is unlikely to be removed simply through the passage of time. While some progress has been made, further steps are required to achieve gender inequity within universities.

2: Horizontal Segregation

Key Points:

- There were differences between professional staff areas in their degree of gender concentration, though most (with two exceptions) were female dominated. In all but the area of facilities management, women were under-represented at senior levels.
- For academic staff, horizontal segregation occurs through both discipline and role specialisation. Both have an impact on women's advancement.
- There was not a single labour market for academic staff, but rather a series of segmented labour markets organised around disciplines. Some of these had higher levels of female participation than others. Gender inequities varied by discipline and role specialisation and therefore require action that takes account of disciplinary and specialisation effects.

Horizontal segregation of jobs by gender can be a major issue related to gender equity/inequity. It refers to different occupations or specialisations and focuses on the differences by gender within similar levels. Within universities, horizontal segregation is seen both in the occupations and departments within which professional staff work and the different disciplines of academic staff. These issues are explored in this section using WCAU data.

Professional Staff: Segregation By Function

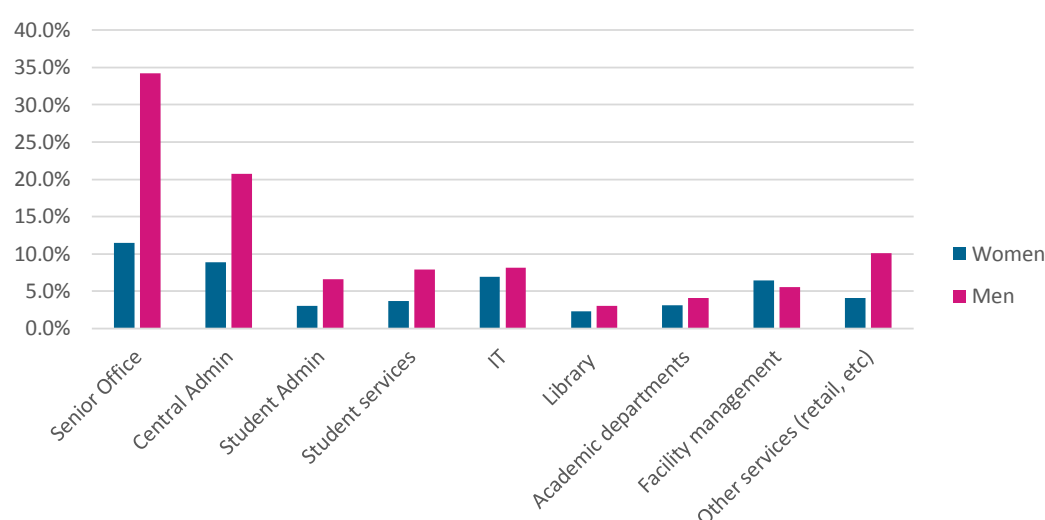
Professional staff work across a broad range of functional areas. The information collected from staff in the WCAU survey categorised these into a number of areas. The largest group of professional staff worked in academic departments/schools/faculties (33%) and the smallest group in facilities management (4%). Some 15% worked in central administration (for example, HR, finance, and marketing administration), 13% in retail and community engagement, 9% in information technology, 8% in library services, and 6% in each of the following: senior management offices (for example, Office of the VC, DVCs), student services, and student administration.

Most of these areas were female dominated. The exceptions were facilities management (66% male) and information technology (69% male). Just under three in ten professional men worked in one of these two areas.

Some 6.3% of professional staff held the most senior HEW 10 and above HEW 10 positions. These senior positions were disproportionately concentrated in central administration (29% of professional staff) and in senior management offices (17% of professional staff).

Gender differences in the proportion of HEW workers at these most senior levels were significant in some areas (see Figure 8). The greatest difference between the proportions of women and men was in the senior management offices (in this area, 11.5% of women compared with 34% of men, held HEW 10 or above positions). In central administration, 8.9% of women compared with 21% of men were at HEW 10. Only in facilities management, a male dominated area with few above HEW 10 positions, were women at parity in the highest senior positions.

Figure 8: Distribution of professional staff at HEW 10 or above positions: percentage women (or men) at HEW level 10 or above as a proportion of all women (or men) in that area.



Source: WCAU professional staff survey.

Academic Staff: Horizontal Gender Segregation, Role Specialisation and Discipline

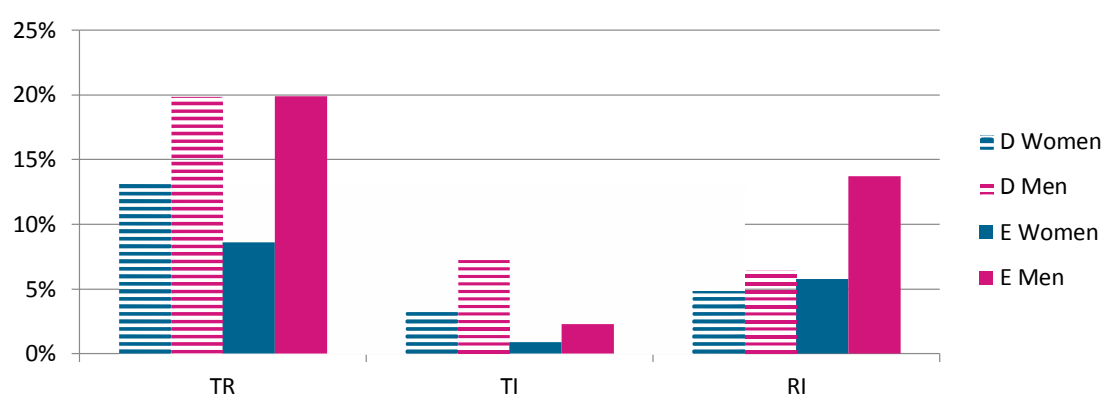
In the academic sample, the workforce can be differentiated in two ways: by the main function of an individual's role, and by discipline. As explained earlier, the main function or role specialisations of academic staff can be divided teaching and research (TR), teaching intensive (TI), and research intensive (RI). The majority of academic staff held TR roles (53.2% of women, 57.3% of men). About one-third held RI roles (34.8% of women, 34.4% of men), and fewer academics held TI roles (12% of women, 10.2% of men).²¹ The problem is not simply that, *overall*, women are over-represented in one type of role specialisation or another – though as we explain later, an important recent problem is the marginalisation of newly appointed teaching women into TI positions. As Figure 9 shows, very few TI positions are at levels D or E, and a TI career path offers little prospect of promotion to senior levels. This is also the case for RI positions, and these are discussed in detail in Section 4.

The other problem is that women have fewer opportunities to rise to higher level positions *within* any role specialisation. Their marginalisation into new TI appointments is one way in which this happens, but this is not the only way.

21. For more details on teaching-intensive appointments see Probert, B. (2013). Teaching-focused academic appointments in Australian universities: Recognition, specialisation, or stratification? Discussion Paper 1, Office for Learning and Teaching. file:///C:/Users/s965404/Downloads/Teaching-focused_academic_appointments%20(1).pdf

The greatest number of senior positions at levels D and E were in academic appointments that are TR, and the lowest proportions were found among academics holding TI appointments. Although the proportion of women increased in TR roles, the difference in the proportion of women and men at the highest levels was greater amongst TR appointments (see Figure 9), with 13% of TR women compared with 20% of TR men at level D, and only 9% of TR women compared with 20% of TR men at level E. There was also a difference (of 8 percentage points) between men and women in level E positions among RI academics. The differences among TI positions were smaller in percentage point terms, but this was because few TI academics held level D or E positions anyway. Irrespective of role specialisation, women had about half or less of the probability that men had of holding level E status.

Figure 9: Academic staff at levels D and E by role and gender: number of women (or men) at level D or E as a proportion of all women (or men) with that role specialisation.



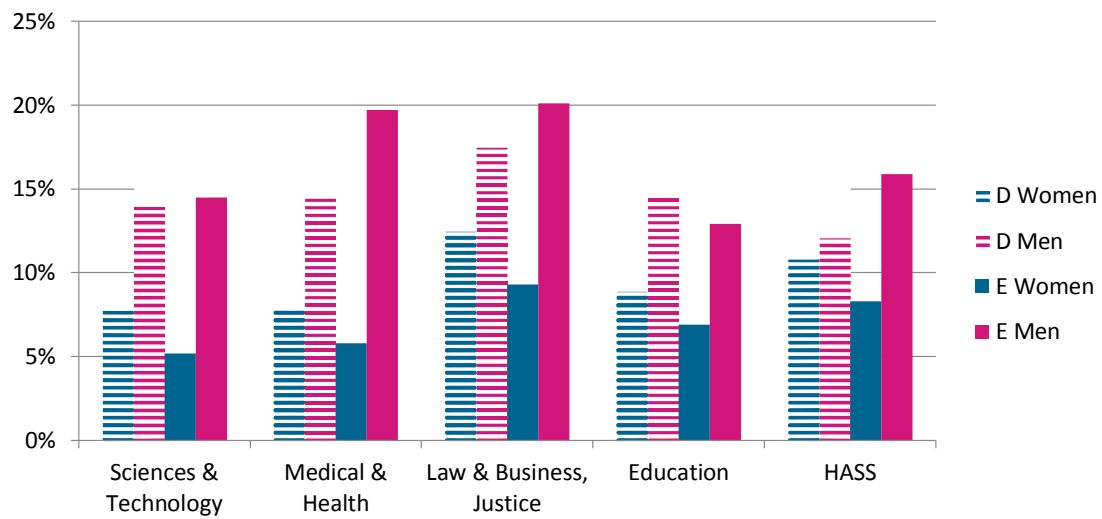
Source: WCAU academic staff survey. Abbreviations: TR = teaching and research, TI = teaching-intensive, RI = research-intensive.

Horizontal gender segregation clearly occurred across disciplines. For this section, we categorised academics into five broad disciplines: Science and Technology (which included physical, chemical, information and communication technology, engineering and earth sciences); Medical and Health Sciences; Law, Business and Justice; Education; and Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (HASS). Typically, men held a greater proportion of academic positions than women in Science and Technology (34.5% women and 65.5% men). In contrast, women had higher representation in Medical and Health sciences (66% women and 34% men), and in Education (67% women and 33% men). The proportions of women and men were more similar in HASS (58% women and 42% men) and in Law, Business and Justice (46% women and 54% men).

Figure 10 shows that, across each of the disciplines, the proportion of men in those disciplines who held positions at levels D and E was greater than the proportion of women at those levels. Among women, the proportion at levels D and E was greatest in Law, Business and Justice (21% of women in this discipline). In HASS, it was 19% of women at D or E. But in Education, Medical and Health Sciences, and Science, less than one-fifth of the women were at these levels (16% of women in Education; 14% in Medical and Health Science and 13% of women in Science). In those three areas the gap between women and men in the professoriate was greatest.

The findings here highlight the importance of discipline-specific approaches to dealing with the issue of gender equity. Our recommendations reflect this.

Figure 10: Academic staff at levels D and E by discipline and gender: women (or men) at level D or E as a proportion of the total number of women (or men) in that discipline.



Source: WCAU academic staff survey.

Recommendations

We recommend that:

- because of the 'local' characteristics of horizontal segregation, gender equity strategies become the responsibility of managers across the university, in addition to centralised university HR functions. Line managers should be asked to devise specific strategies for gender equity *within* their organisational units.

3. Work and Working Conditions

Key Points:

- Approximately three-quarters of the professional staff and just over half the academic staff held permanent appointments (excluding consideration of casual staff). More women than men among all university staff held fixed-term appointments.
- Almost half (43%) full-time professional staff usually worked more than 40 hours a week. Almost all (90%) full-time academic staff worked more than 40 hours a week. Nine per cent of full-time professional staff and half the full-time academic staff (51%) worked 50 or more hours per week.
- Consistent with other industries, women were more likely to work part-time than men. Part-time staff were more likely to have fixed-term appointments than full-time staff.
- Academic women were more likely than men to undertake more teaching, and especially more administration, than their contract indicated. Such 'overloads' in teaching or administration tended to lead to staff wanting to work fewer hours, and expressing lower satisfaction with careers or work-life balance.
- Receipt of pay loadings among both professional staff and academic staff was higher for men than for women. In both groups, this was especially the case for market and, to a lesser extent, performance loadings, and not all of this could be explained simply by differences in level. The value of the loading was greater for men than women.
- One-quarter of staff had experienced harassment or bullying in the workplace, and this was slightly greater among women and highest for academic women.
- Fewer than half of the staff who had experienced harassment considered taking formal action due to the adverse impact it was expected to have on their career.
- Reported harassment rates for women in regional universities (48%) was greater compared with non-regional universities (35%).

This section presents information on type of employment contract, working hours, pay loadings, and harassment. The focus is on permanent and fixed-term staff. Information on the working conditions of the casual academic teaching staff is presented in Section 4: Insecurity.

Analyses in this Section are based on 10,924 professional staff (7,619 women and 3,305 men) who provided details on their employment status details and HEW appointment level, and 8,737 academic staff (4,482 women and 4,245 men) who provided information on their employment conditions.

Employment Contracts

Professional Staff

Permanent appointments were held by the majority of professional staff (70.5% of women and 76% of men).

Part-time work was more common among women than men (25% of women, 6.5% of men). Two-thirds of part-time workers held a .6 (60%) or above fractional appointment (that is, they worked the equivalent of three or more full days per week).

Full-time workers were more likely to have permanent appointments than part-time workers. Among women, 74% who worked full time held a permanent appointment compared with 62.5% of part-time women. Among men, 79% working full time held a permanent appointment compared with 54.6% of men working part-time.

Academic Staff

Just 53% of the academic women and 58% of the men held permanent appointments. The remainder held fixed-term contract appointments.

As with professional staff, part-time work was more common among women, and by a broadly comparable margin (24% of women, 9.5% of men). Among those who identified that they were employed on a part-time basis, 26% said that they usually worked less than 20 hours each week, 33% reported working 20-29 hours, 19% reported working 30-34 hours, 9% reported working 35-39 hours, and 13% reported working more than 39 hours. There was little difference between women and men.

Full-time workers were more likely to have permanent appointments than part-time workers. Among women, 60% who worked full-time held a permanent position compared with 32% of part-time academic women. Among men, 61% who worked full-time held a permanent position compared with 28% of part-time academic men.

Working Hours

Professional Staff

Average working hours for full-time women and men were 39.5 and 40 hours per week, respectively. Forty-three per cent of staff reported that they usually worked 40 or more hours a week (41% of women and 46% of men). Among the full-time women 8% stated that they worked 50 or more hours per week, and 11% of men worked these hours.

Academic Staff

Average working hours for full-time women and men were 48 and 49 hours per week, respectively. Almost all (90%) full-time academic staff worked more than 40 hours a week. Half the full-time academic staff (51%) worked 50 or more hours per week (48% of women, 53% of men).

There were some significant discrepancies between the proportion of time people were meant (on the basis of their contract) to be spending on teaching, research, and administration, and the proportions they were actually spending. Around a third of staff said they were spending a higher proportion of their time on teaching than expected, around a half were spending more time on administration, and around three-fifths were spending less time on research than expected under their contract.

Women were more likely than men to be doing more teaching and especially more administration than they expected. Such 'overloads' in teaching or administration tended to lead to staff wanting to work fewer hours, and having frustrated expectations and lower satisfaction with careers and/or work-life balance.

Pay and Loadings

Salaries of university staff are highly regulated by collective agreements, so there is little avenue for gender (and other forms) of discrimination on the basis of pay. However, one area outside the purview of collective bargaining is loadings. These can be of three kinds: responsibility, merit or performance, and market. The first is usually transparent, that is, loadings for heads of departments, deans and acting in a higher position are set by university policy, are specified as to amount, and attach to the position not the person. However, the second and third forms of loading are often not transparent, and usually subject to confidentiality clauses in employment contracts.

We examined whether and how discretionary loadings ('market' and 'performance' loadings) and higher duties allowances (HDA) were distributed between women and men, and the reasons for such distributions.

Professional Staff

Approximately one-sixth of professional staff received a loading in their annual income in 2011. Overall, this was higher among men than women: 19% of men, but only 13% of women, received some sort of loading. Not surprisingly, loadings were more likely to be obtained among employees at the highest HEW levels, with nearly one-half of professional staff above HEW 10 receiving a loading of some kind. Across HEW levels, men had higher rates of receiving loadings than women, though there was no difference above HEW 10.

Overall, there were not large differences between the proportions of women (1.5%) and men (1.8%) who received a higher duties allowance (HDA). But there were marked differences with respect to other types of loadings. Some 5% of men, but only 3% of women received a performance loading; and 5.5% of men, but only 1.6% of women, received a market loading. This was not simply a function of men's higher average position on the HEW scale: at most HEW levels, men appeared to be more likely to receive a market loading than women, in five instances at statistically significant levels.

Academic Staff

Nine per cent of academic staff received loadings. Men were much more likely to receive all three forms of loading than women (see Table 1). The difference was greatest for market loadings, with twice as many men as women receiving these. The gender difference was also significant for performance loadings (1.8 times) and HDA (1.6 times).²²

22. Bailey, J., Peetz, D., Whitehouse, G., Strachan, G., & Broadbent, K. (2016 forthcoming). Academic pay loadings and gender in Australian universities, *Journal of Industrial Relations*.

Table 1: Incidence and value of loadings for academic staff

Incidence by type of loading				
		Responsibility or higher duties loading	Discretionary loadings	
			Market loading (e.g. for your discipline)	Performance loading (for your individual performance)
Incidence of loadings	Women	4.4%	2.4%	2.6%
	Men	6.9%	4.9%	4.6%
	Male/female ratio	1.57	2.02	1.78
Mean annual values by type of loadings				
Amongst recipients only (personal value)	Women	\$10,260	\$13,289	\$12,423
	Men	\$14,544	\$20,129	\$19,891
	Male/female ratio	1.42	1.51	1.60
Amongst all staff (group value)	Women	\$318	\$219	\$237
	Men	\$843	\$781	\$667
	Male/female ratio	2.65	3.57	2.82

Source: WCAU professional and academic staff surveys.

The average *personal value* of loadings also differed by gender (see Table 1). Again, the discretionary loadings showed more gender disparity than HDA. This time, however, the male/female ratio was higher for performance loadings than for market loadings. The higher amount of market loadings going to men than women could not be explained by differences in their academic levels, disciplines, university types or tenure.

Gender differences in market loadings could not be explained solely by differences in classification level. Being located in a business faculty was a major explanatory factor, consistent with earlier research,²³ as was university grouping (Go8 and ATN universities). While gender was less significant than these factors, it contributed to the gap. Many universities have well-developed appraisal schemes which rely on metrics. Whatever their effectiveness or overall fairness, if they do not discriminate on the basis of gender then that might be one possible reason why the gender gap in merit loadings (after controlling for level, discipline, etc.) became non-significant in statistical terms.

The case is different for market loadings which were clearly skewed in favour of men, even when level etc. were taken into account. It needs to be emphasised that merit and market loadings are highly permeable (that is, institutions and individuals may use the term relatively loosely, so there may be considerable overlap between the two), so universities need to review both types of loadings. Further, our results are aggregated and averages mask individual figures, so it could well be that universities with non-transparent merit pay systems practice discrimination, and need to review their practices.

Gender discrepancies may arise from the lack of clear 'zones of negotiability' or 'asking zones'²⁴ for loadings. Universities need to make it clear that negotiation is possible, and what the parameters of negotiation actually are. This is necessary both for new and existing staff. Research suggests that a condition for gender equity is that zones of negotiability be established for all types of loadings, as it is only then that there can be a possibility of a level playing field for female and male employees.²⁵

23. Currie, J., & Hill, B. (2013). Gendered universities and the wage gap: Case study of a pay equity audit in an Australian university. *Higher Education Policy*, 26(1): 65-82; Probert, B., Ewer, P., & Whiting, K. (1998). *Gender pay equity in Australian higher education*. Melbourne: National Tertiary Education Union.

24. Rousseau, D. (2005). *I-deals: Idiosyncratic deals employees bargain for themselves*. New York: ME Sharpe.

25. Kulik, C. & Olekalns, M. (2012). Negotiating the gender divide: Lessons from the negotiation and organizational behavior literatures. *Journal of Management*, 38(4): 1387-1415; Rousseau, D., Ho, V., & Greenberg, J. (2006). I-deals: Idiosyncratic terms in employment relationships. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(4): 977-994.

Harassment

One-quarter of permanent and fixed-term staff reported that they had experienced harassment or bullying at work in the previous five years: 29% of the total academic staff and 30% of the total professional staff.

Women were more likely than men to report harassment, especially among academic staff: 35% of female academics reported harassment, approximately one and a half times the 23% of male academics who reported harassment; 33% of female professional staff reported harassment compared with 27% men (see Table 2).

Table 2: Incidence of harassment: percentages, by gender

	Professional staff		Academic staff	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Experienced harassment or bullying (%)	33	27	35	23
N	(7227)	(3148)	(4264)	(4032)

N in brackets refers to the total numbers of respondents relative to a column, not the number in an individual cell.
Source: WCAU professional and academic staff surveys.

Our survey did not explicitly distinguish between sexual and other forms of harassment. It is possible that the greater gender difference in reported harassment among academics than among professional staff follows from the different gender composition of the two groups: women account for half (51%) of academics but an overwhelming majority (69%) of professional staff. Cultures and behaviours that discriminate against women may be more difficult to sustain in a female dominated environment.

Taking a harassment case

Over 40% of respondents who had reported harassment had taken, or seriously considered taking, a formal case in relation to this behaviour: 42% of female academics and 45% of male academics; 42% of female professional staff and 41% of male professional staff. Differences in reported rates of harassment did not appear to reflect differences in the likelihood that harassment would be considered serious enough to consider taking a case.

The most common reason given for *not* deciding to pursue a case was 'it would have made things worse for me', given by approximately half of respondents (including 48% of academic women and 54% of professional women). Disturbingly, around one in three of those who had experienced harassment said 'I lacked faith in the complaints process'. A broadly comparable proportion gave the more reassuring response that 'the incident was too minor'.

We asked staff who reported harassment whether they considered that this had an adverse impact on their career. Adverse impacts were more commonly recorded among academic staff. Some 43% of academic women, and 49% of academic men, recorded an adverse career impact (less than 30% recorded 'no impact', the remainder did not know). Among professional staff, 38% of women and 37% of men recorded adverse career impacts (very similar to the proportions recording no adverse career impacts).

We analysed some of the factors associated with recorded harassment. In particular, the type of university had an impact on recorded harassment rates among academic staff that was not apparent among professional staff. For academic women, recorded harassment rates ranged from 30% in Go8 universities to 36% in Innovative Research Universities, 42% in ATN and 43% in unaligned universities. Most starkly, recorded harassment rates were 48% among women in regional universities compared with 35% in non-regional

universities.²⁶ Broadly speaking, these differences in recorded harassment rates by university type were also seen in academic men (but of course, from a lower base). Among professional staff, however, differences in recorded harassment rates by university type were non-significant.

There was a strong link to recorded harassment where workplace culture was perceived as discriminatory. Where women academics saw that 'the attitude within this university towards people of my gender' was a problem, some 61% reported harassment. This was double the harassment rate of 30% recorded when the attitude towards women was seen as neutral (neither a problem nor a help). Broadly similar patterns were seen among female professional staff, and (from a lower base) among men in both categories. There were similar patterns in relation to questions on the attitudes within the university regarding people of the respondent's age or ethnic background, or towards people with family responsibilities.

Causality may run in both directions. People who reported harassment because of gender, age, or ethnic background and perceived that they had inadequate support were more likely to perceive that the attitude within the university to people of their gender, age or ethnicity negatively affected them. If discrimination existed, it was more likely to promote harassment. Fortunately, only 8% of professional women, but as many as 19% of academic women, thought that the attitude within their university towards people of their gender had been a problem, while 14% of professional women, but only 12% of academic women, thought that the attitude within their university towards people of their gender had been helpful. That is, perceptions of gender discrimination appeared stronger among academic than professional female staff.

It is also noteworthy that among academic women (but not men), there were more respondents saying that the attitude towards workers with family responsibilities was a problem than it was a help. Among professional staff, attitudes were much more positive on this issue among both men and women. While discriminatory attitudes towards women were only recorded by a minority of academic women, it was clearly seen as a bigger problem than among professional women where numbers were higher.

Recommendations

We recommend that:

- universities carefully examine the workloads expected of staff, with a view to eliminating long working hours.
- universities examine the workload and expectations of academic staff regarding teaching, research, and service/administration. In particular, the 'informal' expectations on staff should be consistent with their academic profile (that is, what their contract says are their responsibilities in these areas).
- each university reviews the gender distribution of loadings (those who participated in WCAU can consult the confidential WCAU reports distributed in 2012). Figures on all types of loadings and gender differences, for all categories of staff, should be obtained annually by universities and analysed as part of their workplace gender equity reporting arrangements, and targets set to remove gender discrepancies.

26. Skinner, T., Peetz, D., Strachan, G., Whitehouse, G., Bailey, J., & Broadbent, K. (2015). Self-reported harassment and bullying in Australian universities: Explaining differences between regional, metropolitan and elite institutions. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 37(5): 558-571.

- universities establish clear and transparent, gender-neutral policies regarding loadings, and merit and market loadings in particular. Universities should handle loadings (bonuses) with full transparency, by:
 - internally publishing the criteria by which loadings are calculated and offered;
 - publishing data to university staff showing the distribution of loadings by type of loading, by gender, and other relevant variables (for example, faculty/discipline); and externally publishing a summary of those distributions.
 - creating staff awareness of these gender-neutral policies as part of regular performance management and promotions processes;
 - ensuring that staff applying for jobs at the university are aware of these policies early in the selection process, and that 'zones of negotiability' be established;
 - training senior managers in appropriate, gender-aware negotiating styles.
- universities emphasise the importance of dealing with harassment and bullying, both sexual and non-sexual, in the training of managers, and of building up confidence among university staff in the integrity of complaint systems, to ensure that cultures of non-harassment are promoted within the organisation. Particular attention should be paid to academic areas, among which higher rates of harassment of women were found.

4: Insecurity in the Academic Workforce

Key Points:

- Casual academic teaching staff, typically hired on a semester by semester basis, formed the largest component, on a headcount basis, of the academic workforce. Women constituted more than half of the casual academic teaching staff workforce.
- The overwhelming majority (84%) of research academics were employed on fixed-term contracts, and women were a little more likely to be on a contract than men (88% of women, 82% of men).
- A characteristic of fixed-term and casual academic teaching staff was the lack of career path. New appointments were frequently made at the lowest level of appointment irrespective of the staff member's experience. The nature of their contracts limited opportunity for conversion to a permanent position which offered career advancement.
- Women and men had a similar desire for more secure work, and there was no evidence to suggest that casual or fixed-term work was favoured by women as a means to achieve flexibility.
- Despite their important work with students, casual academic teaching staff were often invisible in the university and struggled to gain access to basic resources, as well as often being excluded from university activities.
- A significant proportion of the casual academic teaching staff aspired to an academic career. However, while their work experience was viewed as preparation for an academic career, they received limited access to resources or supported professional development to assist.
- Fixed-term positions were significant in all disciplines, but were rife in the research-heavy (mostly STEM) disciplines. There is a strongly gendered aspect to this insecurity. Women were more likely than men to be in insecure positions and more likely to end up in insecure career pathways.
- Fixed-term academic women, both research intensive (RI) and teaching intensive (TI), were much more dissatisfied with support in their careers than men.

The staffing profile of the academic workforce has changed to include large numbers of casual academic teaching staff and academics on fixed-term contracts, largely in research intensive roles. These groups are responsible for a significant proportion of the teaching and research conducted in Australian universities. In some institutions, the number of research academics was larger than the number of permanent full-time academics. The impacts of such high levels of insecurely employed staff for students and for the university sector as a whole have only begun to be considered in wider public discussion.

By definition, 100% of casual academic teaching staff are in insecure employment. Within the academic sample (excluding casual academic teaching staff), 45% were fixed-term.

This section focuses on casual academic teaching staff and the fixed-term academic workforce. Although just over one-third of professional staff were employed on a fixed-term contract in the WCAU survey, no data on casual professional staff were collected.

Where are the Insecure Academic Staff?

Australian universities have not always had such high levels of insecure academic employment. In the last twenty years the number of casual academic staff, on a FTE basis, has tripled, compared with only a 50% growth in the number of permanent academic staff.²⁷ Poor record keeping on the part of universities has contributed to a lack of understanding about the size and scale of the casual academic workforce.²⁸

Australian Government statistics show that in 2011 the casual academic teaching staff formed 21.7% of the academic workforce on an FTE basis, an increase from 11% in 1990.²⁹ Using UniSuper data, May estimated that 67,000 staff were employed as casual academic teaching staff across Australian universities in 2010.³⁰ The WCAU survey found that the average proportion of all academic staff (on a headcount basis) employed on a casual basis was highest in the ATN universities (66%) and lowest in the Go8 universities (37%).

Overall, the Go8 universities employed the greatest numbers of insecure workers. In the WCAU survey, 50% of the casual and fixed-term academics, and two-thirds of RI academics (63%) on fixed-term contracts, were employed in these institutions.

27. Coates, H., & Goedegebuure, L. (2010). The real academic revolution: Why we need to reconceptualise Australia's future academic workforce, and eight possible strategies for how to go about this. *Research Briefing*, LH Martin Institute, University of Melbourne: 18-20.

28. Coates, H., & Goedegebuure, L. (2010). The real academic revolution, 18-20.

29. May, R., Peetz, D., & Strachan, G. (2013). The casual academic workforce and labour market segmentation in Australia. *Labour and Industry*, 23(3): 258-275.

30. May, R. (2014). An Investigation of the Casualisation of Academic Work in Australia. PhD thesis, Griffith University: 47-49.

Casual Academic Teaching Staff

The casual academic workforce differed from the permanent and fixed-term academic workforce in relation to age, gender, and PhD qualification levels. A majority of casual academic teaching staff were currently studying for a PhD (55%), and 17% had obtained a PhD. The casual academic teaching workforce was also very different to the Australian casual workforce as a whole, with a much older age profile, a function of their higher qualification levels.

Among the 3,163 casual academic teaching staff in the WCAU sample, 57% were women. The casual academic teaching workforce was more concentrated in the HASS disciplines than the sciences.

Insecurity was a significant issue for casual academic teaching staff. Less than 1% had secured an appointment that offered more than one year of casual employment. Nearly one-half had appointments that were contracted for three or fewer months, one-half had contracts of between three and six months, and 10% had a contract of between six and twelve months' duration. Yet, a considerable number of staff had worked within a single institution in a casual teaching appointment for more than one year: 16% had worked for six or more years, 29% for between three and five years, 18% for one to two years. Only 38% had been employed for less than twelve months.

The unstructured relationship these employees had with the university was seen in the lack of resources provided to them. One-third did not have access to a workspace, and only half had access to a student consultation space. While access to a workspace with a computer was relatively equal (76% of women, 77% of men), fewer women had access to a suitable space to meet with students (55% of women, 60% of men) and financial support for research (38% of women, 43% of men). Two-thirds (68%) had been to an induction session at their university but only 40% of attendees had been fully paid for this time. Although the majority (83%) had attended meetings about the courses they taught, only 47% of attendees had been fully paid for this.

Casual academic teaching work was characterised by the set rate of pay per hour of specific work (for example, lecturing or tutoring) and the rates did not increase with the experience of the employee. In terms of income, women and men reported similar lengths of employment at their current university, but men were more likely to earn over \$1000 per week (mainly due to outside employment).

In order to counter the negative impact of employment insecurity, 20% of casual teaching academic staff surveyed worked in more than one institution.

The WCAU survey showed that casual academic teaching was undertaken by a diverse group of people, and their career profile and motivations for working casually varied. However, over half of respondents (56%) aspired to an academic position (see Table 3) with slightly more women than men wanting this. One-quarter were externally oriented, that is, aspiring to work outside the university sector. Only 12% of casual academic staff were 'casuals by choice', that is, working casually was their current employment preference.

Table 3: Typology of casual teaching academics, by gender

	Aspiring academic	Externally oriented	Casual by choice	Retiring	Total
Men	54.2	24.9	12.0	8.5	100%
Women	58.2	23.6	12.3	6.2	100%
Total	56.4	24.2	12.1	7.2	100%

N=2780.

Source: May, R. (2014). An Investigation of the Casualisation of Academic Work in Australia. PhD thesis, Griffith University, p.160.

One-third of the casual academic teaching staff had applied for a fixed-term appointment and about two-thirds desired a fixed-term appointment that was either full-time or part-time, but over half agreed that casual work was all they could obtain.

There was much evidence of frustrated careers among the casual academic teaching staff, that is, those who aspired to be an academic (not casual) in five years' time but did not expect to achieve this (see Table 4). Especially high levels of pessimism were shown by women, in particular women from Go8 universities as well as those in female dominated disciplines (compared with more gender-balanced disciplines) and those who had obtained their doctorate more than two years earlier.³¹

Table 4: Frustrated academic rates, by gender

Would like to be in a continuing academic position in 5 years' time BUT don't expect to be	
Men	48.4%
Women	57.2%
Total	53.5%

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff survey 2011 (n=1584).

These are key findings as they indicate that, for the majority, the casual academic working experience forms part of the preparation for what they hope will be a more secure academic position. Thus, what happens during this period of casual employment has an impact on the individual's future, and also the future of the academic workforce.

Overall, the problems arising from casual employment are greater than can be addressed in this report, and link to wider questions relating to PhD training and the future academic workforce. However, our recommendations point towards some future developments that may assist in this area.

Fixed-Term Research Intensive and Teaching-Intensive Academics

There were 3,020 RI academics in the WCAU sample, with relatively equal numbers of women and men (1,558 women, 1,462 men). They represented 34.5% of the total academic sample. An overwhelming majority of RI academics were on fixed-term contracts, with a slightly greater proportion among women than men (88% of women, 82% of men).

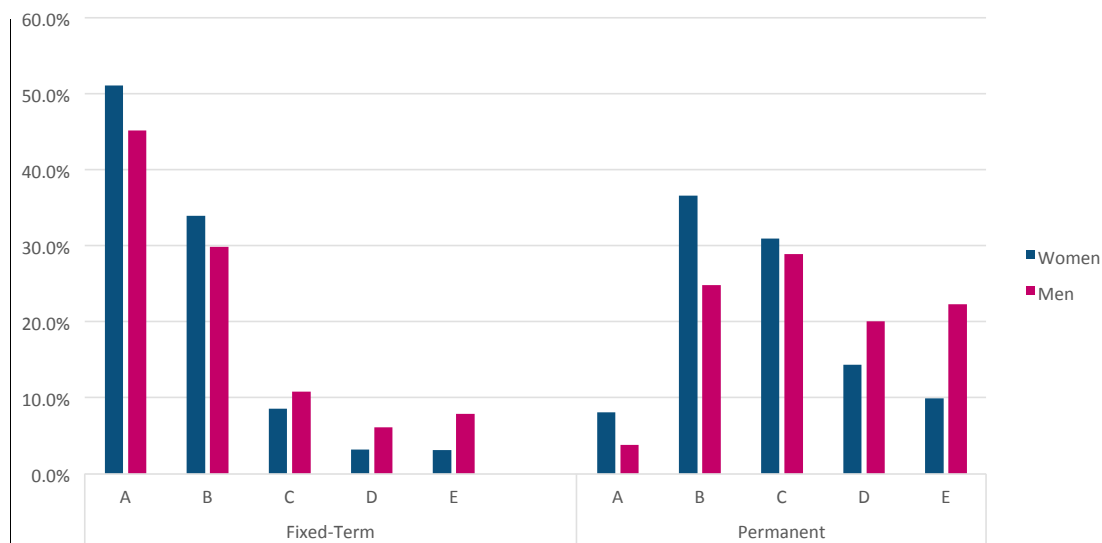
A further 10% (n = 893) of the academic sample were TI academics, with about one-half of these employed on fixed-term contracts, and this was slightly more prevalent among women than men (54% of women, 50% men).

Women on fixed-term contracts in both RI and TI roles were employed at the lowest academic levels.

The overwhelming majority of fixed-term RI academics were concentrated in the lowest two levels of the academic career structure (see Figure 11): level A accounted for 58% of RI women and 56% of RI men, and level B accounted for 27% of RI women and 24% of RI men. Only 18% of fixed-term RI academics were above level C (senior lecturer), including 8% of women and 10% of men at level E. Women were the majority in the levels A and B and the minority in levels C, D and E.

31. May, R., Peetz, D., & Strachan, G. (2013). The casual academic workforce and labour market segmentation in Australia. *Labour and Industry*, 23(3): 258-275.

Figure 11: Academic staff by employment contract



Source: WCAU academic staff survey.

TI academics on fixed-term contracts showed similar patterns, but more held level B (48%) or level C positions (15%) compared with RI academics in fixed-term positions.

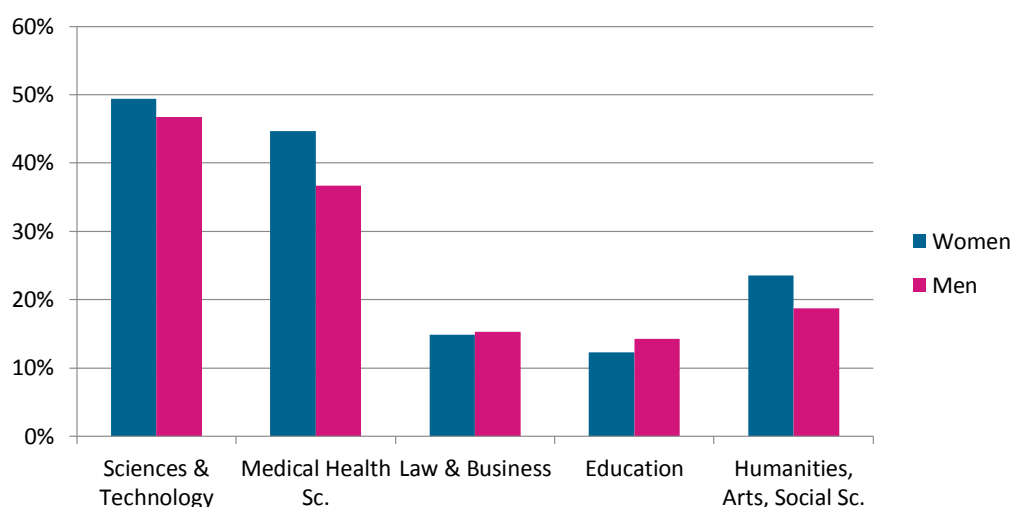
Employment insecurity was linked to barriers to promotion and other career opportunities for fixed-term RI academics, especially when compared with RI academics in permanent positions. Within the fixed-term RI cohort women were significantly more dissatisfied than men across a number of key areas. The areas where more women than men thought that these issues were major problems for advancing their careers included support from supervisors (26% of women, 20% of men), guidance received in performance reviews (24% of women, 18% of men), opportunities for leadership (29% of women, 21% of men), and access to internal research funding (31% of women, 25% of men).³²

Insecurity was strongly associated with specific academic disciplines where the workforce was research focused. Disciplines that had the highest numbers of RI academics and hence fixed-term appointments were in the sciences. Science and technology and the medical health disciplines between them employed the majority, in fact 80% of RI academics (see Figure 12).³³

32. Broadbent, K., Troup, C., & Strachan, G. (2013). Research staff in Australian universities: Is there a career path? *Labour and Industry*, 23(3): 276-295.

33. See Bell, S. & Yates, L. (2015). Women in the science research workforce: Identifying and sustaining the diversity advantage. L.H. Martin Institute, University of Melbourne. <http://www.lhmartininstitute.edu.au/documents/publications/wmn-in-sci-rsrch-rprt-web-070915.pdf>

Figure 12: Percentage of research intensive academics within each discipline, by gender.



Source: WCAU academic staff survey.

Recommendations

We recommend that:

- universities investigate ways to create more secure employment and career paths for insecure staff (casual and fixed-term) who aspire to an academic career with an on-going appointment.
- universities monitor and 'profile' their casual academic teaching workforces to better understand the needs of this workforce. Faculties and departments should conduct audits of their casual academic staff to determine their access to induction, workspace, teaching development and resources, research support and professional development and ensure provision of these resources.
- universities seriously investigate ways in which casual academic teaching staff can access and compete for permanent appointments.
- Universities Australia and its member universities investigate developing with stakeholders a new model for what is presently fragmented PhD training and casual employment in universities, with the aim of:
 - extending integrated teaching and research training for full-time PhD students, to encompass both the research training that is expected in a doctoral program as well as training and meaningful experience in teaching;
 - payment of a meaningful annual income to full-time PhD students that encompasses both PhD training and part-time teaching;
 - involvement in their department's teaching program, including access to teaching resources such as a room and other forms of support;
 - guaranteed teaching for a defined period after completion of the PhD.
- universities investigate whether women fixed-term research intensive (RI) academics are adequately able to access appropriate career supports such as access to internal funds for attendance at conferences, opportunities for leadership, guidance in promotion and support from supervisors, and ensure that they are meaningfully integrated into the working life of departments, centres and institutes.
- universities introduce and implement (or continue to implement) pathways to conversion from fixed-term to permanent status for academic staff, with special attention to the large group of RI academics on contract, and that these processes be monitored to ensure conversion is occurring.

5. Work, Family And Careers

Key Points:

- Mothers were more likely than fathers to perceive problems with the attitude within their university to workers with family responsibilities, with the majority of fathers neutral on this issue. Mothers were also more likely than fathers to report missed opportunities for promotion or other career related opportunities.
- Mothers were more likely than fathers to want, request, and be granted shorter working hours. These findings suggest that the male breadwinner model persists, and its prevalence is impeding efforts to reduce gender inequities.
- Mothers were more likely to perceive problems with attitudes within their university and to report some missed career opportunities in male dominated, compared with gender neutral or female dominated, work units. However, there were contrasting patterns across work units between academic staff and professional staff, and fathers and mothers, in access to flexible working arrangements.
- Overall, the findings are consistent with the persistence of male breadwinner norms, indicating that in spite of the introduction of a number of 'family friendly' measures, universities are making only limited progress towards more gender egalitarian outcomes.

The extent to which family responsibilities constitute barriers to career progression has been the subject of considerable research, with recent scholarship increasingly focused on the provision and efficacy of 'work/family' reconciliation policies. Universities have been at the forefront of the development of some of these policies, such as paid parental leave, but access to and usage of these policies remains an issue. In university employment, particularly for academic staff, research has highlighted a strongly male dominated culture in which female academic staff (especially mothers) continue to experience discrimination.³⁴ Studies have also drawn attention to variations

34. For example, Seierstad, C. & Healy, G. (2012). Women's equality in the Scandinavian academy: A distant dream? *Work, Employment & Society*, 26(2), 296-313; Williams, J., Alon, T. & Bornstein, S. (2006). Beyond the 'chilly climate' – eliminating bias against women and fathers in academe. *Thought & Action: The NEA Higher Education Journal*, Fall, 79-96.

in workplace culture across disciplinary divisions in academia, with particular emphasis on the problems encountered in male dominated or ‘non-traditional’ areas such as science and engineering.³⁵ For this study, participants identified their department or administrative unit as ‘male dominated’ (two-thirds or more men); ‘female dominated’ (two-thirds or more women); or ‘roughly balanced’.

In this section, the focus is on respondents with dependent children.³⁶ Among academic staff, 38% of women and 41% of men had one or more children under 18 years of age; among professional staff the comparable figures were 32% of women 37% of men. The higher prevalence of parenthood among men is not unexpected given the greater propensity of mothers to exit the labour market: it does not appear to be due to age differences in the samples.

Parents’ Perceptions of Organisational ‘Family Supportiveness’

Perceptions of university attitudes to staff with family responsibilities

The WCAU survey question asked: ‘In the last five years, to what extent have the following helped you in advancing your career or been a problem for you in holding back your career?’ The focus of this analysis is on the response option: ‘the attitude within this university towards people with family responsibilities’.

Table 5 shows that overall, mothers were consistently more likely than fathers to perceive problems, and fathers were much more likely than mothers to be neutral. In both occupational groups, mothers were more likely to report problems in male dominated work units, and support in female dominated or gender-neutral work units. The data also suggest a more ‘family supportive’ environment within the professional workforce than for the academic workforce.

Elaborating on these observations, approximately one-third of academic women with children in gender-balanced and female dominated work units, and 44% of those in male dominated work units, reported that the attitude within their university towards staff with family responsibilities was a major problem or somewhat of a problem for their career advancement. In contrast, around two-thirds of academic fathers saw attitudes within their university as neither problematic nor helpful, with limited differences by work unit composition. Among professional staff, a smaller proportion of mothers indicated that the attitude within their university towards people with family responsibilities was a problem for their careers. Commensurately, a higher proportion reported that university attitudes were helpful: this was the case for over 40% of those in gender balanced and female dominated work units, and although the figure was lower (34%) in male dominated units, overall, the perception of support was considerably higher than among academic women. For men with children in professional positions, around half in each work unit category reported that attitudes within their university towards people with caring responsibilities had no impact on their careers.

35. For example, Callister, R. (2006). The impact of gender and department climate on job satisfaction and intentions to quit for faculty in science and engineering fields. *Journal of Technology Transfer*, 31, 367-375; Maranto, C. & Griffin, A. (2011). The antecedents of ‘chilly climate’ for women faculty in higher education. *Human Relations*, 64(2), 139-159.

36. Our analysis of parenthood is based on a variable representing the presence of any children under 18 years of age. Adopting this definition does mean that the ‘no children’ category includes respondents with children who were 18 years or over at the time of the survey. This will be most prevalent among older respondents, who are also most likely to be those at senior levels.

Table 5: Perceptions of career impact of attitudes to people with family responsibilities^a: academic and professional staff with children in Australian universities, 2011 (column percentages, total N in parenthesis).

Academic staff with children < 18 years						
	Male dominated		Gender-balanced		Female dominated	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Problem ^b	19.2	44.1	17.3	32.8	24.9	37.3
Neither ^c	64.9	38.3	63.8	37.6	60.7	37.1
Help ^d	15.9	17.7	19.0	29.6	14.5 ^e	25.6
(N)	(572)	(379)	(701)	(574)	(173)	(442)
Professional staff with children < 18 years						
Problem ^b	12.7	28.2	10.4	22.9	12.2	23.3
Neither ^c	49.8	37.8	56.9	34.7	56.5	36.0
Help ^d	37.5	34.0	32.7	42.4	41.4	40.8
(N)	(275)	(156)	(364)	(507)	(368)	(1379)

Notes: ^a 'Don't know' responses were excluded, ^b Problem = major/somewhat of a problem, ^c Neither = neither problem nor help, ^d Help = great help/somewhat of a help, ^e cell count <30.

N in brackets refers to the total numbers of respondents in a column.

Source: WCAU professional and academic staff surveys.

Perceptions of missed opportunities due to family commitments

Information on this issue was drawn from the question: 'During the past five years, has your work been affected by your family responsibilities...?' The two response options considered here are: 'Missing opportunities to apply for promotion' and 'Missing other opportunities, e.g. to travel, attend conferences'.

Table 6 shows that respondents were considerably more likely to report 'missing other opportunities' than 'missing promotion/advancement opportunities', and that 'missing other opportunities' was particularly prevalent among academic staff. Among academic staff around one-quarter of women with children reported missed promotion opportunities compared with around 10% of men with children. This gender contrast was echoed for responses to 'missing other opportunities' – something experienced by around two-thirds of mothers, compared with around 40% of fathers.

Table 6: Perceptions of career barriers due to family responsibilities^a: academic and professional staff with dependent children in Australian universities, 2011 (percentages, N in parenthesis)

Academic staff with children < 18 years						
	Male dominated		Gender-balanced		Female dominated	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Missing promotion opportunities	8.7 (63)	25.4 (107)	10.5 (90)	22.3 (145)	11.1 (24)	25.5 (130)
Missing other opportunities	40.7 (296)	69 (291)	43.9 (375)	66.9 (434)	43.5 (94)	63.7 (325)
Professional staff with children < 18 years						
Missing advancement opportunities	9.8 (325)	33.5 (173)	10.1 (424)	27.1 (580)	11.7 (446)	26.8 (1607)
Missing other opportunities	17.2 (325)	41.6 (173)	19.8 (424)	30.7 (580)	20.2 (446)	34.6 (1607)

Notes: ^a‘Don’t know’ responses are excluded from the analysis.

N in brackets refers to the numbers in cells that correspond to the percentages shown.

Source: WCAU professional and academic staff surveys.

The pattern of gender differences for professional staff was similar to that for academic staff, although a somewhat higher proportion of mothers in the professional, compared with the academic, workforce reported missing advancement opportunities, particularly in male dominated work units. In contrast, professional employees were less likely than academics to report missing ‘other opportunities’ (perhaps because opportunities such as travel and conferences are more common for academics). Nevertheless, a significant proportion of parents in the professional workforce did report this, again with variation across work units: over 40% of mothers reported missing other opportunities in male dominated work units, compared with 31% and 35% respectively in gender-balanced and female dominated work units.

Overall, these contrasts reiterate marked gender differences, with mothers reporting missing promotion/ advancement opportunities (or other related opportunities) considerably more frequently than fathers in both academic and professional work. Perceptions of missed opportunities varied little for fathers across work unit type, but location in a male dominated work unit appeared especially disadvantageous for women with children in professional positions.

Parents’ Access to Family Supportive Policy Provisions

Among parents in the WCAU survey, around half of academic women (54%) and professional women (46%) had taken parental leave at some time while employed at a university. A similar proportion of professional men (44%) as professional women had taken parental leave, but academic men were less likely to have used this provision (37%). Among those who took leave, the majority had taken their full entitlement: 82% of professional women; 78% of academic women; 78% of professional men; 68% of academic men. In the past five years both professional and academic men have increased their use of parental leave.

Parents were asked if, during the past 12 months, they would have preferred a change in working arrangements, for example in hours of work. Those who responded ‘yes’ were then asked what changes in working arrangements they would have liked to access. Working reduced hours per week on an ongoing basis or for a limited period were the most frequently chosen options, while others such as working fewer hours per day, working in school terms only, and job sharing were identified by very few parents as options they would have liked.

For ease of analysis, we summed 'shorter hours per week on an ongoing basis' and 'shorter hours per week for a limited period' into a single 'preferred shorter weekly hours' variable. The level of access was assessed by examining the proportion of those with a preference for shorter weekly hours who actually asked for this arrangement, and – of those who asked – the proportion for whom the request was granted (in full or in part) or refused. The numbers are quite low for some of the request outcomes, particularly once the data are broken down by gender composition of work unit, hence some caution is necessary in interpreting the results.

Table 7 reveals that fathers were considerably less likely than mothers to express a preference for shorter hours. Similarly, among those who indicated a preference for shorter hours, fathers were less likely than mothers to actually request such arrangements, although for academic staff this difference was marked only in male dominated work units (29% of mothers compared with 19% of fathers). Among those who made a request, fathers were also considerably less likely than mothers to have a request granted in full. Among academic staff, mothers were most likely to have requests for shorter working hours granted in full in male dominated work units, while fathers were most likely to have such requests granted in gender-balanced work units. With the exception of academic men in female dominated work units (the group with the smallest N), the lower likelihood of fathers' requests being granted in full is reflected in the higher rates of refusals for fathers' requests across all work units. We emphasise that there is an insufficient number of cases to identify stable effects for several of these comparisons. Nevertheless, the patterns are suggestive both of persistent male-breadwinner norms (in the gender differences illustrated) and a more traditional climate (in which family-friendly arrangements are mainly accessed by mothers) in male dominated work units.

Table 7: Preference for, and access to, reduced weekly hours, academic and professional staff with children in Australian universities, 2011 (percentages, N in parenthesis)

Academic staff with children < 18 years						
	Male dominated		Gender-balanced		Female dominated	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Preferred shorter weekly hours ^a	17.7 (129)	34.8 (147)	18.6 (159)	31.4 (204)	27.3 (59)	31.2 (159)
Requested this ^b	19.4 (25)	28.6 (42)	27.0 (43)	30.9 (63)	32.2 (19)	34.6 (55)
Granted in full ^c	32.0 (8)	71.4 (30)	39.5 (17)	65.1 (41)	36.8 (7)	41.8 (23)
Granted in part ^c	36.0 (9)	7.1 (3)	20.9 (9)	19.0 (12)	21.1 (4)	16.4 (9)
Refused ^c	24.0 (6)	19.0 (8)	27.9 (12)	12.7 (8)	21.1 (4)	30.9 (17)
Professional staff with children < 18 years						
Preferred shorter weekly hours ^a	16.0 (325)	23.7 (173)	13.2 (424)	19.7 (580)	18.4 (446)	24.0 (1607)
Requested this ^b	6.5 (21)	18.5 (32)	7.1 (30)	18.4 (107)	7.8 (35)	15.0 (241)
Granted in full ^c	33.3 (7)	56.3 (18)	30.0 (9)	61.7 (66)	42.9 (15)	62.7 (151)
Granted in part ^c	9.5 (2)	12.5 (4)	23.3 (7)	11.2 (12)	17.1 (6)	12.0 (29)
Refused ^c	42.9 (9)	28.1 (9)	33.3 (10)	21.5 (23)	34.3 (12)	29.3 (49)

Notes: ^a Percentages in this row are based on the number of respondents who reported that they would prefer shorter weekly hours as a proportion of the total sample in the relevant category.

^b Percentages in this row are based on the number of respondents who reported asking for shorter weekly hours as a proportion of those in the relevant category who said they would prefer this arrangement. The number in parenthesis is the denominator for subsequent calculations of whether this request was granted in full, granted in part or refused.

^c Percentages in these rows are based on the number of respondents who received or were refused this outcome as a proportion of those who asked for shorter weekly hours (see note b above). The column totals for granted in full, granted in part and refused do not equal 100% (or the N reported in the row 'Requested this') as those who failed to indicate an outcome were excluded.

N in brackets refers to the numbers in cells that correspond to the percentages shown.

Source: WCAU professional and academic staff surveys.

Table 7 also identifies some differences between the occupational groups: among professional staff both mothers and fathers were less likely than their academic counterparts to indicate a preference for shorter weekly hours, albeit only marginally so for fathers in male dominated work units. This contrast is possibly because a greater proportion of professional staff, especially women, already worked part-time hours. Among those who indicated a preference for shorter weekly hours, the proportion who actually made a request for this was considerably lower for both mothers and fathers in professional compared with academic work. The results of requests also differed somewhat between the occupational groups. For example, with the exception of mothers in female dominated work units, the refusal rate was higher among professional staff compared with academic staff, particularly for fathers in male dominated work units. Also in contrast with academic staff, mothers and fathers in professional work were most likely to have requests for shorter working hours granted in full in female dominated work units.

In summary, in spite of these differences across occupational groups and work units, a clear observation is that – in line with the persistence of male breadwinner norms – mothers were more likely than fathers to indicate a preference for, request and be granted shorter weekly working hours.

Recommendations

We recommend that:

- universities develop (or extend) 'gender egalitarian' work/family policies, that is, policies designed explicitly to erode male breadwinner/female carer norms. These could include extending parental – as opposed to only maternity – leave entitlements and ensuring that policies such as temporary, part-time, or other flexible working arrangements explicitly state that they are open to men as well as women. These policies should be publicised internally and include examples of successful flexible arrangements taken by individual staff.
- universities develop implementation processes that support both mothers and fathers in combining careers and parenthood, and facilitate their application across all work units. These implementation programs would include monitoring patterns of applications for flexible arrangements and outcomes, and analysing data to identify gender imbalances.
- universities provide training programs on flexible work arrangements for line managers and HR staff, emphasising the importance of gender neutrality in promoting flexibility. for example by:
 - encouraging fathers as well as mothers to apply for flexible working arrangements;
 - ensuring that rejections only occur where there are genuine business reasons and there is no feasible alternative;
 - ensuring applicants are aware they are able to take a colleague with them to any meeting to discuss an application.
- universities ensure that there are adequate internal review and appeal processes where applications for flexible work arrangements or extensions of parental leave are unsuccessful, and enable external appeal to the Fair Work Commission via enterprise agreements for applications under the right to request provisions of the Fair Work Act.

6: Career Advancement

Key Points:

- The initial level of appointment for women was in a lower classification than for men, among both academic and professional staff.
- Part-time work acted as a small but measurable 'brake' on career progression for female professional staff. Women who had only worked part-time were less likely to have advanced than those who worked full-time or those who had periods of working both full- and part-time.
- Women aspired to higher-level positions at least as much as men, among both academic and professional staff.
- Women, both academic and professional staff, applied for promotion at the same rate as men, and were just as likely to be successful in these applications. Among professional staff, success rates in reclassification applications were the same for women and men.
- Two-thirds of research intensive (RI) academic staff, the majority employed on fixed-term contracts, had made no advancement since their first appointment.
- Casual academic teaching appointments do not provide a career path.
- There was not a single labour market for academics, but rather a series of segmented labour markets organised around disciplines. Some of these had higher levels of female participation than others.
- There were three important structural ways in which women academics were disadvantaged in seeking to advance academic careers and which related strongly to discipline:
 - *insecurity* – the tendency, within each role specialisation, for women to be more likely than men to be in fixed-term rather than continuing jobs; and
 - *marginalisation* – the greater tendency for newly appointed women to be placed into teaching-intensive positions (some of them teaching-only positions), which are widely seen as lacking the career opportunities that are available in more balanced TR positions; and
 - *funnelling* – the reducing proportions of women with movement into higher academic levels.
- Each of these was linked to discipline, and was a particular problem for women in research-heavy disciplines (that is, mostly STEM disciplines).
- Approximately two-thirds of university staff wanted some form of change in working arrangements prior to retirement, most usually a reduction in the number of days worked each week. About two-thirds thought that they would be able to achieve these changes.

A comprehensive series of questions was used in the WCAU survey to obtain the career details of university staff. This included first and current appointment levels, the year in which the first appointment took place, and the length of time spent working at different levels. Questions were asked about promotion and reclassification, and an individual's ambitions. This section briefly discusses job satisfaction and then presents findings related to first appointment and advancement (promotion and reclassification) for professional and academic staff, ending with a discussion of issues for staff approaching retirement.

Job Satisfaction

Overall, a clear majority of professional staff (76% women and 71% men) were satisfied with their jobs. However, almost one-third (31%) felt that their level of satisfaction had decreased in the previous two years compared with 22% who said their satisfaction had increased. Satisfaction with career prospects showed a similar decline, with 33% saying their level of satisfaction had declined compared with 19% who felt it had increased.

Women within the professional staff workforce were the most satisfied with their jobs, more so than their male colleagues. Among this group, two-thirds of part-time workers were happy with their work hours compared with only half of full-time workers.

Overall, academic staff were less satisfied with their jobs than professional staff: 69% of women and 68% of men were satisfied. One-third of academic staff (34%) said their satisfaction had decreased in the previous two years, compared with 18% who felt this had increased. Only two-fifths of academic staff reported they were satisfied with their work life balance. Academic women over 50 years of age were less satisfied than their younger colleagues with work life balance.

Yet one-half of university workers agreed that they would like to remain in the sector for the rest of their career, with casual academic staff among the highest group (almost 60% said that they would like to remain), even though about one-fifth stated that there was a 50% chance or more that they would voluntarily leave their jobs in the ensuing 12 months. However, among the youngest university staff the intention to pursue a university career was not strong: only 37% of academic staff, 35% of professional staff and 46% of casual academic teaching staff under 29 years of age wanted to remain in the sector.

First Appointment and Advancement: Professional Staff

First appointment

The WCAU survey findings showed that one of the clearest gender differences among professional staff was the level of first appointment. About one-half of women (46.5%) compared with 35% of men, were appointed at HEW 4 or below. Comparable proportions of women and men were appointed at HEW 5 (24% women, 21.5 % men). However, from HEW 6 to the HEW 10 and above appointments, men predominated at each level. In the highest levels (HEW 10 or above), where only 2% of professional staff were first appointed, 3.5% of men compared with 1.2% of women obtained a first appointment.

Despite the significant number of women entering the university professional workforce since 2005, first appointment levels were still higher for men despite similar tertiary qualifications among both women and men. About one-third of the professional staff, both women and men, held a postgraduate qualification on appointment (see Table 8). As HEW level appointments have grown in number and complexity, we examined staff appointed since 2005, when well-established equity policies existed across the university sector. However, we found only 10.8% of the women were appointed at HEW 8 or above, compared with 20.9% of men.

One-fifth of professional staff negotiated their entry point when they were first employed with their current institution. Staff at lower classifications were least likely to negotiate their level of appointment, but there was no evidence to suggest that women were less likely than men to negotiate or to achieve the entry level they sought.

Table 8: Professional staff by year of first appointment, average HEW at first appointment, average age, and percentage holding postgraduate qualifications at appointment

Year of first appointment	Mean HEW level at first appointment, numbers in parenthesis		Mean age at first appointment		% within each cohort with PG qualifications at first appointment	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Before 1984	3.3 (228)	3.4 (170)	23.6	24.5	12.6	10.5
1985–1994	3.9 (728)	4.3 (350)	30.5	30.8	17.0	21.2
1995–2004	4.5 (1935)	5.1 (915)	35.1	35.3	24.2	26.9
2005–2011	5.1 (4200)	5.3 (1650)	35.8	36.5	32.6	35.3
Total	4.8 (7091)	5.3 (3085)	34.7	34.8	28.5	30.3

N in brackets refers to the numbers in cells that correspond to the percentages shown.
Source: WCAU professional staff survey.

Given human capital similarities among women and men, the outcomes raise questions regarding whether recruitment and selection processes were equitable on the basis of gender. A key point is that few women were appointed to, or attained the level of HEW 8 and above, so that major gender disparities remained at senior levels.

Promotion

Promotion and job reclassification were the two major forms of advancement for professional staff. A series of questions in the WCAU survey asked participants to report on the number of times they had applied for promotion and reclassification and their success rates in the previous five years, as well as their career aspirations for the next five years.

Similar proportions of women and men aspired to a higher appointment in the next five years: 54% of women and 55% of men. Approximately one-half (53%) had applied for promotion, with no gender differences. There was some indication that women tended more than men to aspire to a higher non-management appointment (30% of women and 24% of men), whereas more men were more inclined than women to aspire to a higher managerial position (24% of women and 31% of men).

Among those professional staff who had applied for promotion at least once in the previous five years at their university, women were more likely to have been successful than men with all their applications (54% women, 48% men), and less likely to never have been successful (22% women, 28% men).

With respect to support for promotion, more women than men reported that the level of support from supervisors was 'helpful' in advancing their career (47% women, 44% men).

Promotion applications were strongly associated with employment status. Overall, professional staff holding fixed-term appointments were much less likely to apply for promotion than their colleagues in permanent appointments (42% in fixed-term appointments compared with 57% in permanent appointments).

There was greater gender difference in advancement among professional staff appointed at lower HEW levels. HEW 7 is a critical step as few women advance beyond this classification (see Section 2). Further, the few professional women whose first appointment was at HEW 9 or 10 were less likely than men to reach the most senior level.

Reclassification

Approximately one-half of the professional staff, both women and men, considered their current classification (HEW level) was correct. A sizeable minority (35% of women, 40% of men) thought it was lower than it should be.

Approximately one-third of both women and men had had their classification reviewed in the previous five years. Of those, the majority were reclassified (60% women, 57% men). Both women and men were equally likely to see the process as 'thorough' and 'fair' (just over 60% in each case).

Working part-time

Approximately 19.5% of professional staff worked part-time at the time of the survey: more women (25%) than men (6.5%). A significant minority of staff had periods of both full-time and part-time employment: 25% of women and 12% of men had held both full-time and part-time appointments in universities. Far fewer employees had part-time experience only: more women (13%) than men (3%). These data reflect the relative ease in universities (as compared with other types of organisations) of transferring between full- and part-time work, and back again. This has been a key element of family friendly policies in universities.

Staff working part-time were less likely than full-timers to hold a permanent appointment: 62.5% of part-time women held a permanent appointment compared with 74% of full-time women; 55% of part-time men held a permanent appointment compared with 79% of full-time men. Staff who had only worked part-time were significantly more likely to be employed on fixed-term appointments (44.5%).

Many part-time staff worked only slightly fewer than full-time hours. About two-fifths (38%) worked between .8 and .9 full-time equivalent (FTE) hours, and another two-fifths were on .6 or .7 FTE appointments. Very few staff worked in less than .5 FTE positions. Few women and men at HEW 10 and above held part-time appointments and they were more likely than staff at other HEW levels to work in .8 or .9 FTE positions (58%).

The reasons women and men gave for working part-time differed significantly. About half of the women, but only one-sixth of the men, did so for family reasons.

One-fifth of the women and one-quarter of the men did not want full-time work. Most of this group were over 50 years of age, and this desire may be related to a transition towards retirement. Thus age, life, and work stage circumstances varied among part-time staff.

Women combining part-time and full-time work over a career

As the majority of professional staff working part-time were women, we examined the impact that this has over their career in the university sector. Australian universities generally have part-time work policies which allow staff who are full-time to convert to part-time and then back to full-time work, although there are variations between universities regarding the exact details of the arrangements. The group excluded from these policies is staff who have an initial part-time appointment, who cannot generally 'convert' except by applying for an advertised full-time position.

We divided the female professional staff into four groups:

- **Group 1:** women who had only worked part-time – 13%
- **Group 2:** women who were working part-time at the time of the survey but had previously worked full-time – 12.2%
- **Group 3:** women who were working full-time at the time of the survey but who had previously worked part-time (they had therefore worked full-time then part-time then full-time) – 12.8%
- **Group 4:** women who had only worked full-time – 62.1%.³⁷

The majority of women in each group were first appointed at or below HEW 4, with approximately one-fifth appointed at HEW 5. Slightly more women who had worked only full-time were appointed at the higher levels.

Part-time work was not uniformly distributed across HEW levels (see Table 9). The low levels of part-time work at HEW 9 and above are particularly striking, and are likely to relate to perceived or real negative effects on careers, and direct or more subtle discouragement of part-time arrangements by senior managers for those at higher levels.³⁸

Table 9: Professional women's current HEW level by PT/FT status (percentages)

	PT women	FT women
HEW 1-4	21.9	13.8
HEW 5	27.3	24.0
HEW 6	19.6	20.0
HEW 7	15.0	16.7
HEW 8	10.5	12.7
HEW 9	3.3	6.6
HEW 10	1.2	3.7
Above HEW 10	0.6	2.0
%Total	100%	100%
N	(1885)	(5571)

N in brackets refers to the total numbers of respondents in a column.
Source: WCAU professional staff survey.

The issue of whether periods of part-time work hinder women's career progress was also explored. While career success can be interpreted variously, one easily observable objective measure is job level.³⁹ The survey findings were therefore analysed for what they showed about the relationship between periods in part-time work and career advancement, measured by HEW level. This was a continuous measure constructed by subtracting a respondent's current HEW level from the HEW level at which they had been appointed at their first fixed-term or permanent appointment. Over half (58.7%) of the female professional staff, full- and part-time, had progressed beyond their initial HEW appointment level, although 39.9% had made no progress (see Table 10).

37. Bailey, J., Troup, C., & Strachan, G. (2014). Part-time work and advancement: A study of female non-academic staff in Australian universities. Working Paper, Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing, Griffith University. https://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/615589/Working-Paper-Bailey-Strachan-Troup-2014.pdf

38. Todd, P. & Binns, J. (2013). Work-life balance: Is it now a problem for management? *Gender, Work & Organization*, 20(3), 219–231; Kirby, E. & Krone, K. (2002). 'The policy exists but you can't really use it': Communication and the structuration of work-family policies. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 30(1), 50–77.

39. Laud, R. & Johnson, M. (2012). Upward mobility: A typology of tactics and strategies for career advancement. *Career Development International*, 17(3), 231–254; Gunz, H. & Heslin, P. (2005). Reconceptualizing career success. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(2), 105–111.

Our findings show overall (after controlling for personal measures, work experience and educational qualifications) that there is a negative relationship between working part-time and career advancement, as compared with working full-time only. Career advancement was least for women who had worked only part-time (Group 1). In contrast, it appears to have stalled the least for women who resumed full-time work after having earlier worked part-time (Group 3). Hence, part-time work acts as a small but measurable 'brake' on career progression, with those having periods of part-time work ending up a couple of salary steps below those who had only worked full-time, and those only working part-time, being a step or two lower again.

Table 10: Professional women's career advancement by employment history in the university sector

	Worked PT only (Grp 1)	Worked FT & PT – currently PT (Grp 2)	Worked FT & PT – currently FT (Grp 3)	Worked FT only (Grp 4)	Total
Backwards	1.9%	3.3%	1.6%	1.0%	1.5%
No advancement	60.3%	33.0%	28.6%	39.4%	39.9%
Some advancement	37.9%	63.6%	69.8%	59.6%	58.7%
Mean HEW steps of advancement ^a	.76 (1.2)	1.4 (1.4)	1.7 (1.6)	1.4 (1.4)	1.4 (1.6)
Median HEW steps of advancement	0	1	1	1	1
N	(73)	(806)	(867)	(4212)	(6733)

^a Means and standard deviations in brackets are reported for continuous variables

N in brackets refers to the total numbers of respondents in a column.

Source: WCAU professional staff survey.

In addition, for women who began their employment in a part-time appointment, the move to full-time employment appears to have required them to successfully apply for an advertised vacancy. Staff on fixed-term contracts, however, had no work security beyond the length of the contract and so did not have the opportunity to move to full-time employment. While some staff had access to provisions that allowed them under certain circumstances to move between full-time and part-time employment, other groups of staff did not have this access.

First Appointment and Advancement: Academic Staff (Permanent and Fixed-Term)

Appointment

The level at which academics were appointed varies by the type of appointment (TR; TI; RI) and whether it is permanent or a fixed-term contract (see Table 11). Academics in TR roles were mostly appointed at level B; TI and RI roles were mostly appointed at level A. TI and RI roles had higher rates of fixed-term contracts, hence academics who were appointed on fixed-term contracts were generally appointed at lower levels than their colleagues in permanent appointments.

The group with the highest proportion of fixed-term contracts are the RI academics, and this group had the greatest proportion appointed at the lowest levels. However, RI academics with permanent appointments, who made up a small proportion of the total academic workforce, had the highest proportion of high-level (C or above) first appointments for both men and women, albeit that for women this was significantly less than men (10% among women permanent RI academics and 26% among men).

Table 11: Academic first appointment: percentages at each level, by role type, and gender

First appointment	Type of academic appointment					
	TR		TI		RI	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Level A	37	36	47	42	69	62
Level B	55.5	52	44.5	42	26	26
Level C	6	9	7.5	13	3	7
Level D and E	1.5	3	1	3	2	5
N	(2233)	(2300)	(499)	(329)	(1327)	(1286)

N in brackets refers to the total numbers of respondents in a column.
Source: WCAU academic staff survey.

About one-quarter of academic staff (both women and men) negotiated their entry point when they were first employed with their current institution. Academics appointed at lower levels were least likely to negotiate over appointment level.

Promotion

A majority of both women and men aspired to a higher-level appointment in the next five years, with slightly more women (62%) than men (57%) wanting this. Among this group, less than 10% of both women and men wanted a management position. About one-fifth of academic staff either wanted to retire or work outside the university sector.

Similar proportions of women and men had applied for promotion within the previous five years: 40% of women and 42% of men. When women had applied, the WCAU survey found that they were more likely to be successful than men: 72% of women were successful in all their attempts compared with 67% of men, a finding consistent with earlier research.⁴⁰ However, because of the nature of the survey, we have no data from staff who may have left the university sector in frustration, and hence whether there are gender differences in exit rates.

Overall, women (44%) were more dissatisfied than men (39%) with their career opportunities.

40. Winchester, H., Lorenzo, S., Browning, L. & Chesterman, C. (2006). Academic women's promotions in Australian universities. *Employee Relations*, 28(6), 505-522.

Advancement among fixed-term research intensive academic staff

Employment insecurity for fixed-term RI academics was linked to barriers to promotion, with 62% of research academics reporting that they had made no progress through the career levels since their first appointment.

Fixed-term academics were much less likely to apply for promotion, compared with those employed in permanent positions. Of the academics in fixed-term employment, 73.6% had never applied for promotion with their current employer.

Fixed-term RI academics were also less likely to expect that they would have the opportunity to advance through the academic career structure. When asked where they expected to be in five years' time, fewer fixed-term academics expected to be at a higher level than was the case with respect to permanent academics. Fewer women (33%) expected to be at a higher level than men (41%), while nearly twice as many women (23%) as men (14%) expected to be on the same level in five years. Many others expected to leave.

Fixed-term teaching academics were also more dissatisfied with their career opportunities in the sector compared with permanent academics (see Table 12).

Table 12: 'I am satisfied with my career opportunities in the university sector as a whole' (%)

	Research-intensive Academics				Teaching Academics				Total
	Fixed-term		Permanent		Fixed-term		Permanent		
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Agree	35	37	56	58	39	40	49	47	44
Disagree	48	45	23	24	44	39	33	33	38
Neither/ Do not know	17	18	21	18	17	21	18	20	18
N	(868)	(867)	(103)	(151)	(288)	(272)	(1207)	(1359)	(5115)

Teaching academics refers to TR and TI academic staff.

N in brackets refers to the total numbers of respondents in a column.

Source: WCAU academic staff survey.

Fixed-term academics were more likely than permanent staff to say they experienced difficulties in accessing or receiving career supports. Opportunities for leadership and accessing internal funds were the areas of greatest difficulty. In all areas women were more likely than men to say these issues were an obstacle to career development.

For research academics the level of support they received in their careers revealed significant gender differences on nearly every measure. Compared with men, more women research academics, continuing and fixed-term, reported that they did not receive career support in applying for promotion, guidance in performance reviews, leadership opportunities, or access to internal funding. The responses of women fixed-term RI academics indicated that inability in accessing career supports were more of an issue for them than for women in permanent positions (see Table 13).

Fixed-term RI academics experienced more difficulties in accessing or receiving most career supports than either permanent RI academics or permanent and fixed-term teaching academics.

Table 13: Percentage of academics stating that the level of support was a major problem in their career advancement

	Research Intensive Academics				Teaching Academics				Total
	Fixed-term		Permanent		Fixed-term		Permanent		
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	
Support from supervisors applying for promotion	26	20	21	16	29	21	30	27	28
Guidance in performance reviews	24	18	19	15	23	17	30	23	25
Opportunities for leadership	29	21	19	20	27	17	26	23	24
Access to internal research funding	31	25	16	17	34	25	31	31	31

Teaching academics refers to TR and TI academic staff.
For approximate Ns see Table 12.
Source: WCAU academic staff survey.

First Appointment and Advancement: Casual Academic Teaching Staff

Appointment

Casual academic teaching staff had very different appointment processes compared with permanent and fixed-term staff. Hiring processes were very informal: more than two-thirds were offered work either through a contact at the university, typically either friend or department/academic contact. Only about 10% responded to an advertisement, either a public advertisement or one distributed internally within the department/faculty. One in five juggled work across a number of universities trying to make a living, yet on average their length of employment at any particular institution was between two and three years.

Advancement

Approximately one-third of casual academic teaching staff had applied for a permanent or fixed-term appointment within their university. The survey did not ask these staff how many times they had applied, but men were slightly more likely than women to report that they had been successful in their applications (41% women, 47% men), despite the fact that men were no more qualified than women (with 60.9% women and 60.2% men having postgraduate qualifications).

Casual academic employment did not provide a career path as usually the only reward for good work was more casual employment. As a consequence, this work could serve to detract from the search for more secure academic employment due to its time consuming nature and detrimental impact on research productivity.

Career Advancement, Discipline, and Gender Disadvantage: Academic Staff

We identified three important structural ways related to discipline in which women academics were disadvantaged in comparison to men in seeking to advance academic careers. These were:

- *insecurity* – the stronger likelihood, within each role specialisation, for women to be in fixed-term rather than continuing jobs as compared with men (insecurity is discussed separately in Section 4); and
- *marginalisation* – the greater tendency for newly appointed women to be placed into TI positions (some of them teaching-only positions), which are widely seen as lacking the career opportunities that are available in more balanced TR positions; and
- *funnelling* – the reducing proportions of women at higher academic levels.

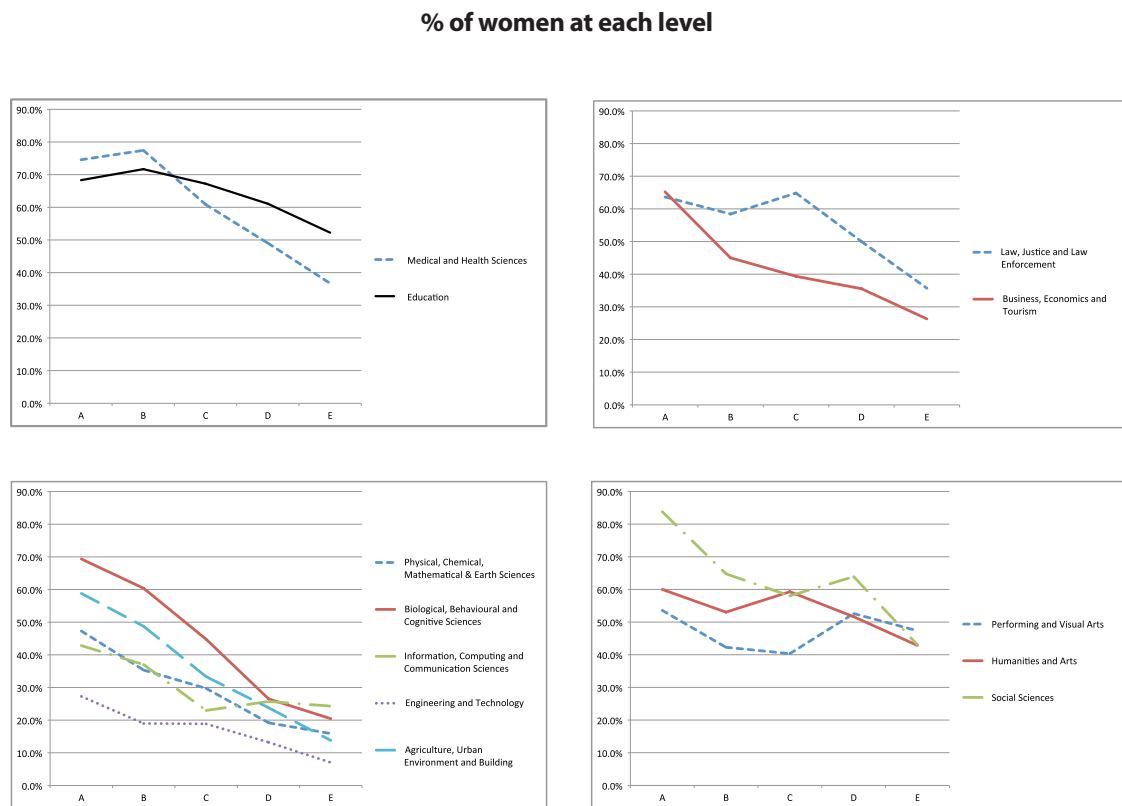
Each of these is linked to discipline because:

- role specialisation heavily shapes insecurity, and in the teaching-heavy disciplines, gender differences in role specialisation were only weakly significant (that is, at the 10% level). But in the research-heavy disciplines (all of which were STEM disciplines), gender differences are strongly significant. Women are three percentage points more likely than men in the research-heavy disciplines to be in a research intensive position, which have high rates of fixed-term employment, and they are eight percentage points less likely than men to be in a combined TR position, the positions with the lowest rates of fixed-term employment. Thus in research-heavy disciplines in particular, men dominate the role specialisations that are most likely to have permanent status. Moreover, there are gender differences in continuation rates among RI staff in research-heavy disciplines and these cannot be explained by differences in age and tenure;
- in the teaching-heavy disciplines, women were only slightly more likely than men to be TI. However, in research-heavy (mostly STEM) disciplines, there was a large and significant difference: women in teaching jobs were considerably more likely than men to be streamed into TI jobs with few career opportunities;
- career paths for women were ‘vertically narrow’ – that is, they show ‘funnelling’ – in almost all disciplines, although funnelling differs by discipline. Funnelling curves (lines indicating the proportion of women at each level) by individual discipline groups are shown in Figure 13. Funnelling was, on average, worse in research-heavy disciplines. Funnelling was a major problem for women in teaching positions in research-heavy fields.

Funnelling is worse in research-heavy disciplines, especially in teaching jobs in research-heavy disciplines. Yet, it is only through access to teaching positions that most academics are able to obtain job security. So funnelling women out of higher-level teaching jobs in research-heavy disciplines essentially means that women are being funnelled out of secure employment in the research-heavy disciplines.

The survey findings do not support the proposition that funnelling will disappear over time as women are employed in greater numbers within the profession. Gendered differences in insecurity and marginalisation suggest that, even if the effects of funnelling reduce over time, career disadvantage is unlikely to disappear, unless positive steps are taken to address it.

Figure 13: Funnelling patterns within disciplines: women as a proportion of total academic staff at each level, within disciplines.



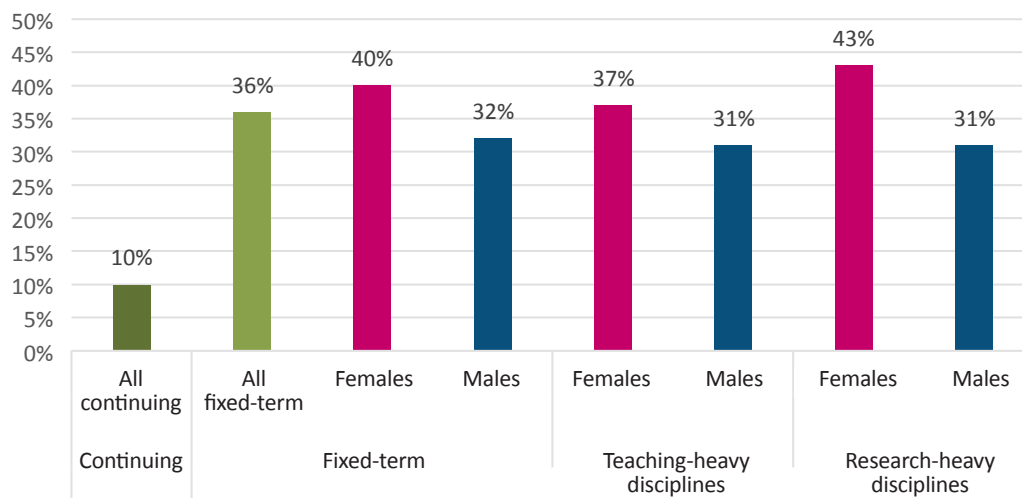
Source: WCAU academic staff survey.

Marginalisation of female teaching appointees

We looked at all teaching positions – that is, those positions that involved over 20% of time spent on teaching, either TR or TI positions. Our dependent variable was the proportion of teaching positions that were TI. Key findings are illustrated in Figure 14.

In the WCAU survey, only 10% of continuing teaching appointments were TI. However, 36% of fixed-term teaching appointments were TI. Newer appointments tended to be fixed-term, particularly at entry levels. Thus TI positions not only had weaker career opportunities, they were also on average more insecure. There were also notable gender differences. Among men, 32% of teaching fixed-term contracts were TI, but among women the proportion was 40%.

Figure 14: Proportion of teaching appointments that are TI.



Source: WCAU academic staff survey.

Again, discipline mattered, and the differential was worse in research-heavy than in teaching-heavy disciplines. In teaching-heavy disciplines, the gap was small and non-significant at 6 percentage points (37% for women, compared with 31% for men). However, in research-heavy disciplines, the gap was significant and double, at 12 percentage points (43% for women, compared with 31% for men).

Impact of discipline on advancement of women academics

Thus, disciplines demonstrate different patterns of marginalisation, these are gendered, and marginalisation of new entrants into teaching is worst and most gendered in the research-heavy disciplines. The outlook for and experience among casual teaching staff also varies substantially by discipline.⁴¹

These findings illustrate the general point that academic disciplines are a basis for segmented labour markets with different career paths, varying degrees of external transferability, and different patterns of insecurity and marginalisation. There is not a single labour market for academics, but rather a series of segmented labour markets organised around discipline. To varying degrees, people move in and out of universities while maintaining positions within those disciplines or professions.

It is important to be aware that the cultures that shape barriers to female advancement are not just located within universities; they are located within disciplines and can only be properly addressed by action that crosses university boundaries. Solving the problems of women academics cannot be done only at the university level. It also requires action at the discipline level, and the involvement of professional bodies relating to the disciplines, covering people both inside and outside academia. Some of those disciplines, especially in the STEM area, are presently engaged in internal discussions about the barriers facing women in career advancement. Universities need to be part of, contribute to, or even stimulate such debates.

The results in this and preceding parts of this section raise questions as to whether unconscious bias operates within academia. Unconscious bias refers to the tendency for people's beliefs, thoughts and attitudes to lead them to respond in ways that are in line with stereotypes without conscious or explicit awareness they are thus influenced. This has been shown in other studies to take the form of unconsciously applying a stronger weighting to the qualifications and achievements of male candidates and a lower weighting to the achievements of female candidates in professional settings, with small differences accumulating over time.⁴²

41. May, R., Peetz, D. & Strachan, G. (2013). The casual academic workforce and labour market segmentation in Australia. *Labour and Industry*, 23(3), 258-275.

42. Valian, V. (2005). Beyond gender schemas: Improving the advancement of women in academia. *Hypatia*, 20(3), 198-213.

The gender patterns in rates of application for and success in promotion would argue against unconscious bias, but on the other hand gender differences in marginalisation into fixed-term teaching-only roles, in perceived career support problems (especially amongst fixed-term academics), continuation rates for fixed-term staff (especially in research-heavy disciplines), in level of first appointment and in satisfaction with career opportunities (especially amongst fixed-term academics), all raise questions as to whether unconscious bias operates. This is lent support by the persistence of male breadwinner stereotypes discussed in the previous section. While the evidence is mixed, then, there remain good grounds for suspicion that unconscious bias is still a problem in universities.

Transition to Retirement

For the majority of university workers, a pension, primarily a UniSuper pension, was the main source of income expected in retirement. However, one-third of casual academic teaching staff did not know what their main income source would be in retirement. This compared with 19% of professional and academic women, and 14% of professional and academic men.

Overall, more than half of all staff, (68% of professional staff, 65% of academic staff and 54% of casual staff), wanted some form of change in work arrangements as they transitioned towards retirement. A smaller percentage of full-time workers wanted to continue their current patterns of work compared with part-time and casual workers. A higher proportion of men compared with women working full-time wanted to continue working full-time.

The preference of all groups of staff was to reduce the number of days worked each week rather than reducing the number of hours worked each day. About 42% of all staff would have liked to reduce the number of days they worked each week, while only 21% of staff would have liked to reduce the hours they worked each day. Other options included changing the type of work undertaken (22%), and reducing responsibilities (22%). Fewer staff wanted contract or casual work (10%). From Table 14 it can be seen that full-time workers wanted to reduce their hours each day, more so than part-time or casual workers. This was especially the case among academic staff. Generally, the highest percentages of staff wanting to reduce the number of days worked were among the academic staff, women, and full-time workers (see Table 14).

The majority of workers who desired some form of change in work circumstances as they transitioned to retirement thought this would have been achievable (70% of professional staff, 65% of academic staff and 81% of casual academic teaching staff). However, one-third of women and one-quarter of men perceived that a change in work circumstances might not be affordable during the transition to retirement. Academic staff and men were most concerned about their organisation's lack of support for reducing the days worked per week as they transitioned to retirement.

Table 14: Like to reduce days per week worked: percentage of university workers, by age, gender, and employment status

		Women			Men		
Age		Professional Staff	Academic	Casual	Professional Staff	Academic	Casual
<=49 years	Full-time	57.8	49.4	-	45.5	36.7	-
	Part time	35.9	33.0	29.7	27.8	30.3	25.4
>=50 years	Full-time	61.6	50.4	-	48.8	36.4	-
	Part time	33.8	40.1	17.9	35.4	33.6	19.1

Source: WCAU professional, academic and sessional staff surveys.

Recommendations

We recommend that:

- universities continue to monitor promotion and reclassification processes in order to ensure that these career advancement mechanisms are accessed by women and men equally and that the success rates are similar.
- universities offer a wide range of ways in which staff can modify their work patterns in the transition to retirement and assist staff in accessing arrangements appropriate for their individual circumstances.
- universities provide all staff who have managerial and supervisory responsibilities with mandatory training in combatting 'unconscious bias' which has been shown to lead to a stronger weighting being given to the qualifications and achievements of male candidates and a lower weighting to the achievements of female candidates for positions in areas that historically were male dominated.
- universities liaise with professional bodies and the Academies across the range of disciplines and professions represented, to counter sexism and discrimination in career progress. Deans, Heads of Departments and Managers of professional areas should be asked to devise strategies for engagement with professional bodies, with a view to encouraging the development of policies that address gender equities.
- Universities Australia collaborate with professional bodies and the Academies relevant to academic disciplines and professions represented in the sector and encourage joint action between universities and these organisations to address gender inequities in labour markets in which universities participate.

Professional staff

- universities regularly review the levels of 'first appointment' for both female and male professional staff to ensure they are similar, and investigate any biases in recruitment and selection.
- universities promote, among professional staff, the relative success of reclassification applications and the fact (where this is indeed the case within those universities) that professional women's success in promotion applications are comparable to men's.
- universities review their part-time work policies to ensure transitions between full- and part-time work (and back again) are as seamless and rapid as possible, and that barriers are not erected to 'reversion' from part- to full-time work (or vice versa).
- universities investigate ways in which staff whose initial appointment is on a part-time basis can convert to a full-time position if desired.
- universities actively create awareness among employees at higher HEW levels that part-time work is available, and ensure senior managers do not overtly or subtly discourage any employees from working part-time.

Academic Staff

- universities develop explicit career paths for teaching intensive (TI) appointments to ensure that extended career paths are available through to levels D and E, and provide genuine opportunities for academics starting in TI positions to undertake sufficient research to transfer into a combined teaching and research (TR) position if they wish.
- universities pay particular attention to the relationship between gender and teaching intensive (TI), fixed-term academic appointments in research-heavy (STEM) disciplines, requiring managers in areas where gender inequity has been identified to play an active role in the development of specific equity policies and their implementation.

Appendix 1

WCAU Sample: Overview of Age, Qualifications, Place of Birth

Professional staff

- The median age was 43 years for women and 44 years for men. Only 12% of professional staff were younger than 30 years of age, and 9% were over 60 years of age.
- 50% of professional staff held a bachelor degree qualification and 29%, a postgraduate qualification.
- 68% were Australian born, and 1% were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI).

Academic staff

- The median age was 46 years among women and 47 years among men. Only 4% of academic staff were younger than 30 years of age, and 14% were over 60 years of age.
- 80% of academic staff held a PhD qualification.
- 58% were Australian born, and 1% were ATSI.

Casual academic teaching staff

- Casual academic teaching staff were much younger than other academic staff. One-half were younger than 34 years of age, while 9% were 60 years of age or older. Median age was 36 years for women and 35 for men.
- Half were studying at the time of the survey; 17% held a PhD qualification.
- Two-thirds were born in Australia, and 1% were ATSI.

Appendix 2

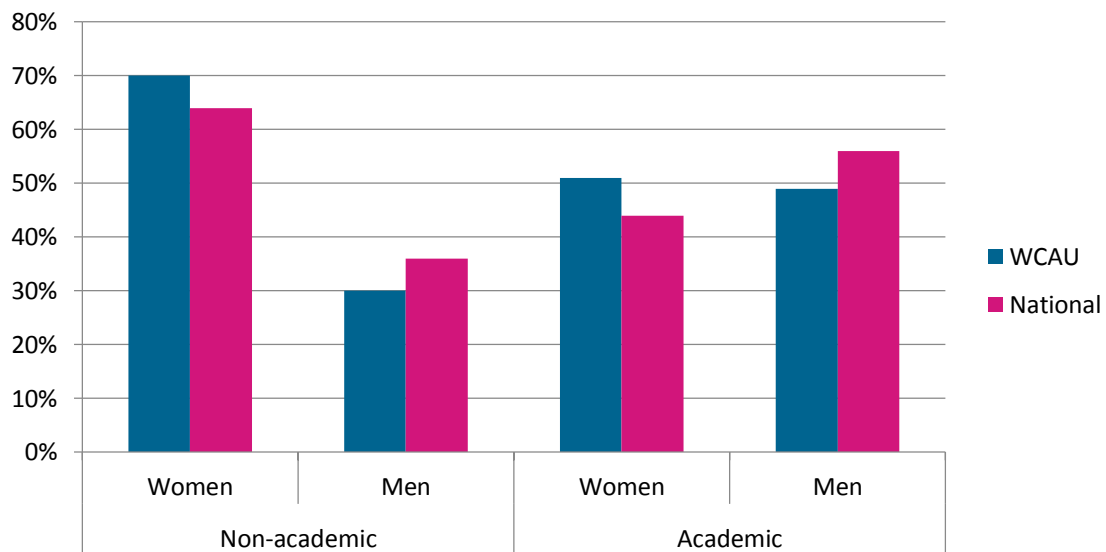
Comparison of National and WCAU Sample: Proportion of Workforce by Gender, in a Permanent Appointment, and Age Categories

A comparison of the WCAU sample of permanent and fixed-term academic and professional staff only with the national statistics for 2011 was undertaken to identify the representativeness of the WCAU sample (see Figures 14-19). Overall, the WCAU sample is relatively consistent with national statistics on gender, age, and staff in permanent appointments. There are slight differences that should be taken into account when considering the findings that are reported. The WCAU sample also has a higher representation of Group of Eight universities and fewer unaligned universities than the population.

The WCAU sample shows a higher proportion of women to men among professional and academic groups than the national data reports for 2011. This is a difference of 6% among the professional group and 7% in the academic group. Whereas WCAU data show a slight majority of the academic workforce as female, the national federal statistics demonstrate a slight majority as male. This may reflect the higher response rates among females typically found in self-report surveys.

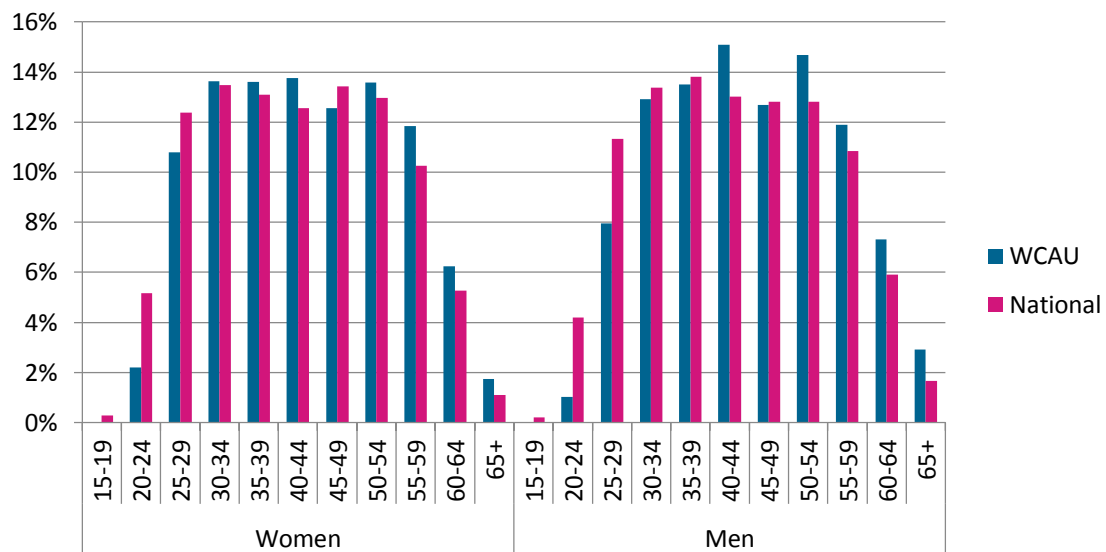
The WCAU sample and national statistics on the age of the professional and academic workforce are fairly similar: differences of between 1–3% across the age categories exist. A limitation of the WCAU sample is the relatively limited numbers of younger aged groups in the professional staff sample; at most, this is a difference of 3%.

Figure 15: National Statistics and WCAU sample: percentage of men and women in non-academic, and academic workforce.



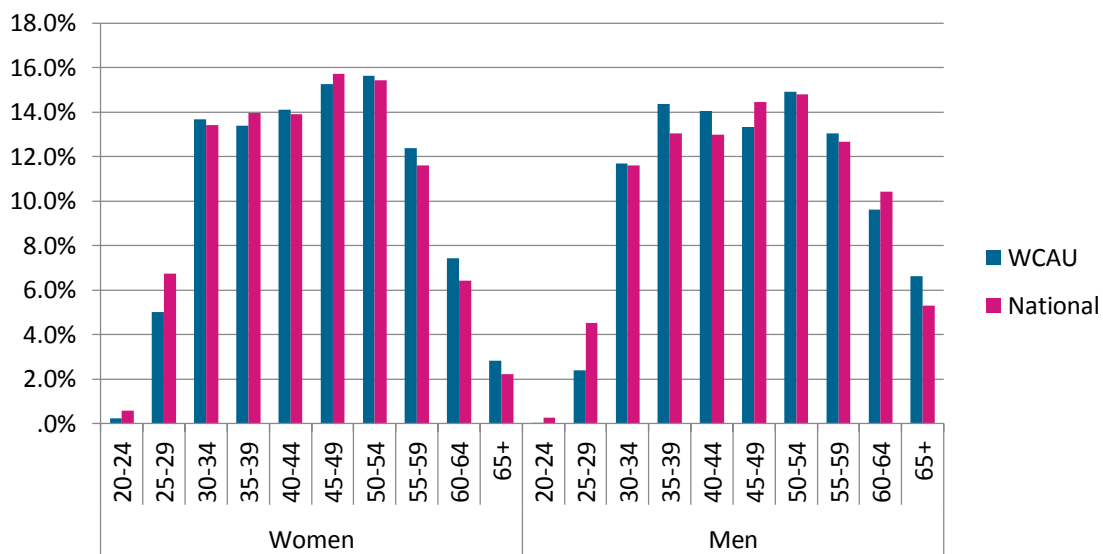
Sources: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission); WCAU survey data.

Figure 16: National Statistics and WCAU sample: percentage of non-academic workers, by age, and gender.



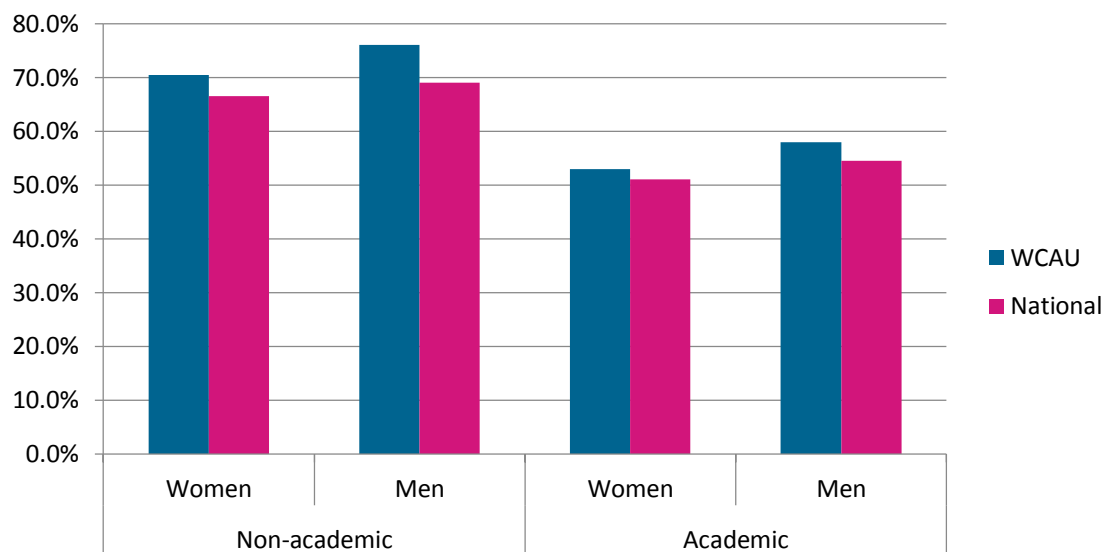
Sources: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission); WCAU survey data.

Figure 17: National statistics and WCAU sample: percentage of academic workers, by age, and gender.



Sources: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission); WCAU survey data.

Figure 18: National Statistics and WCAU sample: percentage of non-academic and academic staff in permanent appointments.



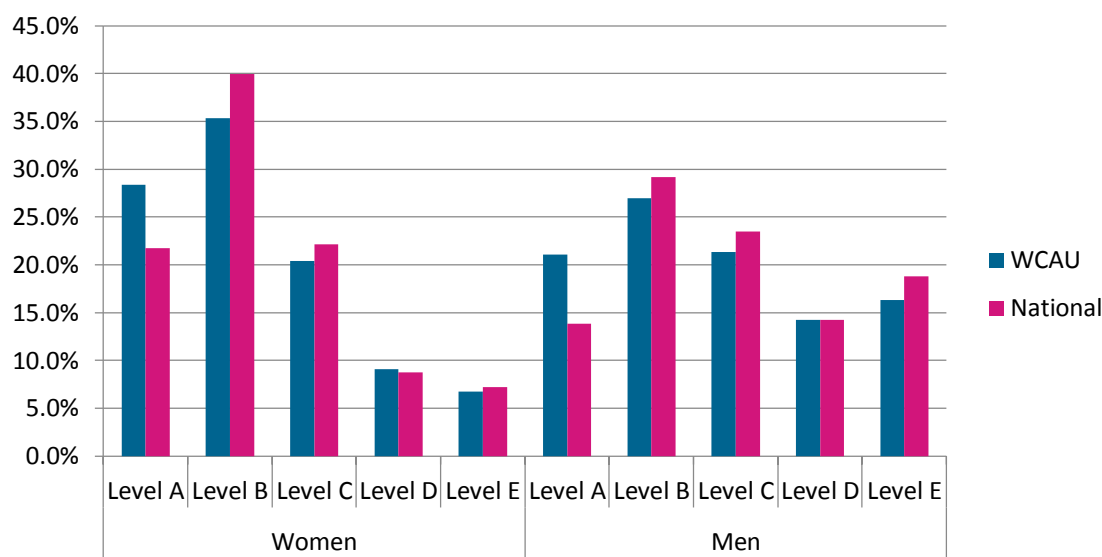
Sources: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission); WCAU survey data.

Figure 19: National Statistics and WCAU sample: percentage of professional staff position classification, by gender.



Sources: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission); WCAU survey data.

Figure 20: National Statistics and WCAU sample: percentage of academic staff position classification, by gender.



Sources: Australian Government Department of Education and Training, Selected Higher Education Statistics, unpublished data (copyright Commonwealth of Australia, reproduced with permission); WCAU survey data.

Appendix 3

PUBLICATIONS from ARC LINKAGE GRANT LP0991191: Gender and Employment Equity: Strategies for Advancement in Australian Universities

Report

Strachan, G., Troup, C., Peetz, D., Whitehouse, G., Broadbent, K. & Bailey, J. (2012). *Work and Careers in Australian Universities: Report on Employee Survey*. Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing, Griffith University.

http://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/469192/Work-and-Career-Report-on-Employee-Survey_Final-v2.pdf

Strachan, G., Troup, C., Peetz, D., Whitehouse, G., Broadbent, K. & Bailey, J. (2012). *Work and Careers in Australian Universities: Executive Summary*. Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing, Griffith University.

http://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/469110/EXECUTIVE-SUMMARY-Work-and-Careers-Report-2012-final.pdf

PhD theses

May, R. (2014). *An Investigation of the Casualisation of Academic Work in Australia*, PhD thesis, Griffith University.

Farrelly, B. (2014). *Negotiating Career Progression and Parenthood: Family-Adaptiveness in an Australian University*, PhD thesis, The University of Queensland.

Journal Articles

Bailey, J., Peetz, D., Whitehouse, G., Strachan, G. & Broadbent, K. (2016 forthcoming). Academic pay loadings and gender in Australian universities. *Journal of Industrial Relations*.

Skinner, T., Peetz, D., Strachan, G., Whitehouse, G., Bailey, J. & Broadbent, K. (2015). Self-reported harassment and bullying in Australian universities: Explaining differences between regional, metropolitan and elite institutions. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 37(5): 558-571.

Broadbent, K., Troup, C. & Strachan, G. (2013). Research staff in Australian universities: Is there a career path? *Labour and Industry*, 23(3): 276-295.

Farrelly, B. & Whitehouse, G. (2013). Equality enabling parental leave: Prevalence and distribution in Australian universities. *Labour and Industry*, 23(3): 245-257.

May, R., Peetz, D. & Strachan, G. (2013). The casual academic workforce and labour market segmentation in Australia. *Labour and Industry*, 23(3): 258-275.

May, R., Strachan, G. & Peetz, D. (2013). Workforce development and renewal in Australian universities and the management of casual academic staff. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice*, 10(3): 1-26.

Strachan, G., Bailey, J., Wallace, M. & Troup, C. (2013). Gender equity in professional and general staff in Australian universities: The contemporary picture. *Labour and Industry*, 23(3): 215-230.

Working Paper

Bailey, J., Troup, C. & Strachan, G. (2014). Part-time work and advancement: A study of female non-academic staff in Australian universities. Working Paper Series, Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing, Griffith University.
http://www.griffith.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/615589/Working-Paper-Bailey-Strachan-Troup-2014.pdf

Selected Conference Papers

In addition to those listed, there have been items in Linkage Partner publications and many presentations at these organisations and university seminars.

Peetz, D., Strachan, G. & Troup, C. (2014). Discipline, change and gender in the academic workforce: A report from the Work and Careers in Australian Universities Project. Paper presented to 28th AIRAANZ conference, Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand, Melbourne, 7-9 February 2014.
<http://www.griffith.edu.au/business-government/centre-work-organisation-wellbeing/research/regulation-institutions/projects/gender-equity-in-australian-universities/?a=615445>

Whitehouse, G. & Nesic, M. (2014). Gender and career progression in academia: Assessing equity and diversity policy directions in Australian universities. Paper presented to the Australian Political Studies Association Annual Conference, 28 Sept - 1 October, University of Sydney. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2440136>

*WHERE TO
FROM HERE?*

