An Investigation of the Casualisation of
Academic Work in Australia

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Submitted in fulfilment in the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

September 2013
Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

.........................

Robyn May
September 2013
Papers accepted for publication

Journal articles


Book chapter
May, R & Strachan, G (2014 in press) ‘We are not included: The experience of casual (temporary) academic staff in Australia’, in CAUT (ed.) Casualising the Academy, Lorimer Press, Otowa

Refereed conference papers
Acknowledgments

My research was part of an ARC Linkage project, *Gender and Employment Equity: Strategies for advancement in Australian Universities*, 2009-2012 LP0991191. I am very grateful for the APAI scholarship and the additional funds from the Griffith Business School which enabled me to live in Melbourne and study at Griffith in Brisbane. It has been very rewarding to be part of a fantastic research team, led by Professor Glenda Strachan.

I want to thank the ARC Linkage project partners, NTEU, Unisuper, and Universities Australia Executive Women, and extend particular thanks to former NTEU President Carolyn Allport who was involved from the early stages of the project. Thanks to Greg Furey at Unisuper for his assistance with extracting the data. Thanks to colleagues at the NTEU, particularly Ken McAlpine and Linda Gale, for support and inspiration.

I am especially grateful to my supervisors Professor Glenda Strachan, Dr Kaye Broadbent, and Professor David Peetz, without whose expertise, guidance, and care I would not have made it this far. I have learnt a lot from each of you and I have greatly appreciated your patience and encouragement, and the fact that you always treated me more as a colleague than as a student. Thank you also to Professor Sharon Bell who has given me fantastic support throughout the three and half years. My research and writing skills have benefited enormously from our many interesting discussions. I really appreciate the time you have made for me.

Thanks to the interview participants who made time to tell their stories, the university liaison staff who sent out the information and interview requests on my behalf, and all the casual academics who took part in the survey.

Thanks to the many other colleagues who have provided encouragement, advice and much to think about along the way, especially RMIT colleagues Iain Campbell and Gavin Moodie.

Finally thanks to family and friends who have seen me through the ups and downs of the past three and half years, and endured my many absences. Thanks to my Dad for always encouraging me to do my best. Thanks to Magnus for technical, and editorial support, and to our son Keir who I hope thinks anything is possible if you put your mind to it.
Abstract

Australia’s universities have undergone a transformation over the past three decades. These changes have impacted heavily on academic staff and academic work. For some the ‘ivory tower’ offering lifelong academic employment still exists, while many others aspire to it. However, the reality of working life for most academic staff in Australia’s universities is increasingly characterised by an institutional invisibility manifest in poor conditions, lack of career path and no job security. Much of the teaching work in Australia’s universities today is performed by casual, hourly paid, staff underscoring this bifurcation of academic work. Casualisation of academic work has arisen from a mix of demand side and supply side factors, overlayed by the regulatory environment and the impact of new forms of public management on the university sector. These processes are part of a re-shaping of academic work and they sit within what is currently a highly complex and challenging environment for universities. Universities operate in a competitive and volatile global context, and have their missions and purpose framed firmly by economic imperatives.

Australia is not alone in the shift to more insecure academic employment as the development has parallels with changes in the universities of the Anglo-American nations, where the employment of academic staff on a temporary basis has become a prominent feature. At the same time as academic work is changing, the academic workforce is ageing, prompting concerns about skill shortages over coming decades when the current generation of academics retire. The ‘enterprise university’ (Marginson & Considine 2000) which is characterised by devolved management and budgeting, and shaped by the creation of quasi-markets for education, has not placed an importance on workforce planning. Further, union efforts to regulate insecure employment in the university sector have been stymied by a harsh and re-regulated industrial environment, particular under the Conservative Liberal/National Party Coalition Government, 1996-2007.

Using mixed method research, the research questions posed in the thesis are: why is academic work increasingly casualised in Australia; what does the casual academic workforce look like; what are the implications for casual academics, academic staff, university management, and public policy; and, what are the gender dimensions of the casualisation of academic employment?

The research has involved the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data analysed in this thesis was gathered from a large scale
survey, the Work and Careers in Australian Universities Survey (WCAU). This survey of academic, general/professional, and casual academic staff across 19 universities was conducted during 2011 and forms part of an ARC Linkage project, *Gender and Employment Equity: Strategies for advancement in Australian Universities, 2009-2012* LP0991191, led by Professor Glenda Strachan. The casual academic staff survey received a 13.3 per cent response rate comprising 3160 responses.

The qualitative data gathered for the thesis comes from case studies at two very different universities, including interviews with casual academic staff, academics managing casual staff and senior managers, as well as document analysis. The data has been supplemented with analysis of existing publically available longitudinal data on the casual academic workforce, and data from the universities superannuation fund, Unisuper, to estimate the headcount size and nature of the casual academic workforce.

The thesis is theoretically informed using segmented labour market theory to conceptualise the processes of casualisation in Australia’s university sector and to understand and explore the impact of New Public Management on academic work. Segmented labour market theory assists in unpacking the processes of casualisation; how employer strategy, labour supply and the impact of the wider regulatory environment cause labour markets to be segmented and to explain how inequality can occur (Rubery 2005). The thesis describes the shape of the casual academic labour market, the characteristics of casual academic work and the impact this has had on academic staff, university management and the university sector.

The thesis argues that the casualisation of academic work has been driven by devolved budgeting and management processes, and a deteriorating funding environment for universities, compounded by a harsh regulatory and industrial environment. Casual employment, a unique Australian expression of insecure employment, has become embedded in the university sector as a management response to dealing with funding uncertainty. In using this form of flexible labour university managers have avoided responsibility for academic workforce planning and renewal. Casualisation has resulted in high costs for casual academic staff and for the academic staff who manage them, with significant policy and workforce implications.

Across the Australian workforce casualisation has a gendered pattern, reflected in the enduring nature of the male breadwinner model and the lack of secure flexible part-time work options for women. This gendered pattern is also apparent in the casualisation of academic work, which has serious consequences for gender equity and future workforce
planning. The casualisation of academic employment has been aptly summed up as: ‘the hidden part of the massification that has taken place in higher education in Australia over the last 30 years’ (Percy et al. 2008, p. ii).
# Table of Contents

Abstract ............................................................................................................................... vii

Table of Contents .............................................................................................................. xi

List of Tables ...................................................................................................................... xv

List of Figures ..................................................................................................................... xvii

List of Abbreviations ......................................................................................................... xix

INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................... 1

CHAPTER 1: THE UNIVERSITY AS EMPLOYER AND THE CHANGED NATURE OF ACADEMIC WORK ................................................................. 11

Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 11

The idea of a University ...................................................................................................... 12

The changing environment for the Anglo-American universities – 1970s to present .......... 17

Explaining these changes – New Public Management ....................................................... 25

NPM and universities ........................................................................................................ 28

The casual academic – Australia’s unique manifestation of insecure academic work ...... 32

The size and scale of the casual academic workforce in Australia .................................. 40

CHAPTER 2: THE CASUALISATION OF ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT .......... 53

Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 53

Casualisation in the Australian labour market: An overview ........................................ 54

The casual academic workforce in Australia’s universities .............................................. 62

Overview of insecure academic work in Anglo-American universities ............................ 75

A typology of the casual academic .................................................................................. 80

The impact of insecure academic employment on teaching quality: International and Australian literature ........................................................................................................ 88

Theoretical approaches and developing a theoretical framework .................................. 88

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY ......................................................................................... 113

Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 113

Methodological approach ................................................................................................. 113

Data used for this research ............................................................................................... 116

Data collection methods – quantitative data .................................................................. 117

Construct validity .............................................................................................................. 124

Data collection – qualitative data ................................................................................... 127

Data limitations – qualitative and quantitative data ....................................................... 133

CHAPTER 4: THE WORK AND CAREERS IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES SURVEY OF CASUAL ACADEMIC STAFF ......................................................... 135

Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 135

The demographic profile of respondents ....................................................................... 136
Where are casuals employed? ......................................................... 139
 Discipline – which academic disciplines are casual academics working in? ..................... 143
 Recruitment – how do casual academics gain casual academic work? ............................ 149
 Patterns of work and income ....................................................................................... 150
 A typology of casual academic staff ............................................................................. 155
 Conditions of work – job and career support and access to facilities ............................... 164
 Career satisfaction ........................................................................................................ 172
 The frustrated academic ............................................................................................... 177
 Frustrated academic rates and career satisfaction – explaining the differences for females .. 184
 Job satisfaction ............................................................................................................. 185
 External mobility .......................................................................................................... 188
 Conclusion .................................................................................................................... 189

CHAPTER 5: THE CASE STUDY UNIVERSITIES ....................................... 195
 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 195
 The Sandstone University category .............................................................................. 196
 The Newer University category ................................................................................... 196
 Background workforce size – Old University and New University ................................. 197
 Casual academic staff data – Old University ............................................................... 198
 Casual academic staff data – New University ............................................................... 199
 Policy and industrial provisions ................................................................................... 200
 The interviewees .......................................................................................................... 205

CHAPTER 6: WORKING AS A CASUAL ACADEMIC – THE CASE STUDIES 213
 Institutional invisibility ................................................................................................. 215
 Job quality – pay and conditions .................................................................................. 220
 Career paths and building a career .............................................................................. 223
 The impact of job insecurity: finance, careers and ambitions ....................................... 229
 Frustrated academics: The transition to more secure academic work and the ‘tipping point’ .. 232
 Gendered precariousness ............................................................................................... 235
 The differences and similarities between New University and Old University ............ 238

CHAPTER 7: MANAGING CASUAL ACADEMICS – SENIOR MANAGERS AND ACADEMICS AS MANAGERS .................. 245
 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 245
 Part I: The senior managers ......................................................................................... 246
 Policies and industrial arrangements ............................................................................ 247
 Budgets and the impact on staffing decisions ................................................................ 249
 Recruitment, retention and workforce planning ......................................................... 252
 Risks associated with high levels of casualisation ....................................................... 255
 The causes of casualisation ......................................................................................... 259
CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION ............................................................................. 289

Introduction ............................................................................................. 289
Demand side – influential factors ........................................................... 294
Labour supply – influential factors ......................................................... 296
Outcomes – the impacts on casual academic staff .................................. 304
Outcomes: The impact on academics managing casual staff ............... 313
Conflicts and contradictions of segmented labour markets – teaching quality .... 316
The unique university setting – policies and practices in the organisational context .......... 317
Revisiting the research questions ......................................................... 320
Conclusion ............................................................................................... 321

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION ........................................................................... 323

APPENDIX A: MARGINSON’S TYPOLOGY OF UNIVERSITIES ............... 329
APPENDIX B: THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT FOR CASUAL ACADEMIC STAFF .......................................................... 331
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES ..................................................... 345
APPENDIX D: SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES ............................................... 347
References .............................................................................................. 349
List of Tables

Table 1.1: Full-time equivalent university academic staff, ratio of casual to non-casual, Australia, selected years ................................................................. 43
Table 1.2: Research staff as a proportion of all academic staff ................................................................. 44
Table 1.3: Women’s proportions of the academic workforce and the casual academic workforce various years ................................................................. 45
Table 2.1 Variations of insecurity amongst academic staff in the Anglo nations ...................... 79
Table 2.2: Junior’s typology of casual academic staff ........................................................................ 82
Table 3.1: WCAU Survey response rate – casual academic staff survey ................................. 119
Table 3.2: Proposed casual academic staff typology – motivation and orientation .... 123
Table 3.3: Average response rates by university type – WCAU 2011 ........................................ 125
Table 3.4: New University payroll data – casual academic staff by semester 1&2, 2011 compared with WCAU results for New University ........................................ 127
Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of survey respondents ........................................ 138
Table 4.2: Overall contactable population and sample by university type .............................. 139
Table 4.3: Respondents working at more than one institution by University type ....... 140
Table 4.4: Proportion of respondents studying for a PhD qualification by University type ........................................................................................................ 141
Table 4.5 Casual academic density by university type (headcount) ........................................ 141
Table 4.6: PhD qualified respondents by University type and sex ............................................. 143
Table 4.7: Academic discipline of respondents, and median age of discipline ............. 145
Table 4.8: Discipline of respondents - casual academic staff and academic staff and gender composition .................................................................................. 147
Table 4.9: How respondents obtained their casual positions ............................................... 149
Table 4.10: Casual academic respondents’ length of employment at ‘this university’ 151
Table 4.11: Reported gross weekly earnings ............................................................................ 151
Table 4.12: Main sources of income and casual earnings per week ........................................ 152
Table 4.13: Respondents working at more than one institution by sex .................................... 154
Table 4.14: Type of casual work undertaken by sex .................................................................. 154
Table 4.15: Total usual weekly hours of all face-to-face teaching by sex ....................... 155
Table 4.16: Detailed and broad typologies of casual academic respondents – motivation and orientations to casual work ......................................................... 157
Table 4.17: Typology of casual academics by sex ..................................................................... 160
Table 4.18: Typology of casual academics by university type (Marginson typology adapted) ................................................................................................ 161
Table 4.19: All ‘disciplines’ by typology of casual academic .................................................. 162
Table 4.20: Respondents with access to resources and amenities by sex .......................... 164
Table 4.21: Respondents who had access to financial support for their research by study status and sex .............................................................................. 165
Table 4.22: Have you ever taken part in or received any of the following? .................... 166
Table 4.23: Access to job and career supports, by University type, and overall sample .... 167
Table 4.24: Access to job and career supports by casual type ............................................. 168
Table 4.25: Access to job and career supports by gender composition of discipline .. 169
Table 4.26 Access to job and career supports by study status ............................................ 170
Table 4.27: Access to resources and amenities by university type, study status and gender composition of discipline ................................................................. 171
Table 4.28: Career satisfaction ........................................................................................................ 172
Table 4.29: Career satisfaction by sex, university type, PhD qualification, and casual type ................................................................. 173
Table 4.30: Career satisfaction by gender composition of discipline ........................................ 174
Table 4.31: Career satisfaction by academic discipline ............................................................... 175
Table 4.32: Career satisfaction by access to supports and amenities ........................................ 176
Table 4.33: Career satisfaction by access to induction, professional development ................ 176
Table 4.34: Frustrated academic rates by sex .............................................................................. 178
Table 4.35: Frustrated academic rates for males and females with a PhD and studying for PhD ................................................................. 179
Table 4.36: Frustrated academic rates by sex and university type ............................................ 180
Table 4.37: Frustrated academic rate by discipline and gender .................................................. 181
Table 4.38: Frustrated academic rate by gender composition of ‘discipline’ and gender ............. 182
Table 4.39: Frustrated academic rate by age .............................................................................. 182
Table 4.40: Frustrated academic rate by year since completed PhD .......................................... 183
Table 4.41: Job satisfaction by sex, PhD and casual type .......................................................... 186
Table 4.42: Job satisfaction by gender composition of discipline ............................................. 186
Table 4.43: Job satisfaction by access to supports and amenities ............................................. 187
Table 4.44: Job satisfaction by ‘discipline’ ................................................................................. 187
Table 4.45: Proportion of respondents studying for a PhD qualification, and external mobility score, by University type and discipline ................................................................. 189
Table 5.1 Full-time and fractional full-time university workforce by size and type .................... 198
Table 5.2: Faculties’ (generalised) proportions of casual staff and levels of female casual .......... 199
Table 5.3: Casual academic interviewees at Old University by qualification study status and self-described status ................................................................. 206
Table 5.4: Casual academic interviewees at New University by qualification, study status and self described status ................................................................. 208
Table 5.5: Case study interviewees and WCAU survey sample ................................................. 209
Table 5.6: Profile of academic interviewees, New University and Old University .................... 210
Table A:1: Marginson’s typology of Universities – adapted to 4 type ........................................ 329
Table D.1: How current substantive position was first obtained .............................................. 347
Table D.2: Number of casual/sessional staff you usually supervise per semester ................. 347
List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Proportion of academic staff (FTE) employed on a casual basis, selected years, 1990-2012 ......................................................................................................................... 42
Figures 1.2: Casual academic density (FTE) by Institution type, highest, lowest and average 2011 ................................................................................................................................. 46
Figure 1.3: Age distribution of casual academic staff by sex June 2010. Unisuper data ..................................................................................................................................................... 48
Figure 2.1: Proportions of Australian workforce employed as casual, by age and gender, 2011 ........................................................................................................................................... 56
Figure 2.1: A framework for understanding employment change ........................................ 100
Figure 2.2: A framework for investigating the casualisation of academic employment in Australia ........................................................................................................................................... 105
Figure 4.1: Proportion of casual academics in each age group in five selected academic disciplines ..................................................................................................................................... 148
Figure 4.2: Sources of income by sex (%) ............................................................................ 153
Figure 4.3: Proportion of casual academics in each age category by the casual academic typology ....................................................................................................................................... 163
Figure 4.4: Frustrated academic rate by year of PhD graduation ........................................ 183
Figure 8.1: A framework for investigating the casualisation of academic employment in Australia ........................................................................................................................................... 293
### List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAUP</td>
<td>American Association of University Professors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACTU</td>
<td>Australian Council of Trade Unions</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALTC</td>
<td>Australian Learning and Teaching Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANU</td>
<td>Australian National University</td>
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<tr>
<td>APA</td>
<td>Australian Postgraduate Award</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARC</td>
<td>Australian Research Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATN</td>
<td>Australian Technology Network of Universities</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUQA</td>
<td>Australian Universities Quality Agency (abolished 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUTC</td>
<td>Australian Universities Teaching Committee (replaced by ALTC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAE</td>
<td>College of Advanced Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAUT</td>
<td>Canadian Association of University Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEETYA</td>
<td>Department of Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEST</td>
<td>Department of Education, Science and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIISRTE</td>
<td>Department of Innovation, Industry, Science, Research and Tertiary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECR</td>
<td>Early Career Researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI</td>
<td>Education International</td>
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<tr>
<td>EOWA</td>
<td>Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERA</td>
<td>Excellence in Research Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FTE</td>
<td>Full-Time Equivalent</td>
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<tr>
<td>HASS</td>
<td>Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDR</td>
<td>Higher Degree Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>HECE</td>
<td>Higher Education Contract of Employment Award 1998</td>
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<td>HECS</td>
<td>Higher Education Contribution Scheme</td>
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<td>HELP</td>
<td>Higher Education Loan Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEWRR</td>
<td>Higher Education Workplace Relations Requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>MCEETYA</td>
<td>Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>NHMRC</td>
<td>National Health and Medical Research Council</td>
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<td>NM</td>
<td>New Managerialism</td>
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<td>NPM</td>
<td>New Public Management</td>
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<td>NTEU</td>
<td>National Tertiary Education Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>OHS</td>
<td>Occupational health and safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>PBRF</td>
<td>Performance-based Research Fund (New Zealand)</td>
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<td>RAE</td>
<td>Research Assessment Exercise (UK)</td>
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<td>RIBG</td>
<td>Research Infrastructure Block Grant Scheme</td>
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<td>RQF</td>
<td>Research Quality Framework</td>
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<td>SES</td>
<td>Socio-economic status</td>
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<td>STEM</td>
<td>Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAFE</td>
<td>Technical and Further Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEC</td>
<td>Tertiary Education Commission (New Zealand)</td>
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<td>TEU</td>
<td>Tertiary Education Union (New Zealand)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEQSA</td>
<td>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (replaced AUQA in 2009)</td>
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<tr>
<td>T&amp;R</td>
<td>Teaching and Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCU</td>
<td>University and College Union (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNSW</td>
<td>University of New South Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCAU</td>
<td>Work and Careers in Australian Universities Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>WGEA</td>
<td>Workplace Gender Equality Agency (replacing EOWA in December 2012)</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Since completing my doctorate five years ago I have worked as a casual teaching academic in NSW and Victoria, combining casual contracts from several institutions as I have been unable to find a fixed-term or permanent position anywhere. In that time I have received a maximum of two hours of pedagogical ‘training’. Most university teaching skills are learnt on the job or through fleeting incidental conversations with colleagues. Although doing the frontline work of the university, we [casual academics] move around campuses almost invisibly without offices or invitations to collegial meetings....

(Dr Bonny Cassidy, Letter to the editor, The Age, 29 July 2013, p. 20).

Teaching is one of the two primary functions of the modern university, the other being research. However, despite its importance, academic teaching is increasingly in the hands of a highly marginalised and largely invisible staff group: the casual academic staff. These staff, engaged and employed by the hour, and typically hired on a semester basis, form the majority of teaching and research academic staff in Australia’s universities. Their numbers have grown alongside the large scale transformation of Australia’s university sector over the past three decades. Despite their prominence in the core work of the university, and their large numbers, universities do not measure their casual academic workforce in any adequate manner, often do not record their details other than the most basic necessary for payment of wages, and do not know their qualifications, or motivations, for undertaking casual work. This situation arises from a complex mix of labour market forces, contextualised by the university setting with all its historical and cultural baggage, and influenced and shaped by a wider set of regulatory, institutional, and societal conditions.

Awareness of the growing insecurity of employment in Australia’s universities has been raised among the general public, as indicated by the letter to the editor from a casual academic published recently in a major Melbourne newspaper. More generally universities have been prominent in public discourse through issues such as the rising costs of university tuition, the problems and benefits of a large international student population, and the widespread belief of the importance of the need for a university qualification amongst younger generations. All frame the university within a wider
economic context as central to the creation of a highly educated workforce for the achievement of ‘productivity growth and a knowledge economy’ (Australian Government 2009, p. 12).

Despite the importance of the university sector to the economy and wider society, and a growing awareness of the extent of insecure employment amongst university teaching staff, these issues have not been widely theorised or discussed in depth in the literature. This arises from the often invisible nature of the casual academic workforce, employed only to deliver face-to-face teaching, and the tenuous employment relationship casual academics have with their institutions. It is further hampered by poor data collection on the part of universities and the responsible government department. This thesis endeavours to deal with these shortcomings in the data and literature and investigates the casualisation of academic teaching work in Australia’s public university sector. Mixed method research is used to address the research questions:

- Why is academic work increasingly casualised in Australia?
- What does the casual academic workforce look like?
- What are the implications for casual academics, academic staff, university management, and public policy?
- What are the gender dimensions of the casualisation of academic employment?

In a report of the Inquiry into Insecure Work in Australia, commissioned by the Australian Council of Trade Unions in 2012, the Chair of the Inquiry observed that the divide between workers in Australia was no longer between blue collar and white collar; it was between those in secure jobs, and those at the periphery in insecure employment (ACTU 2012, p. 7). Nowhere is this observation more true than in Australia’s universities. Universities are often referred to as an ‘ivory tower’, occupying a sometimes romanticised or idealised space in Australia’s public consciousness. In the romanticised version of the ivory tower, academic work is secure and lifelong and academic staff enjoy high levels of autonomy. For some this ivory tower still exists, while many others aspire to it. However, the reality of working life for a large proportion of academic staff is increasingly characterised by poor conditions, lack of career path, and no job security.

A report commissioned by the Australian Teaching and Learning Council (ALTC) in 2008 labelled the growth of casualisation in the academic workforce as the ‘hidden part of the massification that has taken place in higher education in Australia over the last 30
years’ (Percy et al. 2008, p. ii). This study estimated that up to half of the teaching load in Australia’s universities was performed by hourly paid academic staff (Percy et al. 2008, p. 8). The opening of Australia’s universities to a much wider and larger student population appears to have been at the expense of the careers and working lives of a generation of academic aspirants. Universities are unique as employers in that they have a large degree of control over both the supply and demand for academic staff. Evidence is emerging of an over-supply of PhD graduates in many disciplines. Whilst this is related to incentives provided by government funding, and a government push to have more PhD graduates (Group of Eight Universities 2013; ACOLA 2012), it is one factor that has contributed to the labour market supply for casual academic employment.

Australia is not alone in this shift to more insecure academic employment, and the trend shares many parallels with developments in the universities of the Anglo-American nations where the employment of academic staff on a temporary basis has become a prominent feature (Bryson & Barnes 2000; Gappa & Leslie 1993; Husbands & Davies 2000; Rajagopal & Lin 1996). In these countries insecure academic employment has taken different forms, making international comparisons problematic (Bryson & Barnes 2000). The different forms are complicated by the differing regulatory, institutional, and industrial environments within which academic work sits, which might explain why there is very little literature which focuses on insecure academic work in a comparative perspective. The purpose of this study is not to develop a comparative perspective, rather to use the evidence emerging from Australia’s close comparator nations to assist in understanding the trends and issues in Australia.

In whatever way insecure academic staff, in all their forms, are described and defined, the overriding characteristic uniting them is what they are not; they are not tenured, ongoing, or ‘regular faculty’ (Bexley & Baik 2011; Gappa 2008; Langenberg 1998). The variety of forms and descriptions of insecure staff, from ‘part-time faculty’ (Gappa 2008), ‘sub-faculty’ (Langenberg 1998, p. 39), non-tenure-track, and the commonly used terminology in Australia ‘sessional’, in some cases seek to illuminate the precariousness of their employment, and in other cases to obfuscate the essential nature of the employment relationship. More evocative has been the efforts to ‘name’ the issue, from ‘invisible faculty’ (Gappa and Leslie 1993), ‘faceless departments’ (Leatherman 1997), and ‘gypsy scholars’ (Goldberg 1983), said to be following a ‘horizontal and terminal’ career path (Lundy & Warme 1990, p. 207). Brand (2013, p. xv) uses the term ‘the lost tribe’, encompassing the structural invisibility of these staff
who ‘work in the shadows’ and recognising that many universities would not be able to function without them.

In Australia the most common form of insecure academic employment takes a particularly harsh form; it is hourly paid piece work that is both temporary and, paradoxically, sometimes long term (Briar & Junor 2012). Work that is hourly paid and hourly engaged is known in Australia as casual employment. This mode of employment accounts for approximately a quarter of all employees in the Australian labour force and it has a particular place in the historical development of Australia’s regulatory framework (Campbell & Burgess 2001; ABS 2013). Over the past three decades the image of casual work in the wider Australian labour force has been typically associated with younger workers, the less skilled, and those working in the service sector (Burgess, Campbell & May 2008). This is in sharp contrast with the staff employed on a casual basis to teach in universities. Casual academic staff are highly qualified, and are further distinguished by their mode of payment, effectively a piece rate which is based on an hour of face-to-face teaching delivery. The hourly rate payment, derived from the lower levels of the academic pay scales, includes compensation for set additional hours associated with preparation and administration, together with a loading of 25 per cent to make up for the absence of annual leave and sick leave. The rate of payment for a tutorial, for example, includes an additional two hours payment for preparation, consultation and administration. Marking work is generally paid for separately at a lower set hourly rate. The preparation and administration that takes place outside of the tutorial or lecture setting is often beyond the control of the casual academic. It is work that has grown and expanded with the changing demands of the university sector, a rapidly advancing technological environment, and an increasingly diverse student population. The other factor beyond the control of the casual academic is the number of students in each tutorial, the number of which has doubled over the past three decades, from an average of 15, to an average of 30 (NTEU 2007, p. 8).

This research comes at a critical time for Australia’s university system, as it continues to move rapidly to a system that is driven by student demand, providing a place for virtually every student who applies. In 2009 the Labor Government set a target to have 40 per cent of all 25-34 year olds qualified to at least bachelor degree level by 2025, up from 32 per cent in 2009 (Australian Government 2009; Bradley et al. 2008). In addition, Australia already has the third largest share of the international student market.
in the world, just behind the USA and the UK. In 2013 international students comprise 29 per cent of the total higher education load in Australia (Universities Australia 2013, p. 26).

Australian universities are both highly regulated, yet less dependent than ever on government funding. Government funding comprises less than half of the university sector’s revenue sources (Universities Australia 2013, p. 56). Universities face a series of public policy challenges stemming from over-reliance on international students as a revenue source, a tightened fiscal environment, and the impact of global university rankings. Universities operate in a global context but have their mission and purpose framed firmly by Government driven economic imperatives. Education is Australia’s fourth largest export industry, generating $15 billion a year in revenue, and universities are: ‘critical pillars that power Australia’s economy, productivity, research, innovation, global engagement and industrial transformation’ (Universities Australia 2013, p. 13).

Australia’s unitary system of 37 public universities, all of which provide teaching, research, and a broad subject offering, is under immense strain, and facing increasing pressure to differentiate. The continuing academic workforce is ageing, and the nature of academic work and the academic career path is changing. The composition of the student population is also changing. Women now outnumber males in post-graduate completions, although gender segregation in field of study is still strong. Casualisation of academic employment runs as a counter-trend to the push for more PhD students, and to the claims of academic skill shortages, and the need for academic workforce renewal. Australian universities are amongst the most casualised workplaces in Australia. Indeed the university itself is a locus of casualisation with the vast majority of full-time university students also working on a casual basis in order to support themselves through increasingly expensive university study (James et al. 2007, p. 38).

The thesis is theoretically informed using segmented labour market (SLM) theory to conceptualise the processes of casualisation in Australia’s university sector. SLM theory provides a dynamic framework with which to explore the complex factors that have contributed to the growth of casual academic employment in the university sector. The framework illustrates how employer strategy, labour supply and the impact of the wider regulatory environment cause labour markets to be segmented, that is, to operate quite separately from each other, and how this can result in inequality (Rubery 2005).

The impact of New Public Management on the university sector and academic work is overlayed by the wider regulatory environment, and societal structures such as gendered
labour supply (Rubery 2005). Using segmented labour market theory, the data are analysed to describe the shape of the casual academic labour market, the characteristics of casual academic work, and the impact casualisation has had on casual academic staff, academic staff and university management.

**Scope of the thesis**

The focus of the thesis is on casual (hourly paid) teaching staff in universities, often referred to in the Australian university sector as ‘sessional’ teaching staff. In the thesis they will be referred to as casual academic staff. The thesis uses mixed method research to investigate the casualisation of academic work in Australia. The thesis is based on the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data, together with analysis of existing publically available longitudinal data on the academic workforce, as well as new data from the universities superannuation fund, Unisuper, to estimate the headcount size, and the gender and age composition of the casual academic workforce.

Investigating the trends in the growth of casual academic employment since its establishment in 1980 is restricted by limitations in the publicly available statistics on casual academic staff. A limited longitudinal data set exists from 1989, but these data are inconsistent, irregular, and often reflect poor data collection on the part of universities (Coates & Goedegebuure 2010, p. 15; Percy et al. 2008). The data is only collected and reported in full-time equivalent terms which seriously understate the scale of casualisation across the sector. To overcome these limitations this thesis has analysed superannuation data from the industry superannuation fund, Unisuper, data that has not been used before for research purposes of this kind. The Unisuper data has allowed a calculation of the headcount of the casual academic workforce, along with analysis of the age and gender composition. The casual academic population is characterised by significant churn which means that the data represents only a snapshot at a point in time. Nonetheless the data address a significant gap in the understanding of this critical workforce, and provide a platform for examining the research questions.

In endeavouring to answer the research questions, invariably more questions are raised. The role of academic discipline in the growth of casual employment, the gendered dimensions of casualisation, and the impact of casualisation on academic work are indicated as areas requiring further exploration. While the thesis does not investigate in detail the issues of teaching quality and the impact of an increasingly casualised
academic workforce on student outcomes, this is an important area for further investigation.

The quantitative data analysed in this thesis was gathered from a large scale survey, the Work and Careers in Australian Universities Survey (WCAU). This survey of academic, general, and casual academic staff across 19 universities was conducted during 2011 and forms part of an ARC Linkage project, *Gender and Employment Equity: Strategies for advancement in Australian Universities, 2009-2012 LP0991191*, headed by Professor Glenda Strachan. Over 3100 casual academics responded to the survey, a 13.3 per cent response rate, representing the largest survey of casual academic staff that has been undertaken in Australia to date. The survey data is complemented by case studies conducted at two universities which represent very different aspects of the Australian university system. The first, which is referred to as ‘Old University’, was formed in the 1800s, and is a research intensive university. The other university, referred to as ‘New University’, was formed in the 1990s, the recent transformation period for Australia’s universities. At each of the universities interviews were conducted with casual academic staff, academics responsible for hiring and managing casual staff, and senior university managers. Across both the universities 45 interviews were conducted in total, and a range of internal data and documentation was analysed. The mixed method approach allows for a more nuanced analysis of the issues arising from the survey data. It provides a means to explore the lived experience of casual academic work, and the implications of that work, from the point of view of the academics who manage those staff, the senior managers who manage budgets and staffing, and the implications for the university as a whole. Analysis of this topic has never been conducted in this manner in Australia before, and it makes an important contribution to the public policy discussion about academic workforce development and renewal, and the nature of academic work.

My own interest in the topic stems from earlier experience of working for the academic staff union, the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) which afforded me the opportunity to meet many casual academics who were qualified and desperate for more secure work, who loved their work, cared greatly about their students, but had grave concerns about the conditions under which they were employed, and fears for their own futures as a result. I also met many academics who were very concerned about the state of their profession and the conditions under which they were forced to hire casual academic staff. My own experience of work as a casual academic has given me first-
hand awareness of the constant insecurity, the frustration, isolation, lack of support, and the challenges of a very diverse student population that characterises the work. This experience has informed my approach to the research. This is a research project that needed doing and I am very grateful to the ARC Linkage project team for providing me with that opportunity.

In the thesis details of the industrial arrangements for university staff and the role of the university staff union, the NTEU, in that process are discussed, but it is beyond the scope of the thesis to investigate the role of union strategy, or examine in detail the union response to the casualisation of academic work. Further, the emergence of a specific literature examining the impact of insecure academic staff and casualisation on teaching quality is noted, but the issue of teaching quality will not be discussed in detail.

It is noted that there are other forms of insecure work in Australian universities which are also expanding. These include the prevalence of fixed-term contracts of employment especially amongst research staff, fixed-term contracts of employment for teaching and research academic staff, casual employment for research staff, and the employment of administrative staff (known in the Australian context as general/professional staff) on a fixed-term and on a casual basis. Analysis of these trends is also beyond the scope of this thesis.

**Thesis structure:**

Chapter 1 provides a background to the Australian university sector, tracing the public policy framework, the history of wages and conditions determination and discusses New Public Management (NPM) as a common element to the changed public policy environment across the Anglo-American countries. The publicly available data on casual academics is discussed, and the Unisuper data is presented, outlining the size and scale of the casual academic workforce in Australia today. Chapter 2 concentrates on the literature, firstly casualisation in the wider Australia workforce and then casualisation of academic work. The literature on casualisation of academic work in the Anglo-American universities is considered and the range of explanations provided in the literature is discussed. A theoretical framework for the thesis is outlined at the end of this chapter. Chapter 3 outlines the methods used in the thesis, and provides the detail of the data collection processes for the quantitative and qualitative data. The mixed method approach is discussed in this chapter. Chapter 4 discusses and analyses the quantitative data gathered from the WCAU casual academic staff survey. Chapter 5
provides the background to the two case study universities, including information about the two universities, details of the interviewees and discussion of policy and industrial settings. Chapter 6 discusses the case study interviews with the casual academic staff, examining the themes which emerged from the interviews and also from the survey data. Chapter 7 discusses the case study interviews with the senior managers in the first section and then the academic staff who manage casual academic staff. In Chapter 8 all the main findings are brought together and discussed using segmented labour market theory to interrogate and understand the processes of casualisation. The concluding chapter to the thesis is Chapter 9 and this chapter considers the key findings, the contributions of the research and issues requiring further research.

Summary

The teaching work performed in Australia’s universities is a critical function, and universities have a significant place within the economy and wider society. The current Labor Government proposes to have 40 per cent of young people educated to at least bachelor degree level by 2025, underscoring the importance of a highly educated population to the Government objectives for productivity growth and a knowledge economy. In this context the employment conditions of much of the academic teaching workforce is worthy of attention. Casual academic staff form a very highly qualified workforce with diverse backgrounds and reasons for undertaking this work. Understanding more about this key group of staff and the implications that casual employment has for them, for other academic staff and for university managers, will assist with policy development and the important issues of academic workforce planning and renewal.
CHAPTER 1: THE UNIVERSITY AS EMPLOYER AND THE CHANGED NATURE OF ACADEMIC WORK

A background

The relationship between higher education and universities in particular with the broader society is problematic, contradictory, constantly renegotiated and always contestable (O’Brien 1990a, p. 268).

Introduction

Universities are, as Marginson and Considine (2000, p. 1) observe, ‘unusual institutions’. They are institutions that occupy a unique place in society, both as upholders of culture and tradition, publicly funded at least in part, autonomous and self-governing, ever adaptable and resilient. Part of that adaptability and resilience is the narrative to which universities subscribe, as autonomous institutions, central to the nation building project and the very future of the nation’s prosperity. In a recent publication Universities Australia (2013, p. 8) proclaimed: ‘Universities are the engine room of every successful nation’. Unique too is the relationship between the university and its continuing academic staff, who with their ‘tribal’ discipline loyalties and training as critical thinkers, often have strong views about their institutions. Over the last four decades the nature of the employment relationship between academic staff and their institutions has been transformed from one of a ‘scholarly community’ to that of ‘managed professional’ (Slaughter & Rhoades 2004, p. 10). Shaping these contradictions, tensions, and transformations is the changed role of the state and its relationship with the university sector in terms of funding, expectations, and regulation. These changes sit firmly within a global context, moulded by the local regulatory environment. It is within this rapidly changing environment that academic work has been transformed, with universities becoming major employers of casualised temporary labour, and academic work no longer the preserve of the autonomous professional.

This chapter provides the background to, and the context of, the casualisation of academic employment, focussing on the university and its role as employer. The chapter begins by looking at the idea of a university, and then the early history of Australia’s university system. The public policy environment for Australia’s universities is traced, outlining the rapidly changed environment that universities have faced, and the current set of complex challenges facing the sector. The origins of the
casual academic rate of pay are discussed, set in the changed industrial relations settings for academic staff. The chapter concludes by analysing the currently available statistics on the nature and extent of the casual academic workforce. These statistics, as many commentators have observed, have considerable shortcomings (see: Bexley, James & Arkoudis 2011a; Coates, Dobson, Edwards, Friedman, Goedegebuure & Meek 2009) and both reinforce, and reproduce, the invisibility of the casual academic workforce. As a result of the inadequacies in the currently available data a new source of data has been obtained for this research and for the first time uses analysis of the university staff superannuation fund, Unisuper’s, de-identified staff records. The results are detailed at the end of the chapter, and are able to fully demonstrate the magnitude of the scale of academic casualisation, and the gender and age profile of that previously hidden workforce. This background is essential for the next chapter, Chapter 2, which discusses the literature on casualisation.

The idea of a University

In Australia the definition of a university can be found with reference to legislation. A university is ‘an institution which meets nationally agreed criteria and is established or recognised as a university under state, territory or commonwealth legislation’ (MCEETYA 2005). The criteria includes: the ability to grant higher degree qualifications; a culture of sustained scholarship; commitment to free inquiry; and governance, rules, policies, and processes sufficient to ensure the integrity of the institution’s academic programs (MCEETYA 2005). In Australia in 2011 there were 37 public universities, two private universities, one Australian branch of an overseas university, and one university of specialisation: a college of divinity. The unitary structure of Australia’s public university sector is very recent, emerging from large scale reforms in the late 1980s during which 19 universities and 51 colleges of advanced education were amalgamated (Marginson and Considine 2000, p. 33). However, there is ‘no idea of the university free of historical contingency’ (Rochford 2006, p. 147).

The universities of the Anglo-American nations, whilst sharing many of the defining features of the Australian university, must be seen in their own historical and legal contexts. The university sector in each country is quite different. There are three main types: predominantly public, supported by government grants as in the case of Canada; nominally public but highly dependent on tuition fees as in Australia, New Zealand,
and more recently England and mixed, with public, private non-profit and private for profit institutions as in the USA (Robinson 2006, p. 2).

**The origins of the ‘traditional academic’ and Australia’s early universities**

Australia’s first universities, the University of Sydney and the University of Melbourne, were formed by Royal Charter in the 1850s. Royal Charter was the means by which universities had traditionally been formed in the UK, and was seen as the best way of ensuring institutional autonomy (Rochford 2006, p. 152). The establishment of universities in the emerging colonies of Sydney and Melbourne were brave acts for the small settler societies with Melbourne following Sydney a year after Sydney University’s establishment in 1852. Initially these early universities were small institutions, offering liberal arts instruction to a few elite men. The universities expanded in the 1860s to include the professions of law, engineering, and medicine, and, in 1880, to admit women.

By 1890 Australia had four universities, one in each of the major colonial settlements, (now state capital cities) and two more universities were established just after the turn of the century, University of Queensland in 1909 and University of Western Australia in 1913. These early institutions were very much an ‘elitist democracy of dons’ (Halsey 1983, p. 33), following in the traditions of Oxford and Cambridge, of learning and scholarship, and of self governing academic units (Marginson & Considine 2000, p. 108), with little interference from government. They operated as a ‘community of scholars’, with emphasis on the commonality of interests between university staff and university managements (O’Brien 1990, p.262).

The importance of research to the role of the university began to assume prominence at the turn of the twentieth century, and increased in the post war period. In particular the role of the university and of academic staff in contributing to the war effort repositioned the university sector and prompted a change in the nature of funding (Forsyth 2010, p. 42). The Universities Commission, established in 1943, was the first move by the Commonwealth to fund universities, until this point responsibility for universities was solely a state matter (Forsyth 2010, p43). Shortly thereafter the Australian National University was founded in Australia’s capital, Canberra, in 1946, by the Commonwealth government with a specific research focus and emphasis on post-graduate research and study.
Two significant reviews took place during the mid 1900s, the Murray Committee on Australian Universities in 1957, and the Martin committee in 1963. The Murray Committee was seen as providing the impetus for the post-war expansion of Australia’s university sector, and it investigated what role the sector should have in Australian society (O’Brien 1990, p. 256). The Martin report oversaw a further program of expansion in the sector up to the early 1980s, shifting the focus from elite and semi-private to a ‘system of mass credentialing’ (Marginson & Considine 2000, p. 23). At this time the limitations of the self-referencing collegial traditions inherited from Britain were beginning to become apparent in Australia’s universities through financial crises and lack of administration. This issue would be dealt with by the most significant reforms of the sector, the Dawkins’ reforms in 1987-89, which are discussed later in this chapter.

From these early origins Australian universities adopted three distinctive features. First, they were state-dependent. Second, the sector was utilitarian and an outcome of this is the way international students are seen as a source of revenue rather than as a cultural exchange. Third, neo-liberal policies and the neo-liberal experiment were much bolder in Australia where, like New Zealand, there had been little resistance to radical neo-liberal ‘reform’ (Marginson and Considine 2000, p. 53-4).

It is from within the university sector’s early history that notions of the ‘traditional academic’ originate. A key defining feature of the ‘traditional academic’ has been a linear career path, facilitated in the more recent period by policies and processes of merit based selection and promotion involving peer assessment. The requirement to hold a PhD before entry to the profession is recent in Australia and varies depending on the academic discipline. The traditional academic career path is distinctive and very different from career paths in other professions. Toren (1993, p. 450) with reference to Israeli academe identifies several key features of an academic career which emphasise this distinctiveness and are broadly applicable in the Australian setting. Academic careers typically commence on the lower levels of the career ladder and progression is through peer assessment and merit based selection and advancement is not necessarily restricted by limits on positions. Academics perform the same core tasks of teaching, research and administration throughout their career and upward mobility in academic ranks does not mean a change to a completely different job, rather it may involve a different allocation of time, for instance to be more research focussed, or it may involve a different employer.
Traditionally academic employment has been characterised, and given distinctive form, by the notion of academic tenure, which in the past meant life-long employment. Academic tenure is linked inextricably with academic freedom. Bess (1998, p. 4) argues that tenure is necessary to create the essential conditions for productive work and to facilitate highly motivated academic staff. These pre-conditions include peer support and quality norms, risk taking, and expectations of trust and goodwill.

Complexity is added by the role played by academic discipline. Definitions of what constitutes an academic discipline vary and have evolved over time. Trowler (2012, p. 9) offers a definition that is fluid, noting common background, organisational form, internal hierarchies and sets of discourses as features of ‘reservoirs of knowledge resources’ which are reshaped by those within the discipline. Academic discipline is both an organising base and social framework (Becher 1994). The rapid changes underway in academic work have caused some to question whether the notion of discipline ‘tribes’ is still applicable. Whitchurch (2008) suggests that there has been a blending of academic and professional staff work into a ‘third space’, and that other changes such as increased casualisation have contributed to the declining importance of discipline. The tradition of self governing academic units and the typically internal focus of discipline, along with the importance of peer assessment, have contributed to a fragmentation of the academic profession (Jones 2011).

Insecure academic employment can only be understood with reference to the standard model of employment for academic staff. Academic work has a number of unique features which set it apart from other professions. The discipline-based organisation of academic work conditions academics to the particular behaviour and language of their discipline ‘tribe’ (Trowler 2012). Combined with the absence of a codified entry into the profession, in comparison with other professions such as engineering, medicine, law, or nursing where training combined with registration both signifies and restricts entrance to the profession, the academic profession is fragile, with contested boundaries that can, and have, shifted over time. Indeed, some have questioned whether there is such thing as an academic profession, arguing that academics have coalesced around shared values such as collegial decision making and academic freedom (O’Brien 2001, p. 106).

For many Australian academics the 1970s was seen as a ‘golden age’, characterised by institutional and academic autonomy, less pressure to publish, lower student load and a far more favourable policy and funding environment compared to that since the 1990s.
In comparing survey results of academics from 1977 with 1997, Harman (2000) found considerable change and evidence of adaptation amongst academic staff, with academics still adhering to core values, such as the importance of higher education and the need for greater funding. Deem, Hilliard and Reed (2007, p. 85) remind us not to fantasise the ‘golden age’: the academy has always been divided and has often been characterised by division between different staff on different contracts, between those who taught and those who did research. Further, collegial practices have often sought to exclude particular groups, such as women, and those from different racial and class backgrounds (Bensimon 1995, p. 601). Marginson (2000, p. 31) concurs, observing that the passing of the collegial era need not be lamented.

The enduring narrative

The enduring narrative of the traditional academic is evidenced in much of the current debate in Australia about the ageing academic workforce. Analysis of the age structure of the continuing academic workforce has shown that this workforce is older than most other professional groups (Hugo 2005a, 2008). The majority of academic staff, 56 per cent, are over 45 years old, in comparison to the broader workforce proportion of 42 per cent (Hugo & Morriss 2010). As a consequence of this age profile, the university sector is likely to lose substantial numbers of academic staff over the next decade to retirement (Bradley et al. 2008, p. 22). Hugo (2008) argues that the failure to hire academic teaching staff during the decade 1991-2001 has resulted in a ‘lost generation’ of potential academic staff. The consequence, he argues, and policy makers have concurred, will be skill shortages for academic labour at a time when international competition for such labour will be fierce (Bradley et al. 2008). This is counter-posed by emerging evidence of an over-supply of PhD graduates in many disciplines, in part related to incentives provided by government funding and a government push to have more PhD graduates (Group of Eight Universities 2013; ACOLA 2012).

Despite rising concern about over-supply of PhD graduates, the work of Hugo (2005a, 2008; Hugo & Morriss 2010) appears to be the most influential and widely accepted in relation to the future picture of the academic labour force, and has contributed to a sense of crisis about skill shortages, and workforce renewal, in the university sector. The theme is also pursued in the Review of Australian Higher Education (known as the Bradley Report) which notes the sector’s ‘increasing difficulty in attracting and retaining high-quality academic staff’ (Bradley et al. 2008, p. 22). The report also notes that high levels of casualisation have not assisted the ‘attractiveness’ of the profession
(Bradley et al. 2008, p. 23). The Report’s (Bradley et al. 2008, p. 22) assessment that the sector faces difficulty attracting and retaining high-quality academic staff is preaced on a continuing academic workforce that is unchanged. It is an analysis which appears to ignore the rapidly changing nature of academic work and assumes that academic work is only performed by continuing academic staff.

The consequence of the widespread acceptance in the university sector of this analysis has both reinforced, and contributed to, the very separate status afforded to casual academic staff. Many have questioned the suitability of the casual academic workforce for future academic work and their orientation to such work (Coates et al. 2009; Hugo 2008). Hugo and Morris (2010, p. 74) observe that, ‘there is limited information on the capability and quality of these [casual academic] teachers’. Further, the ageing nature of the continuing academic workforce, and the impact of the linear career path, has had consequences which complicate the sector’s capacity for workforce renewal. The continuing academic workforce is ‘top heavy’ and expensive, and this has contributed to university managers’ search for cheaper means of employing academic staff (Bexley et al. 2011, p. 4).

**The changing environment for the Anglo-American universities – 1970s to present**

Before examining the changed public policy environment for universities in Australia, it is useful to examine the trends in our closest comparator nations, Canada, New Zealand, UK and the USA. The comparative perspective is confined to the Anglo-American nations with whom Australia shares the same traditions (in the case of New Zealand and Canada). These traditions originate from the UK and in many ways Australia aspires to those of the USA. Education International, the global trade union for education workers, has identified the growth of insecure academic employment as one of the most significant trends over the recent period, and situates that trend in the common themes of declining government funding, increased staff–student ratios, and increased surveillance of academic staff leading to a decline in academic autonomy (Robinson 2006).

Four key themes that resonate across the comparator nations are elaborated by Deem et al. (2007, p. 62). The first is the increase in the size of the university system and student population, often referred to as ‘massification’. Canada, New Zealand and the UK have each undergone a massification of their university sector, involving either an expansion in the number of universities, or the number of students attending university, or both.
The USA had a head start on these changes, with massification occurring in the 1960s, with the expansion of student financial aid programs, and a 50 percent growth in the number of colleges and universities (Gumpert, Iannuzzi, Shaman & Zemsky 1997, p. 8).

The second theme is the reconfiguration of the relationship between universities and the state. In New Zealand and more recently the UK this reconfiguration has occurred under the banner of New Public Management. Third and closely connected to the second theme, is a decline in public funding. Declining levels of public funding and increased reliance on private sources of funding, such as from student fees and bequests, is a common feature across the Anglo-American countries with sharp falls in public funding per student noted for Australia, Canada and New Zealand (Robinson 2006). Further, the UK is moving rapidly towards a student pays model and state funding in the USA as a proportion of all public university funding declined between 1980 and 2001 (Robinson 2006, p. 3).

The fourth major trend has been the growth in external audits and standards for teaching and research. In an apparent contradiction with the declining levels of public funding, less funding been accompanied by greater levels of governmental oversight and control (Robinson 2006). These controls typically involve externally imposed performance and assessment criteria of teaching and learning, each taking a similar form in the comparator countries. These have also been applied to research.

The UK, New Zealand and Australia all have external systems in place to measure research performance. In the UK, the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) has been in place since 1986, and New Zealand has operated the Performance Based Research Framework (PBRF) since 2003, assessing the research performance of individual academic staff. Australia began the Excellence in Research Australia (ERA) in 2010. Scholars have reported a range of unintended consequences, including a negative impact on teaching quality in the UK (Elton 2000), and PBRF was argued to have discouraged early career researchers and favoured the hiring and retention of senior staff in New Zealand (TEU 2013). While the various measures of research performance are invariably justified along public accountability grounds, the result is greater control and monitoring of the work of academics and a shaping and controlling of effort and research direction. As Deem et al. (2007, p. 63) note, all of these developments have brought considerable change to the ‘traditional academic’ who had previously been subject to little accountability and control, and enjoyed secure employment.
The changed policy settings for universities in Australia

This section traces the public policy settings for Australia’s universities, starting from the early 1960s when universities were largely publicly funded. The changing public policy framework forms a backdrop to the investigation of academic casualisation. Australia’s public policy framework for higher education can be viewed in terms of four time frames, the first three which Marginson (2001, p. 205) broadly characterises as nation building (1961-1988); a mixed or ‘quasi market’ system (1989-1995); and the post 1995 period characterised by declining funding (1996-2007). A fourth period can be added incorporating the current Labor Coalition Government, elected as a Labor Government in 2007, and then again in 2010 as a Minority Government. This period encompasses some increases in, and further changes to, funding arrangements, along with the introduction of student demand driven funding.

During the nation building period spending on higher education peaked at 1.5 per cent of GDP in 1975-76 (Marginson 2002, p. 410). University tuition was free from 1974 to 1989, and university education was viewed in public good terms. During this time the public higher education sector consisted of: universities, colleges of advanced education (CAE), and institutes of technology, with 90 per cent of funding from government (Marginson and Considine 2000, pp. 32-33). The arrival of the Hawke Labour Government in 1983 came at a time of global economic challenges, and for the new government a determination to prove themselves ‘good economic managers’. The Hawke Government sought to place a distance between itself and the previous Whitlam Labour Government, and the perception of Labour Governments as big spenders and poor economic managers. The Hawke Government set out an agenda of public sector, industrial, and financial restructuring (Bessant 2002, p. 88). It was in this climate that the government implemented a series of radical changes to Australia’s university system, one scholar describing the government as ‘caught in the web of economic rationalism’ (Meek 1991, p. 469). The changes both facilitated a much wider participation in university education, and transferred some of the cost of that participation to the student, in line with a broader agenda and pledge to reform the public service (Bessant 1995). The changes were similar to those that took place in other parts of the world, except that in Australia they happened more quickly, and the decline in federal government funding was more rapid (Marginson and Considine 2000, p. 28).
These reforms, the 1987-9 ‘Dawkins’ reforms’, named after the then Minister for Education, John Dawkins, brought a series of major institutional amalgamations. They also introduced to universities a range of managerial practices such as devolution and decentralisation, contracting out, and brought an emphasis on performance and accountability (Kimber 2003, p. 43). The most significant component of the Dawkins’ reforms was the amalgamation of 19 universities with 51 colleges of advanced education and institutes, turning a binary system of 70 institutions of higher education into a unitary system, of 37 universities, through a series of ‘shot-gun marriages’ (Marginson and Considine 2000, pp. 32-33). The amalgamations were aided by what Marginson and Considine (2000, p. 34) termed the ‘Dawkins dowry’, large sums of additional funds in the form of subsidies, capital grants and new student places. The amalgamations, whilst extending the ‘teaching and research’ model of academic work to a greater number of staff, also brought with them a radically different research funding regime. Universities were no longer given the full autonomy for research direction, as the White Paper on which the government’s changes were based, foreshadowed:

_The Government expects that all academic staff should be active in scholarship, funding for which is appropriately based primarily on student load. However, it expects that Commonwealth funding for research should be focused more effectively on those institutions and staff with a demonstrated capacity and record of research performance. (White Paper 1988, p. 92, cited in Meek 1991, p. 476)._

The Dawkins’ reforms also brought changes to university governance, including a repositioning of the role of academics, and a devolving of staff and financial management to Faculty and School level (Blackmore 2002). At the same time universities were aligned more to market forces, with greater funding directed to areas of market demand such as engineering and accounting, or national shortages such as maths teaching (O’Brien 1990b, p. 8). The reforms explicitly endorsed and encouraged flexibility in academic staffing as part of a reconstruction of academic work. Universities were encouraged to expand the proportions of non-tenured senior lecturer and above positions, noting that most non-continuing positions were in the lower lecturer levels (Dawkins 1998, p. 109). Tuition fees were reintroduced through a deferred payment scheme called the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS), recouped by taxation after post-study income met a specified threshold. The scheme is now known as the Higher Education Loan Program (HELP). In 2011-12 the income
threshold was set at $47,196 and the average time taken to repay a HELP debt was approximately eight years (Lomax-Smith, Watson & Webster 2011, p. 95).

Prior to the 1988 White Paper, universities were under pressure to change their management structures to mirror those of the private sector, and the White Paper sought a commitment that universities institute a more ‘efficient management structure’ (Bessant 1995, p. 59). Bessant (1995, p. 60) describes two key changes that drove this, first the creation of a senior executive group, modelled along the lines of the senior executive service already in place in the Commonwealth Public Service. The second key change was the reorganisation of management structures within the university, including the establishment of large scale multi-disciplinary faculties with a ‘super dean’, and top down control structures (Bessant 1995, p. 61). These changes were embedded by the late 1990s when Marginson and Considine (2000) coined the term ‘enterprise university’, describing the growth of the ‘executive layer’ as one of the key features of this new emerging university system. The government’s objectives were implemented by management at the institutional level, the managers becoming, ‘the principal agents of modernisation, mergers and marketisation’ (Marginson 1997, p. 68). This ‘steering from a distance’, was harnessed by central control of finances, and driven through faculties and departments (Marginson 1997).

The election of the Howard Liberal-Coalition Government in 1996 further reinforced the market mechanisms established within higher education funding by Dawkins, using funding as a lever for this process (Pick 2008). During the period 1995-2005 public funding per student fell by 28 per cent in real terms (Marginson 2009, p. 10). The government reduced funding in three main ways: first direct grants were reduced in real terms, funding for salary increases was not supplemented, and some over-enrolment was allowed but, with partial funding (Marginson and Considine 2000, p. 58). The impact of this was particularly harsh on discipline areas that did not attract full fee paying international students, such as the humanities (Marginson 2000). In addition to the funding constraints of this period, an extensive quality assurance framework was developed, including the establishment of the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA), responsible for independent and regular quality auditing of accredited universities (Bradley et al. 2008, pp. 128-9).

In the post Dawkins’ period, domestic student numbers rose, then remained stable between 1997 and 2000, overtaken by a ten-fold growth in international full fee paying students during the period 1990-2007 as universities began to harness this new source of
revenue (Marginson 2009, p. 10). Reductions in government funding, in particular under the Howard Government, required universities to look for new sources of revenue, and when universities were allowed to charge full fees to international students in 1985 this source of revenue expanded rapidly. By 2007 the state was a minority funder of the university sector, with only 45 per cent of university funding coming from government sources (state and federal) (Marginson 2009), in stark contrast with the 1986 figure of 87 per cent (Marginson 2000). Instead of providing supplementary dollars, fees from international students became a substitute for public funding (Marginson 2007, pp. 4-5). However, much of this revenue was spent on further marketing to, and managing international students, placing considerable strain on universities’ research capacities (Marginson 2007c). By 2012 education was Australia’s fourth largest export earner, and Australia had seven per cent of the world market in foreign students, third only to the USA and UK (Marginson 2007b, p. 4; Universities Australia 2013, p. 18)

In 2007, a Labor Government under the leadership of Kevin Rudd, re-elected as a Minority Government under Prime Minister Julia Gillard in 2010, brought further changes to university public policy. These changes were consistent with the context of the last two decades, namely within the framework of maximizing export revenue whilst minimizing public expenditure, and expanding regulation (Marginson, 2007b, p. 7). The new government, in a now established tradition of reviews into higher education, commissioned the Bradley Review of Higher Education, delivered in late 2008 (Bradley et al. 2008), and the Base Funding Review, delivered in 2011 (Lomax-Smith et al. 2011). The Bradley Report outlined how far Australia had fallen behind other OECD nations in terms of funding for universities, and made a number of bold recommendations including; a target of 40 per cent of 25-34 year olds with a degree qualification by 2025, a 20 per cent participation rate by low socio-economic-status (SES) groups, and universal higher education funded on the basis of student demand to be managed through compacts between each university and government (Bradley et al. 2008, p. xviii). The Report (Bradley et al. 2008, p. 116) also proposed the establishment of a new quality agency to replace AUQA, with the new body to have responsibility for accrediting new providers and new universities, as well as auditing accredited universities.

To date, the government has accepted and initiated many of the Bradley Report recommendations including the targets of 40 per cent participation, 20 per cent
participation of low socio economic status (SES) groups, the student demand driven model of funding, and established the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) as the new quality agency in January 2012. However, the funding has been maintained at about one third of the Bradley Review’s proposed level (Massaro 2010).

In summary, the current university public policy landscape poses a number of serious challenges for the Australian university sector, challenges which directly influence the environment within which staffing decisions are made. Staff costs, for salaries and staff on-costs, represent the largest proportion, approximately 58 per cent, of all university costs (Lomax-Smith et al. 2011, p. 39), and whilst the proportion has been stable over the past decade, the implication is that staff salaries assume critical importance in internal university budget decisions. The challenges facing universities are briefly summarised.

First, the reliance on international students as a funding source has been exposed as a source of significant risk to the sector given recent downturns in the international student market which have arisen from the global economic environment, the high cost of Australia compared to other destinations, and recent perceptions that Australia may not be a safe place for international students (Massaro 2010, p. 9). In 2010 fee paying overseas students were contributing 17.5 per cent of the total revenue of Australian universities, the second single largest source after the Commonwealth Grant Scheme which contributed 21.4 per cent of revenue (Lomax-Smith et al. 2011, p. 5).

Second, the federal government budgetary environment remains uncertain. Ongoing funding improvements to the sector are at risk as a result of global uncertainties and the impact this is having on the budgetary and fiscal environment (Marginson 2012; Massaro 2010). Further, the move to a student demand driven system in 2012 has placed additional cost pressures on universities and the funding system (Lomax-Smith et al. 2011). At the same time, greater differentiation is apparent within the sector, with some research intensive universities deliberately restricting undergraduate numbers, and other, less research active universities, lowering entrance scores and admitting students who need additional support.

Third, the increasing visibility and use of global university rankings, both as a measurement tool by government, and a marketing tool by universities, is emerging as another driver of behaviour in the sector. These ranking systems ‘confirm, entrench and reproduce prestige and power’ (Marginson 2007c, p. 13), and serve to further
differentiate the sector domestically. Some universities have performed very well in
global rankings, and others have not.

Fourth, during this period of rapid change, quality and accountability regimes have
become more complex and burdensome. A new performative agenda in the form of
Excellence in Research Australia (ERA), similar to the Research Assessment Exercise
(RAE) in the UK, measures research output using a series of metrics, and awards
Departments, and universities, ratings according to those outputs. The ERA places new
pressures on the bifurcation of academic work, with even greater emphasis placed on
research performance. This further exacerbates the growing proportion of research only
staff, a large number of whom are appointed on ‘soft money’, and consequently short
term contracts of employment.

Fifth, staff-student ratios have been increasing steadily and according to some estimates
it would cost between $700m - $1billion today to restore ratios to 1996 levels, even
without considering the additional support needed by students entering under the
uncapped system (Massaro 2010, p. 7). Staff-student ratios are widely held to be an
important component of teaching quality, and the base funding review noted that
continued high ratios would be an impediment to improving teaching quality (Lomax-
Smith et al. 2011).

Finally, significant funding cut backs by state governments in the vocational education
and training (VET) sector have seriously impacted dual sector universities in the state of
Victoria in particular, where several universities offer both VET and university courses.
These cutbacks have resulted in significant cuts to VET provision and the capacity for
students to pathway from VET into university (Wheelahan, Arkoudis, Moodie, Fredman
&Bexley 2012). This has placed further financial strain on those universities already
strained by lowered entrance standards and the need to provide additional support to
those students.

Combined, these challenges make for an extremely uncertain external environment
where many of the major issues such as; funding, international student numbers, global
rankings, and accountability regimes, are largely outside the sector’s control. The
sector is forced to be more externally focussed than ever before, and to do so with much
less certainty of its funding environment.
Explaining these changes – New Public Management

In detailing the significant changes in the public policy environment for Australian universities, changes which replicate many of those in the universities of the Anglo-American nations, a common theme is uncovered. Neo-liberalism emerged in the 1970s as an ‘expression of capitalism’s contradictory logic’ (Tickell & Peck 1995, p. 370), coinciding with the end of the Keynesian era (1995, p. 365). A range of ‘neo-liberal projects’ were pursued across the Anglo-American countries and central to those was the reconfiguration of the role of the state in relation to the economy, and in its role as employer (Fairbrother, O'Brien, Junor, O'Donnell & Williams 2012, p. 19). It was within this context that New Public Management (NPM) emerged as the policy vehicle for bringing managerialism and markets to the running of the public sector (Hood 1991). NPM is a broad concept, central to which is the idea that public sector efficiency would be improved if the differences between the public and private sectors were narrowed or removed (Bach & Bordogna 2011, p. 2282). Marginson (2009, p. 2) describes the goal of NPM market reform in the context of the university sector as ‘to remake educational institutions as business firms producing economic products within an open competitive market’.

Although not necessarily ‘new’, NPM emerged in the Reagan/Thatcher era, and was initially an essentially Anglo-American project (Homburg, Pollitt & Van Thiel 2007). The label ‘new’ was more about defining how this form of public sector management differed from the past, a past where the public and private sector were distinct and separate, and the public sector was a ‘model employer’, governed by structures, and procedures, that enhanced its status (Bach & Bordogna 2011; Hood 1995). Barry, Berg and Chandler (2012, p. 66) sum up NPM as the ‘organizational glue of neo-liberalism and its associated regimes of control’.

Within the literature the labels applied to the new forms of public management emerging during this period are debated. Some prefer ‘new managerialism’ (NM) to NPM as it underlines that this is an ideological approach (Deem 2005, p. 219). Those who favour NPM as concept argue that it is evolving into an international orthodoxy, one which has been adopted by governments of all political persuasions (Hood 1995). Deem (2005, p. 225) argues that NM is apparent in UK higher education through changes such as higher workloads for academics, devolved budgeting, performance measures for academics, and increase in the number of managers and changes to funding.
In subsequent literature Deem et al. (2007, p. 4) pose NM and NPM as separate but linked parts of a ‘cultural-cum-policy paradigm’ that fundamentally shifts the notions of ‘public services’. In particular NM and NPM exercise a new level of influence over the autonomy of the professional worker. Deem et al. (2007, p. 19) elaborate the complex shift from ‘trust’ to ‘control’ in the management of professional work in the context of the NPM changes. They argue that where once ‘trust’ governed the work of the professional, under NPM governance has shifted to control through four key mechanisms. First, professional work is made more open and transparent. Second, new sources of expert knowledge are brought in to replace that of the professional groups. Third, there is a shift away from the traditional language, and values, of the professional, to a new focus on performance and accountability. Fourth, through new governance regimes new language has evolved causing professionals to self censor as they adapt to the changed environment (Deem et al. 2007, p. 20). The outcome is the undermining of professional autonomy, and the destabilisation of the power and control the professional has over their work (Deem et al. 2007).

In a wide ranging analysis of public service reform in ten OECD countries, Bach and Bordogna (2011, p. 2284) summarise the four key policy components of NPM. The first is the process of outsourcing, privatisation, and the redrawing of the ‘boundaries’ of public provision. Second is the shift toward market-type mechanisms away from internal governance. Third, the use of private sector management techniques, such as performance management and a range of measurement tools, designed to give public sector managers more power. Fourth there are changes to the regulation of employment relationships, including changes to the way trade unions are dealt with, and the adoption of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices (Bach & Bordogna 2011). In making the public sector look and feel like the private sector, and removing the differences between the two, Bach and Bordogna (2011, p. 2285) argue that NPM went to the heart of traditional public sector employment relations. The features of traditional public sector employment relations such as job security, seniority pay and implicit support for trade unions, were those that made the public sector a ‘model employer’ (Bach and Bordogna 2011, p. 2285). Under NPM changes public sector employment has been characterised by greater levels of job insecurity and higher levels of contingent employment, external recruitment of senior managers and widening pay gaps between these managers and other staff. The changes have occurred alongside less support for trade unions, decentralised bargaining, and increased managerial prerogative (Bach and Bordogna 2011).
The all pervading nature of NPM reforms across OECD nations, and in particular amongst the Anglo-American nations, has led many scholars to consider whether there is a convergence of NPM. The notion of convergence has been questioned in a number of comparative analyses (Bach and Bordogna 2011, Hood 1995, Pollitt 2007). It is suggested that there are two main models of NPM, with a core group of ‘NPM enthusiasts’, identified as the UK and New Zealand (Bach & Bordogna 2011; Pollitt, Van Thiel & Homburg 2007). In exploring commonalities amongst these nations, Pollitt (2007, p. 17) notes that majoritarian political systems, central administrations, and a particular view of government, combined with ‘a pro-business set of cultural norms’, are key features.

Comparative analysis reveals that particular state traditions and features have been mediators against the wide-scale introduction of NPM in many countries, particularly in Europe, and the role and status of public sector trade unions, and public sector employment relations, has been a key component of the variation (Pollitt et al. 2007). Hood (1995, p. 107), in an early comparative analysis of NPM, argues that there was no clear relationship between the ‘political stripes of governments’ and the application of NPM, nor was there any connection with the economic performance of a country and their application of NPM. Indeed, he suggests that NPM might be more closely associated with social-democratic governments as they have to work harder to establish their economic credentials (Hood 1995, p. 102).

The consequences of NPM for employment relations, in particular the growth of insecure employment, have not been given prominence in the literature (Bach & Bordogna 2011, p. 2281). Since this observation, Fairbrother et al. (2012) in a comprehensive comparative analysis of changes in employment relations in two public sector agencies, one in the UK and the other in Australia, have examined state restructuring through the lens of union renewal. The analytical frame used is depoliticisation, of which NPM is a central component (Burnham 2001). The process of depoliticisation is described as one which allows for the institutionalising of neo-liberalism, but through a ‘hands-off’ approach where decision making is devolved, and through the creation of ‘markets’ where power is exercised by what Fairbrother et al. (2012, p. 24) describe as ‘loose-tight steering control’. This allows both the normalising of neo-liberalism, and the positioning of blame for unpopular policies to the various agencies, and not the government. The process of depoliticisation occurs under tight control mechanisms which set targets, control the boundaries, and give managers
autonomy within those boundaries. As Deem (2005, p. 220) observes, this devolved management, paradoxically, has gone hand in hand with greater state regulation.

**NPM and universities**

The shape, form, and impact of NPM in higher education has been different to the impact in the wider public sector, given both the distinct historical features of universities, and the particular nature of university employment relations. A range of scholars have examined the impact of NPM on the academic profession (Deem et al. 2007; Parker & Jary 1995; Prichard & Willmott 1997) and some have begun to look at the impact of NPM upon gender (Barry et al. 2012; Thomas & Davies 2002). Much of the literature related to NPM and universities comes from the UK, where the operation of a central government has seen a long term project of NPM (Bach & Givans 2011). NPM is framed as the driver for demand side explanations, cost factors and managerialism (Deem et al. 2007). Keep and Sisson (1992, p. 68) who examined the growth in short term contract staff in UK higher education argued that a failure of management had resulted in university employers simply passing on funding constraints in the form of insecure employment contracts, and that managers had not accepted ‘responsibility for managing the employment relationship’.

The reshaping of academic work has been dubbed ‘McUniversity’, by Parker and Jary (1995) who describe the replacement of skilled academic work with standardised processes. This trend is seen as part of the broader ‘McDonaldisation’, a standardisation of work and society (Ritzer 1993). Parker and Jary (1995, p. 327) argue that casualisation is a key component of the ‘control’ regime of the ‘new higher education’, embodied in the creation of an amenable labour supply, willing to work for lower wages in order to eventually gain more secure employment. In a detailed analysis of surveys and case studies of temporary academic work in the UK, Bryson and Barnes (2000, p. 192) found that funding models, as well as the broader regulatory environment, were influential in explaining the high levels of insecure employment.

Research has also focused on the unintended consequences of NPM on higher education, and in particular the impact of NPM on academic work. Some scholars have found that amongst the changes there is adaptation and retention of professional identity, with no evidence of a ‘profession in crisis’ (Bryson 2004a, p. 55; Kolsaker 2008). Others have documented attempts by academics to resist changes to the way they do their work (Henkel 1997). Some have suggested that NPM has had a differing
impact on different types of universities with the more traditional UK universities found to be affected more by NPM (Kok, Douglas, McClelland & Bryde 2010).

There has been a focus in the literature on changes to the academic labour market, particularly around differentiation, and insecurity of employment, often in response to research performance exercises, as well as the fragmenting of teaching and research (Bryson 2004a, Deem et al. 2007, Henkel, 1997). Bryson (2004a, p. 55) observed rising casualisation as evidence of the fragmentation of academic work, and the commodification of research work. In all of these studies the focus has been upon the academic, and in the case of the important work of Deem et al. (2007), the manager-academic, in the context of NPM and the managerialist changes within universities. There does not appear to be a literature that places an examination of insecure academic work and the processes of casualisation central to the emergence and persistence of NPM.

Only a small number of studies have looked at the strategies applied by university managers to the employment of temporary academic staff as an explanation for the growth of insecure academic employment. Examining changes in the UK, Bryson and Blackwell (2006, p. 212) focus on the range of strategies applied by university management as responses to a range of external pressures including, EU regulations of temporary staff, concerns about risks to teaching quality and university reputation, and anti-casualisation campaigns by trade unions (Bryson & Blackwell 2006, p. 210). The authors found that the various management approaches to the management of temporary academic staff represented a continuum, from differentiation to integration. Institutions that managed their temporary academic staff by differentiation made very clear distinctions between the roles of continuing academic staff, and temporary staff, specifically restricting the temporary staff role. This approach appeared to be motivated by a risk management strategy (Bryson and Blackwell 2006, p. 215). The universities with a more integrated approach tend to include temporary staff in policy and to offer some support and development to these staff, although they still differentiate between different types of temporary academic staff. Bryson and Blackwell (2006) concluded that need for flexibility was not met by the use of temporary contracts, and this approach failed to recognise the diversity amongst temporary academic staff.

The key policy components of NPM as described by Bach and Bologna (2011, p. 2284) appear to be visible features of NPM’s influence in the universities, particularly in the UK. The shift toward market type mechanisms and the use of private sector
management techniques, particularly as control mechanisms, appear to be well established. These features are also apparent in Australia where the use of market type mechanisms, outsourcing, private sector human resource management techniques, and changes to the nature of employment for academic staff, have all taken place over the last three decades (Blackmore 2002; Marginson 2009).

The Australian variant: The enterprise university

The Australian variant of NPM has been explored by Marginson and Considine (2000, pp. 9-10), in a comprehensive study of governance in 17 Australian universities, the outcome of which they describe as the ‘enterprise university’. They identified five key trends apparent in the governance structures and processes of the universities. First, and critically, is what they call a ‘new kind of executive power’. This executive class ‘mediates’ the outside influences upon the university by setting the internal strategy. Second, and consistent with new executive power, is the changing of governance structures from collegial to structures that are more operational and linked with executive authority. The third trend is a drive for ‘flexibility’ which is apparent in staffing, and is a response to differing policy and funding agendas. The fourth trend is the decline of the discipline, which as the traditional home of academic loyalty and identity, is broken down by large cross disciplinary faculties and research centres. Finally, Marginson and Considine (2000, pp. 9-10) argue that new types of devolution, which devolve budget control within tight frameworks, serve to both push down decision making whilst retaining central control. This process allows blame to be devolved and control to be centralised. Combined, the changes contribute to what Marginson (2000, p. 32) term ‘tendencies to the deconstruction of academic professionalism’, part of which is the threat that casualisation of academic work presented to the academic profession because casual academics’ ‘loyalties are skewed towards managers and away from the academic disciplines’ (Marginson 2000, p. 32).

The ‘enterprise university’ has been moulded to operate in what Marginson describes as a ‘quasi-market’, one in which the ‘policy discourse is more market like than the reality’ (Marginson, 2009, p. 1). NPM, he argues, is a political rather than an economic tool, allowing government greater control through devolution, where ‘devolved systems generate less resistance than direct rule’ (Marginson 2009, p. 1).

Despite the radical changes in Australian universities, Marginson (2009) finds that the full marketisation of higher education through NPM has failed due to three key reasons.
The first reason is that education is predominantly a public good. Second, the outcomes of higher education are wide, dispersed and unable to be captured into a ‘commodity’. Third, qualifications are positional goods, and status is attributed by limiting the product, not mass producing it (Marginson 2009, p. 12). The other limiting problem of NPM is that it is ‘nation bound’, yet universities operate in a global environment, and are increasingly influenced by that environment (Marginson 2009, p. 3).

There is an emerging literature examining the impact of NPM on academic staff in Australia, and a limited literature looking at the impact on administrative staff (Pick, Teo & Yeung 2012; Szekeres 2006). Fredman and Doughney (2012) link the increasing dissatisfaction expressed by academics about their work to management culture and loss of control. In another study, levels of employee involvement in Australian universities, as per collective agreement provisions, are examined, and they find a more managerialist approach to change management had emerged over the last decade (Weller & Van Gramberg 2007).

Marginson and Considine’s (2000) ‘enterprise university’ highlights the drive for flexibility in staffing as a response to the changeable policy and funding environment. Others have linked academic casualisation with NPM in Australian universities although as noted above, there is not an established or well-developed literature (Junor 2004a; Kimber 2003; Ryan, Groen & McNeil 2012). Junor (2004a, p. 278) describes the combination of the devolved management and tightened budgets of the 1990s as a ‘transmission belt for casualisation’. Whilst an all pervasive managerialism has driven the search to cut costs and enhance ‘flexibility’, Kimber (2003, pp. 44-5) argues that there are many hidden costs associated with employing large numbers of casual staff, costs both for universities and the staff themselves. Ryan et al. (2012, p. 29) in a case study investigation of a regional university, describe the increasing marginalisation of casual academic staff and link this to the ‘tightening grip of managerialism and NPM ideologies within universities’. The authors argue that managers have become ‘addicted to cheap, compliant and expendable academic labour’, and that managerialism has driven an emphasis on cost-cutting to the detriment of workforce development and teaching quality (Ryan et al. 2012, p. 30).
The casual academic – Australia’s unique manifestation of insecure academic work

It is against this backdrop of the drive for flexibility to deal with growing student numbers, budget pressures and the emergence of the enterprise university that the establishment of casual academic employment in Australia is discussed. The literature on casualisation in Australia, and the specific literature examining casualisation of academic work in Australia is considered in the next chapter. How casual academic employment evolved in the sector requires an examination of the history of pay determination in the sector and an understanding of the industrial background. The discussion of the industrial settings is confined to Australia.

Background – the Australian industrial setting for university staff

The pay and conditions for university staff (continuing, fixed-term and casual) in Australia’s 37 public universities is primarily determined by registered collective agreements negotiated by the industry union, the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU), often in conjunction with other unions, in the federal jurisdiction. University staff are designated as one of two distinct categories, they are either academic staff or general/professional staff. This discussion is focussed solely on academic staff, the category to which casual academic staff belong and to which the casual rates of pay are linked. The NTEU is the only union with coverage of academic staff, and it shares coverage of general/professional staff with a range of other unions, both public sector and trade based, reflecting historical union coverage.

The various university collective agreements operate in conjunction with a range of institutional specific policy arrangements that together set the minimum standards for pay and conditions. Academic staff are employed in one of three employment categories: on a continuing basis (with probation periods of between 3 to 7 years); on a fixed-term basis; or on a casual (hourly rate and hourly engagement) basis. The full suite of academic ‘privileges’ apply to continuing academic staff. These are conditions such as: merit based promotion, access to study leave/sabbatical (at most universities), professional development, and appeal rights upon redundancy or dismissal. All female continuing university staff (academic and general), have access to paid maternity leave of 26 weeks and in some cases up to 36 weeks, a benefit which far exceeds that at most other Australian workplaces (Baird, Frino & Williamson 2009, p. 682). Following a decision by Australian Catholic University to provide 26 weeks’ paid maternity leave to
female staff in 2000, this benefit was won through collective bargaining at each of the other universities during the 2003-2004 enterprise bargaining round.

Fixed-term academic staff have access to most of these conditions during their contract of employment. Fixed-term staff can generally only be dismissed for serious misconduct, but have no entitlement to employment beyond the length of their contract. The third category of employment, casual employment, is an hourly engagement, characterised by the absence of regular entitlements such as sick leave and annual leave. This is compensated for by a ‘casual loading’ of 25 percent. Female casual academics may be eligible for the government-funded provision of 18 weeks maternity leave at minimum wage, but they are not entitled to the maternity leave provisions afforded to continuing or fixed-term university staff. Casual employment, whilst hourly paid and insecure, paradoxically can be both regular and long term, that is, semester to semester over many years, a feature that has not to date been legally challenged (Briar and Junor 2012). Many university collective agreements and policies in fact make a distinction between ‘occasional’ or ‘ad-hoc’ casual academic staff, and casual academic staff, often referred to as ‘sessional’ staff who are notionally employed by semester, although their engagement remains on an hourly basis.

Staff may be engaged on a casual basis in the university sector in a variety of roles. However, as noted above, the focus of this study is upon the largest group of casual staff, casual academic teaching staff. These staff are usually employed on a semester basis to perform teaching in roles such as lecturer, tutor, demonstrator, or clinical demonstrator, although they may also be engaged on a one-off basis, for example for a guest lecture. The commonly used ‘sessional’ designation appears to point beyond casual status, due to the semester based nature of engagement, and at some universities time sheets are not required for the claiming of salary. However the reality is the ‘sessional’ academic is engaged by the hour, and can be fired, or indeed can leave employment, with an hour’s notice and is largely excluded from the benefits of academic employment, and indeed from most aspects of collegial life (Brown, Goodman & Yasukawa 2010). Casual academic employment, as with casual employment generally, is defined by the absence of rights (Bexley & Baik 2011).

The history of pay determination for continuing academics employed in Australia’s universities chronicles the changing space the university sector has occupied in Australian society. It also follows the changes described by Bach and Bordogna (2011) who argue that changes to the nature of the employment relationship, diffusion of
Human Resource Management (HRM) practices, and changes to the role and influence of trade unions, are all components of NPM. In the 1950s academic salaries were determined by local negotiation, with staff represented by staff associations, and universities requesting funding increases from state governments to pay for the agreed increases (O’Brien 1990a). Grievances were resolved typically, ‘over a glass of sherry with the Vice Chancellor’ (O’Brien 2001, p. 106). In the 1960s academic salary determination was formalised with the establishment of the Australian Universities Commission which made salary recommendations for academics in much the same way as for other autonomous professionals such as politicians and judges. Underlying their separate status, academics did not receive the standard wage increases awarded to other workers through the national wage system. In constitutional terms education was deemed, at that point, not to be an ‘industrial pursuit’, and thus did not fall under the federal system of conciliation and arbitration (O’Brien 1990b, p. 5).

In 1974 the Academic Salaries Tribunal was established to determine academic salaries, and the tribunal operated until academics finally became part of the federal system of conciliation and arbitration in 1987 (O’Brien 1990b, p. 10). By the mid 1980s enterprise based bargaining was rapidly evolving across the wider workforce as a key plank of the Accord between the then federal Labour Government and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). Whilst university academics were always employees in a common law sense, they did not necessarily see themselves as such until this point (O’Brien 1990a). However, the shift to enterprise bargaining also meant a critical change in the nature of their employment, as their relationship with their institutions shifted from that of a ‘community of scholars’ to that of employer and employee, although this was not straightforward as the paymaster was the government (O’Brien 1990b, p.10). After almost twenty years of academic salary determination outside of the university, in 1987 university academics assumed the same status as most other Australian workers in that they had to bargain with their employers for their wages and conditions (O’Brien 2001). This major shift required the establishment of a management layer within the university.

The progression of industrial representation for academic staff from staff associations to a full industrial union is a key component of the history of wage determination in the sector. In 1986 three associations representing academic staff in colleges and universities achieved federal registration as trade unions, following a landmark High Court case in 1983 which removed the constitutional limitations to academics (and a
range of other workers) becoming part of the federal system of conciliation and arbitration (O'Brien 1990b). The formal registration of these associations as trade unions also allowed for tighter regulation of academic work, bringing the ‘labour aristocracy of university staff’ into line with other workers (O’Brien 2001, p. 107). At the time there were some who argued that the developments would undermine academic tenure (O’Brien 2001, p. 107).

The NTEU was formed in 1993 as an amalgamation of the three registered unions and two other staff associations. The amalgamation was not without opposition as the Federation of University Staff Association (FAUSA) which represented academic staff in universities, did not favour amalgamation (O’Brien 2000). Each of the amalgamating unions brought a very different culture to the new national union. FAUSA, dominated by tenured male academic staff, had strong branch autonomy, whereas the two unions representing general and administrative staff, and college academics, were state based, making for a ‘fluid’ structure. This structure helped to facilitate a pattern bargaining approach in the decentralised bargaining environment which provided for consistency in wages and conditions across the sector (O’Brien 2001, 2000; Rosewarne 2005, p. 190). The approach found some favour with university managements and reflected their need for a ‘level playing field’ of wages and conditions, particularly for academic staff in academic disciplines where there was competition for staff (Rosewarne 2005).

**Origins of the casual academic mode of employment**

Casual academic employment has its origins in this rapidly evolving industrial environment of the 1980s. The method of pay determination for casual academic teaching (lecturing, tutoring and demonstrating) is essentially a ‘rate for the job’, known originally as the ‘3 hour formula’. The ‘3 hour formula’ was established by a 1980 recommendation of the Academic Salaries Tribunal for academic staff in Australia’s then 19 Universities (Academic Salaries Tribunal 1980). The Tribunal had been required to grapple with the distinction between part-time and fractional time staff, and the reality that a variety of rates of pay and practices existed across the sector in relation to the payment of those academics that were not full-time. In common with the wider workforce, primacy was afforded to the full-time worker (usually male), with those who did not conform to this status consigned to a ‘residual’ set of conditions. The Tribunal noted that institutions had the right to appoint casual or fractional time staff at their discretion, ‘but the discretion should be limited’, and accordingly the Tribunal ruled that any part-time lecturer who performed 60 per cent or greater of a full-time load would be
paid as a fractional staff member (Academic Salaries Tribunal 1980, p. 21). Those who worked less than 60 per cent of full-time load would receive an hourly rate, based on variations of the ‘three hour formula’. The formula determined that the rate of payment for each hour of face-to-face teaching (in a tutorial setting) would also include payment for two hours of associated preparation, marking, administration, and student consultation.

The three hour formula conceptualised a casual academic as one coming from outside the university to offer a particular expertise on a limited term basis, offering ‘skills not ordinarily possessed by those who may be attracted into full-time service at the lowest position in the lecturer range’ (Academic Salaries Tribunal 1980). The tribunal also noted that the vast majority of those working as tutors and demonstrators were postgraduate students.

In 1987 a 20 per cent loading on the hourly pay rate was codified in the first salary award for the sector, and given to compensate for the absence of entitlements such as sick leave, and annual leave, normally associated with employment. Further award improvements were made in 1997 when casual academic rates were tied to the academic scales and higher rates of pay were established for PhD qualified casual staff (May, Gale & Campbell 2008). Further changes to the structure of casual academic pay occurred throughout the 1990s although the fundamental hourly rate basis remained unchanged. The move to enterprise bargaining during this period resulted in a weakening of the 60 per cent rule, meaning casual academic staff could teach the same number of hours as continuing staff (May et al. 2008). This coincided with an increase in teaching load for academic staff. Through collective bargaining the casual loading was increased to 25 per cent across the sector (NTEU 2010b, pp. 7-11).

A significant award gain by the NTEU in 1998, the Higher Education Contract of Employment Award 1998 (HECE) placed limitations on universities’ capacity to employ fixed-term staff, and set out strict categories under which fixed-term employment could be used. These ‘HECE’ categories, as they were known, included: work undertaken for a special project, an externally funded research project, or maternity leave replacement. The NTEU had also sought to restrict the use of casual employment as part of this claim but was unsuccessful (Rosewarne 2005). The full bench decision left the way open for the parties to return to the Commission, if there was ‘an acceleration of the use of casual employees on work that is properly considered
work of a continuing nature, with no effective provision of the movement of casuals to a

The changing political and regulatory environment

In the immediate years following the implementation of the HECE award in 1998, fixed-term employment fell by 27 percent between 1998 and 2001, and numbers of both continuing academic staff, and to a lesser extent casual academic staff, increased (May et al. 2008). These developments point to the links between fixed-term and continuing employment, and fixed-term and casual employment. The tightening of the basis upon which academic staff could be employed on a fixed-term resulted in many academic staff having their employment status converted to a continuing position. It also showed that in the absence of the capacity to employ academic staff on a fixed-term basis, casual academic employment was in part a substitute form of flexibility.

The momentum for further regulation of employment categories ceased when the Keating Labour Government lost office in 1996. The Liberal Coalition Government, 1996-2007, was quick to introduce new industrial relations legislation and when it secured control of the Senate in July 2005 more extensive industrial relations legislation was passed. This legislation, the Workplace Relations Amendment Act 2005 (commonly known as Work Choices) removed any capacity for unions to restrict fixed-term or casual employment, along with a raft of other changes. The result was that the impact of HECE on fixed-term employment was short lived and by mid 2000 the numbers of staff on fixed-term contacts of employment had returned to their pre-HECE level. After an initial jump in the proportions of academic staff employed on a casual basis in 1998 to 2000, the proportions of casual academic staff remained constant for the decade to 2009 (see Table 1.1).

The Liberal Coalition Government embarked on a neo-liberal agenda of de-collectivisation using funding and legislative measures to target employment flexibility in universities (Cooper & Ellem 2008). In 2005 in addition to the impact of Work Choices specific legislation aimed at employment relations in higher education was introduced. The Higher Education Workplace Relations Requirements (known as the HEWRRs) tied eligibility for increases in Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding to universities not limiting or restricting the form or mix of employment types, along with a range of other ‘flexibility’ provisions (Rosewarne 2005). This highly interventionist approach by the federal government, who by this stage were a minority funder of
universities, followed many years of funding cutbacks for universities. It was also an intervention at odds with the rhetoric of decentralised workplace bargaining. It marked a sharp turn in the nature of federal government and university relations, and a lack of unity amongst the university leadership meant there was little resistance to the interventions. Some attributed this to the changed role of the Vice Chancellor and the diminished status of academic staff (Rosewarne 2005, p. 98). In response to the government’s interventions, the NTEU took a strategic decision to negotiate ‘HEWRRs compliant’ collective agreements with individual universities, effectively writing the union out of representation on university committees and disputes procedures, in order to maintain university funding and collective bargaining presence (Rosewarne 2005). Whilst in the main, the consequence was less power and authority for the union, bargaining on the requirements for individual agreement provisions (the Australian Workplace Agreements, known as AWAs) reduced the impact of this particular government requirement (Rosewarne 2005).

During this period of the Howard Liberal Coalition Government a number of industries and unions were singled out for particular focus, one of those being the NTEU (Cooper and Ellem 2008, p. 540). A number of academics were attacked personally for having union links, and being ‘union friendly’ (see Buchanan 2007; Marr 2007). In 2005 and 2006 the Education Minister, Brendan Nelson interfered in the allocation of research funding by vetoing Australian Research Council funding of a number of research projects that had already been approved (Haigh 2006; Thornton 2007). This represented an unheralded attack on academic freedom and contributed to an environment where attacks on public intellectuals and universities were given mainstream voice, and the role, and status of universities as traditionally constituted ‘conscience and critic of society’ was seriously questioned. Under the same government, public funding per tertiary student fell by 30 percent in real terms, during the period 1995-2003, the largest decrease by all but one OECD nation, Poland (Marginson 2007a, p. 8).

The election of a Labor Government in November 2007, and the introduction of the *Fair Work Act* in 2009, once again changed the settings for collective bargaining in the sector. In the period since 2009 the NTEU has been successful in re-introducing restrictions on the use of fixed-term contracts (the so-called HECE provisions), and in placing some limits on the use of casual academic staff in university collective agreements. Internal NTEU research has found that for the early adopters of the reintroduced HECE provisions, some reductions in fixed-term appointments have
resulted (McAlpine 2012, pers. Comm., October 11). In an attempt to unpack some of the high workload components of the ‘rate for the job’, the NTEU has also been successful in mandating separate payment for marking for casual academic staff in collective agreements, adding another piece rate (NTEU 2010a). Casual academic employment provisions, as limited as they are, have always been included in collective agreements, and casual academic staff are eligible, and encouraged, by low membership dues, to be union members. Despite this incentive casual academic membership remains extremely low (May et al. 2008). In 2012 the NTEU entered a new bargaining round with a major claim to seek the creation of 2000 new teaching focused academic positions across the sector, to ‘permanently replace casual work’ (Rea 2012, p. 4).

Summary

The examination of pay determination in the university sector highlights that it has only been in the very recent period that academic staff have become employees in the commonly understood manner. This major change has involved academics being required to negotiate their terms and conditions with a new level of management within the university, rather than having wages and conditions set by outside agencies or authorities. It also required academic staff, through their union, to harness bargaining power through industrial action, something which was very new to the sector. The implications of these changes and the enduring notions and values of the traditional academic, have in turn coloured the academic union’s response to the growth of casual academic employment, and shaped the form of insecure academic employment in Australia.

The impact of the regulatory environment upon union strategy cannot be understated. The HECE award was a significant achievement for the NTEU. Having developed a regulatory strategy, the change of government in 1996 forced the NTEU to adopt a much more resource intense, and unfamiliar, strategy of representation (Campbell 2005). The decade of the 1990s saw the largest decline in trade union membership and density of the twentieth century, and many argued that the Australian trade union movement was left vulnerable in the post-Accord period (Briggs, Cole & Buchanan 2002, p. 4) For the NTEU, shifting to a representation strategy was doubly challenging as casual academic staff proved even more difficult to organise and represent than casual workers in the rest of the workforce, due to their invisible and transient status, and in many cases their fear of job loss (Brown et al. 2010).
Under the current Labour Coalition Government, and the new *Fair Work Act* environment, the NTEU has returned, to some degree, to its regulatory strategy, with some success, notably the restriction of fixed-term contracts of employment through collective bargaining. The NTEU has also endeavoured to continue a campaigning and representation approach to the issue of casualisation and this has given the issue a greater level of public awareness (May et al. 2008). There is recent evidence of growing grass-roots activism by casual academics themselves, including at the University of Sydney where a group of casual academics developed a series of yoga poses to show how they were ‘bending over backwards to be flexible’ (NTEU 2013, p. 8).

**The size and scale of the casual academic workforce in Australia**

Since the formal regulation of casual academic employment in 1980 the employment of academic staff on an hourly basis has become a growing feature of the university workforce. This section outlines the size and scale of the casual academic workforce using the publicly available data and Unisuper data, a new source of data that has been gathered in order to overcome some of the issues with the existing data sources. Given the origins and development of casual academic employment, and the marginal status, and high churn associated with the casual academic workforce, it is unsurprising that accurate and reliable measurement, and reporting of the workforce has been challenging. These issues are compounded by poor data collection by universities themselves on their casual academic workforces (Percy et al. 2008; Probert, Ewer & Whiting 1998) but are also a reflection of the lack of requirement from government to report accurately on the casual academic workforce (DIISRTE 2012a). A 2008 report for the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) observed, ‘most universities are unable to report comprehensive and accurate data on the number of sessional [casual] teachers and their conditions of employment’ (Percy et al. 2008, p. 7).

The most relevant publicly available source of statistics on staff in the university sector in Australia is that collected on an annual basis by the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE) and reported annually in the Higher Education Staff Statistics Series (see DIISRTE 2012). DIISRTE, and predecessor departments with responsibility for higher education, have been collecting staff data from universities since 1988, with data from 1993 onwards comprising a stable sample that is broadly comparable in terms of the make-up of the university
sector (Hugo 2008, p. 12). The trends in academic staffing prior to the unified system have been extrapolated by Hugo (2008, p. 11) who describes rapid growth in continuing academic staff numbers during the 1950s to 1970s, and in particular a doubling of continuing academic staff numbers between 1976-1991 as ‘baby-boomers’, many from overseas, were recruited in large numbers into academic positions. The subsequent considerable slowing in continuing academic staff numbers has resulted in ‘age heaping’ with an age structure that is now dominated by older academic staff (Hugo 2008, p. 19)

The Australian Census on Population and Housing, collected every five years by the federal government, gathers a wide range of data including data on occupation and industry of employment. The most recent census was conducted in 2011. In theory this should also provide a source of data on the university workforce, but Hugo (2008, p. 9) notes that it is very difficult to gather accurate information about academic staff from the census as both the industry category, higher education, is imprecise, as are the occupation categories. Further, the nature of the survey questions and the timing of the census (just outside of teaching semester), in early August, are such that the work of many casual academics is not adequately captured. The 2011 census questionnaire did not ask about contract of employment, that is whether the individual was employed on an ongoing or casual basis (ABS 2011). As a consequence the census data provides little usable information and was not examined for the purposes of this research.

The casual academic staff data collected by the federal government is collected on a full-time equivalent basis (FTE) only, in contrast to data for other staff categories which is also collected by number (headcount). The FTE measure is useful for the calculation of actual staff who are in continuing and fixed-term employment, but it provides no information about the actual size, make-up, age, gender and qualification profile of the casual academic workforce, a difficulty recognized by DIISRTE (2012a) in a review of the collection of higher education statistics.

The full-time equivalent formula calculates a full-time equivalent employee as a casual employee employed for 9 hours per week (face to face, or equivalent) of lecturing, for the university’s normal teaching period, or employed for 25 hours per week (face to face, or equivalent) of tutoring, for the university’s normal teaching period. Using data from the central human resources departments of eight different universities Percy et al. (2008, p. 8) show how the formula can distort and underestimate the actual headcount size of the casual academic workforce. The authors describe how at one university one
FTE represented seven casual teaching staff and up to 24 in another due to the differing ways casual labour was applied (Percy et al. 2008, p. 8). The formula results in the actual size of the casual academic workforce being underestimated, and does not allow for changes in the composition of the casual academic workforce over time. Data is not collected on age, hours of work, or the qualifications of this important workforce, and gender analysis is difficult given the nature of reporting (DIISRTE 2012a, p. 6). Inadequate data collection has limited universities’ capacities to understand the extent of their casual workforce (Coates, Dobson, Goedegebuure & Meek 2009a; Percy et al. 2008). Further, poor data collection has meant the extent of increase in this workforce and its magnitude and scale has been rendered invisible, like the workforce itself (Bexley & Baik 2011).

Figure 1.1 shows the growth in the proportions of academic staff (FTE) employed on a casual basis using the only publically available longitudinal data set available for this category of staff. The graph shows that on a FTE calculation the proportion of academic staff employed on a casual basis has risen from 11 per cent in 1990 to 22 per cent in 2011.

**Figure 1.1: Proportion of academic staff (FTE) employed on a casual basis, selected years, 1990-2012**

Source: DEEWR, DIISTRE Higher education staff statistics, selected years, Table 1.7, Appendix 1.5

In the last twenty years the growth in casual academic employment has significantly outstripped growth in the employment of tenured academics (Coates et al. 2009b). Table 1.1 details the information provided in Figure 1.1 and shows how casual
academic staff numbers, reported on a FTE basis, grew by 250 per cent during the period 1990-2011, compared with a much slower, 55 per cent, growth in non-casual academic staff numbers during the same period. Casual academic staff numbers, on a FTE basis, doubled during the decade 1990-2000. Column 3 of Table 1.1 shows that the proportion of academic staff employed on a casual basis (FTE) rose significantly during the period 1990-2000, following which the proportions remained fairly steady at approximately 19 to 20 per cent for the next decade. Interestingly the statistics since 2009 seem to suggest that the proportions of academic staff employed on a casual basis are once again increasing. Column 4 tracks the proportion of all university staff (non-casual) who are employed on a fixed-term basis. These figures reflect the regulatory changes for fixed-term staff, in particular the HECE Award in 1998, discussed earlier, which limited the grounds upon which staff (both general and academic) could be employed on a fixed-term basis. The proportions of staff employed on a fixed-term basis declined significantly in the period 1998-2002, but once the restrictions on fixed-term employment were removed by the Howard Liberal Coalition Government in 2005 the proportions began rising to pre 2000 levels.

Table 1.1: Full-time equivalent university academic staff, ratio of casual to non-casual, Australia, selected years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1 Non-casual academic FTE (1)</th>
<th>2 Casual academic FTE (2)</th>
<th>3 Casual academic FTE density (1+2/2) (%)</th>
<th>4 Fixed-term staff as a prop of non-casual staff (all staff FTE) (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>26530</td>
<td>3259</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>30276</td>
<td>5497</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>31256</td>
<td>6095</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>30148</td>
<td>6306</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>29893</td>
<td>7106</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>30997</td>
<td>7862</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>33043</td>
<td>8136</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>29.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>34227</td>
<td>8028</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>35151</td>
<td>8353</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>36592</td>
<td>8490</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>34.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>37522</td>
<td>9086</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>38965</td>
<td>9968</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>40100</td>
<td>10691</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>41090 (55%)</td>
<td>11429 (250%)</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DEEWR, DEST Selected Higher Education Staff Statistics, Appendix 1.5, 1.4, various years, Universities Australia 2010

At the same time as casual academic employment has rapidly expanded, the make-up of the continuing academic workforce has also changed. The proportions of academic
staff that are employed on a research only basis has grown considerably, as Table 1.2 shows. The numbers of research only staff have doubled in the period 2001-2011, a function of the changed make up of research funding, and pointing to a wider set of changes underway in the deconstruction of academic work. The proportion of all continuing academic staff that is research only has risen from 19 per cent in 2001, to 26 per cent in 2011. Research only staff are overwhelmingly appointed at a smaller number of research intensive universities that receive the vast majority of research grant funding. They also tend to be appointed at the lower levels of the academic scale, levels A and B, and are younger than teaching and research academic staff (Broadbent, Troup & Strachan 2013).

Table 1.2: Research staff as a proportion of all academic staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research only staff (numbers)</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research staff as a proportion of all academic staff (teaching only, research only, T&amp;R)</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General staff component of research only (difference between Table 2.2 and Table 2.7 of appendix 1, HES staff statistics)</td>
<td>1868</td>
<td>2368</td>
<td>2360</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DEEWR, DISRTE HES, staff statistics Appendix 1, Table 8, 2001, Table 2.7, 2011, Table 2.7, 2005. Note: Research only staff employed as general staff are not included in these calculations

Gender and academic casualisation in Australia

Women have always comprised higher proportions of casual academic employment than males, as Table 1.3 shows. Women’s share of non-casual academic employment has grown rapidly from 1990, when it was less than a third, to 45 per cent in 2010. Within this is a familiar pattern of vertical segmentation with males dominating the higher levels of the academic scale, and women concentrated at the lowest levels, academic levels A and B (Strachan, Broadbent, Whitehouse, Peetz & Bailey 2011). The over-representation of women in the ranks of casual academics reflects in part women’s pooling at the lower ends of the academic scale of levels A and B, and the fact that these levels have increasingly become casualised. Once the traditional entry point for an academic career, level A is now almost entirely made up of casual and fixed-term positions (DEEWR 2010).
Table 1.3: Women’s proportions of the academic workforce and the casual academic workforce various years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Proportion of academic workforce who are female %</th>
<th>Proportion of casual academic staff who are female %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: App 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, DEEWR various years (Teaching only + T&R), Table 7, DEEWR, Staff Statistics various years, Carrington and Pratt, (2003:4),

**Institutional variations in the use of casual employment**

Variation exists in the use of casual academic staff, depending on the type of university. Using Marginson’s typology (Marginson and Considine 2000, pp. 189-190), which categorises universities in accordance with their formation period, Table 1.4 shows the patterns of casual academic employment across the sector. The typology is fully detailed in Appendix A, and summarised as follows:

**Sandstone:** The nine oldest universities, the most research intensive universities. Eight of these universities form the Group of Eight Universities, a coalition of the most research intensive universities.

**Gumtree:** Universities formed in the 1960s and 1970s, nine universities are in this group.

**Unitech:** Five universities, all large former Colleges of Adult Education. This group has its own sectoral group, known as the Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN).

**Newer:** Fourteen universities formed in the period since 1986, many through amalgamations (Marginson and Considine refer to this category as New, however to avoid confusion with the case study universities in this thesis the label Newer is used in this typology).

(Marginson and Considine 2000, pp. 189-190).

Analysis of the most recent data for 2011 shows that six universities have a casual academic teaching density (FTE) of 30 per cent or greater and six universities have a density of 15 per cent or less (DIISRTE 2012). Typically, research intensive universities are lower than average users of casual academic teaching staff as evidenced by the
average density for the Sandstone University category of 15 percent, although this is related to their higher proportions of research only staff. The Newer Universities and the Unitech group of universities have a higher than average use of casual academic staff, with three of the 14 Newer Universities recording casual density levels in excess of 30 per cent.

Figures 1.2: Casual academic density (FTE) by Institution type, highest, lowest and average 2011

![Casual Density Chart]

Source: DIISRTE Higher Education Staff Statistics, 2012 Appendix 1.4, 1.5

In an analysis of staff and student statistics from DEEWR, Larkins (2012) examines the staffing responses of the nine largest universities by student number to increases in student demand during the ten years 2000-2010. He finds a variety of responses by the universities, with three of the universities relying heavily on the employment of casual staff to deal with student growth (Larkins 2012, p. 4). This adds further to a picture of diversity amongst universities in relation to their use of casual academic staff.

Due to inadequate and uneven data collection, both by universities themselves, and also that required by the responsible government department, investigation into patterns of employment across Faculty and discipline, within individual universities, have not occurred in any systematic way. A number of studies have commented upon the significant variance within institutions and across faculties and disciplines, in the usage of casual academic staff (Fine, Graham & Paxman 1992; Probert et al. 1998).
Casual academic staff numbers using superannuation fund data

As a result of the inadequacies in the publically available data on casual academic staff and in particular the lack of a headcount calculation of casual academic staff a new source of data has been investigated in this thesis. Data from the university staff superannuation fund Unisuper were explored to see if they could provide a more accurate and detailed picture of the casual academic workforce. This data has not previously been released for research purposes of this nature. Through the Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage project to which this research is attached, access was obtained to aggregate, de-identified data held by Unisuper. Over 95 per cent of eligible university staff, both academic and general/professional belong to the fund.

In Australia all employers are obligated by law to pay a minimum nine per cent superannuation payment (rising to 9.25 per cent from 1 July 2013) to their employees, once the employee earns more than $450 in a month. The university sector provides an enhanced superannuation benefit to continuing and fixed-term staff (depending on length of contract) of 17 per cent of salary. Casual staff, and fixed-term staff on short term contracts (typically up to one year), only receive the nine per cent employer contribution. Those university staff who receive only a nine per cent superannuation benefit are members of a discrete and separate fund within Unisuper, known as the Accumulation 1 Account. Casual academic staff who perform very occasional lecturing or tutoring and therefore do not meet the $450 per month threshold are excluded, as they do not receive superannuation payments. In order to meet the statutory $450 per month threshold for receiving superannuation, a casual academic would need to be working at least one hour a week if tutoring, or at least one hour a fortnight if lecturing.

In order to make use of the data contained in the Unisuper Accumulation 1 Account and in order to isolate the staff records of those working as casual academics from those who may be casual general staff or short term fixed-term staff, a proxy of an employment period of nine months or less over the calendar year was established. The proxy approximates a casual academic’s semester based employment of March to November. Whilst variance in semester length and number exists across the university sector this was determined to be the most accurate way of ascertaining an estimate of the casual academic workforce from the data.

As at 30 June 2010, the total pool of active Accumulation 1 Account members, that is those who had received a superannuation payment in the previous 100 days and who had held an account for longer than 12 months, was approximately 110,000 staff. These
110,000 staff comprised academic and general casual staff, and short term fixed-term staff, typically with employment contracts of less than 12 months. Using the proxy of a nine month or less period of employment (March to November) it was estimated that approximately 67,000 of the 110,000 staff in the fund were casual academic staff.

Once isolated these 67,000 staff could be further analysed by gender and age. Figure 1.2 presents the gender and age composition of this identified cohort of casual academic staff. Females form the majority at 57 per cent of the sample. The age profile of this group is considerably younger than of the continuing academic staff, with 52 per cent aged 35 years or younger. Of note also is the gender breakdown in each of the age categories: women form 62 per cent of those aged in the critical child-rearing ages of 35-55 years. Slightly more males than females form the 65+ year old category, although this group forms only a small proportion, four per cent, of the sample. These data will be compared with the survey data, discussed in Chapter 4.

The DEEWR full-time equivalent (FTE) figures for the same period, 2010, displayed in Table 1.2 show 10691 FTE casual academic staff. This suggests that one FTE equates to approximately six actual casual academic staff members (DEEWR 2011). Coates and Goegebuure (2010, p. 17) in their analysis of FTE ratios suggest a ratio of between six to eight casual academic staff for each FTE.

**Figure 1.3: Age distribution of casual academic staff by sex June 2010. Unisuper data**

The Unisuper data is a powerful and new source of information about the size, scale and make-up of the casual academic workforce. The data does have some limitations and
has not been pursued beyond the initial calculations for June 2010. First, the data collected is for quite different purposes to that required for this research, and in many cases information at the individual level is extremely limited. The Unisuper data is only as good as that provided by universities and whilst some provide comprehensive data, others provide very limited data. Second, the data, due to obvious privacy requirements, can only be extracted by Unisuper staff. Third, the use of a proxy to distinguish casual academic staff from other staff whose records are in the Accumulation 1 Account is problematic, and may over-estimate the population. A series of checks undertaken by Unisuper staff with individual universities known to have relatively good data on their casual academic workforces found some evidence of over-estimation. This appeared to be due to the proxy including other staff such as casual general staff and short-term fixed-term staff, thus over-estimating the numbers of casual academic staff. Fourth, when compared to the population data gathered from 19 universities for the purposes of the Work and Careers in Australian Universities’ survey for casual academic staff, discussed in Chapter 4, the Unisuper figures are higher. This may be due to the different methods used to calculate the population sizes. The survey population represents a point in semester time calculation, whereas the Unisuper data calculates casual academic staff numbers over the period of a whole year and include staff who may have only worked one semester during the year.

Despite these limitations the data provides for the first time a headcount figure for the casual academic workforce. It also provides a source of evidence about the gendered nature of the casual academic workforce, and evidence about its age profile. These data can be compared with the WCAU survey data and combined contribute to a greater understanding of the casual academic workforce than has been possible in the past.

Crucially but unsurprisingly there is no data that calculates, or measures, the number of teaching hours performed by casual academic staff. Given the large numbers of casual academics it is reasonable to estimate that these staff are responsible for a considerable proportion of the teaching work of the university sector. One estimate has suggested that at a number of universities the overwhelming majority of teaching hours were performed by casual academic staff, and that across the sector this could be as high as half the teaching load (Percy et al. 2008, p. 8).

Summary

The chapter has drawn together a range of data, both that which is publically available, and new data from the staff superannuation fund Unisuper, to show the size and scale of
Australia’s casual academic workforce. Casual academic employment has been a feature of the Australian university academic workforce since being formalised in 1980 but the data show that since 1990 the growth in casual academic employment, on a FTE basis, has significantly outstripped the growth in continuing academic employment. The Unisuper data suggests that on a headcount basis more than half of all academic staff is employed on a casual basis. The Unisuper data also provides new information about the composition of the casual academic workforce, showing its gendered and youthful profile, and contributing to our understanding of this important component of the university workforce. The rapid transformation of academic work suggests that notions of the traditional academic are outdated. The academic workforce is fragmenting into; a group who perform research, employed on a fixed-term basis; those who perform a large proportion of the teaching, employed on a casual basis; and a minority who are traditional, continuing employed, teaching and research academics.

The new data raise questions about how academic work is currently conceptualised. Predictions of future shortages of academic staff are premised on the model of a continuing teaching and research academic (Hugo 2005; Bradley 2008), yet the data show these staff constitute only a minority of the overall academic workforce. The continuing workforce is ageing, with many of those hired during the 1970s and 1980s likely to retire over the next decade. The age pattern displayed by the analysis of Unisuper data, which shows a much younger age profile for casual academic staff, suggests that the new crop of academics have been hired into casual positions rather than continuing positions, with a concurrent displacement of much of the teaching work onto those casual staff over the last 20 years.

The backdrop for this transformation of academic work, and the massive growth of casualisation of academic work has been the changing public policy environment for universities in Australia, framed by NPM and its reshaping of the relationship between the state and the university sector and in turn the nature of employment relations within the university. This very challenging public policy environment, creating what has been described as the ‘enterprise university’ (Marginson and Considine 2000) has been compounded by a harsher regulatory environment for trade unions and workers since the early 2000s.

The trends have resonance with our comparator nations, the Anglo-American countries. The international literature on NPM detail four key components (Bach and Bordogna 2011), and the changes have taken a particular shape and form in the university sector,
particularly in the UK where NPM has been well established. Deem et al. (2007) detail how NM and NPM have shifted trust to control in the management of professional workers, and the particular impact this has had on academic staff. NPM has been the common denominator across our close comparator nations and it appears that insecure academic work is one, somewhat overlooked, but nonetheless significant outcome.
CHAPTER 2: THE CASUALISATION OF ACADEMIC
EMPLOYMENT

Australia and the international context

Introduction

Australia’s university workforce is now characterised by the employment of large numbers of insecurely employed casual academic staff as the data in Chapter 1 has shown. This is a development that sits in the context of a range of major changes that have occurred in the university sector since the late 1980s, interwoven with the prominence of NPM and a harsher regulatory environment for trade unions and workers since the 1990s. The literature on casualisation in the Australian labour market highlights the unique nature of insecure employment in the Australian context; both its very precarious form, and the extent to which casual employment is entrenched across the labour market. This literature, and that relating to insecure academic employment, raise questions about the quality of casual academic work and what opportunities the work offers to be a bridge to a better, more secure job. The invisible nature of casual academic work is also raised as a significant and key feature of the work.

This chapter examines the literature on casualisation in Australia, and in particular academic casualisation. The chapter begins by setting out the Australian context with an examination of casualisation in the Australian labour market. Following this, the literature relating to the casualisation of academic employment in Australia is examined in detail. The implications of casual employment for casual academic staff is a sub-theme, and the gendered nature of academic casualisation is also considered. The impact of insecurely employed academic staff on teaching quality from an international and Australian perspective is discussed. The chapter then locates the trend toward the casualisation of academic employment within the four Anglo-American countries, investigating the context in Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the USA, given the similarities with the university sectors in these countries.

The chapter concludes by considering the theoretical approach which can assist with examining the situation of casual academic staff and the pressures which have led to the growth in this insecure employment form across the university sector. This requires a theoretical approach which allows for a broad understanding of national, sector wide, organisational and labour market factors. Segmented labour market theory and
reformulated segmented labour market theory are examined and adapted to develop a theoretical framework that will be applied to the data in this thesis.

**Casualisation in the Australian labour market: An overview**

The Independent Inquiry into Insecure Work, established by the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) in 2012, defined insecure work as;

> Poor quality work that provides workers with little economic security, and little control over their working lives. The characteristics of these jobs can include unpredictable and fluctuating pay, limited or no access to paid leave, lack of security and uncertainty over the length of the job and lack of any say at work (ACTU 2012:14).

In a submission to that Inquiry, Owens and Stewart (2012, p. 30) note that Australia is unique in that casual employment, one particular form of insecure employment, is embedded in legislation and across all forms of regulation of work and there is no attempt in the regulation to confine casual employment to its original purpose: ‘temporary, short term, or irregular engagements’. This has led to the scenario of the ‘permanent casual’, where half of all workers employed on a casual basis have been in their job for over a year, but without access to the benefits normally associated with work such as sick leave and annual leave (ACTU 2012, p. 15). This situation is not necessarily due to employee choice or preference, as is sometimes claimed (see Productivity Commission 2006, p. 42). A 2007 survey by the Australian Bureau of Statistics found that 52 per cent of those employed on a casual basis would prefer more secure employment (ABS 2010).

Casual employment is a uniquely Australian expression and interpretation of non-standard employment, which sits firmly in the context of wider economic, regulatory and labour market changes that have taken place over the last three decades (Burgess & Campbell 1998a). The most recent statistics show that 24 per cent of employees and one fifth of the total workforce were employed on a casual basis (ABS 2013). A casual employee is defined in the official statistics as an employee ‘without leave entitlements’ (Burgess and Campbell 1998a, p. 87). Casual workers are paid an hourly rate of pay, often, although not always, with a loading of 20 per cent to 30 per cent of the hourly rate (Buchanan 2004, p. 17). The loading is to compensate for the lack of other benefits such as sick leave and annual leave, which are normally associated with employment. Casual workers have only extremely limited protection against unfair dismissal, and no
right to notice or severance payments when employment is terminated. In limited instances, depending on state legislation and the nature of the casual employment, long service leave (additional leave based on length of service) may apply. State funded parental leave also may apply, subject to the employee meeting a range of threshold conditions.

Australia belongs to a select group of OECD nations that have very high levels of insecure or temporary employment across the labour force (Campbell 2004). The definition of temporary work includes all work, such as casual, fixed-term, and seasonal work, which is not continuing or permanent, allowing for variations in employment forms across countries (Campbell 2004, p 97). Spain also has high levels of temporary work: in 2011 25 per cent of employees were employed on temporary contracts, compared with a European Union (EU) (27 countries) average of 14 per cent (Eurostat 2012). Unlike Spain where temporary work was a planned response to the need for employment flexibility, Campbell (2004, p. 99) argues that in Australia the growth of casual work has been unplanned. A number of factors make Australia’s situation unique: the large gap between the conditions of casual work and standard work in the labour market; the significant growth in casual employment since the mid 1980s; and the size of the casual workforce (Campbell 2004, p. 86).

In the 1970s approximately 10 per cent of workers were employed on a casual basis (Buchanan 2004). In 1982 13 per cent of employees were casual and the proportion rose steadily in the period to 1996, reaching 23 per cent of employees that year (Campbell 2010, p. 71). Since this time increases have been at a much slower rate, rising to 23.6 per cent in 2003 and staying approximately at this level since then (Campbell 2010, p. 18). During the period 1988 to 2003, 54 per cent of all new jobs created in the Australian economy were casual jobs (Kryger 2004). Amongst OECD nations Australia had one of the fastest growth rates for casual and part-time employment during this period (Richardson & Law 2009).

The age profile of casual employees in the Australian workforce is detailed in Figure 2.1. The graph shows clearly that age is a key feature of casual employment, with the overwhelming majority of younger workers employed on a casual basis. The lowest levels of casualisation are found amongst males of prime working age (35-55 years of age).
Figure 2.1: Proportions of Australian workforce employed as casual, by age and gender, 2011

[Graph showing proportions of Australian workforce employed as casual, by age and gender, 2011]

Source: ABS Cat. No. 6310, Table 21, August 2011

The incidence of casual employment is highest for women and young workers, a significant minority of whom are students, and for both these groups employment is also more likely to be part-time (Burgess & Campbell 1998b; Richardson & Law 2009). Indeed, almost 60 per cent of those who work part-time are employed on a casual basis (Campbell 2010, p. 18). Casual work is not just confined to women and students as casual employment has increased among male workers and amongst full-time workers, and has been growing at faster rates amongst these groups (Burgess et al. 2008). In 2012 27 per cent of all female employees and 21 per cent of all male employees were engaged in casual employment (ABS 2013) indicating a gendered pattern of casual employment. Those employed on a casual basis are, on average, less qualified than the rest of the workforce, and tend to be clustered in service based industries such as retail and hospitality, and in low skilled jobs such as labouring, cleaning and clerical work (Kryger 2004; Burgess et al. 2008).

The characteristics of informal or non-standard work are derived from, and can only be understood in the context of, the regulatory framework for formal or standard employment (Sassen 1997). The Australian notion of standard employment has been built around the ‘male breadwinner’ (Ellem 2005). This notion was established through the system of conciliation and arbitration, and then spelt out in the Harvester Judgment of 1907. This landmark wage determination case specified a ‘living wage’ as one that would allow a man to support a wife and three children (1907 2CAR1 Higgins, J President, 8 November 1907). The post-war settlement of centralised wage fixing, industry protection, and the White Australia Policy, further entrenched the standard employment model, and the ‘ideal worker’, as a full-time male, unionised and working
in craft/manufacturing based employment. This ‘ideal worker’ enjoyed a range of benefits including sick leave, annual leave, and long service leave (Ellem 2005). The characteristics of this work contrast strongly with those of casual work.

The literature has canvassed the defining characteristics of casual work. Campbell (1996) argues that precariousness and absence of rights are at the heart of casual employment. Casual work has been said to represent a ‘commodification’ of labour, which goes against the long-held principles embodied in Australian labour law of fairness in wage setting (Pocock, Prosser & Bridge 2005). A different perspective is offered by Curtain (2001) in an examination of casual workers’ orientations towards vocational education and training. His research concludes that ‘a major defining characteristic of casual work is the absence of a career path’ (Curtain 2001, p. 111) and that it is employers’ assumptions which serve to limit the opportunities of casual workers for further training and development, rather than anything to do with the casuals themselves. The question of assigning motivations and understanding casuals’ preferences is complicated by the fact that casuals do not comprise a homogenous group (Curtain 2001; Pocock et al. 2005).

Explanations for Australia’s growth in casual work have varied. Campbell (2001) identifies employer strategy as a major reason for the expansion, arguing that employers have deliberately used regulatory gaps in the award system to drive down labour costs and respond to product market competition. He notes that the development of the award system created an ‘officially sanctioned gap in protection’ which allowed employers to avoid obligations of employment, and these gaps were exacerbated through the labour market deregulation of the 1990s (Campbell & Burgess 2001, pp.177-179). Stable job tenure during the last two decades, alongside growing casual employment rates, has led others to suggest that this change to employment regulation and employment security is due to employer cost cutting (Buchanan 2004). Others argue that structural changes to the economy, in particular the growth of the service sector and the decline of manufacturing, have been key drivers (Hall, Bretherton & Buchanan 2000).

The growth in casual employment can be seen to underscore a wider shifting of the risks of employment from employer to the employee (Hall et al. 2000; Rafferty & Yu 2010). Rafferty and Yu (2010, p. 9) describe this as a ‘risk transfer’, the shifting or abandoning of many aspects of employment that used to offer protection such as defined benefit pensions, and employment security. Their report, which has been written for the ACTU, describes individualisation and the ‘risk absorption role for labour’ as one of the major
changes in the nature of work since the 1970s (2010, p.7). Casual work is a significant component of the risk shifting that has been underway, contributing to the household becoming an economic ‘shock absorber of last resort’ (IMF 2005, p.89).

A smaller number of studies have focussed on the supply side, suggesting that women’s increased labour force participation and women’s desire for more flexibility and part-time hours has driven the growth in casual work (Romeyn 1992). Overall though, it appears that the demand side drivers are far more critical to the explanation of casual work than the supply side (Richardson and Law 2009).

There has been considerable debate over the last two decades amongst academics, politicians, and public commentators about the virtues or otherwise of casual work, and labour market flexibility more generally. The opposing viewpoints can be summarised as, on the one hand, casual work is a positive feature, allowing workers (usually women) to achieve ‘work-life balance’ and employers to manage fluctuations in business; or a negative feature, representing a degradation of long held employment standards at the expense of short term business imperatives (Burgess & Campbell 1998b; Gough 2006; Productivity Commission 2006; Wooden & Warren 2004). Those who argue that casual work is an essential component of a flexible labour market and a productive modern economy point to the concentration of casual work amongst young people and women with caring responsibilities as evidence that it should not be seen as a problem as it suits the particular circumstances of those groups (Productivity Commission 2006; Wooden and Warren 2004). Indeed, some suggest that casual work is preferred by many women and young people (Wooden & Warren 2004). The finding that casuals have similar levels of job satisfaction to other employees is used to support the argument that casual jobs are not ‘sub-standard jobs’ (Wooden & Warren 2004, p. 296).

Support for the view that casual employment is a positive feature of the labour market had particular favour during the conservative Liberal/National Party Coalition Government (1996-2007) when a ‘flexible labour market’ was seen as a critical component of a ‘productive economy’. Casual employment has grown under both political parties’ leadership. Indeed, the most rapid period of growth was during the Hawke/Keating Labor Government, 1983-1996, during which time the Australian economy underwent major economic restructuring including floating of the dollar, reduction of tariffs, financial deregulation, and decentralisation of bargaining.
Proponents of casual work also argue that it provides a useful pathway for the unemployed into the labour market (Productivity Commission 2006). The evidence is mixed on this question as the long term nature of many casual jobs suggests that casual work may be more of a trap than a bridge, and that there is a gendered aspect to this pattern of employment. A recent study by Buddelmeyer and Wooden (2011), using longitudinal Australian labour market data to examine labour market transitions from casual work to more secure work, found that a casual job assisted men with the transition to a more permanent position. This was not the case for women and the authors speculated that women ‘had less of an aversion to casual employment than men’ (Buddelmeyer & Wooden 2011, p. 128). Of particular interest, the authors also find that a higher level of educational attainment did not significantly improve success in the transition from casual to permanent employment (Buddlemeyer & Wooden 2011, p. 126). The same question and data were explored by Watson (2013, p. 10) who approached the question of whether casual employment was a bridge or a trap by looking at the labour market status of casual workers from one year to the next, excluding full-time students from the analysis. He concludes that the characteristics of casual jobs operate to perpetuate casual employment, rather than assist labour market transition, and this is due to an employer strategy to maintain casual labour (Watson 2013, p. 23). Age has a compounding effect for casual workers, and, similar to Buddelmeyer and Wooden (2011), education only has a small positive impact on the chances of gaining more secure employment (Watson 2013, pp. 16-17).

This theme of the quality of casual jobs, the exploitation and vulnerability of many casual workers, and the high price that is paid by workers for access to some control over hours, has been the focus of literature looking at the conditions of casual employment (Pocock, Buchanan & Campbell 2004a). On the issue of job quality those who dispute that casual work is a positive feature of the labour market argue that objective criteria, such as remuneration, not subjective criteria such as job satisfaction, are the more appropriate measuring points for job quality and on this score casual jobs are clearly inferior (Watson 2005). Casual work has been found to be associated with a wide range of negative features. Casuals were found to be disadvantaged in terms of retrenchment and had longer periods of unemployment after being made redundant than on-going employees as casual workers’ lack of entitlements, such as redundancy payments, make them cheaper to lay off during an economic down turn (Peetz 2005). Further, casuals miss out on superannuation. Approximately 20 per cent of casual workers were found to have no superannuation coverage, in comparison with only 1.4
per cent of non-casual employees (ABS 2007). Given government concerns about the ageing population, the fact that up to one fifth of the workforce does not have adequate, or indeed any, superannuation coverage is of serious concern (Burgess & Strachan 2005).

Insecure work has increasingly been linked with poor occupational health and safety outcomes and increased exposure to risk (World Health Organisation 2007). Australia’s occupational health and safety legislation is premised on a permanent model of employment with trade union involvement, a model that does not properly account for casual work (Johnstone, Quinlan & Walters 2005). Recent research has also found that workers employed on a casual basis have a much greater risk of sexual harassment at work, not just because they are more likely to be young and female, but because of the power relationships involved, and the more limited rights of recourse available to the casual worker (LaMontagne et al. 2009).

A highly casualised workforce also has a negative impact beyond that for the individual worker. A casualised workforce is not compatible with skill development and long term workforce planning as casuals tend to sit outside formal training programs and career progression opportunities (Connell & Burgess 2006; Richardson & Law 2009). An Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) survey of 2000, quoted in Buchanan (2004, p. 22) found that 50 per cent of casuals reported that they did not undertake any form of training, compared with 30 per cent of permanent employees.

Casualisation and casual employment represent a major challenge to the Australian trade union movement. Union density across the Australian workforce in 2011 was 18 per cent, down from 43 per cent in 1992 (ABS 2011). Union density amongst casual workers was only 6 per cent (ABS 2011). Union responses to casualisation have been broadly described as either representation or regulation (Campbell 2005). Regulation, either through limitations on levels of casual employment, claims for increased casual loadings, or conversion processes for casual employees, has been the more standard response (Campbell 2005). The move to decentralized bargaining during the Hawke/Keating Labor Government (1984-1996), was compounded by the dismantling of employment protections under the Liberal/National Coalition Government (1996-2007), and this forced unions to look more closely at representation strategies, both through the adoption of the organizing model (Cooper 2003; Crosby 2005) and through bargaining. The capacity of the union movement to respond to the challenge has been severely impacted by a rapid decline in union density over the last two decades and a
corresponding decline in collective bargaining coverage and union reach (Campbell 2010). The ACTU has signalled that tackling insecure work is one of its major challenges, and has used the findings of the Independent Inquiry into Insecure Work in Australia to lobby government for improvements in job security (ACTU 2012).

The high rates of part-time casual employment amongst women in Australia compared to other liberal welfare states, is described by Vosko (2011) as ‘gendered precariousness’. Almost two thirds of all casual employees working on a part-time basis are women, reflecting a lack of permanent part-time work options for women (Vosko 2011, p. 107). Part-time employment, whether it is casual or ongoing, has been found to have a ‘wage scarring effect’ (Chalmers & Hill 2007) as much of the available part-time and insecure work has no career progression. This impacts negatively on women who are returning to work after career breaks, or who are seeking flexible work hours to balance care responsibilities. The prominence of part-time hours amongst women is exacerbated by the Australian ‘one and a half earner’ model in couple families, reinforced by a tax system that penalises higher levels of income of the second earner, and further concentrates women in insecure part-time work (Charlesworth et al. 2011, p. 47). The persistence of insecure employment in the Australian labour market both reflects and reinforces gender inequities. Casual workers are excluded from the most basic minimum standards in particular conditions which have distinct benefits for women such as the right to request flexible hours, minimum maternity leave provisions and carer’s leave (Briar & Junor 2012).

The question of women’s preference for casual and part-time employment has been debated in the literature with feminist scholars challenging those such as Hakim (2006), who argues that women display a range of levels of commitment to work. The varying levels of commitment range from home-centred to work-centred and Hakim (2006) argues that women adapt their labour market behaviour to suit their work preferences. Hakim’s (2000) preference theory found favour with policy makers under the Howard Liberal Coalition Government 1996-2007. During this period a range of welfare and tax changes were made to promote ‘choice’, particularly choice for partnered women to stay at home with their children (Brennan 2007). Preference theory is challenged by those who point out that preferences are shaped by the labour market and regulatory context within which women make decisions about work, and that choice is often highly constrained (Charlesworth et al. 2011; Fagan 2001; Pocock et al. 2004a).
The literature examining casualisation in the Australian labour market highlights three key points of relevance for the following discussion. First, the negative impacts of casual work on casual workers resulting from poor employment conditions such as; the deficits of training and superannuation, poor health and safety outcomes, and the lack of employment protections. The often long-term nature of casual employment suggests, as Watson (2013, p. 23) argues, that there are features of casual work which make it a trap for many workers, rather than a bridge to a better job as proponents argue.

The second point is the gendered element to casual employment in Australia, described as gendered precariousness. The majority of women working part-time are employed on a casual basis. Whilst women are more likely to seek flexibility in hours of work, casual work is not necessarily a choice. It too often represents all that is available (Pocock et al. 2004a, p. 23). Casual employment results in women being excluded from employment protections and basic minimum standards, resulting in marginalisation and vulnerability to poor employment practices.

Third, the very entrenched nature of casual employment is tightly bound with employer and industry demands for a ‘flexible labour market’. The Productivity Commission’s (2006, p.40) investigation into ‘non-traditional employment’, outlined the productivity benefits that casual employment provides an employer, such as dealing with volatile market conditions and managing peaks and flows in work. Employer groups in Australia have been vocal in their resistance to any changes that could limit their capacity for labour flexibility. This has been reinforced by a regulatory system that has failed to address the growth in the ‘permanent casual’, allowing employers to keep employing staff on a casual basis even when the work is regular and ongoing. These features underscore, as Rafferty and Yu (2010) argue, a process of the transferring of the risks of employment from employer to employee.

Burgess and Campbell (1998a, p. 17) summarise the growing precariousness apparent in Australia’s labour market as a result of three sets of conditions; employers’ labour use strategies, the role of the state, both as regulator and employer, and the extent of a surplus supply of labour.

**The casual academic workforce in Australia’s universities**

This section examines the literature on the casualisation of academic work in Australian universities. The earliest literature dates from 1990 and the literature that follows are broadly descriptive accounts, often located in one university or one faculty. There are
only a very small number of studies which extend beyond the single university case study, the largest study is that by Junor (2004) which surveys casual academic staff across five universities. The approaches are empirical, as with much of the literature in the higher education area, and there has not been an emergent theoretical approach to this issue in Australia.

The discussion of the literature in this section follows a chronological and thematic approach as the literature reflects the developments in this issue, as discussed in the first chapter, and much of the literature builds on what was written before. The emerging literature, dating from 1990 uncovers the issues and explores these empirically. The literature from the late 1990s to the present is discussed thematically, examining questions of data collection, gender dimensions, conditions of work, and impacts on other academic staff. These are the themes that emerge from the literature as it builds and develops over time, along with interest and attention on the issue of casualisation.

The issue of casual academic employment has also been raised in a wider literature examining Australia’s university sector, and in particular the academic profession. This literature identifies growing casualisation as a threat to the academic profession (Bexley, James, & Arkoudis 2011; Coates et al. 2009b; Marginson & Considine 2000). Kimber (2003) points to a growing divide in academic work and describes this as the ‘tenured core and tenuous periphery’. Casual academic staff are referred to in the Australian literature as, ‘the proletariat of the academic profession’ (Percy et al., 2008, p. ii), ‘marginalised educational outworkers’, (Blackmore 2002, p. 433), and as ‘an academic underclass’ (Baranay 2006, p. 41). Discontent amongst casual academic staff about their working conditions, and concerns about the wider implications of casualisation have remained at the forefront of the available literature since the issue was first discussed.

The insecure nature of casual academic employment is highlighted in much of the literature which describes the problems that flow from the short-term and transient nature of the work. A number of individual and cross university surveys, and case studies of casual academic staff, discuss the deficits of casual academic employment such as: lack of access to basic facilities, exclusion from collegial forums, high administrative burdens, poor pay and conditions, feelings of isolation, and poor communication from employers (Brown et al. 2010; Churchman 2005; Fine et al. 1992; Gottschalk & McEachern 2007; Junor 2004a). Combined, these issues have created what this thesis terms ‘institutional invisibility’, that is a persistent and ongoing
exclusion from all the elements associated with academic work, perpetuated by the hourly rate nature of employment, and reinforced by poor sector wide data collection on casual academic staff, and the enduring narrative of the traditional academic. The gendered dimensions of casualisation are also examined as these are a key, but not defining, feature.

*Early literature*

The early literature investigated the gendered nature of casual academic employment. A decade after the hourly rate employment became codified for academic staff in 1980 Grimes (1990) investigated women’s ‘partial employment’ in the context of the extension of equal opportunity legislation into New South Wales universities in the early 1980s. Through a survey of 77 staff and interviews with 20 female staff at one NSW university her research examines whether part-time work, in all its forms (temporary and permanent), contributes to a ‘gendered dead-end’ for women (Grimes 1990, p. 112). She observes that men were far more likely than women to use their casual or part-time work as a stepping stone to more secure academic employment, despite men and women having similar qualifications, and similar aspirations for permanent work (Grimes 1990, p. 113).

A 1991 survey of all casual academic staff at University of New South Wales (UNSW) was one of the first to raise general concerns with the employment of academic staff on a casual basis (Fine et al. 1992). Over 900 casual employees (academic and general staff) were surveyed, of which 364 casual academics responded, comprising a 74 per cent response rate amongst the casual academic workforce (Fine et al. 1992, p. 77). The survey was instigated by the Equal Opportunity Committee of the University who were concerned that as a significant proportion of casual staff were women and international students, there was potential for them to be ‘misused by staff senior to them’ (Fine et al. 1992, p. 53). The main areas of concern uncovered by the survey were; the conditions of work and recognition for work performed including the time required for marking, the impact of casual work on research students’ own research, adequate acknowledgement of contribution to research, and attendance at professional development courses on an unpaid basis (Fine et al. 1992, p. 1).

The authors of the UNSW report exhibited surprise at what they found to be a defining feature of casual academic employment, ad-hoc recruitment and the ‘highly personalized nature of casual appointments’ (Fine et al. 1992, p. 51). They observe that
in other aspects of university life ‘elements of patronage and paternalism’ were curbed by formalised policies and procedures (Fine et al. 1992, p. 52). By contrast, casual employment is ‘characterised by uncertainty and insecurity’ (Fine et al. 1992, p. 51), and the authors chronicle the institutional invisibility apparent from the dissatisfaction with facilities and resources, lack of adequate training, and high workload, all issues which resonate with the literature almost twenty years later. Having begun their research with a keen eye to gender, the researchers find that women were both more highly represented in casual employment, and in casual employment for longer than men, despite the fact that the women in their sample were more qualified. Fine et al. (1992, p.50) speculate that there are structural barriers to women’s advancement in the system and that for many women, ‘casual employment may constitute their actual career’.

Issues with casual work are raised again during the 1990s but largely in the context of observed wider changes to academic work and the nature of higher education in Australia (Coaldrake & Stedman 1999; Collins 1994; McInnis 1996). Collins’ (1994) investigation of casual and contract research work for post doctoral researchers raises concerns about insecurity and a changing academic labour market (Akerlind 2005). In a 1996 report for the Australian Research Council on early career academics, Bazeley et al. (1996) note that one of the many issues associated with the establishment of a research career is that casual employment impacted on the capacity to seek research funding, and that females are more likely than males to be employed casually. They report on the difficulty casual academics have in obtaining continuing positions, particularly in the pure sciences and humanities, which are described as ‘top heavy’, and identify an over-supply of PhD graduates in some disciplines (Bazeley et al. 1996, pp. 12-13).

**Poor conditions of work**

A major survey by Junor and colleagues in 2001-2002 provides a comprehensive picture of the extent and impact of casualistion of academic employment (Junor 2004a, 2004b; Junor & Wallace 2001). Their survey of 1,337 casual academic staff and 1,154 casual general staff across five universities investigates employment duration and regularity, job roles, pay and conditions, job satisfaction, preferences, aspirations, and demographics (Junor 2004a, p. 283). Surveys were mailed to casuals’ home addresses and a 29 per cent response rate was achieved across all casual staff (both general and academic).
A number of key issues are raised by Junor’s work, issues that had not previously received serious attention in the literature. The survey analysis reveals an average age of casual academic staff of 38, a slight majority of females, and finds that 40 per cent of respondents were currently enrolled in a course of study, either bachelor or postgraduate (Junor 2004a, p. 288). Junor (2004a) finds that whilst most casual academics enjoy their work and the flexibility it offers this does not offset the inherent insecurity of the work. Multiple job holding is common, 41 per cent of respondents held between 2-5 casual or part-time jobs and ‘disguised unemployment’ is revealed (Junor 2004a, pp. 279,291). The institutional invisibility observed by earlier authors continued, as Junor’s research uncovers widespread feelings of marginalisation relating to lack of access to professional development, exclusion from decision making, and lack of awareness of employment rights (Junor 2004a, p. 295). The hourly pay rate its composition are identified as a source of inequity as the flat rate nature of the payment dictates that skills and experience are not rewarded by increases in pay (Junor 2004a, p. 296). Unpaid hours are also reported to be one of the three main causes of concern. Junor (2004a) also addresses what she argues are the causes of increased levels of casual academic employment: the move from an elite to a mass higher education system in conjunction with tighter government funding, combined with devolved management at the university level. These factors create a ‘transmission belt for casualisation’ (2004a, p. 278). The recommendations that come from the research are for clear criteria based regulation to limit casual work to where the work was genuinely casual, to provide pay increments, and to allow for accrued entitlements to address the issues of unpaid time, and the rewarding of experience (Junor 2004a, pp. 300-301).

Junor’s work also points to issues of ad-hoc recruitment, raised earlier in the UNSW study (Fine et al. 1992). This finding is reiterated by Churchman (2005), whose case study research of one university described the method of hiring as ‘you will do’. Her study chronicles haphazard and ad-hoc appointment processes, and vulnerability to exploitation as a result of lack of access to organizational knowledge and institutional voice (Churchman 2005). Contracts for the semester’s teaching are often offered in the week before teaching began, adding further to the sense of insecurity (Gottschalk & McEachern 2007). This employment ‘in haste’ practice could lead to hiring unsuitable staff and left little time for training and induction (Bexley and Baik 2011b). Casual academic staff appeared keenly aware that raising questions and pursuing employment rights could be ‘career suicide’ (Baranay 2007). In a later paper, Briar and Junor (2012,
p. 42) reflected that the situation was now so serious that it amounted to a ‘hidden crisis of insecurity in tertiary education’.

The financial strain on casual academics caused by low pay and semester based engagement are also reported in a number of studies and union publications (Brown et al. 2010; Gottschalk & McEachern 2007; NTEU 2007). Baranay (2006, p. 48) details the indignities suffered by many casuals such as applying for unemployment benefits over the summer in order to make ends meet during the long break between teaching periods. She notes how low pay pitted the casual’s work ethic against the reality of their employment contract. One casual academic observes, ‘It’s slave labour, I’m always swinging between guilt and martyrdom’ (Baranay 2006, p. 32).

The lack of career path associated with casual academic employment is also explored in the literature. A case study of seven long term casual academics finds that the participants aspired to an academic career, but they realised that ‘if you actually don’t do research you’re history’ (Keogh, Garrick & Fera 2006, p.12). As their positions demanded high teaching loads, there was no opportunity for research or career support, which thus restricted their career options (Keogh et al. 2006).

A review of the literature by Kimber (2003, p. 41) observes a ‘tenured core and tenuous periphery’ and points to casual academics becoming an ‘underclass’, permanently relegated to poor conditions and high levels of job insecurity. She advocates for comprehensive research into the profile, needs and aspirations of casual academic staff in order to develop policies to address the issues, and insists that such policies must be based on higher education and academic work as a public good (Kimber 2003, pp. 48-9). Barrett (2004) concludes that casualisation contributes to an intensification of the emotional labour inherent in academic teaching, further exacerbated by the physical and collegial isolation of casual academic labour. The emotional labour of casual academic teaching is largely unrecognized, not just because of the nature of casual work, but because of the very transactional nature of the employment contract itself (Barrett 2004).

A case study of ‘City University’ (Brown et al. 2010, p. 172) documents the negative aspects of casual academic employment, noting the range of distinctions between casual academics and continuing academic staff, including the fact that casual academics are not paid to develop and maintain knowledge, ‘yet are expected to deploy it in the teaching process’. Brown et al. (2010, p. 179) characterise the experience of work for casual academics as one of ‘class subordination’, where casual staff are socially and
intellectually alienated from the labour process. The authors argue that only a ‘perfect storm’ of declining labour supply, quality issues and the mobilisation of casual academics will resolve the problem of growing casualisation (Brown et al. 2010, p. 180).

Similar to the findings of Brown et al. (2010), invisibility and isolation are also themes of a case study of casual academics working in the Business Faculty of an inner city university, and the authors note that the relationships with employing academics are critical mediators of this isolation (Davis et al. 2009). They observe a ‘Darwinian selection process’ (Davis et al. 2009, p. 50) that sees only the high performing casuals survive. High intrinsic job satisfaction and close working relationships with the employing academic were noted amongst participants.

The consistent reporting of the issues around poor quality of work for casual academic staff begins to give the issue a higher prominence and draws the attention of the university staff union, the NTEU. The union commissions a report which examines the experience of casual academics through a case study at ‘City University’ and draws attention to the existence of ‘permanent casual’ employment (Brown, Goodman & Yasukawa 2006, p. 31). In addition to their examination of casual academic work, the authors recommend possible union strategies to deal with casual academic staff. Experiences of casual work are examined through interviews with 25 casual academic staff. Three main areas were investigated; work intensity and job satisfaction, life course and casual teaching work, and casual identity in the workplace (Brown et al. 2006, p. 31). The authors find that casual academics are often unable to access basic support to do their job and they feel invisible. Many sought an academic career but were beginning to look elsewhere for more secure work. They question the sustainability of wide-scale casualisation and its impact on the future academic workforce, and propose that higher education unions invest more resources into organising casual workers, noting the future of the union was as dependent on this as the casuals themselves (Brown et al. 2006, pp. 32-3). The report is an indication that the NTEU is beginning to take casualisation seriously and following the report a series of policy and strategy changes emerge (see May et al. 2008).

A more recent study by Bexley et al. (2011, p. 60) of the academic profession included survey responses from 622 casual academic staff. The issue of job security is a consistent theme amongst casual academic respondents, the majority of whom had reasonably regular short-term casual contracts, and were struggling to transition to more
secure academic employment (Bexley et al. 2011, p. 39). The report finds the majority prefer more secure employment: 20 per cent said that casual work was the ‘only available academic work’; a further 18 per cent said they were using the work to prepare for an academic career; and only 10 per cent said that casual work suited them (Bexley et al. 2011, p. 39). These findings reinforce a familiar pattern of under-employment, job insecurity and lack of career path identified by the earlier literature.

**Poor data collection and structural invisibility**

The existence of a ‘tenuous periphery’ of casual academic staff is apparent in much of the literature from the 1990s which in particular uncovers the paucity of information kept by employing universities on their casual academic staff (Probert et al. 1998). A pay equity study commissioned by the NTEU in 1996 finds that through a combination of institutional invisibility and sector-wide invisibility, casual academics did not appear to exist in Australian universities. The authors of the pay equity study note the potential weakness in their research due to their inability to include casual staff in the pay equity research as a result of individual university’s poor data collection. In addressing this data gap, Probert et al. (1998, p. 83) conducted a survey of casual staff (both general and academic) at one university, where they established that 61 per cent of all staff at that university were employed on a casual basis. Their data indicated a ‘pattern of unequal employment for casual academic staff’ with women working more hours but with a lower hourly rate due lower levels of appointment (Probert et al. 1998, pp. 85-7). They conclude, unsurprisingly, that the need for more adequate data particularly on casual academic staff is critical. They also reiterate earlier observations by Collins (1994) and Bazeley et al. (1996) that the conditions for academic career entry had appeared to harden, with higher requirements for entry making it more difficult for women in particular to enter academia due to women’s uneven career trajectories. The study finds no evidence that the transition from casual to continuing employment is harder for women than for men. They concluded it is difficult for everyone (Probert et al. 1998, p. 91).

Interestingly, a 2011 study commissioned by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), by Bexley et al. (2011, p.37), reports the same issue 15 years later when they attempt to conduct a survey of academic staff. They find that many universities can only locate casual academic staff details for the current payroll period, and many universities are unable to distinguish casual academic
staff from other staff for the purposes of targeted communication (Bexley et al. 2011, p. 37).

**Gender dimensions**

The gendered pattern of casual academic employment has been confirmed by a range of studies, and the literature has considered the reasons why women consistently form higher proportions of the casual academic labour force, and whether women experience casual employment differently to men (Castleman et al. 1995). This issue is first raised by Grimes (1990, p.112) whose research examines whether part-time work, in all its forms, contributes to a ‘gendered dead-end’ for women, and then by Fine et al (1992, p. 26), who speculate that casual employment militated against advancement differently for women than it did for men. Bassett and Marshall (1996, p. 13) argue that there is a large ‘underclass’ of women academics, ‘defined by and restricted to their non-tenurable status’, suggesting that a range of factors, including a masculine culture within academia, and the incompatibility of family life with full-time academic work, contributes to this situation. These factors are compounded and magnified by the lack of career development, and the marginalization of casual staff, adding up to a ‘cumulative disadvantage’ for women (Primack & O’Leary 1993, p. 158). A 1999 national survey of academic staff, from 15 universities across the country, finds women comprised 61 per cent of the casual and part-time academics who responded (McInnis 2000, p. 136). The author concludes that casual and part-time academics were more focussed on teaching, although one third said they were working part-time or casual because there were no full-time jobs available, while a further 20 per cent were doing so in conjunction with undertaking PhD studies.

In a study at one university, looking specifically at the intersections of gender and casual academic work, Probert (2005) finds that casual employment is not gendered but instead is explained by women’s over-representation in lower academic ranks and lower levels of human capital. She argues that the home is the place to look for explanations and change, as women’s greater share of care work has made them unable to compete with men to achieve ‘ideal academic’ status. Others studies focussed on gender take a different approach, suggesting that women’s higher representation in insecure positions is not just a legacy of the past but something that continues to be replicated within the system (Castleman et al 1995, p. 4).
A study of 200 casual staff, at the University of Ballarat, by Gottschalk and McEachern (2007), returns to the question of women’s experience of casual academic employment. They find that many more women than men see their casual employment as a deliberate career strategy, deployed in order to manage care for family, as well as maintenance of professional currency. However, the survey finds that whilst most respondents are positive about achieving work/life balance from casual work, at the same time they experience high levels of insecurity, ‘a price that many were prepared to pay for flexible employment, though they would prefer not to’ (Gottschalk and McEachern 2007, p. 100). Briar and Junor (2012) in a submission to the ACTU’s Insecure Work Inquiry examine the wider gender dimensions of insecure work, including the impact of lack of protections, gender based disempowerment, the link between insecure work and poverty and poor health and safety. They describe a ‘hidden crisis of insecurity in tertiary education’, with women entering university in greater numbers but increasingly being locked into casual employment with limited career prospects (Briar & Junor 2012, p.45).

Recent issues

In the late 2000s, research began to examine academic casualisation from a discipline perspective. A small number of studies raise the notion that academic discipline may impact on the experience of casualisation, and the requirements of, and for, casual work. Cowley (2010a, 2010b) argues that in the discipline of law, casual teachers are a key part of the faculty, and understanding who these academics are is important. Her findings show that casuals in law schools are overwhelmingly ‘outside industry experts’ and that there is significant variation in the use of casual staff with some universities using casual staff to fill between one third to two thirds of teaching requirements (Cowley 2010a, pp. 21-22). Labour markets are a key explanation for differences in levels of casual staff, with a number of the smaller regional universities reporting very low use of casual staff due to lack of ready access to practitioners (Cowley 2010a, p. 22). The research concludes that high reliance on casual staff was unlikely to change and therefore induction and professional development is crucial. However this should not be a ‘one size fits all’ but must recognise the nature of the workforce in the particular discipline (Cowley 2010b, p. 43).

A survey of casual academics in a business and law school at a regional university by Ryan (2012) revisits both Fine et al. (1992) and Junor’s (2004a) studies to develop and compare results. Location and labour market are again critical determinants with survey
respondents reporting an average age of 45 years, the same as the tenured workforce, explained by the tight regional labour market (Ryan 2012, p. 7). The author’s findings mirror those of Junor (2004a) but they note the major difference between their survey and earlier surveys is that casual work is now main-stream in the sector (Ryan 2012, p. 10). More than half of the academics employed in the faculty surveyed were employed on a casual basis, and high levels of frustration and disillusionment were found (Ryan 2012, p. 10).

Drawing on their experience of working as casual tutors, McKay and Brass (2011) examine the discipline of cultural studies, and draw interesting parallels between new technologies embraced by universities, such as podcasting, and the use of casual academic labour, as representing the ‘new interfaces of outsourced academic labour’ (McKay and Brass 2011, p. 141). The new technologies, they argue, are ‘tacked on’ to the teaching process, just as casual academics are appended to the teaching staff, and both are ad-hoc and disjointed rather than connected (McKay and Brass 2011, p. 159). Gregg (2009) describes the use of ‘blogging’ by many aspiring academics as a means to cope with invisibility and the inherently insecure career development process by seeking collegiality in a virtual space, in order to counter the lack of collegiality they find in their workplaces.

The question of the impact of casualisation on teaching quality has arisen only in the last five years in Australia and the small literature in this area is discussed in a later section in this chapter. The issue is framed by a report, commissioned by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council in 2008, which found that poor data collection, lack of formal policy and procedure, and low levels of integration and support characterised the employment conditions of casual academic staff (Percy et al. 2008). These findings confirmed the earlier studies’ findings of institutional invisibility and raised questions about issues of teaching quality (Percy et al. 2008).

**Implications for academic staff who manage casual staff**

The literature that examines the impact of the casualisation of academic employment on other staff, particularly academic staff required to manage casual staff, is sparse and focused on two key issues. First, that of work intensification for academic staff, and second, the lack of support for the management role (Coates et al. 2009; Lazarsfeld Jensen & Morgan 2009). In particular the lack of support for the management role both
reinforces and reflects the invisibility of the casual academic workforce, an issue which resonated with the literature discussed earlier. The study by Lazarsfeld Jensen and Morgan (2009) specifically link casualisation with intensification of work for academic staff and reports a lack of recognition of the work associated with the employment of casual staff. The authors suggest that lack of commitment by some casual staff and poor standards due to lack of support, placed additional burdens on already overworked academic staff (Lazarsfeld Jensen and Morgan 2009, p. 65). Coates et al. (2009b) using a large international survey of academic staff, argue that high levels of casualisation mean that academia risks becoming an unattractive profession for the next generation (Coates et al. 2009b, p. 15). These concerns are also raised in the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education 2007 (Bradley et al. 2008, p. 21). In a later study, Coates and Goedegebuure (2010, pp. 16-21) discuss the impact of casualisation on academic staff, particularly the imposition of a human resource management (HRM) role upon the academics who are managing casuals, noting that the role is generally unsupported and unregulated, describing it as ‘phantom HR’.

The impact of the casualisation of academic teaching in nursing is examined by Peters et al. (2011) who explore the experience of academics working with large numbers of casuals both in the classroom and in a clinical setting. Their study, which is explicitly from the perspective of the nurse academic, finds that the employment of casual academic staff added to the workload of academic staff. This raises a number of issues for teaching quality, as casuals lacked teaching skills and were perceived to lack commitment (Peters et al. 2011, p. 40). Bexley et al. (2011, p.11) argue that the academic profession has to some extent been undermined by casual and short term employment (Bexley et al. 2011, p. 2). The report, although not specifically addressing the impact of managing casual academic staff, observes that the most significant change in the academic workforce over the past 20 years is the increase in the amount of teaching performed by casual academic staff, who they describe as the ‘hidden academic workforce’ (Bexley & Baik 2011; Bexley et al. 2011, p. 1).

**Summary: Australian literature on casualisation of academic employment**

The literature on the casualisation of academic employment spans the period 1990 to 2012, and aside from Junor’s (2004a) major study across five universities, and the Bexley et al. (2011) study of academic staff across 17 universities, is largely limited to
case studies and surveys at single universities. It is often located in the context of wider changes to academic work and the academy and the issue of casual academic employment has not always been the sole focus. The literature is empirical rather than theoretically driven. The research for this thesis is more extensive, spanning a survey of 19 universities and two case studies, and will draw on a theoretical framework from segmented labour market theory.

In the literature examining casualisation of academic employment in Australia some consistent themes are identified. These are: the institutional invisibility of casual academic staff, the poor quality of work and poor conditions of work for casual academic staff, the gendered nature of casual academic employment and the growing separation of casual academic employment from continuing academic employment. Institutional invisibility is manifest in the continuing reporting in the literature of: poor data collection and awareness by universities, ad-hoc recruitment, and lack of access for casual academic staff to facilities, training and collegial support. Poor quality of work is detailed in Junor’s (2004a) descriptions of unpaid hours of work, exclusion from decision making, feelings of marginalisation, multiple job holding and lack of career path. Gender dimensions, including women’s concentrations in lower academic ranks and the differing experience of casual employment, have been clear from the earliest literature (Fine et al. 1992). The separation of casual academic employment from continuing academic employment is identified in literature in the mid 1990s and described by those reporting on the lack of career path (Gottschalk & McEachern 2007; Junor 2004a). There has been little discussion about the impact of managing casual academic staff on academic staff and the changes to academic work as a result of casualisation.

In the last decade the literature has begun to examine discipline specificity, and discuss the importance of standards for supporting and managing casual academic staff, principally through concern for the impact of large scale casual academic employment on teaching quality. The push for standards for supporting and managing casual academic staff in particular appear to be premised upon acceptance of a continued growth of casual academic employment, without questioning whether casualisation may in fact be incompatible with teaching quality. The literature raises a number of key questions about the causes and implications of the casualisation of academic employment and the persistence of gendered dimensions. The consistent reporting of the disadvantage suffered by casual academic staff suggests that the forces that create
pressure for casualisation are greater than those which may be able to limit it. The most recent literature shows that those issues identified by the early surveys remain relevant for casual academic staff, and, as outlined in Chapter 1 assume an even greater prominence given the growth in casual academic staff numbers. The diversity of casual academic staff, and emerging evidence about the discipline diversity of casual work, highlight the growing complexity of the issue and the difficulty in prescribing policy responses.

The Australian literature does not locate or propose a theory for examining the growth of casualisation, although many authors point to funding regimes and decreased funding, devolved management, and the broader rise of managerialism across the sector (Bexley et al. 2011; Junor 2004a; Ryan et al. 2012). The literature necessarily intersects with a range of literatures, such as that on casualisation, precariousness and insecure work, higher education literature, gender, and more recently new public management literature. The impact of casualisation on the university sector; on students, and on other staff has not been thoroughly examined and where negative impacts have been identified, discussions have been localised. Poor data collection has enabled much of the growth and scale of the casual academic workforce to remain hidden from view.

**Overview of insecure academic work in Anglo-American universities**

Insecure academic employment is a phenomenon that extends beyond the Australian university sector and this section, whilst limited to an examination of the Anglo-American universities which have the most in common with Australia, shows that the issue is global in nature. In the US and UK in particular the issue is increasingly the subject of public commentary.

Despite the different regulatory frameworks in each of the Anglo-American countries, insecure work is becoming a widespread feature of both the academic profession and university system. A comparative analysis prepared for Education International, the global trade union for education workers, noted: *The casualisation of the academic workforce has been one of the most significant trends over the past decade* (Robinson, 2006, p. 1). There are striking parallels in each country in relation to the decline of secure academic employment, the growth in the precarious academic workforce and the gendered aspect of these changes. Despite these similarities there is only a very limited literature discussing this issue in comparative perspective and where comparative perspectives have been undertaken they have focussed on changes to the academic
profession (for example Coates et al., 2009b), or changes to the academy (for example Fitzgerald, White, & Gunter 2012), and not on the growing phenomena of what has recently been described as the ‘academic precariat’ (AAUP 2012, p. 14). A recent publication examines professional development issues for ‘part-time teachers’ in higher education, taking a comparative perspective. However the focus in this comparative perspective is on teaching quality concerns not the nature of employment for ‘part-time teachers’ (Beaton & Gilbert 2013).

Invariably, insecure employment forms are measured against, and understood by, the standards for tenured or continuing academic employment in each of the countries. Academic tenure has been retained in some countries but not others. In the UK, for example, academic tenure was abolished by the Thatcher Government in 1988, and a number of smaller institutions in the USA have eliminated tenure or offer limited tenure. Academic freedom, and in theory academic tenure, is protected by legislation in New Zealand, while in Australia it forms part of collective bargaining. In Canada, academic freedom is protected in university policies and in collective agreements, rather than in legislation (Robinson 2006, p. 33).

The USA has the highest proportion of insecurely employed academic staff amongst the Anglo-American countries and this takes a variety of forms including full-time non-tenure-track, part-time faculty, and graduate student employment (AAUP 2012, p. 13). Statistics for 2009 indicate that approximately three quarters of academic staff in degree granting institutions of higher education of 2 and 4 years were employed on an insecure or contingent basis (AAUP 2012, p. 13). The most prominent of the insecurely employed academic workforce are the ‘part-time faculty’ described as the ‘largest and fastest growing segment of the post-secondary instructional workforce in the United States’ (CAW 2012, p. 6). Hired on a ‘per course’ basis, part-time faculty have no job security, although a 2010 survey conducted by the American Association of University Professors’ (AAUP) Coalition for the Academic Workforce (CAW) found that 80 per cent had been employed on this basis for at least three years (CAW 2012, p. 9). The survey also found that part-time faculty formed around half of all academic staff, had an average age of 36, 60 per cent were women, and one third held a PhD. The majority did not want to be part-time, preferring a tenured appointment (CAW 2012, p. 8).

In Canada, insecure academic employment takes a similar form to that of the USA, and estimates suggest that around half of all academic staff in the 56 public universities, excluding those in Quebec, were non-tenure-track (Dobbie and Robinson 2008, p. 126).
Non-tenure-track employment takes one of two forms in Canada as either fixed-term contract of less than 12 months, or part-time fixed-term employment (Dobbie & Robinson 2008). Dobbie and Robinson (2008, p. 126) use their data from three comparable universities, two in Canada and one in the USA to suggest that in fact ‘casualisation of academic labour has gone further in Canada than in the United States’. Given the difficulties in cross-national comparisons it is not possible to assess this claim more widely.

Insecure academic employment in the UK is typically either an hourly paid ‘piece rate’ or fixed-term (Bryson & Barnes 2000). The university sector is unique for its very high levels of insecure employment of professional workers with over half of all academic staff employed on a fixed-term, temporary, or contract basis (Bryson and Blackwell 2006). Much of the growth in insecure employment has resulted from the transfer of work previously performed by permanent staff to those on insecure contracts, an employment model Bryson and Barnes (2000) describe as casualisation. The University and College Union (UCU), representing staff in both further education and higher education in the UK, notes that statistics for hourly paid higher education academic staff are poor, but estimate that approximately one third of all academic staff, on a headcount basis are hourly paid (University and College Union 2011). EU regulations that restrict the capacity of employers to hire employees on a series of rolling fixed-term contracts and require parity between part-time and full-time workers’ conditions of employment, are yet to be evaluated for impact (Bryson & Blackwell 2006).

Evidence for New Zealand is much more limited. In many ways New Zealand has led the way in the ‘neo-liberal experiment’ and the university sector has not escaped wide-scale public sector ‘reform’ (Kelsey 1995; Shore 2010). A survey of part-time limited term teaching staff at one New Zealand university found that many were ‘unqualified, untrained and unsupported’ and the majority were women, although no overall figures were provided (Sutherland 2002, p. 2). Estimates from the New Zealand Tertiary Education Union (TEU) suggest that 25 to 30 per cent of academic staff on a headcount basis are non-tenured or fixed-term (Robinson 2006, p. 8). Casual workers in New Zealand receive state mandated minimum conditions of employment which include annual leave, five days paid sick leave per annum and state funded parental leave after a qualifying period and hours’ threshold (Campbell & Brosnan 2005).
Gender and insecure academic employment

In each of the comparator countries gender inequities are apparent, both in terms of women’s under-representation in the higher academic levels and over-representation in part-time and insecure academic appointments (Robinson 2006). A 2010 survey by the American Association of University Professors found that 60 per cent of part-time faculty were women (CAW 2012) and that women held only 31 per cent of tenured academic positions and 57 per cent of full-time non-tenure-track positions (West & Curtis 2006, pp. 8-9). Similarly, in Canada, women represented 43 per cent of all full-time tenure-track academic staff and made up 23 per cent of full Professors, but 54 per cent of non-tenured academic staff were women (Bauder 2006; CAUT 2012). In the UK, fixed-term academic employment was much more common for women; only 13 per cent of professors in the UK were women and more than 25 per cent of women were employed part-time compared with 13 per cent of men (Robinson 2006, p. 7). Similarly, statistics for New Zealand found that women made up only 14 per cent of professor level and were half of all part-time academic staff (Robinson 2006).

In Canada, Lundy and Warne (1990) found that part-time academic work occupied a ‘horizontal and terminal career path’, a path common to many more women than men (Lundy and Warne 1990, p. 207). The authors argue that universities have done little to assist those whose career paths do not conform to the male full-time model (Lundy and Warne 1990, p. 220). Rajagopal and Lin (1996) found that the majority of part-time academics in Canada were women and that their career aspirations were ‘camouflaged’ as a result of their part-time status. Their work was characterised by the lack of career progression, few promotion opportunities, and a lack of professional development. Further, part-time employment did not attract tenure or salary progression, which resulted in the work taking a particularly routine form (Rajagopal & Lin 1996).

A small number of studies consider insecure academic work from a feminist perspective. Drawing on interviews with insecurely employed academic staff teaching women’s studies in Canada, Webber (2008) examined how managerialism and insecure employment combined to silence feminist voices in the academy. Other studies have examined changes in academic work more broadly from a feminist perspective, with the growth of insecure academic employment seen as just one aspect of the changes (Blackmore 2003; Saunderson 2002). In a study focussed on the discipline of law McBrier (2003) uses event history analysis to examine whether men and women have different rates of mobility from non-tenure to tenure-track jobs in law faculties of
Canadian universities. She finds that men are able to use insecure academic employment as a stepping stone to more secure academic employment more successfully than women (McBrier 2003, p.1240). In particular, she finds that male and female non-tenure-track teachers are very similar in their characteristics but women appeared to be ‘directly slowed because of their sex’ and that the factors which affected career mobility were ‘not gender neutral’ (McBrier 2003, p.1240).

Developments in the five Anglo-American nations are summarised in Table 2.1, examining the forms of insecure academic employment, the gender dimensions and the share of public spending on tertiary education in 1995 and in 2008. The table shows that the UK and Australia have had sharp declines in the share of funding from public sources, with the UK, in particular, registering a very sharp fall between 1995 and 2008. In contrast the USA and Canada have seen an unchanged funding position, with the US in particular already having very low levels of public expenditure on tertiary education. Insecure academic employment can be seen to take a variety of forms across the various countries, with gender dimensions apparent.

**Table 2.1 Variations of insecurity amongst academic staff in the Anglo nations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Form/mechanisms of insecure academic employment</th>
<th>Gender dimension</th>
<th>Proportion of public expenditure on tertiary education %: 1995</th>
<th>2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| United States | • Part-time faculty (hire by course)  
| | |  
| | • Non – tenure-track  
| | |  
| | • Graduate student  
| | 60% of all part-time faculty are female (2010) | 37.4 | 37.4 |
| United Kingdom | • Short term contract  
| | |  
| | • Hourly rate  
| | 50% of female academic staff are on fixed-term contracts (2003) | 80.0 | 34.5 |
| Canada | • Short term contract  
| | |  
| | • Part-time  
| | |  
| | • Non-tenure-track  
| | 54% of non-tenured academics are female | 56.6 | 58.7 |
| New Zealand | • Short term fixed-term  
| | |  
| | • Casual – hourly rate  
| | 50% of all non-permanent academic staff are female | 73.0 in 1991 | n/a |
| Australia | • Casual – hourly rate  
| | |  
| | • Fixed-term  
| | 57% of all casual academic staff are female | 64.6 | 44.8 |

*Source: Robinson, D (2006); OECD Education at a Glance 2011, Table B3.3, p. 245*
A typology of the casual academic

An important feature of the insecure academic workforce that is apparent from some of the literature, both Anglo-American and Australian, is the diversity of those who undertake this work and the diversity in work undertaken. A number of studies based initially on Anglo-American research, from which Australian scholars have built, have sought to capture this variety by proposing a series of typologies in order to understand and explain the reasons why people take up, or find themselves in, insecure academic employment. These typologies recognise the diversity of the labour supply and labour demand in the casual academic workforce, and the variety of motivations for pursuing casual academic work. They serve to highlight the complex make-up of the casual academic workforce and the challenges in providing policy solutions.

The first typology was proposed by Tuckman (1978, p.307) who surveyed part-time academic staff in 128 institutions in the USA and distinguished seven categories based on the reasons why those staff became part-time, these were; semi-retired, students, hopeful full-timers, full mooners (those who already had a full-time job), homeworkers, part mooners (those with a part-time job somewhere else) and others (unknowners). The largest category is found to be ‘full-mooners’, followed by students.

Gappa and Leslie (1993, pp. 50-60), build on this work with a study of part-time faculty in 18 colleges and universities in the USA. They propose a four part typology for part-time faculty which describes the motivations for teaching:

1. Professionals, specialists or experts (that is those who have primary careers elsewhere);
2. Career enders (those transitioning to, or in retirement);
3. Freelancers (those working a variety of part-time jobs);
4. Aspiring academics (those who seek a continuing academic position).

(Gappa and Leslie 1993, pp. 50-60; Gappa 2000, p. 79).

Despite the diversity of motivations and backgrounds of these staff they find institutions treat all part-time faculty the same, ‘as marginal, temporary employees with no past and no future beyond the immediate term’ (Gappa and Leslie 1993, p. 63). In a more recent USA study examining changes in the academic profession, Finkelstein (2010, p. S144) describes the category of professionals as ‘accidental academics’ as they do not have the training or ‘socialisation’ of traditional academics.
In examining insecure academic staff in Canada, Rajagopal and Lin (1996), seek to distinguish ‘real’ part-time academics, that is those who only work part-time, from what they term ‘classical part-time academics’, those who combine part-time teaching with full-time jobs elsewhere (referred to by Gappa and Leslie (1993) as ‘professionals, specialists or experts’). Rajagopal and Lin (1996, p. 263) find the majority of part-time faculty are in fact ‘real’ part-timers, and they are mostly women seeking an academic career. This group were found to be poorly supported and had little training and career development, features which combine to render them uncompetitive in the tenured academic labour market (Rajagopal and Lin 1996).

A UK study by Husbands and Davies (2000) proposes six categories of part-time academic staff, based on descriptions of their employment contract and their academic background, rather than the orientation of those staff to their work. Their study investigates whether different types of universities use different types of part-time staff, and find that the post-graduate student as contract labour is common in the older universities, and contract part-time labour is more common in newer universities (2000, p. 345). Subsequent to this, Bryson and Blackwell (2006, p. 209), adapt Gappa and Leslie’s (1993, pp. 50-60) typology to include post-graduate students, portfolio workers, and retired academics to the British context. They argue that the forms or types were also shaped by their voluntary and involuntary aspects, by the aspirations of those staff, and by their career stage.

These international typologies are adapted in three separate Australian studies by Junor (2004a), Gottschalk and McEachern (2007, 2010) and Coates and Goedegebuure (2010). Junor’s (2004a, p. 286) research involving a survey of 1,337 casual academic staff is the first to propose a typology for casual academics in the Australian context. Nine broad categories, some with overlap, are proposed, based on short and long term preferences in the context of life-cycle stage and educational qualification. These are summarised in table 2.2 below.
The typology provides the first serious categorisation of the diverse nature of the casual academic workforce in Australia’s universities. The survey specifically investigates the question of preference for casual academic work by asking respondents directly ‘if you could choose your mode of employment which would be your first preference?’ (Junor 2004, p. 284). Of significance is the finding that only 28 per cent of casual academic respondents stated that a casual appointment was their first preference (Junor 2004, p. 284). Those who prefer casual employment are concentrated amongst the ‘retirees’, ‘outside industry experts’, and ‘industry professional apprentices’, that is those whose main focus was outside the sector, although Junor (2004b, p. 6) notes amongst retirees only half prefer casual work. Further, they find women express a stronger preference for ongoing employment than men (Junor 2004b, p. 5).

A 2007 study by Gottschalk and McEachern (2007, 2010) of 196 casual academic, general, and technical and further education (TAFE) staff at the University of Ballarat, a dual sector university, with both higher education, and technical and further education provision, proposes a different typology. Using both survey and case study material the authors propose a four-part categorisation based on motivations for casual work in the context of work-family balance, life stage and career orientation. They propose the groupings of:
1. Young mothers; career maintainers (flexibility sought with the presence of young children in the family);

2. Career developers (balancing children at primary school with a focus on career development);

3. Early careerists (young and postgraduate with few family responsibilities seeking to gain experience to help them obtain more secure employment);

4. Late career transitioners (mostly men focused on earning income into retirement and not on career development)

(Gottschalk and McEachern 2010, pp. 43-4).

Whilst their study was not solely focused on casual academic staff, and was framed around work-family balance, many of their findings resonate with earlier research. They conclude that the outcomes for the three career ‘aspiring’ groups they identified were in fact ‘frustrated careers’ (Gottschalk and McEachern 2010, p. 49). In a similar finding to Junor (2004b), only a minority of those surveyed by Gottschalk & McEachern (2007, p. 100) expressed a preference for casual employment. The authors conclude, ‘the choices [to work casual] are made within the constraints of a lack of preferred alternatives’. One respondent reports her efforts to use casual employment as a stepping stone to more secure work, ‘this was a deliberate career strategy however now after 6-7 years as a casual I have huge doubts that a permanent position will ever be available to me’ (Gottschalk and McEachern 2010, p. 46). The typology draws attention to the growing mismatch between career aspirations, the desire for flexibility and a ‘foot in the door’, and the university’s strategy of using casual academic employment.
In more recent research looking primarily at the changing nature of academic work, Coates and Goedegebuure (2010, p. 20) propose a typology of ‘sessional’ staff they argue assists with workforce planning and development, and takes into account the very diverse nature of the workforce. Their typology is based on a review of the available research and statistics, and proposes a five part categorisation with some overlap:

1. Industry expert (has substantive professional appointment);
2. Faculty freelancer (has multiple appointments, possibly for ‘family or personal choice reasons’);
3. Returning retiree (retired academics returning to teach);
4. Treadmill academic (qualified academic who cannot secure a continuing appointment);
5. Academic apprentice (post-graduate students supplementing their scholarship and gaining experience).

(Coates & Goedegebuure 2010, p. 20).

The discussion of the various typologies serves to highlight a key feature which is that the labour supply for insecure academic employment is not homogenous. It is only in the very recent typologies, particularly that of Coates and Goedegebuure (2010) that the issues of career progression and transition, or the lack thereof, is identified, as indicated by their ‘treadmill’ categorisation. This will be investigated further in the data and the development of the typology in the thesis. The literature discussed here is applied in Chapter 3 to develop a proposed typology for casual academic staff. That typology informs the data collection for the research and is tested in Chapter 4 where the survey results are analysed.

**The impact of insecure academic employment on teaching quality: International and Australian literature**

The scale and growth of insecure academic employment has raised questions about the impact of this development on undergraduate education and teaching quality. An emerging literature has begun to consider how teaching quality and insecurely employed academic staff intersect, and how insecurely employed academic staff could be better supported in their professional development needs. The issue of teaching quality in higher education is what one Australian academic has termed a ‘wicked problem’, due to its high consequences and ill defined and under-theorised nature
(Krause 2012, p. 285). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss this particular issue in detail but the specific literature from the USA and from Australia that explicitly connects insecure academic employment and teaching quality will be considered in this section.

A framework provided by Gibbs (2010) provides a useful matrix for understanding the components, which he argues constitute undergraduate teaching quality, and how they interact in the production of a very complex concept. By breaking up the concept of quality into a range of components it can be seen how and where the employment of insecure academic staff, as a result of their employment conditions and status, may impact on outcomes for undergraduate education. The component parts are summarised as the ‘3P’: ‘presage’, ‘processes’, and ‘product’ (Gibbs 2010, p. 4). Presage is the inputs, including the quality of students, quality of academic staff, and the resources of the university. These frame, but do not necessarily create, the ‘process’ that is the teaching and learning environment including class sizes, student contact, and feedback. ‘Product’ is the outcome, including student retention, student performance, and employability (Gibbs 2010, pp. 14-42). The review of literature, most of which is from the USA, concludes that presage variables do not help to explain institutional difference, as they largely measure the outcomes of very able students (Gibbs 2010, p. 45). Similarly, analysis of attrition rates of first year students in Australian universities suggests that university entrance scores are the best predictor of retention, the higher the score the student comes to the university with, the lower their probability of attrition (Lomax-Smith et al. 2011, p. 76). Gibbs (2010, p. 45) concludes that what universities make of the resources and students that they have, that is the process, is what makes a difference. Specifically, the processes which assist with student engagement are those which contribute most to student improvement (Gibbs 2010, p. 43). The critical elements of student engagement include the level of academic challenge and the extent of student-faculty interaction (Gibbs 2010, p. 33). Insecurely employed academic staff, by virtue of their transient status may generally not be as able as continuing academic staff to provide these critical elements of student engagement.

It is only in the USA where these issues have been examined on a large scale and the results suggest that there is basis for concern. A survey of full-time and part-time faculty across 130 colleges and universities found that contingent faculty, particularly the most insecurely employed ‘part-time faculty’, performed less well than full-time (tenured and tenure-track) faculty in all the areas described as critical to student
engagement (Umbach 2007, p. 110). The survey gathered 17,900 responses, graduate teaching assistants were specifically excluded due to their particular employment conditions and sampling issues (Umbach 2007, p. 96). In comparing the results across full-time and part-time faculty, it was found that part-time faculty spent less time preparing, less time with students, had lower expectations and were found to be generally ‘less effective’ than full-time (tenured and tenure-track) academic staff (Umbach, 2007, p. 110). Given the poor work conditions and lack of support that characterise part-time faculty employment Umbach (2007, p. 110) concludes that ‘it should surprise few that contingent faculty display a lack of commitment and perform less effectively than their tenured and tenure-track peers’.

Other studies from the USA have found that higher reliance on non-tenured and part-time faculty were associated with a higher undergraduate drop-out at first year and lower graduation rates (Ehrenberg 2012, p. 200). The reason for the poorer performance of undergraduate students, Ehrenberg (2012) speculates, is to do with the nature of the employment of the part-time faculty. Many worked across multiple campuses to make a living (dubbed ‘taxi-cab professors’) and had no time for meeting with students or keeping up to date with curriculum and their discipline (Ehrenberg 2012, p. 201). In another study, Bland et al. (2006, p.115) found that tenured academic staff were more productive and more committed to their work than insecurely employed academic staff.

The Australian literature has begun to examine the impact of casualisation on the quality of teaching in Australian universities. The Australian Learning and Teaching Council’s (ALTC) 2008 Recognition, Enhancement, Development (RED) report examines policies and supports for casual academic staff across 16 universities (Percy et al. 2008, p. 2). The RED report identifies a heavy dependence at all of the universities on casual academic staff noting that ‘quality assurance of sessional teaching in many institutions is inadequate’ (Percy et al. 2008, p. 11). A range of recommendations are offered, taking a ‘whole of university approach’, under five broad domains: systemic and sustainable policy and practice, employment and administrative support, induction and academic management, career and professional development, and reward and recognition (Percy et al. 2008, p. 5). The 2008 report built on earlier work by a project funded by the Australian Universities Teaching Committee (AUTC) which noted the ‘widespread lack of formal, systematic or centralised policies and procedures relating to the recruiting, managing, training, and support of [casual staff]’ (AUTC 2003, p. 3).
A number of smaller studies suggest ways in which casual academic staff can be better supported and managed (see for example: Chalmers 2002). Provision of compulsory professional development to casual academic staff in an engineering Faculty is discussed by Santhanam and Codner (2012), who cautiously find a positive impact on student satisfaction, noting that most staff undertaking the training and working as casual academics in the Faculty had completed undergraduate education outside Australia.

Two university specific case studies consider casual academic employment and teaching quality. One finds many barriers to casual academics improving their quality of teaching, including lack of recognition, informal and formal development and poor management (Ryan 2012). A study of marking at two universities by Smith and Coombe (2006) finds a lack of supervision and support, and poor awareness of university policy, on the part of casual academic staff, resulting in a potentially negative impact on the quality of marking.

The restrictions and inherent tensions of managing casual academic employment through a teaching and learning framework to manage risk, has been highlighted by the reports from two universities who assess their own efforts to improve conditions for casual academic staff (Kelly 2008; Macquarie University 2009). At the University of Canberra for example, a two year project identified casual academic staff issues, and developed an induction and professional development package that was able to reach approximately half of the casual academic staff (Kelly 2008). The project, funded by an ALTC grant, noted that despite the very positive feedback from casual staff about the training program there was no ongoing support from the university once the grant money ran out. Further, the main issues identified for casual staff, categorised as respect, recognition and resources, and better employment conditions, were not fully tackled by the project (Kelly 2008, p. 2). Kelly (2008, p. 4) notes that the training program actually received resistance from some senior staff who argued that their casual academics were long-term staff and therefore not in need of induction or professional development. Similarly, the Macquarie University report identified a range of concerns by casual academic staff including isolation, lack of job security, lack of access to information and limited professional development (Macquarie University 2005, p. 7). In response the university developed an orientation kit and induction session to deal with the ‘communication’ problems identified, with a focus on supporting teaching quality (Macquarie University 2005, p. 13).
The notion that casual staff present a ‘risk’ to quality, which can be ‘fixed’ by training and professional development, inherent in the RED report recommendations, is challenged by Percy and Beaumont (2008). They argue the ‘fix for quality’ of induction and training for casual staff not only ‘blames the victim’, providing an easy solution that avoids the real issue, but it also ignores growing evidence about how teaching quality is best fostered, which is through ‘collegial, collaborative, supportive communities of practice’ (Percy and Beaumont 2008, p. 151). However, this type of professional learning is much harder to measure, would involve a fundamental change to the way casual staff are engaged within their faculties and Schools, and would be far more costly to implement (Percy & Beaumont 2008).

In summary, whilst the ‘quality agenda’, and the emergence of evidence about the negative impacts of large numbers of insecurely employed academic staff on student outcomes, may represent somewhat of a countervailing force against continuing and further casualisation of academic work, the extent to which this can occur will depend on a range of factors. The first is how seriously universities take the issue of teaching quality, in so far as it relates to employment of casual academic staff, and what levers might exist to force universities to act on what appears to be a growing base of evidence for concern. In 2012, TEQSA, the newly appointed quality agency developed standards frameworks which advised that teaching staff have at least one qualification level higher than that which they are teaching (TEQSA 2012). It is unclear how this very recent requirement has been implemented and whether all universities have included their casual academic staff as part of their reporting. The second is how well developed the various performance management measures for control and surveillance of casual academic staff become (essentially student evaluation scores). Third, and closely related to the use of the performance measures, is whether a supply of reasonably qualified labour will continue to make itself available under the terms offered, such that casual academics deemed not to be performing can be replaced. In large part this will depend on the numbers of post-graduate students, and the harnessing of other sources of casual academic labour.

**Theoretical approaches and developing a theoretical framework**

A variety of theoretical approaches have been used in the Anglo-American literature to understand and explain the growth in insecure academic work, these include: labour process theory, feminist perspectives, managerialism and management strategy and
organisation approaches. Each of these theoretical approaches offers valuable insights but none has been able to provide a framework that can fully capture the complexity of the university setting and the particular features that have interacted to create casual academic employment.

Labour process theory has been used in a small number of studies to explain the unbundling of the work of the traditional academic in the UK, describing the process of the separation of teaching and research work (Bryson 2004; Willmott 1995). The fragmentation of the academic labour process was also raised in a Canadian study of the academic profession by Jones (2011). The theory has an important focus on deskilling and fragmentation which are features of the changes in academic work and the growth of insecure academic employment. However, the theory does not adequately encapsulate the role of external factors, in particular those which have arisen from the changed public policy environment for universities, government funding cutbacks and changes in the broader regulatory framework. Some have noted that university workforces are subject to the same global forces that are transforming work more generally, and that academic casualisation is part of these broader changes (Finkelstein 2010).

Feminist perspectives were considered earlier in this chapter, and some scholars have used these to examine the issue through a gender frame (Lundy & Warne 1990; Rajagopal & Lin 1996). Whilst this perspective is valuable it appears that a focus on gender alone may mean that other important elements are missed. Organisational approaches, specifically a theory of academic capitalism, developed in a response to the particular setting in the US university sector is too place-specific to be of more general applicability. Academic capitalism builds from resource dependency theory to describe and explain how universities integrate the new knowledge economy to produce, and reproduce academic capitalism. In this environment academics and academic work is no longer central, academics are instead ‘managed professionals’ whose work is divided in ways that are easily managed and useful to the market (Slaughter & Rhoades 2004a). Likewise, considerations of management strategy and managerialism, discussed in Chapter 1, whilst useful for a focus on the organisation, are unable to give adequate consideration of employee experience or the role of the external environment.

Dual labour market theory and segmented labour market theory has been used by Roemer and Schnitz (1982), Rosenblum and Rosenblum (1996, 1997) and Bauder (2006) to describe the growth of insecure academic employment in the US and Canada.
The theories used in these studies lay the groundwork for a theoretical framework that can be applicable to the Australian setting. The studies use segmented and dual labour market theory as a device to describe what they argue is occurring in a particular academic discipline, in the case of Bauder (2006), or across a series of cohorts of academic staff in Canada (Rosenblum & Rosenblum, 1996, 1997).

The literature shows that context is extremely important and that the unique organisational setting that is the university, as discussed in Chapter 1, is central to understanding and explaining the rise of insecure academic employment in Australia’s universities. Universities are unusual employers in that they train their own academic labour force, and broadly, exercise control over supply through PhD training (Roemer and Schnitz 1982). Academic work is characterised by high levels of autonomy and by discipline specificity (Trowler 2012). Yet unlike many other forms of professional work, such as nursing or teaching, academic work is characterised by a lack of clear boundaries as it is without a formal qualification and registration process. A PhD qualification essentially trains an academic for the research component of academic work and the teaching component is essentially dealt with by what may appear to be an ill-defined and informal quasi-apprenticeship of casual academic teaching. Whilst formal teaching qualifications for the university setting exist, typically a graduate certificate, the take-up of such qualifications has been at best mixed across the sector in Australia and is common only amongst younger academic staff (Hardy & Smith 2006).

Further to this, the literature has identified the particular regulatory settings which have resulted in the Australian labour market having very high levels of insecure, casual employment compared to other countries (Campbell 2004). Another significant feature is the impact of public policy changes and the reduction in the levels of government funding for universities. The literature has also identified the gendered dimensions of casualisation (Pocock et al. 2004a). The casualisation of academic employment needs to be examined taking into account these contexts and also be understood as the move of insecure work into the professions. Casual academics are highly qualified staff with high levels of human capital, attributes which would ordinarily be expected to be associated with job security.

This discussion foreshadows the need for a theoretical framework that can capture these complexities and assist with understanding and unpacking the processes of casualisation. Segmented labour market theory (SLM), in particular the most recent reformulation and developments through the work of Osterman (1994), Grimshaw &
Rubery (1998), Beynon et al. (2002), Grimshaw et al. (2001, 2002), and Rubery (2005, 2006), will be considered as they offer a framework for examining the research questions. SLM theory, and its historical and theoretical development, is discussed in the next section including a discussion of the studies which have applied dual labour market theory and segmented labour market theory to investigations of insecure academic employment.

**Segmented labour market theory**

SLM theory is underpinned by the premise that labour markets are ‘socially constructed and politically mediated’ and the theory challenges the neoclassical economic orthodoxy that labour markets function in the same way as any other market (Peck 1996, p. 5). SLM theory is said to have three ‘generations’ of development (Peck 1996, pp. 50-6) and the theory has tended to develop in country specific strands.

The origins of SLM theory are found in the dual labour market theory of the early 1970s which identified two distinct sectors of the labour market, the primary, secure internal labour market, and the secondary labour market, characterised by marginal and low paid employment (Doering & Piore 1971). Dual labour market theory developed from the identification of internal labour markets (Kerr 1954) as economists sought to explain job tenure and why employers maintained internal labour market structures.

Early dual labour market theorists, who were largely focused on economy wide developments in the US, suggested that there was little mobility between the primary and secondary labour markets as the conditions of the secondary labour market reinforced its negative characteristics, and they located the reason for dual labour markets as uncertainty, both in labour markets and product markets (Fine 1998).

The second generation theorists, principally Reich, Gordon and Edwards (1973), took an explicitly radical approach, arguing that employers used segmentation as a strategy to control the workforce (Peck 1996, p. 53). Their analysis extended dual labour market theory to argue that there were four segmentation processes that divided the working class, and these were part of a wider transformation of labour resulting from the dynamics of monopoly capitalism (Reich et al. 1973, p. 364). The four processes were: the separation into primary and secondary labour markets; segmentation within the primary sector; segmentation by race; and segmentation by gender (Reich et al. 1973, p. 360). These processes of segmentation weakened the working class, and facilitated capital accumulation in the post war period, so segmentation helped explain why there
had been no organised response (Gordon, Edwards & Reich 1984, p. 214). Segmentation was argued to be the means by which new post war labour market entrants, such as women and migrant workers, were confined to lower paid jobs and industries; for example, by 1970, 95 per cent of all women workers were in just four sectors (Gordon et al. 1984, p. 206). Whilst acknowledging that the forces of segmentation had negative outcomes for women, the theory was not able to adequately account for gender, or provide explanations for gender due to its demand side focus (Rubery 2005 p. 276).

**Application of dual labour market theory to insecure academic work**

Dual labour market theory was used in a small number of early studies of insecure academic work to examine and explain its rise in both the USA and Canada (Roemer & Schnitz 1982; Rosenblum & Rosenblum 1997, 1996). Roemer and Schnitz (1982) identified ‘academic employment as day labour’, and described the emergence of a dual labour market for academic staff in the USA. They argued this came about through a series of labour market changes in the 1960s and 1970s where the supply of PhD graduates began to outpace the availability of academic positions (Roemer & Schnitz 1982, p. 515). Non-tenure-track academic positions were found to resemble a secondary labour market due to their instability, poor working conditions and limited opportunities for advancement (Roemer & Schnitz 1982, p. 523). The consequence was the establishment of a new and more permanent basis of discrimination against already disadvantaged groups, such as women and those from minority backgrounds (Roemer and Schnitz 1982, p. 527).

In a series of studies on academic work in Canada, Rosenblum and Rosenblum (1996, 1997) apply dual labour market theory to an examination of the changes in the academic labour market, in particular to investigate the role of the external (non-tenured) labour market as an unofficial recruitment pool for the internal (tenured) labour market. Using cohort analysis the authors examine full-time new university academic entrants to both internal and external labour markets seven years after first appointment, in order to analyse retention rates, and movement between the external and internal labour market. They find that over the seven-year period for each of the seven cohorts examined (1977-1983) survival rates of approximately 50 per cent for those from the internal labour market, and that approximately 20 per cent of those who start in the external labour market make it to the internal labour market of the same university (Rosenblum &
Rosenblum 1996, p. 441). A survivor is defined as someone who is still at the same university seven years later. The studies find that women are more likely to enter academia through the external labour market, and as a consequence have more ‘disorderly’ careers (Rosenblum & Rosenblum 1996, p. 439). They also found that each successive cohort of external entrants was older than the last one, suggesting that the pursuit of an academic career was becoming harder and longer (Rosenblum & Rosenblum 1996, p. 441). Further, the rate of PhD qualification was increasing in both the internal and external labour market over time, particularly amongst women, suggesting changes in supply and demand for PhD qualified academic staff (Rosenblum & Rosenblum 1997, p. 12-13). The external labour market is found to be ‘an important part of the unofficial recruitment systems of the internal labour markets’ (Rosenblum & Rosenblum 1996, p. 442).

*The flexible firm*

The changing economic environment of the 1980s is also reflected in literature, from both the US and UK, that focused on employer strategy. The notion of the ‘flexible firm’ was developed by Atkinson (1984) who observed changes in employer behaviour in the UK. The flexible firm model was premised on the idea that firms sought three forms of labour use flexibility; functional, numerical, and financial (Kalleberg 2003). In particular, numerical flexibility related to the firm’s capacity to adjust the workforce to suit changing patterns of demand through the use of a contingent or non-standard workforce, or in dual labour market terms, a secondary labour market (Kalleberg 2003). Kalleberg (2003, p. 159) argued that the flexible firm strategy led to a widening gap between the core and periphery or primary and secondary labour markets, and for those in the secondary labour market without portable skills and labour market power, it led to insecurity and inequity. However, whether a strategy of functional or high performance work practices, and numerically flexible work practices were compatible or indeed a realistic depiction of management strategy was questioned (Kalleberg 2003; Pollert 1988). The flexible firm model was also criticised for being simplistic (Burgess 1997). A UK study examining employers’ labour use strategies reported an absence of strategic thinking and little evidence of a conscious flexible firm model (Hunter et al. 1993, p. 387).
SLM theory developments in the US literature

SLM theory has been developed further in literature specific to developments in the American labour market, with a series of studies examining the basis of segmentation across the labour market to determine whether this was due to industry, occupation, gender, race and skill, or qualification level (Hudson 2007). Growing and persistent wage inequality in the US since the 1980s led to debate about the role of human capital in determining how workers were rewarded and, given the decline in male earnings, how gender and race impacted in the rapidly changing environment (Reid & Rubin 2003). Reid and Rubin (2003, p 414) examined wages data at five points in time between 1974-2000 to investigate interactions between an individuals’ occupation and the industry in which they worked, and the effects of human capital, race, sex and industry or sector of employment. They concluded that labour market structures and industrial structures were key components of gender and racial inequality at work (Reid & Rubin 2003, p. 426).

The US literature also canvassed what constitutes a ‘bad job’ in the context of growing inequality and employers’ drive for flexibility. Kalleberg et al. (2000, p. 260) argue that in the US context a bad job meant low wages, and a lack of health insurance and pension benefits. They found that non-standard jobs (that is jobs where there is no employer or the employer is removed from the workplace such as an agency, or the employment is ‘contingent’, short term, and without an explicit expectation of longer term employment) were more likely to fall into the category of ‘bad jobs’ (Kalleberg et al. 2003, p. 273). Non-standard employment was growing, and the study estimated that in 1995, 31 per cent of workers were in a non-standard job (Kalleberg et al. 2003, p. 259). Whether a ‘bad job’ might assist a worker getting a better job and whether contingent, or outsourced work, could necessarily always be classified as bad was also considered, noting the heterogeneity of non-standard work (Kalleberg et al. 2000; Hudson 2007). Research on contract workers in Silicon Valley, for example, found that these workers had high levels of job satisfaction and felt secure in their jobs as they were always able to obtain work (Osterman, Kochan, Loche & Piore 2001, p. 39). In other words in some, albeit limited, cases it could be that what appeared to be insecure, contract employment status did not result in job dissatisfaction and feelings of insecurity and could not be characterised as a ‘bad job’.

Hudson (2007) proposed a ‘new segmented labour market thesis’ which retained an economy wide perspective in order to investigate increasing polarisation of the US
labour market. Evidence was found for demand side segmentation based on citizenship status rather than gender or race, and Hudson (2007) argued that this was occurring both within firms and across the economy. The growth of non-standard work resulted in workers becoming confined to bad jobs, in the way that the original dual market theorists had suggested (Hudson 2007, p.207). Non-standard work was found to be the defining characteristic of the secondary labour market, over and above sex and race, and this interacted with citizenship status, specifically undocumented Hispanic workers whose occupational crowding in low skilled jobs pushed wages down (Hudson 2007, p. 306).

The developments in SLM in the US literature have largely retained an American specific character and have tended not to engage explicitly with the British theorists. Their focus has been on economy level developments in the US, and labour market structures to investigate wage inequality and job quality.

Job quality – bridges, traps and stepping stones

Continuing from the debate about job quality a number of scholars have also examined the issue of whether insecure or non-standard work and indeed low paid entry level work can be seen as a bridge or stepping-stone to more secure work. This question in the Australian context has been debated by Buddelmeyer and Wooden (2011) and Watson (2013) using longitudinal data to examine labour market transitions. Watson (2013) argues that casual jobs are labour market traps, rather than bridges to more permanent work. The question of the implications of accepting an entry level job as a means of obtaining a ‘stepping stone’ to the next job was investigated in a European comparative analysis by Scherer (2004) examining West Germany, Great Britain and Italy. Two kinds of entry level positions were considered, the first a very short-term contract, and the second a position with lower educational requirements than that held by the applicant. Scherer (2004, p. 386) finds that accepting a position for which the applicant is over-qualified has long term negative consequences for career, and that short term contracts assisted entry to the labour market but were also associated with employment instability and unemployment.
Third generation SLM theory

A third generation of theorists emerged in response to the US developments in the 1970s and had an essentially British character, and is often referred to as the Cambridge School. These theorists argued that second generation SLM theory was ‘excessively deterministic and simplistic’ (Marchington et al. 2005, p. 11) and that there needed to be more consideration of supply side factors (Fine 1998, p. 125). Dual labour market theory was static and seen to be too place - and time - specific, relevant only to the USA during the 1960s and 1970s (Rubery 2005, p. 262). The third generation theorists, observing rapid changes underway in the labour market in the UK in the 1980s, revisited SLM theory and internal labour market and external labour market theories to examine fragmentation and deregulation of the labour market and to propose a more dynamic analysis (Grimshaw & Rubery 1998). Grimshaw and Rubery (1998, p. 202) argued that changes observed in the UK labour market over the 1980s and 1990s called for a ‘reformulation’ of SLM theory. The changes they identified included deterioration in public sector pay and conditions, decline in collective bargaining coverage and trade union membership, a rise in performance based pay, and decline in seniority based pay, all influenced by increasing levels of unemployment and flexible forms of employment (Grimshaw & Rubery 1998, pp. 202-205). In the public sector changes associated with NPM had a significant impact on internal labour markets dismantling career structures and blurring distinctions between the primary and secondary public sector workforce (Hood 1995, p. 96). These were all identified by Grimshaw and Rubery (1998, p. 218) as part of a process that was continuously ‘redrawing the boundaries between core and periphery employees’.

The issues identified by Grimshaw and Rubery (1998) are salient to those identified by the literature examining the casualisation of academic employment in Australia, and the changes that the university sector has undergone over the past two decades. This development in the reformulation of SLM theory offers a mechanism for going beyond the somewhat polarised primary and secondary labour market notions of the early theorists, and instead offers a dynamic framework for understanding the processes and interactions at play. The context for the casualisation of academic employment is the wider changes in academic work and changes to the university driven by external forces such as changed public policy, changed regulatory frameworks and reductions in government funding.
The third generation theorists also argued that the factors of labour supply such as gender, household division of labour, the activities of trade unions and role of the state needed to be considered (Peck 1996; Vosko 2010). Critically, they argued that the role of the organisation needed to be reconceptualised and put at the centre of the analysis (Beynon et al. 2002, p. 26). This was reiterated by Rubery (2006, p. 14) who argued that the failure to give prominence to the role of the organisation was symptomatic of policymakers being ‘in thrall to an individualised approach to the understanding of labour markets’.

*Application of SLM to insecure academic employment*

Two discipline specific case studies, both from Canada, use segmented labour market theory to examine insecure academic work (Bauder 2006; McBrier 2003). McBrier (2003) examined the discipline of law, specifically to look at sex inequality in mobility across segments in the profession, from non-tenured to tenured academic work. Her study found that women moved more slowly than men from insecure to secure academic employment and that women appeared to be directly slowed as a result of their gender (McBrier 2003, p. 1240). Bauder (2006) focused on the discipline of geography and observed that segmentation occurred because academia operated as a separate labour market, where, for many academics, there were few outside opportunities. He observed that internal segmentation already existed on the basis of gender, class and university status (Bauder 2006, p.233). Other studies have used segmented labour market theory to examine the influence of academic discipline, gender and institutional type (Finnegan 1993; Moore et al. 2010). Moore et al. (2010, p. 196), in a case study of a US university, interviewed academic staff (tenured and non-tenured) teaching a diversity education course and found that the academic labour market was ‘split’ by race, class, and gender. Finnegan’s (1993) study was confined to tenured academic staff and found that the academic labour market is segmented by institutional type.

*Reformulated SLM*

As discussed, the recent developments in SLM theory have sought to emphasise the role of the organisation in explaining and understanding changes in the employment relationship and the nature of work. These theoretical developments, described as a
reformulating of SLM theory (Rubery 2005 p. 264), build on the work of Osterman
(1994), whose model sought to explain how internal labour markets were evolving in
the US. Osterman’s (1994) theoretical developments built on his earlier work examining
the importance of internal labour markets in the US economy for explaining wages and
employment conditions (Osterman 1984).

Considerable change was observed within the organisation of internal labour markets in
the US during the 1980s and significant growth in contingent employment although
there was no major change in job tenure at that time (Osterman 1994, p. 318). Osterman
(1994 p. 318) proposed that there were three key elements to explaining the changes
such as flexible jobs, performance based pay, and variations across similar firms that
were observed in internal labour market structures. First were performance pressures
within the organisation. These pressures led employers to seek to maximise effort and
gain commitment from key workers in order to maximise output, and to retain skilled
labour, through the use of internal labour markets. The second element was that internal
labour markets resulted from pressures and power struggles within organisations, such
as the actions and responses of management as well as the impact of ‘norms and
customs’. The third element was that of the external environment, and comparative
examples were the best way to illuminate this influence (Osterman 1994 pp. 319-323).
Further, organisations often sought to imitate other actors in a search for legitimacy and
this was particularly so with organisations regulated by government agencies (Osterman
1994 p. 323). Osterman (1994 p. 324) described the three elements as rings which may
all be operating at one time with different levels of influence. However he noted that
primacy was given to performance pressures as this best represented what was occurring
during the time period he examined (1994, p. 329).

This model was taken further by Beynon et al (2002, p.26) stressing the dynamic nature
of the relationship between pressures upon the organisation from the macro level, that is
the environment within which the organisation operates, and how the organisation
responds to those pressures. They developed a framework which conceptualised
Osterman’s (1994) three rings of influence as loops that interact, separately and
together, to result in changes to employment conditions, as follows:

**Pressures on organisational performance:** This ring encapsulates how organisations
respond to the particular pressures of their industry, market position or regulatory
environment, and these responses can have an impact on employment conditions within
the organisation. Performance pressures are mediated by the responses of managers and
also by organisational culture which can either temper or exacerbate performance pressures. Organisations within any particular sector may respond differently to the same pressures depending on their position within their sector or industry and their strategies, and some may copy the strategies of other organisations as a means of seeking legitimacy.

**Organisational culture and power relations:** Osterman (1994) posed organisational culture as a factor that would constrain change, but in Beynon et al.’s (2002, pp. 30-31) framework it is described as a factor that influences and shapes how external challenges are managed and operationalised. Critically, if workforce cooperation is required for the change process then managers may choose not to challenge existing employment arrangements and instead work with their current staff. Alternatively, a requirement for radical organisational change may prompt the employment of a brand new workforce in a different employment mode, for example outsourcing or temporary employment. Key to these decisions is the power struggles within the organisation, struggles which are in turn influenced by developments outside of the organisation such as changes in the political environment or changes in the external labour market.

**External market and regulatory conditions:** This ring encompasses external conditions such as changes in the broader regulatory environment that may interact to effect pressure on the organisation and influence the way that managers respond to those pressures. The broader political environment can impact on power relations within the workplace and embolden managers to act more harshly or alternatively embolden unions to pursue claims more vigorously. Changes in labour supply can provide opportunities to organisations in times where there may be a surplus of skilled labour and alternatively where skill shortages exist this can require organisations to adopt different strategies in order to retain skills in-house.

Whilst each of the rings is considered separately, Beynon et al. (2002, p. 33) argue that they interact in ways that are both complementary and competitive to cause changes in employment conditions. Power relations mediate the extent to which managers and unions can respond to pressures and the outcome of those pressures.

The model is extended further through three key observations offered by Rubery (2005, pp. 262-4). First, it is within the organisation that employment relationships are shaped and not in the labour market, and managerial strategies are central to what occurs. Second, institutional arrangements reflect conflict and power struggles. The existence of internal labour markets for example, may have more to do with trade union bargaining
power, and employer capacity to pay than the skill set of the workforce. Third, inequalities can emerge from segmentation on the demand side and the supply side, for instance gender can be a source of supply side segmentation, and organisational profitability a demand side segmenting force. Further, demand side and supply side processes of segmentation occur within and across organisations to change the nature of employment, producing inequity and instability. Societal systems are also considered as a component of the external factors, as they are the forces which shape regulation and social institutions. This more developed and dynamic model sought to move away from Osterman’s (1994) approach which started with performance pressures, to instead build a model where pressures could be seen as arising from external forces or from internal arrangements such as internal labour markets (Rubery 2006, p. 7). Each of the factors interacted and built on the other to create and explain segmented labour markets and sources of inequity. These factors are diagrammatically represented in figure 2.1. It is difficult to replicate the model as it was originally described but the meaning is the same and the model depicted in Figure 2.1 will be used to build upon in the thesis.

Figure 2.1: A framework for understanding employment change

(Source: Adapted from Beynon et al (2002 pp. 26-34), Rubery (2005))
The development of the theoretical basis of the framework described above was successfully applied by Beynon et al. (2002, p. 38) in examining case studies of seven large British organisations which spanned a range of employment in the British economy; banking, local government, healthcare, newspaper journalism and printing, pharmaceuticals, food retail and telecommunications. In observing wide scale change at each of the organisations, their case study analysis focused on three main areas of employment; staffing policies and practices, training and skill development; and working time (Beynon et al. 2002, p. 109). Each of these was examined in detail using the framework from which Figure 2.1 was adapted, to explain the processes of change in employment. The outcomes of the elements in each of the three rings was seen to take different forms, for example changes to staffing policies could take the form of outsourcing, redundancy, temporary contracts or strategies for retention and each is shaped by performance pressures and internal struggles.

Whilst the authors found diversity across the case study organisations due to a range of external factors and internal pressures two common themes emerge; the drive to reduce labour costs and an increase in the intensity of work (Beynon et al. 2002, p. 233). This was aptly summed up as ‘an unfair day’s work for an unfair day’s pay’ (2002, p. 261). Broadly, in all cases, managers were found to have a lot more autonomy to act than previously but often responded with short-term solutions which created other issues such as poor morale and high turnover. The outcomes were also seen as creating more segmentation and greater decentralisation and atomisation.

In summarising what they observed the authors describe the trend of ‘internalising the market’ whereby workers increasingly bore the full weight of market forces in the employment relationship, essentially a shifting of risk of employment from employer to employee (Beynon et. al 2002, p. 241). Work was commodified, or cut to fit the product or service demand, and this could mean shorter hours, shift work and outsourcing, limited down time and result in extra unpaid work, as workers endeavoured to manage and complete all of their tasks. This fed back into worker morale and staff turnover, sometimes resulting in a management rethink where the external conditions were not favourable, such as in times of labour shortage, or when it was necessary to keep the skills in-house. Unbundling of skills was observed in the health case study with an outsourcing of the low paid and low skilled tasks that were previously part of the nurses’ jobs. Typically new technologies appeared to be associated with de-skilling
processes and de-layering, with emphasis focused on a smaller skilled labour force supported by larger numbers of unskilled workers.

These theoretical developments in SLM theory were also pursued by Grimshaw et al. (2001, 2002) using a smaller sample of the case studies discussed above to examine the features of employment associated with a traditional internal labour market (Grimshaw et al. 2001, p. 30). In analysing the case study data the authors found little evidence for the traditional internal labour market, such as career progression, job security and on the job training. For employees, the absence of these features led to a great deal of uncertainty about their position in the labour market (Grimshaw et al. 2002; Grimshaw et al. 2001). Employers were afforded greater managerial discretion than in the past and were responding to internal and external labour market pressures by shaping different conditions for different groups of workers (Grimshaw et al. 2001, p. 30). In the absence of regular career paths employers relied upon ‘alternative more intensive techniques of appraisal and selection’ (Grimshaw et al. 2002, p. 111). The authors observed a ‘winner-takes-all’ approach to the new career path in the case study organisations. This resulted from the large gap between the lower and middle layers in the organisation, a gap that could only be bridged by employees willing to make a major commitment in work effort that did not guarantee reward (Grimshaw et al. 2002, p. 110).

Three key themes arise from reformulated SLM theory (Rubery 2005, p. 265). The first suggests a stronger attribution for the employer in shaping employment conditions, noting that employment conditions are shaped within organisations. Second is that demand side and supply side factors combine to shape employment, resulting in ‘conflicts and contradictions’ (Rubery 2005, p. 263). Third, the role of societal systems and institutional structures need to be taken into account, and these help explain differences between different countries (Rubery 2005, p. 265). The societal systems are those that govern regulation, labour market institutions, and gender relations.

Reformulated SLM theory, as conceptualised in Figure 2.1 will be used to examine the research questions in this thesis. A theoretical framework that can capture complexity, retaining the centrality of the university setting, whilst adequately accounting for the impact of external factors, in particular the impact of government regulation and funding and public policy changes, is key to the analysis. The higher education literature more broadly provides an empirical account of changes in the university, and academic work, reflecting the complexity of the institutional setting. Reformulated SLM theory emphasises the importance of the organisational setting and seeks to
understand the internal processes which shape change in employment relations. The theory also gives sufficient weight to the role of external forces which the literature, particularly in Chapter 1 show are an essential element for understanding what has taken place in Australia’s universities. The features of continuing academic employment, such as job security, limited and controlled entry, career progression, and on the job training conform to notions of an internal labour market, albeit industry wide rather than organisation specific (Grimshaw et al. 2001, p. 27). It is the empirical approach underpinning SLM theory and recent reformulations that offers a valuable lens for exploring changes in academic work and the growth in insecure academic work.

In using this approach it must be noted that the theory is not entirely uncontested. SLM theory has been criticised by Kezar and Sam (2011, p. 1424) who argue that using the theory for an analysis of insecure academic staff is problematic as it treats these staff as if they were ‘laborers, not professionals’, and ignores much of the unique nature of academic work. They acknowledge that this does not mean they endorse the poor conditions under which insecure, non-tenure-track academic staff work (Kezar & Sam 2011, p. 1436). Hudson (2007, p. 291) notes that too much focus on earnings as a measure of a secondary labour market has confused cause and effect between industry and occupation as the basis of segmentation. These critiques can be examined more closely through the data gathered for this research but the literature suggests that poor conditions of work for casual academic staff are one of the defining features of this development. Whilst casual academic staff are professionals with high levels of human capital, these features have not given them immunity from insecurity in work. It may be that in examining casual academic work with the same frame of reference as used to examine all other kinds of work, the true nature of this work can be revealed.

In all, reformulated SLM theory offers a dynamic theoretical frame to explain employment change by highlighting the mutual interactions between performance pressures, organisational culture and the impact of external markets and regulatory conditions. The application of this theory to an industry, the university sector, rather than an individual organisation or to an economy wide analysis is a fresh application of the theory that offers new perspectives.

This framework can be applied with some modifications to examine the research questions in this thesis.
The theoretical framework to be used in this thesis

A theoretical framework derived from the work of Osterman (1994) and Beynon et al. (2002) is outlined in figure 2.2 and will be used in this thesis. The framework refocusses attention to the role of external factors as the key factors which drive change. Further, how these factors are operationalised within the university setting and how within that particular and distinct setting those pressures are responded to in the context of collective bargaining and the institutional setting for academic work, helps to explain how these three elements bring about academic casualisation.
The external environment – public policy, regulatory changes and labour supply

In this construction of the model the external environment is privileged as the starting point and key driver of change. There are three key factors from the external environment which create performance pressures for universities, these are: the changed public policy settings for universities including funding regimes, the broader regulatory changes and the labour supply for casual academic staff.
The university sector underwent major reform in the late 1980s, discussed in Chapter 1. The number of universities doubled within a very short period of time, changes were made to funding arrangements and governance, and tuition fees were reintroduced. These changes were compounded by a significant decrease in government funding under the Howard Liberal Coalition Government, which saw the proportion of university revenue from government sources drop from 87 per cent in 1996 to 45 per cent in 2007 (Marginson 2000, 2009). Changes to fee arrangements which permitted full fees to be charged to international students provided a new revenue stream for universities. In addition the more recent period has seen expansive quality and accountability regimes for universities including the Excellence in Research Australia (ERA) to measure research outputs. This has gone hand in hand with increased emphasis on global university rankings as performance measures and marketing tools, and driven a focus on research. TEQSA, the new quality agency has also placed requirements upon the level of qualifications of those teaching into university degree courses.

Changes in the broader regulatory environment for industrial relations generally, from the push to decentralised bargaining from the mid 1980s to the Howard-era Workchoices legislation had an extremely negative impact on unions and collective bargaining generally. In the university sector the Howard government specifically linked funding increases to requirements for changes to industrial relations within universities. These changes were designed to weaken the ability of unions to regulate employment conditions via collective bargaining and in the university setting to specifically restrict the capacity of unions to regulate employment forms such as casual employment (Rosewarne 2005).

The nature of labour supply for casual academic staff is another significant factor. This is both gendered and characterised by discipline specific external labour markets related to the professions aligned to the discipline, which in turn shape the casual academic labour market. That is, the features of discipline-oriented labour supply create segments within academic labour markets. The features of the external labour market shape the availability of labour for the casual academic labour market by both providing postgraduate students with alternative perhaps more attractive career options, and defining the size of the available workforce, for example, in disciplines such as nursing and education casual academics are directly linked into external labour markets as practitioners. The labour supply is gendered as a result of women’s higher rates of post-
graduate completion, their concentration in lower academic ranks and broader societal factors which push women towards flexible and part-time work hours. Further, the discussion earlier in the chapter examining typologies of insecure academic staff shows that the characteristics and motivations of these staff are highly diverse. This will be considered in the data analysis.

Performance pressures: Operationalising NPM through the enterprise university

Performance pressures have been driven by what was described above as the external environment, essentially the actions of government since the mid 1980s. Through the imposition of ‘quasi-markets’ for higher education by government and through decreasing government funding, university managers have operationalised NPM creating what Marginson and Considine (2000) describe as the ‘enterprise university’. The enterprise university is characterised by devolved budgeting, enhanced managerial control, a drive for flexibility in staffing to deal with volatility in external conditions, and the need to deliver teaching in the most cost effective manner (Marginson & Considine 2000, pp. 9-10). University managements have also responded to the declining proportions of revenue from government funding, and changed regulations for fee setting, by pursuing international students as a revenue source. International student numbers rose ten-fold between 1990 and 2007, and this revenue source comprised 17.5 per cent of universities’ total revenue in 2010 (Lomax-Smith et al. 2011, p. 5). Attracting international students has become a major component of universities’ marketing budgets.

The enterprise university, with a new executive class, devolved budget and decision making, and a drive for flexibility in staffing, has turned academic staff into ‘managed professionals’ (Marginson & Considine 2000; Slaughter & Rhoades 2004). This has required a ‘re-layering’; the addition of a new management layer in order to make the transition. The employment of new management staff of itself has created budget pressures, and forced further fragmentation of work. New categories of professional work spanning academic and general staff categories have emerged (Whitchurch 2008). A disproportionate growth in administrative staff positions, compared to continuing academic positions, since the Dawkins’ reforms, has been identified and attributed to the nature of funding, and the resources needed to pursue smaller sources of funds (Dobson 2010).
Further, and consistent with Osterman’s (1994) observations about tendencies to
imorphism amongst publically funded organisations, Marginson and Considine (2000, p. 19) observe a pattern of ‘inter-institutional mimicry’ as university managers
responded to performance pressures by adopting the same model, that described as the
enterprise university.

Organisation culture: The distinct university setting

The Australian university sector has a particular historical and cultural context which
has created a unique organisational form. The academic staff, responsible for the core
teaching and research functions of the university, has always been central to this distinct
organisational setting. Chapter 1 detailed the changing relationship between academic
staff and their institutions and the discussion of pay determination for Australian
academic staff in Chapter 1 also details the transformation in this relationship from
community of scholars to industrial actors. The history of wages and conditions
determination on a formal collective basis for academic staff is a fairly recent one. It has
only been since the late 1980s that academic staff have had to conceive of themselves as
workers in the sense of having to bargain with their employer for their wages and
conditions.

Formal collective bargaining through the university staff union, the NTEU, is
characterised by a broad consistency of wages and conditions for academic staff across
the sector. Academic staff are employed on a five levels which start at Level A and rise
to Level E (professor). Employment is either ongoing, fixed-term or casual. This
consistency in pay and pay scales has provided a level playing field which suited
universities and reflects an occupational rather than institution specific labour market
(Rosewarne 2005). Indeed collective bargaining has delivered academic staff some
significant victories over the recent period. Salaries for academic staff in Australia are
high by international standards and other benefits such as 17 per cent employer
superannuation payments and 36 weeks paid maternity leave are superior to that
enjoyed in the public service (Coates et al. 2009). University staff, through their union,
have become accustomed to the use of industrial action, including strike action to
achieve goals in collective bargaining. These features; relatively high (by Australian
standards) levels of unionisation amongst non-casual academic staff, university based
collective bargaining with sector wide coordination and an occupational labour market,
make for a unique organisational setting through which the performance pressures have been mediated.

The outcome – casualisation of academic employment

The large scale casualisation of academic employment can be seen as an outcome of the interaction of these three elements. Changes in funding arrangements, expansion of the sector and student numbers, and wider regulatory changes which weakened union power have been the context for university managements seeking a lower cost means of providing academic teaching. The mechanism for doing this has been the widening of the regulatory gap within which the category of casual academic teaching is located. During the period 1990-2012 statistics collected by the federal department responsible for higher education matters show that growth in casual academic employment on a full-time equivalent basis significantly outpaced that of continuing academic employment. Further, analysis using superannuation fund, Unisuper data, detailed in Chapter 1, has been able to quantify that in 2011 the casual academic workforce on a headcount basis was larger than the continuing academic workforce. The literature has highlighted issues with the poor quality of these casual jobs and poor conditions of employment for casual academic staff.

The history of pay determination for academic staff, detailed in Chapter 1, shows how casual academic employment was first regulated in 1980, and the literature in Chapter 2 discusses how casual work in the Australian labour market was initially a residual category, which was exploited by employers during the 1980s in response to structural changes in the economy at that time. Casual employment expanded as a regulatory gap through which flexibility and the transfer of risk could occur (Campbell 2001; Rafferty and Yu 2010). In the university setting, the external forces of the changed funding and policy environment required universities to teach more students with less money and whilst international student numbers grew to the extent of comprising a significant revenue source, this revenue source proved volatile and in need of a constant expensive marketing effort. Further, measurement of research through the ERA focused the attention of continuing teaching and research staff on their research efforts, leaving the teaching function as one able to be ‘outsourced’ to a different and more ‘flexible’ category of staff.
The outcomes – impact on other academic staff

Casualisation has significant implications for those staff who are working as casual academics and it also has implications for those who are continuing academics. There is only a limited literature examining the impact on continuing academics and this has focussed on work intensification and concerns about teaching quality. These issues will be explored through the qualitative and quantitative data, using the framework described above to understand and explain how changes to the external environment have driven particular management responses within universities. These responses have interacted with the distinctive nature of the university setting and academic work.

Summary

In applying the reformulated SLM theory by using the model outlined in Figure 2.2 to analysis of the casualisation of academic work the processes of segmentation, both demand side and supply side can be explored, and the role of the university as employer, and the role of management strategy can be examined. Analysis of longitudinal Australian labour force data suggests that the characteristics of casual jobs serve as a trap to casual employees, perpetuating casual employment for those employees (Watson 2013). In the university setting experience on the job makes the casual academic cheaper and more attractive to employ as pay rates do not increase with seniority nor is there a promotion process within casual academic employment (Junor 2004a).

The literature points to the institutional invisibility of casual academic staff, the gendered nature of casual academic employment and the gulf between this employment and more secure academic employment. Further analysis is needed to understand the diversity amongst casual academic staff and a typology will be developed to enable that analysis. The framework developed in Figure 2.2 will also assist with examining the impact casualisation on other academic staff.

The statistics discussed in Chapter 1 show that much of the teaching work in Australia’s universities is performed by this casual academic workforce. Most students will be taught by casual academic staff during their studies, and for these students casual academics are highly visible, yet within their institutional contexts casual academics remain hidden, marginalised, isolated and often unsupported.
Conclusion

The discussion of the literature points to a range of themes to be explored in the data, using the theoretical framework that has been developed, to address the research questions. The impact of external factors such as the changed public policy and regulatory environment has been examined in Chapter 1 and will be explored in the interviews with senior managers. The nature of performance pressures on the university and the impact of the ‘enterprise university’ will also be explored through the interviews with the senior managers. The links between this and the unique university setting will be explored in the interviews with senior managers and also with academic staff who manage casual academic staff, and this will examine the changes in academic work. The outcomes, particularly the impacts of casualisation on the casual academic staff themselves will be explored in the interviews with casual academic staff and in Chapter 4 which details the analysis of the survey of casual academic staff.

The key themes of insecure academic work raised by the literature; the institutional invisibility of casual academic staff, the poor quality of their jobs, the gendered dimensions of the work and the growing segmentation of the casual academic labour market from the continuing academic labour market, along with segments within these labour markets, will be explored in the data chapters. In particular whether casual academic employment is a bridge to more secure academic work, or a trap is a critical question. This question will be examined with reference to the interactions of demand and supply for casual academic staff, exploring the diverse nature of the casual academic workforce, alongside the employer demands for flexibility. Reformulated SLM theory offers a dynamic framework within which to examine and explore these complex processes and examine the conflicts and contradictions that can arise.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The background discussion and the literature chapters both highlight the complex nature of the university setting and of academic work. The discussion in Chapter 2 shows that both qualitative and quantitative research has been used to examine the issue of the casualisation of academic work. In examining the literature it can be seen that a variety of theoretical frameworks have been applied to the analysis of the casualisation of academic work in both local and international studies, and largely the approach taken is an empirical one. The dynamic nature of the processes of casualisation requires a methodological framework and approach that can capture complexity. The theoretical framework that will be used was outlined in Chapter 2, using an adaption of Beynon et al. (2002) model of employment change. This chapter sets out the methodological approach taken in the thesis and describes the processes of data collection and analysis undertaken. The thesis takes a mixed method approach which involves both quantitative and qualitative research.

Methodological approach

A mixed methods approach has been used in this thesis to collect and analyse data. As Pick, Teo & Yeung (2012, p. 8) observe, mixed method research is useful for research involving universities due to the complexity of the subject matter. They argue that mixed methods allows for quantitative findings to be explored in more detail through concepts that cannot be easily measured, such as individual experiences of work (Pick et al. 2012). Mixed methods research has been described as research that ‘mixes or combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study’ (Burke Johnson & Onwuegubuzie 2004, p. 17). The authors describe mixed methods research as a ‘third wave’ or ‘third research movement’ that moves beyond the paradigm of one particular approach, and is ‘expansive and creative’ and not limiting (Burke Johnson & Onwuegubuzie 2004, p. 17).

Mixed methods research takes a ‘practical’ approach to dealing with research questions as it allows for a breadth of tools to be used, rather than restricting the types of data collection that may be possible (Creswell & Plano Clark 2007). Although still in relatively early days of its development, some have argued that mixed methods research should be seen as research design in its own right (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003, p.17).
Bryman (2007, p. 21) argues that the real strength of mixed methods research is that in combination the varying data should be ‘more than the sum of the parts’. Quantitative and qualitative data should be ‘mutually informative’ and ‘talk to each other, much like a conversation or debate’, suggesting that good mixed methods research requires something more than just an elaboration of qualitative and quantitative data, rather, these findings should be ‘mutually illuminating’ (Bryman 2007, p.21).

The mixed methods approach allows the research questions to be approached from different angles and enables a more nuanced understanding of the processes of casualisation. The mixed methods research design type applied in this research is triangulation design. This design is used to compare quantitative results with qualitative findings and to validate and expand on both sets of results (Creswell & Plano Clark 2007, p. 62). Triangulation design is described as being an efficient design method as it means data collection can occur at both quantitative and qualitative levels during a similar timeframe and, analysed separately before being combined for write up (Creswell & Plano Clark 2007). This approach is appropriate as much of the current data is contested, often inadequate, and subject to differing interpretation.

In order to make the most of mixed methods research Bryman (2007, p. 20) argues that it is important not to lose sight of the original rationale for the mixed method approach, citing the difficulty many researchers find in intergrating the analyses. He argues that, in integrating the findings of mixed methods research, researchers should not simply test one set of findings against another, rather they need to bring together the findings in order to enhance the overall account (Bryman 2007, p. 21). Bryman (2007) finds there are a number of reasons why qualitative and quantitative research is often not integrated in a way that optimises mixed methods research. Specifically, the barriers relate to the different research methods of each approach, the different audiences, and the skills and preferences of researchers (Bryman 2007, p. 19).

The reasons for using mixed methods research in this thesis are two-fold. Firstly, due to the relatively poor quality of statistical data currently available about casual academic staff in Australian universities (see Coates et al. 2009b; Percy et al. 2008), and the contested nature of the debate on the role of casualisation in the sector, it is important to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, and endeavour to verify the data by examining it from different perspectives. Second, in order to investigate the research questions that examine the implications of casualisation, qualitative data in the form of interviews and case study analysis is undertaken. An understanding of the lived
experience of casual academic employment, and of the impacts of casual academic employment on academic staff who manage casual staff, and on senior managers, can only be gained by in-depth interviews with those staff to explore their experiences. Such understanding is not possible through quantitative data. The interview questions were guided and informed by the analysis of the literature. Analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data was enhanced by triangulation of the data and findings.

The data gathered from the Work and Careers in Australian Universities survey of casual academic staff (WCAU) provides a broad perspective about the size and demographic of the casual academic workforce, with detail about objective conditions of employment, the range of support and training provided to casual academic staff, motivations for working as a casual and employment preferences. The data gathered from the case studies, in particular the interviews, has an interpretivist frame, as it acknowledges that there are multiple viewpoints and perspectives, and the aim is to understand how people construct meaning in the particular setting (Neuman 2011, p. 102). In particular, in interviewing senior staff, and academic staff managing casual staff, data is gathered from a range of perspectives within the particular organisational setting and reflects differing interactions with the issues of casualisation, and differing access to decision making and decision makers. This rich source of data allows a much fuller picture of the processes of casualisation to emerge, enabling the research questions to be more fully explored. The interpretive approach assumes that the world is experienced differently by different people and by acknowledging different lived experiences an interpretative explanation can be given (Neuman 2011, p. 105).

The interviews with casual academic staff allow for an exploration of the lived experience of casual academic employment, providing a perspective that cannot be gained by the quantitative data. The field interview is a ‘joint production’ between the researcher and the interviewee that can be enhanced by a ‘mutual sharing of experiences’ (Neuman 2011, p. 450). The internal and external consistency of interview data can be verified by reference to the other interview data, internal university documentation and policy, and the quantitative data (Neuman 2011, pp. 455-456). Through the use of semi-structured interviews participants were given space to tell their story and themes and issues that emerge can then be explored more deeply.

The theoretical framework used to inform the data analysis, segmented labour market (SLM) theory, requires a methodological approach that can deal with complexity, and capture data from a range of approaches. Many of the studies using an earlier version of
SLM theory, dual labour market theory, to investigate insecure academic work have used quantitative data (Roemer & Schnitz 1982; Rosenblum & Rosenblum 1996, 1997). Later studies have used case study data (Bauder 2006). Studies of academic work have applied SLM theory to quantitative and qualitative data (Finnegan 1993; Moore et al. 2010). Reformulated SLM theory has been successfully applied to case study analysis by Beynon et al. (2002) and Grimshaw et al. (2001, 2002). Much of the recent US literature using SLM theory has used quantitative data for the analysis (for example, Kalleberg et al. 2000; Reid & Rubin 2003; Hudson 2007), although Osterman (1994) draws on secondary data that is qualitative and quantitative.

**Data used for this research**

The research has involved the collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data used for this thesis was gathered from three sources:

1. A survey of all casual academic staff employed at 19 Australian universities, during the second teaching semester of the year, August-October 2011, the Work and Careers in Australian Universities Survey (WCAU). The survey was conducted as part of an Australian Research Council Linkage Project (LPO991191): *Gender and Employment Equity: Strategies for Advancement in Australian Universities*.

2. Analysis of data from the staff superannuation fund, Unisuper, for the purposes of establishing a headcount calculation, and a gender and age breakdown, of the casual academic workforce.

3. A secondary source of data used was that from the federal government department, DIISRTE collection of higher education staff statistics. This data is the only longitudinal source of data on the casual academic workforce.

The qualitative data was collected from case studies undertaken at two very different Australian universities, ‘Old University’, from the category of Sandstone Universities and ‘New University’, from the category of Newer Universities. Both universities took part in the research on a confidential basis and the university identities are not disclosed. The universities are assigned titles which describe their university type (Marginson & Considine 2000, pp 189-190). At each university interviews were conducted with casual academic staff, academic staff managing casual academic staff and senior managers. In
total 45 interviews were conducted. The data from these interviews is likewise de-
identified to protect the confidentiality of those who took part. A range of
documentation from each university was analysed for the case studies including relevant
university policy and collective agreements, and where available, internal reports and
payroll data.

**Ethics approval process**

Ethics approval for the case study research was granted by the Griffith University
Human Research Ethics Committee on 4 April 2011. Ethics approval for the WCAU
casual academic staff survey was granted by the Griffith University Human Research
Ethics Committee in July 2010. Confidentiality of university and individual participant
identity was clearly described in the ethics documentation provided to participants.

**Data collection methods – quantitative data**

The main data source for the qualitative data comes from the Work and Careers in
Australian Universities (WCAU) survey, undertaken during August to October 2011,
the second semester teaching period of the Australian university academic year. The
survey was distributed to all professional/general staff, academic staff (continuing and
fixed-term) and casual academic staff in 19 of the 37 Australian universities. These
universities agreed to take part on the basis of confidentiality. The universities were
predominantly those which took part in an earlier survey of gender equity in Australian
universities by Probert et al. (1998), so as to allow for comparisons over time. The
Probert et al. (1998) study was unable to include casual academic staff and reported that
this was because the universities’ own data on their casual staff was incomplete.
Separate survey instruments were designed for each of the three staff groups, with some
areas of over-lap in order to compare data. Casual academic staff were invited to
participate in the survey online. General/professional and academic staff were also sent
a copy of the survey hard copy.

The casual academic staff population represented the total of all casual (hourly paid)
lecturers, tutors, demonstrators, and/or clinical demonstrators, on the participating
university’s payroll during the last pay period prior to the survey distribution during
semester 2, 2011. The decision was made to survey the whole population of casual
academic staff in order to maximise the response rate. Email details for each of those
staff were provided by 16 of the participating universities to the Institute of Social
Science Research (ISSR) at the University of Queensland, who administered the survey. Three participating universities sent the survey link by email directly to their own staff. The survey was distributed electronically three times between August to October, 2011 with two reminders each a fortnight apart following the initial email.

The survey instrument for casual academic staff was developed to reflect the employment conditions of casual academic staff, the concerns raised in the academic literature as well as the gaps identified in the literature. In addition to capturing a range of demographic data such as age, gender, qualification and academic discipline, the survey sought information about hours of work, sources of income, motivations and orientations to casual employment, career intentions and job and career satisfaction. The survey instrument was developed by the researcher in conjunction with input from the ARC project team, in order to ensure consistency across the three survey instruments.

In total 3160 casual academics responded to the survey, a 13.3 per cent response rate. This response rate was lower than that for the academic staff survey (35 per cent) and general/professional staff survey (32 per cent) (Strachan et al. 2012). The lower response rate for casual academic staff is consistent with casual workers’ lower response rates in other surveys (see Junor 2004a; Morehead et al. 1997). Previous surveys of casual staff in multiple university surveys have had low response rates, although Junor’s (2004a) survey of casual academic and casual general staff in five universities achieved a 29 per cent response rate. Junor (2004a) had access to home addresses and surveys were posted to casual staff. Home addresses were not available for the WCAU survey.

A recent, 2010 survey, of all academic staff that included all casual academic staff, at 17 universities by Bexley et al. (2011, p. 60) received 662 responses from casual staff. Bexley et al. (2011) do not report the response rate for casual academic staff but they report an overall response rate of 16 per cent, implying that the casual academic response rate was considerably lower.

There are additional reasons why the casual academic response rate was lower than that for academic staff. The casual academic workforce is large and dispersed. Due to their hourly rate, and often short term nature of employment casual academic staff have less affiliation with their employing institutions than more securely employed staff. Casual academic staff can be hard to reach due to lack of access to a workspace at their institution. Many universities have difficulties keeping adequate records of their casual
workforce (see Bexley et al. 2011; Percy et al. 2008) and many casual staff either do not have access to university email accounts or do not use those email accounts. Due to the transient nature of casual academic employment and the difficulties associated with physically locating casual academic staff, a decision was taken not to send the survey hard copy to the workplace, as had been done as an option with the other two staff groups. Casual academic staff only received the survey by an email link.

The casual academic sample

The population and sample are described in Table 3.1. The initial population as per the list of email addresses provided by the participating universities was 25,514 casual academic staff. There were 1794 surveys returned citing an invalid email address, thus reducing the population to 23,740 casual academic staff. Of those 23,740 there were 20,557 who did not participate, and 3 of those who responded did not provide information about their gender, which made their response unusable. There were 3,160 respondents who completed the survey either fully or partially, comprising a 13.3 per cent response rate. A complete survey response was determined by ISSR to be one where the respondent had answered questions in the last set of questions (those in part L). A partial survey response was where the respondent had answered one of the first two questions (age and gender) and but had not fully completed the survey to the last set of questions (those in part L). A full copy of the survey instrument is attached in Appendix B.

Table 3.1: WCAU Survey response rate – casual academic staff survey

| Size of total population as provided by the 19 participating universities | 25514 |
| Number returned with invalid email address | 1794 |
| **Size of survey population** | **23740** |
| Did not participate | 20557 |
| Did not provide information about gender – survey unusable | 3 |
| Number of surveys fully completed online | 2918 |
| Number of surveys partially completed online (answered first 2 questions and did not reach the end of the survey) | 245 |
| **TOTAL SAMPLE** | **3160** |
| **RESPONSE RATE** | **13.3%** |


**Quantitative data – development of the survey questionnaire**

The survey questions in the WCAU survey for casual academic staff were set out in 12 different sections as follows:
A. Age, gender and qualifications
B. Current job
C. Income
D. Hours and Workload
E. Job satisfaction and security
F. Career and job history
G. Career supports and difficulties
H. Career Intentions
I. Work and family
J. Parental leave
K. Retirement planning (questions in conjunction with industry research partner, Unisuper)
L. Country of birth, marital status, union membership

The sections A, B, E, H, I, J, K, L were very similar to those questions asked in the academic survey, modified for the population of casual academic staff. The survey questions in section I and J, work and family and parental leave, were based on questions from the Australia Work and Life Index (AWALI) survey (Pocock, Skinner & Pisaniello 2010). The questions in sections C, D, E, F, G and H were specifically modified and developed for casual academic staff. These were designed by the researcher in conjunction with the ARC project team to investigate the research questions and gaps identified in the literature. Where possible the questions allow for comparison with the academic staff survey results, but also reflect the unique nature of casual academic employment.

The survey questions for casual academic staff sought to capture two sets of data. One set related to the objective experience of casual academic employment, seeking responses on whether a range of activities were included in the workload of a casual academic staff member, and whether these had been undertaken on a paid or unpaid basis. These included activities such as marking, induction, professional development, activities such as attending staff meetings, and the provision of research support. Increasingly, payment for such activities have been part of the collective bargaining claims of the NTEU, and payment regimes for such matters have been successfully
included in a number of collective agreements, in particular separate payment for marking. Unpaid activities have been noted as a major source of concern and source of complaint by casual teaching staff (Baranay 2006; Fine et al. 1992; Brown, Goodman and Yasukawa 2006).

The data gathered in relation to the objective conditions of the casual academic employment allow for analysis of the nature of casual employment relationship, and understanding of what training, support and professional development, the casual staff member is receiving. The literature examining this question suggests that casual academic employment is used as a cost saving measure, rather than for the purposes of workforce renewal (Junor 2004a; Kimber 2003). Therefore this data is to be employed to address the research question; what does the casual academic workforce look like, and what are the implications of that employment for casual academic staff.

The second set of data relates to questions about the casual academic’s sources of income, career intentions, motivations, orientations and employment mode preferences. From this data it should be possible to determine the proportions of casual teaching staff who are wholly reliant on their casual work for their income, and in contrast, the proportions of staff that seek an academic career. Earlier research has suggested that the majority of casual teaching staff would prefer more secure employment (Gottschalk & McEachern 2007; Junor 2004a). The issue that has not been explored in detail is whether there are gender differences in relation to these questions. This addresses the research question about the implications for casual academic staff and its gender dimensions. This data will also be used to develop a typology of casual academic staff. A proposed typology, based on the discussion in the literature is discussed in the next section. This typology will be tested using the quantitative data. A new typology, resulting from this two stage process, is a key contribution of the research and will aid understanding of the diversity of the casual academic workforce.

**A proposed typology for this thesis**

Building on the typologies discussed in Chapter 2 a new typology is proposed to both guide the development of the survey questions, and the case study interviews with casual academic staff, academic managers and senior university managers. The defining characteristics for the proposed categorisation are motivation, career intention and preference, and orientation. This typology proposes that those whose career intentions are to seek an academic position may be derived from groups with a variety of external
characteristics, and that these may be connected. For instance, an industry expert may be motivated by the experience of teaching casually to become a post-graduate, in order to seek an academic career. Equally, an ‘academic aspirant’ may be someone who has completed their PhD and has been unable to find an continuing academic position, and is working in a casual position whilst they continue to apply for more permanent work, or they could be a post-graduate student who aspires to an academic position. The casual by ‘choice’ category may comprise those whose personal circumstance is such that they are able to manage the insecurity inherent in casual appointments. They may or may not wish to pursue an academic career in the future, with questions of ‘choice’ needing careful navigation as highlighted by the earlier typologies (Gottschalk & Mc Eachern 2010; Junor 2004a). The retiree category is proposed as comprising those who supplement their retirement or pension income with casual academic teaching and as a result it is suggested their preference would be for casual work.

The typology differs from that of Junor (2004a) in that it focuses on motivation and orientation rather than description, and does not seek to focus on work-life balance as a pre-supposed motivation for seeking casual employment (Gottschalk and McEachern 2010). The typology is also distinguished from that proposed by Coates and Goegebuure (2010) as it seeks to illuminate aspirations, and orientations, rather than confining some groups to the description of a ‘treadmill’ status. Further, the category ‘academic apprentice’ proposed by Junor (2004a) and Coates and Goegebuure (2010) suggests that there is a measure of formal training for teaching accompanying PhD study and casual academic employment in line with a career path, evidence of which is not borne out in the literature. This is an area that warrants further investigation, and is investigated in the discussion of both the survey and case studies.

The typology will also assist with examining the research questions about policy implications for university management and public policy. The typology will assist with understanding the nature of the casual teaching labour force, and the barriers to transition for casual academic staff to the internal labour market. Given the issues raised in the literature about academic workforce planning and renewal, an understanding of the composition of the casual academic workforce is critical (Coates et al. 2009a; Hugo 2008). Evidence about the proportions of the casual academic workforce who are qualified academics seeking an academic career is critical for understanding and exploring the dynamics of labour supply and demand, and for assessing claims about forecasted shortages for academic staff, such as those raised in the Bradley report.
(Bradley et al. 2008). Further, it is important to examine how time spent as a casual academic impacts upon casual academics’ perceptions of their career prospects and if these are gendered. In particular the questions in section H of the WCAU survey relating to career intentions seek to provide information about these questions.

Table 3.2: Proposed casual academic staff typology – motivation and orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Motivation</th>
<th>Career intentions</th>
<th>Orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Post-graduate student – academic orientation</td>
<td>Younger female</td>
<td>Income and academic job</td>
<td>Academic career</td>
<td>Full-time academic position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Post-graduate student – industry orientation</td>
<td>Younger</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Seeking career outside academia</td>
<td>Part-time or casual work during study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Industry expert – industry orientation</td>
<td>Main source of income is industry job middle age male</td>
<td>A desire to teach</td>
<td>Focus on external career</td>
<td>Prefers casual work to fit with main job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Industry expert – academic orientation</td>
<td>Main source of income is industry job</td>
<td>Seeking possible career change</td>
<td>Academic career</td>
<td>Full or part-time academic position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Academic aspirant</td>
<td>Main source of income is casual job, younger female, qualified academic</td>
<td>Income and seeks an academic career</td>
<td>Academic career</td>
<td>Full or part-time academic position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Casual by ‘choice’</td>
<td>Main source of income is casual job – but may be other family sources female</td>
<td>Casual work ‘chosen’ to suit life circumstances maybe temporal</td>
<td>Depends on circumstances</td>
<td>Prefers casual work with flexibility to suit personal circumstances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Retiree</td>
<td>Casual work to supplement pension retired male</td>
<td>Wants to teach and wants to work</td>
<td>Continue as is</td>
<td>Prefers casual work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data analysis

The full data set of de-identified partially and fully completed surveys was provided to the researcher in January 2012, in SPSS format. The survey data were analysed using SPSS. Most of the analysis is either univariate or bivariate analysis with differences tested for significance with the use of Chi square. Chi square was used to determine statistical significance between variables within the tables. Chi square testing determines the association between two categorical samples for the likelihood of the distribution being due to chance. Significance was reported at the p<0.05 level. Reporting significance at this level confirms that the results are unlikely to have occurred as a result of chance. As the cells are quite large Chi square is an appropriate measure and does not present any problems. The survey analysis is presented in
Chapter 4 of the thesis. In some of the tables in Chapter 4 the intermediate values are not included, and this is noted in those tables.

**Construct validity**

The casual academic workforce is a particularly difficult group to examine. Little is known about the overall characteristics of the workforce, and it is a workforce with a high level of churn due to the inherently insecure and temporary nature of employment (Brown et al. 2010, p. 176). There are two indicators that add weight to the relevance and representativeness of the WCAU casual academic staff survey data. First, the gender and age distribution of the WCAU results are very similar to the age and gender distribution evidenced in analysis of data from Unisuper, discussed in Chapter 1. For example, analysis of the Unisuper data found that 57 per cent of casual academic staff are women. This is the same proportion as amongst casuals in the WCAU survey. The Unisuper data also reveals that 52 per cent of the population of casual academic staff are under 35 years of age, only slightly more than the 48 per cent amongst casuals in WCAU. The gender profile reported in the WCAU survey is similar to that reported by DIISRTE. The DIISRTE (2012) data showed that in 2011, 54 per cent of the full-time equivalent teaching only academic casual workforce were women (compared to 57 per cent of the headcount in WCAU).

The survey was sent to the identified population of casual academic staff employed at the 19 universities in order to maximise the response rate. As a consequence of the non-random nature of the survey and the low response rate, caution needs to be exercised in how the results are interpreted for the whole casual academic workforce and what conclusions can be drawn for the population of casual academic staff (Whitfield & Strauss 1998). Quantitative research generally has higher external validity and low internal validity (Whitfield & Strauss 1998). The casual academic workforce is a particularly difficult group to examine as not only is there little known about the overall characteristics of the workforce, in particular by the employing institutions (Percy et al. 2008). Casual academic work is inherently insecure and temporary with no expectation of ongoing employment, and even where work has been ongoing it can end at very short notice (Brown et al. 2010, p. 176).

Aside from that estimated by the analysis of Unisuper data in Chapter 1, there is no comprehensive population data for the casual academic workforce. As a consequence it was not possible to examine response bias. This is a limitation of the survey and an
inherent limitation in survey of a group of workers such as casuals. The varying response rates by university type are examined in Table 3.2, which describes the average response rates by university types using the Marginson typology (see Appendix A) (Marginson & Considine, 2000, pp. 189-190) to categorise the university sample. Of the nineteen universities in the casual academics’ survey, five were from the Sandstone University category, four from the Gumtree University category, two from the Unitech University category and eight from the Newer University category. Column 3 details the number of respondents from each of the university categories and column 4 the proportion that these respondents represent, by university category. The table shows that Sandstone Universities had a higher response rate and formed a higher proportion of the overall sample than their proportion of the population as detailed in column five. That is Old University respondents formed 43 per cent of the sample, but comprised only 35 per cent of the population of casual academic staff. Some explanations for this are discussed in Chapter 4.

Table 3.3: Average response rates by university type – WCAU 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1) Average response rate %</th>
<th>(2) No. of universities in sample</th>
<th>(3) No. in sample (n)</th>
<th>(4) Proportion of sample %</th>
<th>(5) Proportion of population %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1365</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>34.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumtree</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitech</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>686</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean response across sample</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>3160</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

*New University data – a comparison of payroll data and WCAU survey results*

A further check on the robustness of the data is provided by examining the WCAU survey results from one of the case study universities, New University and comparing that with payroll data provided by the university for the case study research. This data is described in Table 3.3 and compares the payroll data for semester 1, 2011 (row 1) with payroll data for semester 2, 2011 (row 2) against the WCAU survey results (row 3) for New University.
New University’s payroll data shows that approximately 60 per cent of all casual academics who worked during 2011 were women and that only seven percent of all those casual academics were paid at the casual academic rate applicable to those with a PhD qualification (a slightly higher hourly rate of pay). The proportions of all academic staff employed on a casual basis is calculated in the first column by dividing the numbers of casual academic staff by the numbers of total academic staff, using data that New University provided to the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA) (now known as the Workplace Gender Equality Agency) as part of a regular data provision exercise\(^1\). By comparing this data with that from the WCAU survey results for New University it can be seen that the casual academic density, from both sources, is similar. However, the survey appears to have an over-representation of female respondents.

Column three shows that seven per cent of casual academic staff on payroll were paid at the higher PhD rate, this is a proxy for holding a PhD qualification and may not be up to date. The survey may be slightly over-represented by those holding a PhD qualification. In column four, the payroll data for average hours paid in the fortnight, shows the average hours to be 17 compared to the average hours worked reported in the survey as 15. Overall the results suggest that the WCAU is broadly reliable for the population of casual academic staff at New University during the survey period.

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\(^1\) EOWA, now WGEA, a federal government agency, publishes each year a list of ‘Employer of choice for women’, with employers chosen as part of a process where organisations voluntarily submit data against a range of criteria. Many Australian universities take part in this process and in 2012, 19 universities were deemed to be employers of choice for women, see EOWA (2012).
Table 3.4: New University payroll data – casual academic staff by semester 1&2, 2011 compared with WCAU results for New University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basis of calculation</th>
<th>(1) Proportion of academic staff employed on a casual basis* (%)</th>
<th>(2) Proportion of casual academics who are women (%)</th>
<th>(3) Proportion of casual academics paid at PhD rate (%)</th>
<th>(4) Average hours paid per fortnight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Payroll period during Semester 1, 2011</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Payroll period during Semester 2, 2011</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. WCAU- New University</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>11**</td>
<td>15***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*payroll data for semester 1 &2, 2011 as against EOWA data for total academic workforce  
** survey respondents who said they had a PhD qualification  
*** average hours worked per fortnight

**SOURCE:** New University payroll data, WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

**Unisuper data**

The process for the collection and analysis of Unisuper data is described in Chapter 1. As discussed in Chapter 1, limitations associated with that data resulted in that data being analysed for one year only, 2010.

**DIISRTE data**

The DIISRTE data are a secondary data source and are discussed in Chapter 1 and used in Table 4.5 in Chapter 4. The data are the only longitudinal source of data on casual academic staff and enable analysis from 1989. Each March universities are required to provide estimated casual staff FTE numbers for the current year and actual casual staff FTE numbers previous calendar year. The data are a small part of a whole range of staffing statistics that universities are required by legislation to provide each year for the Higher Education Staff Data Collection (see DIISRTE 2012).

**Data collection – qualitative data**

Case study research offers particular advantages when examining complex organisations such as universities and allows for a more sophisticated understanding of processes at work within those organisations. Case study research has a range of strengths including, ‘the ability to capture complexity’ and to explain linkages between various factors (Neuman 2011, p. 42). Case study research enables the contextualisation of the research questions within a particular organisational and
institutional context to reveal differences across the university sector. Interviews with casual academic staff, academic staff responsible for managing casual staff and senior managers reveal a variety of perspectives allowing analysis from a range of viewpoints.

The interviews, particularly those with casual academic staff, were approached from the standpoint of an ‘insider’ (Neuman 2011, pp. 433-434). As I have worked as a casual academic I both understand, and have empathy with, the conditions of work for casual academic staff. In the course of the interviews I told casual academic interviewees of my own work history and background in order to develop trust and rapport, and to show that I was familiar with their work and its setting. This approach can have both benefits, in that richer data can be gained as a result, and risks. The risks are that an insider may lack the appropriate distance necessarily to analyse the data and make findings that give weight to all points of view. In being aware of these risks measures can be taken to ensure internal and external consistency of the data by checking it against other data sources, such as that from other interviewees with different points of view.

Through the case study research the research questions about why academic work is increasingly casualised and the implications of casualisation for university management and public policy were examined in a way that is not possible using survey analysis, or even by analysis of documentation. The research seeks to uncover the practical application and the reality of university policies and practices relating to the employment of casual academic staff. Likewise research questions about gender generate a deeper understanding of issues beyond the analysis of gender differences, and can be approached more fully in the case study setting. The case studies also provide the means to a deeper understanding of the lived experience of casual academic work, how this is impacted by circumstance and choice, including an understanding of the some of the ways that gender can shape these outcomes (Pocock et al. 2005). Pocock, Prosser and Bridge (2004b, p. 24), in a study on the impact of casual work on workers and their families, argue that qualitative data is useful for examining complex issues such as motivations, and describe some of the difficulties they encountered when interviewing casual workers.

Each of the university case studies, discussed in Chapters 6 & 7, are contextualised using a wide range of data, from the survey data as well as examining university policies, industrial arrangements and structural factors that may affect casual teaching staff. The interviews explore employee understanding of universities policies, in addition to gathering information about the policies themselves. The university level
data is also explored where possible, for different patterns of employment across faculties. Analysis of the case study universities is examined for differences between and within each university in the use and form of casual academic employment.

The qualitative data involves two case studies, drawn from very different universities, with multiple units of analysis. The qualitative studies identified in the literature have largely focussed only on the individual casual academic staff member typically within a single university setting. In the case studies in this research the focus is on the individual casual academic, as well as on the academic managing casual staff, and on the senior managers as the decision makers within the universities. The impact of managing casual academic staff on the academic staff is explored in the interviews with academics. The review of literature in Chapter 2 showed that this was an area that has received little attention. Similarly, an understanding of the views of senior managers about casualisation, provides a broader perspective and contributes to examination of management strategy. The use of multiple units of analysis is important for understanding the different perspectives of each group of staff, and exploring the impact of casualisation on academic staff. Casual academic staff do not work in isolation, they are supervised by academic staff and senior managers have a role in overseeing that management. Understanding the context for the actions and responses of senior managers will also assist with investigating the processes of casualisation.

Two very different universities were chosen and approached to be case studies. Permission for access to undertake the case study was sought from the Vice Chancellor at each university, under the auspices of the ARC Linkage project; *Gender and Employment Equity: Strategies for Advancement in Australian Universities*. Once permissions were granted liaison took place with a senior administrative staff member who facilitated the distribution of requests for participants for interview, and provided relevant documentation, that was not already available on the public record. The two universities agreed to participate on the basis of non-disclosure of identity, and are referred to in the thesis as ‘Old University’ and ‘New University’, labels which point to their particular historical and institutional contexts. The purpose of choosing very different universities as case studies is to examine whether the experience of casual employment differs between the universities, or is in fact similar. It is also to explore whether there are different approaches to the engagement, support and management of casual academic staff, and whether there are differences in the policy and collective
agreement settings at those universities that might explain any differences that were found.

There is very little literature that examines employer strategy in the context of the funding and budgetary pressures that exist and the range of options open to universities to deal with those pressures. The background to each of the case studies is provided in more detail in Chapter 5. An overview and outline is provided in the next section.

*Case study – New University*

In total twenty five semi-structured interviews were conducted at New University, ten with casual academic staff, eight with academic staff managing casual academic staff and seven with senior managers (at the level of head of school or above). The interviews took place between June to November 2011. During June 2011 the New University contact person sent a series of emails to staff from each of the categories, requesting that they contact the researcher if they were willing to take part in an interview. The email gave an outline of the research project, the details of the project’s host university (Griffith University) ethics approval and policy, and the researcher’s contact email and phone number. In the case of the email seeking casual academic staff to participate particular emphasis was placed on the importance of participation of female staff members so as to ensure that women formed the majority of interviewees.

In total seven senior managers, six academics and seven casual academic staff made contact direct with the researcher as a result of the email, and interviews were scheduled and undertaken. The remaining two academic interviewees and three casual academic interviewees resulted through snowballing from original participants. Snowballing is a useful technique in a workplace setting such as a university, due to the nature of working relationships and the close knowledge academic staff within a School or department have of each other’s course requirements and need for casual academic staff. Snowballing occurred from an interviewee forwarding details of the project and the researcher’s contact details to a close colleague. One casual academic made contact as a result of snowballing from their academic manager, and the other two from snowballing from a fellow casual academic. Two academic staff were referred to the researcher by their colleagues. All of the interviewees took place on campus, either in offices, a quiet room in the library or a cafe.

A range of material was analysed for the New University case study including: policies, collective agreements, payroll data in relation to casual academic staff, a report for the
Employer of Choice for Women (renamed the Workplace Gender Equality Agency in December 2012) submission (EOWA 2012), an internal report from 2008 reviewing the use of casual staff across the institution and a 2006 report by the then Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA)².

Case study – Old University

At Old University semi-structured interviews were conducted with twenty staff comprised of two senior managers (at head of school level or above, or senior administrative staff), six academic staff managing casual academic staff and twelve casual academic staff. Interviewees were sought in a series of targeted and global emails sent by the university liaison staff member during the period of October to November 2011. The email set out information about the research project, details of the project’s host university (Griffith University) ethics approval and policy and a request that interested participants contact the researcher direct. In the case of the email seeking casual academic staff to participate particular emphasis was placed on the importance of participation of female staff members so as to ensure that women formed the majority of interviewees.

All twelve casual academic staff interviewed made direct contact with the researcher as a result of the email and were interviewed during October to December 2011. Interviews took place on campus, either in the participants’ office or in some cases in a cafe. Three of the academics who were interviewed, and the two senior managers, made direct contact with the researcher as a result of the university email request. A further three academics took part as a result of snowballing from other academic staff who had taken part in interviews. The interviews with academic staff and senior managers took place between November 2011 and May 2012.

At ‘Old University’ a range of material was gathered and analysed for the case study including relevant policies, the collective agreement/s, and statistics produced for the university’s Employer of Choice for Women submission (EOWA 2012). The university was unable to provide any internal statistics on the size and demographic of the casual academic workforce, but a high response rate from Old University casual academic staff to the WCAU survey provided a baseline of data.

² AUQA’s functions were taken over by the Tertiary Education and Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) in 2009.
**Interview process – all interviewees**

Once contact was made with potential participants, full ethics information and an outline of the research project was sent by email before the interview took place. An interview date and time was arranged by email, at a venue suggested by the participant. Upon giving explicit consent to tape the interview, the interviews were taped, and later transcribed. Interviews ranged from 45 minutes up to an hour in length and were semi-structured, allowing the canvassing of a broad set of topics, but also allowing participants to tell their own stories as they saw fit. Space was also left during the course of the interviews to pursue unexpected material, which sometimes arose in the course of the interview. The range of topics that were canvassed and questions that were asked for each group of staff are detailed in Appendix C.

**Interview analysis**

All of the interviews were transcribed and then analysed for themes using Nvivo software. Interviewees were assigned pseudonyms, and all reference to the interviewees uses these pseudonyms so as to ensure confidentiality. The discipline location of interviewees, and any other potentially identifying material, is not disclosed in order to protect their confidentiality.

The themes that emerged from the interview analysis were generally specific to the particular staff group, with some small areas of overlap. The themes were informed by the literature review discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 and also emerged from the analysis of data, in particular the survey data. The themes formed the basis of the data chapters 6 and 7. For casual academic staff the themes were; conditions of employment, the impact of casual employment and gendered precariousness. The themes that emerged from the interviews with academics managing casual staff were; the recruitment and development of staff, the management role, experiences of casualisation, and the academic career path and academic work. The themes that emerged from interviews with senior managers were; policies and industrial arrangements, budgets, recruitment, retention and workforce planning, teaching quality, the causes of casualisation and academic career paths.

**Case study analysis**

The full range of interview data and internal and publically available documentation was analysed in order to provide a background setting for the case study, discussed in
Chapter 5. That background sets the scene for the discussions in Chapter 6 & 7 which analyse the interview data using the themes that emerged through analysis in Nvivo, and using the background data used to contextualise that analysis.

Data limitations – qualitative and quantitative data

The lack of population data for the casual academic workforce is a limitation of this study as it is difficult to investigate response bias, so care must be taken in interpreting the results for the whole population of casual academic staff. This is made more complex by the transient nature of the workforce and the inherent insecurity of casual academic employment. Further, the case study data is not generalisable across the whole university sector and cannot claim to be representative of the experiences of all casual academic staff, nor of academic staff managing casual staff or senior managers. Participants were volunteers who responded to university email requests, and hence they were not randomly chosen. Whilst the majority were female, consistent with the quantitative data that shows women form a majority of casual academic staff, their age and qualification profile was not representative of the wider casual academic population, as they were older and more qualified than that population. However, this is not a critical problem. The purpose of the interviews was to explore the experience of work from the perspective of these staff. Despite all of these limitations, the mixed method nature of the research allows for a comparison across quantitative and qualitative findings in order to validate and expand upon results.

Summary

The use of both quantitative and qualitative data allows the research questions to be fully explored, and the results of the quantitative data can be used to inform and enhance the qualitative data. Further the qualitative data will explore the areas that the quantitative data cannot reach. This dynamic approach is suited to the theoretical framework used for the research, it will be both assist with the application of the theoretical framework and develop the theory. The complexity of the processes of casualisation within the university setting, require a methodological approach that is able to capture a range of data, and deal with a range of perspectives in order to provide a fuller picture. The theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2 using SLM theory will assist with examining the complex processes of segmentation and explaining how casualisation is set within this context.
CHAPTER 4: THE WORK AND CAREERS IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES SURVEY OF CASUAL ACADEMIC STAFF

Introduction

This chapter discusses the Work and Careers in Australian Universities survey (WCAU) that was conducted during 2011, across 19 Australian universities, and analyses the results of the survey of casual academic staff. The chapter also draws on the survey results for the WCAU academic staff survey, and on the DIISRTE Higher Education Staff Statistics Collection (DIISRTE 2012; Strachan et al. 2012). The methodological details of the survey are dealt with in Chapter 3. The survey received 3160 useable responses, which represented a 13.3 per cent response rate. The survey is the largest and most comprehensive survey undertaken of casual academic staff in Australia since Junor (2004a). The results address the research questions:

- What does the casual academic workforce look like?
- What are the implications for casual academics, academic staff, university management, and public policy?
- What are the implications of casualisation for employees and how are these gendered?

The discussion of survey results in this chapter begins by looking at the demographic profile of respondents, including age, gender, educational qualification, current study status, union membership and carer status. The type of university where respondents were employed is examined, using Marginson’s typology (Marginson & Considine 2000, pp. 189-190), before looking at the academic discipline profile of respondents. The university typology is detailed in Appendix A. How respondents gained their casual positions is examined and discussed. The chapter then looks at patterns of work and income, including main sources of income, type of casual work undertaken and hours of work, investigating any gender differences. The chapter includes a proposed typology of casual staff, based on responses to questions about motivations for, and orientations to, casual work, along with qualification, study status, and source of income, building on and modifying the typology proposed in Chapter 3. The typology is used as an independent variable to test if it can explain other outcomes including job satisfaction and career satisfaction. Access to a range of important job and career supports, such as induction, professional development and course meetings, and access
to facilities and resources are examined, using the earlier identified variables of gender, university type, academic discipline and casual type. The category of the ‘frustrated academic’ is developed and discussed, looking at those who want to be an academic but don’t expect that their ambition will be fulfilled, signalling an important finding in the survey. The chapter concludes with a discussion summarising the statistics and drawing some conclusions about the data.

The demographic profile of respondents

Table 4.1 provides an overview of the demographic profile of the survey respondents. Of those who responded to the survey 56.9 per cent were female. The median age of respondents was 36, the mean 38.9 years. The median age for females was 36, for males it was 35. The survey sought information about respondents’ qualification level and study status. In particular the PhD qualification was identified as critical as it indicated that the individual holds the widely accepted entry level qualification necessary to be considered for a continuing academic position. Of all respondents, 15.8 per cent reported that they held a PhD qualification. Males were slightly more likely, (16.8 per cent), than females, (15.0 per cent), to hold a PhD. A further 54.4 per cent of the respondents reported that they were studying for a qualification, with 70 per cent of that group studying for a PhD (comprising 37.7 per cent of the overall respondents).

This means that a slight majority of respondents held, or were studying for, a PhD. Of note also is only 1.3 per cent of the sample reported they had no formal qualifications post secondary school, one quoting their qualification as ‘the university of life’.

Casual academic staff comprise an international cohort, something they have in common with continuing academic staff. Of WCAU casual academic survey respondents 40 per cent were not born in Australia, with males more likely to have been born overseas than females. Separate data also indicates that in 2006, 40.5 per cent of Australian academic staff were born overseas (Hugo 2008, p. 30).

We asked respondents if they had a child or children under the age of 18 living at home with them. A quarter of those who answered said they had a child or children under the age of 18 living at home with them: 21.7 per cent (561 respondents) said they had either primary or shared care. This group comprised 27.7 per cent of female respondents and 14.1 per cent of male respondents.

Union members comprised fifteen per cent of the sample. This is much higher than the trade union density amongst casual workers across the economy, which is 6 per cent.
overall, 4.9 per cent for females and 6.9 per cent for males (ABS 2011, pp. 34-36). The NTEU’s casual academic membership was approximately 2000 in 2012, suggesting an approximate trade union density of 4 per cent amongst casual academic staff (McAlpine 2012, pers. comm., October 11). Respondents were not asked which union they belonged to, and it is possible that some may belong to a union other than the NTEU.

The WCAU survey consisted of three separate surveys to the three different staff groups: academic, general-professional and casual academic. In comparing the broad characteristics of respondents to the WCAU casual academics’ survey, to those of the respondents to the WCAU academic staff survey, it can be seen that there are four main differences; gender, age, qualification, and levels of union membership (Strachan et al. 2012). Overall, the non-casual academic respondents were less likely to be female than the casuals’ respondents; non-casual academic staff were much older than the casual academics, and much more likely to hold a PhD. Women comprised 51 per cent of respondents to the academic survey and 57 per cent of respondents to the casual academic survey. The median age of non-casual academic respondents was 46 years, 10 years older than casual academic respondents. The overall level of PhD qualification of staff responding to the academic survey was 80 per cent, with 75 per cent of female non-casual academics and 85 per cent of male academics reporting that they had a PhD qualification. Over a third of respondents to the academics’ survey said they belonged to a trade union (Strachan et al. 2012).

The higher proportions of women in the casual respondent’s ranks raises questions about women’s transitions from casual to continuing academic employment, something which is beyond the scope of the survey analysis, but this matter is explored in the case study chapter, Chapter 6. Questions about women’s orientations to, and motivations for, casual work are discussed when examining the typology of casual staff.

Returning to the casual academic survey responses, these point to a number of gender differences between male and female casual academic staff, as seen in Table 4.1. First, females are much more likely than males to be union members; 17 per cent of females and 12.8 per cent of males reported that they belonged to a trade union. Males are slightly more likely to be studying for a qualification, 55.1 compared with 52.7 per cent of females. Females in turn are significantly more likely to say they have caring

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3 Estimated using the casual academic population from the WCAU contactable population figures, multiplied by 2, as the denominator. See Table 4.2
responsibilities, 27.7 per cent, compared to 14.1 per cent of males. In terms of the age profile, there were slightly higher proportions of males in the younger and older age categories and females were more likely to be in the 45-55 year age category. Females comprised slightly under two-thirds of all respondents in the 40-54 year age category, a pattern that was also uncovered in the analysis of the Unisuper data in Chapter 1. The WCAU casual academic survey data was also similar to the Unisuper data in that women were 57 per cent of both samples, the median age for the Unisuper data was slightly under 35 years of age, and the Unisuper data also revealed just four per cent of the sample as over 65 years of age.

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of survey respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic characteristics</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Total Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2531</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>1359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>1359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 years</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34 years</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39 years</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44 years</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49 years</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54 years</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59 years</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64 years</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+ years</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age Not disclosed</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Australian born</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational qualifications</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post grad</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor incl Hons</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other tertiary, TAFE</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No formal qualifications</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information given</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1801</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Currently studying for a PhD</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently studying for a qualification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(including a PhD)</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Has caring responsibilities (1)</strong></td>
<td>402</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Is a member of a trade union (2)</strong></td>
<td>243</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Sum of those who reported they were either the primary carer, or shared care of a child U18 (n=2575) (2) (n=2550)

(a) Percentage of total of that column, except for gender which for that row is percentage of total.

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011
Where are casuals employed?

In Chapter 1 casual academic employment was examined using the publically available staff data collection published by DIISTRE. An adaptation of Marginson and Considine’s (2000, pp. 189-190) five-part typology, grouping universities according to their formation period, into Sandstone, Redbrick, Gumtree, Unitech and Newer, was used for the analysis of those statistics. The typology is detailed in Appendix A. The four part typology, which combines the Sandstone and Redbrick categories, is used in this chapter, to first examine the make-up of the casual sample; and then to examine the proportions of all academic staff who are employed on a casual basis. Using the typology maintains the anonymity of those universities that took part in the survey, but enables investigation of possible differences between universities of different formation periods.

Table 4.2 shows the overall contactable population from the WCAU casual academic staff survey, and the sample of respondents, across the 19 universities, by the type of university, using the four part typology. Sandstone Universities formed the largest proportion of the overall contactable population of casual academic staff. In addition Sandstone University casual academic staff generally provided higher response rates than casual academics from other institutions. Respondents from Sandstone Universities formed 43.3 per cent of the sample and comprised 32.8 per cent of the population. Response rates from casual academics at Gumtree Universities and at Newer Universities were similar to their overall proportions of the population. Casual academics from Unitech Universities were somewhat under-represented with only 16.0 per cent of respondents coming from these universities, yet Unitech Universities’ casual academics comprised 23.5 per cent of the contactable casual academic population. Further details about response rates are reported in Chapter 3.

Table 4.2: Overall contactable population and sample by university type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Type</th>
<th>Number of universities in survey</th>
<th>Proportion of contactable population %</th>
<th>Proportion of sample %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumtree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitech</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>23740</td>
<td>3160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011
One explanation for the higher response rates at Sandstone Universities is found in Table 4.3 which looks at whether respondents work at more than one university, by the type of university they were employed at for the purposes of undertaking the survey. Casual academics working at Sandstone Universities were much less likely than casual academics working at every other type of university to have multiple places of employment. Only 15.9 per cent of Sandstone University casual academic staff respondents said they worked at another institution, compared to 20.0 per cent of Gumtree respondents, 24.7 per cent of Unitech respondents and 26.7 per cent of Newer University respondents. This suggests that Sandstone University casual academic staff may have a greater attachment to, or association with, their university of employment, as a consequence of not needing to travel to other places of employment, and thus may be more likely to take part in a survey. Overall, the finding that one in five respondents is working at more than one institution suggests that overall the group is trying to make a living from their casual academic employment.

**Table 4.3: Respondents working at more than one institution by University type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University type where survey was undertaken</th>
<th>Proportion of respondents who work at more than one institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumtree</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitech</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall sample</strong></td>
<td><strong>20.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2765)*

Further evidence for greater attachment amongst respondents at Sandstone Universities was found by looking at respondents who are studying for a PhD, by their university type. Sandstone University respondents were more likely to be studying for a PhD than respondents from Unitech or Newer Universities, and as a consequence were more likely to be physically present at their campuses, often with an office space attached, due to their post-graduate student status. This information is detailed in Table 4.4. The proportion of respondents from Gumtree Universities studying for their PhD was almost identical to that of the proportion of Sandstone University respondents. However, neither of these explanations seems to fully reveal why response rates were higher amongst Newer University than Unitech Universities. A third possible factor might be the higher rate of casual academic density itself amongst Unitechs.
Table 4.4: Proportion of respondents studying for a PhD qualification by University type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University type</th>
<th>Proportion of sample currently studying for a PhD qualification %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumtree</td>
<td>43.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitech</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall sample</strong></td>
<td><strong>37.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=3128)

The proportion of all academic staff who are employed on a casual basis (referred to as casual density) was estimated in Table 4.5, by university type, using the information provided by each of the surveyed universities as to their contactable populations (the headcount for both non-casual and casual academic staff). For each university the total non-casual academic contactable population as provided by the university, was summed with the total casual academic contactable population as provided by the university, and divided by the casual academic contactable population figure, in order to estimate casual density. These figures are aggregated by university type. The average casual density by university type is reported in column 2, and it reveals that Unitech Universities had by far the highest proportions of academic staff employed on a casual basis. In fact some two thirds of all academic staff employed at the Unitech Universities that took part in the survey, were employed on a casual basis. High casual academic density might (but we cannot be certain) mean a larger number of casual academics at Unitechs working relatively short hours. This might reduce attachment and hence response rate. However, we do not have the data to be definite on this question.

Table 4.5 Casual academic density by university type (headcount)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University type (Marginson)</th>
<th>(1) Number of universities in survey</th>
<th>(2) Average density estimated as % of all academic staff</th>
<th>(3) Average density as a % of all T&amp;R academic staff only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unitech</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumtree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Academic Staff Survey, Casual Academic Staff Survey, (3) DIISTRE staff statistics 2011, Table 2.7

The contactable population for non-casual academic staff across the 19 universities included academic staff designated as research only, or research focused. In column three the average density is calculated using only the figures for teaching and research
academic staff; that is confining the calculation to consider only the teaching function of the university. The calculation is made using statistics from the DIISTRE Higher Education Staff Statistics (2011) for the each of the universities in the survey. The DIISRTE data were applied in two ways, first to calculate the proportion of all academic staff that were research only, this proportion was then deducted from the total population for the individual university for the WCAU survey. In a second calculation the DIISRTE data were used as to calculate the denominator for each university. The results were very similar for each university and the academic population for the 19 universities was only 800 less than that for the DIISRTE data for the 19 universities, a difference that could be explained by the different reporting periods for each of the populations. The casual density figures were averaged for each university type, and averaged over the 19 universities to determine the average density of 53 per cent as shown in column 3.

What this calculation shows is that the casual density for Sandstone Universities, Gumtree Universities and Newer Universities was quite similar, once the higher levels of research only staff at Sandstone Universities is taken into account. What it also highlights, once again, is that the Unitech Universities are those with the greatest proportions of casual academic staff, regardless of how the figure is calculated. At Unitech Universities some 72 per cent of all teaching and research academic staff were employed on a casual basis, a much higher proportion than the sector wide average of 53 per cent. Overall the figures are able to show that casual academic staff comprised the majority, on a headcount basis, of all teaching and research academic staff.

The data in Table 4.6 looks more closely at those casual academic respondents who were PhD qualified, by employment by type of university they were working at for the purposes of undertaking the survey. This particular group comprised 16.2 per cent of the sample (n=498). The table shows a breakdown of where the PhD qualified respondents were employed by sex. The highest proportion of PhD qualified respondents was amongst females who work in Sandstone Universities (19 per cent), males in Gumtree Universities (21.9 per cent) and males in Newer Universities (19.2 per cent).
Table 4.6: PhD qualified respondents by University type and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Proportion of PhD qualified persons at each university type</th>
<th>Share of PhD holders at this university type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>16.8 (N=3077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumtree</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitech</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

In summary, by examining the respondent data by type of university a range of differences were observed. Sandstone University casual academic staff were more likely to respond to the survey. This may be related to the fact that they were less likely than casual academic staff in the three other categories of university type to have multiple places of employment, and were more likely to be studying for a qualification. The proportions of teaching and research academic staff who were employed on a casual basis were similar for Sandstone, Gumtree and Newer Universities, but Unitech Universities had a much higher proportion of casual academic staff. Overall, casual academic staff accounted for more than half of all teaching and research academic staff on a headcount basis. Differing patterns of employment of PhD qualified casual academic staff were revealed, Sandstone Universities had the highest proportion of PhD qualified females casual academics, and Gumtree Universities had the highest proportion of PhD qualified male academic staff. Overall, one in six respondents was PhD qualified.

**Discipline – which academic disciplines are casual academics working in?**

The survey asked respondents to provide information about the academic discipline in which they are employed, by choosing from a thirteen category menu, or by providing information in an ‘other’ category box. Where no information was provided by the respondent about their academic discipline, information provided about the work unit/department by either the respondent, or by the university, contained within the SPSS file, was used to determine discipline. There were 263 respondents who reported that they worked in more than one academic discipline, these respondents were only
allocated to one academic discipline for the purposes of further analysis. There was very little difference between the frequencies by discipline where all responses were coded (n=3295), compared to the frequencies where only one discipline was coded (n=3008), as reported in columns 1-4 of Table 4.7. The median age of respondents in each of the ‘discipline’ categories is reported in column 5.

In all, a ‘discipline’ was ascertained for 95 per cent of respondents (n=3008). Discipline categories were aggregated into five ‘discipline groups’; hard sciences, medical and health sciences, business and law, education, and humanities, arts social science (HASS) and others. The results indicate that 35.0 per cent of respondents worked in the hard sciences grouping, 15.6 per cent in medical and health sciences, 14.3 per cent in business and law, 7.9 per cent in education and 27.1 per cent in humanities, arts, social science and others (HASS).
Table 4.7: Academic discipline of respondents, and median age of discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic discipline</th>
<th>(1) Frequency all responses</th>
<th>(2) %</th>
<th>(3) Frequency first response only</th>
<th>(4) Proportion of sample %</th>
<th>(5) Median age in discipline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HARD SCIENCES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Chemical, Mathematical and Earth Sciences</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological, Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, Computing and Communication Sciences</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Technology</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, Urban Environment and Building</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUSINESS AND LAW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law, Justice and Law Enforcement</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, Economics and Tourism</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HASS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing and Visual Arts</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities and Arts</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3295</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3008</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011
In Table 4.8 each individual ‘discipline’ category was further examined to look at the proportion of female respondents who work in the academic discipline. Each ‘discipline’ was assigned a gender composition profile based on the following proportions of respondents:

- where less than 45 per cent of the respondents in the discipline are female – ‘male-dominated’ (M)
- where between 45 and 55 percent of the respondents in the discipline are female – ‘gender balanced’ (B)
- where greater than 55 percent of the respondents in the discipline are female – ‘female-dominated’ (F)

There were eight female-dominated ‘disciplines’ and combined these ‘disciplines’ formed 61.6 per cent of the sample. The most feminised ‘discipline’ was education, with females comprising three quarters of all respondents in that ‘discipline’. Biological, behavioural and cognitive sciences had the next highest proportion of female respondents at 69.3 per cent. Two ‘disciplines’ (architecture, urban environment and building; and business, economics and tourism) comprised the ‘gender balanced’ profile, and together they formed 17.1 per cent of the sample. Three ‘disciplines’, all in the hard sciences ‘discipline group’, were defined as male-dominated, and these comprised 21.2 per cent of the sample. These are all labelled in column 1 of Table 4.8.

In column 2 results from the WCAU academic staff survey were used to show the proportions of female respondents in each of the ‘discipline’ categories. Overall 51 per cent of the non-casual academic sample was female, compared to 57 per cent for the casuals’ survey. Column 2 shows that the male-dominated disciplines for casual academic staff were found to be even more male-dominated when looking at the academic staff respondents. For example only 26 per cent of the non-casual academics working in physical, chemical, mathematical and earth sciences were females, compared to 43.9 per cent of casuals’ respondents for that discipline. Some of the disciplines deemed gender balanced for casual academic staff, such as architecture, urban environment and building, and business, economics and tourism tended to be male-dominated when looking at respondents to the non-casual academics survey. Of the eight disciplines which were female-dominated for casual academic respondents, females formed greater than 50 per cent of all non-casual academic respondents for six
of the disciplines, and in the case of three of those, females formed more than 60 per cent of respondents.

Table 4.8: Discipline of respondents- casual academic staff and academic staff and gender composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Discipline’</th>
<th>(1) Proportion of females in discipline % CASUAL</th>
<th>(2) Proportion of females in discipline % ACADEMIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Chemical, Mathematical and Earth Sciences</td>
<td>43.9 (M)*</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological, Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences</td>
<td>69.3 (F)</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, Computing and Communication Sciences</td>
<td>27.2 (M)</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Technology</td>
<td>21.8 (M)</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, Urban Environment and Building</td>
<td>49.3 (B)</td>
<td>37.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES</td>
<td>67.0 (F)</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law, Justice and Law Enforcement</td>
<td>72.0 (F)</td>
<td>58.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, Economics and Tourism</td>
<td>46.3 (B)</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION</td>
<td>75.7 (F)</td>
<td>67.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing and visual arts</td>
<td>55.4 (F)</td>
<td>45.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities and Arts</td>
<td>67.6 (F)</td>
<td>56.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>62.3 (F)</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>64.9 (F)</td>
<td>48.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>56.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>51.3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: M=Male-dominated discipline, F=Female-dominated discipline, B=Gender balanced discipline

Source: WCAU Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=8236), WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=3008)

Figure 4.1 examines the age profile of five of the 13 ‘disciplines’. The graph depicts the proportions of each age group that were in each of the ‘disciplines’ displayed. Considerable age variation by ‘discipline’ was found. The age profiles depicted can broadly be described as an old profile, a young age profile, two have a middle or average age profile, and one with a quite even age profile. The education ‘discipline’ was much older than the other disciplines, with a median age of 52 amongst casual academic respondents. Education has been identified as an ageing discipline by Hugo (2008, p. 20) who noted that over 60 per cent of continuing education academics were over 50 years of age. This was similar to the age profile of school teachers, showing how the labour market for the profession was connected to that of the academic labour market (Hugo 2008). By contrast the ‘discipline’ of biological, behavioural and cognitive sciences was a very young ‘discipline’, with a median age for casual academic respondents of 28. The three ‘disciplines’ displayed, humanities and the arts (HASS), medical sciences (MedSc), and architecture, urban environment and building (AUEB)
all had median ages very similar to the overall sample. However within these groupings considerable variation is shown. Architecture, urban environment and building had quite an evenly distributed age profile, whereas medical and health sciences had peaks in the 45-49 year age category, and humanities and the arts had high proportions in the 30-50 year age categories.

The very different age profiles within ‘disciplines’ suggested that there may be something distinctive about the casual academic labour markets within academic disciplines and that these were more reflective of the academic ‘discipline’, rather than the overall casual academic labour market. Further, as will be examined in more detail later in the chapter, each discipline interacts with the external labour market in relation to alternative employment opportunities for those qualified in the field and also in relation to the need for externally focused practitioners to contribute to the discipline.

**Figure 4.1: Proportion of casual academics in each age group in five selected academic disciplines**

[BBS= Biological behavioural and cognitive sciences (9.1% of sample)]
[MedSc= Medical sciences (15.5% of sample)]
[Ed= Education (7.9% of sample)]
[HASS= Humanities and Arts (13.2% of sample)]
[AUEB=Architecture, Urban environment and building (4.5% of sample)]

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011
Recruitment – how do casual academics gain casual academic work?

The survey explored how respondents obtained their casual academic positions. The response to the question: ‘how did you obtain your current casual position’, is detailed in Table 4.9. The table shows that for the overwhelming majority of casual academic staff, recruitment was a highly informal process and one that relies upon the casual academic having a range of networks. Almost three quarters of respondents said that they had obtained their casual employment either through making a personal approach, or being offered work by someone they knew at the university. This was not just a function of casuasl already being present on campus, as only just over half of all respondents were currently studying for a qualification and the respondents who were not currently students also appeared to be maintaining or developing active networks in order to obtain their casual employment. Table 4.9 shows that 42.3 per cent of females and 34.4 per cent of males obtained their casual position after being offered the work by a contact or friend, and males were more likely than females to obtain their casual position by making a personal approach. Some 35.0 per cent of males and 28.3 per cent of females obtained their casual positions in this manner.

Table 4.9: How respondents obtained their casual positions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How did you obtain your current casual position?</th>
<th>Females %</th>
<th>Males %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offered work by contact/friend at the university</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approached the department or an academic</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offered work by postgraduate supervisor/ as part of postgraduate studies</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responded to an advertisement</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responded to a general faculty/department call/other</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (n=2590)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

The highly informal approach to recruitment apparent for casual academic staff was in contrast to the formal processes that apply for appointment to continuing and in many cases, fixed-term academic positions. The WCAU academic staff survey found that 60 per cent of continuing teaching and research academic staff obtained their current substantive appointment through a competitive appointment process (see Appendix D). Informal and highly localised recruitment is likely to have negative implications for casual academic staff. It may mean that gaining internal knowledge, accessing supports for teaching and their career opportunities, and gaining a general awareness about the university itself, is then limited. Informal hiring practices are explored in more detail in
the case study chapters where casual academic staff talk about their experience, and academic staff who manage casual staff describe the ‘just in time’ nature of casual recruitment and its associated challenges.

These findings confirm those in the literature such as that by Fine et al. (1992, p. 51) who observed the ‘highly personalized nature of casual appointments’ and Junor (2004a). The data suggest little has changed in this regard. Casual employment is a reflection of patchy and highly devolved personnel processes, and used to meet purportedly unpredictable student demand. Informal hiring can expedite the normally slow processes of academic recruitment, and be a response to short term needs for teaching staff. The informality of the process suits the university sector’s requirements for a ready pool of available staff to teach at short notice, although the process adds to the workload for academic staff (Lazarsfeld Jensen & Morgan 2009, p. 65). For the casual academic it means that their attachment to the university is extremely localised and highly dependent upon their personal networks and contacts. In summary, recruitment of casual academic staff was highly localised and informal, requiring the active use and maintenance of networks and contacts on the part of these casual staff. Gender differences were apparent in how casual academic work is obtained, with males more likely to make a request for work and females more likely to be asked if they would consider to work.

Patterns of work and income

This section explores the patterns of work and income of respondents to the WCAU casual academic staff survey including earnings, length of employment, main sources of income, how many institutions respondents work at, and what type of casual academic work they perform. In each case the results are reported for males and females in order to begin to explore the data for gender differences, in addition to those differences already uncovered.

The respondents’ length of employment at their current place of employment, (referred to as ‘this university’) is explored in Table 4.10. The median time spent as a casual academic staff member was 3 years, and the mean 2.53 years for both males and females. This was in contrast with the results for the non-casual academic survey where the median time in an academic position was five years. Table 4.10 shows that the majority of respondents have been casual for more than two years, and one in five have been casual for more than six years. This points to the existence of the ‘permanent
casual’ raised in the literature by Brown et al. (2010, p. 179) who suggest that casualisation is part of an overall management strategy of dealing with ongoing work by the employment of insecure academic staff.

Table 4.10: Casual academic respondents’ length of employment at ‘this university’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Females (n)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Males (n)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Overall (n)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than one year</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>558</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-9 years</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14 years</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15+ years</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1533</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1204</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>2737</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

The survey asked about gross income per fortnight (the standard payment period for casual academic staff) for the respondent’s current employment, and the responses are reported as gross weekly income in Table 4.11. Three fifths of respondents who disclosed their weekly income reported that they earned less than $500 per week. A further 16 per cent earned between $500 and $699 per week, and 24 per cent earned more than $700 per week. Whilst there was little gender difference between earning levels less than $700 per week, higher proportions of females earned between $700 to $999, and greater proportions of males earned greater than $1000, although these very high earners formed only 12 per cent of the overall sample.

Table 4.11: Reported gross weekly earnings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gross weekly $</th>
<th>Females (n)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Males (n)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Overall (n)</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $499</td>
<td>892</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>60.3</td>
<td>1594</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500-$699</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$700-$999</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1000+</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1459</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1164</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>2799</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

The data in Table 4.11 need to be interpreted in conjunction with Table 4.12 which report a cross tabulation of gross weekly income and the reported main source of income. Respondents were asked to nominate their main source of income, from six options or ‘other’. For those respondents who answered the question, 36 per cent said that their casual employment was their main source of income, a further 27 per cent relied on their scholarship for their main source of income, and 18 per cent said their
main source of income was employment outside the university sector. A further nine per cent of the respondents to this question said they relied on their family or partner for their main source of income and four per cent relied upon their pension. Of the small number who provided information in the ‘other’ category, most noted that they were reliant on unemployment benefits as a main source of income. What the table shows is that those who rely on a university scholarship for their main source of income are most highly concentrated in the low earning categories, below $500pw; some 84 per cent of those whose main source of income is their university scholarship earned less than $499 per week. Scholarships typically restrict the amount of paid employment a scholarship holder can undertake, usually to nine hours per week. Those for whom casual employment was their main source of income, and those who depended on a position outside the university were more likely to earn higher weekly incomes from casual teaching.

Table 4.12: Main sources of income and casual earnings per week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main source of income</th>
<th>Earning &lt; $499pw %</th>
<th>$500-$999 %</th>
<th>$1000-$1499 %</th>
<th>$1500+ %</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Total (n)</th>
<th>Proportion of sample %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My casual employment</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University/other scholarship</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>703</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment outside the sector</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My family</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment in another non-academic university position</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pension/income support I am retired</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>94.3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>60.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>27.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>2616</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

Gender differences are revealed in main sources of income. As shown in Figure 4.2. These differences are statistically significant (Chi Square=71.532, d.f=6, p< 0.001). Males were more likely to be reliant on a scholarship, (29.4 per cent of males depended on their scholarships compared with 24 per cent of females), and males were less likely than females to be reliant on casual employment as their main source of income, (37.4
per cent of females depended on their casual employment compared to 34.6 per cent of males). Males were also more likely to be reliant on an income from outside the university sector, and much more likely to be reliant on a pension. Females report higher levels of dependence on another family member/partner as their main source of income than males. Some 12.1 per cent of females indicated that they were dependent on family/partner as their main source of income, compared with only 5 per cent of males.

**Figure 4.2: Sources of income by sex (%)**

![Graph showing sources of income by sex](image)

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2725)

Respondents were also asked about how many institutions of higher education, including private providers and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges they were employed at. Table 4.3 summarised the issue by type of university, and Table 4.13 examines gender differences in the proportions of respondents working at more than one institution. One in five respondents reported that they worked at more than one institution, and this was more common amongst females than males, with 22.7 per cent of females, and 17.7 per cent of males, reporting that they worked at more than one institution.
Table 4.13: Respondents working at more than one institution by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Works at more than one institution</th>
<th>Females %</th>
<th>Males %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (n)</td>
<td>1550</td>
<td>1215</td>
<td>2765</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

The range and mix of casual academic work that respondents are undertaking is explored in Table 4.14. The largest proportion of respondents was undertaking tutoring only; this group formed 43 per cent of the sample, followed by 18.9 per cent who did both tutoring and lecturing. A further 14 per cent of respondents said they undertook another combination, such as tutoring and demonstrating. Statistically significant differences are revealed in the type of work undertaken by gender (Chi Square significance p< 0.05, five degrees of freedom). Females were more likely than males to be performing tutoring work only, with males more likely to be working in a combination of activities.

Table 4.14: Type of casual work undertaken by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Females %</th>
<th>Males %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>Total (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring only</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>1097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturing and tutoring</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical demonstration only</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another combination</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturing only</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating only</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>2532</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

Table 4.15 summarises how many face-to-face hours per week respondents reported they spent performing each of those tasks in total during a usual week. The face-to-face hours are reported by gender and show very little difference between the total amount of hours males and females work in the different types of casual work, females were slightly more likely to work up to four hours per week, and males were slightly more likely to work more than seven hours per week.
Table 4.15: Total usual weekly hours of all face-to-face teaching by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total usual hours per week</th>
<th>Females %</th>
<th>Males %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>Total (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2 hours per week</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 – 4 hours per week</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 – 6 hours per week</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – 10 hours per week</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or more hours per week</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>2609</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

In summary, by examining patterns of work and income gender differences are revealed in relation to the types of casual work performed, the propensity to be working at more than one institution, the amount of weekly earnings, and the main sources of income. However males and females were found to work fairly similar hours per week. In particular females were more likely than males to have multiple employers, work mostly as tutors, and depend on their casual employment as their main source of income.

A typology of casual academic staff

A proposed typology of casual academic staff was discussed in Chapter 2, and a seven part typology built on the work of Junor (2004, p. 286) and Gappa and Leslie (1993, pp. 50-60) was proposed in Chapter 3. Unlike Junor (2004) whose nine part typology includes some overlap amongst categories, the typology developed in Table 4.16 was designed to have mutually exclusive categories, assigning each respondent to one of four main categories of ‘motivation and orientation’; academic, external, casual by choice, or retiring. There may be overlap between the two later categories in practice, for example some ‘casuals by choice’ may also be in the ‘retiring category’. For the purpose of further analysis it was important to assign a dominant characteristic to each of the respondents, essentially based around their motivations, orientations and qualifications, and in the case of the retiring category, partly their age, in order to undertake further analysis.

The initially hypothesised seven part typology was reduced to a four part typology by summing a range of categories, outlined in Table 4.16, in order to focus on motivation and orientation. The four part typology is made up of the nine sub-categories of characteristics, two of which are additional to the seven categories of characteristics originally proposed in Table 2.3. One of the new sub-categories expanded upon the
externally focused category to include those who were currently not post-graduate students, nor were they earning their main source of income from outside the sector, but none-the-less they aspired to a career outside the sector. The second new category expanded on the aspiring academic category to include those who did not hold a PhD, and were not studying for a PhD, but aspired to an academic position. The proposed typology in Chapter 2 considered aspiring academics as either post-graduate students; those with their main source of income earned outside the sector but looking for a career change; or from PhD qualified academic casuals. It may be that the aspiring academics in this new sub-category were either: planning to do a PhD in the future, or were in professional practice disciplines, for example nursing, where holding a PhD was not as essential as for other disciplines.

The typology in Table 4.16 was built by initially looking at respondents’ answers to the survey question: ‘where would you like to be in five years’ time?’ There were five possible responses to this question, and they give a fairly clear indication of the respondents’ orientations to casual work:

- Employed as a sessional/casual academic
- Employed as an academic in a continuing position
- Employed outside of the university sector
- Retired, not working
- Other including an option for comments

Of those who chose the option ‘other’ and added a comment (n=53), the vast majority (n=48) recorded that either they were unsure, didn’t know, or intended leaving for overseas, or studying full-time. A further five stated that they would like a continuing general staff position. Of the others who wrote comments in addition to nominating one of the first four options (n=149), half (n=71, 2.5 per cent of the sample) noted that they would prefer a combination of at least two of the options, most commonly part-time or casual academic work in conjunction with outside sector employment. Whilst the categories did not specifically allow for those who might be described as ‘freelancers’, a group identified by Gappa and Leslie (1993) as those who seek casual or part-time academic work in conjunction with other work outside the sector. Only a small proportion noted their preference for this combination of work.
Table 4.16: Detailed and broad typologies of casual academic respondents – motivation and orientations to casual work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Qualification OR study status OR main source of income</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Proportion of overall sample %</th>
<th>Career aspiration/orientation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring academic – post grad student</td>
<td>Studying for PhD or Post grad qualification</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>‘Academic’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring academic – PhD qualified</td>
<td>Holds a PhD</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring academic – not qualified not studying</td>
<td>Has a Post grad qualification or lower qualification or studying for Bachelors</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside sector employed – academic orientation</td>
<td>Main source of income is from a job outside the university sector</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total aspiring academic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1569</strong></td>
<td><strong>55.3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Externally aspiring casual</td>
<td>Has a range of qualifications, including 31 with PhD. Not currently studying</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>‘External to university sector’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside sector employed – external orientation</td>
<td>Main source of income is from a job outside the university sector</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Externally aspiring post grad student</td>
<td>Studying for a PhD or post grad qualification</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total externally oriented</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>673</strong></td>
<td><strong>23.8</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual by choice</td>
<td>Has a range of qualifications including 31 with PhD qualifications</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>‘Casual by choice’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total casual by choice</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>335</strong></td>
<td><strong>11.8</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree/wanting to retire</td>
<td>Main source of income is pension/includes 18 with PhD</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>‘Retiring’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other – includes unsure, moving OS, full-time study, seeking general staff position</td>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total sample</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2833</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

Those who answered that they would like to be a casual/sessional in five years’ time were assigned to the ‘casual by choice’ category. The remaining respondents were then analysed by their highest qualification, their study status and their source of income, to categorise them by aspiration (either to be an academic, to work outside the university sector, or to be retired/not working).

The aspiring academic category

Those aspiring to an academic career came from one of three main groups. The vast majority came from those who were studying at post-graduate level; these comprised
31.7 per cent of the sample. The next largest group was those holding their PhD, they made up 10.9 per cent of the sample. The remainder were either currently not studying, or studying at Bachelors level, or earned their main source of income from outside of the university sector. Those who earned their main source of income outside the university sector, but aspired to an academic position (3.7 per cent of the sample) appeared to be those looking for a career change. While the three groups that made up this category are very different they share the same aspiration for an academic position, and their motivation and orientation toward casual academic employment is the same. In all, 55.3 per cent of the overall sample, that is, a majority aspired to a continuing academic position. Of this particular group, one in five was PhD qualified.

**The externally focused category**

Amongst those whose aspiration was for a career external to the university sector, were those studying for a post-graduate or graduate qualification, those already earning their main source of income from outside the sector, and those who currently earned their main source of income from either their casual work, other university work, or from family sources. A small proportion of this last group were PhD holders (n=31). In total this group comprised 23.8 per cent of the sample. Only a small proportion of those aspiring to a career external to the university sector fit the ‘outside industry expert’ category proposed by Junor (2004a) to describe those whose primary career is outside the sector. This group may be under-represented in the survey due to their often very limited presence on campus, and their external focus. Disciplines where the employment of ‘outside industry experts’ as casual academics is more common include law, business, nursing and engineering (see Cowley 2010a; Peters et al. 2011).

**The casual by choice category**

The ‘casual by choice’ category was defined by those in the group having a 5-year aspiration to be still working in their casual/sessional academic position. This group included a small proportion of PhD holders (n=41) and a mix of those holding post-graduate qualifications or studying at post-graduate level. The majority of this group (n=240) were currently not studying. A third (n=136, 4.8 per cent of the sample) of this group earned their main source of income external to the sector, suggesting that they may also be part of the ‘industry expert’ category, previously described as being under-
represented. However, as the intention of the typology was to categorise motivation and orientation, their orientation toward their casual employment is given primacy in the assignment of category.

The category of ‘casual by choice’ is problematic, and notions of choice can be highly subjective and nuanced. Underlining the complexity are the responses ‘casuals by choice’ gave to the survey questions: ‘I would accept a salaried full-time academic position’ and ‘I would accept a salaried part-time academic position’. Of those designated ‘casual by choice’ 36 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that they would accept a full-time position, and 70 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that they would accept a part-time position. However in answer to the statement ‘casual work suits my circumstances’, 93 per cent of the ‘casual by choice’ group either agreed or strongly agreed. This issue is discussed further in Chapter 6 in relation to the very small number of casual academic staff interviewed who reported to be satisfied with their casual employment status and who said they would not take a more permanent position if it were offered. In particular, the reasons for expressing a preference for casual work are explored, highlighting the temporal dimensions, and often constrained nature of those choices.

The retiring category

The retiring category is also explored further in the Chapter 6, underlying the difficulties in assigning motivations and labels to those working post-retirement age. Age and an orientation toward retirement were the primary defining characteristics of those in this category, and the category included respondents who expressed the view that they would like to be retired in five years’ time, or who currently were dependent on a pension as their main source of income, and/or were older than 60 years of age. This group included 18 respondents who were PhD qualified.

Using the new typology of casual academic staff

By applying the four main categories of aspiring academic, externally oriented, casual by choice, and retired/retiring, it was possible to examine a range of characteristics to see if these characteristics revealed differing patterns of motivation and orientation. An important question to examine was do males and females have different orientations to their casual academic employment? Table 4.17 reveals that there were few gender
differences between males’ and females’ orientations and motivations towards casual academic employment. Females were slightly more likely than males to aspire to an academic career, and males were slightly more likely to belong to the retiree group. This is a noteworthy finding as it challenges what is often a commonly held assumption that females prefer casual work as it suits a need or desire to balance work and home life. Further, it means that the higher proportion of females in casual academic employment, compared to females in non-casual academic employment, is not explained by women’s preferences for casual work.

Table 4.17: Typology of casual academics by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aspiring academic %</th>
<th>Externally oriented %</th>
<th>Casual by choice %</th>
<th>Retiring %</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>100 (n=2780)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011
The typology can also be applied to examine university type to see if there is a difference in the motivations and orientations of the casual academic workforce depending on the type of university where they work. Table 4.18 shows that the universities appeared to have quite differently oriented casual academic workforces, with externally oriented casuals more highly concentrated at Sandstone Universities, and aspiring academics more common at Gumtree Universities. The differences are statistically significant. Both of these university types had higher proportions of respondents studying for their PhD, as observed in the earlier Table 4.4. Unitech Universities and Newer Universities appeared to have much higher concentrations of casuals by choice, and Newer Universities had a higher proportion from the retiring group, than other universities. What this suggests is that the casual academic labour market maybe quite different in each of the different types of universities.

**Table 4.18: Typology of casual academics by university type (Marginson typology adapted)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aspiring academic %</th>
<th>Externally oriented %</th>
<th>Casual by choice %</th>
<th>Retiring %</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumtree</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitech</td>
<td>54.0</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total sample</strong></td>
<td><strong>56.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 (n=2780)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (Chi square significance p<0.001, nine degrees of freedom)

In Table 4.19 the ‘discipline’ profile for casual academic staff is examined using the typology. Those in humanities and arts were much more likely to be aspiring academics, indeed almost three quarters of the respondents in this ‘discipline’ aspired to an academic position, compared with less than half of those respondents employed in the engineering and technology ‘discipline’. Two thirds of those in the social sciences ‘discipline’, and almost two thirds of those in biological sciences, and performing and visual arts ‘disciplines’ aspired to an academic position. By contrast the highest proportions of casuals oriented to a career external to the university sector were found in the male-dominated disciplines of engineering and technology, and physical, chemical, mathematical and earth sciences. The highest proportions of ‘casuals by choice’ were found in the architecture, urban environment and building ‘discipline’, and the
performing and visual arts ‘discipline’. Education had the highest proportions in the retiree category, reflecting the high median age in this ‘discipline’.

These patterns further build on the discussion about the age profile of each of the ‘disciplines’ displayed in Figure 4.2. The very different profiles of motivation and orientation of casual academic staff by ‘discipline’ add to evidence about the impact of academic discipline on the casual academic labour market. These findings also add weight to the suggestion that separate labour markets may operate within each discipline.

Table 4.19: All ‘disciplines’ by typology of casual academic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Aspiring academic</th>
<th>Externally oriented</th>
<th>Casual by choice</th>
<th>Retiring</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Chemical, Mathematical and Earth Sciences</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological, Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, Computing and Communication Sciences</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Technology</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, Urban Environment and Building</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and Health Sciences</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law, Justice and Law Enforcement</td>
<td>59.6</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, Economics and Tourism</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing and visual arts</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities and Arts</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>68.0</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL (n=2691)</strong></td>
<td><strong>57.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>22.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

Figure 4.3 below shows the differing age profiles of the casual types. Unsurprisingly the retiring category is highly concentrated amongst over 50 year olds, and those aspiring to a career external to the university tended to be concentrated in the younger age categories, particularly those under 25 where 65 per cent of that age category said
they aspired to a career outside of the university. Casual academics who aspired to academic careers were concentrated in the 30-50 year categories, and after age 50 the proportion of aspiring academics declines considerably. By age 55 the profile changes, with much greater numbers in the casual by choice and the retiring categories. Those who are ‘casuals by choice’ tend to be older with the highest proportions of this category in the over 60 age group.

**Figure 4.3: Proportion of casual academics in each age category by the casual academic typology**

The average length of service by semester was examined by use of independent t-tests. This revealed that those in the ‘casual by choice’ category had the longest average period of service, followed by ‘aspiring academics’ and then those from the ‘aspiring external’ category.

In summary, by focusing on a new typology of casual academic staff that highlights motivation and orientation to casual academic employment new insights are gained about the interplay of gender, institutional type and academic discipline differences. Indeed, there were few gender differences in motivation and orientation but the composition of the casual academic workforce appeared quite different depending on the ‘discipline’. Likewise, different types of universities appeared to have differently motivated and oriented casual academic workforces.
Conditions of work – job and career support and access to facilities

The survey explored the conditions of work for casual academic staff, including their access to a range of supports and resources that may have an impact on their capacity to perform their work, and to improve their career prospects. In particular the survey asked whether casual academics had attended induction, professional development, and whether they attended course or department meetings, or whether they belonged to a university committee, and if they did, whether they were paid for these activities. A further question asked about access to resources and amenities, in particular, did they have access to: a workspace and computer; a suitable space to meet with students and whether they had access to any financial support for research, such as support to attend conferences. Access to financial support for research, in particular, is a measure of support for an academic career.

Table 4.20 reports the proportions of males and females who said that they had access to the following listed resources and amenities at the university where they undertook the survey. In the case of a suitable space to meet students, and access to financial support for research, it can be seen that the proportions of females who had access was less than for males, and the differences were statistically significant but strongly related to the respondent currently undertaking a qualification. As a result of their student status, access to apply for financial support is available.

Table 4.20: Respondents with access to resources and amenities by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you have access to the following: (proportions that said yes)</th>
<th>Females %</th>
<th>Males %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>Chi sq</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workspace with a computer (n=2584)</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suitable space to meet with students  (n=2561)</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>5.954*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial support for your research, eg. support to attend a conference (n=2498)</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>43.7</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>7.759**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. Cells in data columns 1-3 are ‘yes’ values. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between gender and row variables, d.f=1 (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001).

Table 4.21 shows that 66 per cent of females who were studying full-time had access to financial support for research, and 73 per cent of males who were studying full-time had access to financial support for research. For those respondents who are currently not studying, both males and females had very low rates of access to financial support for research. Only 13 per cent of males who were not currently studying, and 15.5 per cent of females who were not currently studying, have access to financial support. Whilst the proportions of males and females currently studying are fairly similar, females are
much more likely to be studying part-time than males. Amongst those studying part-time the level of access to financial support for research is the same at 32 per cent.

The importance of a research record as well as a PhD as a pre-requisite for an entry level academic position in most disciplines is discussed in the case study chapters. For those casual academics without access to funds for research in order to build a research profile they would need to self-fund attendance at conferences, or self-fund access to materials to support their research. This adds to the difficulty for those casual academics to build a research career.

Table 4.21: Respondents who had access to financial support for their research by study status and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HAS access to financial support for research</th>
<th>Amongst females</th>
<th>Amongst males</th>
<th>Study Status as a proportion of sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All respondents not currently studying</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All respondents studying part-time</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All respondents studying full-time</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall sample</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N=1404</td>
<td>N=1093</td>
<td>(n=2497)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

Table 4.22 records whether respondents had access to: induction, professional development, attendance at course meetings about a course they were teaching, belonged to a university committee, or attended department or faculty meetings. The survey asked in each case if they had access to, or took part in these activities, and if so was it on an unpaid, fully paid or part paid basis. The results show that approximately one third of respondents had not undertaken induction, or professional development at their current workplace. A further third of respondents said they were fully paid to attend professional development, and to attend course meetings, and one in four were paid to attend induction. Almost half the sample said they had attended course meetings on an unpaid basis; a third attended school or department meetings unpaid, and approximately a quarter attended induction and professional development on an unpaid basis. Whilst the data do not indicate whether these initiatives were voluntary or had an element of compulsion, they do suggest a significant amount of goodwill on the part of casual academic staff, as well as a desire to build a career, and improve their skills.
Table 4.22: Have you ever taken part in or received any of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No %</th>
<th>Yes Unpaid %</th>
<th>Yes Partly paid %</th>
<th>Yes Fully paid %</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Induction</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development, training</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend course meetings</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>29.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belong to a committee</td>
<td>80.5</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend general school/dept meetings</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

Table 4.23 focuses on; induction, professional development, and attendance at course meetings, by university type, to show how access to these particular supports varies, in some cases quite significantly, by type of employer. The table details the proportion of respondents, by university type, who had no access to the provision, had access but it was unpaid, had access that was partly paid, and had access that was fully paid.
Table 4.23: Access to job and career supports, by University type, and overall sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of job and career support</th>
<th>(1) Sandstone</th>
<th>(2) Gumtree</th>
<th>(3) Unitech</th>
<th>(4) Newer</th>
<th>(5) ALL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Induction - No</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – Yes unpaid</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – Yes fully paid</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>35.9</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – Yes part paid</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chi square</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>33.099</strong>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2540</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development - No</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development – Yes unpaid</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development – Yes fully paid</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development - Yes part paid</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chi square</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>52.656</strong>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2546</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings - No</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>17.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – Yes unpaid</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – Yes fully paid</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – Yes part paid</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chi square</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2560</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between job and career supports and column variables, d.f=9, n/s=not significant. (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001)

A varied picture is revealed amongst the university types in terms of the provision of job and career supports as shown in columns 1-4, Table 4.23. Those at Sandstone Universities were most likely to have undertaken induction and most likely to have done so on a paid basis. Gumtree Universities had the highest rates of professional development for casual academic staff, although Newer University respondents had the highest proportion receiving paid professional development. The highest proportion attending course meetings were at Gumtree Universities and Sandstone Universities, and those at Sandstone Universities were most likely to be paid for attending meetings. Half of all respondents at Unitech Universities reported they had attended course meetings on an unpaid basis. The differences between universities for induction and professional development were statistically significant.
These three selected job and career supports were also analysed by type of casual, and
gender composition of discipline to ascertain if these different groupings of respondents
had different levels of access. Table 4.24 summarises access by the type of casual academic and shows that aspiring academics were more likely to undertake professional development unpaid, and more likely to have had paid induction. Interestingly those in the retiring category were most likely to be paid for attending course meetings.

Table 4.24: Access to job and career supports by casual type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job and career support</th>
<th>Aspiring academic</th>
<th>Aspiring external</th>
<th>Casual by choice</th>
<th>Retiring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Induction - No</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – yes-unpaid</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – yes part paid</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – yes fully paid</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>28.722**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2458</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development - No</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development – Yes unpaid</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development- Yes part paid</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development – Yes fully paid</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>24.694**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2464</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings - No</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – yes unpaid</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – yes part paid</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – yes fully paid</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2478</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between job and career supports and column variables, d.f=9, n/s=not significant. (*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001)

Table 4.25 below shows that those in female-dominated disciplines are the least likely to have induction fully paid, and the least likely to have access to professional development. Those in female-dominated disciplines are also the least likely to be paid for attending induction or professional development. The differences reported in Table 4.25 for access to induction and professional development are found to be statistically significant.
Table 4.25: Access to job and career supports by gender composition of discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job and career support</th>
<th>Male-dominated</th>
<th>Gender balanced</th>
<th>Female-dominated</th>
<th>Chi sq</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Induction - No</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – yes unpaid</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – yes part paid</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – yes fully paid</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2540</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>36.551***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development - No</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development – Yes unpaid</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development- Yes part paid</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development – Yes fully paid</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2546</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>18.187**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings - No</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – yes unpaid</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – yes part paid</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – yes fully paid</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2560</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between job and career supports and column variables, d.f=6, n/s=not significant. (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001)

Job and career supports were also examined by study status in Table 4.26 to see if there were different patterns of access. The differences were statistically significant for induction and professional development, and show that those studying full-time are more likely to receive induction and professional development on a fully paid basis. Those who are studying full or part-time were also more likely to attend course meetings on an unpaid basis than those not studying, possibly due to them being more likely to be present on campus for their study, or also it may be related to their wish to build a career.
Table 4.26 Access to job and career supports by study status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job and career support</th>
<th>Not studying</th>
<th>Studying part-time</th>
<th>Studying full-time</th>
<th>Chi sq</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Induction - No</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – yes-unpaid</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – yes part paid</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction – yes fully paid</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2539</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>41.637***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development - No</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development – Yes unpaid</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development– Yes part paid</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development – Yes fully paid</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2545</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>24.844***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings - No</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – yes unpaid</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – yes part paid</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course meetings – yes fully paid</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=2559</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between job and career supports and column variables, d.f=6, n/s=not significant. (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001)

Finally access to a workspace and computer, and a suitable space to meet students was examined by the same characteristics in Table 4.27. As previously discussed in relation to access to financial support for research, the table shows that access to a workspace and computer was higher amongst those who were studying full-time, and lowest amongst those who were not studying, suggesting that this benefit is also linked to being a student rather than being an employee. Considerable variation is observed in access to a workspace and a space to meet students depending on the type of university. In particular, casual academics at Unitech Universities had much lower levels of access to both these facilities, compared to other universities, and Unitech Universities had the higher levels of casualisation. Further, there were statistically significant gender differences in relation to both access to a student consultation space, and financial support for research, as shown in Table 4.20.
Table 4.27: Access to resources and amenities by university type, study status and gender composition of discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportion who have access</th>
<th>Workspace and computer %</th>
<th>A suitable space to meet with students %</th>
<th>Financial support for research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone University</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumtree University</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitec University</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer University</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>2584</strong></td>
<td><strong>2561</strong></td>
<td><strong>2498</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chi-square</strong></td>
<td><strong>28.088</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>46.349</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>82.400</strong>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not currently studying</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying full-time</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying part-time</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>2583</strong></td>
<td><strong>2560</strong></td>
<td><strong>2498</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chi-square</strong></td>
<td><strong>130.084</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>15.338</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>666.068</strong>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-dominated discipline</td>
<td>84.3</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender balanced discipline</td>
<td>72.4</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male-dominated discipline</td>
<td>74.8</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>2584</strong></td>
<td><strong>2561</strong></td>
<td><strong>2497</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chi-square</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.971</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>23.505</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>81.322</strong>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between university type, study status or gender composition of discipline and column variables. Cells in data columns 1-3 are ‘yes’ values. d.f=3, (university type) d.f=2 (gender composition of discipline, study status) n/s=not significant. (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001).

In terms of access to job and career support and facilities it seems that the type of university where the casual academic works made a difference. Also there was evidence that some benefits, such as access to financial support for research, and access to a workspace, were associated with the casual academic’s student status and not related to their employment. Those studying full-time were much more likely to undertake induction on an unpaid basis, possibly as they seek to develop their careers through the combination of study and casual academic work and hoped that attending an induction program may assist. This of course assumed that attendance on an unpaid basis was a matter of choice, not compulsion.

Overall the findings reveal patchy provision of job and career supports, suggesting that not a lot has changed since earlier literature investigating these issues raised concerns about lack of structured support for casual academic staff, and linked this with inadequate quality assurance (Percy et al. 2008). The lack of structured support and professional development for casual academic staff raises serious questions about the preparation these staff were receiving for possible future academic careers and how university managers regarded the casual academic workforce. The lack of progress over recent years suggests that the workforce is structured in such a way as to operate
separately from the continuing workforce, rather than as a ‘training ground’ for future academic staff.

**Career satisfaction**

The WCAU casual academic staff survey investigated career satisfaction with a range of questions that investigated respondents’ assessments of their career opportunities. In order to determine how satisfied respondents were their career opportunities at the university where they undertook the survey and career opportunities in the university sector, answers to the following questions were summed into an index to enable further analysis:

- ‘I am satisfied with my career opportunities at this university’ (5 point scale, strongly disagree to strongly agree)
- ‘I am satisfied with my career opportunities in the university sector as a whole’ (5 point scale, strongly disagree to strongly agree)
- ‘My satisfaction with my career prospects’ (3 point scale, gone up, stayed the same, gone down in the last 2 years).

Table 4.28 describes the responses to each of these questions for the whole sample.

**Table 4.28: Career satisfaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey question</th>
<th>Strongly disagree/somewhat disagree % of category</th>
<th>Neither/don’t know % of category</th>
<th>Strongly agree/somewhat agree % of category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with my career opportunities as this university</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with my career opportunities in the university sector as a whole</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Survey question</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gone up</strong></td>
<td><strong>Stayed the same/don’t know</strong></td>
<td><strong>Gone down</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My satisfaction with my career prospects have:</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. (n=2432)

The response order was reversed for the third question ‘my satisfaction with my career prospects’ to ensure that the least satisfied and ‘disagree’ responses were aligned with the lowest scores reflecting the greatest levels of dissatisfaction with career opportunities and the highest scores reflecting the highest levels of satisfaction with career opportunity. The results for the first two questions were re-coded to add
‘strongly disagree’ and ‘somewhat disagree’ to form one point, and ‘somewhat agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ to form three. Combined these three questions formed an index that ranged from 3 points to 9 points as follows:

- 8-9 points – high levels of satisfaction (agreed with at least 2 questions)
- 5-7 points – neutral
- 3-4 points – low levels of satisfaction (disagreed with at least 2 questions) When combined the index comprising these questions had a Cronbach alpha of 0.719.

This summary career satisfaction variable was then analysed by gender, university type, PhD status and casual type to see if these groups varied in their satisfaction levels. These results are reported in Table 4.29. It can be seen that the groups that are most dissatisfied with their career opportunities are those with PhDs. Half of those with a PhD indicated low levels of career satisfaction and less than 20 per cent indicated high levels of career satisfaction.

Table 4.29: Career satisfaction by sex, university type, PhD qualification, and casual type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment of career opportunities: category</th>
<th>Lower career satisfaction % of category</th>
<th>Higher career satisfaction % of category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guntree</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitech</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>39.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.928***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD holder</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not hold PhD</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td></td>
<td>114.629***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual type – aspiring academic</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual type – external focus</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual type – casual by choice</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual type - retiree</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi square</td>
<td></td>
<td>41.316***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. (n=2432). Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between between university type, PhD status, gender or casual type and column variables, d.f=4 (PhD status), d.f=6 (university type, categories of casuals). n/s=not significant. (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001). Intermediate value not shown.

Interestingly there is little or no difference by gender in terms of career satisfaction. The type of university where the casual academic works makes some difference to career satisfaction with statistically significant differences found between university
types. Sandstone University casual academics are the least satisfied and Newer University casual academics have the highest proportions in the most satisfied category. Newer Universities were also found to have the highest levels of retiring and casuals by choice which may explain this result. The type of casual does make a difference to career satisfaction with the ‘casual by choice’ and retiring groups recording much higher levels of satisfaction than those aspiring to either academic or external careers. Just under a third of those who aspired to an academic career had lower career satisfaction.

Career satisfaction is examined by the gender composition of the discipline. The differences reported table 4.30 are statistically significant. In particular respondents in female-dominated disciplines were far more likely to express dissatisfaction with their careers, than those in male-dominated, or gender balanced disciplines, and those in female-dominated disciplines also had much lower proportions with higher career satisfaction than those in either male-dominated or gender balanced disciplines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition of discipline</th>
<th>Lower career satisfaction % of category</th>
<th>Higher career satisfaction % of category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male-dominated discipline</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender balanced discipline</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-dominated discipline</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall (n=2432)</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chi-square</strong></td>
<td><strong>31.26</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>31.26</strong>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between gender composition of discipline and column variables, d.f=4. (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001) Intermediate value not shown

‘Discipline’ appeared to be the most significant factor affecting career satisfaction, and significant variation is revealed between the different academic discipline groups as shown in Table 4.31. A number of disciplines report very high proportions in the higher career satisfaction category. These disciplines were mostly in the hard sciences category (physical, chemical, mathematical sciences, engineering and technology, and architecture) and also included education and business and economics. Of these disciplines, physical, chemical, mathematical and earth sciences, and engineering and technology, were highly male-dominated, business and economics was gender balanced and education was highly female-dominated. Broadly speaking all are disciplines where job opportunities are available outside of the university sector, for people with
qualifications in these fields. This is in contrast with the disciplines where very low levels of satisfaction, and high proportions of dissatisfaction, are reported, such as humanities and the arts, and the social sciences where, broadly speaking, there are fewer job opportunities outside the university sector, as well as limited job opportunities within the university sector.

**Table 4.31: Career satisfaction by academic discipline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Lower career satisfaction – proportion in this category</th>
<th>Higher career satisfaction – proportion in this category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Chemical, Mathematical and Earth Sciences</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>41.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological, Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, Computing and Communication Sciences</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>34.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Technology</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>40.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, Urban Environment and Building</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and health sciences</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law, Justice and Law Enforcement</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, Economics and Tourism</td>
<td>24.1</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing and visual arts</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities and Arts</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>36.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL (n=2432)</strong></td>
<td><strong>29.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>34.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. Intermediate value not shown*

The data for career satisfaction is further investigated for access to job and career supports and amenities to examine if these made a difference to career satisfaction. Table 4.32 shows statistically significant differences for workspace and computer, for student space and for access to financial support for research, suggesting that having access to such amenities was positively associated with career satisfaction.
Table 4.32: Career satisfaction by access to supports and amenities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lower career satisfaction % of category</th>
<th>Higher career satisfaction % of category</th>
<th>Chi square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No workspace &amp; computer</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>11.999**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes workspace &amp; computer</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No space to meet students</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>51.457***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes space to meet students</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No access to financial support</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes access to financial support</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>61.858***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2428). Intermediate values (medium satisfaction) not shown. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between satisfaction and resource variables, d.f=2. (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001)

Table 4.33 examines career satisfaction and paid access to induction and professional development. As with access to basic amenities, paid access to induction and professional development was positively associated with career satisfaction and the differences were statistically significant.

Table 4.33: Career satisfaction by access to induction, professional development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lower career satisfaction % of category</th>
<th>Higher career satisfaction % of category</th>
<th>Chi square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No access to induction</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>20.788**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid access to induction</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No access to professional development</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>15.158*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid access to professional development</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2397). Intermediate values in column (medium satisfaction) and row (unpaid access) variables not shown. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between career satisfaction and column variables, d.f=6 (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001)

In summary, the data suggest that by providing the basics of job and career support and amenities and access to resources to support research, universities can improve the casual academics’ experience of work, and their career satisfaction. Higher levels of career satisfaction were found amongst respondents who had paid access to induction and professional development, and amongst those who had a workspace, computer and place to meet students. Access to financial support for research was related to study status and was associated with higher levels of career satisfaction.

As might be expected, ‘casuals by choice’ appeared to be the group happiest with their career opportunities, along with those in the retiring category. For these two groups,
their employment as a casual academic is not a means to a more secure academic position. Those who expressed the greatest dissatisfaction with their careers were from the humanities, arts and social sciences disciplines, from female-dominated disciplines, and amongst those who were PhD qualified.

**The frustrated academic**

The data was investigated further in relation to the career hopes, aspirations and expectations of respondents. Responses to the survey questions that assessed aspiration and expectation by asking where would the respondent ‘like’ to be in five years’ time, and where did they ‘expect’ to be in five years’ time, were analysed to create a new variable labelled the ‘frustrated academic’. The range of options provided for this question was detailed in the section discussing the typology of casual academic staff at Table 4.16. Of the overall sample, 57 per cent reported that they would like to be in a continuing academic position in five years’ time. This group are the aspiring academics. The ‘frustrated academic’ variable was confined to examining the proportion of this group who go on to report that they do not expect to be an academic in five years’ time, that is, their aspiration is not matched by their expectation. The proportions of frustrated academics were reported for a range of categories such as gender, university type, study status, ‘discipline’, gender composition of ‘discipline’, and age. These are described as the frustrated academic rate.

The category of frustrated academic is an important one because it identifies that group of casual staff for whom working as a casual academic is seen as part of the process of achieving an academic career, yet their own assessment of their future is quite bleak. Given that this group, in part, represent the future academic workforce, their pessimism about their future job prospects is particularly concerning.

Table 4.34 examines the frustrated academic rate for males and females and find that females are much more likely to be frustrated academics than males and the difference is statistically significant. It appears that for females their assessments of their future are bleaker than those of the males. This is an interesting finding that is explored in more detail in the case study chapters. It may reflect a better transition rate to more secure academic work amongst males than females, or even a greater exit rate from casual academic work among males.
Table 4.34: Frustrated academic rates by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Would like to be in a continuing academic position BUT don’t expect to beContextualised Text</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=1584). (Chi square = 12.269, d.f=1, p<0.001)

Table 4.35 examines the frustrated academic rate by sex for those with a PhD and those respondents studying for a PhD. The table shows that frustrated academic rates appear higher amongst females with PhDs than amongst males with PhDs, although the differences are not statistically significant. The first columns also look at the numbers of males and females with PhDs who are in the aspiring academic category. This indicates that 60.7 per cent of females with PhD qualifications and 55.2 per cent of males with PhD qualifications would like to be an academic in five years’ time. The second set of columns look at those currently studying for a PhD, comparing males and females. This shows that those studying for a PhD were more optimistic about their chances of finding a secure academic position, than those who already have a PhD and are working in a casual position. The frustrated academic rate for females studying for a PhD is 53.4 per cent and it is 40.9 per cent for males. The gender difference here is statistically significant and suggests that males who are studying for a PhD are much more optimistic about their chances of securing continuing academic work in the future, than females who are studying for a PhD. Alternatively, males may have been much more successful in gaining employment during their PhD studies and were no longer working as casuals. These gender differences narrowed for those with a PhD, with the frustrated academic rate for males with a PhD jumping quite considerably compared to a smaller increase for females.

Of those who are studying for a PhD, higher rates of aspiring academics were evident, 62.3 per cent of females and 68.1 per cent of males reported that they would like to be an academic in five years’ time. The high rates of aspiring academics amongst those studying for a PhD and the high levels of pessimism expressed, particularly by females, about their future prospects were concerning findings. World-wide shortages of academic staff have been identified as an issue for the Australian university sector over the next decade (Bradley et al. 2008; Hugo & Morriss 2010). A recent survey of Higher Degree Research (HDR) students by Edwards et al. (2010) found similar levels of concern about future prospects, as that displayed in Table 4.35. Almost half of the
HDR students surveyed by Edwards et al. (2010:xi) expressed a strong intention to pursue an academic career, but around a third of these felt that finding an academic position was ‘not realistically achievable’. The HDR survey found that more than half of the students who responded were working at their universities whilst studying and for the overwhelming majority they were working in a casual position a factor which may have affected their assessments of their future.

Table 4.35: Frustrated academic rates for males and females with a PhD and studying for PhD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>females</th>
<th>With PhD males</th>
<th>total</th>
<th>Studying for PhD females</th>
<th>males</th>
<th>total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frustrated academic rate ( %)</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>47.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N (’would like to be an academic in five year’s time)</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N in sample (with PhD/studying for PhD)</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>1175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘would like to be an academic in five year’s time’ (%)</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>60.4</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

Frustrated academic rates by gender and university type were examined in Table 4.36. The data show that for females working in a Sandstone University their sense of frustration and pessimism about their job prospects were the most striking, with a frustrated academic rate of 59.8 per cent, much higher than for males in Sandstone Universities, at 48.1 per cent. Overall, females were more pessimistic than males, in all of the university categories, and when aggregated, Sandstone Universities were found to have higher rates of frustrated academics than for any other university category. The differences between males and females at Sandstone Universities were statistically significant.
Table 4.36: Frustrated academic rates by sex and university type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Amongst males %</th>
<th>Amongst females %</th>
<th>Frustrated academic rate Overall sample %</th>
<th>Chi square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone University</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>59.8</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>8.794**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumtree university</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>3.550*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitech University</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>1.682 n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer University</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>.228 n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total sample (n=1587)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>53.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.269</strong>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between university type and column variables, d.f=1, n/s=not significant. (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001)

The highest proportions of frustrated academics are found by looking at the ‘discipline’ categories, as shown in Table 4.37. The table examines the frustrated academic rate by discipline and gender, and finds the highest rates amongst females are found in the disciplines of humanities and arts, education and social sciences. Amongst males high rates of frustration were found in the disciplines of performing and visual arts and humanities and arts. Overall, two-thirds of those working in the performing and visual arts, and the humanities and arts want to be academics but do not expect that they will be. A Chi Square test was applied to the table as a whole and it showed a relationship between discipline and the frustrated academic rate but could not identify the nature of that relationship. Examination of Table 4.37 shows that in nine of the thirteen categories of discipline females have a higher frustrated academic rate than males, and males had a higher rate in four categories. To test whether the differences are significant Chi Square tests were applied to gender composition of discipline within each discipline. Results are shown in the fourth row of Table 4.37. Unfortunately small cell sizes mean that most of the tests showed non-significant results with the exceptions of law, performing and visual arts, at the five per cent level and humanities and arts at the ten per cent level. It would be erroneous to conclude that there were no discipline specific differences by gender in the frustrated academic rate as high non-significance could simply be an artefact of the sample size. Accordingly the disciplines were aggregated into three categories based on gender composition in Table 4.38.
Table 4.37: Frustrated academic rate by discipline and gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Frustrated academic rate %</th>
<th>Amongst males %</th>
<th>Amongst females %</th>
<th>Chi square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male-dominated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Chemical, Mathematical and Earth Sciences</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, Computing and Communication Sciences</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Technology</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender balanced</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, Urban Environment and Building</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, Economics and Tourism</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-dominated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological, Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law, Justice and Law Enforcement</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>14.3#</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>3.877*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and health sciences</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing and visual arts</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>3.929*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities and Arts</td>
<td>69.2</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>2.787^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>63.0</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>62.5#</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (n=1548)</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>11.871*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=1548). Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between discipline and column variables, Chi square =78.014 d.f=12, *=p<0.05, ^=p<0.10 (# denotes less than 5 observations)

Table 4.38 reveals a statistically significant difference in the level of frustrated academics by the gender composition of the ‘discipline’ the respondent is working in. Those working in female-dominated disciplines had much higher frustrated academic rates than those working in either male-dominated disciplines, or in gender balanced disciplines. Further, the impact on females working in female-dominated disciplines appears to be more negative than for males, with the highest levels of frustrated academic rates recorded amongst females working in female-dominated disciplines. The differences here are bigger than those between males and females overall, suggesting that ‘discipline’ and gender combined to impact upon the experience of casual work and the perceptions about the possibility of a future academic career. The differences between males and females in male-dominated and balanced disciplines are very small, suggesting that, for these disciplines, the distinct impact of discipline is more important. However within female-dominated disciplines being female makes a difference to the
frustrated academic rate. The reasons for this can be speculated upon but ultimately are beyond the scope of this thesis.

**Table 4.38: Frustrated academic rate by gender composition of ‘discipline’ and gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender composition</th>
<th>Frustrated academic rate</th>
<th>Amongst males %</th>
<th>Amongst females %</th>
<th>Chi square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male-dominated discipline</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender balanced discipline</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-dominated discipline</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>5.123*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overall</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>11.871*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=1548). Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between gender composition and frustrated academic rates, d.f=2, *=p<0.05

Table 4.39 summarises the frustrated academic rate by age and shows quite a degree of variation, with peaks in the frustrated academic rate for those aged over 40 years, a group which make up approximately 40 per cent of the sample. Whilst the rates of frustrated academics were very high amongst the 60+ group these respondents only make up a small proportion of the overall sample. They also reflect the reality that gaining a more secure academic position post 60 years of age is unlikely. Statistically significant differences are revealed by age.

**Table 4.39: Frustrated academic rate by age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frustrated academic rate</th>
<th>Proportion of sample in this age category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-24 years</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29 years</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34 years</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39 years</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44 years</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49 years</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54 years</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59 years</td>
<td>67.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+ years</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overall</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=1583). Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between age and column variables, chi square =57.618 d.f=9 p<0.000

Of interest is the frustrated academic rate for those with a PhD, based on the year of their graduation. Table 4.40 shows that casual academics who graduated with their PhD
prior to 2009 had significantly higher rates of frustration than those who graduated in the years since 2009. This suggested that, for this group, there may be a tipping point after which the possibility of gaining a more secure academic position was perceived to be less likely.

Table 4.40: Frustrated academic rate by year since completed PhD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years since PhD</th>
<th>Frustrated academic rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed in 2009 and later</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed prior to 2009</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total n=286</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=286)

The tipping point is hinted at graphically in Figure 4.4, which displays the frustrated academic rate by year of PhD graduation. The graph shows that for each year further away from graduation the frustrated academic rate rose, with significant climbs recorded for those who graduated before 2009-2010.

Figure 4.4: Frustrated academic rate by year of PhD graduation

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

The issue of whether there is a tipping point at a certain period post PhD graduation, and beyond which the likelihood of gaining a more secure academic position is significantly diminished, is also explored in Chapter 6. There is no Australian research on the average time between PhD completion and first continuing academic position. In
the USA analysis of social sciences graduates found it was 6 years before the majority of aspiring academic PhD graduates in social science had secured a tenure-track position (Nerad, Rudd, Morrison & Picciano 2006).

The frustrated academic rate can only measure respondents’ perceptions of the likelihood that they will achieve their aspiration. However, the data show that respondents’ assessments were that the longer they work as a casual beyond the completion of their PhD, the less likely it was they believed they would gain a more secure academic position. This is a key finding.

In summary the gap between aspiration and expectation expressed as the frustrated academic rate was highest amongst females working in Old Universities, females with PhDs, those working in female-dominated ‘disciplines’ and in the ‘disciplines’ of education, performing and visual arts, humanities and the arts, and those in the prime working ages of 40-54. Gender and its interaction with discipline was a key feature of the frustrated academic variable. Further, the frustrated academic rate was highest amongst those who had completed their PhD prior to 2009 suggesting that there is a point at which making the transition from casual work to more secure academic work is perceived to be much more difficult, and beyond which, presumably, working as a casual academic in order to improve the chances of gaining more secure academic employment, was no longer useful.

Frustrated academic rates and career satisfaction – explaining the differences for females

In Table 4.29 it was illustrated that males and females had very similar levels of career satisfaction. This contrasts with the higher levels of frustrated academics amongst females, and can be explained by the different nature of the two questions. The frustrated academic rate was determined by a question that asked the respondent where they expected to be in five year’s time. This question removed the element of reasonable expectation that may be included in an individual’s general assessment of their career satisfaction. That is, career satisfaction was likely to be considered relative to the situation for other casual academics. To ask where someone expects to be in five years’ time was a more objective indication as it was not tempered by relative expectations, but rather directly measures their perception of their own career future. Hence, it appears that females may view their career satisfaction in the context of a general assessment of the situation for casual academics, but when asked to consider
their own personal assessment of their expectations they express a more pessimistic view than males. This finding will be explored further in Chapter 6 to see if there are differences in the lived experiences of casual academic employment between males and females, and to look for possible explanations for females more pessimistic assessments of their futures.

**Job satisfaction**

Job satisfaction amongst casual workers generally has been a long running point of debate in the broader literature. Some have used longitudinal data sets to argue that as casual workers have been found to have similar job satisfaction to more securely employed workers, casual employment is not a problem (Wooden and Warren 2004). Others have suggested that objective criteria, such as remuneration, are more appropriate measuring points for job quality and, on this basis, casual employment is clearly inferior (Watson 2005). Indeed, casual academic staff appeared to be satisfied with their jobs, with 78 per cent of the sample agreeing or strongly agreeing that ‘I am satisfied with my job overall’. However in investigating the question more deeply by the categories already identified as sources of variation, a different story is revealed.

The survey question asked respondents to answer on a five point scale ranging from strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither, somewhat agree, strongly agree; ‘I am satisfied with my job overall’. Those least satisfied were those who answered that they either strongly or somewhat disagreed with the statement, those who strongly or somewhat agreed with the statement were deemed to represent the most satisfied, the neutral group who recorded neither or don’t know are not reported in the tables.

Job satisfaction is analysed by gender, PhD qualification and type of casual, in Table 4.41 below. There is very little difference by gender for job satisfaction. Those who had a PhD qualification were much more likely to be in the least satisfied category, and had lower levels of job satisfaction than other groups. Casuals who are categorised as ‘casual by choice’ have very high levels of satisfaction, with 90 per cent satisfied. Those in the aspiring academic category have lower levels of satisfaction as do retirees although for both groups three quarters are satisfied with their jobs. The differences by casual types are statistically significant (p<0.001, one degree of freedom).
Table 4.41: Job satisfaction by sex, PhD and casual type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am satisfied with my job overall</th>
<th>Least satisfied % (a)</th>
<th>Most satisfied % (a)</th>
<th>Total n</th>
<th>Chi square</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>1465</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>1150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=2553</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With PhD</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>405</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without PhD</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>2173</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=2615</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>133.402***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring academic</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>1461</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring external</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>555</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual by choice</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>308</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N=2491</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33.394***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. (a) those who disagreed/strongly disagreed, or agreed/strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their job overall. Intermediate values (neutral) not shown. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between sex, PhD status or casual type and column variables, d.f.=6 (categories of casuals) d.f.=4 (PhD status) (*p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001)

Table 4.42 examines job satisfaction by the gender composition of the discipline and finds there is a statistically significant difference between the three groups. Those in female-dominated disciplines reported lower levels of job satisfaction, and higher levels of dissatisfaction with their jobs than those in gender balanced, or male-dominated disciplines.

Table 4.42: Job satisfaction by gender composition of discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am satisfied with my job overall</th>
<th>Least satisfied % (a)</th>
<th>Most satisfied % (a)</th>
<th>Total n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male-dominated discipline</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender balanced discipline</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-dominated discipline</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>75.9</td>
<td>1610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall sample</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>2615</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. (a) those who disagreed/strongly disagreed, or agreed/strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their job overall. Intermediate values (neutral) not shown. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between gender composition of discipline and column variables, chi square= 19.187, d.f.=4 p<0.01

Table 4.43 examines access to basic amenities such as a workspace and computer, and access to financial support for research, and finds statistically significant differences between those who do have these provisions and those who do not, suggesting an association between higher levels of job satisfaction and access to basic amenities and support.
Table 4.43: Job satisfaction by access to supports and amenities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am satisfied with my job overall</th>
<th>Least satisfied % (a)</th>
<th>Most satisfied % (a)</th>
<th>Total n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No computer and workspace</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes computer and workspace</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>79.9</td>
<td>1958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chi square</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>11.974</strong>**  **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No financial support</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>1477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes financial support</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>1003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chi square</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>39.944</strong>**  ***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. (a) those who disagreed/strongly disagreed, or agreed/strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their job overall. Intermediate values (neutral) not shown. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between amenities and supports and job satisfaction, d.f=2, *p<0.05, ** p< 0.01, ***p<0.001

In Table 4.44 ‘discipline’ is examined for respondents in different disciplines against reported levels of job satisfaction. The table reveals that major differences between respondents in different disciplines were observed. Some disciplines had very high proportions of respondents in the most satisfied categories these include all of the sciences categories, medical and health sciences, law, business economics and tourism and education. On the other hand those in the disciplines of performing and visual arts, humanities, and arts and social sciences had high proportions in the least satisfied categories and lower proportions of job satisfaction. Statistically significant differences were found across the disciplines.

Table 4.44: Job satisfaction by ‘discipline’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Least satisfied % (a)</th>
<th>Most satisfied % (a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Chemical, Mathematical and Earth Sciences</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>84.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological, Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, Computing and Communication Sciences</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Technology</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, Urban Environment and Building</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>75.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and health sciences</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law, Justice and Law Enforcement</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, Economics and Tourism</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>84.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>81.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing and visual arts</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>61.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities and Arts</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>64.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL (n=2615)</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>78.4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011. (a) those who disagreed/strongly disagreed, or agreed/strongly agreed that they were satisfied with their job overall. Intermediate values (neutral) not shown. Asterisk indicates probability range for a chi square test of whether there is a relationship between discipline and column variables, chi Square =136.377 d.f=24 p<0.001 (2 cells have a count less than 5)
In summary those who express the lowest levels of job satisfaction were those who were PhD qualified, and those who were working in the performing and visual arts, and the humanities, arts, and social sciences disciplines. A basic provision such as a workspace and computer was associated with higher levels of job satisfaction, as was having access to financial support for research.

**External mobility**

The earlier data examining academic discipline showed some clear differences between casual academic labour markets for different discipline groups, based on age profile, job and career satisfaction levels, level of qualification, type of casual, and levels of frustrated academics. In relation to the age and gender profile it was suggested that the casual academic labour market for the ‘discipline’ was more aligned with the academic labour market for the ‘discipline’, than with the overall casual academic labour market. This issue is explored further to look at connections between casual academic labour markets and the external labour market, principally that of the professional opportunities associated with the discipline, as expressed by responses to a question about external mobility. Respondents were asked: ‘I could work in universities or in other sectors’ on a five point scale from strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, to strongly disagree. At a ‘discipline’ and university level the role of external mobility is indicated in the last column of Table 4.45 which showed the net mobility score (those agreeing and strongly agreeing, minus those disagreeing and strongly disagreeing, that they had mobility with other sectors) by university type and discipline. There were small, albeit significant differences between university types: Sandstone, Unitech and Newer Universities have net mobility scores around +77 to +78, compared to +81 for Gumtree Universities. But discipline differences were substantial, with net mobility ranging from +87 in law and related areas, to +65 in humanities and arts. The latter was a particularly problematic area, as amongst continuing academics the net external mobility score is also the lowest, at -27, in the humanities and arts: continuing academics in these disciplines find it hard to move out and, this in turn makes it hardest to get in for casual academics, who in turn, have the most limited external opportunities as well. Thus mobility differences differentially affect the opportunities available to casuals in various disciplines. External mobility tended to be lower in disciplines where a higher proportion of casuals held PhDs (r = -.87). Academic discipline appeared to
have the effect of causing the highest qualified groups to have the least mobility, reflecting the higher standards for entry to those academic disciplines, some of which have also been identified as ‘top-heavy’ (Bazeley et al. 1996; Bexley & Baik 2011). Mobility across academic discipline is extremely limited and where it does occur is likely to be within a similar category.

Table 4.45: Proportion of respondents studying for a PhD qualification, and external mobility score, by University type and discipline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PhD status, proportion of respondents:</th>
<th>Mobility:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With a PhD %</td>
<td>Currently studying for a PhD %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandstone</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumtree</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unitech</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newer</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall sample</strong></td>
<td><strong>16.2</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘Discipline’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phd status</th>
<th>With a PhD %</th>
<th>Currently studying for a PhD %</th>
<th>Mobility: Net external mobility score*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Law, Justice and Law Enforcement</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>87.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information, Computing and Communication Sciences</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture, urban environment, building, agriculture</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>82.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical and health sciences</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performing and Visual Arts</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>80.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological, Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering and Technology</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business, Economics and Tourism</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>71.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical, Chemical, Mathematical and Earth Sciences</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities and Arts</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011*Net external mobility score is the proportion agreeing with the statement ‘I have career mobility between universities and other sectors’, minus the proportion disagreeing.

Conclusion

The statistics show more about the casual academic workforce than has previously been known. The casual academic workforce differs from the continuing (non-casual) academic workforce in relation to age, gender, and PhD qualification levels. The casual
academic workforce is also very different to the wider casual workforce, with a much older age profile that is a function of the higher qualification levels of this cohort.

A majority of the casual academic sample are either currently studying for a PhD, or already hold their PhD; combined, these respondents form 54 per cent of the sample. The survey had some over-representation of casual academics working at Sandstone Universities, and this group was much less likely to have multiple places of employment which may explain their higher response rates. Unitech Universities had the highest proportions of their overall academic workforce employed on a casual basis, and the other three university groupings employed similar proportions, once the research component of the academic workforce was taken into account.

The sample was been explored for differences based on gender and on the type of university where the casual academic was employed. Gender differences were found for main sources of income, for working at more than one institution and for the type of casual work that was undertaken. Males and females reported very similar lengths of employment at their current university, but males were more likely to earn over $1000 per week. Males were slightly more likely to hold a PhD or to be studying for a PhD; females were more likely to have a postgraduate qualification. Furthermore, gender differences were apparent in access to a workspace, access to a student consultation space and access to financial support for research, with females less likely to get access.

When looking at the sample by the four university types, it appeared that different casual academic labour markets are in operation at the different types of universities. Sandstone Universities and Gumtree Universities had higher proportions of casual academics either with, or studying for, a PhD. Sandstone University casual academics were much less likely to hold casual academic positions at other universities and were more externally focused than those at any other university. Whilst similar proportions of casual academics at Gumtree Universities to those at Sandstone Universities were studying for a PhD, Gumtree Universities had the highest proportions of aspiring academics. Casual academics at Unitech Universities and Newer Universities included much higher proportions of ‘casuals by choice’ than the other universities and Newer Universities had much higher proportions of the retiring category. Differences were found between university types in relation to the provision of induction, professional development, attendance at course meetings, access to workspace and computer and access to financial support for research. Unitech Universities, where the highest
proportions of casuals were employed, provided lower levels of access to these supports, amenities and resources than other universities.

The analysis has built on and extended earlier typologies developed for casual academic staff, and applies the new typology in order to understand, and explore differences between casual academics. The majority of respondents, 56 per cent, aspired to an academic position. This is a key finding as it indicates that, for this group working as a casual academic is part of their preparation for what they hope will be a more secure academic position. PhD study provides training in research, but not teaching, yet at least as much of a teaching and research academic’s time will be spent teaching, as undertaking research. Thus what happens during this period of casual employment, particularly for those who were also undertaking PhD study, has an impact on both their future, and the future of the academic workforce. How casual academics were being supported, trained and developed in their disciplines is very important. The data shows that provision of basic job and career supports such as induction, and professional development was inconsistent and only a minority received payment for attendance at course meetings. A third of all respondents had not had any induction or professional development. These data suggest that despite the casual academics’ motivations, their employing universities were not necessarily treating them as a potential future academic workforce.

There were further important findings about the motivations and orientations of casual academic staff. Males and females were found to have quite similar motivations and orientations. Males were slightly more likely to be in the retiree category and females were slightly more likely to be aspiring academics. Males were slightly more likely to be studying for a qualification than females, and those males studying a PhD were also more likely to be aspiring academics than the females who were studying for PhD.

The development of the ‘frustrated academic’ variable was an important contribution that enabled gender, qualification and academic discipline differences to be explored to examine the gap between aspiration and expectation for those who form the most critical part of the casual academic workforce, the aspiring academics. Further analysis of the frustrated academic rate found that there was a tipping point beyond which the likelihood of more secure academic work was perceived to be a more distant possibility. The data suggests that respondents who had completed their PhD more than two years ago were extremely negative about their chances of finding a secure academic position.
This finding adds to the investigation of whether casual employment is a bridge to more secure employment or a trap.

The picture that emerges is of casual employment in universities not as the entry level to an internal labour market but as a secondary labour market that is segmented from the principal labour market and which, itself, comprises a substantial number of segments. There are many elements of casual academic employment that conform to that of a secondary or peripheral labour market, the work is hourly paid and insecure, provision of support and resources is uneven, and there is an absence of career path or career progression. Further, changes in the internal labour market, such as lack of mobility apparent in a number of disciplines, impact on those in the external labour market, restricting their opportunities even more. The existence of a large external, casual labour market may impact on the experience of work for those in the internal labour market. SLM theory offers the most valuable theoretical frame for understanding the casual academic workforce as it is dynamic and seeks to explain processes and interactions, by locating the organisation centrally with a key role for external forces.

Analysis by ‘discipline’ reveals a great deal about the diversity of the casual academic labour force and points to discipline as the basis for segmentation across the casual academic labour market. Academic ‘discipline’ is found to have a major impact on career satisfaction, job satisfaction and on the rate of ‘frustrated academics’, that is those for whom their aspiration to be an academic does not match their expectation. Respondents in the humanities and social sciences ‘disciplines’ in particular report high levels of dissatisfaction about careers and jobs, compared with those working in the medical and health sciences, and engineering and technology discipline. The ‘discipline’ variations by age, and by motivation and orientation to casual academic work, reveal the very diverse nature of the casual academic workforce. The large variations across ‘disciplines’ in casual academics’ orientations to casual work, and their levels of career and job satisfaction, suggest that there are labour market issues within the ‘disciplines’ which are also influencing the experience of work. Some ‘disciplines’ have strong interactions with the external labour market such that qualified individuals have a range of options, and may move in and out of the different labour markets. Disciplines which are also professions are good examples, such as engineering and law (Cowley 2010b). Other ‘disciplines’ with fewer professional links and less opportunities for academic positions, such as those in the humanities, arts and social sciences, were also where the highest levels of dissatisfaction and frustration were apparent.
These two important sets of findings regarding the impact of academic discipline, and the characteristics surrounding this new typology of casual academic staff provide important detail on the nature of labour supply for casual academic work. These findings suggest that the impacts of working as a casual academic are delineated by both demand side (discipline) and supply side (casual orientation) factors.

The implications of casualisation particularly for those who are aspiring to an academic position are significant. The absence of structured job and career support suggests that casual academic employment is not necessarily equipping these staff with the training and skills they need for continuing academic positions. Further the segmented nature of the casual academic labour force will impact on the university sector's capacity to recruit academic staff in the future, if and when forecasted staff shortages arise (Hugo 2008). These issues are elaborated in the case study Chapters, 6 and 7.
CHAPTER 5: THE CASE STUDY UNIVERSITIES

Introduction

The Australian university sector is very diverse, with some universities dating their history back to Australia’s pre-federation days, and others that are creations of the late 1980s. This chapter introduces the two case study universities, universities which represent that diversity, discussing their history and institutional background. Details are also provided about the policy and industrial settings at each university, and about the staff who were interviewed. The two case studies are referred to as ‘Old University’ and ‘New University’ reflecting their histories, and in order to protect their identity. Old University traces its history back to pre-federation Australia and New University is a product of the Dawkins’ reforms of the late 1980s. These two universities in many ways represent the two sides of Australia’s university sector, traditional, well resourced and high status, contrasted with adaptable, embedded in location and community, but without the tradition and endowment of the Sandstone Universities.

The WCAU survey data discussed in Chapter 4 has revealed a range of differences between the Sandstone Universities, the category to which Old University belongs, and the Newer Universities. Differences were found in the age, and motivation and orientation profile of the casual academic workforce in each of the university types, as well as in the level of resources and support provided. However there were similarities too. It is clear that all universities, whether resource and tradition rich or not, rely heavily on casual academic staff to deliver much of their undergraduate teaching. Indeed the proportions of academic staff employed casually at the Sandstone Universities were very similar to the proportion employed casually at the Newer Universities once the research only academic staff numbers were taken into account.

For each of the case studies the categorisation of each university is described, followed by data on the nature of the casual academic workforce at each of the universities. Detail of the policies and procedures of each of the universities, as they relate to the employment of casual academic staff, is discussed by way of context. Information is provided about the interviewees from each university; the casual academic staff, the academic staff, and the senior managers.

Three chapters are devoted to the discussion of the case studies. In the following two chapters, Chapter 6 focuses the interviews with the casual academics, and Chapter 7 the
interviews with senior managers, and academics who manage casual academic staff, referred to as ‘academic managers’.

The Sandstone University category

Old University is from the category of universities referred to as the Sandstone Universities (Marginson & Considine 2000, pp. 189-190). The category comprises nine universities; eight which belong to the Group of Eight Universities, a coalition of eight major research intensive universities (Go8 2012a). The ninth is the University of Tasmania, founded in 1890. The Sandstone Universities belong to the most distinctive and most easily identified category of Australian universities. All of the Sandstone Universities are capital city based institutions, and are less likely than other universities to be multi-campus. As long established institutions, the Sandstone Universities have many ‘inherited advantages’ such as established reputation, established wealth and influential alumni (Marginson & Considine 2000, p. 191). Sandstone Universities are far less dependent on government funding than other university categories, are more likely to appear in international ranking lists, and tend to dominate National Competitive Grant funding schemes (Marginson & Considine 2000, p. 191). In 2010, for example, 69 per cent of external research income was awarded to Group of Eight Universities (comprising eight out of the nine Sandstone Universities) and 74 per cent of competitive grant income (Go8 2012b). Each of the Sandstone Universities has a medical school that in turn generates large amounts of research funding, as well as prestige. The high status associated with Sandstone Universities means that these universities do not have to market themselves as much as other universities, nor do they necessarily have to provide high quality teaching in order to attract students (Marginson & Considine 2000, p. 192). Instead, able students, high levels of research activity, and academics with strong reputations, combine to create a ‘mutually reinforcing definition of value’ (Marginson & Considine 2000, p. 193).

The Newer University category

This category of university is described by Marginson and Considine (2000, p. 201) as a ‘heterogenous group of post-1986 universities developed out of merger or expansion amongst Colleges of Adult Education’ (CAE). There are 14 universities in the category, and it is the most diverse group of universities, although sharing in common their late formation date, typically smaller staff profile, generally lower attainment of research
funding, and less of a research focus than other university categories. A number of Newer Universities are dual-sector universities, which means they also offer vocational education, through technical and further education (TAFE). Many of these, such as the University of Ballarat, and Charles Darwin University also service diverse regional communities. Universities in the Newer University category have a higher than sector average dependence on international student income as a revenue source (de Zilwa 2005).

Unlike the older, more established universities, very few Newer Universities have a medical school, which means that for this group of universities the staffing profile is quite different, with much lower proportions of research focused academic staff. Newer Universities tend to employ more females academic staff due to the higher focus afforded to the large student based disciplines of education, nursing and business, as well as the origins of these universities. Indeed, Castleman (1995) argues that the boost in the numbers of females academics across the sector since the 1990s is in large measure due to the amalgamations and Newer University formations of the post 1988 period, as these former colleges were major employers of women academics.

In describing the enterprise university, Marginson and Considine (2000, p. 10) argue that one of the significant changes in the university sector over the period since the late 1980s is the decline in the importance of academic discipline. This is particularly the case, they argue, for the Newer Universities where the various academic cultures have not had the time to become properly established. This is in strong contrast to the Sandstone Universities where they argue discipline loyalty is strongly entrenched. As a result, Marginson and Considine (2000, p. 10) contend that academics in Newer Universities tend to be more aligned to their institution than their discipline.

**Background workforce size – Old University and New University**

Table 5.1 below uses Department of Industry Innovation, Science, Research, Technology and Education (DIISRTE) data to categorise universities as either ‘small’, ‘medium’, or ‘large’ based on the size of the full-time and fractional full-time workforce. This data includes all continuing and fixed-term academic and general/professional staff, but does not include casual staff (either academic or general). The table is used only as a guide by which to describe the workforce size of the two case study universities for the purposes of background and context. Old University is a large employer, as are most of the universities in the Sandstone University category.
New University is a medium sized employer. Universities classified as medium sized employers have a workforce of on average 2300 staff. Most universities in the Newer University category tend to be small, with less than 1500 staff.

Table 5.1 Full-time and fractional full-time university workforce by size and type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University size</th>
<th>No. Of universities</th>
<th>Average size of workforce</th>
<th>Sandstone universities in this category</th>
<th>Newer universities in this category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small – up to 1500 staff</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>981</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium – between 1501-3000 staff</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2334</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large – greater than 3001 staff</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5244</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Table 2.6 Higher Education Staff Statistics 2012, DIISTRE

Casual academic staff data – Old University

The WCAU casual academic staff survey was distributed to casual academic staff at Old University during semester 2 of 2011. The response rate at Old University was 20 per cent, with 451 responses received. The survey results provide useful background to the characteristics of the casual academic workforce at Old University, but care needs to be taken in generalising these results to the whole population of casual academic staff at Old University.

The sample from Old University comprised 66 per cent females, 34 per cent males. Overall 19 per cent of respondents reported that they held a PhD which is slightly higher than the rate for the total survey response. Females were more likely than males to hold a PhD: 20 per cent of the females who responded, and 16 per cent of the males who responded, held a PhD. Of those who had worked on a casual basis during 2011, the proportion that held a PhD was even higher at 24 per cent. Across the Old University respondents, 55 per cent of respondents were studying for a qualification and the median years employed as a casual was 3 years. Respondents from Old University were more reliant than those from the overall sample of respondents on their casual income, with 44 per cent reporting that it was their main source of income (compared to 36 per cent of the overall sample). The discipline mix was weighted towards those from the social sciences, 50 per cent came from humanities and the arts, economics, and education, and 18 per cent from the sciences including medical and health sciences. Old
University was unable to provide any data about the population of casual academic staff other than the size, and advised that such data was not able to be collected due to limitations with central payroll and IT systems.

**Casual academic staff data – New University**

New University casual academic staff had a 13 per cent response rate to the 2011 WCAU survey, which was the same as the overall survey response rate. In addition to the survey data, New University was also able to provide data from its own payroll with details of casual academic staff employed during semester 1 and semester 2 of 2011. That data provided information about gender, Faculty and school of employment, average hours paid for the fortnight, and whether the casual earned the PhD rate. The data was discussed in Chapter 3 and showed that approximately 60 per cent of all casual academics who worked during 2011 were females and that only seven percent of all those casual academics were paid at the PhD rate. The average hours paid per fortnight (not necessarily the same as hours worked) was 17.

Table 5.2 below examines the data in greater detail by looking at the three generalised faculties and the proportions of the casual academic workforce in each. The payroll data analysis revealed that females comprised 63 per cent of all casual academics in the Faculty with the largest casual academic numbers, represented in the ‘Social Science’ Faculty. Females also comprised a high proportion of the casual academic workforce in the ‘Science’ Faculty, although this Faculty employed a much lower proportion (28 per cent) of all casual academic staff.

**Table 5.2: Faculties’ (generalised) proportions of casual staff and levels of female casual employment – New University**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Faculty – ‘Science’ (%)</th>
<th>Faculty – ‘Business’ (%)</th>
<th>Faculty – ‘Social science’ (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of total casual staff workforce*</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of faculty casual workforce who are female</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>63.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*sums to 95 per cent due to some casual academics working in non-faculty areas

**Source: New University payroll data for semester 1 and 2, 2011**

Further analysis revealed that a much higher proportion of male casual academics (ten per cent) were paid at PhD rate compared to females casual academics (five per cent). Overall, these data suggest that New University had a slightly higher rate of casual academic staff employment than the average university in the Newer University
category, when looking at the 2011 WCAU results referred to in Chapter 4. The survey results show the Newer University category had an average of 44 per cent of academics employed on a casual basis. New University’s own data revealed a casual academic density of 49 per cent, as shown in Table 3.3 in Chapter 3.

Data from the 2011 WCAU survey for New University showed that 67 per cent of respondents were females, slightly higher than that suggested by New University’s payroll data. The survey found that 19 per cent of male respondents from Newer Universities, and 11 per cent of female respondents held a PhD, much higher than that indicated by the university’s payroll data, suggesting that casual academics with a PhD may be over-represented in the New University survey sample. Two thirds of the Newer University WCAU survey sample was studying for a qualification, and the median age was the same as that of the overall sample, which was 35 years.

**Policy and industrial provisions**

As part of each case study a range of relevant staff policies and the relevant staff collective agreement were examined. Combined, and in conjunction with legal minimum standards, these set the conditions of employment for casual academic staff. Provisions that are in collective agreements are different from those in policy in two key ways. Under the Commonwealth *Fair Work Act 2009* collective agreement provisions carry the weight of law and are technically enforceable through the courts. Collective agreements are reached through collective bargaining between the university and the staff union/s. Matters contained in university policy on the other hand are subject to change, and not enforceable unless referred to in collective agreements. Policy development and policy changes may involve staff consultation, but ultimately are shaped by managerial discretion and prerogative. For staff, collective agreement provisions, due to the involvement of unions and due to the capacity for enforcement, have more importance than policy provisions, although some policies and procedures are enshrined in collective agreements.

**Policies and industrial provisions for casual academic staff**

*Old University*

At Old University the policy and collective agreement provisions for casual academic staff are essentially framework provisions that set minimum obligations, and provided guidance to faculties and Schools employing casual academic staff. The provisions
cover four main areas. The first, fulfilment of legal obligations including the provision of a contract of employment, payment periods and the application of statutory provisions such as long service leave. The second covers access to various resources and facilities, detailed in both the collective agreement and in policy, and access to induction, covered in policy only. The third area is an aspirational commitment in the collective agreement to reduce the size of the casual academic workforce. The fourth area deals with performance management and states that where performance is deemed to be of a high standard the staff member may be considered for future additional work where available, and that where performance is deemed to be poor employment may be terminated.

Old University policies provide for casual academic staff to receive induction. The policy specifies that at a minimum, induction should include occupational health and safety induction, information about workplace discrimination and harassment rights and responsibilities, and other relevant local applicable policies. The casual staff member’s supervisor is responsible for the provision of induction. Access to facilities and resources was provided in both policy and industrial arrangements, and these set out that Departments should use their ‘best endeavours’ to maintain the following during and, for at least 3 months after the end of the contract: library cards, email accounts, and university network and intranet access. In addition ‘best endeavours’ are to be used to provide all casual teaching staff, other than those working on only an occasional basis, with; telephone access, computer access, an email account, a work desk, and a designated space for student consultations.

The collective agreement states that casual academic staff may apply for internal positions and internal funding opportunities including for grants and professional development funds, unless stated otherwise. Further, the collective agreement in operation at the time of the study pledged that Old University would use its ‘best endeavours’ to reduce the casual academic staff workforce employed by the university by one per cent each year during the life of the agreement. No further obligations were placed in relation to measurement of current casual staffing levels or mechanisms for ensuring compliance with this provision. The fact that Old University was unable to provide data for their own casual academic workforce suggests that this provision may not have been taken seriously.

Old University used policy to create a distinction between casual academic employees engaged over an anticipated timeframe, and other casual employees, such as those with
a one-off engagement such as a guest lecture. For those casual academic employees engaged over an anticipated timeframe (typically a semester) payment may be averaged over the pay periods within the semester or paid as a lump sum. The amount paid is based upon the casual hourly rates specified in the relevant collective agreement. The contract, whilst described as ‘sessional’, retains its casual employment character as sick leave and annual leave do not apply as they would if it were a fixed-term contract of employment. Arrangements such as these remain largely untested in the courts. Casual academic staff may have rights under common law to pursue alleged breaches, particularly if such a contract were to be offered and then withdrawn (Briar & Junor 2012:9). The practical application of these provisions is discussed more in Chapters 6 and 7. However, it is worth noting here that during the case study interviews with casual academic staff, and senior managers at Old University, some variation was uncovered in relation to the ‘going rate’ for a ‘sessional’ contract, depending on the Faculty within which the contract was being offered, and the casual academic who was being employed.

Broadly, the policy and collective agreement provisions at Old University, combined, provided at best a minimum framework. In particular, the use of the term ‘best endeavours’ in relation to the provision of facilities and resources means that provisions would be extremely difficult to enforce. Instead, provisions allow for some variation in the resource capacity between faculties and Schools/Departments, and did not mandate terms of employment. The only mandatory conditions of employment for casual academic staff were those backed up by statute, such as payment of wages and long service leave, and the casual rates of pay, as set out in the collective agreement.

Interviews with academic staff and casual academic staff, detailed in the following two chapters reveal that whilst the policy and collective agreement provisions did provide minimum standards, which were commonly but not universally observed, in some areas minimum provisions were exceeded. It appears that some policy provisions are not well advertised or understood. For example, no evidence was found for casual academic staff being aware of, or applying for, internal funds for grants or professional development. Faculty differences were apparent, with well-resourced faculties far more likely to provide detailed induction and professional development than less well resourced faculties. None of the casual academic staff interviewed reported having issues with payment of wages, nor were concerns reported about basic facilities such as access to email and library cards. Provision of office space, space to meet students and
access to resources such as photocopying was common, although not universal, amongst the interviewees, and again Faculty differences were apparent.

New University

At New University the relevant collective agreement, relevant staff policies, casual academic staff statistics, and a report produced in-house during 2008 reviewing the use of casual staff, were analysed for the purposes of the case study. The structure of New University is characterised by a small number of large multi-disciplinary Faculties headed by Executive Deans. The consequence of this Faculty structure for the employment of casual academic staff is that the type and usage of these staff varies quite markedly within a Faculty, providing challenges for the application of policy and standardised procedures for casual academics.

Analysis of the New University collective agreement and relevant policies revealed that there is an attempt to provide a centralised approach to the support and management of casual academic staff, with a number of important provisions mandated in the collective agreement. These include the casual academic rates of pay, access to ‘adequate and appropriate’ professional development opportunities for casual academic staff, and ‘wherever possible’ access to alternative employment opportunities supported by the internal advertising of academic level A (entry level academic) position vacancies.

These provisions are backed up in a more extensive suite of policies relating to recruitment and conditions of employment. New University’s policy on recruitment and selection applies to all staff, including casual academic staff. The policy specifies that casual academic appointments can be made without advertising, contracts should be approved before the casual commenced work, and that applicants should receive induction in accordance with the staff induction policy. Documentation associated with the casual appointment is to be retained locally and central administration was required to keep records relating to: the casual contract, eligibility to work in Australia, evidence of qualifications and other required checks, and all time sheets submitted by casual academic employees. The recruitment policy also specified that academic level A positions should be advertised initially within the university where suitably qualified casual academic staff are employed on a regular basis.

Policies in relation to the employment conditions of casual staff include: employment contracts and payment, induction and professional development, use of email,
occupational health and safety (OHS), discrimination and harassment, and the staff code of conduct. The professional development policy require that all new staff, including casual staff, are informed about the staff code of conduct, OHS policies, and the policy on discrimination and harassment, as part of their induction and orientation. The professional development policy states that professional development should be funded by the cost centre within which the casual staff member works.

The contents of a 2008 report produced internally by the university to examine casual (academic and general) staff use and issues were examined. The report describes the results of a survey and focus groups of casual staff conducted internally during that year, and made a series of recommendations. The recommendations were extensive and covered career and professional support, employment and administrative support, reward and recognition for casual staff, and communication and consultation. The central theme of the report was that the university should take a ‘whole of university’ approach to its employment of casual academic staff. The report was an indication that the university had endeavoured to take a centralised approach to the management and support of casual academic staff. The report was in large measure, in response to an unfavourable report by the Australian University Quality Agency (AUQA). The AUQA report recommended that the university conduct a review of the employment of casual staff and develop a strategy for the management and support of those staff (AUQA 2006, p. 7).

In contrast with Old University’s minimum framework provisions, New University offered on paper a somewhat more prescriptive set of benefits for casual academic staff, mandating professional development and endeavouring to address the issue of transition to more secure academic employment via internal advertisement of level A positions. These provisions suggested that at least centrally the university had attempted to integrate casual academic staff within the policy framework, and had established some standards for employment. The practical effect of these policy and collective agreement provisions are examined in more detail in the next two chapters, and the interaction between policy and practice, and the implications of devolved decision making are discussed and examined. As Rubery and Wilkinson (1994, p. 27) warn, researchers ‘must not make the assumption that these descriptions of employment policy necessarily fit actual practice’.
The interviewees

Casual academic staff: Old University

In total twelve casual academics from Old University were interviewed. As discussed in Chapter 3, all Old University interviewees responded to an email request for participants sent by the university. The interviewees comprised four males and eight female, spanning half of the Faculties at Old University, predominantly in the non-sciences. Of the twelve interviewees, eight held their PhD, two were very close to completing PhDs, and two held masters qualifications with one planning to start a PhD in the near future. Half of those interviewed worked exclusively at Old University during the semester of interview and the other half worked at other universities at the same time. One interviewee worked at three other universities as well as Old University. Three were in their 30s, three in their 40s and three were in their 50s. Two interviewees were under 30, and one was over 60. Three of the women had combined their casual academic work, and in the case of two, their PhD studies as well, with child bearing and care of very young children, and one of the men was supporting a partner and new baby with his casual work. Seven of those interviewed were actively searching for a full-time academic position and four interviewees expressed a preference for part-time continuing academic work. Of the latter, two expressed a preference for part-time work in the university sector, in combination with part-time work in other sectors. Only one interviewee expressed a preference for casual work. In terms of the typology developed in Chapter 2, there were nine ‘aspiring academics’, one casual by ‘choice’, and two who expressed a preference for a combination of university and externally based work. These preferences are summarised in Table 5.3. This last category was not included in the typology developed in Chapter 2, but had been suggested by other studies, such as that by Gappa and Leslie (1993:60) who referred to the group as ‘freelancers’. In both cases the interviewees were slightly more focussed on their external positions so would in terms of the typology be classified as ‘externally focussed’.

The longest period of casual employment reported by an interviewee was twelve years, another had worked nine years, another seven years and three had been casual for six years. In each of these cases the casual employment reflected time spent working in conjunction with PhD study and completion, and not all of the employment was at Old University. Four of the interviewees had been casual for two years or less. The average hours worked varied greatly; five worked equivalent to or greater than a full-time load.
(broadly defined as eight to ten hours a week teaching at Old University), two combined Research Assistant work with their teaching, four had a part-time (tutoring) teaching load, and one had concluded a semester’s tutoring at the time of interview and was very unsure about the next appointment.

The gender breakdown of the group was the same as that reflected by the survey responses but the group had a much higher rate of PhD qualifications than the survey respondents, possibly reflecting an element of self selection amongst interviewees. Table 5.3 below describes the interviewees by their qualification and study status and by their motivations for and orientations to casual academic work in accordance with the typology developed in Chapter 2 and elaborated in Chapter 4. Each interviewee was asked whether they would take a part-time or full-time (continuing or fixed-term) academic position if it were offered, and what their career plans were in relation to their casual academic work.

Table 5.3: Casual academic interviewees at Old University by qualification study status and self-described status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD qualified</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD candidate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduate qualification only</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring academic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring to external position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual by choice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefers a mix of university and external work – focus more on ‘external’</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Casual academic staff: New University

Ten casual academic staff were interviewed at New University and their characteristics are summarised in Table 5.4 below. The interviewees were mainly longer-term casuals, with half of the sample having worked for more than six years in a casual academic role at New University. Four of those interviewed either worked in other universities simultaneously, or at some time in the past. One interviewee was currently working at two other institutions as well as New University and had at one point worked at four different institutions during a semester. Six of the interviewees were women, which
reflected both the casual academic gender profile of New University described in Table 5.2 and the wider casual academic workforce. Four of those interviewed were either very close to or over 65 years of age, five were between 30-50, and only one younger than 30 years old. The age profile reflected that of the survey results which show that New Universities have a higher proportion of ‘retirees’, that is, those in the 60+ age category, than the other university types. Only one casual in the sample held a PhD and this reflected New University’s internal statistics which showed that only seven per cent of their casual academic workforce was paid at the PhD rate. Five of the sample were current PhD candidates, and another was undertaking post-graduate study. Of the six interviewees currently undertaking post-graduate study, five were undertaking their studies at New University.

The sample is categorised by their own descriptions of their motivations for working as a casual and their career aspirations in accordance with the typology. Specifically, each interviewee was asked whether they would take a part-time or full-time academic position (continuing or fixed-term) if it was offered, and what their career plans were in relation to their casual academic work. Only one of the ten New University casual academic interviewees stated that she preferred casual work and would not be interested in a continuing part-time or full-time position. This interviewee was also planning to retire within the next few years. Of the five PhD candidates, all stated that their aim was to secure a continuing academic position in the future, and all expressed a preference for more secure part-time work in relation to their current situation, as did the interviewee who was a post-graduate student. Three of the sample had industry or academic backgrounds, and whilst those in this group were over 60 years of age, each expressed a preference for more secure part-time work, and a desire to continue working for as long as they were able. Interestingly none of the three defined themselves, or thought of themselves as belonging to a ‘retiree’ category, despite all being at or beyond traditional retirement age. For each the motivation to secure a more permanent position related as much if not more to their desire to improve their teaching performance and availability for students, as it did to a desire for greater employment security. These issues are explored further in the next chapter.
Table 5.4: Casual academic interviewees at New University by qualification, study status and self described status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD qualified</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD candidate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduate qualification only</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduate student</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring academic – full-time</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring academic – part-time/ ‘retiree’</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring to external position</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual by choice</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_Casual academic interviewees and the 2011 WCAU survey_

Table 5.5 compares the profile of the casual interviewees in each of the case study universities against the profile of casual academic respondents for their corresponding university type to see how each sample compares. The table compares the qualifications and study status of interviewees and the university type sample, and the motivations and orientations of the interviewees and the university type sample. The Old University interviewees are over-represented with PhD qualified casual academics, and the New University interviewees are over-represented with PhD candidate interviewees. Aspiring academics are over-represented in both samples, reflecting a self-selection amongst interviewees who were possibly more interested and aware of the particular issues.
Table 5.5: Case study interviewees and WCAU survey sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>New University interviewees</th>
<th>Newer University WCAU</th>
<th>Old University interviewees</th>
<th>Sandstone University WCAU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD qualified</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>67.0</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD candidate</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduate qualification</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduate student (not PhD)</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring academic – full-time</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>75.0</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring academic – part-time</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspiring to external position</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual by choice</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retiree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

**The academic managers: Old University**

Six academic staff were interviewed at Old University. The academics spanned three Faculties and were all female. Five of the group were mid or late career academics, one was preparing to retire in the next coming year, and four held PhD qualifications. One of the interviewees was an early career academic and a PhD candidate, and held a continuing academic position that had wide ranging responsibility for the management and supervision of casual tutors. Of the five mid to late career academics, four had had long periods of employment at Old University, one had spent her entire working career (over 40 years) at Old University and the others had periods of service ranging from 10 to 20 years. One of the academics was new to Old University, and had previously worked in industry, completing her PhD mid career. This interviewee, along with another two interviewees, had experience of working as a casual academic. The other three had followed traditional linear academic career paths, with full-time continuing academic employment immediately following completion of their PhD. All of the interviewees were responsible for the management of a range of casual staff and had held this responsibility for some period of time. Four interviewees managed two or three casual academic staff, and in the case of two interviewees, they were responsible for up to 20 casual staff.

**The academic managers: New University**

A total of eight academic staff, three males and five females, were interviewed at New University. Six of the eight were directly responsible for the management of casual
academic staff as part of their academic position, and they had responsibilities ranging from 2 up to 20 casual academic staff. One of the academics held a teaching and learning role, with previous responsibility for policy development for casual academic staff, and another held administrative responsibility for a much larger group of casual staff, but no management role. All of the academics could be described as either early or mid career, and all had worked for varying periods of time as casual academics before securing their current continuing position. Three of the eight were studying for a PhD, the other five held their PhD.

Table 5.6: Profile of academic interviewees, New University and Old University

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic profile</th>
<th>Old University</th>
<th>New University</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early career</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid career</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late career</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous work as casual academic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD qualified</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviews with academic managers at both universities explored each academic’s personal career path and career plans, and their experience of casual academic employment including their own transition to more secure employment. The interviews mainly concentrated on issues around the management of their casual staff, what support they received in this role, how they recruited casual staff, how much time was spent in the management role and how much control and discretion they had. The academic managers employed a range of strategies and held a variety of views about the way the task of managing casuals fitted with their perceptions of their role as an academic. These views and strategies were often developed as a result of their own experiences, and were mediated by the levels of support around them and the cultures of their particular work areas or disciplines. Levels of awareness of the policy and industrial provisions for casual staff were generally very low, particularly amongst academics at New University, and the academics rarely sought support or advice from their central university human resource divisions in relation to these matters. Advice, when it was sought out, was typically sought from local administration staff or from department heads.
Senior Managers

Senior managers were defined as those at head of school or above, or in senior administrative roles. The interviews with senior managers explored their own career paths, perceived changes in the university, their involvement and understanding of issues of casualisation including teaching quality issues, understandings about budgets and the impact budgets had on staffing profiles, issues around management of casual staff, the challenges they perceived for the university, and issues around workforce strategies and workforce renewal.

Senior managers: Old University

Only two senior managers volunteered to be interviewed at Old University despite a series of email requests by the university to targeted Faculties over a period of six months. One manager held a senior Faculty based position, and was new to Old University having spent her academic career at another university. The other interviewee had a senior administrative role. Both were women aged in their 50s and both had experience of working outside the university sector as well as between 15-20 years experience working within universities, including for relatively short periods of time (less than five years) at Old University. The senior academic manager held a PhD, and the senior manager who was a senior administrator held a Masters qualification.

Senior managers: New University

A total of seven senior managers were interviewed at New University, five women and two men. Six were at head of school level or higher, and one interviewee was a senior administrator from central administration. All were aged 45 or over, with two in the 60-65 age group category. Three of the senior managers were career academics who had spent their entire career at New University and its predecessor institutions. The other three were self described ‘late career’ academics who had spent time working in other industries, undertaken their PhD later in life, whilst working in an academic position, and had risen quickly into academic management. All six of the academic senior managers held PhDs.

Summary

The chapter has provided background for the two case study universities. In the next two chapters the interviews with casual academics staff, academic managers and senior
managers is discussed. The two case studies provide the means for examining the research questions about the implications of casual academic employment for casual academic staff, academic staff managing casual staff and university management. The case studies, in conjunction with the data from the WCAU survey results for casual academic staff, provide a rich source of data for exploring the research questions.

The discussion in this chapter highlighted the differences between the two case study universities. Old University, as a well established, well resourced, research intensive university had a highly qualified casual academic workforce, and this was reflected in the levels of PhD qualified interviewees, and the high proportions of aspiring academics. Old University has an active post-graduate student population from which to draw casual academic staff. New University interviewees on the other hand were at different career stages and a much lower proportions of the New University category of universities were either PhD qualified or studying for a PhD. New University does not have the resource or prestige of Old University, and has a very different student cohort. In 2010 over 20 per cent of students at New University came from low socio-economic (SES) backgrounds (New University 2010). This was consistent with the particular location and mission of the university. By contrast, Old University set a target of achieving nine per cent of students from low SES backgrounds by 2010 (Old University 2010, p. 29). The target set for the overall sector by the Bradley report was 20 per cent of low SES background students by 2020 (Bradley et al. 2008, p. xvii). These two factors; the nature of the labour supply for casual academic work, and the particular student demographic, were the sharpest points of differences between the case study universities.
CHAPTER 6: WORKING AS A CASUAL ACADEMIC – THE CASE STUDIES

We are not included in Christmas parties. We are not included in staff meetings. We are not invited to give presentations on our research and we are not included in joint research projects. I have been here 6 years. I am not a staff member (Annie, Old University, October 2011).

Introduction

This chapter investigates the implications of casual academic employment for casual academic staff through analysis of semi-structured interviews with 22 casual academics. In Chapter 2 the literature on the casualisation of academic employment in Australia revealed the key themes of insecurity, poor wages, conditions and support, invisibility, lack of career path, and gender dimensions, as characteristics of the casual academic working experience. The literature has been consistent in reporting these issues and concerns over a 20 year period, describing characteristics of jobs associated with of a secondary labour market. The quote from Annie, above, describes how the exclusion from social and collegial activities impacted upon her feelings of belonging, despite her lengthy period of employment.

This chapter discusses the interviews conducted with casual academics at the two case study universities. The interviewees comprised six women and four men at New University and eight women and four men at Old University. The interviewees’ ages, career aspirations and qualification levels were summarised in Chapter 5, and the methodology is discussed in Chapter 3. The interviews explored career aspirations, experiences of work, perception of career opportunities, job satisfaction, and future plans. The diverse backgrounds of the 22 interviewees, and the semi-structured nature of the interviews, allowed a range of material to be canvassed and interviewees were given scope to tell their own stories. In order to protect identity, pseudonyms are assigned to each of the interviewees. The discipline backgrounds of respondents, and other potentially identifying features, are not disclosed for the same reason.

The age and career stage diversity amongst those who volunteered to be interviewed reflected the diversity of the casual academic workforce, highlighted in Chapter 4. PhD graduates were over-represented amongst interviewees, with nine of the 22 interviews PhD qualified, compared to the WCAU survey data which found that 16 per cent of the sample was PhD qualified. Five interviewees were over 60 years of age, and this group
was over-represented against the survey profile of nine per cent of the sample being 60 years or older. Women were also slightly over-represented amongst the interviewees. Only three interviewees, all aged between 20 and 30, were following what could be described as a linear career path, undertaking PhD study after completing undergraduate and some post-graduate study. Five interviewees were ‘mid-life PhDs’ leaving behind other careers to pursue their research interests and in the case of one, an academic career. A survey of Australian PhD students conducted in 2010 found that the average age of PhD commencement was 33, and 30 per cent of PhD candidates were aged 40 and over (Edwards, Bexley & Richardson 2010 p, 20). This suggests that the sample has an older age profile than the casual academic workforce, and in particular that those aged over 60 are over-represented. In all, the self-selected nature of the interviewees means that care needs to be taken in generalising across the wider population of casual academics. The purpose of the interview data is to explore the lived experience of casual academic work using the perspectives of these interviewees.

The interviewees from Old University were much more likely to be PhD graduates, and this along with the differing resource levels within and between each university, appeared to have the biggest impact on the experience of casual work, both positively and negatively. Within and across the universities, differences were revealed in relation to conditions of employment, including, critically, access to induction and professional development. In the well resourced Faculties and Departments of Old University more support was offered to casual academic staff. By contrast, interviewees who worked in the less well resourced Faculties of Old University, and at New University, had much less access to induction, professional development and career support.

The chapter examines a range of themes that through using the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2 emerge from the interview data as the outcomes of casual academic employment for casual academic staff. The themes are as follows:

- Institutional invisibility
  - recruitment, induction and professional development;
  - resources and facilities;
- Job quality – pay and conditions
- Career paths and building a career:
  - Progression, support, and career development;
- Teaching – feedback, quality assurance;
- Job satisfaction;

- The impact of job insecurity: Finances careers and ambitions;
- Frustrated academics: The transition to more secure academic employment and the ‘tipping point’;
- Gendered precariousness.

**Institutional invisibility**

In the literature institutional invisibility was apparent in the continuing reporting of; poor data collection and low awareness of issues by universities, ad-hoc recruitment, and lack of access for casual academic staff to facilities, training and collegial support. These issues were explored in the interviews with casual academic staff and are set within the findings of the quantitative data discussed in Chapter 4.

**Recruitment, induction and professional development**

Word of mouth, it’s how I’ve got all my work. I haven’t applied for any of these jobs (Jane, Old University, November 2011).

The literature reports that recruitment into a casual academic position is often ad-hoc, ‘you will do’ (Churchman 2005), reflecting the ‘just in time’ nature of casual academic employment, matching the ebbs and flows of student demand, and changing course provision. The WCAU survey findings confirmed that informal recruitment practices were very much the norm and the vast majority of survey respondents reported that they had obtained their positions through personal contacts. This suggests that casual academics are ‘sponsored’ into their employment and must cultivate a network of contacts in order to maintain their casual positions. This informal start to employment influences the invisible element of much of the work of casual academic staff.

The interviews with casual academics provided further evidence about the ad-hoc, informal nature of recruitment, and showed how this impacted on other aspects of employment. Jane, quoted above, reported the common experience that all of her casual academic work was through ‘word of mouth’. For all bar one interviewee, recruitment was informal, usually via a thesis supervisor, or a former colleague, and occurred as a result of being asked, or making a request for casual academic employment. The
exception, an interviewee from Old University, had answered an on-line advertisement for her casual tutoring position, and made a formal application.

The flow on effect of informal entry to employment appeared to be that structured support such as induction and professional development was often absent, reinforcing institutional invisibility. At New University, despite the existence of policies and industrial provisions described in Chapter 5, mandating induction for casual academic staff, the experience of induction or support upon commencement of employment was uncommon. Only two interviewees reported having undertaken some induction and other training, and for one this was only as a result of a concurrent general staff position that he held. Another received induction after three years in her casual role. As a result, the experience of ‘winging it’ was common: ‘you are thrown in at the deep end and don’t have a clue what you will teach. That’s the norm really. Mostly I can wing it, but I don’t think students get much of a fair go’ (Rod, New University, September 2011).

Two interviewees from New University had taken up casual employment soon after arriving from overseas, bringing with them international teaching experience. For these two, in particular, the informal start was particularly jarring: ‘I mean, I relied on my own experience, no one really tells you anything you just get thrown in. There is no handbook, everything is trial by learning. In that sense it’s hard.’ (Jackie, New University, October 2011).

On the other hand, despite the minimal policy framework for casual academic staff employment conditions, there appeared to be an informal hierarchy to the progression of casual academic work at Old University, accompanied by some degree of support at least in the early stages. Undertaking induction was a common, but by no means universal experience amongst those interviewed from Old University. Seven interviewees had progressed from tutoring to take on lecturing work, and sometimes course coordination, and most did so in combination with tutoring work. A number of interviewees explained that it was common practice at Old University to only allow new tutors one or two tutorials in their first appointment and this generally accompanied a standardised induction program which casual staff were paid to attend.

Those who had undertaken induction offered a variety of views on its usefulness. Rose found the induction useful but the timing, before she actually started teaching, meant the experience was not optimised. Kim, arriving as an outsider to the university sector, and to university teaching, found the induction process very helpful: ‘They did a workshop for a half day which was really good. Then we had a subject meeting at the beginning of
semester, and it’s pretty much up to you from there.’ (Kim, Old University, November 2011).

Those who worked in casual lecturing or course coordinating positions found there was little support for these more challenging roles. Derek took on a course coordination role:

The learning curve was both steep and independent. I had to discover it for myself, and the people I went to for help were very helpful and giving of their time, but they had to be found, sought and approached (Derek, Old University, November 2011).

Similarly, Viv, a casual academic at Old University, felt that the induction did not cover much of the information that she would have found useful, such as how to navigate the various administrative requirements associated with casual teaching work. To compensate, she took it upon herself to do further professional development by taking internal training offered by another centre within the university, which was free, but she did it in her own time.

The implications of informal recruitment appear to have consequences for many interviewees, particularly at New University, who did not receive adequate structured induction or professional support. Induction was more common at Old University, but there were Faculty and Departmental differences in terms of the levels of support and training offered. Well resourced Departments offered much more structured induction and support, particularly for those in tutoring roles. However, Old University interviewees were much more likely to be undertaking lecturing and course coordination work where they reported that their associated training and support needs were more intense, and much less likely to be met. New University interviewees, despite policy to the contrary, consistently reported a lack of induction or support.

**Resources and facilities**

I do all my printing at home. The odd times I have done it here I have felt like I have leprosy. I don’t have a great printer, $15 every time I top it up. I probably spend $100 on that sort of stuff, maybe more (Viv, Old University, November 2011).

The literature has consistently raised issues about access to resources for casual academic staff (eg. Brown et al. 2010). The WCAU survey findings, reported in
Chapter 4, indicated that access varied depending on the type of university where the casual was employed. Similarly in the interviews, university differences emerged in relation to access to resources such as office and computer space, access to printers, rooms and other facilities. These differences were apparent within the universities as well, with differences revealed between faculties and Departments. The differences impacted heavily on casuals’ capacity to perform their work adequately and often had a financial impact on the individual casual academic as Viv’s quote shows.

For casual academic staff at New University, and in less well-resourced faculties at Old University such as Viv, reported above, most of their preparation work was done at home. Annie was not given an office space and had nowhere to go in between classes: ‘I taught over winter and didn’t have an office, so I sat on a bench outside in 10 degrees eating my lunch, twiddling my thumbs, in between classes’ (Annie, Old University, October 2011). Rita described how inadequate working facilities necessitated both her working from home and also having to purchase her own equipment:

‘That’s where I find it hard as a sessional. We are housed in a storeroom, no windows, no air-con. It’s got three computers, two that take half an hour to turn on. We can’t even mark in the office. I had to buy a laptop.’ (Rita, New University, October 2011).

Viv described how tight budgets in her School at Old University meant that access to appropriate resources was often very difficult and that she was made to feel ‘needy’ if she sought resources for teaching: ‘It is always characterised as if you are this needy person, you need an office space, you need to use the photocopier’ (Viv, Old University, November 2011). Dom described himself as fortunate to have access to an office but this came about as a result of a concurrent general staff role: ‘I have been lucky, but other sessionals say they can’t get a desk, they have no access to facilities’ (Dom, New University, September 2011). Tom raised the perennial issue of parking as a major frustration, noting that annual parking costs devoured a week’s worth of his wages.

A number of interviewees’ frustrations centred on onerous systems for accessing information technology, passwords were revoked at the end of semester, and had to be reapplied for at the beginning of the next semester. Often it just became too hard, but this also meant that vital information about training and development sessions were missed. Dom described how this made him feel: ‘If the university doesn’t want me to be a better teacher, a better qualified teacher, then it’s the university’s problem’. (Dom, New University, September 2011). His perception was that the university did not care.
about his professional development and as a consequence his motivation to care was reduced as well. Des described how onerous processes meant he did his own thing, not bothering with university email systems but as a consequence he missed out on information that may have been of use: ‘I can’t be bothered [with the university email]. After a while you just do it your way because doing it their way is too inconvenient’ (Des, New University, November 2011).

Derek reported the horrific experience of almost losing a semester’s work after he failed to take note of a general email advising that computers would be removed from the temporary office that he had been occupying:

I’ve had some awful experiences like I walked into my office one day and my computer was gone. I was furious. I felt like the moment was emblematic of how the current structure here, and more generally, forces administrative staff to treat sessionals (Derek, Old University, November 2011).

Others at Old University were more circumspect about their work environment: ‘I know there are some people who tutor and they get upset about lack of facilities, but that never bothered me’ (Abigail, Old University, November 2011). Dimitri, as the only casual in the 60 plus age category in the Old University group, was happy to be able to keep working and whilst he had a shared office space he was less concerned about facilities: ‘I don’t care if I work in the library, in fact I would prefer to have students around me. I think this is an old fashioned way of doing it’ (Dimitri, Old University, November 2011). Kim, who worked as a tutor in a well-resourced Faculty was very happy with the support she received from the Department administration staff, and grateful for the fact that she could do some of her work from home: ‘The department have been brilliant. I let them know which hours I can do, what fits with childcare. They are brilliant’. Having come from the corporate sector she felt that: ‘it’s been a really nice experience. Probably the most flexible, understanding employer I have ever had’ (Kim, Old University, November 2011).

The impact of resource constraints and inadequate facilities resulted, for many of the interviewees, in feelings of frustration and demoralisation, and served to reinforce their institutional invisibility. The physical surroundings of their working lives, from being forced to eat lunch in the cold outside, to having to reinstate email and computer access every semester, emphasised their insecure and marginal status in their institutions. In particular for those at New University, poor facilities meant working from home was
common, which resulted in them having even less of a presence on campus. This added further to financial burdens and to their sense of invisibility and dislocation.

**Job quality – pay and conditions**

*It’s more like a labour of love to teach, or a commitment to some nebulous future, not a financial reward. Not that money is everything (Abigail, Old University, November 2011).*

As discussed in Chapter 1, pay rates for casual academics are specified in university specific collective agreements which set out the hourly ‘face to face’ rate of pay for tutoring, lecturing and demonstrating, along with a separate rate of payment for marking work performed outside the classroom. The construction of the hourly rate, aside from separate payment for marking, remains largely the same as in 1980 when it was first established, a time when the university sector was very different. The literature raises ongoing concerns about pay rates and lack of recognition of work performed as major issues for casual staff (Junor 2004a). The interviews with casual academic staff revealed almost universal discontent and unhappiness with pay, and the reasons for this were wide-ranging and different at each case study university.

New University interviewees all reported issues with correct and on time payment and all had stories of other casual colleagues with similar problems. Issues with pay processes often arose unprompted during interviews, and centred on late payment, wrong payment, laborious pay methods and unhelpful central administration processes and staff. Most of the interviewees reported spending significant amounts of their own time monitoring their pay and pursuing pay claims. Rita describes: ‘I keep my own spread-sheets. You have got to do it, because you are never sure if your pay is going to be there. You don’t know. It’s hit and miss’ (Rita, New University). Another interviewee described how late payment meant she was unable to meet her financial commitments, and had to ask for an advance in pay, something she found deeply embarrassing: ‘They had to give us an advance as we were going to have to wait weeks because someone didn’t put the paperwork in. It happened to me three times last semester’ (Jackie, New University, October 2011).

One interviewee commented that the system reflected a distrust of casual staff, and the impact made her extremely angry:
I would go four weeks without a pay cheque. I kept saying why do I have to tell you what I am doing when I have signed a contract saying I will do this every week. I’m guessing someone will notice if I don’t turn up to class, but it was a really untrusting system (Tess, New University, November 2011).

By contrast, Old University interviewees received their pay on time and without problem, but had serious concerns about rates of pay, comparative pay justice and the amounts of work needed to earn a decent wage. Anger was common: ‘I feel abusively exploited. It’s just outrageous. The fact that I teach 500 hours a year, the person in the office next to me [a continuing academic] earns four times as much and teaches 100 hours a year’ (Annie, Old University, October 2011). Derek reflected on his workload and his hourly rate and that of other, less qualified staff he came into contact with around the university: ‘[we] are probably paid less than the security guard, and the people cleaning the office’ (Derek, Old University, November 2011). Jed compared himself to other men he knew who were undergraduates when he started his PhD: ‘they are working now, earning $110,000 a year and I am in my 30s and struggling, on $35-$40 an hour. You don’t do it for the money’ (Jed, Old University, November 2011). The most telling was Lee, who had previously worked in hairdressing, she commented on the hours that went into preparing a lecture: ‘I would have never imagined that hairdressing, which is one of the most exploited industries, was actually, in the end, less exploitative than working at the university’ (Lee, Old University, November 2011).

Whilst most had negative views about actual rates of pay Rod saw it in the context of job security:

It’s not too bad [the pay], it’s the lack of security. I did suggest to a former [senior manager] that if I was going to be teaching so many hours why can’t you make me part-time? But it’s always fobbed off (Rod, New University, September 2011).

Two of the interviewees at Old University combined casual work, and PhD studies with care of young children. These women noted that their pay covered their child care costs and little else, but there were compensations. Kim was happy with work she described as interesting: ‘I kind of knew that it was paying for the childcare and that was it. It’s not really about the money, it’s more about finding that balance and not having a blank of five years on your CV, if that makes sense’ (Kim, Old University, November 2011).

Performance of unpaid work was also apparent, although this interviewee did not in any way view it as negative when she explained she had performed a range of tasks unpaid.
Unpaid extra work was viewed as goodwill in the bank for a future position, and was about ‘getting a foot in the door’. Lily described this unpaid work as: ‘Love, it’s another love job. I don’t see that as wasted time’. (Lily, New University, October 2011). She freely acknowledged there was no guarantee but felt that the strength of relationships she had developed with academic colleagues, and the support they gave her, would count in her favour in the longer term.

Only Rose and Dimitri, who both worked as tutors at Old University, expressed ambivalence about their pay rates, but both reported issues with payment for marking. Rose had sought union advice on the issue and was able to secure payment for marking and Dimitri refused tutoring work when he was told that marking would not be paid. At New University the addition of a separate payment for marking into the collective agreement, as a result of a union campaign, was widely acknowledged as being a major boost. However the source of this improved condition was not well understood. Many attributed it to being a management initiative: ‘recently they started to give extra money for marking which is really good, really nice. [Q: How did that come about?] Probably the university realised they were going to lose people’ (Rita, New University, October 2011).

Mohan was the only interviewee who expressed a positive view about his earnings, and his situation showed how difficult it was for casual academics to earn a decent living. Having recently graduated with his PhD, Mohan supported himself and his partner on his casual earnings. He reported working an extraordinarily high number of hours across a very broad range of subjects, although he was aware that his teaching load was unsustainable and not necessarily in his career interests. Mohan had worked a series of sessional contracts, which, as described in Chapter 5, provided for a set amount of money for the semester for course coordination, lecturing and tutoring work. He had calculated the hourly rates set in the collective agreement and concluded that the ‘sessional rate’ was in fact a better financial deal, despite the fact that the rate had been reduced in the previous year due to budget issues within his Department.

In summary, concern about pay was a common theme, albeit with a different focus across almost all of the interviews with casual academic staff. For the interviewees at New University being paid correctly and paid on time was their main concern. Rates of pay became a second order issue. For those at Old University comparative pay rates were a major bone of contention, reflecting the higher qualification levels of those interviewees. For many, insecurity manifested in irregular and sometimes incorrect
payment of wages, in the semester based nature of work, and in the lack of guaranteed work from one semester to the next irrespective of performance. Pam described it as the stress inducing, ‘scramble for work’ at the beginning of each new semester. In the main, interviewees dealt with their concerns individually, either through keeping their own records, pursuing pay claims personally or just generally internalising feelings of exploitation and anger. On the rare occasion where there were benefits in excess of the collective agreement rate these were subject to managerial prerogative and could be removed without discussion, as Mohan found out.

**Career paths and building a career**

The survey data, discussed in Chapter 4, revealed that a majority of casual academics aspired to a more secure academic position. The diversity of the casual academic workforce has in part meant that the needs of those who are aspiring to secure academic positions have been ignored (Coates & Goedegebuure 2010). Further, the inherently temporary nature of casual employment more generally, even though it can also be long term, is not conducive to training and career development (Connell & Burgess 2006; Curtain 2001).

**Progression, support and career development**

The vast majority of those interviewed aspired to an academic career or sought a more secure academic position, and only two (one at New University and one at Old University) stated that they wished to remain casual. One of those who wished to remain casual was over 60 years of age and close to retirement. A further two interviewees expressed a preference for a mix of external and casual work, and one of these was over 60 years of age. The other interviewees who were over 60 years of age and of whom there were three, all preferred more secure employment as they were concerned about the impact their transient employment status had on their students.

For many of the interviewees the question of how casual academic employment was preparing most of them for their much hoped for future careers was explored in the interviews. At Old University a number of interviewees reported how they had progressed from tutoring work to lecturing and then to course coordination, all on an hourly paid basis. This was a strong reflection of these interviewees’ desires to build an academic career, and to gain teaching experience. Both they, and the academics guiding them, believed that gaining experience in this work was essential for their CV. At New
University the interviewees were at different stages in their career and whilst a small number did undertake lecturing and course coordination work, there was no structured approach to how and when this work was allocated, nor was many receiving career advice or support.

The ad-hoc and informal nature of recruitment for casual academic positions persisted in the processes for moving from tutoring to lecturing and course coordination work. For those at Old University, getting access to this work, and developing the ‘right’ CV relied upon effective management of good networks of ‘patrons’ or mentors: ‘It’s about who you know. It’s patronage, you have to know the right people. They have to take an interest in you, you have to suck up’ (Jed, Old University, November 2011). Building networks was constant and ongoing, and opportunities for lecturing and course coordination were leapt upon, even if the timing of those offers was inconvenient to concluding the PhD.

I had over 120 students I was co-ordinating, lecturing and tutoring. It was an amazing experience even though I was so close to [PhD] submission, I couldn’t turn it down. It was course co-ordination and you don’t know if you are going to get the offer again. I didn’t have it on the CV and also it was right in my area (Derek, Old University, November 2011).

Viv described how she had applied for casual course coordination in her subject area and was unsuccessful. The ad-hoc nature of the process meant she felt unable to ask for feedback as to why. She knew that the process was never straightforward, but it was still troubling: ‘There is no transparency in the selection process. Here I would never pester someone if I didn’t get the job. I know it’s not straightforward. They can’t give me a straightforward answer’ (Viv, Old University, November 2011).

Derek and Mohan both described the circular, reinforcing process of getting course coordination work once you had proved yourself to be ‘good’. Mohan explained how he was able to continue to secure casual course coordination work: ‘the idea of just bringing in a casual to take a subject, if you want someone to do that you want someone good, and if they are good they must have done it a few times’ (Mohan, Old University, December 2011). Similarly Derek explained what he saw as the reasoning behind the selection for casual lecturing and course coordination positions and how this meant balancing the need to give post-graduate students an opportunity, with an eye to teaching quality outcomes:
I think, generally, academics who aren’t teaching their courses due to buy-outs want someone good doing the course. It’s all about quality teaching. People are very anxious about their enrolment numbers, and student assessment (Derek, Old University, November 2011).

In contrast to the sentiments expressed about the importance of casual lecturing and course coordination for building a CV, a variety of views were expressed by the interviewees about the real value of casual tutoring for their own career development. Those who were fairly new to the work tended to speak positively about the importance of the experience for career building but others who had worked longer in casual roles had a different view. Jed explains: ‘[research assistant work] will get me somewhere but once you’ve done a few years of teaching on your CV there is no professional development, no making you a better teacher or lecturer. It’s a dead end’ (Jed, Old University, November 2011). Similarly Rod, an aspiring academic at New University, felt that it would be his (soon to be completed) PhD, combined with research experience that would secure him a job in the future, not his casual teaching: ‘[I think] the sessional work actually works against you, it doesn’t matter how good you are’ (Rod, New University, September 2011).

A lack of access to genuine professional development, both formalised and ‘on the job’, characterised the working experience of many of the casuals interviewed and was a major stumbling block for those who were actively searching for an academic position, or who intended to search for one in the future. Skills and experience were gained in the performance of work, and help could usually be obtained when actively sought, but on occasion the lack of collegiality was stark. Jane observed:

There was one [senior colleague], I asked her before semester started could I get some advice. I haven’t lectured before. She said something back like I can’t meet with you just email me questions. I was flabbergasted. I didn’t even know what questions to ask (Jane, Old University, November 2011).

For Tess, despite having international teaching experience, it was very clear that a ‘proper’ academic job could not be sought until she had completed her PhD. A PhD would mean: ‘A real job, no more pissy sessional, not knowing what’s going on, terrified of the future stuff’ (Tess, New University, November 2011). It was apparent that for New University casual academics, like Tess, who were working towards an academic career, professional development and career support had to be sought and managed individually, it was not part of their job. Whilst Old University interviewees
had more access to lecturing and course coordination work, arguably of benefit for their CVs, any career support beyond this was likewise their own responsibility. The consequence for most was that career development was disjointed, ad-hoc and unplanned, it occurred outside of their paid employment, and only on their own initiative. The value of teaching experience was often being reassessed by the casual academics, and two of the men had concluded that it was not going to assist them in their career aims.

**Teaching – feedback and quality assurance**

The issue of feedback, in the context of professional development and improving teaching practice, were explored with the casual academics. For most of the interviewees seeking either an academic career, or a more secure academic position, their professional development and in particular feedback on their teaching practice, was important for their career goals. This also related to questions of teaching quality and how casual academics perceived quality was monitored.

For most of the casual academics the only positive feedback they received was the fact that they continued to be hired each semester. However the means by which re-hiring was decided varied quite markedly in the two case study universities. The use of student evaluation scores to evaluate performance and determine future hiring, appeared to be fairly widespread at Old University, with many interviewees reporting that they were under no illusions about their continued casual employment resting on good scores:

‘they were very clear about if your student scores fell you would no longer be teaching, very clear about that, no hiding that. My scores have been really good’ (Kim, Old University, November 2011). Most interviewees at Old University had a keen eye to their student evaluation scores, and worked hard to ensure they got good evaluations. Derek reports: ‘you are beholden to the quality of teaching results, and so you have to kind of make the students feel loved, and make them feel like they are getting their money’s worth’ (Derek, Old University, November 2011). Similarly Mohan put in a lot of effort into his teaching to ensure that the work kept coming:

> I will constantly try and find ways to improve the subject. That’s partly because I want to make the subject better, but I would like to think that it signals to my employer that I am worth having for a second semester’ (Mohan, Old University, December 2011).
Not all of those at Old University worked in Departments with reliance on student evaluation results. Rose, a fairly new tutor at Old University, described a more haphazard approach to student feedback in her Department and a personal desire for more student feedback in order to improve her teaching: ‘I would like some feedback, the only feedback I have had is of my marking, but no one gives me feedback on my teaching’ (Rose, Old University, November 2011).

At New University there appeared to be little systematic attention to performance and evaluation, and interviewees expressed a range of concerns regarding the quality of the student experience that, in their opinion, resulted from having such a large and often poorly supported casual teaching staff cohort. The experience of ‘winging it’ and filling in classes at the last minute was reported by a number of interviewees at New University. Des, who had previously been a tenured academic, observed the changes of the past 20 years: ‘I think they [students] are seriously short changed given that they now have to pay. They are not getting the same commitment from staff. They don’t have the staff as readily available.’ (Des, New University, November 2011). Many New University casual academics reported that they took student feedback very seriously but didn’t believe that their employer did.

In summary, very different approaches to teaching feedback, quality assurance and student evaluation were found in the two case study universities, with Old University casual academics often subject to quite rigorous performance management in the form of student evaluation scores. Old University interviewees were very aware that poor student evaluation scores meant no more work, and this was backed up by a perception that there was a steady supply of qualified people ready to take the work. At New University a much more haphazard approach was apparent, suggesting in part that the nature of the labour supply was such that the university could not afford to be too choosey about who was hired. This issue is explored in the next chapter, in particular, in the interviews with the academics responsible for hiring casual academic staff at New University.

**Job satisfaction**

I actually do love teaching, it’s great. This is not a common thing these days. Teaching is meant to be what you do so you can get your research done, but I think it’s a really important part of academic life (Lee, Old University, November 2011).
High levels of job satisfaction are common to many casual workers, and the similarities between reported levels of job satisfaction amongst casuals compared with workers who are employed on a more secure basis has been used by some to argue that this demonstrates that casual employment is not sub-standard employment (Wooden & Warren 2004). Further, job satisfaction derived from teaching is common to academic staff (Bexley et al. 2011, p. 14). The issue of job satisfaction was explored with the interviewees and even though the interviews canvassed the frustrations and negative aspects of working as a casual academic, the overwhelming majority of interviewees reported that they loved their work. Satisfaction was derived from a range of aspects of the job. In particular, a love of teaching, and enjoyment from engaging with students, emerged as a universal theme. For casual academics at both universities, the particular student cohort of the respective universities was a point of comment. Those at Old University felt that the student cohort was very capable and able, and this was a particularly satisfying aspect. At New University, its particular mission to educate those from lower income backgrounds was a motivation that united many staff: ‘we are giving some real battlers a chance [to get a good job]. I know these guys will be able to get out there and turn their lives around. That’s a great thing.’ (Rod, New University, September 2011).

For Rita, a casual academic in her 60s, the work allowed her to bridge the generation gap: ‘I love this. My faith in young people has been renewed from teaching. Mostly they are the same as us, [just using] different tools’ (Rita, New University, October 2011). This was also a factor for Kim, who whilst younger than Rita, also enjoyed the opportunity to work with young students and dispel some preconceptions she had about ‘gen Y’. For Des it was also about the enjoyment of the student contact, along with retaining a connection to the academic world and keeping up with developments in his discipline. Rose, a younger tutor, had some challenges dealing with students, particularly young male students as a result of her youthful appearance, but reported that she really enjoyed teaching, and was passionate about her subject and the chance to pass that knowledge on.

For the older interviewees at New University, being in a collegial environment and having time to discuss issues with colleagues was a particular draw-card for staying in the university environment: ‘it’s rewarding to be able to sit down and talk with like minded colleagues’ (Tom, New University, September 2011). Pam was motivated by a desire to share her experiences from her international industry background: ‘I like the
interaction with students, and I like the fact that I can share my experiences with others. They don’t read about this in the text books’ (Pam, New University, September 2011)

The love of teaching was not enough to keep all of those interviewed working in their casual academic roles. Jed reported that despite his love of teaching he felt the pay rates did not reflect the work involved in doing the job well, he described it as a: ‘downward spiral’ and had decided to stop casual teaching work: ‘I’ve actually said no to tutoring now. I love teaching, but the amount of time proportionate to pay is ridiculous’ (Jed, Old University, November 2011). His strategy instead was to take on casual research work in preference to casual teaching, whilst completing the last stages of his PhD.

The interview data captures how much intrinsic satisfaction is gained from teaching and enjoyment of teaching was a universal theme, even for those who had decided to no longer teach. This was what kept the interviewees motivated to continue working, but it did not amount to acceptance or satisfaction with their terms and conditions of employment. It is fair to say that most interviewees loved their work but had serious reservations about the way in which they were employed.

The impact of job insecurity: finance, careers and ambitions

Casual work makes it impossible to plan a life (Jed, Old University, November 2011).

The implications of casual employment for finances, careers and career ambitions were explored with the interviewees. The literature, discussed in Chapter 2, pointed to the high cost of casual work for casual academic staff, suggesting that casual work may hinder, not help, academic career aspirations (Gottschalk & Mc Eachern 2010; Junor 2004a). For most of the interviewees, across both case study universities, there was a high personal cost to working on a casual basis. This cost was not necessarily apparent to academic managers or the university, and invaded all facets of life. For each interviewee the results were different depending on their life stage and circumstance, but the impacts were palpable. One interviewee broke down in tears when asked what her plans were for the future (she had recently submitted her PhD). She described the heavy workload, the financial drain and loss of social life that had accompanied the seven years it had taken her to finish her PhD, in conjunction with casual work:

[I am] trying to find a source of income. I have done things like let a room in my house. I am worried about money at the moment. I get my last pay
cheque next week and I only have marking (Viv, Old University, November 2011).

She described the financial impact of casual work, and the insecurity of semester based work: ‘The uncertainty, the poor income. The fact that it is semester by semester. I think I earned $9000 last tax year. You can’t live on that. I am living off savings’ (Viv, Old University, November 2011).

Annie, like Viv, was single and told a similar story of the personal toll the combination of PhD study and working as a casual academic had taken on her capacity to manage her life:

It has destroyed me financially. I work 7 days a week. I can’t afford to fix my house. I can’t afford to fix a car that is falling apart. I can’t afford some health things I need to do, but I am supposed to be in a really well paid job. I could not do any more hours if I tried. I don’t have the hours left. I don’t have a private life. I can’t afford a private life (Annie, Old University, October 2011).

Both women had left established careers in order to pursue PhD studies and ambitions for an academic career but the combination of casual work and study meant that they were required to, in effect, start at a lower level, one which did not recognise their previous working experiences and career status. The tension between employment status and qualification was harsh as they were in effect required to start again from the bottom, yet they were in the later years of their working lives.

Accumulation of superannuation was another casualty of insecure employment. Lee realised that for her this meant she would need to work well past traditional retirement age, and she felt she would like to be in a position to make a choice about that rather than being forced to do it: ‘Oh its shocking, my superannuation is probably about one tenth of my partner’s. I can see that I will need to work on some kind of part-time basis until I am quite old’ (Lee, Old University, November 2011).

The sentiment of feeling used and exploited was expressed by a number of interviewees, mixed with the constant insecurity of not knowing what work, and therefore what income, they would have the next semester. Jane, a young woman, described the overwhelming exhaustion from overwork that came with never being able to say no to work that was offered, for fear that it wouldn’t be offered again:
I am exhausted, but, I am really aware if I say no [to work] he will find somebody else, and then it’s not just this work that’s gone, it’s all work in the future, and I will have nothing next year. I can’t say no to anything (Jane, Old University, November 2011).

For her, the impact of casual work was far ranging and meant that she was unable to see family and friends anywhere near as much as she wanted. She commented on how she had been prompted recently to contemplate what work-life balance actually meant. Working on the weekend, whether it was class preparation or writing articles from her PhD was something she had done for so long she simply had accepted it as normal.

For the younger males, the impact was quite different but nonetheless still significant. Derek described the late transition to adulthood that accompanied his PhD studies and casual work and the fact that he was five to ten years behind his peers in terms of owning a home and having a more stable life. He summed up his experience as ‘bitter sweet’, and one which left him mentally and physically spent: ‘It’s been for me a source of incredible skills acquisition and confidence boosting [but] it’s never been a good source of income’ (Derek, Old University, November 2011). He was acutely aware of the imbalances in the relationship:

I give a lot of energy to them. I am a good employee. I shoot myself in the foot. It comes at a high price at the end of it. I end up with no money and an uncertain future, and the university loves me. I am perfect for them. I am exactly what they need at this time (Derek, casual academic, Old University, November 2011).

The insecurity of short term work weighed heavily on Jed who described the stress of supporting a young family on his casual income whilst also finishing his PhD: ‘It is stressful. The toughest thing about being casual is the complete lack of job security and living pay cheque to pay cheque’ (Jed, Old University, November 2011). The stress was magnified by the lowly status that Jed felt was attributed to casual work, despite his qualifications and years of hard work, and he felt other professionals had talked down to him because he was casual. Tess felt the burden of insecurity even though she knew her employer liked her work: ‘Even when I knew they liked me, I didn’t know from one semester what I would be teaching, if the hours were there, how many hours it would be. Not to mention the saga around missing pay cheques’ (Tess, New University, November 2011)
For the one self-described ‘happy casual’ who had effectively carved a sabbatical from her corporate career by combining casual tutoring with raising young children, the choice was not without some personal cost: ‘it’s a career plateau, it’s not a career progression and the pay is significantly reduced’ (Kim, Old University, November 2011). Whilst her intention was to return to her corporate career at some point she worried about whether that would be possible, and was aware that her ‘sabbatical’ meant returning on a lower rung on the career ladder, having left corporate life at a senior level. Kim’s ambivalence, and resignation, at the choices available to her were apparent throughout the interview. She had come to the view that her previous corporate career and the demands it made on her were not compatible with her current stage of life, and whilst she enjoyed tutoring she did not feel it was assisting her career development.

The costs of working casually were wide ranging and often cumulative. They ranged from financial, including the negative impact on superannuation, a delayed entrance to adulthood, stress and anxiety, over-work and exhaustion, and career stagnation. For one interviewee the stress of working and completing her PhD had resulted in a period of hospitalisation. Most reported some degree of financial strain and hardship as a result of their casual employment, and many commented on their inability to plan their lives or to look too far ahead. Anger and frustration at the lack of recognition of their long years of training, and the lack of opportunity for advancement was common.

Frustrated academics: The transition to more secure academic work and the ‘tipping point’

Analysis of the survey data discussed in Chapter 4 generated the notion of a ‘tipping point’, a time beyond which further casual academic employment meant that a more secure position was increasingly unlikely. The WCAU survey data suggested that after two years of working as a casual academic post PhD completion, respondents’ perceptions of their chances of gaining a more secure appointment were significantly reduced. The question of how long interviewees were willing to spend searching for an academic position was explored to see if any had put a timeframe on this process, and how they managed those decisions. Eight of the interviewees at Old University held their PhD and seven of the eight were actively searching for continuing or fixed-term academic positions. The job search process was canvassed with those interviewees.
Mohan had recently gained his PhD and had been seeking academic employment for over six months. He was generally optimistic about his chances, but sanguine about the state of the academic labour market. When pressed he admitted that he would put a timeframe around his job search, and that if two years elapsed with no job in sight he would possibly change his mind about his career plans. Such was his desire to work as an academic that he was reframing a variety of roles in order to portray himself as a ‘self-made full-time academic’, with a teaching and research role constructed out of a number of different contracts:

One of the other things I am strongly considering would be applying for research as a post doc and doing that whilst still maintaining casual teaching. This would effectively make me a self-made full-time academic.

It’s a bit more plate spinning (Mohan, Old University, December 2011).

Those who had more post PhD casual teaching experience were discovering that this was not the only necessary requirement for the transition to a more secure position. Lee described the ‘dead end’ she found herself in after focussing too much on teaching whilst completing her PhD studies and raising her son. She was explicitly told not to bother applying for a continuing academic position that came up in her school due to her lack of publications and the highly competitive nature of the field. She observed:

I think you do get positioned in the wrong place. I don’t think it’s intentional but accidental. You become the go to person, the gofer, she will do it, and that’s where it stops (Lee, Old University, November 2011).

She had never actively sought career advice and was becoming increasingly aware that being highly teaching focussed made her uncompetitive in the hunt for more secure work. She felt angry that colleagues seemed to recognise the predicament she was in, but that little was done to try and create a career path or provide more stability for those qualified and seeking an academic career.

Jane, who was two years post PhD, had not really contemplated a career in anything other than academia, and struggled to articulate her career plans: ‘I need to start thinking about what else I need to do. I have decided I will give it five years, I am almost three years [post PhD], that feels really daunting’ (Jane, Old University, November 2011). She realised that her reasons for entering academia were not assisting in her job search: ‘I did my PhD because I wanted to write about the topic. I’ve never been a careerist, it was a weird realisation that I had to think about that and be strategic. That’s not me at all’ (Jane, Old University, November 2011).
Derek was very close to submitting his PhD and felt that he was not given enough advice going into his PhD about the future: ‘It isn’t a very pretty picture which is really disappointing. No one kind of tells you when you go in, you have to intuit it. I don’t regret it [but] I don’t know if I would choose it again’ (Derek, Old University, November 2011). His personal circumstances were such that he was mobile and he had begun to apply for jobs locally and internationally. He was prepared to continue working on a casual basis for the next 12 months, whilst job hunting, before contemplating work outside academia.

Annie was aware that her previous lack of a PhD had held her back from more secure employment, but now after seven years of study and a mix of casual and some fixed-term employment, and a year post PhD completion, she was finding new barriers and more excuses:

I am not regarded as just a casual. I am regarded as something more than that, but it’s always just that there is never a position, but “we don’t want you to go anywhere”, and the excuse has been lack of PhD. So really something has to happen soon, [otherwise] I am going to be looking elsewhere (Annie, Old University, November 2011).

In the absence of structured career support many of the PhD qualified interviewees had depended on their PhD supervisors for career advice, but this proved a stumbling block in a number of cases. Jane noted her supervisor was brilliant for the topic but unable to provide the career support and networking that was needed post PhD: ‘my main supervisor was brilliant, but she hated academia. I was her last student then she left and she just couldn’t give me that support. I didn’t think about it, it was about the topic’ (Jane, Old University, November 2011). Viv changed supervisors during the course of her PhD but had a mixed experience. Provision of career advice was often hit or miss and had to be actively sought out. Abigail was aware that her supervisors were very stretched and felt that the university should offer a more centralised approach:

I think that what the university should have is some sort of mentoring capacity. My supervisor was extraordinarily busy, very supportive when I saw them but outside of that they were unavailable. I tried to circumvent that. I had to be proactive (Abigail, Old University, November 2011).

For the PhD qualified interviewees there was awareness that the circumstances surrounding their academic training and mentoring, whether it be due to retiring, burnt out or busy supervisors, meant that they were not supported with appropriate career
advice to support their aspirations. A number of interviewees commented on the fierce
competition, often from international applicants, for the occasional entry-level academic
positions that came up. Whilst most had reluctantly put a timeframe on how long they
would continue to apply for academic positions before looking outside the university
sector for a job, few had given concrete thought to alternative employment options. The
concern and in many cases despair, expressed by these interviewees reflects the findings
in Chapter 4 about the existence of a tipping point, a point beyond which casual
academic teaching work was no longer helpful, and may in fact detract from success in
the search for an academic position.

**Gendered precariousness**

The literature on casualisation in Australia has highlighted the gendered nature of casual
employment, and this pattern has been revealed in the statistics on casual academic
employment (Bassett & Marshall 1996; Briar & Junor 2012). The interviews sought to
explore gender differences in the approach to casual employment, and the experience of
casual employment. Analysis of the survey data in Chapter 4 did not uncover gender
differences in terms of motivation and orientation to casual academic employment.
Females were just as likely as males to aspire to an academic position.

In terms of the interviewees, gender differences were apparent in the way that men and
women framed their casual experience, and the ways in which each came to their casual
work. The males were generally more optimistic about the future, and seemed more
confident. The women on the other hand appeared to focus more on their deficiencies
and strive to be seen ‘as good’ in every aspect of their work, hoping that if they were
‘good’ someone would notice. Many of the women seemed acutely aware of the
importance of a strong research profile, and were quick to point out their deficiencies in
this area: ‘[my research is] not so good. When I teach I tend not to do much research,
and some of my teaching is away from my area, so I need to go back to basics’ (Lee,
Old University, November 2011).

Mohan, who worked a heavy teaching load, placed a different emphasis and
interpretation on his work experience, playing down his lack of publications:

*If I had to put a finger on one weakness is that my research and publication
record is not extensive largely because of my balancing of work and
research over the last 5 years. The strength of my application is my broad
teaching experience. I have taught in [a big range of subjects across*
faculties] and done so with high levels of student feedback (Mohan, Old University, December 2011).

Both Mohan and Derek, younger males, described their own teaching abilities in complementary terms. Derek explained why he had been fortunate with the amount of teaching experience he had gained whilst working casually, noting the highly competitive nature of securing casual work in his Faculty:

I feel like it’s because I am a little bit charismatic and go out and meet people. I stick my hand up for opportunities and make myself available and I am well liked. If you are not as assertive and sort of shiny then it’s really hard (Derek, Old University, November 2011).

Few of the women were as forthcoming about their abilities as Derek and Mohan, or as ruthless in their focus on particular kinds of work. Jane is an example:

I think I am a really good tutor and it’s a really weird for me to say that. I have kind of realised recently men have no problems doing that. I guess I know I am good at this and I could be great if I was given support and I had a job (Jane, Old University, November 2011).

Jasmine had come from a tenured academic position in another institution changed discipline and undertaken a late career PhD. She found herself forced to earn a living from a number of casual appointments whilst she sought to bridge the gap between one research project and the next funding round; a process made all the more complicated by her not having a secure position from which to seek grant funding. She reflected upon what she observed in her school:

One of the young women here was commenting every job she has gone for recently a man has got. It’s like if there are less jobs going you better give it to a man, he’s got a family. I do think gender is still a massive issue. A lot of it is to do with confidence and having a different vision of your ability. From the minute they are born they are told they are fantastic but the message women get is quite different, a mixed message (Jasmine, Old University, November 2011).

For most of the women interviewed at New University the arrival of children had caused the rearranging of career plans and career ambitions, and heightened the need for flexibility and part-time hours. Tess was unable to take up an earlier offer of undertaking a PhD due to pregnancy, and Sally’s work had been organised around
raising her child. Jackie’s search for flexibility and income, whilst completing a PhD related to providing security for her young children. Divorce with young children had prompted Lily’s career change and long term aim to establish herself in an academic career. As Sally argued, the search for flexibility often resulted in women’s options becoming highly restricted and had resulted in a: ‘whole generation of women that have in many ways been used. They look for flexibility, they haven’t been developed into any other roles, [and] they are camouflaged in the system’ (Sally, New University, October 2011)

Similarly, child bearing and child rearing shaped the careers of the women interviewed at Old University and the choices that were available to them at critical career points. For Lee the journey back to undergraduate study through to PhD, having come from a trade background was an enormous one, and was combined with the arrival of her child. She describes the double workload she subjected herself to in order to combine the early child rearing years with her work: ‘I was teaching when he was three months old. It did work out ‘til recently when you realise that it’s been a bit of a dead end, that you are too much into teaching’ (Lee, Old University, November 2011).

Abigail described the difficulties of having children and trying to focus on study, and how this resulted in her taking much longer to finish her PhD than she had hoped: ‘I really enjoyed having something to focus on that wasn’t about the children, it was very rewarding. What I found is that it was only in the past year that I got back the capacity to really write the thesis and do it justice’ (Abigail, Old University, November 2011).

Gender differences emerged in the approach to casual work as a means of facilitating the transition to more secure work in the future. Two of the men interviewed described how they cut back completely on tutoring work and focussed on research. Rod commented: ‘I have toughened up over the years. They treat you like they are doing you a big favour but really it’s me doing them a service by agreeing to teach. I look after myself first now’. (Rod, New University, September 2011). Similarly Jed had stopped taking on tutoring work and instead concentrated on casual research work.

Four of the women interviewed at Old University were aged 40 to 55 and had all completed PhDs in the last four years. Their age combined with gender produced a particular vulnerability:

*It only occurred to me when I turned 50 this year that this is the new group that is really under-employed. I am going to have to start lying about my age. That’s where you get lost in the casualisation thing. Ten years ago I*
didn’t even think [age] would be an issue (Lee, Old University, November 2011)

For the women who were interviewed, gender shaped their entry to casual work, their experiences of casual work and their potential pathways from casual work, in a way that it did not for the men. Kim sought out the flexibility and capacity that casual teaching offered to fill a gap in her CV when she realised her corporate career would not accommodate her young children, and that her equally high flying corporate partner was unable to shift his focus to home in the way that she was. Annie and Viv, midlife PhD graduates, were unencumbered by child-care responsibilities, but instead the combination of gender and age was conspiring to make them feel invisible and used. Similarly Pam, who juggled casual academic work at three different universities, felt that age, gender and race had worked against her. Despite her high level international background and the fact that she spoke multiple languages, her lack of PhD was used as the reason to confine her to casual teaching work.

For the younger males interviewed gender did not bring with it the same constraints, even though only one of the men’s personal circumstances meant that his career decisions were his alone. Two of the younger males were main breadwinners and both were very driven in their career focus. In particular the younger males appeared to have been able to achieve advantageous access to particular aspects of casual academic work, such as course coordination experience and project research work through patrons, often senior academic men who recognised their potential. The men gave the impression of professional confidence more so than the women. This was apparent in the way they described their own abilities and re-framed, rather than focussed on, their deficiencies. Gender was not an obstacle to the younger males, whereas for the females it was what shaped their unsteady navigations at every turn and stage of the life-cycle. The notion of ‘cumulative disadvantage’ is an apt summation (Primack & O'Leary 1993).

The differences and similarities between New University and Old University

As discussed above the interviews with casual academics point to differences in the casual cohort in each of the case study universities. The overwhelming majority of those interviewed expressed a preference for a more secure academic position. However, the much higher numbers of Old University casuals with a PhD qualification was a sharp point of difference. This reflected the findings in Chapter 4 that suggested that casual academics working in Sandstone Universities were at least twice as likely as
those in Newer Universities to hold a PhD qualification. This difference is strongly related to the research status of the two very different universities, and indicates that the two universities may have quite different labour markets for casual academic staff, both in terms of supply and in terms of employer demand.

In each university there was a particular rallying point that invoked a sense of loyalty to the institution in which the interviewees worked, and across all interviewees there was a common enjoyment of teaching. New University casual academics appeared to identify strongly with what they saw as the mission of their university and this allowed the more negative aspects of their working experiences to be rationalised: ‘I believe in what the university is attempting to do in offering opportunities for a very diverse community of people’ (Sally, New University, December 2011).

In the case of Old University its reputation and prestige was something of a double edged sword for those who had completed Old University PhDs and were struggling to find more secure academic work. Jed summed up his perceptions: ‘[Old University] just know what they are and don’t have to prove it. As a student, and as a researcher, it opens more doors for you as well.’ (Jed, Old University, November 2011). In this sense there was no indication that the casual academics were loyal to management, rather than their disciplines or academic colleagues, as some have suggested may be the case (see Marginson 2000). Indeed loyalty and attachment was highly localised and many of the interviewees were acutely aware of the interdependent relationship they had with their academic managers, and the difficulties those academics faced. Derek noted: ‘I have never made any official complaints to anyone who has employed me because I feel sorry for them’ (Derek, Old University).

Of interest were the different institutional approaches to casualisation, discussed in Chapter 5 and evidence of which emerged in the interviews New University had on paper at least, an institutional focus on academic casualisation, evidenced by efforts to collect data, develop policies for casual academic staff and efforts to centrally resource policy implementation. Despite this the interviews with New University casual academic staff revealed little evidence of any benefit from those policy provisions, and much evidence of angst and distress about very basic conditions of employment, such as correct and on-time payment for work. On the other hand, at Old University with fairly minimal policy and industrial provisions for casual academic staff, it was found that at faculty and discipline level there were elements of formality and support for casual academic staff. This was particularly apparent in well-resourced faculties where
tailored responses, such as local induction were common. Old University casual academics were much more likely to have taken part in induction and staff meetings, and to have access to facilities than New University casual academic staff. This concurs with the survey analysis in Chapter 4, which showed that casual academics from universities in the same category as Old University were more likely to have a workstation, computer and space to meet students, and have undertaken induction and professional development, than those from a Newer University.

The differences between the two universities had both positive and negative impacts on the casual academics. Old University interviewees had better access to support, but this was offset by its limited application to more complex work such as lecturing and course coordination, and the fairly widespread monitoring of performance which accompanied the support. New University interviewees had less support, and were highly frustrated by poor administrative processes, but were not subject to the same levels of monitoring and scrutiny. New University interviewees were also less likely to be PhD qualified and did not have the same immediate concerns as the Old University interviewees who were actively job hunting. So while New University interviewees had far worse conditions of employment, in many ways the Old University interviewees faced a more demanding scenario with higher immediate personal consequences.

At the level of the individual casual academic it was clear that Old University casuals were subjected to far greater levels of performance management, and this monitoring of work mediated the effort that Old University casual staff put into class preparation. This was in contrast with the lack of attention to quality control at New University. For New University casuals it was their own aspirations and work ethic that drove how much effort went into their preparation, and as such it appeared that there was room for a far greater variance in the quality of casual academic teaching at New University compared with Old University. Anecdotes about casual staff leaving part way through semester, or being asked to teach at extremely short notice, were far more common at New University. Only one such anecdote was gathered at Old University.

Overall, the experience of work for the individual casual academic and the implications of working as a casual academic can be summarised under five key themes; institutional invisibility, uncertain career paths, job insecurity, precariousness shaped by gender, and frustrated ambition. Institutional invisibility was established at the start of casual academic employment, as a result of the personalised, often ‘sponsored’, nature of recruitment. This highly localised start to employment impacts on casual academics’
knowledge of, and ability to access, internal support and training. This was reflected in the interviews particularly with New University casual academics. Exclusion from collegial forums was reported by many casual academics, this resulted in a lack of access to support for research and a feeling of not belonging. Institutional invisibility permeated the lack of career advice and was particularly damaging for those who were seeking more secure academic work.

The second theme is that of uncertain career paths. Lundy and Warne’s (1990, p. 207) analysis of part-time academic work in the US as comprising a career path that was, ‘both horizontal and terminal’, has resonance with the situation of many of those interviewed. The interviews revealed distinct differences between casual academic work and the linear career path that characterised traditional academic work. Casual academic employment appears to have no delineated entry point. The interviews revealed the various points at which the casual academics entered casual employment; often it was in the context of post-graduate study, sometimes following retirement from a continuing academic position, and in some cases through a chance meeting with an academic looking for casual teaching staff. Further, casual academic employment appears to have no career signposts, and no means of advancement within its ranks, other than to more casual employment, that is moving from casual tutoring to casual lecturing and course coordination. The highly insecure nature of casual academic work means that high performance is essentially rewarded only with further offers of casual employment. Despite receiving advice to the contrary from well meaning supervisors and managers, casual employment appears not to be assisting those qualified casual academics in gaining secure employment.

A number of interviewees were beginning to question whether their casual employment was actually detracting from their search for more secure academic work. These interviewees identified the impact that their casual teaching work had on their research capacity and research output. Others had taken active steps to stop accepting casual academic work. One interviewee reflected that she did not think of herself as an academic, and this was as a result of casualisation, which she argued made people feel bad about themselves. This particular interviewee had a PhD, worked a series of teaching and research casual positions, and in addition was publishing work from her PhD, so the component parts of her working life were that of a teaching and research academic. She was not afforded the status or identity of an academic and was acutely aware of how marginal her foothold on academic life was.
Many of the interviewees’ work and life circumstances were precarious and there was a strong gender component. Gender appeared to shape women’s entrance to casual academic employment and contribute to the reasons why the transition to more secure employment was difficult. Precariousness was apparent in the levels of insecurity expressed by a number of interviewees, and it manifested in financial and health related strain and stress. The combination of study with casual employment and child rearing was common amongst many of the women and added layers of stress and disadvantage to their career plans. Planning for the future was very difficult, and for many of the younger casual academics ‘adult milestones’ such as house purchase, or the idea of having a child, were out of the question.

The sense of frustrated ambition, expressed as the ‘frustrated academic index’ in Chapter 4, was palpable amongst many of the interviewees and particularly strong amongst those who were PhD qualified and actively looking for an academic position. All reported fierce competition for the few entry-level academic positions that came up, and a sense of a rising bar for entry to those positions. The interviewees’ perception was that a PhD in itself was no longer sufficient for an academic position; rather a PhD in combination with a solid research profile was necessary. This perception arose from their experiences in applying for continuing and fixed term academic positions and the feedback they and others in similar situations received during those processes.

The WCAU survey findings about frustrated academics and the ‘tipping point’ post PhD, beyond which finding a continuing position appeared to be more difficult, are elaborated in the interview data revealing the emotions behind these labels. In particular the existence of a ‘teaching trap’ whereby the time consuming nature of casual teaching employment detracted from the capacity to produce publications, showed how continued casual teaching employment created a cumulative disadvantage in the search for more secure academic employment. This calls into question the capacity of casual academic employment to act as a ‘bridge’ to a secure academic position, the very basis upon which it has always been promoted to post-graduate students. Many of the interviewees, often acting on the advice of supervisors, took on casual teaching work to fill their CVs, but others were beginning to question the usefulness of this strategy.

For those interviewees actively searching for more secure academic work there was a growing realisation that their dream of being an academic may never be fulfilled. Most had not thought beyond this plan and were struggling with new visions for their future.
Nothing in their PhD training had prepared them for this eventuality. There were high levels of awareness amongst the PhD qualified casual academics that being too teaching focused was not assisting with their future employment prospects, but there was little support at their institutions to overcome this ‘teaching trap’. Instead there was increased pressure to continue teaching on a casual basis, not just because of the requirement to earn an income but also because the availability of experienced and dedicated casual teaching staff suited the university, a fact that these interviewees were only too aware of.

**Summary**

The interviews add additional evidence of the existence of an academic labour market that is segmented, further to the discussion in Chapter 4. The characteristics of the experience of work described by many of the interviewees such as lack of resources and support, high levels of insecurity and poor conditions of employment are consistent with jobs in the secondary labour market, despite the high levels of qualifications held by interviewees. There was little about the work that these casual academics were performing that assisted their aspirations for more secure academic employment, and much that appeared to hinder those aspirations. Aside from being able to fill their CVs with evidence of teaching experience, many were missing out on structured peer mentoring and support necessary for their development. Time spent working as a casual academic, whilst necessary for survival, meant less time for research, and more time spent in the constant search for work, cultivating networks, managing student expectations, worrying about finances, and not being able to plan ahead. There was nothing inherent in the casual academic semester to semester mode of employment that enabled the interviewees to make the transition to more secure employment. Casual employment status reduced them to that of ‘marginal, temporary employees with no past and no future beyond the immediate term’ (Gappa & Leslie 1993, p. 63).
CHAPTER 7: MANAGING CASUAL ACADEMICS – SENIOR MANAGERS AND ACADEMICS AS MANAGERS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the interviews with senior managers and academics who manage casual staff, at the case study universities. As outlined in detail in Chapter 5, nine senior managers, and fourteen academic staff responsible for managing casual academic staff were interviewed. Senior managers were defined as those academic staff at head of school level or higher and professional staff with significant policy, administrative and/or management responsibility. This chapter, in discussing the interview data, addresses the research questions about the implications of casualisation for academic staff, for university managements, and for public policy. In particular, management strategy is investigated in the interviews with senior managers to examine the intersections of budgets, policy, staffing decisions, workforce planning and the impacts these have on casualisation. The theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2, using SLM theory, places the role of the organisation and particularly employer strategy as central to the growth of casualisation. The interviews with senior managers and academics managing casual academics explore employer strategies and in particular how university managements respond to changes in the external environment.

There is only a limited body of literature that examines the impacts of casualisation on academic staff and this literature was examined in Chapter 2. The literature raised the issue of work intensification for academic staff as a result of having the additional, and often unacknowledged, responsibility for the management of casual academic staff (Lazarsfeld Jensen & Morgan 2009). Further, the high levels of dissatisfaction expressed by Australian academics, compared with academic staff in other countries, has been discussed in the light of high workloads, including responsibility for a human resource management role in relation to casual academic staff (Coates et al. 2009). The work performed by academic staff in relation to their management of casual academic staff is only beginning to be investigated. There is no literature that explicitly examines senior managers’ attitudes, responsibilities and strategies in relation to the employment of casual academic staff. The other significant issue that emerged from the interviews with the academic staff was that of the issue of transition from casual academic to continuing academic employment. A number of academics interviewed had only recently made this transition, and the factors involved were explored in those
interviews. This is not an area that has received much attention in the Australian literature.

As discussed in Chapter 5, despite a number of requests sent by the university to its senior staff, only two senior managers at Old University were interviewed, one academic, and one senior professional staff member. At New University seven senior managers agreed to be interviewed, and these staff held a range of senior academic positions including head of school, and dean, and one interviewee was a senior administrator.

The chapter has two parts. In the first part the interviews with senior managers are discussed, and in the second part the interviews with academic staff are discussed. The senior managers’ interviews explore the issues that emerge from the theoretical framework proposed in Figure 2.2. Specifically, the features of the enterprise university, and how these have been both a response to government policy changes, and have clashed with the unique organisational culture and setting of the two universities are explored.

The discussion of senior managers’ interviews is structured as follows:

- Policies and industrial arrangements;
- Budgets and the impact on staffing decisions;
- Recruitment, retention and workforce planning;
- Risks associated with high levels of casualisation;
- The causes of casualisation; and
- Changes in the academic career path.

**Part I: The senior managers**

The role of management strategy in academic casualisation was examined in the interviews with senior managers. University managers are dependent on academic staff in order to provide the university’s core teaching function but resource constraints and volatility in funding arising from the impacts of NPM, detailed in Chapter 1, have required managers to develop strategies to lessen their dependence on these staff and reduce or constrain the costs associated with teaching. The extent to which this is a deliberate activity, rather than an unplanned response, was considered through the course of the interviews.
Policies and industrial arrangements

In Chapter 5 the quite different sets of policies and industrial arrangements for casual academic staff at each of the universities was discussed. Old University was found to have a minimal framework of policy and an industrial arrangement which set out minimum obligations, and requirements upon faculties and schools to make their ‘best endeavours’ to achieve those standards. New University on the other hand had a more detailed suite of policies, two of which were also reflected in the current collective agreement, and these took a more mandatory approach. These two policies, access to professional development opportunities, and the internal advertisement of level A academic positions, offered on paper at least, the possibility of real benefit to casual academic staff and suggested that the university was endeavouring to address issues of career progression. Broadly, the two quite different strategies may be seen in light of the terms described in a study of UK universities by Bryson and Blackwell (2006); ‘differentiation’, in the case of Old University and ‘integration’ in the case of New University.

In the interviews with senior managers at New University, these policy provisions were explored in order to examine how they were understood and applied in the workplace. It became apparent that in reality New University’s policies for casual academic staff had little practical effect, confirming the casual academics’ experiences. A range of reasons for this emerged. For example, when asked about hiring at level A, all of the senior managers responsible for the academic staffing decisions within their faculty expressed both a reluctance, and an inability, to hire at this level. Often this was expressed in the context of the comparatively low level of pay at level A:

*The problem with level A is the remuneration is often not competitive with what people will get elsewhere out there in industry. We can’t recruit at that level. We can’t get quality applicants at that level (Jeff, New University, June 2011).*

*I would say we almost never [hire at level A]. I say that because most of the professions, if they come out of university with a professional qualification they would get equivalent level B salary. It’s very hard to appoint at level A. (Mandy, New University, August 2011).*

Although Old University had no provision for internal advertisement of level A positions, senior managers at Old University also reported that hiring at level A was
uncommon, and that level B tended to be the entry point, although in some faculties it was much higher with staff, (often overseas appointments), recruited at levels D and E.

In addition to the issues with salary at level A, none of the New University senior managers appeared to be aware of the policy and industrial provision to advertise level A positions internally in any case. Jeff, a long term senior manager notes: ‘At [New University] I don’t think we have any means of preferencing sessionals. Once we advertise the position it has to be advertised externally.’ (Jeff, New University, June 2011).

The short-comings of these well intentioned provisions were acknowledged by a senior administrator, although she incorrectly attributed their lack of effectiveness and did not seem to be aware of the issues about low salaries raised by the senior managers:

So, even though it’s [internal advertisement of level A positions] in the agreement, I don’t know how effective it will be. It’s going to rely very much on the personal relationship between the course coordinator and the sessional staff member (Sandy, New University, November 2011).

Further, it appeared that other genuine attempts to improve policy shortcomings were met with fierce resistance by local managers. Sally gave an example of when the university attempted to implement a policy that required every casual academic to be interviewed and references obtained. The policy lasted two weeks and had to be rescinded: ‘there was uproar. People said we can’t implement this, this is ridiculous. We need people tomorrow. So we had real push back on that’ (Sandy, New University, November 2011). The policy which set out provision for induction for casual academic staff who were teaching at least one hour a week during a semester, was acknowledged also to have failings, despite the good intentions. As a result, what appeared to have positive intent did not always result in improvements for casual academic staff.

New University’s policy framework appeared to favour an ‘integration’ approach to the management of casual academic staff but the interviews with senior managers revealed this was far from the reality. A variety of barriers prevented the actual implementation of policies, not the least of which was the lack of awareness of the policy provisions. However, resource constraints were a major factor as well. These practical barriers to policy enforcement resulted in casual academics at New University missing out on opportunities to develop their careers, and as a consequence they were not integrated into the academic workforce. The gap between the intention of the policy, and
workplace reality, was further widened by the complex interplay of resourcing, senior manager priorities, external labour markets and a devolved decision making structure.

**Budgets and the impact on staffing decisions**

In Chapter 1 the impact of NPM on university management was discussed. One of the major changes evident in the enterprise university was the development of a senior executive, and the devolution of budgets and decision making to faculties and Schools (Marginson & Considine 2000). At both case study universities these processes were quite advanced, and they were most advanced at Old University. Furthermore senior managers were unanimous at both universities that budgets, and budget processes were the major determinant of, and the major constraint on, staffing decisions. A number of senior managers commented on the way that centrally determined forward estimates shaped staffing budgets. One senior manager described them as ‘aspirational revenue numbers’. Budgets, and the various ways they were mandated by central finance areas, evoked common frustration amongst the senior managers interviewed. The complexity of the budgeting processes was highlighted by the different understanding each New University senior manager appeared to have of how they functioned.

During the time that the case study research was undertaken both universities were undergoing further changes to budget models. These changes were revealing tensions between self-funding faculties, resources for central administration functions, and appropriate funding levels for resource intense disciplines. The changes in budget processes generated a range of interpretations of the reality, and the practical implications of the budgeting processes, amongst the senior managers. At New University for example, each senior manager provided a different interpretation of how the current budget process worked. As a consequence of the differing interpretations each offered a range of explanations for how the budget process affected staffing decisions, particularly decisions about hiring more casual, or more permanent, academic staff.

The interviews uncovered fundamental tensions between central administration and faculty. The frustrations expressed by one senior manager were common:

> The centre of the university has just blown out; none of them have any sense of constraint or restraint. What you have seen is this transfer of full-time staff in faculty to full-time staff in the centres. Instead of having people who
Mandy, a faculty based senior manager at New University had seen her areas go through a massive change process, involving staff redundancies, school amalgamations and reorganisation. She describes the budget difficulties she was left with: ‘In 2008 we had six Schools and they were put into three Schools, four Schools became one, so that’s how I got a $3.7m debt in my faculty’ (Mandy, New University, August 2011). Another senior manager describes how the budgets were set centrally, tightly controlled and monitored, with little flexibility. For this particular senior manager the context was a faculty with growing student numbers, significant over-enrolment, thus great unpredictability in student load, and a discipline profile that meant a variety of types of casual academic staff were employed: ‘Every month if there is a variance between what each school might say is their sessional budget and what it is actually, that’s picked up on, and an explanation is required’ (Jeff, New University, June 2011).

The budget process was described as one that required the faculty to return a pre-determined ‘margin’ back to the centre. Margin was explained as: ‘Margin of income generated over income expended. In other industries it might be termed a profit’ (Jeff, New University, June 2011). The senior manager explained that his understanding was that his faculty returned a higher ‘margin’ than any other faculty of the same discipline in the country. With predicted further student growth he was anticipating the ‘margin’ to double in dollar terms over the coming years. As a consequence the capacity for new permanent academic appointments remained highly uncertain.

Another senior manager, new to the university and to his position, described how the budget process severely constrained his capacity to plan and manage his staffing profile:

The faculty budget for 2010 had projected surplus of $Xm. I was thinking of all the strategic things I could do with that, sat down with the accountants when I arrived, and said what can we do with this? They said it’s gone. The budget process is [that] there is a X per cent levy and then whatever else you have left over we’ll have that as well (Desmond, New University, July 2011).

For those at the head of school level, budget processes were a source of keen frustration. Trish felt that central administration and central finance had no understanding of the situation schools and faculties faced, and how the consequences of centralised decisions reverberated for teaching:
If you do lose positions then the sessional budget blows out. You get beaten over the head by finance who don’t actually seem to understand that in terms of balancing the budget you still need to provide a service, so if you hold a position and don’t refill, someone has to do that work. So you fill with sessionals. (Trish, New University, July 2011).

This ‘silo’ mentality is also observed from the other side, as Megan, a senior manager, and general/professional staff member at Old University observes, reporting on what she saw as a culture of ‘non-compliance’ amongst academic staff:

The culture is challenging, nothing is mandatory. [Old University] is more so than some others. The admin stream is a silo run in parallel with the academic stream so you provide services but you are separate, and it is very hard to get academics to comply (Megan, Old University, November 2011).

Megan described the tensions created by an increasingly devolved budgeting system at Old University, where faculties were essentially ‘self funding’. The consequence was even greater tension between resource rich faculties and those that were unable to generate the same levels of revenue. Resource rich faculties were able to hire more of their own administrative staff, and tailor processes and systems to suit themselves rather than the whole university. The impact had a physical manifestation in the architecture of Old University, with the fortunes of the different faculties revealed in the sharp contrasts between innovative new buildings housing well-off faculties, and the ageing facilities of the poorer faculties. Megan describes how the new budget model provided incentives for faculties to generate higher levels of revenue: ‘Faculties are expected to be self funding. For the faculties who are doing better there are financial incentives, they keep the greater proportion of it rather than it just being levied back’ (Megan, Old University, November 2011).

In comparing the two case study universities it appeared that Old University had a more advanced devolved budget model than New University, with Old University faculties operating almost as ‘separate business units’ and disciplines absorbing the relative benefits or disadvantages of their discipline and consequently faculty positions and fortunes. At New University the tight management and control over staffing budgets was apparent from the way the senior managers described the processes by which their own managerial discretion was curbed. Overall, the capacity for the creation of additional positions or the reconceptualising of staff profiles within faculties to provide
career paths for casual academic staff appeared remote, and beyond the control of the senior managers.

**Recruitment, retention and workforce planning**

Workforce planning and development is a key challenge for the university sector given the predictions by some that there will be a workforce crisis when the baby-boomer generation of academics retires over coming decades (Hugo 2005a; Hugo & Morriss 2010). Following Hugo’s analysis, the Bradley Review of Higher Education identified the possibility of staff shortages as a result of the ageing continuing academic workforce (Bradley et al. 2008, p. 22). Consequently, the question of workforce planning and recruitment of new academic staff, in the context of career progression for casual academic staff, was an important area of investigation with the senior managers interviewed.

The senior managers all described the impact of tight budgets on their capacity to establish new academic positions or plan ahead to improve academic staffing levels. The interviews revealed the compartmentalised way in which casual academic employment was managed. Heads of school were responsible for the management of the budgets for casual academic staff, but, as detailed in the next section, the hiring decisions were made by the academic responsible for the unit or course, without reference often to central human resource or other school managers.

Heads of school, across both universities, were responsible for signing time sheets and managing staffing budgets, including budgets for casual staff, and set the parameters for hiring, that is, how many and on what terms. Heads of school generally had only limited contact with casual staff. Faculty deans had overall budget responsibility for the casual staff budget, and overall workforce size, staffing profile and mix, but had almost no contact with casual staff on a day to day basis. As the faculties were often large groupings of disparate disciplines, particularly at New University, the casual academic staff profiles of the various disciplines were quite different, and often the dean’s awareness was limited to the patterns of their own particular discipline. At the level of dean, and higher, there was capacity to argue for improvements in budget allocation for their faculty within senior management forums, but in practise this was constrained, complex and often highly political.

In describing why casual numbers had grown in his faculty, Jeff explained that, despite over-enrolment and major growth in student numbers, the over-enrolment had not been
fully funded, and an effective staff freeze had been in place for many years. The consequence was a continuing increase in casual academic numbers: ‘We have been constrained in how many new staff we can recruit. [There has been] a de-facto freeze for many years and at the same time with many staff reaching retirement age’ (Jeff, New University, July 2011).

When asked if he felt that there were too many casual academics in his area, Jeff reported that he was unsure of the actual numbers, although he thought it was about 50 per cent of his academic staff:

We are a huge faculty, it’s not too many. I think we would like to convert some of those sessional roles into contract or ongoing roles. Whether we will succeed in that is another matter. The budget will get debated intensely over next few months (Jeff, New University, July 2011).

While there seemed to be awareness on the part of some senior managers that the extent of casualisation at New University was increasingly untenable, it was unclear who owned the problem and then who would fix it:

I think people probably do realise that we have an overreliance on sessional staff, but as one of the [senior managers] said he is quite horrified at the number we have to undertake what he would say is our core activity. At the end of the day we are outsourcing it to sessional staff, but he just feels that the university hasn’t really taken a serious view on it to say let’s put a stop to this. It’s a much bigger issue than a local issue (Sandy, New University, December 2011).

A faculty based senior manager at Old University reported a similar pattern of budget tightening. She described continuing budget constraints which had meant that staff that had left had not been replaced, and a staffing profile that was largely dictated by budget rather than any strategic planning:

My impression initially is that it has been largely budget, budget dictates, it is a very tight budget at the moment. We haven’t been able to replace a number of staff who have resigned over the last couple of years (Lattitia, Old University, January 2012).

Another implication of tight budgets was that rather than being able to develop a staff profile strategically, and deal with workforce renewal, the more common position was one of ‘holding the line’, as this senior manager described: ‘it’s been the case of trying
the defend the budget and defend those positions. We are up to establishment in this School, it’s been a lot of hard work making that happen.’ (Trish, New University, July 2011). When questioned about the notion of ‘establishment’ she reported that this is determined historically rather than being a model which endeavoured to plan for the future. At Old University a similar observation was made about a desire to plan staffing decisions, as against the reality: ‘I always live in hope [about being more strategic], one of the things [inherent in course provision in this discipline] is that there is very little discretionary money left in budgets to be more strategic in staffing’ (Latitia, Old University, January 2012).

The perceived barriers to creating more secure academic positions were raised and discussed with each of the senior managers. One senior manager’s concerns with converting casual positions to more secure positions related to provision of offices, and how research opportunities would be offered: ‘how many new offices would you need? It’s a strange thing to think about. You would need to think about how you provide research opportunities’ (Mandy, New University, July 2011). For another senior manager it was the disconnection between strategy and budgets: ‘I think the other thing that has occurred is that we have had strategic process there, and here the financial planning process, and ne’er the twain shall meet’ (Desmond, New University, July 2011). Whilst this manager admitted his levels of casual academics were unsustainably high, he was not optimistic that the situation would change in the near future.

One senior manager offered an insight into how the hourly rate nature of casual academic work shaped her management judgement about offering fewer hours of work to more casual staff, rather than allowing a smaller number to have a greater share of work. As one of the few senior managers who had previously worked as a casual academic, she was more aware than most about the consequences of her management judgement:

I could reduce the number of sessionals and give more work to some of them. There are a couple who would like that. However, from my experience, because I do tend to lose a core each year and have more come on board, I have preferred to err on the side of more, rather than put all my eggs in one basket. That’s, I suppose, a slightly unfair position for the sessionals, but it’s a position I’ve taken. It was a conscious decision, a management judgement (Fatima, New University, July 2011).
The interviews with senior managers explored how staffing decisions were made in their schools and faculties and what decisions were taken about replacing staff, recruiting new staff, and planning for the future. At both universities, two factors determined staffing decisions. First, the amount of funds available was a critical constraint. Schools and faculties appeared to be constrained to staffing levels determined in the past, and as those levels were squeezed further work, in the form of growing student numbers, was automatically pushed onto casual staff. These permanent staffing levels appeared to bear no relevance to student numbers, as some senior managers testified. Second, how those funds were managed, and how those decisions were made appeared to be something the senior managers had very little influence over. The hourly rate calculation of casual employment shaped particular management responses to ‘flexibility’ and risk. At each management level decisions were made within a series of constraints, and judgements exercised within those contexts, often against wider interests or better judgements. The evolving budget model at Old University appeared to be driving far reaching differences between resource rich and resource poor faculties.

The lack of strategic planning and a structured approach to workforce development was stark from the interviews at both universities, and was a point that many senior managers commented upon. The lack of capacity for strategic decision-making about workforce planning and development appeared to stem from the limited basis upon which senior managers could exercise judgement and plan ahead. Further, the default response to dealing with staffing issues, and student variability, particularly student growth, by employing more casual academic staff, highlighted the entrenched processes of casualisation.

**Risks associated with high levels of casualisation**

*It’s a curious way to run a university that the teaching – the core business – is done by the most marginalised members of the community, and this impacts on both the casuals and the ongoing staff (Josephine, New University, July 2011).*

In Chapter 2 an emerging literature on the links between high levels of insecure academic employment and outcomes for undergraduate students was examined. The impact of high levels of insecure and poorly supported academic staff on student engagement was observed to be related to the nature of their employment and their very
tenuous association with their universities (Ehrenberg 2012; Umbach 2007). The links between casual academic employment and impact on student learning have only recently been considered and this literature is very limited (see Gilbert 2013).

During the interviews with senior managers at New University it became apparent that they were keenly aware of the risks to the university from employing large numbers of casual academic staff. Concerns ranged from student attrition, (widely acknowledged as a problem at New University), students’ experience, and the impacts on other staff. They also acknowledged the reality that sometimes casual staff left part the way during the semester creating all kinds of headaches for those left behind: ‘I think there are a lot of risks with sessional employment. I think that one of the risks is that they can just up and go, and they do, and leave you high and dry. It’s happened here’ (Trish, New University, July 2011).

Senior management were very aware of the high exposure first year undergraduates in particular, had to casual staff, and the clash between those students’ needs for extra support and the realities of casual staff with limited time and capacity to provide such support: ‘You can’t look at student experience without looking at what we are doing with our sessional staff. They are often the people standing there as ambassadors for [New University], especially first year students’ (Sandy, New University, November 2011).

The senior managers with long working careers at New University reflected on the changes that had occurred during their working lives. One focused on the dramatic increases in tutorial sizes and the impact that had upon teaching quality and the student experience:

    The faculty has an upper number of 32, so potentially you could have a tute of 31. It was 18-20 when I was first teaching. So, not only has the number of students increased, the number of hours you have them for has decreased (Josephine, New University, July 2011).

In a different faculty, large increases in staff student ratios were also observed: ‘One of the other new elements over the last 20 years is an increase in the student staff ratio, larger classes. It’s been quite pronounced in this university’ (Jeff, New University, June 2011).
The impact of large numbers of teaching staff employed casually exposed the university to a range of risks, as the university was unable to offer any real inducement, or reward, for casual academic commitment, a point acknowledged by one senior manager:

*Simple fact is that if you are being paid on an hourly rate to turn up and present, unless you see it as an opportunity to strut your stuff, or you have a particular commitment to the experience beyond what you get paid, people are going to do the effort for which they are rewarded* (Desmond, New University, July 2011).

New University senior managers were aware of the high student attrition rate in first year, in part, a number argued, attributable to good students leaving for higher ranked universities, and in part due to students being taken in who struggled with university standard work. A number of New University senior managers suggested that adding high numbers of casual teaching staff in first year subjects to the mix did not help the problem. The growing awareness of issues with student attrition and the student experience was not yet supported by hard data argued one senior manager, suggesting that once it was it would be easier to argue for improved practises:

*I think if we can start to get some evidence based data on that then I think people will say I see what you mean, we really have to do something. There are some really bad pockets of really bad practise* (Sandy, New University, November 2011)

The fact that quality was at risk seemed to be acknowledged at New University. Further, there was an understanding that the university relied heavily on the goodwill of its casual academics, and this was not sustainable: ‘You are relying on the goodwill and passion of those teachers, which they might have for a while, but after a while it will probably wane a bit if they don’t feel it paying off for them.’ (Sandy, New University, November 2011). Sandy worried that unless New University was able to demonstrate an obvious career path, or visibly recognise the value and importance of its casual workforce then the goodwill would begin to evaporate.

The tensions of balancing teaching and research in a research intensive university such as Old University were apparent in Latitia’s observations, both from her experience in a senior academic role at another university, and in her current role at Old University. In her view this had an impact on teaching quality: ‘When we improved our research, our teaching and learning evaluations went down. It’s really difficult to keep both up there’ (Latitia, Old University, January 2012).
The focus on research was important as her Department had to keep up its reputation and the high score from the recent research evaluation exercise, and also bring in much needed research funds to help the department develop. However, having a strong research focus had a variety of effects; good researchers needed to be freed from teaching requirements, but tight budgets meant they still needed to do some teaching. The faculty had recently trialled the introduction of a number of ‘teaching focused’ positions, a feature of Old University’s collective agreement. Staff appointed to those positions had a higher teaching load than teaching and research academics. The options for the newly appointed teaching focused level B academics were limited though, with future promotion depending on attaining a PhD and a research record, something which Latitia acknowledged was very difficult to achieve with a high teaching load.

At New University a senior manager in a faculty with high levels of casualisation expressed his concern about the nature of the particular labour market for casual academic staff, and as a consequence, the quality of the casual staff who were employed. He proffered the view that just as New University was often a university of last resort for students, it may be an employer of last resort for some casual academic staff: ‘I suspect we have people who are teaching in our classes who are doing so because they couldn’t actually do it anywhere else’ (Desmond, New University, July 2011).

Megan, a senior administrator at Old University, felt that the high levels of casualisation she observed in the faculties she worked within presented a degree of risk to the organisation: ‘mostly from the perspective of reputation’ (Megan, Old University, July 2011). This was due to the lack of visibility of these staff within the faculties and the lack of contact the university overall had with them. Risks were reinforced by what she described as an inadequate IT system, adapted beyond its capability, and unable to produce good data on the casual workforce:

‘They just fill in their form. We don’t necessarily have any interaction with them and we don’t even induct them [at faculty level]. They have an induction at the local level. Often they are in at night as well, they are not visible’ (Megan, Old University, July 2011).

The interviews with senior managers at New University showed there was a good deal of awareness and concern about the impact of high levels of casualisation on the student experience, and the risks this presented. The senior managers acknowledged that the casual employment relationship was somewhat one-sided, as the university offered little
in the way of inducement or reward for commitment, but it expected a great deal of goodwill and commitment from the casual academic staff. The sustainability of this strategy was questioned by many senior managers. Despite this they did not see an alternative, or not at least one that was within their control.

**The causes of casualisation**

The interviews explored the senior managers’ views of casualisation, what they thought were the reasons behind casualisation, and what might change the situation. A range of views were elicited and not all of the senior managers reported a heavy reliance on casual academic staff. In Latitia’s faculty, fixed-term contracts appeared to be the preferred mode for dealing with variable student load, and special course offerings. Megan expressed the view that increased casualisation was in large measure attributed to caution in hiring due to a perception that once an academic was hired it was hard to dismiss them. She argued that the effect of recent changes to university collective agreements, in particular the re-introduced requirements limiting the use of fixed-term contracts of employment to a range of special categories (the so-called HECE provisions), was to increase casual appointments. She explained: ‘Once you are ongoing, you have to go through a whole very extensive process to put someone off. That leads managers to be cautious, and make sure they hire casuals’ (Megan, Old University, November 2011).

A similar view was offered by Josephine who suggested that not being able to put academics on fixed-term contracts first, to ensure they were suitable for the work in the longer term, created problems:

> Once the union took the contract away [this made it difficult to hire new PhDs]. We used to be able to put people on contract and if it didn’t work out then you don’t renew the contract. Not everyone is well suited to dealing with young people (Joesphine, New University, July 2011).

One manager expressed inevitability about the need for casual staff although the balance between core and non-core was critical. She said: ‘We will always need sessionals, you will always have some need for a flexible labour force. It’s about balance, it’s not good to have mostly non-core. It’s much better to have the core labour force that you nurture and develop’ (Trish, New University, July 2011).
The senior managers also had a variety of views about the profile of their casual academic staff. Most tended to over-emphasise the ‘choice’ aspect of the work for many casual staff. Fatima described the three categories of casual staff she saw amongst her workforce: ‘I’m just thinking numbers, 40 per cent [are] looking for something more, 40 per cent its lifestyle, and for 20 per cent it fits with study so they couldn’t do much more at the moment’ (Fatima, New University, July 2011).

Sandy also argued that casual work suited many of those employed at New University but she noted with some pride that when a block of academic jobs were offered five years ago, almost half were filled by current New University casual academics, suggesting that there was a good proportion who were looking for more security.

Some of the managers seemed to suggest that casualisation was associated with perceptions that once someone was hired for a continuing academic position they could not be fired, and that restrictions on fixed-term contracts, where potential continuing staff could be tested out, also drove casualisation. Countering this was a sense that too many casuals was not necessarily a good thing and that a balance between a core staff and periphery was important.

**Changes in the academic career path**

The survey evidence in Chapter 4, and the interviews with casual academics in Chapter 6 suggest that due to the extent of casual academic employment in Australia the traditional academic career path is no longer available for a substantial proportion of those endeavouring to enter the academic profession. This evidence is supported by the observations of many of the senior managers who had spent their entire career in the university sector. The changes to the academic profession and the academic career path can be summarised by three major themes. First, there were a range of observations offered about the raised entry standards for an academic position. A senior manager, who had been in academia for over twenty years observed:

> I think it is [harder to get an academic job]. It was changing as I entered the game. Certainly up til the early 90’s you could have a happy academic career to senior lecturer [academic level C] with a Masters. These days you are unlikely to be appointed even to a level A without a PhD (Desmond, New University, July 2011).
Second, there was widespread acknowledgement that very few entry-level positions had been advertised recently, a consequence of the tight budget environment discussed earlier in this section. On the occasions that entry level academic positions were able to be advertised, senior managers at both universities offered the same observations as the casual academics who were interviewed; competition was fierce, standards were high and the threshold for entry had risen considerably. By way of example, this senior manager notes that to be considered for an entry level academic position:

*You need a PhD for a start. Sessionals need to be thinking about the need for these sort of level qualifications and increasingly we are looking for the actual teaching skills. We will be encouraging sessionals to do the graduate certificate to get teaching skills as well (Jeff, New University, June 2011).*

Despite all of these requirements, he went on to observe, ‘we have had so few ongoing jobs advertised’ (Jeff, New University, June 2011) and at the same time there has been a greater influx of international applicants; a welcome development which meant that attracting and retaining academic staff was not going to be the problem that had been forecast: ‘I assumed we would face a shortage, and be in difficulties, but we have had interest from overseas as well. I’m not seeing it [recruitment of academics] as such a big issue’ (Jeff, New University, June 2011). He noted that the trend for academics to work past traditional retirement age, and the deterioration of academic working conditions in North America and Europe, had meant concerns about mass retirements and skill shortages in 5-10 years were less likely to eventuate.

Third, the consequence of fewer opportunities for entry points, and higher entry thresholds, was that for casual academic staff there was no sign-posted career path into academia. This point was highlighted by a New University senior manager, who described how a long term casual was recently overlooked when an academic position in her faculty was advertised, and they were inundated with ‘amazing applicants’ with excellent publication records. The teaching work the casual performed, upon being advertised as a continuing level B teaching and research position, attracted a wide ranging and more appealing set of applicants, leaving the casual who had taught the subject for ten years uncompetitive and without employment. This example adds to the data discussed in Chapter 4 and the literature discussed in Chapter 2 that described a segmented labour market. This example illustrates how the casual academic labour market is decoupled from the continuing academic labour market, in part because of the way the work is delineated. For the casual academic performing the teaching
component of the academic job, over a long period of time, there was no mechanism for him to become competitive for a continuing position. Indeed it appeared that the long period of time spent in the casual position rendered him uncompetitive.

In summary, these changes in the academic career path, raised entry standards, fewer positions and lack of entry signposts combined to produce an academic labour market completely different to the one many of the senior managers were part of when they began their academic careers. Only one of the senior managers had any experience of casual academic employment, and all were fairly removed from the realities and impacts of these changes for new entrants to academia.

**Summary: The senior managers’ interviews**

The limited number of interviewees from Old University makes comparisons across the two universities, from the perspectives of senior managers, difficult. The high level of participation by senior managers at New University provided useful material, particularly on the impacts of devolved budgeting, and on the changed nature of academic work, given that many senior managers had very long careers at New University.

The explanations given by each of the New University senior managers about how the budget process worked underscored the complexity of budgeting processes, and the difficulties associated with making changes to these processes. Each manager had a different understanding of the budget process and how it was applied. Their own capacity to effect changes to the process appeared limited despite a number reflecting on how unsustainable the levels of casual academic employment were.

The interviews also provide an insight into how the application of labour is determined by its form, described by one senior manager as ‘not putting all the eggs in one basket’, when she explained why she didn’t give more work to a smaller number of casual academic staff, despite the fact that she knew there were many who would prefer that. The flexibility of casual academic employment obscured any obligation or desire to provide job security because of the temporary nature of the work itself. Casual academic staff had high levels of turnover, and casual academic work ebbed and flowed, leaving neither party willing to commit to the other. Some senior managers at New University suggested that the standard of casual academic staff as a consequence of the inherent insecurity of the work was lower, and there were negative impacts for students. However budget constraints, and the budget driven nature of decision making
reduced any capacity for workforce planning. Managerial decision making was tightly prescribed for each layer of management, providing an illusion of power to manage staffing decisions that was often not matched by reality.
PART II – Interviews with the academic managers

In this section the interviews with academic staff are discussed. In all fourteen academic staff were interviewed, eight at New University and six at Old University, each of whom had some level of responsibility for the management of casual academic staff. The task of managing casual academic staff is now commonplace amongst academic staff in Australian universities. The WCAU survey of academic staff found that the vast majority of teaching and research academic staff, some 69 per cent, had responsibility for managing casual academics, and half managed between one and five staff (see Appendix D).

This section explores the implications managing casual academic staff had for academic staff. This is an area that has received a very limited attention in the literature, as discussed in Chapter 2 (see Coates et al. 2009b; Lazarsfeld Jensen and Morgan 2009). That literature pointed to work intensification resulting from the additional responsibilities, lack of recognition of the work involved in managing casual academics, and lack of support for the management role, as issues for academic staff. Reformulated SLM theory points to conflicts and contradictions inherent in changing employment practices such that employer strategies to drive flexibility through a secondary workforce can also have an impact on the core workforce (Rubery 2005, p. 272). The interviews reveal how the imposition of a supervision and management role for casual academic staff on academic staff impacts their workload. The impacts are often invisible and unaccounted for. Many academics are aware of how important their management role is, both in terms of the career development of the casuals they manage, and in terms of the impacts on students. Few felt supported in that role.

The discussion is structured as follows:

- The recruitment and development of casual academic staff; including
  - supporting casual academic staff and awareness of policy and industrial provisions;
- Outcomes for academic staff – the impact of the management role including;
  - management styles and;
  - managing teaching quality;
- Academics’ own experiences of casualisation; including
  - explanations for casualisation from the academics’ perspectives, and

264
the changing academic career path

The section begins with a short summary of the reflections of one of the academics interviewed, Connie, who, at the time of interview was preparing to retire, having spent her whole academic career at Old University. Her own early experiences as a casual academic in the 1970s provide an interesting backdrop to this section.

Connie’s story – how far have we come?

I had worked for 3 years in research, when I had my first child there was no maternity in those days. Once you were pregnant you were supposed to tell them. I had a nice boss who said when you get pregnant you work for as long as you are comfortable, but when it gets obvious you will have to go (Connie, Old University, December 2011).

Connie’s career began at Old University in the late 1960s, pre-dating maternity leave, and award or collective bargaining coverage for universities. In the 1960s pregnancy generally signalled the end of a woman’s working life, although after the birth of her child, Connie found being at home isolating and returned to work less than a decade later as a casual academic, work she found through a professional network. At that time casual pay rates were set by salary determinations, and with large amounts of managerial discretion. She described her then boss as ‘an absolute misogynist, [who] believed it was our ‘pin money’. She described how she and her fellow (all female) casuals gathered off campus at a colleague’s house one night to discuss their pay and working conditions, vowing to seek an improvement. A delegation of three women met with the head of department and won a series of improvements, including in the structure of the casual rate of pay, access to amenities such as lockers, and access to support and professional development. Connie secured a fractional fixed-term level A appointment in the 1980s, the fractional level set such that the Department did not have to pay superannuation. She managed to save enough from her salary to put a deposit on a small house in lieu of super. It turned out to be ‘a far better investment than my Unisuper, but I didn’t know that at the time!’ Her appointment fraction increased until she went full-time in the 1990s and then later in that decade secured an continuing level A position when another staff member left. Connie never undertook her PhD, noting that by the time she had completed her Masters she was: ‘sick of being poor basically. I went to a government high school, my parents were not wealthy. I am the first in my family to go to university. I had to work.’
Connie specialised in teaching, and won many teaching awards. She fought hard to secure promotion to level B, after threatening to leave for another University. Two years ago in her mid 60s she was promoted to level C. After more than 40 years at Old University, Connie retired at the end of 2011.

The recruitment and development of casual academic staff

The findings from the WCAU survey for casual academic staff discussed in Chapter 4 and the casuals’ interviews discussed in Chapter 6 indicated that recruitment, and appointment of casual academic staff was informal and highly localised. The responsibility for ensuring casual academic staff are hired to lecture, tutor, or demonstrate for particular courses rests with the academic staff member coordinating the particular course or unit. The responsibility has a range of implications for academics, and essentially means they take on a quasi human resource management role, one they are generally not trained for. Casual academic staff, as the survey and interview data have shown, come from diverse backgrounds, bringing a variety of expertise. Many are not familiar with the university environment, and require support. The management of casual staff is a very common component of an academic job, but it is one that has received little attention or recognition, particularly in relation to the impact on workload.

Academics at Old University described a variety of hiring practices, ranging from somewhat structured, to ad-hoc and informal, and these varied by Department. In some cases at Old University, especially in large or core subjects, recruitment processes were handled by administrative staff. In two Schools at Old University it was identified that there was a systematic call for expressions of interest for casual teaching work each semester and selection which involved, for new applicants, checking of CVs, an informal chat and sometimes an interview. Another school took a collective senior staff decision about who would be offered work. Old University academics consistently advised that preference should always be given to local post-graduate students, and in some areas industry expertise was also sought after and valued.

Interviews with academic staff at New University confirmed that recruitment of casual academic staff was a very ad-hoc, and the impact this had on those academic staff was explored. The absence of a large pool of post-graduate students at New University meant that recruitment practices were less structured. In sourcing casual academic staff academics had to cultivate a network of contacts, and often explore colleagues’
networks as well. Jim’s description of how he found his casual staff was a common one: ‘Mainly through contacts, word of mouth, and recommendations. [Then I say] let’s have a chat, see if you are interested. There is no formal interview process as such’ (Jim, New University, June 2011). The process was often ‘hit or miss’ and academics developed strategies for working out who they thought would be suitable for the work. This had its limitations as Gen, who often managed up to 20 casual academic staff, observed, and it took place outside any formal recruitment processes of the university, completely unsupported: ‘You have to filter them out, there is nothing formalised. I have no quals (sic) I just go on gut instincts, and hopefully common sense, but realistically, I should have some training on that you know’ (Gen, New University, June 2011).

The notion of hiring someone ‘good’, as reported by the casual academic interviewees, was confirmed, and the academics interviewed across both universities had a pretty clear idea that ‘good’ was a combination of someone who was easy to work with, would ‘deliver’, and did not incur student complaints. It was not necessarily the ‘best and the brightest’. A New University academic described how he rewarded loyalty over a brilliant CV and this was the advice he got from colleagues: ‘Over time you become very conscious of rewarding loyalty by being loyal. You go out of your way to find people who you know will deliver and see the program through’ (Joe, New University, June 2011). The only way he was able to reward loyalty though was through first refusal on future work, where he was confident that the work would be available.

At Old University, student evaluation scores were also factored into hiring considerations, although none of the academics suggested that student evaluation scores alone was an appropriate measure of performance. This was contrary to the perceptions of casual academics who believed that there was a very clear relationship between poor scores and no more work. At New University, student evaluation scores did not appear to feature in any of the hiring or management of casual academic staff. By way of explanation for this, one New University academic, who said that he would like to make use of such data in order to improve performance, noted that whilst the data was collected, its distribution was so delayed it was not of any use.

All of the academics across both universities noted the high turnover associated, in particular, with casual tutoring. Many academics who taught large classes estimated that they would turn over half to two-thirds of their casual tutors each year. The high turnover of tutors, which was a function of the seasonal nature of employment and the
labour supply, had a number of implications. First, for those at Old University involved in the direct supervision of tutors teaching into large classes, high turnover meant there was a constant and ongoing provision of induction, training and support, and for those in better resourced schools this was quite regularised. At New University where induction and support was less common, the transient nature of the casual workforce sometimes had disastrous consequences for continuity and teaching quality. One academic described a situation where a casual academic had left part way through semester without notice, something that was not common, but did happen.

Second, the very temporary nature of the employment contract also was used as a de-facto performance management tool, particularly at Old University where many schools appeared to have the systems in place, and a sufficient labour supply to do this. Tutors deemed not to be ‘good’ were not asked back, as Loretta attests: ‘They get evaluated and that gets reviewed, if they haven’t performed well they don’t get rehired’ (Loretta, Old University, December 2011). Decisions about not re-hiring were made internally, and without subject to any recourse for the affected individual; no particular procedures were followed and managerial discretion and prerogative were key features. At New University similar decisions were made, but without recourse to student evaluation data. A New University academic described her strategy for recruiting casual academic staff: ‘Usually I have my favourites. I pick the ones I know will turn up and do the job, and not get complaints’ (Kate, New University, September 2011).

Third, the absence of an obligation to provide work beyond the semester was a double edged sword, offering academic managers both benefits described above, in the form of de-facto performance management, as well as challenges. Academics all tried to construct ways to offer the security of future work to those staff they wanted to keep but at the same time had to be careful not to over promise. Selecting new tutors was an acquired skill. Bron described how she had developed a sense for who would be suitable for the work: ‘I have got to the point where if I have a bad feeling about someone, I won’t hire them, and just wait for the next one. I have tried to improve the quality [of hiring]’ (Bron, Old University, April 2012). Bron’s preference was for tutors to be hired on a more secure basis such that they would see a career path, and could be properly developed and supported. Under the current system she believed that many felt it was not worth spending time improving their performance.

Connie, whose story was discussed at the start of the section, had worked as a casual academic in the 1970s. In her view the structures around casual employment had
improved greatly over the years, and she felt that a much more professional approach towards the employment and support of casual academic staff was now apparent. Despite this more professional approach, Connie observed that in her discipline it was increasingly difficult to recruit casual academic staff:

We are finding problems now, not as many students coming through, more women are in the workforce in a different way. In our day you took time out with kids. It’s an era that’s changing, and someone has to pay the mortgage. Why would they bother coming here when there is no security? (Connie, Old University, December 2011).

In summary, the interviews reinforced earlier findings that the hiring of casual academic staff was very informal and ad-hoc, and required academic managers to adopt a range of strategies in order to ensure they kept a steady flow of suitable labour. These recruitment processes were in sharp contrast with what applied to appointment for continuing academic positions, marking a clear difference in the two labour markets. Where recruitment practices for casual academics were somewhat more regularised, the insecure nature of the casual employment contract served as a de facto performance management tool, in conjunction with the use of student evaluation scores. From a management point of view this was a relatively effective approach as long as there was a steady supply of labour. This was a function of having an active research higher degree cohort of students, a sharp point of difference between Old University and New University. For New University the lack of such a consistent labour supply sometimes had a negative impact on the capacity to deliver teaching and manage standards.

**Supporting casual academic staff: Awareness of policy and industrial provisions**

In Chapter 5 the different policy frameworks at each university were discussed. New University offered a range of benefits to casual academic staff through policy and industrial arrangements and these benefits offered potential for a positive impact on casuals’ experience of work and career prospects. Old University, on the other hand, only had a framework of minimum provisions, both policy and industrial, for casual academic staff. The interviews with academic managers explored awareness of policy and industrial provisions, and how this awareness or otherwise impacted on the experience for both academics and casual academic staff.

At New University very low awareness of the various provisions for casual academic staff, including even the most basic of the provisions, amongst academic managers was
striking. One academic manager who was responsible for the management of around 20 casual academic staff, was unaware of how the hourly rate payment was constructed for casual academic staff, and that it included payment for additional hours beyond that of the face to face teaching. As a consequence she thought they were paid only for their hours spent in class, and did not expect them to do any preparation or follow up with students. An early career academic herself, she had not sought advice from central administration in relation to her role with casual staff, nor had any been offered. Nor did she receive support for her role from within her own Department. She explained how as a consequence she ended up dealing with all the student inquiries, some of which could have been dealt with by her casual academic staff:

See I didn’t know that, I didn’t know that at all. My understanding is they get the repeat tute rate because there is no preparation involved with that, I didn’t realise that. I end up doing all the inquiries because I am here (Gen, New University, June 2011).

Similarly, awareness about professional development opportunities for casual staff was extremely low and as a consequence academics did not suggest to their casual staff that they should seek out professional development. Joe reported that he would have liked his casual academics to undertake professional development but: ‘Who would pay for it? There is no policy that says the head of school should pay them to and require them to. There is a standard form for hiring sessionals, nowhere on that form does it say tick for induction’ (Joe, New University, June 2011). Joe was unaware of the policy and industrial provision for induction and as a result none of his casual academic staff had undertaken any induction. Many of the interviewees at New University were early career academics and were not well supported, and this impacted on their capacity to provide support for their casual staff. Another early career academic, Steph noted that she had not had any follow up as part of her probationary period, or any professional development herself: ‘apart from the head of the unit [who] has been very supportive, but no official support, no mentor.’ (Steph, New University, September 2011).

Mike had begun to introduce some training for casual academic staff in his area, with the support of his head of department: ‘we are now paying sessionals to come to training. We pay them to turn up to teaching and learning seminars. We invite them to school meetings, not sure if they get paid for that.’ (Mike, New University, June 2011). These were all local initiatives of his own doing and were not widespread in his Department.
The situation for academics at Old University was quite different, where particularly for those in well resourced large faculties, the application of policy provisions such as standardised inductions, access to email, library accounts and so on, was attended to by administrative staff, and in many cases the provision of resources for casual academic staff exceeded that required by policy and industrial agreement. Despite this, within and across faculties, there appeared to be quite a wide variation in the levels of support and systems in place to manage casual staff and to ensure consistent quality of teaching. Even in well resourced faculties the academics admitted that the support and training given to casual staff was often highly variable, and dependent on a range of factors including the nature of the subject being taught, and the approach of the individual academic to the management of casual staff. Large core subjects with highly standardised curriculum enjoyed wide ranging administrative support, which in a few areas included the provision of an ongoing senior tutor role. In smaller subjects academics had control over how much or how little support and training they provided, and the responsibility for this was theirs alone. In this broad context where there were systems and resources to ensure policies were applied, the knowledge or otherwise of the academic staff about those policies assumed less importance.

In summary, the practical effect of written policies and industrial arrangements for casual academic staff was mediated by resourcing, administrative support and levels of awareness amongst academic managers. In the case of the well resourced faculties at Old University, good administrative supports and resources meant the minimum policy and industrial provisions in relation to obligations upon appointment, and access to facilities and resources, were often met and exceeded. By contrast, at New University, poor administrative support, lack of resources and the low awareness of policy and industrial provisions amongst academic managers meant that good policies on paper were rarely translated into reality for casual academic staff. This was also related to the poor support given to those academics, many who were early in their careers and had spent some time as casual academics themselves. The institutional invisibility of casual academia had permeated the early career academics’ experiences of continuing employment as well.

**Outcomes for academic staff – the impact of the management role**

The impact of having to assume a management role in relation to casual academic staff varied for the academics depending on a range of factors. Some were able to minimise
the associated work as there were resources available in their schools and faculties for this. Others, particularly those who had worked in casual roles during their own careers, took a more hands-on approach out of concern for the casual academic and also with an eye to teaching quality. Most academics assumed the management role reluctantly, and like that of the casual, the associated work was invisible, unrecognised and largely unsupported. Efforts to improve conditions for casual staff generally resulted in more work for the academic.

**Management styles**

Given the significant management role undertaken by the academics interviewed, the support provided for that role and what underpinned the approach they took to the role was of interest. It was apparent that a great deal of discretion was afforded to the academics in both universities in terms of how they approached the task of managing their casual staff. Management styles appeared to be mediated by a series of factors including, levels of administrative support in the school, the academic’s own experiences of casual work, and their individual career priorities. For the academics at Old University who worked in the better resourced schools and faculties, a range of administrative supports alleviated much of the more day to day burdensome supervisory responsibilities, particularly for those teaching large classes. Loretta and Cleo, both very research focused academics relied on the extra support to allow them a fairly hands off approach. Loretta noted, ‘I think it’s about having good systems in place, picking quality people, training them well. All those things make a difference, making sure they are enjoying tutoring.’ (Loretta, Old University, December 2011). Similarly, Cleo argued that the heavy research emphasis and research requirements on academic staff meant that the department had an obligation not to burden staff with management responsibilities: ‘We hire people to manage casuals, it’s done well. It’s built up as our numbers have built, they want us to do research, and so we are freed from those admin tasks’ (Cleo, Old University, December 2011).

By contrast, Helen, who worked in the same Old University faculty as Cleo, took a different approach, and commented on the differences she had observed in approach between academics, like herself, who had experience of working as a casual, and those academics that had not had that experience. She argued that the different management styles were also related to gender, and sometimes to country of origin of the academic. She felt that women often took on more pastoral care in relation to their students and
casual academic staff, as this was expected of them. As a relative newcomer to academia she reflected on her how she saw the academic profession:

*It’s not cooperative or collegial, and people don’t get rewarded for doing all of that organisational citizenship type stuff. People get rewarded for individual achievement and there are no consequences for behaving badly towards tutors. The only consequence is that tutors have some choice over who they work for* (Helen, Old University, April 2011).

Similar to Helen, Connie and Bron’s management practices were informed by their own experiences as casual academics, and their desire to improve on the short comings they experienced. Bron explained: ‘I’ve tried to put in place practical things I would have liked to have seen when I was a casual. I was just told here is the text book, go and teach’ (Bron, Old University, April 2012). Connie made a lot of effort to create social, and development opportunities for her casual academic staff, and used breaks between classes to offer the opportunity for some professional development and personal nurturing: ‘It’s a small thing but if people only realised sometimes if you are not in a financial position to do big things for your sessionals, you can still find a spot for them to keep their things’ (Connie, Old University, December 2011). Samanithi believed it was part of her role as a senior academic to mentor both her own post-graduate students in relation to their casual teaching, as well as the casuals teaching into her courses. She felt motivated to assist casual academic staff where she saw bad practice that needed to be improved: ‘The thing I have noticed is how variable it is, the amount of support they get in our School. I have had a number of people complain. My feeling is people are getting less informal mentoring’ (Samanithi, Old University, May 2012).

At New University, the absence of administrative support meant that academics had no choice but to take a highly administrative approach, and often this was out of concern for the impact on students. As a recent recruit to New University, Mike favoured a more structured approach to the management of his casual academic staff, with lesson plans written by unit coordinators that include tutorial material, and clear guidance to tutors as to what should be covered. He expressed concern about the variety of practice he observed in his area. Similarly, Jim gave clear guidance to his casual staff and saw that his job was to provide the structure and framework for the tutorial. Joe argued there were two important skills for managing sessionals: ‘one is assessing performance and the other is in giving feedback’ (Joe, academic, New University, June 2011). He felt all academics should be given some basic training in how to manage casual staff: ‘*I reckon*
that should be a basic of induction to work here [as an academic]. If you are going to work here you will manage sessionals and if you do that badly you will ruin someone’s life, not to mention the students as well’ (Joe, New University, June 2011).

In summary, management styles and approaches varied considerably depending on the level of administrative support the academic had, how focused they were on their own research, and where they had experience of casual work themselves, how motivated they were to improve on that experience for others. It is fair to say that most academics were reluctant managers, being required to perform work that was unrecognised, and often unsupported. Concern for their casual academic staff was common, and many academic managers did what they could to improve working conditions. However, their capacity to do so was highly constrained, and often at the expense of higher workloads for themselves.

**Managing teaching quality**

The academic managers’ perceptions of teaching quality issues and the risks associated with casualisation were explored in the interviews. The student cohort at each of the universities was quite different, and this was found to shape the issue in a distinct way at each university. A different perspective of the impact of casualisation on teaching quality emerged from each of the case studies. New University academics were quick to recognise and comment that high levels of casualisation at New University had a direct, often very negative, impact on students. Liz, an academic working in a teaching and learning role at New University, had a keen eye to the issue of student attrition: ‘it’s clear to me that having the amount of sessionals that we do, particularly in first year, where they are concentrated because of the big numbers, is really negative’ (Liz, academic, New University, June 2011).

In contrast, Old University academic managers tended to frame the issue as one of development and support of casual staff and their career paths, possibly because of their closer association with many casual academic staff as their own students. On this issue Old University academics expressed a range of serious concerns about how casual academics were supported and developed:

*My great concern is the casual development. What opportunities do people have to develop themselves in this context if they are constantly being casual? For me part of the piece that is rarely talked about is professional development (Loretta, Old University, December 2011).*
Similarly, Helen worried about the inclusion of casual academics into the collegial life of the department: ‘there isn’t really anything about managing them as employees. They are not regarded as part of the department’ (Helen, Old University, April 2012). Overall, academic managers at Old University, particularly those in the well resourced faculties, tended to assume quality concerns from a student point of view were taken care of by the various induction and student evaluation measures, and by the constant topping up of the labour pool by willing post-graduate students.

As a result of the lack of supports for casual academics at New University, academic managers instead employed a range of individual strategies to attempt to mitigate what they believed were the direct impacts of casualisation on students. Jim described his method of keeping tabs on the performance of his casual staff by maintaining weekly email communication with students. He says: ‘That’s always the gamble with sessionals, you never know if they are going to be any good or not, you rely on a lot of student feedback for that’ (Jim, New University, September 2011).

Gen was very blunt about how when things went wrong with her casual staff, they became her problem: ‘if I don’t look after [quality issues] then I have to wear the complaints, and the students that don’t progress’ (Gen, New University, June 2011). In her School a lack of administrative support, in combination with the particular teaching requirements of her discipline, meant that issues were exacerbated for her:

The main issue for the students [with casuals] is lack of consistency and lack of accessibility, so if I get a casual staff member in week 2, I might not see them again til week 7. Often they are not in the system, and when they are in the system, when the contract runs out the system triggers, they get cut off so there is actually no communication and accessibility for the students (Gen, New University, June 2011).

Kate worried about the varied standards she observed amongst the casual academic staff in her area, with staff sourced from a variety of different places, and very few who brought with them any teaching skills: ‘how do you maintain a standard across in terms of teaching, moderating and marking, that’s the biggest issue’ (Kate, New University, September 2011). She also noted that difficulty in finding casual staff, often sourcing staff at the last minute, had an impact on how classes were delivered and teaching quality: ‘sometimes we struggle to find sessionals and often at the last minute we walk into the PhD office and say who can teach?’ (Kate, New University, September 2011).

Kate described her efforts in trying to improve the management of casual staff in her
discipline more generally by arguing for the appointment of a head tutor or similar position. However, the initiatives were all contingent on being able to access extra money from an already stretched school budget, or begging for money from central administration. Both options, in her assessment, appeared unlikely to be successful.

In some Old University schools and faculties casual academics, particularly in areas of specialty, were becoming more difficult to find. Highly selective use of casual academics in lecturing roles was viewed by academics at Old University as critical to managing quality, and minimising risk. Some academic managers reported that their schools tended not to use casual lecturers in the large first year subjects, and important final year subjects, and that employment of casuals to lecture always brought with it an element of risk: ‘Most of the people we employed sessional [lecturers] to teach whole subjects have done really well, and there are no issues of quality, but there is a perception that you don’t know who your course is being taught by’ (Samanthi, Old University, May 2012). Samanthi offered the example of another university offering courses in the same discipline, where all the subjects were taught by casual staff, which she regarded as ‘really poor’.

At New University there was a consistent view amongst academics that cost cutting was exacerbating casualisation and in turn affecting teaching quality. Mike observed his department head in constant battles with central finance over casual staffing budgets. His department was ruthless about student staff ratios, and cancelled tutorials if student numbers fell below 25. The effect was in the stability of contracts for casual academic staff, and then keeping those staff. He notes:

You wonder why there is a quality problem, but [New University] is very tight to the point of being ridiculous, they think this is a small business. There is a kind of a culture here that this is a business where you have to make money, cut every corner you can, cut every cost you can (Mike, New University, September 2011).

A number of academic managers suggested that the provision of professional development would assist with quality concerns. However, this would need central commitment and funding, and was unlikely to be initiated locally due to lack of funds.

In summary, between, and within institution differences emerged strongly in relation to perceptions of, and responses to, issues of teaching quality. Old University academic managers tended to view teaching quality as something which was dealt with by the processes of induction and support for casual academic staff, although in the less
resourced faculties these processes were not as well established, and concerns were expressed by academics about this. New University academics on the other hand, had a high awareness of the impact of casualisation on teaching quality and used a range of direct interventions to try to lessen the impact. This awareness related not only to the concern about lack of support for casual academic staff but was directly related to the nature of the student cohort at New University, and the additional support that many required. Casualisation also added to workload, and contributed to work intensification for the academic managers, whether it was through their own efforts to mediate quality concerns, through lack of administrative support, or the time taken to search for and hire suitable casual staff.

**Academics’ own experiences of casualisation**

*There is an assumption that [casual staff] are independently wealthy and it’s a hobby, rather than them actually needing the money (Helen, academic, Old University).*

The theoretical framework developed in Figure 2.2 proposes a mechanism for investigating the casualisation of academic employment. The literature and the quantitative data discussed in Chapter 4 raise the question of casual employment becoming a trap rather than the bridge to more secure academic employment that aspiring academics hope for. Increasingly, spending a period of time in insecure academic employment, either casual academic teaching or research, is a common feature of an academic’s career path. There is no Australian research which quantifies the average length of time spent in insecure academic employment prior to securing a continuing position. Nor is there any study which examines whether the period spent in insecure employment before gaining ongoing employment is lengthening for each new cohort of academic staff. What is also unknown is what proportion of aspiring academics give up their search for an academic position and pursue an alternative path.

A recent US study of PhD graduates who completed their studies in the social sciences in the mid to late 1990s established that it took six years before the majority of those aiming for an academic career had found a tenured or tenure-track position (Nerad et al. 2006, p. 12). The authors noted, ‘the path to the professoriate and other stable employment is marked by uncertainty’ (Nerad et al. 2006, p. 2).

These issues were explored with the academic interviewees in order to establish what factors were common to those who had prior experience of casual employment and how
this impacted on their experience of academic employment. All of the academics interviewed at New University had previously worked on a casual academic basis and most had managed the transition to more secure academic work in the very recent period, although only two had made that transition within New University. On the other hand only three of the academics at Old University had worked as casual academics and two had made the transition to more secure employment in the recent period. What differentiated the two groups was that New University academics were younger and newer to academia and Old University academics were older and tended to have traditional linear career paths.

The experience of working as a casual academic had a strong impact on the academics’ awareness, understanding and response to their management role for casual academic staff. The academic staff at each university were quite different in this respect and this was in part a reflection of the career stage of the two groups of staff as mentioned. As a result of their experiences New University academic managers were all highly attuned to the issues of casualisation. Jim was an interesting example of how the experience of working as a casual impacted life as a continuing academic. He was grateful for the transition he had made from casual academic work to a contract position and then a continuing academic position, but admitted that the experience of many years of working in a range of industries and occupations, often on a highly contingent basis, had been scarring. Jim observed that he did not view himself as having a career or a profession, instead his primary identity was one of father and husband, with work simply a means of supporting his family, not an identity. He had sympathy with many of his casual staff: ‘It’s hard, it’s really hard, some of them are older. I think, Christ, I wouldn’t want to be in my 60s thinking, where is the next pay cheque coming from?’ (Jim, New University, September 2011).

Helen was one of only two Old University academics with recent experience of casual academic work. She had struggled to make the transition to continuing academic work, a transition that was eventually achieved after a series of fixed-term positions, many years of casual academic employment, several unsuccessful applications, and a reluctant interstate move for her first continuing job. This was all after a successful career outside the university and a later life PhD, during which she had first-hand experience of what she felt was very poor treatment by university administrative staff. The contrast between her former high status career and her demotion to casual worker status was immense and as a consequence she had thought a lot about the issues for casual staff:
'we rely very heavily on sessionals [lecturers], and on casual tutors and also sessionals who will take responsibility for teaching an entire subject and with no possibility of career or an ongoing job' (Helen, Old University, April 2012).

Connie, with long experience as both a casual academic and now manager of casual staff had firm views about the value of casual work at particular stages of the career path, and life cycle, resulting from her own personal experience; but she believed casual work needed to be limited. The limitations in her mind were around time, how long a person could be employed as a casual, the level of knowledge base required for the particular work, and the level of responsibility. She was realistic about whether such limitations on casualisation would ever be applied and felt that the only real pressure point was accreditation, credentialing, and brand:

‘If most of your credentialing activities are done by casual staff who you treat badly, what does it say about quality?  Reputation and brand is everything. So I think that is the pressure point, morals have nothing to do with it’ (Connie, Old University, December 2011).

Explanations for casualisation from the academics’ perspectives

I don’t think people understand that casual academic work in universities is seasonal. People would not compare it to fruit picking but it is seasonal (Helen, Old University, April 2012).

Most of the Old University academics interviewed expressed some reservations about casualisation, with concerns ranging from pay levels to lack of security and lack of support. Bron who worked most closely with casual staff agreed that the way the pay rates were constructed meant that tutors, particularly new tutors were underpaid, and that marking rates were problematic due to the requirement that tutors provide extensive written feedback to students: ‘ [I think] they are underpaid because they spend a lot of time giving written feedback.  I know it takes a lot of time’ (Bron, Old University, April 2012).

Despite these concerns, working as a casual academic, particularly in a lecturing role, was commonly seen as an essential component to a PhD student’s CV if they were aiming for an academic career. Most of the academics cited examples of their own PhD students, or those that they were aware of in their departments or faculties that had found permanent academic work, after a period of time in casual employment, although it was acknowledged that this was becoming increasingly difficult.
A number of Old University academic managers expressed the view that casuals were increasingly being used to replace continuing staff that had left, and that the critical core of academics was being eroded: ‘*I think it is important that we have enough of the core. The periphery is getting bigger. We need more of the core. I get the sense we have had people leave and those jobs haven’t been replaced*’ (Loretta, Old University, December 2011). Helen thought that casual work represented a very ‘*odd bifurcation*’ of academic work and the gulf between that work, and a continuing position was growing, with positions more difficult to obtain and entry standards rising.

The academics’ perceptions about the motivations and orientations of casual academics to casual work were also explored. In Chapter 4 a typology of casual academic staff was developed, and the data showed that most casual academics (56 per cent) aspired to a more secure academic position. Academic managers tended to believe that casuals had a wide range of motivations and that only a proportion were looking for more secure academic work. This academic commented of her casual staff: ‘*The retired ones don’t want one [an ongoing job], some of the women would like an ongoing job, there are some coming up soon, I will encourage her to apply*’ (Mavis, New University, September 2011). Interestingly one of the ‘retired ones’ she speaks of is Tom, interviewed as one of the New University casual academics. He had expressed his preference for a two or three day a week continuing position when asked about his preferred mode of employment. Mavis, as his local manager, had assumed that because Tom was of retirement age he would prefer casual work. This highlights the capacity for misunderstanding of preferences and ‘choice’ of casual staff and the impact of stereotyping in making assessments about preference. The perceptions held by academic managers could also serve to limit the opportunities provided to their casual academic staff.

On the issue of the value of the ‘industry professional’ as an essential component to undergraduate teaching Mike expressed a strongly negative view: ‘*I have a lot issues with having industry people in. People I think tend to over-rate industry people, and I come from industry*’ (Mike, New University, September 2011).

The academic managers had a range of explanations for why they thought casualisation was occurring. Kate felt that the drive to increase the research profile at New University, in response to government funding, had an impact on casual numbers: ‘*if academics want to do research and the courses can’t be covered by academics here then they have to be covered by sessionals*’ (Kate, New University, September 2011).
Jim saw cost as the driver for all the decisions around casualisation and shared the view of many of the other academics that it was unlikely to change: ‘I think it’s a shame that we are governed not by quality but by cost, and it seems that the university, well everyone says universities weren’t always like that, but they are now, everything is’ (Jim, New University, September 2011). Joe explained what he saw as the ‘push and pull’ factors of casualisation:

The reluctance to hire more permanent staff compounds the existing gravitational pull towards more administration. Units always need teaching, subjects need teaching, and there are always fewer and fewer ongoing staff to teach and not enough administrative rigour to free up admin work to get people back into the classroom (Joe, New University, June 2011).

The views expressed by the academic managers were very much shaped by their own experiences of casual work and of those interviewed all but three, all from Old University, had worked as casual academics during their careers. Their concerns centred around the lack of supports for casual academics and the lack of career path into more secure academic positions, which was combined with a general sentiment that the situation was unlikely to change. Those with recent experience of work as a casual academic tended to view the profession through the broader lens of casualisation, whereas the academics with no experience, or no recent experience of casual academic work commented more on the changing nature of academic work, the hollowing out of the ‘core’ as Loretta referred to. A variety of views were expressed about the motivations of their casual academic staff, again those with recent experience of casual work themselves were more attuned to the issues around career paths and career development. A tendency to make assumptions about casuals’ motivations based on their age was apparent with some academics.

The changing academic career path

The interviews explored the career paths taken by the academic managers and their thoughts on academic work and the changes in the profession. Again the different age and career profile of the two groups of academic staff provided quite different responses. The reflections of these staff, particularly those who had recently transitioned from casual academic employment, provides valuable insights into the
changing nature of the academic career path and the interactions between the internal, academic labour market, and the external, casual academic labour market.

Three of the Old University academics had very long term employment at Old University and had followed a traditional linear academic career path (Toren 1993) with promotion into senior academic positions. Samanthi had held tenured academic positions since completing her PhD, which had followed a Masters and short term research work. Loretta, also a career academic had followed a linear career path which included, like Samanthi, an overseas PhD and overseas experience before returning to a continuing academic position in Australia. Both women observed that the academic career path had changed during the course of their careers.

Samanthi observed two major changes that she felt had a major impact on casualisation. First, the removal of senior tutor and tutor continuing positions in the 1980s, positions which were in her view respected and offered a career path and job security post PhD completion. Second, she observed a significant increasing of the standards for entrance to, and promotion in, academic positions. By way of evidence she compared her own application for her entry level position with that now expected at Level B, noting a significant difference in the expectation in terms of research output, career stage and grant application record. This point was also raised by other interviewees from different faculties and disciplines. Samanthi argued that for academics:

The expectations are higher now, the workload is worse. It’s much more pressured in terms of assessment and evaluation, and there has been a big shift away from valuing time put into teaching towards research (Samanthi, Old University, May 2012).

The school in which she worked rarely hired at level A, and level B applicants were expected to have publications, possibly a research grant and certainly teaching experience. She acknowledged that for a recent PhD graduate to be competitive they would be advised to first look for a ‘post doc’ position. Whilst the ‘post doc’ was a common component of a science based academic career it was less common in the humanities and ‘post doc’ positions were few and far between. She observed that as a consequence many PhD students were also starting to reconsider whether academia was for them.

Loretta felt that the Australian PhD was not competitive particularly compared with those who came through the North American PhD model where students were encouraged to publish during their PhD: ‘the challenge is that the market is bad
overseas, so there is a greater influx of internationals into the Australian market, and we have quite different PhD programs’ (Loretta, Old University, December 2012).

By way of example, Loretta described a recent job advertisement for a level B academic that received a large number of applicants, including many international applications with ‘great records, great teaching and publications’. Working in a research intensive university, and with her own career ambitions, there was a constant pressure to publish, and Loretta admitted to a working week of 45-50 hours which included working most weekends. Helen agreed that the international academic labour market was impacting on the local academic labour market, and that many post-graduate students were reconsidering whether an academic career was possible: ‘It’s so hard to get a permanent position. It seemed to change in about 6 months [during 2010/11]. Suddenly everybody was getting a lot of applicants from UK, Europe and US. There are no jobs there’ (Helen, Old University, April 2012).

The academic interviewees from New University tended not to reflect on changes in the academic career path as they were all either early or mid career academics with fairly recent experience of casual academic employment. Only one of the eight had followed what could broadly be described as a traditional linear career path in the sense that she had obtained a continuing position immediately post PhD. New University academic interviewees were aware of the importance of research on the progression of their careers. Many felt that their workloads were unsustainable due to the juggling of teaching, managing casual academics and the need to develop a research profile. Their workloads were compounded by the particular nature of the student cohort at New University, a student cohort that had a high proportion of those from non English speaking backgrounds, and first in family to go to university. A commitment to their ‘university mission’, common to the casual academics interviewed as well, added further to workload pressures.

Many academic managers commented on the impact the recently introduced workload model was having on casualisation. Joe explained:

The workload model is driving everything. Before the workload model, I taught three subjects per semester, the moment the workload model kicked in, I was down to two courses a semester, now with course coordination and research I can only teach one course a semester (Joe, New University, June 2011).
The workload model had allowed him to carve out time for research, and therefore focus more on his own career progression, but he felt that unless more permanent staff were appointed, the workload model would lead to further casualisation. The bind for academic staff was complex; the more they pursued their own careers by focusing on research, the greater the pressures for further casualisation. The New University senior managers had also expressed concerns with the workload model, and what they saw as a capacity to drive perverse incentives, rewarding administration work over teaching, thus creating more employment of casual academic staff.

For all of the academics, changes to, or demands upon their profession, gave rise to concerns about how this affected the new generation of academic staff. Old University academics observed rising thresholds for entry and difficulties associated with the international labour market and what was seen as an uncompetitive Australian PhD program. For the academics at New University the lack of support for their own careers, combined with an increasingly demanding workload and set of expectations, were also factors associated with casualisation. None of the academics expressed any hope of change. In fact Liz, an early career academic at New University, was an embodiment of the difficulty the sector may face in retaining younger staff into the future. This was a trend identified by a 2011 survey of academic staff which showed 30-40 per cent of young academics plan to leave academia (Bexley et al. 2011, p. 18). Liz reported that at almost 40 years of age, and six years post her PhD, she was more interested in being healthy at 60 than putting in the effort for what she saw as a completely unsustainable workload, profession and sector. As a consequence she had been retraining in a completely unrelated profession and was planning her exit from academia, despite all the years she had invested in her training and her obvious commitment to her work.

Summary – academics who manage casual academic staff

Connie’s story, of 40 years at Old University, which started this section, showed that whilst conditions for casual academics have in many ways improved considerably, significant new problems have emerged which are now of a much greater scale and magnitude. The reflections of those academics who had followed traditional linear career paths in particular, show how much more difficult it is to begin an academic career today, and add to the evidence of a segmented labour market between casual academic and continuing academic staff. These observations reinforce the concerns expressed by casual academics about the difficulties of obtaining more secure
employment, and the survey data which showed the high levels of frustrated academics, especially amongst those with PhDs.

The implications of casualisation for the academic managers appeared to be shaped by the resources available in the particular school or faculty where the academic worked, and by the university in which the academic worked. This finding reinforces the findings discussed in Chapter 4, which showed the importance of academic discipline to a range of important outcomes for casual academics such as career opportunity and job satisfaction. For the academic staff, such as Cleo and Loretta at Old University, who were research focussed, and who worked in well resourced faculties, the employment of casual academic staff assisted their careers as it removed much of their teaching load. They were also assisted by high levels of administrative support which also relieved them of much of the associated administrative responsibilities. For the academics at New University, lack of support meant additional workload pressures, stress and constant pressure to maintain a supply of suitable labour for casual positions. In addition they were forced to develop a range of strategies to mitigate the impacts on students and teaching quality.

The application of a workload model at New University, which tried to account for some of the administrative workload in large courses and increasing student numbers, appeared to have the perverse outcome of creating further casualisation. In addition, the smaller scale, and tighter budgets of New University meant there were few administrative supports for academic staff, which in turn left them with greater autonomy and discretion in the performance of their supervisory roles. For the students, and the university as a whole, it meant no consistency or control over process or outcome. Joe observed:

I see big quality assurance problems that are not adequately addressed. There is nothing systematic about how we supervise [casual academic] staff and nothing systematic about how they conduct their work, except they put in pay claim forms if they want to get their money (Joe, New University, June 2011).

What was consistent amongst all the academics interviewed, in terms of their observations and experiences, was that the recruitment of casual academic staff tended to be a highly informal, largely ad-hoc process that relied on a ready pool of post-graduate students, or in its absence the maintenance of a good network of contacts. Also consistent was the observation of growing and embedded casualisation as a major
component of academic work, although this was experienced differently depending on the university at which the academic was employed. Old University academic staff were more concerned about casual academic professional development and career paths, and less concerned about the impacts casualisation had on students. For New University academics there was a real and immediate concern about the heavy reliance New University had on casual academic staff, and the impact of this on students, compounded by the particular nature and needs of the student cohort. The concerns went to both the structure of the casual academic contract, and the consequent lack of staff presence and availability, and to the quality of some of the casual academic staff due to the difficulty in finding ‘good’ staff. Both of these concerns were likely to be exacerbated by the impacts of the demand driven model of funding, introduced in 2012, and discussed in Chapter 1, where student numbers were uncapped enabling universities to enrol an increased and uncapped, number of students.

Conclusion

A consistent theme across the interviews with academic managers and senior academics at both universities was the ad-hoc nature of the management of casual academic staff, the general lack of workforce planning, and absence of strategic workforce management. The recruitment and management of casual academic staff was highly decentralised and disconnected from any human resource management processes or policies. In fact a number of interviewees commented that the central human resource department was a hindrance to the process, and on occasions academic managers were actively told not to involve them when serious issues arose. Senior management decision making appeared to be chaotic and driven essentially by top-down budget edicts that severely constrained any capacity to plan future staffing decisions. Budgets appeared to be the driver for most activities, and staffing levels and staffing composition flowed from these budgeting processes rather than as a result of any active planning or management. These findings allow for a deeper investigation of the role of the organisation in shaping employment systems (Rubery 2006, p. 13).

Noticeable was the growing distance between casual academic work and a continuing academic position, as evidenced by the experience of longer term academics and senior managers. Their experiences were testament to the changed nature of the academic career path, and illustrated how the entry standard for a continuing academic position had become significantly higher over the past two or three decades. It was no longer
clear how the transition was made from casual employment to a continuing position. The individual stories from the academics that had recently made the transition showed that tenacity and persistence were necessary attributes, and that time spent in insecure academic employment was a financial necessity to be endured during the job search process, rather than anything which necessarily assisted it. The enforced nature of time spent in casual and insecure employment before gaining a continuing position had left many of the academics bitter and scarred, and had not prepared them well for academic work. The experience of those who had made the transition more recently contrasted sharply with the career paths of the longer term academics and senior managers. Many of the longer term academics reflected on the very different entry standards at the time when they entered academia, and the smoother and clearer path from PhD completion to continuing academic employment.

The differing resource levels within and across universities appeared to be the major explanation for whether casual academic staff had access to resources and supports, irrespective of the existence of policies specifying the necessary requirements. A number of well resourced departments at Old University had a highly regularised approach to the appointment and support of casual tutorial staff. This had little reference to the minimal university policies, but related to the existence of resources and appeared to be motivated by a focus on quality control and a desire to remove administrative work from academic managers. This made life somewhat easier for the academics that were managing casual staff, and provided more structure for casual employment. However it went hand in hand with higher levels of performance monitoring and surveillance. Interestingly, the academics did not uniformly offer the same observations about the importance of good student evaluation scores, suggesting that these were only one measure of a casual academic’s performance. Casual academics, as reported in Chapter 6, were very clear about the implications for them of poor student evaluation scores.

The strongest links between policy implementation and resourcing were apparent at New University where significant resource constraints hampered the application of policies for casual academic staff to the extent that the policies bore no relationship to actual practice. The highly devolved nature of budgeting meant that good initiatives were only able to be implemented where there was central funding and the result was that there were good ideas, and small areas of good practice, but not widespread implementation. There was evidence that some very senior managers were very aware
of the problems presented by high levels of casualisation at New University and the impact this had on the student cohort and on the university brand, but other, more pressing, resource issues consistently took priority. Evidence and policy was one thing but a process and a plan for making the case for real change was elusive.

Overall it can be seen that there are least two identifiable management strategies for dealing with the management and employment of casual academic staff. Neither really fits the two approaches identified by Bryson and Blackwell (2006) as ‘differentiation’ and ‘integration’. Whilst the policy provisions of New University pointed to an integration strategy, and Old University’s more minimalist policy approach appeared to be a strategy of differentiation, the case study interviews revealed that the reality was somewhat different. New University in practice operated a highly ad-hoc model of management which had significant implications for academic managers who were required to mediate quality issues, and implications for the university as a whole in relation to their particular student cohort. Old University’s approach was centrally differentiated, but locally developed in well resourced faculties where it meant academic managers were alleviated of much of the workload associated with managing casual academic staff. Resources and resource constraints were what drove the actual practice, irrespective of the intention of policy.
CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION

Introduction

The discussion in this thesis is informed by SLM theory, and it uses this, as developed in Chapter 2, to examine an industry, the Australian university sector. This brings new insights to an analysis of a rapidly changing profession, academic work, and is a novel approach to the use of SLM theory. The impact of NPM, and its particular Australian variant described as the enterprise university (Marginson & Considine 2000), on academic work has been investigated through the data analysis, which highlight the complex interplay between the enterprise university, the regulatory structures, government funding changes including the growth of international students, and the nature of labour supply, both gendered and discipline specific. Complexity and diversity is underscored by the different outcomes for casual academic staff resulting from their orientation to their work and their academic discipline. Reformulated SLM theory is developed as a framework in which to examine segmentation processes arising from the impacts of the wider regulatory and social environment on the university sector. That framework also examines how the enterprise university has been at odds with the traditional and distinct university setting, and academic work, and the collision of these features has contributed to the growth of an institutionally invisible workforce.

Broadly the features of a primary and secondary labour market are apparent when examining the characteristics of continuing academic employment compared with those of casual academic employment. Continuing academic staff have a well-defined career path and career progression, with job security. The literature and the qualitative and quantitative data have shown that casual academic staff by comparison have no job security, very limited access to training and development and a flat pay structure that differentiates only by PhD status and does not recognise skills and experience. Career progression within casual employment is mostly to more casual employment. High performance is no guarantee of future casual work and no guarantee of more secure work. For those who undertake casual work in order to improve their chances of more secure academic employment, the data suggests that the work may have more characteristics in common with that of a trap than a bridge to secure academic employment.

As argued by Rubery (2005, p.263) ‘conflicts and contradictions’ can arise from the forces that create casual academic employment. There may be negative impacts on
teaching quality, particularly for students who need more support, where large numbers of casual academic staff are employed. Yet the casual academic workforce, is now larger (by headcount) than the core teaching and research academic workforce, and is transforming the nature of academic work. The data show that a majority of this workforce aspire to a position in the core academic workforce.

Reformulated SLM theory proposes that labour markets are shaped within organisations as a result of the processes of segmentation arising from the regulatory and societal systems (Rubery 2005). The data show how the casual academic labour market and the continuing academic labour market interact closely, particularly at the level of academic discipline, and how the interactions impact both labour markets. Far from being ‘protected’ by a large secondary labour market, academic work and the internal academic labour market are being reshaped by its presence. For academic staff the addition of a management role with concurrent responsibility for teaching quality is contributing to a segmenting of the internal labour market along the lines of those who can focus on their research and limit their teaching, and those lower level academic staff who have higher teaching loads and larger classes and less time to focus on research. Further, as entrance to academic work is now increasingly preceded by time spent in insecure academic employment, the lack of support and training during this period is impacting on the capacity of those staff to transition to and adjust to work in the internal labour market.

In chapter 2 a theoretical framework was developed for investigating the casualisation of academic work, using theoretical developments advanced by Osterman (2004), Beynon et al. (2002) and Rubery (2005, 2006). The framework gives primacy to the external forces to which university managements have responded: regulatory changes, public policy changes including government funding constraints, and issues of labour supply, with universities responding and reacting to these pressures through the ‘enterprise university’. These have in turn interacted with and influenced the internal settings of the university, in particular the distinct nature of academic employment and the positioning of the academic staff within the academy. Large scale casualisation of academic work has been a product of all of these forces. The outcomes for casual academic staff, and academic staff as a result of these forces will be discussed in this chapter.

The theoretical framework to be used is depicted below in Figure 8.1. This has been developed from that shown in Chapter 2. Figure 8.1 explicitly recognises the demand
side forces and, separate to that, the supply side forces. The demand side forces are those of the actions of government in changing regulatory settings, public policy and funding. The demand side also encompasses the universities’ responses to the actions of government, operationalised through the enterprise university, and the distinct university setting including the positioning of the academic staff within the academy. The supply side features are highlighted separately as these are influenced by the performance pressures on universities as they increase research focus and produce more PhD students which influence the labour supply for casual academic staff. The features of labour supply; academic discipline and the orientation of the casual academic to their work shape the outcomes for casual academic staff in critical ways. In particular those casual academics who aspire to a secure academic position are more negatively impacted by the outcomes than those who undertake casual academic employment for reasons other than for an academic career.

The academic labour market is segmented along both vertical and horizontal lines. Vertically it is segmented between the core, internal labour market and an insecure periphery or secondary labour market. The core consists of continuing academic staff whose employment is characterised by a linear career path and career and professional development, consistent with an internal labour market. The secondary academic labour market is comprised of casual academic staff, who form a pool from which core academic staff may be chosen, but for whom there is no formalised progression from the secondary to the core. Horizontal segmentation is apparent amongst those in the secondary, casual labour market on the basis of academic discipline. Further fragmentation and segmentation is observed within the core academic labour market as it can also be argued that there is horizontal segmentation by discipline and vertical segmentation between those in secure, ongoing positions and those in insecure fixed term jobs. However that analysis is outside the scope of this study and a topic for further research.

As demonstrated in Chapter 4, the labour markets for casual academics in each of the disciplines are very different in their characteristics and often reflect the gender and age profile of the continuing academic labour market for the discipline. The labour markets for casual academic staff interact with external labour markets by drawing from particular outside pools of labour especially in the case of the professions such as law, engineering and accounting for example. The consequence is that differing levels of mobility and opportunity exist within the discipline based labour markets influencing
the career and job satisfaction for individuals. These differing levels of opportunity influence how universities source casual academic labour at the academic discipline level and also in many cases reflect the fortunes of individual disciplines and faculties. Some faculties such as in business and law, that are well resourced due to their capacity to attract students fare relatively well in devolved budget models and are able to offer more favourable conditions to casual academic staff.
Figure 8.1: A framework for investigating the casualisation of academic employment in Australia

DEMAND SIDE

THE ENTERPRISE UNIVERSITY – ‘operationalising NPM’

THE DISTINCT UNIVERSITY SETTING – from community of scholars to industrial actors

Use of casual labour for academic teaching work

OUTCOMES FOR CONTINUING ACADEMIC STAFF

- Reshaping academic work
- Workload impact
- Invisible management

OUTCOMES FOR CASUAL ACADEMICS

- Lack of job security – risk shifting
- Segmented by discipline
- Institutional invisibility
- Uncertain career path – more trap than bridge
- Job quality
- The frustrated academic – thwarted ambitions?
- Gendered precariousness?

SUPPLY SIDE

PUBLIC POLICY, REGULATORY SETTINGS & CHANGES IN FUNDING

LABOUR SUPPLY

(Adapted from Figure 2.2)
Demand side – influential factors

This section examines each of the factors outlined in Figure 8.1 which are influential on the demand side, and primacy is given to the impact of the external factors of public policy, regulatory settings and changes in funding, as these have been the changes to which universities have responded.

Public policy, regulatory settings and changes in funding

In chapter 2 the literature and background to the major changes in the Australian university sector since the late 1980s were summarised. This highlighted the significance of the declining proportion of university revenue coming from government funding, the increase in international student numbers, the doubling of the number of universities and the imposition and adoption of NPM and managerialism resulting from these changes. In addition, wider regulatory changes reinforced insecure work arrangements and created an environment where it was extremely difficult for unions to challenge job insecurity through collective bargaining. In the framework developed in Chapter 2, in Figure 2.2, labour supply was considered to be another element of the external forces. However, the data gathered for this research has uncovered the segmentation of the casual academic workforce aligned to discipline. The data analysis has also revealed that there are interactions between the casual academic labour force, and the labour force external to the sector but related to the discipline or profession. This finding, together with the use of a new typology for casual academic staff developed in Chapter 4 using the survey data, show that the labour supply for casual academic staff is a factor which needs to be considered separately and given its own focus. Labour supply has an effect on both the processes and outcomes of casualisation. The outcomes for casual academic staff are delineated by these features of the labour supply. This is an important finding and will be returned to in the discussion.

Universities have responded to the external pressures in particular ways. The Dawkins’ reforms of the late 1980s brought with them NPM to the university sector and a senior management layer was created in order to adopt these changes. At the same time academic staff had to adjust to the idea of bargaining with their managers for wages and conditions. Up until this time wages had been determined by external bodies.
The enterprise university

The concept of the enterprise university, developed by Marginson and Considine (2000), resonated with the perspectives provided by the senior managers in the interviews at the two case study universities. The two universities are at almost polar opposites of the university sector. Old University is research intensive, highly ranked internationally and well-resourced. New University is struggling to develop a research profile and caters for a cohort of students who need a lot of support. However, at both universities the features described by Marginson and Considine (2000, pp. 9-12) of devolved budgeting, enhanced managerial control, and a trend to ‘market bureaucracy’ were all apparent. Indeed they appeared to be more advanced than those found in 2000 by the authors.

The interviews with senior managers discussed in Chapter 7 found that the devolved nature of budgets, and the impact of constantly tight budgets, shaped staffing decisions in ways which over-rode other workforce considerations. Senior managers from both universities told a consistent story of lack of entry level positions, inability to replace staff, staffing freezes, restructuring to accommodate tight budgets and a lack of strategic planning for workforce development. Budgets were seen to be driving all of the activities of the university and within that the importance of research was apparent. The primacy of research was also clear from the interviews with the academic staff, in particular with those academics that were more senior and career-driven. Workload models at New University, and casualisation, sent a clear message to academic staff about the aspects of their work that were valued and rewarded. Teaching loads could be reduced if research outputs were increased.

Interviews with senior managers also revealed deep seated frustrations and disconnection between this management layer and faculty, highlighting complexities and contradictions. Policy improvements for casual academic staff were often caught in the tension between central administration and devolved faculty and school budgets and management. This was the case at New University where attempts to improve policy centrally were either ignored or shouted down by school and faculty managers due to budget pressures. The atomised management layer resulted in fragmented policy development and response, far from the ‘whole of university’ practice that was the university’s stated goal.

The interactions between the enterprise university and the distinct university setting has been one of resistance and acquiescence in a continual back and forward process of
negotiation, through collective bargaining and managerial prerogative, set within the wider regulatory environment. Union efforts to restrict insecure employment had some success in the mid 1990s but since then have been stymied by changes to employment law. Universities have in effect been able to successfully deploy a whole new category of teaching staff, by-passing the continuing staff category of employment. This category of staff, the casual teaching staff, have been the way in which universities have sought to deal with the risks faced through changeable student demand and funding volatility. The creation and growth of casual academic employment has been possible due to a political climate that has favoured managerial prerogative and through the existence of and the capacity to exploit regulatory gaps, such as that within which casual work falls.

The distinct university setting

In Chapter 1 the history of wages and conditions determination for academic staff in the university sector was discussed. The interviews with longer term senior managers and academic staff gave testament to the rapidly changing nature of academic work, in particular the significant increase in standards for entry to an academic position and the increases in workload and expectations. For the career-focussed academics at Old University, long working hours and pressure to produce high quality research outputs were reported. At New University the particular student cohort combined with thinned out administrative structures and constant budget constraints shaped much of the academics’ working lives. Internal regulations in the form of workload models and formulas, an attempt to deal with workload pressures, were seen to drive further casualisation. Increases in administrative and bureaucratic requirements created frustrations for academics and senior managers. At both universities casualisation was a response to the need to deliver teaching and accommodate changing student numbers and course profiles, in the face of either staff freezes for continuing positions or tight budgets which did not allow for staff growth.

Labour supply – influential factors

Labour supply is a distinctive feature in the model outlined in Figure 8.1. In the original model in Figure 2.2 labour supply was simply noted as one of a number of external factors that combined with performance pressures and organisational settings. The data in Chapter 4 reveals a much greater role for the supply-side features of casual academic labour. The data was used to develop a typology of casual academic staff based on their
motivation for and orientation to the work, and this showed the impact of academic discipline. The labour supply of casual academic staff has three key features. First, it shapes the external environment for casual academic staff, for example, the larger the supply of casual academics the more competition there is for work and the greater downward pressure on conditions. Second it is influenced by university policy and the research status of the particular university. That is, the greater the number of PhD students being produced, the larger the supply of qualified labour for casual academic positions. Third, and critically, labour supply affects the process and outcomes of casualisation. That is, the experience of casual employment is different for differently located casual academic staff. The key delineations are those of orientation and academic discipline. The university where the casual academic works also interacts with these aspects of labour supply. Importantly, the outcomes for casual academic staff are delineated by their orientation and motivation for performing the work and their academic discipline. That is, aspiring academics were found to have high levels of frustration and lower levels of job and career satisfaction than other groups. On the other hand those described as ‘casual by choice’ and those who were externally focussed, had much lower levels of frustration and higher levels of job and career satisfaction. For these casual academics their employment status was not connected to the pursuit of an academic career so it was perceived and experienced altogether differently.

Performance pressures also interact with labour supply to mediate the processes and outcomes of casualisation. Research intensive universities such as Old University, responding to pressure from government to produce research and to perform well in international rankings, are focussed on producing large and growing numbers of PhD and post-graduate students. The presence of these students influences the labour supply particularly in those academic disciplines where there are fewer opportunities for employment outside of the university, (as examined in Table 4.45 in Chapter 4 which considered external mobility). The interviews with casual academics at Old University found that in some disciplines securing casual teaching work was highly competitive amongst potential employees, indicating a possible over-supply. By contrast, at New University a lack of PhD students was a factor which sometimes created shortages for casual academic positions, and many of the academics interviewed described the lengths to which they scoured networks and contacts to secure casual academic staff. In response to this Senior Managers at New University described the way that they went in
seeking alternative sources of labour supply, and were encouraging the use of recently retired academics to fill some of these gaps.

*Supply side: A new typology of casual academic work*

In Chapter 2 a variety of typologies in the literature was discussed, but a new typology with a focus on motivation and orientation was developed and outlined in Chapter 3. The proposed typology informed the survey questions, particularly those questions about career intentions, as described in Chapter 4. Initially proposed as a seven-part typology it was expanded to nine categories as a result of being tested using the survey data, as described in Chapter 4. In analysing the data these nine categories were collapsed to a four-part typology. Outlined in Table 8.1 this typology focuses on casual academic staff motivation and orientation. In particular it focuses on how the casual academic views their casual work; is it something they hope to be still doing in five years time, or do they aspire to a more secure academic position, or indeed is their primary focus outside of the university sector? Table 8.1 lists the labour supply characteristics of those who form each of the four categories of aspiring academic, externally oriented, casual by choice and retiring. The process for developing the typology using the WCAU survey results was detailed in Chapter 4.
Table 8.1: A new broad typology of casual academic staff – supply side characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Motivation and orientation</th>
<th>Descriptions of sub-groups within the category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Aspiring academic   | Is actively seeking, or aspires to a continuing or fixed- term academic position, either part-time or full-time. | 1. PhD qualified  
2. Studying for a PhD or post-graduate qualification  
3. Not studying but aspiring to academic position, may be considering study in the future  
4. Main source of income is from outside the sector, planning a career change |
| Externally oriented | Primary focus is external to the university sector either currently or in the future.       | 5. Studying for a post-graduate qualification  
6. Not studying and want to work outside the sector  
7. Main source of income is earned outside the university sector |
| Casual by choice    | Preference is for casual/sessional employment.                                               | 8. Wishes to be casual/sessional in five years’ time                                                     |
| Retiring            | Main source of income is from superannuation/pension, planning to retire in the next five years | 9. Planning to retire, main source of income is a pension/superannuation,                                  |

Source: Table 4:16, WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011, case study interviews with casual academic staff

Analysis of the WCAU survey data, using the typology as a mutually exclusive categorisation revealed that the majority (55 per cent) of respondents aspired to an academic position. Of the 22 casual academic staff who were interviewed, 18 aspired to a more secure academic position.

Supply side: The typology and case study data

The four categories described in Table 8.1 were applied to the casual academic interviewees revealing some small overlap between the categories of retiring, casual by choice and externally focussed. Of the 22 casual academic staff interviewed only two said that if their employer offered them a continuing academic position, either part-time or full-time, they would not take it. One of these ‘casuals by choice’, Rita, was over 60 years of age and planning to retire from work, suggesting overlap between the retiree and the casual by choice category (in WCAU she would have been categorised as ‘retiring’). Two interviewees described their preference for a combination of part-time work in the university sector and in consulting/private industry. Given the mutually exclusive nature of categories in WCAU these interviewees would have been
categorised in accordance with their primary focus (whether it was external or an academic position) as the option of ‘freelancer’ (Gappa & Leslie 1993) was not given in the survey. In both cases these interviewees were somewhat more focussed on their external work than their casual employment. Of the casual academics interviewed, the majority, 18 of 22, were in the aspiring academic category as they had a preference for a continuing part-time or full-time academic position. Of these interviewees, some were close to finishing their PhD, others had completed PhDs and were applying for academic positions, a smaller number were in the earlier stages of their PhD or postgraduate study, and four were over 60 years of age but with a preference for more secure part-time employment. Of those interviewees who were either undertaking or had completed PhD study, there was little evidence any were receiving structured support and professional development for a future academic career. Only one interviewee, Lily, a post-graduate student, appeared to be receiving active support for her teaching development. She worked closely with academic colleagues and was also working unpaid hours as part of an exchange she saw as improving her chances of secure employment in the future.

The ‘retiring’ category was premised on age (those aged 60 and over) and assumed their preference would be for casual work. However, of the five interviewees who were 60 years of age or older, four stated a strong preference for continuing or fixed-term part-time work (that is for more secure employment), and the main reason they gave for their preference was concern for enhancing the student experience. Each felt that a more secure position would allow them time to engage with colleagues in their discipline, maintain discipline currency, and to be available for students. It would be a misrepresentation to simply describe this group as ‘retiring’ and happy with casual employment. Job quality and job insecurity was perceived differently by this group - it was less about their personal circumstances and more about the outcomes for students and for their own outside of work routines. Their casual academic work was combined with other work such as voluntary work, care of grandchildren and in some cases supplemented by pensions. Indeed, these older interviewees were very reluctant to describe themselves in any way as retired. Des combined unpaid work outside the university sector with, typically, five hours a week teaching during semester. He was reliant upon the work for his income and was adamant that he did not belong to a ‘retiring’ category. He observed: ‘I am in no sense retired, but tired, yes’ (Des, New University, November 2011). These over 60s had a strong drive to maintain a foothold in the labour market, and a need for intellectual stimulation, which together with their
obvious skills and experience made them a very attractive source of flexible and compliant labour. There was some evidence that New University had begun to harness ‘retiring’ academics as a source of labour, in an effort to regularise labour supply. This was confirmed by the survey data which showed that the Newer University category of universities employed a much greater proportion of casual academic staff from the ‘retiring’ category than any of the other university categories.

The ‘casual by choice’ category, to which two interviewees corresponded, was also less straightforward. One interviewee, Rita, was close to retirement and had health issues which limited her capacity for work. The other interviewee, Kim, was undertaking a self-styled sabbatical from her corporate career whilst raising small children and did not envisage an academic career. She hoped to return to her previous work at some point. Kim was very positive about her experience of casual academic employment generally as she found the work flexible, and for her it ‘filled a gap in the CV’. The survey analysis in Chapter 4 revealed that the highest levels of satisfaction were amongst ‘casuals by choice’. This group did not have vested interests in career development and transition to more secure work. As a consequence the conditions and security of work assumed less importance to them.

The 22 interviewees cannot be said to be fully representative of the population of casual academic staff, but their individual stories help to illustrate the diverse experiences of casual academic employment. They also help to elaborate another significant finding from the survey analysis, that of the ‘frustrated academic’. This gives a human face to the scale and measure of frustration experienced by those whose primary purpose for undertaking casual work is an academic career, and who are unable to achieve their career goals despite their long years of qualification and casual academic employment.

Supply side features: The impact of academic discipline

The other delineating aspect of labour supply, which was found to both mediate the process and outcome of casualisation and act as a segmenting force, was that of academic discipline. Academic discipline was analysed against a range of variables such as the casual academic typology, the frustrated academic levels and measures of job and career satisfaction and mobility. This revealed the segmented and fragmented nature of the labour markets in the academic disciplines. Some disciplines, particularly in the humanities, arts and social sciences (HASS), had very high proportions of aspiring academics. This was due to the lack of outside options for those qualified in these
disciplines. This is unlike the situation for those in disciplines such as engineering that had high proportions of externally focussed casual academics, and a range of alternative employment options outside academia for qualified individuals.

The discipline categories varied significantly by median age. For example education had a much older age profile, and biological, behavioural and cognitive sciences, had a younger age profile than the overall casual academic sample. These features pointed to the distinct nature of academic discipline based labour markets, and the impact of interactions between the external labour markets for the related profession. In education for example, many casual academic staff are former or current school teachers and the teaching profession is an older profession (Hugo & Morriss 2010).

Gender worked in two ways. First it helped define the characteristics of disciplines and female-dominated disciplines tended to have lower levels of job and career satisfaction and higher levels of frustration than male-dominated disciplines and gender balanced disciplines. Second, it had within-discipline effects, in certain disciplines it produced a more negative outcome for women working in female-dominated disciplines but not in other discipline categories (such as male-dominated or gender balanced).

Very different job and career satisfaction outcomes, and frustrated academic outcomes, were found amongst the academic disciplines. Academic discipline labour markets comprise in part, the external labour market for the core or internal academic labour market for that discipline. Academics, and to a lesser extent, casual academics, have less mobility between disciplines than they have between academia and outside employment. The discipline based casual academic labour markets also interact with labour markets outside the university sector, particularly in the case of the professional based disciplines of law, nursing, accounting, architecture, and engineering for example (see Cowley 2010b; Peters et al. 2011). Cowley’s (2010a, p.25) survey of the use of casual academic staff by 24 university law schools across Australia and New Zealand revealed that location of university, whether regional or city based, impacted on access to and use of practitioners and this shaped the school’s use of casual academic staff. These trends have also been identified in the USA where levels of reliance on insecurely employed academic staff have been found to be ‘uneven’ across disciplinary fields (Finkelstein 2010, p. S148).
Labour demand side segmentation

In responding to the external conditions, particularly the reductions in government funding, university managers have sought a cost effective manner for delivering teaching and the capacity to employ teaching staff on an hourly rate basis has allowed managers to satisfy this need. The particular university setting, both institution and discipline specific, and labour supply associated with that setting, has resulted in differing outcomes in different universities, and disciplines, as the data in Chapter 4 was able to demonstrate. This arises from the impact of devolved budgeting arrangements which exposes schools and faculties to their market ‘risks’, and rewards those who are able to generate more external revenues.

Demand side segmentation resulted in academic discipline being positioned as a key segmenting force. This was a result of the differing fortunes of the academic disciplines depending on their ‘marketability’. Academic discipline is where the impact of NPM, in the form of the enterprise university, shapes the experiences of work and the career possibilities of those in that discipline. Disciplines such as business and law for example, where student demand is high and course provision is relatively cheap, have more resources with which to support their casual staff. At Old University for example casual academic staff in the ‘Business’ faculty received a lump sum semester rate which was higher than the sum of the applicable hourly rates. Marginson and Considine (2000) identify the decline of academic discipline as a feature of the enterprise university but for casual academic staff academic discipline assumes a defining and critical segmenting force which has an impact on the experience of work.

The relevance of university type

Analysis by university type found differences in the make-up of the casual academic workforce of the various university types, adding to the evidence about the different nature of the labour supply and labour demand at the different universities, and pointing to different employer strategies in response to performance pressures. Gumtree Universities were most likely to employ aspiring academics and Newer Universities had higher proportions of the casual by choice and the retiring category. Different levels of access to job and career supports were found at each of the university types; Unitech Universities, which employed the highest proportions of casual academic staff, were the least likely to offer induction, professional development, and attendance at course meetings.
The case study data also pointed to differences between the experiences of casual academic work at New University compared to Old University. Casual academics at Old University generally had greater access to support such as induction, but the work environment was highly competitive. Casual academics at New University had much less support and their conditions of employment, as evidenced by issues around payment of wages, were poor. However at New University there was no monitoring of performance and little competition for work. The stark differences in some respects between Old University and New University reflected their being at almost opposite ends of the university spectrum.

**Outcomes – the impacts on casual academic staff**

Having noted the delineating aspects of the labour supply of casual academic staff this next section examines the outcomes of casualisation for casual academic staff, discussing the following themes which emerge from the literature and from the data in chapters 4 and 6: job insecurity, institutional invisibility, job quality, uncertain career path, the frustrated academic, and gendered precariousness.

**Lack of job security – risk shifting**

Australian universities are no different to many other employers in the Australian labour market in that over the past twenty to thirty years they have rapidly shifted the risks of employment onto their employees (Rafferty & Yu 2010). Beynon et al.’s (2002, p.300) case studies of employment change in seven organisations in the UK find that the notion of job security had considerably weakened since the 1980s and that more onus was on individual workers to take responsibility for their careers including qualifications, skills and retirement planning. The casualisation of academic work embodies this shifting of risk from employer to employee. The employee carries the risk inherent in variable student demand for particular courses, and also must take personal responsibility for the management of their career. Very little responsibility is taken by the university for those casual academics who want to pursue an academic career. This has significant implications for those employees, for academic staff, and indeed for the whole university sector in relation to future workforce planning.

In an application of the framework advanced in Figure 2.2, Grimshaw et al. (2002, p. 110) describe the combination of de-layering, lack of training and development, a growing gap between lower and middle layers in the workplace, and job insecurity.
This created an environment where staff who wanted to ‘get ahead’ were forced to work significant additional hours and at higher levels of responsibility with no guarantee of reward for their effort. Evidence of this was found in the case study data. Lily admitted to working significant unpaid hours in an attempt to improve her job prospects in the future. Mohan described the efforts he went to in order to show his academic colleagues that he was worth asking back for future work. Jane never said no to any work, for fear that it would result in work drying up leaving her without work and income in the future. Others described taking on intense tasks such as course coordination in order to improve their CVs, despite the workload and stress that this entailed. Academic managers and senior managers contributed by actively encouraging their casual academic staff to pursue particular casual teaching opportunities such as course coordination. Many of the senior managers commented on the constantly rising bar for entry into a lower level continuing academic position, noting that such positions were few and far between and often attracted international applicants. The working lives of many of the casual academics were characterised by high levels of insecurity, as one interviewee observed, ‘casual work makes it impossible to plan a life’ (Jed, Old University, November 2011).

The nature of the work, semester by semester and dependent on student numbers, continuing staff availability and budgets, meant it was inherently insecure, irrespective of performance. As Tess observed: ‘even when I knew they liked me, I didn’t know from one semester what I would be teaching, if the hours were there’ (Tess, New University, July 2011). The risks associated with volatile student numbers and changing budgets were shifted onto the casual academic staff and this had a high cost for many. The impacts on individual finances and health were very negative, casual academics were not able to build up their superannuation, they did not get paid holiday breaks and were often forced to work when sick as they did not get sick leave. In summary casual academic employment enabled a significant transfer of the risks of variable student demand and volatile funding from the university onto the casual academic workforce.

An institutionally invisible workforce

The data analysis shows how the characteristics of casual academic employment, and the outcomes of management strategies for the employment of casual academic staff driven by the performance pressures of the enterprise university, combined to create an institutionally invisible workforce. Invisibility began with the ad-hoc appointment process, continued from this with inconsistent or often complete lack of access to
induction and support, and was reinforced by exclusion from collegial forums, structures, and access to support that denoted belonging. Exclusion was not always deliberate but a function of the short-term nature of casual academic employment, and the tenuous attachment to the workplace often as a result of the casual academic holding multiple appointments. It was also reinforced in many cases by the space and resource constraints of cash-strapped schools and faculties which confined casual staff to inadequate spaces, leaving many to work from home instead. Institutional invisibility was then magnified by the inadequate record keeping by universities about this key staff group. Combined, these factors allowed for a convenient blindness on the part of university managements to the issues of casualisation, and allowed universities to position casual academic staff as a homogenous and uncommitted on-tap source of labour. Helen, an academic staff member managing casual academic staff observed that, in her opinion, university management assumed that casual academics were: ‘*independently wealthy and [their work was] a hobby, rather than them actually needing the money*’ ([Helen, academic, Old University, April 2012](#)).

The case study interviews were able to explore how this invisibility was experienced by casual academic staff. Many described how they were made to feel invisible at both a personal level and a professional level. Jane declared that she did not think of herself as an academic. Similarly, Lee told how no attempt was made to assist her find a career path, instead she was told she should not apply for a continuing position that came up in her school due to her lack of publications. Pam, who worked at New University, along with two other universities at the same time, approached all three of her employers about presenting a paper at a conference and was told they were not interested because she was a casual employee. She ended up self-funding the travel and conference fee. Annie’s description of how she was forced to eat her lunch outside in the cold during winter between classes, because there was no space provided for casual teaching staff, was emblematic of the scale of institutional invisibility.

The case study stories highlight the experiences of exclusion and marginalisation which exacerbate invisibility, and demonstrate the negative personal and professional impact these have on working lives and career prospects. They illuminate the findings from the WCAU survey data which show how invisibility is manifested across recruitment processes, inconsistent job and career support and frustration about career prospects.
The frustrated academic

Further analysis using the new typology of casual academic staff revealed significant levels of frustration amongst aspiring academics about their assessments of their career prospects. Of those aspiring academics identified from the survey data, a majority (57 per cent) did not believe that their aspirations would be achieved. In particular high levels of frustration were found amongst women, those with PhD qualifications, and those working in the disciplines already identified as associated with low levels of job and career satisfaction, the HASS disciplines. The category of frustrated academic, highlighted as a result of the new typology, is something that has not been revealed or well understood in previous studies on academic casualisation in Australia. Coates et al. (2009) drew attention to a ‘treadmill’ category, and Gottschalk and McEachern (2010) raised that notion of ‘frustrated careers’ but neither was able to identify or quantify this.

Amongst the case study interviewees most of the casual academics who aspired to an academic position felt that their ambitions were being frustrated. The interviews revealed how many struggled to put a timeframe on how long they would continue in casual employment before giving up on their aspiration for an academic position. The sense of frustration was influenced by the limited availability of entry level academic positions and the high competition for the few positions that came up. Many senior managers and long-term academic staff interviewed reported that they observed a continually rising bar for entrance to a continuing academic position.

The survey data was able to reveal a considerable increase in frustration levels amongst casual academics that had completed their PhDs more than two years ago. This suggested that the two year mark after PhD completion represented something of a tipping point, beyond which achieving a more secure position was perceived to be much more difficult. Alternatively it may be the point by which many of those aspiring to an academic position have either achieved their aspiration or pursued a different path.

Job quality – limited provision of training and support

The provision of ‘on the job’ training and development is a major component of an internal labour market model (Doeringer and Piore 1971). Casual employment generally is characterised by the absence of formal training and development, consistent with an external labour market (Richardson & Law 2009; Buchanan 2004). Grimshaw et al. (2001, p.49) note in their UK based case study research that employer incentives
to offer training are reduced when there is no career structure and career progression, particularly where there is access to a ready pool of trained labour. In the enterprise university, with its focus on flexible application of labour and devolved budget processes, the capacity to apply labour, ‘just in time’ for the teaching semester, is an expedient and cost-effective option. ‘Just in time’ was sometimes at the very last minute. Kathy, an academic at New University, described that on more than one occasion she went to the PhD office in search of a tutor just before a class was scheduled to begin. In such an environment where casual staff can be hired one semester and gone the next the incentive for the university to invest in training is extremely limited.

The WCAU data found that the provision of induction, professional development, amenities resources and career supports was patchy across the Australian university sector and varied depending on the type of university where the casual academic was employed. The Unitech Universities, those with the highest proportions of casual academic staff, offered the lowest level of support to their casual academic staff. The case study data was able to reveal further cross and within university differences that were explained by the resources available to the particular faculty. Well resourced faculties in Old University, for example, appeared to provide much more regularised support for casual academic staff, including administrative support to free up academic staff time. The provision of induction often went hand in hand with rigorous performance management, and support came at a price which was high levels of monitoring, and a requirement to pay attention to student evaluation scores. Derek, a casual academic at Old University described it as: ‘a giant paradox, you are beholden to the quality of teaching results and so you have to make the students feel loved and feel like they are getting their money’s worth’ (Derek, Old University, November 2011).

The two case study universities were seen to adopt different strategies of labour demand, which were overlayed by the academic discipline labour market effects. Easy access to this source of labour was a feature of many of the faculties at Old University. Resourcing issues at New University meant that the issues associated with securing appropriately trained casual staff, and the impact on students remained unresolved, pointing to internal power imbalances and the embedded nature of casualisation. Policy initiatives designed to assist with professional development were largely ineffective due to local decision-makers’ ignorance of their existence and more frequently due to budget constraints.
Career progression – uncertain career path more trap than bridge

The absence of a career path is argued to be a common feature of casual work (Curtain 2001). This was reinforced in a recent analysis by Watson (2013, p. 23) who concluded that career paths were not part of many casual jobs because ‘keeping a reservoir of casual jobs is clearly part of the employment strategies of many firms’. The linear career path associated with continuing academic employment is in strong contrast with the uncertainty and insecurity that characterised the career paths of many of the casual academic interviewees. Casual academic employment, unlike continuing academic employment, does not reward years of experience with improved pay and conditions. Grimshaw et al. (2001) identified de-layering and deskilling as outcomes of the transformed career structures, and both were apparent from the case study data.

The data gathered for this research identifies a number of features of casual academic employment which suggest it can be more trap than bridge. These features were high teaching loads which negatively affected the capacity to produce publications, the perceptions of senior managers, the limited availability and highly competitive nature of entry level academic positions, poor provision of training and lack of collegial support, and the fragmented nature of the work which amounted to a deskilling. Each of these is further elaborated.

High teaching loads were reported by a number of casual academics as severely hampering their publication output, which in turn limited their competitiveness for teaching and research academic positions. Lee described the ‘dead end’ she found herself in after focusing too much on teaching whilst completing her PhD studies and raising her son. Two of the men interviewed described how they had taken a decision after several years of casual teaching to no longer accept casual work because they perceived it was not going to assist their aspiration for a continuing position, instead they favoured short-term research work which would allow them to publish. Others such as Jane, who was three years post PhD and Mohan who completed his PhD over a year ago, were endeavouring to decide how long they would continue in casual academic work before looking outside the university sector. Mohan was acutely aware that his high teaching loads had made it difficult for him to improve his research profile.

The views expressed by many of the senior mangers about their casual academic staff gave an insight into how the workforce was perceived in terms of its connections with the continuing academic workforce and, as a consequence, what obligation or otherwise managers felt to provide career supports for those casual academics. Whilst many
senior managers expressed concern about the high levels of casual employment in their schools and faculties the pressures of ever tightening budgets over-rode these concerns. Budgets were what drove the need to hire casual academic staff to meet the teaching requirements. Pressures to research meant that academics with research profiles were freed up from teaching but budget constraints and fears about what were described by one senior manager as difficulties in dismissing continuing staff meant that a flexible labour force was seen as necessary. Senior managers were generally unaware of the motivations of those working as casual academics and made a variety of often incorrect assumptions about how the work suited their circumstances.

The senior managers also provided evidence about the highly competitive nature of entry level academic positions. This was due to a lack of availability of entry level academic positions and for the few that came up, there were extensive fields of highly qualified applicants. A significantly raised bar for entry to a continuing academic position was a common observation, and many senior managers noted that a PhD was necessary but no longer sufficient for an academic position. Evidence of publishing in high standard journals, and in some cases successful grant applications, were often required for a continuing entry-level lecturer position.

The fragmenting of academic work meant that what might once have been an informal apprenticeship in teaching was now more about narrow delivery of teaching materials in a constrained framework. Casual academics were largely unsupported in their teaching practice and described their experiences of teaching variously as ‘winging it’, a ‘steep and independent learning curve’, ‘trial by learning’ that was a ‘downward spiral’, and a ‘career plateau’. Some academic staff who managed casual academics took on a quality management role, and did so by removing discretion from their casual academic staff with carefully prescribed content for the tutorial or class. Other academic managers took a ‘hands-off’ approach which resulted in the casual academic being ‘thrown in the deep end’ as Rod, a casual academic at New University described it. The outcomes in both cases hindered the career development of the casual academic and put them at a disadvantage in their applications for more secure employment. Their experience of developing their teaching practice was not one of peer mentor and support. It was either delivery of tightly specified content, or winging it and hoping for the best. This also went hand in hand with a lack of collegiality in their experience of work, which translated as missing out on other opportunities to improve their skills, such as collaborating on research projects. Annie described how in six years of employment at
Old University, during and after her PhD studies, she was never invited to collaborate on research projects or apply for grants with other academic staff and this negatively affected her career prospects. All of these features contributed to casual employment becoming a potential trap for those aspiring to academic careers, rather than a bridge to an academic career.

**Gendered precariousness**

The data show that women form a majority, some 57 per cent, of casual academic staff. This gendered pattern is consistent with that in the universities of the Anglo-American countries. The WCAU data showed that women shared the same aspiration as men for an academic career, but had more negative perceptions about the likelihood of achieving their aspirations than men. The higher proportion of women in the casual academic labour force is in large part a reflection of women’s concentrations in the lower ranks of the academic scales. However the persistence of gendered disadvantage in academia appears to be compounded by the expansion of casual academic employment.

SLM theory draws our attention to labour supply and how this is segmented by gender, processes which sit within a wider societal framework. In Australia women who work part-time are typically employed on a casual basis (Vosko 2011, p. 107). This is associated with the durable nature of the male breadwinner model, and a lack of secure part-time work options, and is reinforced by a tax and welfare payment system which favours a one and half earner model in couple families (Charlesworth et al. 2011).

Whilst part-time work is very common amongst women with caring responsibilities in Australia, the question of women’s preference for casual employment, as the means of securing part-time hours, has been debated in the literature. Much of the evidence suggests that choices are shaped and constrained by lack of options for secure part-time work (Charlesworth et al. 2011; Pocock et al. 2004a; Pocock et al. 2004b).

The question of women’s preference for casual academic employment was explored in the WCAU survey. Importantly, males and females were found to have very similar motivations and orientations towards casual academic employment. Males and females worked similar hours per week, males were slightly more likely to hold or be studying for a PhD, and males and females reported very similar levels of job and career satisfaction. Gender differences were found in relation to main sources of income; females were more likely to rely on their casual income. Females were more likely to work casually at more than one institution and were more likely to undertake tutoring
only than males. Females were also less likely to have access to financial support for their research than males. This finding in particular points to difficulties females may face in building their career and making the transition to more secure employment. Significant differences were also found between the levels of frustrated academics amongst males and females, showing that females held more negative perceptions about their likelihood of achieving their aspiration for secure academic employment. This may reflect reality, or contribute to the reality of women’s concentration in casual academic employment.

The case study interviews canvassed a range of reasons why women may become trapped in casual academic employment. Differences between males’ and females’ experience of casual academic employment were found in how they approached their casual employment, and how they responded to the experience of casual work. Men appeared quicker at concluding casual academic work was not going to assist their career plans. Casual academics Rod and Jed had both decided to say no to future tutoring work after teaching casually for several years, declaring it a ‘dead-end’. The women tended to hope that if they performed well they would be noticed. Jane admitted that she failed to ‘talk herself up’ even though she knew she was good at her job. Jasmine reflected how all of the recent appointments in her school went to men, despite the discipline being highly feminised. She attributed this to a returning to the male breadwinner model of employment when times were tight.

Women’s search for flexibility and their desire to perform well in their teaching jobs often rendered them indispensible to their employers, but ‘camouflaged’ them in roles that had no career development. Many realised in retrospect that their focus on teaching left them with limited publications, a deficit that they often drew attention to. The men by contrast were more adept at re-framing their shortcomings, continuing to put themselves out into the job market and ‘talking themselves up’.

Further, the case study data showed how labour supply and demand factors interacted with societal and institutional factors to create significant pockets of hardship, dissatisfaction and frustration for particular women. Many of the older women interviewed felt that they were used and exploited. They felt trapped in a system that obviously needed their expertise, and was willing to take advantage of it, but provided nothing in return. The personal costs borne by these women were significant and long term, impacting on careers, health, finances, retirement plans, and social lives. The women who returned to study later in life, studies that were enhanced by their previous
working experience, were upon graduation simply seen as early career researchers. The status of early career researcher was one which ignored all life and work experience, and implied the need to start at the bottom of the career ladder.

Gender shaped women’s entrance to and experience of casual work. Many of the women interviewed had combined their casual work with childbirth and child-raising, and their casual status excluded them from any of the benefits offered by universities to assist women at this stage of the life-course, benefits such paid maternity leave and flexible work hours. Segmentation reinforced and reproduced disadvantage by pushing women outside the equity lens of university policies, procedures and regulations. The gendered nature of work arrangements in the internal academic labour market, where men occupied the vast majority of positions at professor level and above, was magnified in the external labour market and compounded by the absence of conditions of benefit to women. These factors combined to create a gendered precariousness.

**Outcomes: The impact on academics managing casual staff**

As discussed in Chapter 2 there is only a sparse literature examining the impact of casualisation upon academic staff, yet it is clear that the management of casual academic staff is now a common component of an academic’s working life (Coates et al. 2009; Lazarsfeld Jensen & Morgan 2009; Peters et al. 2011). Rubery (2005) observes that where the employer develops flexibility strategies there is an impact on the core staff as well. Permanent employment status does not protect core staff from the impact of segmentation processes. Instead, fragmentation is observed within the ranks of the core academic staff, particularly along the lines of who is able to devote more time to research. The case study data shows how academic work is being segmented and at the same time reshaped by that process of segmentation.

The WCAU survey of academic staff revealed that the vast majority of teaching and research academics managed at least 2 casual academic staff (Strachan et al. 2012; Appendix E). The interviews with academics explored how the management of casual academic staff affected their work and workload. The interviews also provide new evidence about the nature of the links between the casual academic labour market and internal academic labour market as many of the academics had experience of casual academic employment. The interactions both improved and detracted from the experience of work for all of the participants.
This also adds to the relevance of a reformulated SLM theory in order to understand the processes of the impact of the external on the internal labour market. The interviews with academics who had previously worked as casual academics revealed that the experience of working as a casual was often a damaging one which led them to re-evaluate their professional identities. It also meant that a number felt poorly equipped for their academic roles, were not adequately socialised into their disciplines, and struggled to access appropriate professional development. These academics were highly attuned to the experiences of work of their casual colleagues, and in many cases made huge efforts to alleviate the pressures on their casual staff, which created further workload pressures for themselves.

The management of casual academic staff was a constrained and fragmented process, characterised by high levels of autonomy for some aspects such as hiring, but no control over other, arguably more important elements, such as terms and conditions of employment and job security. Within these constraints many academics exercised some discretion around the levels of support they offered to casual staff, and attempted to construct elements of job security through open and early communication of job opportunities. The implications of being forced to take on a recruitment function were profound. Aside from having to develop a new skill set, usually without support or training, it also imposed an obligation to manage the quality of those casuals. For many academics this meant establishing personalised strategies to check on casuals’ performance. The more tightly the academic sought to control and prescribe the content for delivery, the more control they were able to exercise over teaching quality. The consequence for casual academics was less autonomy and discretion over their work, which led to de-skilling and de-professionalisation.

The strategies used by the academic staff in order to mediate quality concerns were developed without assistance from central human resource management departments, and often without recourse to policies and procedures. They added to workload pressures, but did not assist academics with their own career progression. Workload models, designed to address growing concerns about unsustainable academic workload were identified as having the perverse effect of driving further casualisation. This was because they ended up taking academics out of the classroom, in what one academic described as the ‘gravitational pull towards more administration’ (Joe, New University, June 2011). Constrained and tightened budgets conflicted with teaching requirements, and academics were pulled between increasingly onerous bureaucratic processes and
pressure to produce research. The consequence often was that casual academic staff were brought in to cover the teaching load, teaching being the component of work that was easiest to substitute.

For the academic staff casualisation was yet another signal that the work of teaching was not valued, and that their career progression depended on their research records. For the career-focussed academics, such as Loretta and Cleo at Old University, employing casual academic staff allowed them to focus attention on their research and respond to the pressures to produce research outputs for ERA exercises and university rankings. Climbing the academic ranks was rewarded with less teaching as Joe, an academic at New University, found and he was acutely aware that the price for his career progression was further casualisation. New University’s drive to improve its research profile had also resulted in casualisation as academic staff sought to prioritise their research over their teaching and were replaced by casual teaching staff.

It is in the unpacking of the experiences of the academic managers that the complex shaping and re-shaping of academic work, resulting from the segmentation of the academic labour market, and the interactions between those segments of secure and insecure work, is uncovered. The localised and highly intense interdependent relationship between the casual academic and their academic manager had a huge impact on the experience of work for both and for a number of casual academics it was why they returned semester after semester. Many casual academics expressed a strong sense of loyalty to their academic managers, and much job satisfaction flowed from the relationship. There was also mutual understanding, as Derek, a casual academic commented: ‘I have never made any official complaints to anyone who has employed me because I feel sorry for them’ (Derek, Old University, November 2011). This underscored an awareness of the difficult position the employing academic is in, and the harsh reality that this person is responsible for the decision about the next casual appointment.

Broadly, the academics were ‘reluctant managers’ whose management practices were informed by their own experiences of casual academic employment and shaped by their own career aspirations. The task of managing casual academic staff was neither recognised nor supported, yet as many observed it had a critical impact on casual academics, and on the student experience. As with casual academic work generally, the management of casual academics became part of the overall institutional invisibility that surrounded this component of academic work.
The casualisation of academic employment appeared to be re-shaping academic work, particularly for those in the lower academic ranks, and in turn the pressure on these academics to produce research was creating the need for further casualisation to fill the teaching gaps. Academic work for the lower level academics increasingly involved administration and management tasks, and in many cases a responsibility to recruit, and to manage teaching quality issues. Despite this, their career progression rested largely upon research effort, and hence their capacity to reduce the work associated with managing casual academic staff, something that only those in well resourced faculties were able to achieve.

**Conflicts and contradictions of segmented labour markets – teaching quality**

An emerging literature from the USA has pointed to a range of teaching quality issues associated with the employment of large numbers of insecure academic staff. These issues have begun to be considered in Australia but are largely framed in a risk management setting. The case study data uncovered how this risk management strategy was being operationalised through the use of performance management strategies in conjunction with a healthy labour supply of casual academic staff. The data pointed to contradictions in employer demand strategies and tensions inherent in high reliance on an insecure and transient workforce. The differences between the two universities were highlighted by examining the impact of casualisation on teaching quality. Old University, a research intensive, well resourced university with a very able student body, evidenced by high entry requirements, and a large post-graduate student population, appeared less exposed to risks associated with high levels of casual academic staff. In part this was due to the risk management processes taken by some faculties and schools, but it was also connected to the higher performing students they were able to attract, which created a ‘mutually reinforcing definition of value’ and placed less of a necessity on high quality teaching (Marginson, 2000, pp.192-193).

New University, on the other hand, had a student cohort that required a lot more support, and for these students the impact of high levels of casual academic staff was very negative. New University senior managers, academics, and casual academics all acknowledged the impact of rising student-staff ratios, high levels of casualisation, particularly in first year courses, and the sometimes unsuitable casual academic staff on their student cohort. The casual academics all reported that they took their jobs and these issues very seriously, but the nature of their employment often constrained their
capacity to offer the students what they needed. Despite senior managements’ concerns about the negative outcomes for students, budget constraints and the impact of devolved funding arrangements meant there was no capacity to tackle the problem.

These contradictions highlight wider tensions including the impact of particular government directives such as the uncapping of student places, a 40 per cent target of participation amongst 18-25 year olds, and targets for increasing the numbers of students from low SES backgrounds, against a constrained funding environment. Government sources account for less than half of all university revenue, yet government directives affect university activities in fundamental ways. Some universities are better placed than others to deal with the outcomes of these directives, but the net outcome is to drive larger divisions between university types and to further concentrate privilege and resources amongst a few.

**The unique university setting – policies and practices in the organisational context**

The role of management strategy in relation to the employment of casual academic staff has only been briefly examined in the literature. Bryson and Blackwell (2006) found that universities could be categorised as using one of two models for the employment of insecure academic staff, either integrated or differentiated, although in practice they found this operated more as a continuum. Their case studies revealed that policy did not always result in practice and good practice sometimes took place in the absence of policy, suggesting that other factors drove the practices associated with the employment of casual academic staff. The case study data suggests that there are at least two types or models of management approaches to the employment of casual academic staff that can be identified and illustrated.

This typology of an integrated or differentiated approach was applied to the policy analysis and practice at each case study university. New University, at the policy level, attempted an integrated approach, evidenced through policies that sought to induct and support and provide a career path, and through a central policy driven internal survey and report undertaken in 2008. However, in practice, casual academic staff were far from integrated. Poor administrative processes for pay and IT systems and poor support and resources rendered many of them angry, excluded, and disengaged. Evidence of induction and professional development was rare, and awareness of policy provisions was absent amongst academic managers and senior managers, the very staff who were required to implement them. Resource constraints constantly stymied efforts at good
practice. Cash strapped schools and faculties relied on central support for initiatives they developed but central support was extremely limited. This was all despite awareness amongst very senior management about the risks associated with high levels of casualisation.

In contrast at a policy level, Old University appeared to differentiate quite clearly between casual academic staff and continuing academic staff, with a very limited policy provision for casual academics which set out a minimum framework only. There was little evidence of any central administration attention to the issues of the casual workforce, rather these were seen as matters for faculty and departments. This was reinforced by the large size of Old University and the very advanced nature of the devolved budget structures. Tellingly, Old University were unable provide any details on the size or profile of their casual workforce, providing stark evidence of the lack of importance they attached to the issue at a central level.

For casual academics at Old University, on the other hand, induction was reasonably common, and some internal hierarchies for progression within casual employment, such as moving from tutoring to lecturing work were established. The WCAU data likewise found that access to induction was most common amongst casual academics at Sandstone Universities, of which Old University is one. Old University’s approach to managing casual academic staff was motivated by risk management, not professional development and career progression, as evidenced by the instrumental use of student evaluation scores, which were not a performance improvement tool but rather blunt performance management instrument. Casual academics were very clear that poor scores meant no more work. Good performance was rewarded with more insecure work (moving from casual tutoring to casual lecturing), not the opportunity for more secure employment, and the importance of a well rounded CV was constantly reinforced by academic managers. Quality assurance was effectively managed by a continual supply of qualified labour willing to make itself available under the terms offered. The by-product of this strategy appeared to be the thwarted ambitions and frustrations of the many aspiring academics interviewed.

Two key features help to explain the differences apparent between the two universities in terms of the policies for their casual academic workforce and the experience of work for those employees. Differences are explained by resources and the different nature of the labour markets at each of the universities. Old University, due to its status and research focus was well resourced and as a result many faculties had developed
established procedures for dealing with casual academics, particularly in areas where course offerings were standardised and course sizes were large. Its research status provided for a pool of post-graduate students available and willing to take up casual work. At New University resource constraints coloured every attempt to improve supports for casual academic staff and well-meaning policy failed to translate into practical reality. This was compounded by the administrative difficulties which meant that the basics of on time and correct pay for casuals were ongoing issues. A lack of an established research culture meant that labour for casual academic work had to be sourced from a much wider pool, often resulting in last-minute appointments and sometimes unsuitable appointments.

Each model of managing casual employment has different implications. Old University’s differentiated but more locally developed approach had implications for casual academics due to the high levels of monitoring. For the casuals this created higher expectations and higher stakes as the issues were more intense, resulting in greater levels of frustrated ambition. This was also related to the different nature of labour supply at Old University. The casual academics at Old University, who were actively searching for more secure academic employment, performed work of which the component parts closely resembled that of continuing academic staff: they were often lecturing, or course coordinating, with high levels of teaching hours; they developed their own materials, and often participated in course development. Research work was performed in their own time, or as part of another casual position. Despite the assembling of work that was similar to that of an academic, their working lives were characterised by extreme levels of insecurity. Past work was never a guarantee of future work, and the end of each semester meant the same uncertainty.

The superficially integrated, highly ad-hoc model of New University had greater implications for teaching quality and university management. Fewer of the casual academics interviewed at New University had completed their PhDs and of those who did aspire to an academic position they were not actively searching for that position. For the New University casual academics interviewees, casual academic work was part of a transition rather than, in the case of the PhD qualified Old University casual academics, an immediate thwarted ambition. However, for those at New University the difficulties associated with their work, particularly issues around payment, and lack of support had a scarring effect, which may impact on the possibility of their securing
future academic work. The general lack of induction, support, and the lack of integration made for an alienating experience for casual academic staff.

**Revisiting the research questions**

Using the framework developed in Figure 8.1 to apply segmented labour market theory to the findings, the preceding discussion has addressed the research questions. In responding to the first research question: ‘why is academic work increasingly casualised in Australia’, the thesis has argued that the external regulatory environment has been a primary force. University managements responded to that external environment, together with the imposition and embracing of NPM and the processes of devolved budgeting and management through the enterprise university. This response was reinforced and sharpened by an environment of continual funding decline which necessitated the search for alternative revenue sources such as international students. The broader regulatory forces in the Australian labour market, particularly changes to employment law during the Howard Coalition Liberal government, made it difficult for unions to respond. Instead the broader environment widened a regulatory gap whereby the risks of employment could be shifted onto employees. These factors produced a large and growing casual academic workforce, characterised by a gendered and (in the university setting) youthful profile. The outcomes for this casual academic workforce are delineated by two key aspects of labour supply, the academic discipline and the individual casual academic’s orientations to the work.

The second research question; ‘what does the casual academic workforce look like’ has been addressed by developing a new typology of casual academic staff based on motivation and employment orientations that identifies and acknowledges diversity. The new typology assists with an understanding of the workforce and provides an important modification of the theoretical framework to explain how labour supply affects the processes and outcomes of casualisation, separate to other external forces. The typology also shows that a ‘one size fits all’ approach will not address their needs, particularly not those of the majority who aspire to a more secure academic position. This focuses our attention on the deficits associated with casual academic employment for those particular staff, as outlined in the discussion, as these produce disadvantage in the search for more secure employment. This also has major implications for future workforce development.
The revised theoretical framework helped address the third research question; ‘what are the implications for casual academics, academic staff who manage casual staff, and university management’. The outcomes for casual academic staff and academic staff who manage casual staff have been addressed in the preceding discussion. For policy makers it may be that while there is an adequate supply of labour for casual academic work, and while students remain without a voice on campus due to the decimation of student unions under the Howard Liberal Coalition Government, there is little pressure to address this issue. The issue will remain with university managers who may need to be creative in providing more job security for academic staff into the future, and to do so under a challenging funding environment.

The fourth research question was ‘what are the gender dimensions of the casualisation of academic employment’. The gender dimensions have been illustrated and explained using the qualitative and quantitative data, adding to and expanding upon the existing evidence. By highlighting the similarities and differences in males’ and females’ experiences of casual academic employment emerging from the data new insights are offered demonstrating why women appear to find it harder to move from casual academic employment to more secure academic employment. Gender shapes how women enter casual academic employment and their unsteady navigation along the career path, and how women experience casual employment. The data analysis in Chapter 4 and interviews with casual academic staff show how casual work may become more of a trap than a bridge, particularly for women who are often less inclined to ‘talk themselves up’ and struggle to maintain a research profile when their teaching load is high. In particular the survey data identified the negative impacts of working in female-dominated disciplines for women, noting that this is an area that requires further investigation. Broadly all these features sit within a wider societal context and reflect the residual impact of the male breadwinner model in Australian society.

**Conclusion**

The theoretical framework developed and elaborated in Figure 8.1 in this Chapter show how SLM theory can assist in explaining the processes of casualisation in the university sector. Academic work is vertically and horizontally segmented, between continuing and insecure academic staff, and across academic discipline. The impact of this on casual academic staff is greatly influenced by their orientation to their work. For casual academics who aspire to an academic career the experience of casual employment can
be a particularly negative one, with the work having many features in common with a
trap, rather than acting as a bridge to more secure work.

The analysis highlights the complex interactions between the various external forces,
the regulatory and industrial environment, funding arrangements, the wider public
policy settings, set against the unique organisational environment of the university,
combining to shape the conditions for casual academic employment. The enormous
transformation of Australia’s university sector since the Dawkins’ reforms of 1987 is set
firmly within the context of NPM, and overlayed by changes in the Australian economy,
the structure of employment, and the regulatory environment. These factors have all
played a part in the growth of casual academic employment. Rubery (2005, p. 281)
oberves that organisational strategy in reshaping employment ‘must remain centre
stage’, turning our attention to a focus on the university setting. The primacy of
academic work in the functioning of the university has given way to the ‘market
bureaucracy’ of the enterprise university which is driven by budgets, devolved
management, and new hierarchies of control (Marginson & Considine 2000, p. 12). The
‘tenuous periphery’ (Kimber 2003) represent an invisible majority, responsible for
much of the teaching work of the university, yet without access to any of the benefits
normally associated with qualified, skilled, visible professional employment. The
implications for a generation of aspiring academics and for the academic profession as a
whole are profound and for all the reasons canvassed, until now their plight has
remained hidden and unaddressed.
CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

Academic work in Australia’s universities is highly casualised and the path to an academic career is today more likely to be preceded by time spent in casual academic employment. Further, the length of time spent in casual academic employment for many aspiring academics appears to be growing, and for some a more secure academic position may never eventuate. Using SLM as a framework within which to examine the processes of the casualisation of academic work has highlighted the key role of the external environment and the responses of university managements to changes in that external environment. Casualisation has occurred through ‘an officially sanctioned gap in protection’ which has extended the employment category allowing academic teaching work to be performed on an hourly rate basis, far beyond its intended purpose which was to facilitate short-term or irregular engagements (Campbell & Burgess 2001, pp. 177-178; Pocock et al. 2004). These features have combined with the particular Australian version of NPM in universities, which has manifested as the ‘enterprise university’, and a university management that has failed to address workforce development and renewal.

Across the Australian workforce casualisation has a gendered pattern, reflected in the enduring nature of the male breadwinner model and the lack of secure flexible part-time work options for women. This gendered pattern is also apparent in the casualisation of academic work. In short, casualisation can be seen to represent a failure of regulation.

Much of the public policy discourse about the future of the academic workforce is referenced to the continuing teaching and research academic model of work. This discourse views the ageing of the continuing workforce as a factor which may cause skills shortages when these academics retire, and the global labour market for academics becomes tight (Hugo 2005, 2008; Bradley 2008). However these analyses give only the briefest nod to the highly casualised nature of academic teaching, and ignore the aspirations held by many casual academics for an academic career, aspirations that are not being fulfilled. They also fail to recognise the way the casual academic workforce is reshaping and transforming academic work, and how the broader societal and regulatory forces continue to push universities to produce more with less government funding.

Casualisation and the prevalence of insecure work is an issue which has wider ramifications than just for the university sector. It is situated in a wider debate about the place of flexible, insecure work in a modern economy, and the sustainability of shifting
the risk of employment from employer to employee. Just as this debate is not settled in the Australian labour market, it is far from settled in the university sector and there are some key reasons why this is the case. Firstly, the invisible nature of casual academic work, and therefore the casual academic staff who, while not invisible to students, are invisible to university managements and decision makers. The WCAU survey data showing ah-hoc hiring practises and uneven levels of support and development; and the interview data which detailed the exclusion and isolation characterising the lives of many casual academics, demonstrate how this invisibility is manifested. Second, the segmented nature of academic labour markets, divided along discipline lines, as well as between a core academic and insecure academic workforce, and exacerbated by the market mechanisms of NPM, make a coherent regulatory response extremely difficult. Third, flexibility of labour is now so embedded within universities as a way of dealing with funding uncertainty that a different approach would require significant structural change and a new targeted funding regime. Both appear highly unlikely in the current constrained fiscal climate and decentralised industrial relations environment. The final reason why there has been no consensus about casualisation being a problem is due to the very poor data collection by government departments and universities, and the contested nature of much of that data. Poor data collection is also a reflection of a lack of recognition of the issue, and relates to the invisible nature of the casual academic workforce.

Casual academic employment has become possible because universities have been able to produce, reproduce, and procure a reasonably consistent supply of appropriately skilled and available labour. Universities have also largely displaced the true costs of that insecure employment onto those casual academic staff, the academic staff managing them, and their students. In a recent paper discussing the changing PhD, the Group of Eight Universities (2013, p. 31) acknowledged that whilst record numbers of PhD students were graduating from Australian universities, very few would ever secure permanent academic work. A 2012 survey of 1200 researchers suggested that too many PhD students were being accepted by universities, noting that these students were often seen as ‘cheap labour’ (ACOLA 2012, p. 21). This all points to the emergence of a strategy on the part of some universities to fuel an active labour supply for casual academic work, without any willingness to take responsibility for the career and life consequences of casual academic employment on those casual academic staff, or to assist with developing career pathways.
In the context of over two decades of declining government funding, the current political and economic climate suggests that the future for universities is highly uncertain. Revenue sources such as income from international students remain volatile, and governments, of any political persuasion, are clearly not going to be a saviour. This environment has driven universities towards new forms of segmentation. These are taking shape in the move to an online teaching platform, indicated by the rising interest in massive open online courses (MOOCs), and in the increasing involvement of private providers such as Navitas in first year course provision. These are all trends which will further segment academic work by fragmenting course development and course delivery. In turn they create new challenges for regulation.

There is no doubt that the pressures to casualise academic work are only set to increase and this is an approach that brings substantial cost, as this thesis has demonstrated. The costs for a generation of academic aspirants and for the academic profession are high, but until recently have been invisible. It may only be that when those costs are borne by universities in the form of threats to reputation, and when universities are no longer seen as desirable places to work by well qualified individuals, that pressure will be brought to deal with the issue. Until then the hidden crisis of casualisation will remain just that, hidden.

**Contributions and limitations of this research**

The research confirms and extends findings in the Australian literature, particularly those of Junor (2004a). By using SLM theory the research has examined the implications of casual academic employment for casual academic staff, for academics who manage casual staff, and for university managers. The scale of the research and the mixed method approach provides for the first time a comprehensive picture of the nature of the casual academic workforce, its size and dimensions, and an understanding of the gendered patterns. The use of Unisuper data has enhanced this analysis, and enabled a fuller picture to be presented. The Unisuper data has also been useful in confirming the gender and age profile of the casual academic workforce. This provides the sector with data to begin to tackle the issue of institutional invisibility, and provides a basis for informed discussion about the future of academic work.

The development of a new and mutually exclusive typology of casual academic staff based on motivation and orientation provides a useful platform for informed public policy and university management discussion about academic workforce planning and
renewal. The issue of academic workforce planning and renewal has been highlighted as an important issue, for academic staff, the university sector and the wider economy and society. The university sector is critical to the nation’s productivity growth and the knowledge economy, and workforce planning is key to the sector’s contribution to these aims.

The thesis has examined one form of insecure work in the university sector and while casual academic staff comprise the largest and most insecurely employed staff group there are other forms of insecure employment in the university sector. These other forms include the fixed-term employment for research staff, fixed-term employment for teaching and research staff and general/professional staff, and casual employment for research staff, all areas of investigation outside the scope of this thesis.

The low response rate of casual academic staff to the WCAU survey, whilst not unexpected for this group of staff, means care needs to be taken in interpreting the results across the wider population of casual academic staff. The self-selected nature of those who volunteered to be interviewed for the case study research also means that the results are not generalisable across the population of casual academic staff. Despite this the data does make a valuable contribution to the understanding of the experience of casual academic employment and the implications of casual academic employment for those staff.

**Future Research**

In endeavouring to answer the research questions, invariably more questions are raised. The role of academic discipline in the growth of casual employment, the gendered dimensions of casualisation, and the impact of casualisation on academic work have emerged as areas requiring further exploration. In particular, the apparent negative impact of working in a female-dominated discipline on female casual academic staff is an area that warrants further investigation.

The impact of an increasingly casualised academic workforce on teaching quality is also indicated as an important area for further investigation. The role of union strategy requires future exploration which would add to the understanding of the processes of casualisation, but this was beyond the scope of the thesis. In addition, the lack of cross-national comparisons of insecure academic work has been observed, noting the difficulties in finding comparable data. This is an area that would assist with a broader
understanding of the causes and settings of insecure academic employment, and could assist with policy solutions. The cross-national comparisons discussed in Chapter 2 indicate similar pressures across the Anglo-American universities, particularly constrained government funding, and the prevalence of new forms of public management.

This research has exposed the conditions of employment for casual academic teaching staff in universities who, despite high educational qualifications, arguably the highest in the country, work on insecure hourly paid employment contracts with no guarantee of work from one semester to the next. The completion of a PhD, a now well accepted entry-level requirement for a continuing academic position, provides no guarantee of employment in a university or of a career path. The issues are complex and chances of an academic career vary especially across disciplines, but, overall, there appears to be an increasingly large group of qualified people who want an academic career and have little chance of achieving this. This is happening at a time when the continuing academic workforce is ageing and nearing retirement, and concerns have been raised about workforce renewal. Yet little thought has been given to workforce planning and the lack of discussion about casual academic staff and their role leads to the conclusion that the casual academic teaching workforce, rather than waiting in the wings to replace the continuing staff, is being sidelined and not considered. This amounts to a waste of human capital and points to contradictions in the government’s goal of boosting national productivity through a more skilled and qualified workforce. The strategy of employing casual academic staff to provide teaching, one of the two critical functions of the university, has a high human cost. It also has a high national cost as qualified people fail to gain a permanent job, and this has an impact on national productivity.
APPENDIX A: MARGINSON’S TYPOLOGY OF UNIVERSITIES

The typology, described in Table A.1 separates universities into different types in accordance with the phase of their development, thus providing a useful way of grouping like with like and reminding us that all universities are not the same (Marginson & Considine, 2000:189-190).

Table A:1: Marginson’s typology of Universities – adapted to 4 type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sandstone (9 universities)</th>
<th>Gumtree (9 universities)</th>
<th>Unitech (5 universities)</th>
<th>Newer (14 universities)</th>
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</thead>
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<td>University of Technology Sydney</td>
<td>Edith Cowan University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Queensland</td>
<td>Newcastle University*</td>
<td>Queensland University of Technology</td>
<td>Central Queensland University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Western Australia</td>
<td>Flinders University*</td>
<td>RMIT University</td>
<td>Southern Cross University</td>
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<td>University of Adelaide</td>
<td>James Cook University*</td>
<td>Curtin University</td>
<td>University of Western Sydney</td>
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<td>University of Tasmania</td>
<td>La Trobe University*</td>
<td>University of South Australia</td>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
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<td>Macquarie University</td>
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<td>University of Southern Queensland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australian National University</td>
<td>University of New England</td>
<td></td>
<td>Australian Catholic University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monash University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charles Darwin University*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of NSW</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Swinburne University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Ballarat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>University of the Sunshine Coast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Deakin University</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: UNE is older than Monash but had no medical School, hence IS more like a Gumtree (p189), Deakin originally said to be a Gumtree but Marginson later notes Deakin turned itself into a Newer University (p 201). Redbricks are similar to Sandstones except they are more corporate and entreprenerial, less traditionally academic, however as all 3 now belong to the Go8 it is logical to include them as one category, hereafter referred to as Sandstone universities.

*Denotes universities that are members of Innovative Research Universities

Source: Marginson and Considine (2000: 189-190)

The six Sandstone universities are the oldest universities and together with the three Redbrick Universities are better known as the ‘group of eight’, although the University of Tasmania, founded in 1890 is not a member of that particular grouping of universities. The typology used for the thesis combines the Sandstone and Redbrick Universities into one category, hereafter referred to as Sandstone. The Gumtree
Universities were all founded during the period 1960-1975. The Unitechs are the largest of the old Colleges of Adult Education (CAE) and tend to be more vocationally focussed. This group also has its own sectoral grouping known at the Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN). The Newer Universities is a heterogeneous group of universities and all were founded post 1986 (Marginson & Considine, 2000:188-190).

There are three official organisations of Australian universities, the Group of Eight (comprising eight of the nine Sandstone Universities, excluding the University of Tasmania), the Australian Technology Network (comprising the five Unitech Universities) and the Innovative Research Universities, (comprising seven universities, a combination of six Gumtree Universities and one Newer University). The remaining 18 universities are unaligned. All 37 public universities are members of Universities Australia, the peak body representing the sector, formed in 2007.

In the thesis a slightly adapted form of Marginson’s typology is used to investigate variance by university type. The typology both protects university identity and appropriately recognises the diversity in the sector, a diversity that is very closely linked with the formation period of the particular university.
APPENDIX B: THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT FOR CASUAL ACADEMIC STAFF

Thank you in advance for participating in this important survey. It will provide new information about how work and careers in universities have changed over the past decade and what policies are needed to enhance our working conditions for the coming decade. Your responses are crucial!

Most respondents to our pilot study completed the questionnaire within 20 minutes—it certainly shouldn’t take more than 30 minutes of your time.

If you wish to provide additional comments about issues you think we should have covered, please do so in the box provided at the end of the survey. We welcome your comments.

Consent to participate
Submission of the completed survey will constitute your consent to participate. Your participation is completely voluntary.

Confidentiality
Survey responses are totally confidential. They can only be accessed by the researchers and cannot be linked back to your contact details.

PRIZE DRAW
SURVEY RESPONDENTS ARE ELIGIBLE TO ENTER A PRIZE DRAW FOR AN IPAD2 (64GB, WITH WI-FI AND 3G) – SEE OVER THE PAGE FOR DETAILS

When you have completed this form please enclose it in the reply paid envelope provided and mail it to:

Work and Careers Survey, ESSR Surveys (777)
Institute for Social Science Research
Level 4, GP North 3
Reply Paid 6469
ST LUCIA QLD 4067
YOU DO NOT NEED A STAMP
Instructions for completing this form

1. To answer most of the questions you only need to tick a box. Please tick the box which is closest to your situation. If you are unsure about how to answer a question, mark the response for the answer closest to your situation.

   For example:
   How often do you feel you have spare time that you don’t know what to do with?
   - Almost always
   - Often
   - Sometimes
   - Rarely
   - Never

2. Sometimes you are asked to write in an answer. In that case simply use the space provided.

   For example:
   How long have you worked at this university?
   Number of years

3. Sometimes your response to a specific question may mean that you are asked to skip a question(s) or move on to another section of the survey.

   For example:
   A "you" won a competition, go to...

Would you like to enter our prize draw for an iPad2 (64GB, with Wi-Fi and 3G)?

If you would like to be entered into the prize draw to win an iPad, please tick ’Yes’ and provide an email address or telephone number below. Contact details will be kept totally confidential and separate from your survey responses — no one will be able to link your responses with your contact details.

Yes, I would like to be entered into the prize draw

Email:

Phone:
To Start With: A Few Questions About You

A1. In what year were you born? __________

A2. Are you?
   Female __________
   Male __________

A3. Which of the following educational qualifications have you completed? (Please tick any you have completed and enter the year awarded.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Year awarded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>D 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Masters Degree</td>
<td>D 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coursework Masters Degree</td>
<td>D 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma</td>
<td>D 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Certificate</td>
<td>D 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor Degree</td>
<td>D 6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Diploma</td>
<td>D 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAFE or Trade Certificate or Diploma</td>
<td>D 8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>D 9.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A4. Are you currently studying for a qualification?
   No __________
   Yes—full time __________
   Yes—part time __________

A5. Name of qualification: __________

A6. Year commenced studying this qualification __________

Your Current Job

81. Are you (or have you been) in a sessional/casual position undertaking teaching or demonstration activities in 2011?
   No __________
   Yes __________

82. How long have you worked at this university? __________ years OR __________ months

83. What is the discipline or field in which you work?
   Physical, Chemical, Mathematical & Earth Sciences __________
   Biological, Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences __________
   Information, Computing and Communication Sciences __________
   Engineering and Technology __________
   Agriculture, Urban Environmental and Building __________
   Medical and Health Sciences __________
   Law, Justice and Law Enforcement __________
   Business, Economics and Tourism __________
   Education __________
   Performing arts, Visual Arts __________
   Humanities and Arts __________
   Social Sciences __________
   Other (please specify) __________

333
84. What is the name of your work unit? (an most universities, this is a school, department or institute, e.g. School of Architecture, Medical Research Institute.)

85. Would you say that the salaried academic staff in your work unit are:
- Mostly men (i.e. two-thirds or more men) D 1.
- Roughly balanced between men and women D 2.
- Mostly women (two-thirds or more women) D 3.

86. Do you currently work at more than one institution?
- No D 1. + Please go to BS
- Yes D 2. + Please go to Bi

87. How many institutions of each type?
- University
- TAFE
- Private provider (e.g. Navitas)

88. Where do you undertake your teaching preparation?
- Mostly at home D 1.
- Mostly at the institution where I teach D 2.

Your Income

C1. For your current job what is the total amount you usually receive each fortnight before tax or any other deductions? AmOut/Uni in whole dollars S per fortnight

C2. What is your main source of income?
- University scholarship/other scholarship D 1.
- My sessional/casual employment D 2.
- Employment in another non-academic university position D 3.
- Employment outside the university sector D 4.
- My family (e.g. partner, parents, other family) D 5.
- Pension/income support as I am retired D 6.
- Other (please specify) D 7.

Your Hours and Workload

D1. At all the universities where you work, how many hours of face-to-face teaching do you usually do each week?
- Lecture hours per week
- Tutorial hours per week
- Demonstration hours per week
- Clinical Demonstration hours per week

D2. How many other hours do you usually spend each week on preparation, student consultation, meetings, and marking?
- Hours per week
D5. By the end of this year, how many weeks will you have worked in 2011 in sessional or casual university jobs?  

__________________________ weeks

D6. How many semesters or trimesters have you worked as a sessional/casual in the last five years?  

Semesters or Trimesters

D7. Do you currently supervise other sessional/casual staff?

Yes  
No

DB How many sessional/casual staff do you usually supervise per semester?

__________________________ per semester

Job Satisfaction and Security

E1. Thinking about your employment over the next 12 months, what do you think is the percent chance that you will leave your current job voluntarily (i.e., quit or retire) in the next 12 months?

% from 0% (i.e. no chance) to 100% (i.e. absolute certainty)

E2. Will you be looking for sessional/casual teaching work in 2012?

No  
Yes

E3. What do you think is the percent chance that you will have sessional/casual teaching work in 2012?

% from 0% (i.e. no chance) to 100% (i.e. absolute certainty)

E4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your current job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Don’t know/Not relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| a. I have a lot of input into changes that affect me  
| b. I feel there are unrealistic expectations of me in terms of teaching outcomes  
| c. I am satisfied with the balance between my work and personal life  
| d. I am satisfied with my job overall  |

E5. And to what extent have each of the following gone up or down for you personally in the last two years (or since you started here if that is less than two years)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Went up</th>
<th>Stayed the same</th>
<th>Gone down or worse</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| a. The level of input I have into changes that affect me  
| b. Expectations of the teaching outcomes I will achieve  
| c. My satisfaction with balance between my work and personal life  
| d. My satisfaction with my career prospects  
| e. My satisfaction with my job overall  |
### Career-Job History

**F1.** Thinking about your career as a whole since you left school; can you indicate the number of years you have worked in sessional/casual positions in universities? (Please write number of years in relevant box. Leave blank those boxes that do not apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Part time</th>
<th>Full time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>years</td>
<td>years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>years</td>
<td>years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>years</td>
<td>years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a. Sessional/casual work while studying, e.g. for a PhD
- b. Sessional/casual work after obtaining a PhD
- c. Sessional/casual work at any other time

**F2.** Have you ever applied for a fixed term or continuing academic position?

- No
- Yes

**F3.** Have you ever been successful in an application?

- No
- Yes

**F4.** Why do you think you were unsuccessful? (Please tick any that apply.)

- I did not have a PhD
- Lack of research outputs
- The field of applicants was very competitive
- Other (please specify)

**F5.** Have you ever worked in a continuing or fixed-term salaried position in a university, whether or not this was a position you had formally applied for?

- No
- Yes

**F6.** Thinking about your career as a whole, can you indicate the number of years you have worked in continuing or fixed-term positions in universities at the following levels? (If you have held multiple positions at any time, please respond just for your main job.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>years</td>
<td>years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>years</td>
<td>years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>years</td>
<td>years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>years</td>
<td>years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a. Level A
- b. Level B
- c. Level C
- d. Level D
- e. Level E

**F7.** Please indicate the number of years you have spent working outside the university sector since you left school.

- Irrelevant work related to your current discipline
- Other work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>years</td>
<td>years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**F8.** Have you done any of the following? (Please tick any that apply.)

- Held a post-doctoral fellowship or similar research-only position for 1 year or more
- Worked on a contract in an academic job for 1 year or more

**F9.** How did you obtain your current sessional/casual position?

- Responded to an advertisement
- Approached the department/centre or an academic
- Offered work by a contact or friend at the university
- Offered work by my PhD supervisor
- Other (please specify)
Career Supports and Difficulties

G1. At this university, have you ever taken part in or received any of the following? (Yes, please select paid or unpaid or both.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes—paid</th>
<th>Yes—unpaid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Induction</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Professional development including courses, seminars, training sessions</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Staff meetings of your school/department/ faculty</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Been a member of a committee at your university</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Meetings about a course you are teaching</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

G2. At this university do you have access to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. A workspace and computer</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. A suitable space for student consultation</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Financial support for your research (e.g. support to attend a conference)</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

G3. Have you experienced any kind of harassment or bullying at work in the last five years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Please go to G1.</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Please go to G4.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

G4. Have you taken, or seriously considered taking, a formal case in relation to harassment or bullying at work in the last five years?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Please go to G5.</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

G5. Why did you decide not to take a case?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>D 1</th>
<th>D 2</th>
<th>D 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I didn’t think it was too minor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I lacked faith in the complaints process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It would have made things worse for me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

G6. Did the harassment have an adverse impact on your career?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>D 1</th>
<th>D 2</th>
<th>D 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

G7. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. I could work either in universities or in other sectors</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I would like to remain in the university sector for the rest of my career</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. I am satisfied with my career opportunities in this university;</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. I am satisfied with my career opportunities in the university sector as a whole</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. I would be able to move interstate to advance my career</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GS. 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?


Career Intentions

H1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:


H2. Where would you like to be in five years time? And where do you expect to be? (Please select only one option for where you'd like to be, and only one option for where you expect to be.)

Work and Family

11. Do you have any children under 18 years of age living with you at home?
   No   O 1. + Please go to 14.
   Yes  O 2. + Please go to 12.

12. How many children are living with you at home in each of the age groups listed below:
   Kumber of children
   a. children aged 0–4 years
   b. children aged 5–12 years
   c. children aged 13–18 years

13. Who is mainly responsible for the care of these children? (Please only tick one option.)
   1. My partner
   2. Shared equally with my partner
   3. Other (please specify)

14. Are you responsible for any adult who needs regular care due to ill health, disability or age?
   No   O 1.
   Yes-living with me O 2.
   Yes-not living with me O 3.

15. During the past five years, has your work been affected by your family or caring responsibilities in any of the following ways? (Please tick all that apply)
   1. Having to work part-time
   2. Having to take additional leave (other than parental leave)
   3. Stress from home affecting my ability to do my job well or a sustained period
   4. Missing opportunities to apply for continuing or fixed-term positions
   5. Having to change jobs or responsibilities
   6. Inability to complete qualifications
   7. None of the above

16. Have you ever resigned from, or not taken up work in, a university due to caring responsibilities?
   No   O 1. + Please go to 14.
   Yes O 2. + Please go to 14.

17. For how long were you out of the university sector as a result of this?
   years OR months
18. Thinking about the balance between your work and the rest of your life, how often does your work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. interfere with your responsibilities or activities outside work?</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. keep you from spending the amount of time you would like with your family and friends?</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. interfere with your ability to develop or maintain close relationships and friendships in your community?</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. Thinking about the balance between your work and the rest of your life, how often does your personal life:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Almost always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. interfere with your work activities?</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. restrict the time you spend at work?</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Thinking about your life in general:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>how often do you feel rushed or pressed for time?</th>
<th>Almost always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Don't know / not relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Tite is adequate support in my work</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 5</td>
<td>D 6</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for women in their caring responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Tite is adequate support in my work for men in their caring responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

112. Do you see any of the following as being impediments to balancing your work and personal life?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Major impediment</th>
<th>Somewhat of an impediment</th>
<th>Minor impediment</th>
<th>Not an impediment</th>
<th>Don't know / not relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Attitudes of my supervisors</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Attitudes of my colleagues</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Workloads</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Anything else (please specify)</td>
<td>D 1</td>
<td>D 2</td>
<td>D 3</td>
<td>D 4</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parental Leave

J1. Have you ever taken parental (maternity, paternity or adoption) leave while employed in a university?
   No       O 1. + Please go to K1.
   Yes      O 2. + Please go to f2.

J2. How many times have you taken parental leave?

J3. For the most recent occasion, please indicate when it started and how many weeks paid and unpaid leave you took.
   a. Year leave commenced (e.g. 2009)
   b. Duration of paid leave weeks
   c. Duration of unpaid leave weeks

J4. On that occasion, did you take the full amount of parental leave to which you were entitled?
   No       O 1. + Please go to J5
   Yes      O 2. + Please go to K1
   Don’t know O 3. + Please go to K1

J5. If you did not take your full parental leave entitlement, why not? (Please tick all that apply.)
   Concerned about household financials O 1.
   Concerned about colleagues’ workloads O 2.
   Concerned about the impact on my career O 3.
   Concerned about reaction of colleagues O 4.
   Concerned about reaction of superiors O 5.
   My partner took the primary care role O 6.
   I was keen to return to work O 7.
   Other (please specify) O 8.

Retirement Planning

K1. What are your expected income sources when you retire or as you get older and work less? (Please indicate all expected income sources in the first column, and which one will be your main source of income in the second column.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of income (a)</th>
<th>Main source of income (please select only one) (b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UniSuper</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Australian superannuation</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas pension fund</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government pension</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own assets (including rent, properties, farm, business investments, interest, stocks, debentures, bank accounts)</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouse or partner’s income</td>
<td>6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone else’s income</td>
<td>7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>9.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

K2. As you move towards retirement, which of the following would you like to do, and which do you think you will be able to do? (Please tick all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Like to do (a)</th>
<th>Able to do (b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continue working as I currently do</td>
<td>1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the hours I work each day</td>
<td>2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce the days I work each week/fortnight</td>
<td>3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce my level of responsibility</td>
<td>4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek contract or casual employment</td>
<td>5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontage the type of work I do (e.g. project work rather than teaching or administration)</td>
<td>6.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>7.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
K.3. If you indicated that you will not be able to work the way you would ideally like to as you approach retirement, why is this? (Please tick all that apply.)

- May not be able to afford to 
- My organisation is unlikely to support my preference 
- Too much impact on my final Defined Benefit superannuation payout 
- May lose organisational benefits such as office or funding 
- Other (please specify) 

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D 1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D 5.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Few More Questions About You

L1. Were you born in Australia?

- No D 1. Please go to L2.
- Yes D 2. Please go to L3.

L2. In which country were you born? (please specify)

L3. Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

- Yes, Aboriginal D 1.
- Yes, Torres Strait Islander D 2.
- Yes, both D 3.
- No D 4.

L4. What language do you speak at home?

- English D 1.
- Language other than English D 2.

L5. Are you a member of a trade union?

- No D 1.
- Yes D 2.

L6. What is your current marital status (regardless of whether an opposite sex or same sex relationship)?

- Registered marriage or de facto relationship D 1. Please go to L1.
- Currently not with a partner D 2. Please go to L5.

L7. Which of the following best describes your partner’s current employment status?

- My partner works full-time in the university sector D 1.
- My partner works full-time in another sector D 2.
- My partner works part-time in the university sector D 3.
- My partner works part-time in another sector D 4.
- My partner is retired or not employed D 5.

L8. Do you have a long term health condition, impairment or disability that restricts you in your everyday activities and has lasted, or is likely to last, 6 months or more?

- No D 1.
- Yes D 2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M1. What do you think are the most important things that the university could do to improve your opportunities or satisfaction at work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2. Are there any other issues you’d like to raise that have not been covered in the survey?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The survey was only distributed electronically.
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

Casual academic staff

After establishing some career details, broad demographics and how long the casual had been working in the particular job, each interviewee was asked whether they would accept a full-time or part-time academic position if it were offered. This question was asked first to ascertain preference for casual work, and second based on the response slightly different questions were asked to those who said that they would not accept a full or part-time academic position and that they preferred their casual status.

The following broad topics were canvassed with casual academic staff:

- Qualifications and study status;
- How was casual position obtained, current work situation;
- Career paths;
- Collegiality and connections;
- Job satisfaction/pay and conditions;
- The experience of casual work;
- Control/autonomy/quality.

Academic staff managing casual staff

After gaining some background about the academic staff member, in particular about their own career path and whether they had ever worked as a casual during their career, the following broad topics were canvassed with academic staff managing casual academic staff:

Themes – workload;
- How much time is spent during teaching periods in the management and support of casual staff?
- How many staff are managed and what does this involve;

Professional development and support in relation to managing casual staff;
- Have you received any professional development in relation to this role?

Hiring casual staff;
- How are casual staff employed, do you have difficulty hiring appropriate staff?

Own career path;
- Describe the path you took to get into academia, have you worked as a casual?

Changes to academic work;
- Career trajectory and qualifications;
• The role of an academic;
• Casual academic staff managed;
• Impacts of that role on workload;
• Levels of support and training for management role;
• Impacts on teaching quality;
• Perceptions of motivations of casual staff.

**Senior managers**

After gaining some background about the senior manager, including qualifications, career path and stage, time spent in the university/university sector, the following broad topics were canvassed:

• Role, background and career trajectory;
• Budgets and budget processes;;
• Workforce planning and workforce renewal;
• Understandings of casual academic workforce;
• Causes of casualisation;
• Teaching quality;
• Challenges and risks for the university in the current environment.
## APPENDIX D: SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES

### Table D.1: How current substantive position was first obtained

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>The way the university depicts your contract</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive appointment process</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal promotion</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed without a competitive selection process</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>861</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Academic staff survey unpublished tables

### Table D.2: Number of casual/sessional staff you usually supervise per semester

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The way the university depicts your contract</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 or more</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>863</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WCAU Academic staff survey unpublished tables
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