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Workforce development and renewal in Australian universities and the management of casual academic staff

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Introduction

Academic staff in Australia's university sector face a range of complex and contradictory challenges that are shaping academic work in new and unforeseen ways. The continuing academic workforce is ageing, with significant numbers set to retire over the coming decades (Hugo & Morriss 2010, p42). Universities have undergone major changes such as increased student numbers, with a national goal of 40% of school leavers to have university qualifications by 2025 (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent & Scales 2008), while facing reductions in government funding that began in the 1990s (Marginson 2007). The uncapping of student places, massive growth in international students since the 1990s and an increased emphasis on research performance through international rankings and new measurement schemes for academic research have substantially changed how universities operate. This has contributed to a bifurcation of academic work between teaching and research. While universities have begun to focus more on the quality of teaching, continuing academic staff are mainly measured and valued by their research (Probert 2013).

Much of the expansion in student numbers has been managed by the employment of a casual academic workforce. On a headcount basis, casual academic staff form the majority of the academic teaching workforce in Australia's universities, and perform the bulk of undergraduate teaching (May, Strachan, Broadbent & Peetz 2011; Percy et al. 2008). The capacity to employ academic staff on an hourly basis has existed since 1980, when it was established by the Academic Salaries Tribunal to facilitate the employment of "industry professionals" and provide postgraduate students with an "academic apprenticeship" (Academic Salaries Tribunal 1980, p25). Since 1990, however, this workforce has tripled in full time equivalent (FTE) terms, significantly outpacing the growth in continuing academic positions (Table 1). These casual academic staff, often referred to as sessional staff due to the typically semester-based nature of employment, are hourly paid and hourly engaged, employed on conditions that are insecure, yet, paradoxically, sometimes long-term (Briar & Junor 2012). Despite the importance of these staff to the teaching effort of the university sector, little is known about the impact this development has had on student outcomes and teaching quality. The investigations that have taken place into the employment conditions of casual academic staff reveal a lack of structured support and development and poor conditions of employment; however, universities appear to have only a limited awareness and understanding of these staff and their concerns (Percy et al. 2008).

This paper reports on a new source of data examining the casual academic workforce in Australia's universities. During 2011, the Work and Careers in

Australian Universities (WCAU) survey was conducted at 19 universities as part of the ARC (Australian Research Council) Linkage project *Gender and Employment Equity: Strategies for Advancement in Australian Universities*. The survey of casual-teaching academic staff was one of three surveys conducted for this research. Professional, general and academic staff in fixed-term and ongoing appointments were also surveyed, using a similar, but tailored, survey instrument for each group.

Using the data from the WCAU survey, the research question this paper seeks to answer is: what support do casual academic staff receive from their university to do their work, and how does this affect their job and career satisfaction? The context for this question is critical: the ageing of the continuing academic workforce suggests an urgent need for workforce development and renewal, and the casual academic workforce may represent an important source of labour. Its motivations and orientations are key questions, as is how well the experience of casual academic employment is preparing them for a possible future academic career.

Literature and Background

Despite the institutional differences in universities in the Anglo-American countries, there is well-documented evidence of insecure academic employment commonly becoming entrenched.Over half the academic staff employed in the United Kingdom are employed on temporary contracts (Bryson & Blackwell 2006); similar proportions are employed part-time in Canada (Dobbie & Robinson 2008). In the United States the majority of academic staff are not on "tenure track" (Curtis & Jacobe 2006), a trend described as "the ongoing transformation of the profession into a majority of contingent [temporary] employees" (Schuster & Finkelstein 2007, p5).

In Australia, casual academic employment has expanded rapidly since 1990, alongside the "massification" of the university sector. Casual employment is a particular Australian version of labour-market flexibility that grew out of the "cracks and crevices" of Australia's regulatory system (Pocock, Buchanan & Campbell 2004, p21). Across the wider Australian labour market, approximately one in five employees are employed on an hourly basis (ABS 2011). Many scholars have drawn attention to the insecurity that hourly employment presents, including lack of leave and dismissal at an hour's notice, and the rise of the "permanent casual" (a casual employee who is employed over months and years) (Briar & Junor 2012; Campbell 1996).

Universities present a unique pattern of casual labour usage. It has features in common with the wider Australian labour market, such as the precarious nature of the employment relationship (Campbell 1996) and the gendered nature of the casual workforce (Pocock 1998), but there are also stark differences. In general, most casual work is located in the low-paid, low-skilled sectors of the workforce. In contrast, casual academic staff are amongst the highest qualified in the Australian workforce. The method of pay determination, a "rate for the job", in the form of a prescribed hourly rate based on a face-to-face delivery, is also a unique feature of casual academic work in universities. The hourly rate is set so that it includes payment for preparation, administration and student consultation, all of which have changed and grown considerably since 1980.

The growth in the casual academic workforce can be seen in the statistics collected by the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE), the only longitudinal data available. Table 1 shows the significant growth that has occurred in casual academic employment since 1990. The data is collected on an FTE basis, which uses a formula based on a calculation of teaching hours to equate the hours of a casual academic with that of a full-time academic. On this basis, casual academics comprise 22% of the academic workforce, a significant increase from 11% in 1990. The full-time equivalent calculation, however, significantly understates the real size of the casual academic workforce. Percy et al. (2008, p8) calculated that at one university 62 casual academics equated to 2.64 FTE, and at another 198 casual academics equated to 16 FTE. They noted that a calculation of the student load of casual academic staff may well be a more appropriate and useful statistic to collect, and estimated that casual academics were responsible for half the teaching load across the university sector (2008, p8).

Table 1: Full-Time Equivalent University Academic Staff, Ration of Casual to Non-Casual, Australia, Selected Years

Year	Non-casual academic FTE (1)	Casual academic FTE (2)	Casual FTE density (%) 2/1+2
1990	26,530	3,259	11.0
1994	30,276	5,497	15.3
1996	31,256	6,095	16.3
1998	30,148	6,306	17.3
2000	29,893	7,106	19.2
2002	30,997	7,862	20.2
2004	33,043	8,136	19.8
2005	34,227	8,028	19.0
2006	35,151	8,353	19.2
2007	36,592	8,490	19.0
2008	37,522	9,086	19.5
2009	38,965	9,968	20.4
2010	40,100	10,691	21.0
2011	41,090	11,429	21.7

Source: DEET, DIISRTE (2011): Selected Higher Education Staff Statistics, various years

A 1991 survey of casual academic staff at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) was one of the first to identify a range of problems associated with casual academic employment (Fine, Graham & Paxman 1992). The research detailed dissatisfaction with facilities, including lack of access to appropriate equipment, lack of adequate training and concerns about workload, pay and conditions. For many, casual employment was "characterized by uncertainty and insecurity" (Fine, Graham & Paxman 1992, p51). A number of individual and multi-university surveys and case studies since have continued to elaborate commonly raised concerns such as lack of access to basic facilities, exclusion from collegial forums, high administrative burdens, feelings of isolation and poor communication from employers (Junor 2004; Brown, Goodman & Yasukawa 2010; Gottschalk & McEachern 2010; Bexley, James & Arkoudis 2011a).

A range of literature, both international and Australian, has also pointed to the diversity of motivations and aspirations of insecure (temporary or casual) academic staff, underscoring the difficulty of providing policy solutions (Gappa & Leslie 1993; Junor 2004). A large study of part-time faculty in the USA was the first to detail the diversity of motivations amongst non-tenured academic staff, and proposed a four-part typology to describe their varying motivations: "professionals, specialists or experts", "career enders", "freelancers" or "aspiring academics" (Gappa & Leslie 1993). Similarly, typologies have been proposed by researchers investigating insecure academic employment in Canada (Rajagopal & Lin 1996; Lundy & Warme 1990) and the UK (Husbands & Davies 2000). A number of scholars have built on this typology for Australia (Junor 2004; Gottschalk & McEachern 2010; Coates & Goedegebuure 2010). All Australian typologies distinguish between those who are aspiring to or actively seeking an academic career and those who undertake casual academic work in conjunction with other work, or in retirement.

The link between teaching quality and the casualisation of academic work has not been specifically investigated in the Australian literature, although a number of studies have linked poor support and management of casual academics with risks to quality assurance. A 2008 report for the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) found "quality assurance of sessional teaching in many institutions is inadequate", and suggested a range of improvements under five broad domains (Percy et al. 2008, p11). Several universities, using ALTC grants, have attempted to grapple with the "sessional problem" (Kelly 2008; Macquarie University 2009). At the University of Canberra, for example, an induction and professional-development package was developed for casual academic staff employed at the university, but despite positive feedback there was no ongoing support for the initiatives once the grant money ran out (Kelly 2008, piii).

A specific literature in the USA is emerging on the wider question of the impact of insecurely employed academic staff on undergraduate education, and this may provide some guidance for the Australian context. Umbach (2007, p110), in a large survey of academic staff across 130 institutions, found that contingent faculty, particularly the most insecurely employed described as "part-time faculty", performed less well than tenured faculty in all the areas critical to student engagement. In particular, part-time faculty spent less time preparing and less time with students, had lower expectations and were generally "less effective" than tenured staff (Umbach, 2007, p112). Others have found that higher reliance on non-tenured and part-time faculty was associated with a higher undergraduate drop-out rates and lower graduation rates, and that this was possibly due to the insecure nature of the employment of teaching staff (Ehrenberg 2012, p200).

Many of these staff 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 discipline developments.

Method

Our main data source is the Work and Careers in Australian Universities (WCAU) survey, undertaken during semester 2 of 2011. This covered professional/general staff, academic staff and casual academic staff in 19 Australian universities. As part of WCAU, casual academic staff in 19 universities (of the 37 public universities in Australia in 2011) were invited to participate in an online survey investigating conditions of work, motivations for casual work, access to a range of job and career supports, job and career satisfaction and career intentions. The casual academic staff population represented the total of all casual (hourly paid) lecturers, tutors, demonstrators, or clinical demonstrators on the university's payroll during the last pay period prior to the survey distribution during semester 2, 2011. Email addresses for casual lecturing, tutoring and demonstrating staff were requested through the Vice Chancellor of each of the 19 universities. Email details for each of those staff were provided by a designated payroll officer at 16 of the universities to the Institute of Social Science Research (ISSR) at University of Queensland, which administered the survey. Three universities sent the survey link by email directly to their own casual academic staff. The survey was distributed between August and October, 2011, with two reminders each a fortnight apart.

The survey instrument was developed to especially reflect the employment conditions of casual academic staff and the concerns raised in the academic literature. In all, 3,160 casual academics responded to the survey, a 13.3% response rate. The response rate, whilst lower than that for the surveys of permanent, tenured academic staff (35%) and general/professional staff (32%) is consistent with casual workers' lower response rates in other surveys (see Junor 2004 and Morehead et al. 1997). As a consequence of the non-random nature of the survey and the response rate, caution needs to be exercised in how the results can be interpreted for the whole casual academic workforce and what conclusions can be drawn for the whole population of casual academic staff. The WCAU survey data can only reveal a snapshot at a point in time. Details such as the gender, qualification level and age profile of the population of casual academic staff at that time were unknown, so it was not possible to investigate any response biases.

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, p176). There are two indicators, however, that add weight to the relevance and representativeness of the WCAU survey data. First, the gender and age distribution of the WCAU results is very similar to the age and gender distribution shown in analysis of data from UniSuper (the universities' superannuation fund) (May et al. 2011). For example, analysis of the UniSuper data found that 57% of casual academic staff were women; this was the same proportion as in the WCAU data. The UniSuper data also showed that 52% of the population of casual academic staff were under 35 years of age, only slightly more than the 48% in the WCAU data (May et al. 2011). Second, the gender profile reported in the WCAU survey is similar to that reported by the Department responsible for collecting statistics on higher-education staffing, DIISRTE. The DIISRTE (2011) data indicated that in 2011, 54% of the full-time equivalent teaching-only academic casual workforce were women (compared to 57% of the headcount in WCAU).

The DIISRTE data, our second source, is used in Tables 1 and 4. This is the only longitudinal data source on casual academic staff, and dates back to 1989. In March each year, universities are required to provide estimated and actual casual-staff FTE numbers for the current and previous calendar year. This data is a small part of a range of staffing statistics that universities are required by legislation to provide each year for the Higher Education Staff Data Collection.

Findings

Demographic Details

The WCAU 2011 survey found that casual academic staff are more likely to be female, younger and less well qualified than their continuing academic colleagues. Table 2 compares the demographics of these two groups of staff using the results of the WCAU survey for casual academic staff and for academic staff.

Table 2: Demographic Details of Casual Academic Staff and Academic Staff

	WCAU casual academic survey %	WCAU academic staff survey %
Proportion female	57	51
Proportion holding a PhD	16	80
Median age	36 years	46 years
Proportion born overseas	40	42
Median period of employment	3 years	5 years

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011, WCAU Academic Staff Survey 2011

Table 3 shows the casual academic sample by qualification and university type. In addition to the 16% of the casual academic sample who already hold a PhD, a further 37% were studying for a PhD. The levels of qualification vary by the type of university at which respondents were working. Table 3 uses a slight modification of the five-part typology of the Australian university system developed by Marginson and Considine (2000, pp189-190), to both categorise universities by their formation period and de-identify those that took part in the survey (see Appendix 1). In this typology Australia's 37 public universities are categorised as:

- Sandstone (nine universities) – the oldest universities and most research focussed;
- Gumtree (nine universities) – universities founded between 1960 to 1975;
- Unitech (five universities) – the oldest former Colleges of Adult Education, and
- New (14 universities) – universities formed in the period after 1986, many from amalgamations.

Table 3: Proportion of Survey Respondents with a PhD and Studying for a PhD, by University Type

	Proportion of respondents with a PhD %	Proportion of respondents currently studying for a PhD %
Sandstone	16.8	42.5
Gumtree	16.1	42.8
Unitech	16.8	32.7
New	14.5	26.5
Overall sample	**16.2**	**37.5**

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011

Those working at sandstone and unitech universities were most likely to have a PhD, and those working at gumtree and sandstone universities were most likely to be studying for a PhD. Those employed at new universities were the least likely to either hold or be studying for a PhD.

The proportion of all academic staff who are employed on a casual basis is an important question for investigation. The calculations in Table 4 are based on headcount, and thus compare full-time continuing academics with casual academic staff who may only be working for a small number of hours per week. Nonetheless this provides an important measure of the amount of teaching effort across the university sector undertaken by hourly paid staff. The statistics have been calculated using the contactable population of academic staff and casual academic staff at each university, as provided by that university, for the purposes of survey distribution. Table 4 shows that unitech universities have the highest proportions of academic staff employed on a casual basis, and that once research-only staff (those academic staff who perform little or no teaching) are removed from the calculations (column 3), it can be seen that the three other university types have very similar proportions of casual academic staff.

Table 4: Casual Academic Density by University Type, Based on Headcount

University type	Number of universities in the survey	Average density (estimated) as proportion of all academic staff %	Average density as a proportion of all teaching and research academic staff only %
Unitech	2	66	72
Gumtree	4	47	54
Sandstone	5	37	51
New	8	44	49
Total – average	**19**	**49**	**53**

Source: WCAU Academic Staff Survey 2011, WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey, DIISTRE HES staff statistics (2011)

This new data is the first time that the proportion of academic staff employed on a casual basis has been calculated on a headcount basis. Previous estimates, as detailed in Table 1, have been based on FTE calculations, understating the magnitude of the actual casual academic workforce. Whilst the headcount calculations are also problematic, in that they compare a casual academic who might only be teaching two hours a week with a full-time academic, they nonetheless serve to highlight the extent to which the university sector is casualised. Across the Australian labour force approximately 24% of employees are employed on a casual basis, a figure that has been steady for the past decade (ABS 2011). By comparison, the survey results show that 49% of all academic staff, and 53% of all teaching and research academic staff (on a headcount basis) are casually employed.

In keeping with the finding in the literature about the diversity of the casual academic workforce, the survey investigated the motivations and aspirations of casual academic staff, and categorised respondents according to their motivations and orientations towards casual academic employment: academic, external to university sector, casual by choice and retiree. The categories are mutually exclusive and assigned by analysis of questions exploring aspirations, qualifications and main sources of income. In particular, respondents' answer to the question "Where would you like to be in five years time?" provided key information about aspirations and orientations. The survey found that the majority, 56% of the sample, were aspiring to an academic position. A further 24% were oriented towards work outside the university sector, and 12% said they

would like to be casual in five years' time; this group was described as "casuals by choice". A smaller proportion of the sample, 7%, were retired or depended on a pension for their main source of income. Two key findings emerge from the analysis of these categories. First, men and women have similar aspirations and orientations; and second, those respondents for whom their casual employment represents a choice, rather than a transition point, form only a small proportion of the sample.

The other key findings from the survey were that 36% of respondents relied on their casual employment as their main source of income, and that 23% of female respondents and 18% of male respondents said that they worked as a casual academic at more than one institution.

Support for Casual Academic Staff in their Job

Given that the majority of respondents aspire to an academic position, the question of how casual employment is preparing them for an academic career is crucial. It is also important in understanding what support these staff have to assist them with their teaching work. Survey respondents were asked about whether they had access to basic resources such as a workspace, a computer and space to meet with students, and if they were able to access financial support for their research. The survey also asked about access to a range of job and career supports such as induction, professional development, and attendance at course meetings and staff meetings, and if so, whether these were on an unpaid, fully paid or partly paid basis.

Table 6 shows the level of access to three important resources, two of which are necessities for the teaching role, and the third an important career support for those developing a research profile. The data finds statistically significant differences between men’s and women’s access to a suitable space to meet with students, and access to financial support for research. These differences are not explained by hours of work, as men and women report working similar hours per week. Overall, 76% of respondents had access to a workspace and computer, and 57% had access to a suitable space to meet with students.

Table 6: Access to Resources and Amenities by Gender

Amenity	Women with access %	N	Men with access %	N	Total access %	N	Chi sq Signific-ance
1. Workspace with a computer	75.8	1,454	77.2	1130	76.4	2,584	ns
2. Suitable space to meet with students	55.3	1,444	60.1	1117	57.4	2,561	0.015*
3. Financial support for your research, e.g. support to attend a conference	38.2	1,404	43.7	1094	40.6	2,498	0.005**

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2,497). Cells in columns 1, 3 and 5 are "yes" values.
*Probability value for a chi-square test of whether there is a relationship between gender and row variables, one degree of freedom.

Access to financial support for research is closely associated with study status, rather than employment status (Table 7). Only very small proportions of those not currently studying (who are 42% of the overall sample) have access to financial support for research. For those who are currently studying, the proportions with access to financial support for research are much higher. Men who are studying full time are slightly more likely to have access to financial support for their research than women who are studying full time. Across the sample, 38% of men and 36% of women were studying for their PhD qualification.

Table 7: Access to Financial Support for Research, by Study Status and Gender

Respondent status	Access amongst women %	Access amongst men %	Study status as a proportion of sample %
Respondents not currently studying	15.5	13.0	42.1
Respondents studying part time	32.2	32.0	14.7
Respondents studying full time	65.5	72.5	43.2
			100

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2,497)

The question of access to resources was further investigated to see if there were differences by the type of university where the respondent was employed. Gumtree universities were most likely to provide their casual academic staff with a workspace and computer and with a suitable space to meet students, as shown in Table 8. Both unitech and new universities provided lower levels of access to these basic resources, and were also less likely to provide access to financial support for research, although this is related to their staffing profile, which shows lower proportions of casual academic staff who are also studying. The differences between university types are statistically significant. Unitech universities had the highest proportions of academic staff employed on a casual basis, as reported earlier in Table 4.

Table 8: Access to Resources and Amenities, by University Type

University type	Workspace and computer %	N	A suitable space to meet with students %	N	Financial support for research %	N
Sandstone	77.3	1084	61.3	1073	49.6	1052
Gumtree	83.1	498	65.2	494	42.0	486
Unitech	68.7	425	49.1	422	32.4	413
New	74.5	577	49.3	572	28.2	547
Chi-square significance	*.000***		*.000***		*.000***	

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2,584). Cells in data rows 1, 3 and 5 are "yes" values.
* Probability value for a chi-square test of whether there is a relationship between university type and column variables, three degrees of freedom.

Table 9 shows job and career supports, by university type and across the whole sample. Column 5 shows that approximately one-third of respondents have 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 course meetings, and one in four were paid to attend induction. Almost half said they attended course meetings on an unpaid basis, and approximately a quarter attended induction and professional development on an unpaid basis. Whilst the data cannot show 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.

A varied picture is revealed amongst the university types in terms of the provision of job and career supports (Table 9). 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 new universities had the highest proportions receiving paid professional development. The highest proportions 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 attended course meetings on an unpaid basis.

Table 9: Access to Job and Career Supports by University Type, and Overall Sample by Percentage

Category of job and career support	(1) Sandstone	(2) Gumtree	(3) Unitech	(4) New	(5) ALL
Induction - No	27.3	38.5	38.2	34.8	32.9
Induction – Yes, unpaid	27.5	23.6	23.0	22.3	24.8
Induction – Yes, fully paid	42.1	35.9	37.4	39.8	39.6
Induction – Yes, partly paid	3.1	2.0	1.4	3.2	2.6
	100	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Professional development – No	35.7	33.2	44.7	34.4	36.4
Professional development – Yes, unpaid	30.8	32.6	19.9	22.9	27.6
Professional development – Yes, fully paid	30.6	28.9	31.4	35.4	31.5
Professional development - Yes, partly paid	2.9	5.3	4.0	7.2	4.5
	100	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**
Course meetings – No	15.8	15.2	19.0	19.4	17.0
Course meetings – Yes, unpaid	44.9	48.5	50.7	45.8	46.8
Course meetings – Yes, fully paid	31.8	27.9	24.2	28.3	29.0
Course meetings – Yes partly paid	7.5	8.5	6.2	6.5	7.2
	100	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2,546)

Do Job and Career Supports Make a Difference to Job Satisfaction?

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement, "I am satisfied with my job overall". Those who strongly disagreed or

disagreed with the statement were described as having lower job satisfaction, and those who agreed or strongly agreed were described as having higher job satisfaction. The intermediate category is not displayed, as this counts those who responded as with "don't know" or "neither agree nor disagree"; that is, they expressed no view. Job satisfaction was analysed against access to basic amenities such as a workspace and computer, and access to support for research. Table 10 shows that there are statistically significant differences between those who do have these provisions and those who do not, suggesting an association between job satisfaction and access to basic amenities and support.

Table 10: Job Satisfaction by Access to Resources and Amenities

	Lower job satisfaction % of category	**Higher job satisfaction % of category**	**Chi-square significance**
No access to computer and workspace	18.6	73.4	.009**
Access to computer and workspace	13.7	79.9	
No access to financial support	18.6	74.3	.000***
Access to financial support	9.6	84.0	

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2,566). Intermediate values (medium satisfaction) not shown.
*Probability value for a chi-square test of whether there is a relationship between satisfaction and resource variables, two degrees of freedom.

Do Job and Career Supports Make a Difference to Career Satisfaction?

The question of career satisfaction was addressed by three questions in the survey:

- I am satisfied with my career opportunities at this university.
- I am satisfied with my career opportunities in the university sector as a whole.
- I am satisfied with my career prospects.

Each answer had a three-point scale, ranging from least to most satisfied, and the answers for all questions were summed to create an index that ranged between 3 and 9 points. Respondents with three or four points had lower levels of career satisfaction, and those with eight or nine points had higher levels. The lower and higher career satisfaction groups were then examined by their access to supports

and amenities to see if there was an association between the two characteristics. Table 11 shows statistically significant differences for workspace and computer, student space and access to financial support for research, suggesting that having access to such amenities is positively associated with career satisfaction.

Table 11: Career Satisfaction by Access to Supports and Amenities

	Lower career satisfaction % of category	Higher career satisfaction % of category	Chi-square significance
No access to workspace and computer	35.2	30.1	.002**
Access to workspace & computer	28.0	35.8	
No access to space to meet students	35.8	26.9	.000***
Access to space to meet students	25.3	39.9	
No access to financial support	35.5	29.2	.000***
Access to financial support	21.7	41.5	

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2,428). Intermediate values (medium satisfaction) not shown.
*Probability value for a chi-square test of whether there is a relationship between satisfaction and resource variables, two degrees of freedom.

Table 12 examines career satisfaction and access to induction and professional development. As with access to basic amenities, paid access to induction and professional development is positively and significantly associated with career satisfaction.

Table 12: Career Satisfaction by Access to Induction and Professional Development

	Lower career satisfaction % of category	Higher career satisfaction % of category	Chi-square significance
No access to induction	33.4	28.8	.002**
Paid access to induction	28.2	38.2	
No access to professional development	31.3	33.1	.019*
Paid access to professional development	26.8	39.6	

Source: WCAU Casual Academic Staff Survey 2011 (n=2,397)
Intermediate values in column (medium satisfaction) and row (unpaid access) variables not shown.
*Probability value for a chi-square test of whether there is a relationship between satisfaction and development variables, four degrees of freedom.

In summary, the data suggests that by providing the basics of job and career supports and amenities, and access to resources to support research, universities may improve casual academics' experience of work, and their job and career satisfaction. Higher levels of job and 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 is related to study status (Table 7), and is associated with higher levels of job and career satisfaction.

Discussion and Conclusion

The survey data is able to both confirm the existence and extend our knowledge of this important and "hidden workforce" (Bexley & Baik 2011). The casual academic workforce has a gendered and a youthful face, and whilst it comprises a diverse group, a common theme is the desire for transition. That is, most casual academics see their casual employment as a temporary stage from which they will (hopefully) transition to a continuing academic position or, in the case of a smaller proportion of casual academics, to a position in another industry upon graduation. Only a small minority choose casual academic employment. The findings of the WCAU survey confirm those of Junor (2004, p284) who found

casual employment was a minority preference. Further, the high proportion of casual academics who rely on their casual employment for their main source of income, and the finding that one in five casual academics is employed at more than one institution, suggest that a large component of this workforce is serious about a future academic career.

The evidence about the provision of basic resources and job and career support, the focus of our original research questions, indicates that it remains patchy across the sector, and that some variance in provision exists based on the type of university where the casual academic is employed. This variance seems to be in part related to the study status of the casual academic, with some resources such as access to financial support linked to the casual academic's student status. It also suggests that different types of universities have a different labour supply for their casual academic positions. For example, the research-intensive sandstone universities are more likely to have post-graduate students working as casual academics. Of particular concern are the lower levels of resources and supports at the Unitech universities, where the highest proportions of casual academics are found. Overall the findings suggest that little has changed since the earlier reporting of these issues in the AUTC report (AUTC 2003) and by Percy et al. (2008).

The conditions of employment for casual academic staff, and the provision of basic amenities, resources and job and career supports, matter, for two important reasons. First, they matter for the casual academics themselves. The data suggests that job and career satisfaction are associated with the provision of these basic amenities and supports. It is self-evident that basic resources and amenities contribute to a sense of belonging, and assist with the performance of work to a decent standard. Second, they matter for teaching quality, and for the establishment of conditions under which this can occur. There is no doubt that provision of amenities, supports and collegial inclusion is a necessary precondition for the performance of semester-based casual academic work to a reasonable minimum standard.

The bigger question is whether the provision of these basics is sufficient to provide for appropriate workforce development and renewal, and for the proper career development of what is potentially the future academic workforce. Universities' patchy provision of resources and supports raises a question about how university managers regard the casual academic workforce, with the lack of progress over recent years suggesting that the workforce is structured in such a way as to operate separately from the ongoing workforce, rather than as a "training ground" for future academic staff. The reality is that a bifurcated

workforce has been created in Australia's universities, one that Kimber (2003) described as the "tenured core and tenuous periphery". The conditions in the "periphery" are important for the industry, and the 2008 Bradley review of higher education noted that "casualisation was reducing the attractiveness of academia as a profession" and affecting the sector's capacity to recruit into the future (Bradley et al. 2008, p22).

The links between teaching quality, student outcomes and a large casualised academic workforce are unexplored in the Australian context, although the recent American literature gives grounds for concern. This is not to suggest that casual academics are poor-quality teachers; rather, their conditions of employment appear to provide little basis for professional development and career advancement, and much cause for concern. The plight of one casual academic, highlighted in a submission to a 2013 Parliamentary Inquiry into job insecurity, provides a case in point. The casual academic won an award for teaching excellence from the University of Sydney, but reported that she was unable to afford housing and was living in the balcony of an elderly man's home, working as his carer in order to survive (NTEU 2013).

Additional questions are raised by the research: The impact of the casualisation of academic work on continuing academic staff brings new workload challenges to academic staff who must manage and supervise this diverse and high-turnover workforce. It is the continuing academic staff who must mediate quality concerns, yet it is unclear what training and support they receive for this role and how this affects their workloads. Further, the ageing of the continuing academic workforce and the urgent need for workforce renewal also presents challenges. Casual academic staff represent a possible future source of academic labour, but their conditions of work are not preparing them well for this future. The broader political, social and economic environment that Australian universities face is highly uncertain. There is no doubt that they are going to continue to be asked to do more with less, all while being measured and judged on the world stage. Given all of these issues, the sustainability of a strategy that relies heavily on an insecure and poorly supported workforce to provide much of the undergraduate teaching must be reconsidered.

Appendix 1: Marginson's Typology of Universities (adapted)

Sandstone (9 universities; includes redbrick and Group of 8)	**Gumtree (9 universities)**	**Unitech (5 universities; includes ATN grouping)**	**New (14 universities)**
SANDSTONE (6)	Griffith University	University of Technology Sydney	Edith Cowan University
University of Queensland	Newcastle University	Queensland University of Technology	Central Queensland University
University of Western Australia	Flinders University	RMIT University	Southern Cross University
University of Adelaide	James Cook University	Curtin University	University of Western Sydney
University of Tasmania	La Trobe University	University of South Australia	Charles Sturt University
University of Melbourne	Macquarie University		Victoria University
University of Sydney	Wollongong University		University of Southern Queensland
REDBRICKS (3)	Murdoch University		University of Canberra
Australian National University	University of New England		Australian Catholic University
Monash University			Charles Darwin University
University of NSW			Swinburne University
			University of Ballarat
			University of the Sunshine Coast
			Deakin University

Source: Marginson and Considine (2000 pp189-190)

Notes: UNE is older than Monash but has no medical school, and hence is more like a Gumtree university (p189); Deakin was originally categorised as a Gumtree university but turned itself into a New University (p201). Redbricks are similar to Sandstones, and as all three now belong to the Group of 8 it is logical to include them as one category, hereafter referred to as Sandstone universities.

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