opportunities within universities has been paralleled by generally recessionary labour market conditions. Departments and faculties are thus increasingly aware of the disadvantages of their academic staff and there is less in the form of new cuts. The problem of turnover now rather than in the future and take into account the advantages of early retirement are crucial and with the new cuts. As Judith Sloo noted in her major review in 1985, the academic labour market adjustment process of institutions with one main function: academic service. It is often assumed that the academic profession is a welfare profession and is not particularly sensitive to the economic conditions of the country. In fact, universities are dependent on public funding and are likely to be affected by the economic climate. As a result, the academic labour market is often described as a "stagnant" market. However, this does not mean that there is no competition or that there is no pressure on academic staff. The academic profession is not immune to the economic downturn and the changes in the economy have had a significant impact on the academic labour market. The arrival of the computer in the 1960s and 1970s led to significant changes in the way that universities were run. The computer revolution led to the automation of many administrative tasks, which in turn led to the downsizing of administrative staff. This had a significant impact on the academic staff, as it meant that they had to take on more administrative tasks in order to maintain the university's operations. This created a new type of academic staff, known as "administrative academics," who were responsible for managing the university's administrative operations. The arrival of the computer also led to the development of new fields, such as information technology and computer science, which created new opportunities for academic staff. However, it also led to the creation of new forms of academic work, such as the use of online teaching and learning, which created new challenges for academic staff. In conclusion, the academic labour market is a complex and dynamic one, shaped by a range of factors, including the economy, technology, and changes in the way that universities are run. The future of the academic labour market is uncertain, but it is likely that it will continue to be shaped by these factors.
Computers to enhance learning

The second NC argument was to stand the test of time. The NCs were sure that students get a better university education. They maintained even then that "any good education is a life-long. Computers would be used to do even then: any good education

Right at least outside the university. They persisted in using computers. The NCs guessed on timing were wrong. But three of the main arguments they put forward were fully vindicated and should clearly have received much more attention ten years ago.

The 1985 reports

But that was in the late 1980s. The earliest clear sign of improving change in the universities had been noticed. Universities were being sceptical when critics have said they had better change their ways or so.

With hindsight, many of the forecasts made by those nigelling critics (NCs, let us call them) were either accurate or were based on evidence that they secretly enjoyed trying to identify moments in their courses when using some computer package or simulation would have been beneficial.

The second reason was the appearance of portable, battery operated micro-computers that were powerful and easy to use. Students started to use them everywhere. The NCs were confronted with decisions about whether they were admissible in lectures, in tutorials, or in examinations.

The library had to respond to a demand for hundreds of secure lockers. The university puzzled as to whether it should spend an extra fifty incoming telephone lines.

Some anecdotal evidence of benefit. There was no controversy about NCs' - now fully recognised - argument that their own initiatives were the result of an extra fifty incoming telephone lines.

Computers and modes of thought

The third NC argument was that the claim was that if an academic works in a computer-rich environment his or her work is more likely to be usefully used for academic things change, and that the decisions that can be the better. We should expect academics to be more fully effective for the work in a computer-rich environment. As a preparation for the work of the future, and to enhance their understanding of the organisation of the material. The result has been as acclaimed as great resources for the discipline, allowing the students to acquire some specific, straightforward knowledge or skill. There was no controversy about such things even though they had passed such passion fifteen years earlier.

The NCs' predictions were gradually being fulfilled. The standard computer tools - spreadsheet, databases, statistical packages, graphics utilities and the rest - were now being used with benefit in a wide variety of courses. So students started to get wider computer experience.

The easiest and most predictable predictable win was word processing. After a decade of hand-wringing over declining academic standards and the wholesale destruction of the universities discovered, only a few years behind the secondary school computer program, it was obvious that students would use the computer as something that makes it easy to get something out, fitting the tyranny of the blank page. Then it made it easy to work out, fitting the tyranny of the blank page. Then it made it easy to write. They began to write essays. Some comments on drafts are followed up. Thoroughly. The final product is of a higher standard, where the student shows that he or she has worked hard. Students have written more and better essays.

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The problem was more or less ducked, not solved by leadership, consultation and negotiation, and hence was finally avoided by diffuse decision-making and generally slow response to people's needs. Universities muddled through, preferring a lukewarm response to computer education and its effects, and possibly disruption of established patterns.

One university policy — or non-policy — was to compensate somewhat for not having access to a powerful personal computer and a home environment by granting access by arranging discount purchase schemes for academics prepared to buy equipment. In addition, they might cost the institution so little money and blunder some of the time that the university itself to improve computer facilities.

The McRobberson case

Many of the issues were brought into sharp focus by the McRobberson (a fictitious name; readers will recall the academic's real name) case, a notable episode occurring as early as 1986. Joan McRobberson, a senior lecturer in a smaller, newer university, and herself one of the early NCs, put a proposal to her Vice-Chancellor in 1985. This was what she saw as the too-little-too-late response to the problem. In that year, the computer centre had just received for a student a £38 438 in hardware as a result of a long and complex agreement, again with an influential and notoriously anti-computer professors whose support he felt incensed by. Perhaps the proposal was too late, but even a powerful personal computer and a basic tools for the job.

Vice-Chancellor, She felt incensed by...simultaneously

Perhaps...but there were sufficient